Blog



A screenshot of the Women, Peace and Security (or WPS) Conflict Tracker (NCR screenshot)



by Chris Herlinger

View Author Profile
cherlinger@ncronline.org

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March 18, 2024
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***Editor's note**: Global Sisters Report's Monday Starter is a feature from GSR staff writers that rounds up news from or about women religious that you may otherwise have missed.*



The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security has announced a new initiative to monitor conflict from a gender perspective — a tool that could be helpful to sisters doing work in conflict areas.

The Women, Peace and Security (or WPS) Conflict Tracker will be a first-of-its kind tool and offer "gender-sensitive insight into conflict dynamics and key WPS issues for policymakers, advocates, and researchers," the Georgetown institute announced last week.

The online tracker is described as an "interactive dashboard map that combines real-time data points and original analysis for 25 countries at risk of, currently experiencing, or transitioning from armed conflict. Selected countries reflect current events while ensuring geographic coverage and diversity of conflict dynamics."

In a March 11 announcement of the initiative, made at the Carnegie Corporation of New York headquarters, the institute said that recent data indicate that "approximately 600 million women lived within 50 kilometers of armed conflict in 2022, more than double the levels in the 1990s. Research shows that women are critical to achieving sustainable peace and addressing rising global security concerns. Gender-sensitive insights into today's conflicts are critical."

"The tracker is a valuable cross-national tool to advance the mandate of the WPS Agenda, established by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)," the Georgetown group said of a 2000 UN resolution which "emphasizes the importance of women's meaningful inclusion in all aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, their protection from violence, and the prioritization of women in relief and recovery efforts."

The institute said the tracker will provide "a snapshot of key risks and opportunities for women in 25 conflict-affected countries, as well as each country's current conflict status." It will be updated monthly.

Jessica Anania, the GIWPS research fellow leading the initiative, called the tracker "the first cross-national tool for observing and analyzing global armed conflict with women at the center."

She added that the tracker "identifies key issues related to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda for policymakers, advocates, and researchers."

Future updates to the WPS Conflict Tracker will include in-depth country profiles, insights from women peacebuilders, and policy briefs, the Georgetown Institute said.

The WPS Conflict Tracker is being supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Embassy of Denmark in Washington, D.C.

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Zoom event planned on synodal consultation

The National Religious Vocation Conference and Religious Formation Conference are planning a March 20 Zoom event for vocation and formation ministers to focus on synodal consultation. The 90-minute event will begin at 6:30 p.m., Central time.

In its announcement, the vocation conference said that "the General Secretariat of the Synod is encouraging further consultation ahead of October's Second Session of the Synodal Assembly in Rome. This consultation will be focused on the question: How can we be a synodal church in mission?"

Those serving in vocation and formation ministries are encouraged to participate.

Details and a registration link are linked here.

Applications being accepted for educational debt relief

The National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations, or NFCRV, is accepting applications for grants to pay for the education debt of candidates for religious life.

The applications have to be submitted online by April 12, and only members of the National Religious Vocation Conference are eligible to apply.

Since it was founded in 2014, the NFCRV has assisted 51 candidates entering religious institutes, an announcement said. Details and application forms are available at vocationfund.org. Any questions should be directed to Phil Loftus, the NFCRV's executive director at ploftus@nfcrv.org or 312-318-0180.



The 68th annual United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women is underway in New York City. Shown is a March 13 town hall meeting of the session at the United Nations headquarters in New York. (UN/Mark Garten)

Sisters participating in annual UN women's commission

The presence of Catholic sisters is being felt during the two-week, March 11-22, United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women, now underway in New York City.

Dozens of sisters are participating as observers or as leaders and participants in various workshops related to women's empowerment.

This is the 68th annual commission, which bills itself as the largest annual international gathering on gender equality and women's empowerment.

This year's priority theme is: "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective."