

# UNWOMEN STUDY GUIDE



**UNWOMEN**  
Ending violence against women in conflicted  
areas

## Letter from the Secretary General

Meritorious Participants,

It is with immense pride and excitement that I welcome you all to the very first session of CBKMUN'26. As the Secretary-General of this event, it is both an honor and a profound responsibility to lead this journey that we are beginning together.

CBKMUN'26 marks not only the start of a conference, but the beginning of a tradition. Every established institution once took its first courageous step, and today, we are taking ours. This conference has been built on dedication, long nights of preparation, passionate debates, and a shared belief that young minds have the power to shape tomorrow's world.

Our academic and organizational teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that this first edition of CBKMUN reflects excellence, inclusivity, and intellectual depth. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Academic Team, Organization Team, and every volunteer who contributed to transforming this vision into reality. Without their commitment and resilience, this conference would not have been possible.

Model United Nations is more than formal speeches and draft resolutions. It is a platform where future diplomats, policymakers, and global leaders learn the values of dialogue, compromise, and cooperation. In a world increasingly defined by polarization and uncertainty, diplomacy remains our most powerful tool. At CBKMUN'26, we aim to create an environment where diverse perspectives are respected, critical thinking is encouraged, and meaningful solutions are pursued.

As this is our very first conference, you are not only participants—you are pioneers. The debates you engage in, the friendships you form, and the standards you set will define the spirit and legacy of CBKMUN for years to come. You are shaping the identity of this conference.

I encourage each of you to step beyond your comfort zone, speak with confidence, listen with empathy, and challenge ideas with respect. Let this conference be a place where ambition meets responsibility and where collaboration triumphs over division.

On behalf of the entire Secretariat, I welcome you once again to CBKMUN'26. May this be the first of many remarkable chapters in our story.

Kind Regards

İsmail Sevgen

## Letter from Head of Academy

Honorable Secretary General, Fellow Academy and Dear Delegates;

I am Rana Gülerler and wishing you an informative yet exciting three days at our first ever holding of ÇBKMUN. To briefly introduce myself, I am both the Head of Academy and Chair of the UNEP committee. Being a part of this project is an honor to me. Both me and my fellow Academy members, though our backgrounds may be distant, we came together with our shared endeavours and created each Agenda Item.

To vaguely talk about our Agendas; in our Junior committees, delegates will fight for women's and children's rights in conflicted areas. In our UNEP committee, they will discuss the unethical usage of Artificial Intelligence and how it is badly affecting our environment. In our SOCHUM committee, they will acknowledge the current events the Uyghurs are facing within Central Asia. In our ECOSOC committee, delegates will argue about tariffs within international trade, and in our UNHRC committee they will advocate for the protection of journalists and the right to information.

I hereby encourage each delegate of their respective committee to meticulously prepare and act vigilant in our debates in order to secure a flawless ambiance of debate. Your endeavours and hard work will forever be acknowledged diligently.

As the Head of Academy, I once again wish you an experience at our conference which will bring you productivity, valuable experiences, and lasting memories. You can always find me within the premises if you would like to discuss something.

Best Regards,  
Rana D. Gülerler

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## **Committee Introduction: UN Women**

UN Women is the United Nations body responsible for promoting gender equality and empowering women worldwide. Established in 2010, it works to eliminate discrimination against women and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all genders. UN Women was created to strengthen and unify the UN's efforts in advancing gender equality on a global scale. Since its creation in 2010, UN Women has worked in over 90 countries, implementing programs that empower women economically, politically, and socially. One example is the HeForShe campaign, which encourages men and boys to take an active role in ending gender inequality. UN Women also collaborates with peacekeeping missions to integrate gender perspectives into security strategies, ensuring that women's voices are included in decisions that affect their communities.

Unlike militaries, UN Women does not deploy forces. Instead, it focuses on developing policies, supporting international cooperation, and funding programs that protect and empower women and girls. The organization works closely with governments, civil society, and other UN agencies to address issues such as gender-based violence, economic inequality, political underrepresentation, and discrimination in law and practice. A central part of UN Women's mission is to reduce structural inequalities that limit women's participation in education, the workforce, and decision-making processes. The committee supports legal reforms, promotes leadership opportunities for women, and strengthens protection mechanisms for those affected by violence and conflict. As a committee, UN Women emphasizes collaboration and policy-based solutions. Delegates are expected to work together to create realistic and impactful resolutions that promote gender equality, strengthen protection systems, and ensure the meaningful participation of women in all areas of society.

## **General Information About The Topic**

### **What is Violence Against Women in Conflict**

Violence against women in conflict refers to the wide range of harmful acts committed against women and girls during times of war, armed struggle, political unrest, and humanitarian crises. The issue of violence against women in conflict areas remains one of the most urgent human rights problems of our time. During wars and conflicts, women and girls are often especially vulnerable due to existing gender inequalities and the breakdown of social protection systems. Armed conflicts frequently weaken or completely collapse legal, judicial, and security institutions, creating environments marked by instability, fear, and lawlessness. In these circumstances, accountability is limited, and perpetrators often act with impunity. In such scenarios, women and girls face heightened risks of physical violence, sexual abuse, rape, forced marriage, sexual slavery, exploitation, and human trafficking. Many are also subjected to forced displacement, loss of livelihoods, and denial of access to essential services such as healthcare and education. In some conflicts, violence against women has been deliberately used as a tactic of war to

terrorize communities, punish populations, extract information, or alter the ethnic composition of a region. These acts are not random; they are often systematic and strategically planned to achieve military or political objectives. The impact of this violence extends far beyond the immediate physical and psychological harm suffered by individuals. Survivors may experience long-term trauma, social stigma, unwanted pregnancies, and serious health complications. Families and entire communities are also affected, as fear and mistrust weaken social cohesion. Furthermore, violence against women undermines peacebuilding efforts and slows down processes of recovery and reconciliation after conflict ends. Addressing this issue requires strong legal protections, accountability for perpetrators, survivor-centered support services, and meaningful inclusion of women in peace negotiations. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, UN reports estimate that tens of thousands of women have been subjected to sexual violence as a tactic of war. Beyond physical harm, survivors often face stigma, loss of livelihood, and exclusion from their communities. Studies show that regions with high rates of conflict-related gender-based violence also experience slower economic recovery and weaker social cohesion.

### **International Legal Frameworks**

Despite international recognition and the existence of legal frameworks, significant challenges continue to hinder progress in protecting women in conflict zones. Survivors of violence often face fear, stigma, and limited access to essential health care and psychological support. UNSC Resolution 1820 explicitly condemns sexual violence as a tactic of war and calls for immediate measures to prevent it. However, in practice, enforcement remains difficult. For instance, in Afghanistan, despite laws against sexual violence, survivors often lack access to courts or support services, highlighting the gap between international law and local implementation.

In many conflict-affected regions, judicial systems are weak or under-resourced, making accountability for perpetrators difficult to achieve. Cultural norms and social pressures may further discourage women from reporting incidents, leaving many cases unaddressed and allowing impunity to persist. Political instability and ongoing armed conflicts can also obstruct the implementation of protective measures and reforms. Even when laws exist on paper, their enforcement is often inconsistent, and local authorities may lack the capacity or will to act. Displacement, refugee situations, and humanitarian crises increase vulnerability, as women may experience heightened risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking, forced marriage, or other forms of abuse while lacking access to legal protection.

Moreover, social and cultural barriers can limit the effectiveness of international interventions. In some communities, traditional norms and gendered expectations perpetuate violence and prevent survivors from seeking help. Raising awareness, promoting community engagement, and integrating gender-sensitive approaches into both legal and humanitarian frameworks are crucial steps toward addressing these challenges. By combining legal accountability with practical support and cultural understanding, the international community can more effectively protect women and girls in conflict-affected areas.

## **Main Root Causes**

Violence against women in conflict areas does not occur randomly; it is the result of multiple interconnected structural and social factors that intensify during times of war and instability. Armed conflict often weakens or completely destroys law enforcement institutions and judicial systems. When police forces, courts, and protective services collapse or become ineffective, civilians—especially women and girls—are left without reliable protection. This breakdown of accountability enables perpetrators to act with impunity, as crimes are rarely investigated or prosecuted. Structural inequalities such as restricted access to education and economic opportunities make women more vulnerable during war, armed groups, exploit these vulnerabilities, using sexual violence and abuse to control populations disrupt communities, and spread fear, economic dependency, also limits survivors' ability to escape, or seek justice, perpetuating cycles of violence.

In many conflicts, sexual violence is not only a byproduct of chaos but is deliberately used as a strategy of war. Armed groups may employ rape and other forms of sexual violence to terrorize communities, force displacement, destabilize populations, or assert dominance over specific ethnic or political groups. The intentional weaponization of gender-based violence creates long-lasting psychological, social, and generational harm.

Displacement further increases vulnerability. Refugee and internally displaced women often live in overcrowded camps or temporary shelters where security is limited. In such environments, access to healthcare, legal assistance, education, and economic opportunities becomes restricted. The lack of stable support systems increases the risk of exploitation, abuse, and trafficking.

Conflict also contributes to a rise in human trafficking, particularly during forced migration. Women and girls fleeing violence may fall victim to traffickers who exploit their lack of documentation, resources, or safe transportation. Additionally, armed groups in certain regions impose forced marriages or forced pregnancies as tools of control, reinforcing gender inequality and limiting personal autonomy.

## **Current Challenges**

Despite international recognition and established legal frameworks, significant challenges continue to hinder progress in addressing violence against women in conflict-affected areas. In many regions, survivors face fear, stigma, and limited access to healthcare and psychological support. Reporting abuse can be dangerous due to weak law enforcement systems, lack of confidentiality, and fear of retaliation. In some contexts, violence may even be normalized or minimized due to cultural norms, making it even harder for women to seek justice. Underfunded survivor services and damaged infrastructure further restrict access to protection and recovery programs.

In addition, judicial and law enforcement systems in conflict zones are often weakened or non-functional, making accountability difficult to achieve. Political instability can delay or block the implementation of protective reforms, while corruption and lack of resources reduce the effectiveness of existing laws. Women are also frequently excluded from peace negotiations and decision-making processes, limiting the

development of inclusive solutions. These interconnected challenges create an environment where violence persists and justice remains inaccessible for many survivors.

## **Prevention and Care**

Prevention and care in conflict areas must not go ignored. Preventing violence against women begins with addressing the root causes, such as gender inequality, weak law enforcement, and the breakdown of rights during war. Governments, peacekeeping missions, and humanitarian organizations should integrate gender-sensitive policies into all security and peacebuilding efforts. This includes training military and peacekeeping forces, establishing early-warning systems for gender-based violence, and involving women meaningfully in peace negotiations. Education and awareness programs within displaced and conflict-affected communities are also essential to challenge harmful norms.

At the same time, strong survivor-centered care systems must be in place. Women and girls affected by violence need immediate access to medical care, psychological and financial support, legal assistance, and safe shelters. Services should be confidential, accessible, and culturally sensitive. Long-term recovery programs are equally important to help survivors rebuild their independence and dignity. Ending violence in conflict settings requires not only responding to harm after it occurs, but also creating systems that prevent it from happening in the first place.

Survivor centered care is also very important. Women affected by violence need immediate access to medical care, psychological counseling, legal assistance, and safe shelters in Columbia programs for survivors of conflict related sexual violence include legal aid and trauma, counseling, demonstrating effectiveness of holistic support, long-term recovery programs, help survivors rebuild independence, participate in economic activities and regain, social, standing education programs, and refugee camps have been shown to reduce marriage ending violence requires not only responding to harm, but also creating preventive systems that empower women and communities.

## **Education and Awareness**

Education is a critical tool in preventing violence and empowering women in conflict zones. Access to quality education can provide women and girls with knowledge of their rights, economic opportunities, and life skills, equipping them to resist exploitation and participate fully in society. However, during armed conflicts, schools are often destroyed, teachers flee, and girls are disproportionately kept at home due to safety concerns or social norms. For example, in Syria, prolonged conflict has forced millions of children out of school, with girls facing higher risks of early marriage and sexual exploitation.

Programs promoting education in emergencies have proven effective. In Afghanistan, UN-backed initiatives have established safe learning spaces for girls in refugee camps and conflict-affected rural areas. These programs combine academic instruction with vocational training, psychosocial support, and life skills education. Awareness campaigns targeting parents, community leaders, and youth also help challenge harmful social norms that restrict girls' education or condone gender-based violence.

Education is not only a protective measure but also a catalyst for long-term societal change. Women who receive education are more likely to participate in governance, advocate for their rights, and contribute to peacebuilding. Awareness campaigns further reinforce legal protections, inform communities about services for survivors, and promote behavioral change at the grassroots level. By integrating education and awareness, the international community can empower women and transform conflict-affected societies from within.

### **Cultural Barriers and Social Norms**

Cultural barriers and deeply rooted social norms often contribute to the persistence of violence against women in conflict settings. In many societies affected by war, patriarchal structures and gender roles may normalize discrimination or silence survivors, this mostly starts from gender inequality. Victim-blaming attitudes and expectations of female “honor” can prevent women and girls from reporting abuse or seeking assistance. Armed groups may also exploit existing inequalities, reinforcing harmful norms to maintain control over communities. Furthermore, during conflict, weakened institutions can intensify these dynamics. Addressing violence therefore requires not only legal reform, but also long-term efforts to challenge harmful stereotypes, promote gender equality in education, and engage community leaders, religious figures, and men in changing social attitudes.

Addressing these barriers requires long-term engagement and education programs in Uganda have successfully involved local religious leaders, and men's groups to challenge, harmful gender, norms, and reduce domestic and conflict related files similarly community driven initiatives in Sierra Leone after the Civil War helped reiterates survivors of sexual violence by combining legal support with community sensation, these examples show that legal reform alone is insufficient, social and cultural changes, essential for meaningful progress.

### **Health and Psychological Support for Survivors**

Health care and psychological support are essential components of survivor-centered care in conflict zones. Violence in conflict settings often results in severe physical injuries, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and long-term mental health trauma. Without access to medical care, women face preventable complications or death. For instance, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, survivors of sexual violence often cannot reach clinics due to destroyed infrastructure or ongoing hostilities.

Psychological support is equally critical. Survivors may experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and social isolation. Programs in Colombia and Sierra Leone have implemented trauma-informed counseling and community-based psychosocial support, allowing survivors to regain

agency and reintegrate into their communities. Mobile clinics, telemedicine, and local health worker training can extend services to remote or conflict-affected regions.

International cooperation ensures that these services are accessible and culturally sensitive. UNFPA, WHO, and UN Women coordinate with local NGOs to provide reproductive health services, counseling, and safe shelters. Effective support networks not only address immediate health needs but also help survivors reclaim independence, participate in decision-making, and contribute to societal recovery. Providing comprehensive health and psychological care is therefore vital for both individual and community resilience in conflict-affected areas.

## **Representation and Awareness**

Media representation plays a significant role in shaping public understanding of violence against women in conflict areas. The way conflicts are reported can either amplify survivors' voices or silence them. Responsible journalism can raise global awareness and pressure governments and international organizations to take action. However, sensationalized or insensitive reporting may reinforce harmful stereotypes and invade survivors' privacy. Social media has also become a powerful tool allowing activists and local organizations to document abuses in real time and ask for accountability. It offers a platform for advocacy and accountability increasing awareness through media coverage, public campaigns, and digital activism is therefore essential in both preventing violence and ensuring that survivors are seen, heard, and supported rather than being forgotten. Public awareness campaigns, such as UN Women's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, demonstrate the importance of visibility and community engagements by increasing representation and awareness, media and campaign, help prevent violence, support survivors, and push for systematic change.

## **Considerations for Delegates**

As delegates engage in debate, they are encouraged to prioritize realistic, implementable, and evidence-based solutions. While ambitious goals are valuable, effective resolutions should take into account existing international frameworks, available resources, and the political realities faced by Member States. Proposals should aim to strengthen cooperation between governments, international organizations, and civil society actors in order to ensure sustainable impact.

Proposals may include legislative reform training programs for law enforcement, community education, initiatives, or early warning systems for gender-based violence. Delegates should also consider cooperation between you and agencies local, and ensuring that solutions are sustainable and culturally appropriate drawing on case studies like Rwanda's post-genocide gender programs or Columbia Survivor Integration projects can strengthen proposals and make them more persuasive.

Submissions may address a wide range of approaches like prevention strategies, survivor-centered victim assistance, accountability mechanisms, and the meaningful inclusion of women in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction processes. Delegates are encouraged to consider both immediate humanitarian responses—such as access to protection, healthcare, and legal support—and long-term structural reforms, including legislative changes, institutional capacity-building, and educational initiatives that address the root causes of gender-based violence. It is essential to maintain a balanced perspective that recognizes the urgency of crisis situations while also promoting systemic change that reduces vulnerability over time. Delegates should also remain mindful of cultural and regional sensitivities when drafting policy recommendations, ensuring that solutions are adaptable, respectful, and capable of gaining broad international support. Constructive dialogue, diplomacy, and collaboration will be key in developing comprehensive strategies that advance both gender equality and international stability.

### **Economic Empowerment Of Women In Conflict Zones**

Economic vulnerability is a major factor that increases women's susceptibility to violence during conflicts. When communities face war or displacement, women often lose access to livelihoods, land, and financial resources, leaving them dependent on others for survival. This dependency can trap women in abusive environments or force them into exploitative work, such as informal labor, sex work, or trafficking. For instance, in South Sudan, women fleeing violence frequently rely on informal markets or humanitarian aid to survive, exposing them to exploitation and abuse.

Economic empowerment programs can help reduce these vulnerabilities. Microfinance initiatives, vocational training, and cash-for-work programs have been implemented in several conflict-affected countries, including Afghanistan and Rwanda, to provide women with sustainable income opportunities. These programs not only improve financial independence but also give women greater agency in decision-making, increase participation in community governance, and strengthen resilience against exploitation.

International bodies like UN Women, in collaboration with NGOs and local governments, play a vital role in designing and funding these initiatives. By providing training in entrepreneurship, agricultural skills, or digital literacy, programs can help women rebuild their communities while reducing their vulnerability to violence. Economic empowerment is therefore not only a matter of survival—it is a key step toward long-term stability, gender equality, and peacebuilding.

### **Conclusion**

Violence against women in conflict areas is not solely a gender issue; it is a fundamental challenge to international peace, security, and human rights. When women and girls are systematically exposed to violence, discrimination, and exclusion, entire communities are destabilized. Sustainable peace cannot be achieved without equality, accountability, and effective protection mechanisms for all members of society. Ensuring the safety and participation of women is therefore not optional, but essential to long-

term stability and development. Addressing this issue requires comprehensive and coordinated action at the national, regional, and international levels. Prevention strategies must focus on strengthening legal systems, combating impunity, and integrating gender perspectives into peacekeeping and humanitarian responses. At the same time, survivor-centered approaches are crucial. Access to medical care, psychological support, legal assistance, and economic reintegration programs must be prioritized to ensure that survivors are not left behind.

Through informed debate, respectful dialogue, and realistic policy proposals, this committee seeks to explore how the international community can enhance prevention mechanisms, improve protection frameworks, and promote the meaningful inclusion of women in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. Delegates are encouraged to approach this topic with sensitivity, cooperation, and a commitment to practical, sustainable solutions. By working collectively and constructively, the committee can contribute to policies that promote lasting stability, justice, and gender equality worldwide.

Addressing this issue requires both immediate and long-term strategies. Successful interventions include strong, legal frameworks survivor, centered programs, and inclusive, peace, negotiations that integrate women's perspectives examples from south Sudan, Columbia, Wanda and Syria highlight the importance of combining policy social change and community engagement delegates in this comedy are challenged to propose, realistic, culturally, sensitive, and sustainable solutions that strengthen protections for women and contribute to lasting, peace worldwide

### **Questions to Ponder**

-How can delegates make sure proposed solutions are realistic and sustainable for all Member States involved?

-How can the international community support women in conflict areas while respecting the sovereignty of each country?

-In what ways can local organizations and communities be empowered to prevent and respond to violence, and how can UN Women or other international bodies assist them effectively?

-What measures can ensure that women are meaningfully included in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction, and how does their participation affect long-term peace?

-How can accountability for perpetrators of violence be strengthened when legal and judicial systems are weak or absent?

-What does your country do about rape and sexual violence?

-How can women's participation in peace negotiations be solved?

-How can humanitarian aid efforts better address the specific needs of women and girls in displacement settings?

-What preventive measures can be implemented to reduce the risk of trafficking and exploitation during armed conflict?

-How can international cooperation be strengthened to combat gender-based violence across borders?

-What long-term structural reforms are necessary to address the root causes of violence against women in conflict areas?

-How can monitoring and reporting mechanisms be improved to ensure accountability and transparency

### **Suggested Resources**

Our topic is a tough and difficult one and we don't expect the delegates to know everything so here is a list of sources you can research from that will make your speeches better and your motions richer.

UN Women – Official Website – Provides information on programs, campaigns, and reports about gender equality and violence against women.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – Explains the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and how it protects women in conflict zones.

Human Rights Watch – Women in Conflict – Offers case studies, news, and reports on violence against women in different conflict areas.

Amnesty International – Women's Rights – Covers human rights violations against women and advocacy efforts worldwide.

UNFPA – Gender-Based Violence – Focuses on humanitarian and health-related responses to violence against women in conflict settings.

BBC News – Women in Conflict – Provides accessible news stories and updates on current conflicts affecting women globally.

The Guardian – Gender and Conflict – Features articles about women's experiences in conflict and recovery efforts around the world.

UNWOMEN Country Profiles

Human Rights Watch Annual Reports on Women in Conflict

UNFPA reports on sexual and reproductive health in conflict zones

Academic articles: Gender, Conflict and Peacebuilding

Interactive maps: UN OCHA Humanitarian data dashboards