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Rethinking Women, Peace and Security After State Collapse: The Case of Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda was launched to improve the participation, prevention, protection as well as recovery of women. In terms of WPS agenda, Afghanistan had indeed made some progress during the period from 2001 until 2021 as women in Afghanistan became more active in education, civil service and other sectors. However, the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021 ruined many of the institutions through which these gains were made. In this conceptual article, feminist security theory and feminist institutionalism are applied to the Afghan case via qualitative review of the studies on WPS, UN documents, Afghan policy texts and human rights reports. This is how it is argued in the article that in order for WPS to be put into practice it is usually believed that functional state institutions, cooperative authorities, legal protections and administrative capacities are present. However, if these conditions vanish, all four WPS pillars are going to collapse. As a result, it is proposed that Women, Peace, and State collapse could be used as an additional analytical framework that could be applied to women's security in the context of institutional failure, contested sovereignty and actual rule.

Keywords: *Feminist Institutionalism, Gendered Insecurity, De Facto Governance, Institutional Resilience, Critical Security Studies.*

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Introduction

The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 in October 2000, which became a landmark achievement in acknowledging the experience and contribution of women in matters of international security and peace (United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2000). Better known as Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, the resolution calls for the inclusion of women in peace

processes, protection against gender violence, preventing conflicts, and participation in humanitarian work after the conflicts are over. Hence, it provides a contrast to the security policies that in the past marginalized women from international peace processes (UN Women, 2015). Along with further Security Council resolutions, national action plans (NAPs), and commitments, the resolution developed into an all-encompassing



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normative setting for gender-sensitive peacebuilding and conflict resolution (Akbari & True, 2024; Duncanson & Farr, 2019).

Examining the Afghan context is important for understanding the working and limitations of the WPS agenda. Following the overthrow of the first Taliban regime in 2001, the Afghan Republic, with the help of some external actors, started introducing reforms for improving the access of women to education, politics, civil society, journalism, health care, and various forms of employment. Although these advancements were uneven and continued to depend on exterior support, they did facilitate more participation of women in public life (Akbari & True, 2024; Duncanson & Farr, 2019; UN Women, 2014). However, the fall of the Republic and return of the Taliban in August 2021 reversed all advancements.

After August 2021, the Taliban eliminated or changed the purpose of all organizations that facilitated women's participation in legal protection as, for example, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, although at the same time it restricted their access to secondary and higher education, most professions, political and public life, advocacy, as well as judicial process and movement without mahram. These restrictions also limited women's effectiveness in obtaining medical help and humanitarian support, as they were removed from their jobs and protection services etc. Many Afghan women were banned from operating publicly or had to go into hiding (Akbari & True, 2024; Sobat, 2025).

While much research has been devoted to discussing the restrictions introduced by the Taliban on Afghan women, less attention has been paid to the implications of such restrictions for the concept of WPS. The article claims that implementation of WPS highly relies on functioning legal frameworks, administrative mechanisms, accountability, and NAPs through which the treaty is implemented (Thomson, 2019).

Thus, women, peace, and security in Afghanistan presupposes functioning governments which know how to create legal policies and implement protections (George & Shepherd, 2016). Under the same situations, these assumptions hold true for post-conflict contexts where state institutions can be restored with the help of international partners (Brinkerhoff, 2005).

Hence, the situation in Afghanistan provides an opportunity for re-examining the theoretical foundations of WPS agenda. Rather than being an obvious failure in terms of implementation, the case demonstrates that international organizations should take into consideration the fact that institutions may disappear. When governmental institutions cease to exist and are replaced by authorities who are against the concept of gender equality, it is difficult for women to participate and obtain help. The paper, therefore, seeks to answer the following question: How does the fall of the Afghan Republic question the basic theoretical foundations of the WPS initiative? It analyzes the institutionalization of the principles of the WPS before the year 2021, what took place with the arrangements after the Taliban came to power, and why the mechanism of WPS was not able to offer an appropriate response. It proposes Women, Peace, and State Collapse as an additional framework for situations in which there are authorities that either cannot or do not want to preserve women's rights or comply with international obligations.

The significance of this argument extends beyond Afghanistan. Contemporary conflicts frequently produce institutional fragility, contested sovereignty, and de facto rule. Afghanistan should therefore be understood not only as a case of severe regression in women's rights, but also as a critical case that requires scholars and policymakers to reconsider the relationship among women, security, peace, and statehood.

Method and Analytical Approach

This conceptual article uses a qualitative critical review of WPS scholarship, feminist security and institutionalist literature, United Nations documents, Afghanistan's Constitution and NAP on Resolution 1325, and reports from international human-rights organizations. Sources were selected purposively for their relevance to three questions: the institutional assumptions embedded in WPS implementation; the arrangements that supported women's participation and protection before 2021; and the legal, administrative, and humanitarian consequences of institutional change after the Taliban's return. Afghanistan is treated as a critical case because the period of international state-building coincided with the consolidation of the WPS agenda and was followed by an abrupt change in political and institutional order (Akbari & True,

2024). The analysis is interpretive rather than causal: it uses feminist security theory and feminist institutionalism to identify how the durability, authority, and normative orientation of institutions shape the operation of the four WPS pillars. It does not claim to be a systematic review or to represent the experiences of all Afghan women.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Feminist security theory (FST) contests mainstream theorizing which highlights military dominance, sovereignty and territorial defence, loss of sovereignty, and inter-state conflicts and sees the state as the major reference point of security (Buzan, 1991, pp. 35-57; Tickner, 1992, pp. 1-5). While traditional theorists often define security through external threats to the state, feminist scholars look into how insecurity manifests itself through discrimination, gender violence, structural inequality, and daily power relations (Moser & Clark, 2001, pp. 3-12; Sjoberg, 2010, pp. 17-28; Tickner, 1992, pp. 8-13, 36-38; Waltz, 1979, pp. 91-93).

Tickner, Enloe, and Cohn demonstrate how state-centered analysis can obscure gendered experiences of conflict and peace (Cohn, 2011; Enloe, 1989, p. 7; Tickner, 1992, pp. 29-31). This concern overlaps with human security's attention to economic, political, social, and physical safety, while feminist analysis further emphasizes how power relations, social hierarchies, and gender norms shape vulnerability and violence (Shepherd, 2008, pp. 6-15, 31-39; United Nations Development Programme, 1994, pp. 22-25).

The Taliban's return illustrates the value of this perspective. A reduction in large-scale combat did not produce security for Afghan women: restrictions on education, employment, movement, political participation, and access to justice generated profound forms of everyday insecurity (UN Women, 2022). The case therefore supports the feminist claim that security cannot be measured solely through regime stability or the absence of interstate or organized armed violence (Tickner, 1992, pp. 55-58).

The Afghan experience also identifies a limitation within WPS analysis. Much of the literature treats implementation as dependent on effective state institutions, legislative reform, and governance frameworks that protect rights and facilitate participation (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 2-4, 8-10).

The Republic's disintegration demonstrated how quickly the mechanisms supporting women's security could be abolished, captured, or redirected (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 9-11). Feminist security analysis must therefore consider insecurity produced not only by armed conflict but also by the failure or hostile transformation of institutions charged with protecting rights.

The Women, Peace and Security Framework

During October of the year 2000, the Security Council came up with Resolution 1325 which was the first resolution specifically dealing with women, peace, and security. In this resolution, the effects of war on people from different genders were acknowledged followed by calls for the involvement of women in conflict prevention, peace talks, peace-building, and recovery (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011, pp. 489-492; UNSC, 2000, preamble, paras. 1-10). Some other resolutions were passed which broadened the agenda developed in Resolution 1325 into gendered work (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, pp. 373-376). The agenda consists of four major parts known as pillars: protection, participation, prevention, and assistance (UN Women, 2015, pp. 42-52). Participation refers to the involvement of women in decisions, peace negotiations, governance, and reconstruction. On the other hand, protection supports the prevention of violence against women and girls (Aroussi, 2011; UNSC, 2000, para. 10). Meanwhile, prevention tackles gender-based patterns in violence (UN Women, pp. 190-205). Finally, assistance denotes the help of women in humanitarian issues, recovery, and rehabilitation (UN Women, 2015, pp. 220-236; UNSC, 2000, para. 8[c]).

Feminist institutionalism claims that it is impossible to separate the pillars from institutions where they are to be implemented. The formal rules defined by laws or meanings such as NAP commitments are subject to informal rules such as norms or distribution of authority. The institutions will therefore act to achieve gender equality but, at the same time make reforms dependent on the officeholders, donors, and political decisions (Thomson, 2019). In this case of Afghanistan, the researchers had to understand not only formal commitments but the force and abilities of the institutions able to fulfill them.

Following the resolution adopted a lot of violence prevention institutions appeared in both local and

international institutions due to the incorporation of gender views into events of peace and security governance (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, pp. 373–378). There is a number of countries that decided to adopt National Action Plans which make it possible to turn the goals of the resolution into national legislation (Shepherd, 2016, pp. 324–331). Also, it helped integrate gender approach into UN operations.

At the same time, implementation is extremely problematic and depends, sometimes, more on political wants than obligations (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011, pp. 493–499). Some critics say that participation efforts might appear in numbers but not change the system (Shepherd, 2016, pp. 327–329). Besides, when development of accountability mechanisms is not efficient most international actors cannot do anything to ensure compliance.

Afghanistan shows that there are even more problems. The implementation of the WPS success relies on the existence of the effective institutions that can help execute the policies of the resolution (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 2–4, 8–10). Also, if a constitution is not in force or the authorities don't follow the main principles of the international laws, the plans might not be realistic (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 9–10; Zuckerman & Greenberg, 2004).

State Collapse and the Limits of the Existing WPS Agenda

Collapse of the state typically refers to the failure of a political system and its institutions to the extent that a state is no longer able to fulfill its certain basic functions. The situation is different from the fragility of a state, as collapse means that a large degree of incapacity has occurred (Anderson & Choudhry, 2023; Brinkerhoff, 2005). In this particular article, the term is used in a controlled institutional aspect. Afghanistan did not see the disappearance of governance in 2021; it experienced collapse of the constitutional Republic and the implementation of the Taliban's de facto regime, which did eliminate, control, or transform in many ways the previous institutions that ensured women's rights. This pattern allows understanding the term more accurately. Gender has rarely been among key concepts in the studies of collapse (True, 2018), whereas the literature related to WPS has focused more on such issues as prevention of wars, the development of peacebuilding practices, transitional justice, and reconstruction after wars.

Similarly, relevant here is the distinction between incapacity and possibility to act. A weak government can pursue WPS goals, however it might lack necessary resources, control over territories, or sufficient administrative units to make such actions possible. A de facto regime can have plenty of power and efficiency; however, it might intentionally get rid of such institutions. The need for acting under these varying cases is obvious. Capacity building can be used when dealing with incapacity but the second case poses the question of whether it is possible and to what extent due to the necessity of implementing accountability mechanisms and supporting female institutions.

WPS operates under fundamentally different conditions when implementing institutions become dysfunctional or are replaced by authorities unwilling to honor relevant obligations. Following the Republic's collapse, women were excluded from formal political participation and many of the institutions that had supported participation, protection, and accountability disappeared or changed purpose (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 2–4, 8–11).

The contrast between Afghanistan before and after 2021 therefore supports a conceptual broadening of WPS. Existing models offer limited guidance for conditions in which rights-protecting institutions have collapsed and de facto authorities have assumed power. Women, Peace, and State Collapse is introduced below as a framework for analyzing how such institutional change affects women's safety, rights, and political agency.

Afghanistan Before 2021: WPS Success or Illusion?

Collapse of the state typically refers to the failure of a political system and its institutions to the extent that a state is no longer able to fulfill its certain basic functions. The situation is different from the fragility of a state, as collapse means that a large degree of incapacity has occurred (Anderson & Choudhry, 2023; Brinkerhoff, 2005). In this particular article, the term is used in a controlled institutional aspect. Afghanistan did not see the disappearance of governance in 2021; it experienced collapse of the constitutional Republic and the implementation of the Taliban's de facto regime, which did eliminate, control, or transform in many ways the previous institutions that ensured women's rights. This pattern allows understanding

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Women's Rights and Political Participation After 2001

After the Taliban stepped down from power, both public and political spaces for women opened up again. According to the Constitution of 2004, discrimination against citizens was prohibited and equality in civil rights between men and women was guaranteed under Paragraph 22 of the Constitution. The Constitution also had provisions regarding education, healthcare, labor activities, and participation of women in the two houses of the National Assembly of Afghanistan.

Women being able to participate more in formal political spheres was an important, but not complete, one step forward. Quotas for women made it possible for women to occupy their seats in both legislative bodies. At the same time, there still were women serving as ministers, deputy ministers, governors, diplomats, judges, and parliament members. Therefore, the Afghan government and many international organizations, including UN Women, regarded such presence as evidence of the democratization of society (Azadmanesh & Ghafoori, 2020; Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2004; UN Women, 2014).

Women expanded their roles in education and healthcare. There were more female teachers, and the formation of the professional workforce of midwives ensured better access of women to maternal services (United Nations Population Fund,

2023; UN Women, 2014). Women began to work in the police force, provincial administration, judiciary, and journalism despite the still-existing discrimination in the workplace and problems with security. The appointment of Habiba Sherabi as the first female governor of a province and the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs became prominent symbols of this institutional breakthrough (UN Women, 2014, 2024).

In the field of education, there were significant changes. Millions of girls became students of elementary and secondary schools, and women's participation has increased in universities and professionally-oriented training programs. However, these successes were not equal in various regions and social groups, and girls still experience increased levels of poverty, lack of security, family pressure, and other issues making completing their education harder (Amnesty International, 2014; UN Women, 2014). There were more women participating in peace negotiations, but their possibilities were limited (Azadmanesh & Ghafoori, 2020).

Civil society organizations played a significant role in assisting women as well. Women's organizations addressed the issues of violence against women, legal awareness, livelihood, education, and political participation. Some financial support was provided by international organizations for the purpose of creating public organizations that women could use in order to voice their demands (UN Women, 2014).

Afghanistan's National Action Plan and the Institutionalization of WPS

A major event for Afghanistan occurred when it adopted its National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2015. Through this action plan, Afghanistan was given a basis for gender integration into its security, governance, and development.

By incorporating gender issues, the NAP ushered in such government policies as the inclusion of women in the decision-making and peace negotiation processes, providing them with protection from all kinds of violence, access to justice, and collaboration between various institutions.

The NAP brought acknowledgment of the importance of empowering women in terms of security and peace, as opposed to regarding women only as a social category. Various departments of

government started creating gender projects and developing strategies on increasing the number of women in security agencies and state administration (Akbari & True, 2024). Women's efforts were supported by the structural formation of the implementing institutions, such as the Ministry for Women Affairs, gender focal points in various ministries, specialized prosecution bodies, shelters for women who suffered violence, and the legal basis for implementing a campaign against violence (Amnesty International, 2014).

However, the process of implementing WPS had weak points. It relied too much on external patrons and international development aid agencies, which made it impossible to establish solid domestic institutions (UN Women, 2015). The political participation of women may appear to be just symbolic, while cultural constraints related to both barbaric norms and violence against women may become an obstacle for their influence.

Women had also become victims of ignorance as they were not invited to take part in the most significant negotiations with the Taliban, as well as many institutions engaged in implementing the WPS program lacked the ability to remain independent in the turbulent political environment. The time of the Republic's collapse showed that a great number of achievements were actually the result of externally supplied interim agreement.

The comeback of the Taliban in August 2021 has led to a change in political power, and also to the end of the constitutional order in the framework of which the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda was implemented during the last two decades. The government organizations and civil society organizations that were working to advance women's rights, legal rights, and access to services disappeared, underwent changes or were restricted in their activities. The Ministry of Women Affairs was substituted with the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, women judges, prosecutors, officials, and activists lost their jobs and had to go in hiding, and the authorities imposed more restrictions affecting women's ability to work, travel, get education and participate in public life (Amnesty International, 2022; UN Women, 2022).

The Collapse of Participation, Protection, Prevention and Recovery

Participation is at the core of Resolution 1325 and

Afghanistan's previous National Action Plan (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2015, pp. 5, 13). Since August 2021, women have been removed from senior positions in the government, the Ministry of Women's Affairs dissolved, and many women expelled or prevented from public jobs. The restrictions on education have also contributed to a decline in the number of women professionals, leaders, and civil service workers in the future (Amnesty International, 2022; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2025). The breakdown of participation indicates that the formal commitment cannot succeed without institutions succeeding in ensuring representation during political transitions.

Protection is conditioned by the presence of legal institutions and accountability mechanisms. After 2021, we saw closure, weakening, or inaccessibility of courts, attorneys' offices, legal aid services, shelters, and systems dealing with violence against women. Women in affected institutions in particular, judges, attorneys, and human rights defenders faced the threat of violence, displacement, and exclusion from the systems, and the restrictions on mobility, education, and state employment further made access to justice difficult (Amnesty International, 2022; UN Women, 2022). Protection becomes impossible when there are no institutions that ensure the human rights.

Prevention means there are structural weaknesses that must be attended to before they lead to the actual insecurity. Afghanistan's NAP linked prevention with institutional capability, early warning, and gender-sensitive peace processes (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2015, pp. 6, 14). Women of Afghanistan repeatedly raised concerns that negotiations with the Taliban only compromise their rights, but their worries were put aside in favour of political and security priorities (Sobat, 2025). This is why WPS practice did not have the right instruments to predict and prevent the collapse of the institutions, and coordinate the processes at the level of organized regression of gender issues (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 8-11).

The return of the Taliban exacerbated humanitarian crisis already marked by poverty, food insecurity, and global dislocation. Ban on female humanitarian workers hindered women's access to medical services and aided, and hiring prohibitions only

made women economically dependent and insecure. Consequently, humanitarian work requires not only funds, but also political and institutional conditions, allowing to carry out gender-sensitive actions (Amnesty International, 2022; Meagher et al., 2023).

The Missing Dimension: Women, Peace, and State Collapse

The importance of the case of Afghanistan goes beyond the established rollback of women's rights. Various studies have been conducted on the restrictions imposed by the Taliban, failed attempts of international engagement, and continuing shortcomings in implementing WPS (Akbari & True, 2024; Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, pp. 374–383). However, little attention has been paid to how the collapse or transformation of institutions responsible for implementation influences the functioning of WPS as such.

The case of Afghanistan demonstrates that the four pillars of WPS are based on assumptions related to collaboration between states, governmental capacity, and the stability of the governing bodies. Most often, these assumptions remain unrecognized. When the mentioned assumptions cease to be valid, the agenda faces a challenge that cannot always be attributed to the failures of implementation.

Women, Peace, and State Collapse contributes to the theory of WPS by introducing an institutional dimension to its analysis through the identification of three assumptions needing examination: presence of a functioning state, governing power with commitment to women's rights, and enough stable institutions.

The Assumption of a Functional, Normative and Resilient State

The WPS approach assumes that the state has the capacity to legislate, administer justice, conduct policy coordination, and transform international commitments into national laws and practices using mechanisms such as NAPs (True, 2016; UN Women, 2015, pp. 313–319). However, Afghanistan's experience exposes a weakness of this assumption: after 2021, institutions which conducted women's rights advocacy have been dismantled or changed drastically, leaving inoperable the mechanisms that were used previously (UN Women, 2022, pp. 7–20).

Therefore, the implementation of the concept of WPS should study the cases when recognized as a state is not the main implementer of the respective ideas.

In addition, WPS implies that those in charge of governance are ready to undertake steps aiming at achieving gender equality in their states through different means (True, 2016, pp. 313–319). That is why the emergence of the Taliban rejects this assumption, as their prohibitions indicate that this regime refuses to apply the normative principles of WPS and does not just suffer from lack of capacity (Amnesty International, 2022; UN Women, 2022). The strategies that are usually recommended in case of failures of implementation give very limited understanding of how to approach the situation in those countries where the authorities refuse from the basic principles (Akbari & True, 2024, pp. 8–11).

Finally, WPS considers that it is possible to implement legal commitments into a lasting security through institutions (UN Women, 2015, pp. 127–129). The rapid weakening of judiciary, administrative, and representative institutions in Afghanistan made accountability lower and prevented women from participating in public life (George & Shepherd, 2016; UN Women, 2022). Thus, the evaluation of WPS implementation should investigate not just laws and rules of representation but the autonomy, resources, legitimacy, and resilience of institutions.

Toward a New Framework: Women, Peace, and State Collapse

The proposed framework is meant to add to the existing WPS doctrine, not create a new one. The author starts from the understanding that governing institutions can break down or be co-opted by enemies of women's rights interests. The focus of the author's findings is the process of governance of gendered security: who manages the systems of law, politics, protection, and provision of services and whether such systems can weather the political storms.

Three assertions can be made here. First, either taking away or dramatically changing institutions that are tasked with ensuring women's voice, safety and power represents a novel sort of gendered security threat. Second, institutional resilience must be understood as a prerequisite for efficient implementation of WPS rather than a purely

administrative issue. Third, responses on the international level must be designed for the context of divided authority in the absence of internationally recognized authorities.

Table 1: *Contrasting the conventional WPS agenda with the proposed Women, Peace, and State Collapse framework*

Dimension	Conventional WPS agenda	Women, Peace, and State Collapse
Primary focus	Women’s participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery within conflict and post-conflict governance	The effect of institutional collapse, capture, or replacement on all four WPS pillars
Institutional assumption	A recognized state can translate international commitments into law, policy, and administration	Implementing institutions may fail or be controlled by authorities hostile to women’s rights
Key mechanism	NAPs, legal reform, representation, gender-responsive peacebuilding, and public services	Institutional-resilience assessment, contingency planning, direct support to women’s organizations, and accountability for de facto authorities
Diagnostic question	Are WPS commitments being implemented?	Can the institutions required for implementation survive and remain normatively committed during political rupture?

Note. *Authors’ conceptualization.*

By shifting attention from implementation deficits alone to the institutional conditions that make implementation possible, the framework clarifies why the four WPS pillars deteriorated together after the Afghan Republic’s collapse. It also provides a basis for comparing Afghanistan with other contexts of institutional rupture without assuming that all cases are identical.

Policy Implications and Recommendations: Toward a Post-1325 Framework

Afghanistan illustrates that WPS policy needs to consider the institutional conditions upon which implementation relies. Reinforcing agreed principles will not suffice in cases where authority is under dispute, where institutions that protect rights have disintegrated, or where those who effectively govern deny gender equality. Hence, six measures are suggested:

- Treating institutional collapse or hostile institutional appropriation as a special risk for WPS that needs contingency planning rather than as an ordinary implementation gap.
- Formulating gender-sensitive early warning indicators including deteriorating representation, aggression against women’s organizations, restrictions on education and work, deterioration of legal protection and interference with women

humanitarian workers.

- Evaluating and reinforcing the autonomy of institutions responsible for gender commitments, their resources, legitimacy, security, and continuity instead of focusing mainly on short-term targets of participation.
- Offering ongoing direct support to women’s civil society organizations in a variety of forms including flexible funding, technical assistance, security in physical and online environments and access to advocates at international level.
- Establishing alternative ways of consulting women when official political means are blocked, so that de facto authorities cannot determine which women or organizations present their interests.
- Changing accountability tools used for de facto authorities and other non-recognized actors while making sure that diplomatic pressure and sanctions do not lead to worsening the conditions of women and girls.

These measures would lead to WPS being adapted to the institutional rupture while keeping existing commitments about protection and participation, and prevention efforts. This approach should be implemented in order to secure the agency of Afghan women.

Conclusion

The return of the Taliban in August 2021 resulted in a major setback for women in terms of their rights to participate in political, educational, and economic spheres, among other areas. This setback is too quick and too extensive to be explained only by the ideology of the Taliban or by a lack of proper implementation in the previous two decades. This setback highlights the importance of the principles of women, peace, and security (WPS) as they relate to working state institutions that could stop the implementation of international standards for women's rights.

Afghanistan challenges the three main assumptions regarding policies and practices expected to be adopted and utilized in the future: first, it assumes that the state as an actor will remain; second, it assumes that those authorities that govern people will continue their commitment to gender equality at least on a basic level; and lastly, it assumes that

institutions should continue to perform their functions even if there is a political situation in Afghanistan.

Women, Peace, and State Collapse presents a new perspective on analyzing this question. It still uses all existing WPS principles but shifts the focus towards the stability and normative nature of the institutions upon which the principles depend. In other words, it is possible to distinguish between the usual lack of implementation of the WPS principles and the collapse or malicious takeover of an institution in question because that institution has its own limitations in operation.

The argument, which the authors use in the article concerning the situation in Afghanistan, is important more than that only on the local level. It can be used for comparative studies, which may help formulate recommendations concerning conditions for institutional changes on an international scale.

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Ethical approval was not required because the study is based exclusively on publicly available documents and did not involve human participants, personal data, or direct interaction with affected communities.

Consent for Publication

Not applicable.

Data Availability

No new dataset was generated or analyzed. All materials examined are publicly available and cited in the article.

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