Expert Voices on Atrocity Prev...ion Ep. 40_ Julie Dubé-Gagnon

Fri, Jan 31, 2025 8:42AM 44:19

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Atrocity prevention, gender analysis, sexual violence, UN investigative bodies, Myanmar, Palestine, gender dynamics, intersectional approach, victim support, accountability gap, human rights, conflict zones, gender advisor, investigative mechanisms, trauma-informed.

SPEAKERS

Julie Dubé-Gagnon, Speaker 1, Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall

S Speaker 1 00:00

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 00:08

Welcome to Expert Voices on Atrocity Prevention by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. I'm Jaclyn Streifeld-Hall, Research Director at the Global Centre.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 00:23

This podcast features one-on-one conversations with practitioners from the fields of human rights, conflict prevention and atrocity prevention. These conversations will give us a glimpse of the personal and professional side of how practitioners approach human rights protection and atrocity prevention, allowing us to explore challenges, identify best practices and share lessons learned on how we can protect populations more effectively.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 00:48

Today, I'm joined by Julie Dubé-Gagon, a Canadian jurist who works as an investigator specializing in sexual and gender-based crimes, currently working for a UN Investigative Mechanism. She has served on numerous UN investigative bodies, including those looking into violations and abuses in Myanmar, Ukraine, Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory, Burundi, Central African Republic, and others. Thank you for joining us today,Julie.

J Julie Dubé-Gagnon 01:14

Hi, Jackie, thank you very much for the invitation and congratulations for the excellent work that the Global Centre is doing.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 01:20

Thank you! Julie you are a renowned gender expert that has conducted genderspecific investigations in many atrocity crises. What does a gender expert do and what kind of resources and expertise is needed to conduct gender analysis?

J Julie Dubé-Gagnon 01:37

Thank you, Jackie, that's a bit of a complicated question, but it's a good one. Sowhile you've seen maybe most recent Human Rights Council resolutions, creating fact finding missions, and also commissions of inquiry are the UN investigative bodies. They usually have language that says that they mandate the investigative body to investigate "gender dimensions" of violations and crimes. And that was also included in the language of the of the creation of the Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which I was deployed as part of their startup team. So basically, the gender advisor has to operationalize this language. And what does it mean in practice? Well, first of all, let's explain what gender analysis is. So gender analysis examines the underlying differences and inequalities between all genders, men, women, girls, boys, people with diverse gender identities, power relationships, dynamics which determine and shape gender roles in the situation under study and also understanding also the diverse society underlying these differences and that give rise to assumption and stereotypes. And so as a gender advisor, we try to identify how violations and crimes under our mandate, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), relate to and are exacerbated by gender norms and inequalities. So ourrole also is to prevent conscious and unconscious biases in investigations. And sometimes these biases are entrenched within within the teams, within the investigators, the analysts, the lawyers working on the situation under investigation. So for example, if we're focusing on a particular gender of victims and witnesses of a particular type of crime, for example, imprisonment or torture, they're more visible. And for example, it's easier to speak to, usually men who have access to mobile phones, who have access to means to speak tointernational investigators. So we need to make sure that we also speak to the other genders that have less access to technology, and we need to adapt our methodologies to make sure that we are listening to everybody's voices. So the gender advisor also ensures that there's a gender lens and intersectional approach methodology that is applied in all phases of the investigative mechanism's work. So we can only conduct criminal and human rights investigations that fully reflect victims harm. Once we actually understand how gender impacts the way in which victims in Myanmar, for example, Palestine, Burundi, Ukraine, experience harm and how perpetrators perceive their victims during the commission of the crime and the meaning of the harms inflicted on them, and the specific gender dynamics that drive the perpetration of such harm. So perpetrators, we know this, they hit where it hurts. They hit the victim. Yes, they hit. They also affect the victims, entire community, the family, and we cannot even pretend to grasp the extent and the full spectrum of harm or the impact on the victim, if we do not apply a gender and intersectional lens during our investigations. So applying a gender and intersectional lens enables us to actually think holistically and to understand what it means to be a man, a woman, a girl, a boy, a person with a diverse gender identity. For example, in Myanmar that already has a very diverse society, and we need to understand the intersecting identities that affect this person, for example, the cultural background, the religion

that they have, education, displacement, and all sorts of other intersecting identities. The gender advisor also strives to ensure that the investigation of sexual and gender-based violence, or sexual and gender-based crimes, including reproductive violence and the gendered and intersectional dimensions of all crimes and violations are prioritized and given particular attention throughout all the investigations. That's a real challenge. This includes, more broadly, the different crimes and violations committed against women, men, boys and people with diverse gender identities and sexualities to ensure that the voices of all victims and witness are reflected in the work resources. So how do we do this? Well, we actually need a gender advisor. We need investigators, analysts, lawyers that have an expertise in gender mainstreaming, intersectional analysis, but also sexual and gender-based crimes. I would also add crimes against and affecting children, because age could be an intersecting factor, also of discrimination and targeting. We need colleagues from the country under situation. We need colleagues from Myanmar. We need colleagues from Palestine, from Burundi, from the Central African Republic, to understand also how these gender dynamics fit. And it's really nice also to have colleagues from these places that have diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds and very strong analytical skills. So colleagues from these situations under investigation are not just interpreters and translators, they're also analysts, investigators, lawyers. It's very important to have them on board. We also need the methodology to mainstream gender mainstream SGBV adopted as a policy by our leadership, because if it's not adopted and approved by leadership, it's very difficult as a gender advisor at P4 P3 level, sometimes P5 you know, really have the investigation team adhere to that methodology. So because SGBV and gender capacity need to be integrated throughout the investigative body, rather than operating in an isolated unit, it's very important for that leadership to you know, adopt and green light the methodology. For example, at the Myanmar mechanism, we've established an SGBV working group composed of investigators, lawyers, analysts, witness protection and support officers, including those with linguistic, cultural, context-specific expertise who work across all investigations. And the working group ensures that gender considerations are mainstream from the outset of all investigations. So for example, when there's an investigation plan that's being created in a certain situation, it goes through the the working group, and we make sure that, you know, there's a gender lens and intersectional lens included that SGBV is mainstream and also crimes against and affecting children.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 09:32

How did you first start becoming a gender expert?

J Julie Dubé-Gagnon 09:36

It all started 10 years ago when I joined the UN. I was firstly deployed to the Central African Republic, the peacekeeping mission there, as a human rights officer that was part of the mobile Investigation Unit. And I was deployed in field offices where that needed support and capacity to fulfill their human rightsmonitoring and investigation mandate. And I remember very clearly at the very beginning of my deployment in the CAR, in one of the investigations we were deployed to, there were girls. They were about 15-years-old, that we found in a small village, very remote village, in a bush, and they hadn't had access to any sort of protection or even medical services after the conflict of 2013 and I found these two girls who had been raped by former members of armed groups and that had difficulty walking. They were literally walking bent over. And it really made me realize that we needed a holistic approach, not only to

capture their testimony, their evidence of what had happened to them, but really also to have a holistic approach in terms of providing support to them, child protectionservices. So finally, we managed to get these two girls access medical services. They really needed to see gynecologists, actually, because of the you know, youcan still have very serious pain two years after being gang raped in a conflict situation. So for me, it was kind of out of frustration and that I became a genderadvisor, also seeing other colleagues in different places, asking villagers, asking women, raise your hand if you've been raped. You know, I've seen this. It's not invented. So I think that looking at this as a woman myself, I just became extremely interested, and I felt compelled to work with more marginalized victim groups, women, people with diverse gender identities and sexualities to make sure that their voices were heard in those human rights investigations. So I think that's how it all happened. And then I was deployed to the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi as the gender advisor, part of the JR Roster, UN Women JR roster. And then I did so many other investigations after that. So that's how it started.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 12:24

It's really incredible. I want to pick up on something you you said earlier about, you know, the importance of having, you know, local experts and people who are actually from the country and understand the context. You know, could you give an example of or some examples of what applying a gender lens looks like,and how that may vary from context to context.

J Julie Dubé-Gagnon 12:48

Yeah, another excellent question. So I'll give an example, sometimes people think that applying a gender lens me mean it means that you investigate sexualand gender-based violence. It's actually very two different things. So I explainedwhat gender analysis is, but I want to give an example here of an investigation Iwas assigned to, and there was no sexual violence to investigate, and was actually gender mainstreaming that needed to be done during the investigation. So in 2018 I was assigned as gender advisor to the Commission ofInquire on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza. The situation is completely different now, so, but back then, a few years ago, we were mandated by the Human Rights Council to investigate killings and injuries perpetrated by Israeli security forces in the context of the right to return protests at the border. So every Friday, Palestinians in Gaza would go to the border and protest for their right to return. There was no sexual violence here to investigate, but the this absence underscored the criticality of applying a gender lens. So from the outset of the investigation, we noted that men and boys were in 99% of the cases targeted by the IDF of soldiers. They were hit in the head, they were hit in the abdomen, they were hit in the legs. But where were the women and girls? Did they participate in the protests? And if they didn't participate in the protests, why? And if they did participate, how did they participate? Were they somewhere else and they were not being targeted? Or, you know, what was the situation? It really intrigued me, and we needed to speak to Palestinian women and girls to understand why, you know, these were the numbers that we were seeing. So in order to do so, we had to set up gender sensitive methodologies toreach out to them, because, again, you know, Palestine is a very patriarchal society. It's more it's easier to speak to man with smartphones that are on signal. We can, you know, speak remotely with them. But it's not so the case for women who often times have, chores in the in the home, they are the main caregivers for children, etc. So we cannot reach Palestinian women witnesses like we spoke to Palestinian men witnesses, for many reasons. So women often do not have their own smartphones, as I've mentioned, they're not afforded the

same space to meet and associate in public like men do in Palestine, we therefore worked with local grassroots organizations, women's organizations, mainly where women witnesses would normally go for services and activities. And women and girls were not direct victims of these violations, but they were still victims, and this is what needed to be reflected in our investigations to whatextent women and girls were also victims of this conflict. So women and girls would care actually for the injured or amputated male relatives. These were the ones who would wake up in the middle of the night, bring their brothers who had no more legs to the toilets. Some women lost their main breadwinner of thehousehold. So women would became female-headed-households, or suddenly became, you know, had to go out in the work phase workforce and look for jobs, because a lot of their male relatives were killed during the protest. So it really exposed also women in Palestine and other countries. This is not propertoPalestine, but when you lose your husband, you're often it is expected of you to marry your brother in law. So it exposes also women to forced marriages in acertain extent, and also to forced evictions. Because as often, when you lose your husband, sometimes you're you live with your in laws, etc. and you know you're often, some women told us that they were forced to move out. So it was really important for this particular investigation to understand the pre-existing gender discriminatory practices and norms that were exacerbated as a result ofthis conflict, and so applying a gender lens here enabled us to understand the full spectrum of harm and victimization of women and girls and the gender disproportionate impact of violations on women and girls and boys too. So maybe just to go back also to your secondary question of, how does this impact, you know, conflicts, or is, how does this differ from one situation to another? Well, I mean, the methodology is always the same, but our findings can often differ. But I'll give you an example here of Myanmar. So with the Myanmar mechanism, it's very we, we, we realized it was very important to understand that gender dynamics is particularly in a post-COVID world where we don't have access to the situation in the countries under investigation. If youlook at the Human Rights Council investigations today, very rarely do we have access to the situation under investigation, physic, physical access. So we need to respect survivors agency to speak to us remotely, or when we have access to them, when they're relocated somewhere else, and their cases need to be reported because it's therapeutic and healing. Also to deliver that testimony, weneed to look at risks from all dimensions before we engage with them, includingfrom the victims own eyes before the engagement, as mentioned, remotely and in person. For that, this is an example of how we apply a gender lens, you know,and the logistical arrangements of our interviews with our witnesses, but we ask ourselves these questions, do women or girls need to seek consent from the male head of household, you know, to take a phone speak to us on signal remotely? Do they need to get out of the house to speak to us? Do we need to arrange a safe house for them to go and speak to us? Do they need a mock reason also to leave the house, and, you know, pretend they're doing somethingelse, when really they're speaking to UN investigators? So gender discriminationpermeates everywhere, everywhere. And these are but practical examples from from the fields that we need to consider from a gender perspective. Yeah, at all,at all times.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 19:39

Thanks. You know, I think that that really highlights not just the importance of gender advisors, but also how much those of us who aren't kind of gender experts or specifically trained in this area, don't think about on a day to day basis, and don't, you know, really consider and so I think building on on that you. Can you share some misconceptions that we may have when it comes to gender-based violence and the experience of different genders in these atrocity contexts?

Julie Dubé-Gagnon 20:12

There are so many misconceptions we could have done the podcast just on this subject, but maybe a couple. There's a misconception that investigating sexual and gender-based violence or crimes means that you necessarily apply gender lines. That's that's not true. That's actually very incorrect. Gender analysis cannot be subsumed by sexual violence. They're two very different things. Gender analysis applies to all crimes and violations under investigation, murder,attacks on civilians, air strikes, torture, all violate, all violations and crimes. So toovercome this, Human Rights Council resolutions should probably, in addition toincorporate the language I mentioned before, gender dimensions of crimes and violations, use the terminology gender-based violence, or, in a way, just kind of add an explainer of what that really means, because sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence, and there's often too much emphasis on the sexual part and not necessarily on the gender base, which can amount to an international crime. So for example, when you're targeted based on your genderand other and other intersecting forms of discrimination, age, religion, political affiliation and others. Sexuality is another one. Well, this is where gender lens really enables us to capture all these, all this, you know, the harm based on these different factors that can amount to separate crimes of crimes of the crime of persecution, for example, but also other crimes. So there are more misconceptions. I mean, just this week, I spoke to a victim a witness, and she said that she had spoken to another person. She was detained with another woman she was detained with in an interrogation facility. And she said, well, this woman said that she had been interrogated, and during the interrogation, they inserted a stick in her vagina, but then she said, Oh, but she wasn't raped, and I question, then, okay, here like I'm going to just going to listen to my witness, and I'm going to ask, What do you mean by rape? And then I understand then that she meant, well, you know, rape is, is when you're forced to have sex with a man. And then she explains, and I respect that, and I respect that that's her understanding, and that she's willing to share her understanding with me. But then I also take this opportunity to explain that actually, under international law, you can be raped by an object inserted in your genitalia. So, so it was an interesting exchange, you know, I was collecting the evidence, but I wanted to make sure was collecting the evidence from the perspective of the victim of the witness. And at the same time, it was an empowering discussion, because we both, you know, we're learning. And she really appreciated that conversation. But this is just an opportunity to kind of, you know, address certain misconceptions that can impact the narrative of victim testimony.

Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 23:50

That's that's really such a great example of that kind of space between our personal understanding, our personal context, and international law. Over the years, the HRC has ensured a much more systematic inclusion of this gender lens when establishing and renewing investigations, I would say, especially in the last you know, half decade or even decade, we've seen it expand much more. How would you assess the current accountability landscape with regards to intersectional gender analysis?

Julie Dubé-Gagnon 24:30

Yeah, that's a very, also good question that we could also just spent the entire hour on the podcast talking about it. I think that there's an amelioration, just basically also because we're

seeing more and more language from Human Rights Council resolutions asking the investigative body to look at gender dimensions of violations and crime. So I think that the language is there now. The problem is with allocating appropriate resources for us to. Actually deliver on the mandate. So in that sense, more can be done. So we need to be given the resources to properly deliver. So when I mean resources, of course, I mean, and I'm not just simply advocating here for my job, but I mean, of course I would advocate, you know, continue funding positions ofthe gender advisor, SGBV investigators and analysts, but also witness support officers. So in my 10 years of experience investigating gender dimensions of crimes and also SGBV, I can say that it is quite impossible to adequately do this job and apply a victim centered approach and a trauma informed approach, if we don't closely work with counselors, with psychosocial support service providers that are able to accompany our survivors and victims throughout the interview process, throughout all interactions with the investigative body before any engagement during and after. I'm just going to give you one example why this is so important. One survivor that I spoke to with my team a few months ago was just starting to narrate her experience of arrests and detention, and during just a brief like two hours of her describing what had happened to her during her arrest, an initial one hour of her detention, she had been raped twice. She had been raped twice in multiple ways, from all possible openings of her body. So sorry, this is very graphic, but this had a you know, and then she was enslaved for about a month by that same, those same perpetrators, and held as a sex slave for numerous weeks while she was five months pregnant. So this has had on her many, many, many health consequences, and also mental health consequences. So we had to pause the interview, the witness interview, to makesure that her needs were met, that her medical and psychosocial needs were met. And I think that it is even more distressing for victim or witness to continue to narrate and deliver their testimony if we don't have a duty of care to provide the support that is needed for appropriate healing. So of course, there's no longterm referrals that we could do what we can pay for, but it is also our job to to have access to these service providers and these you know that are delivering extremely important services, so I think that okay, give us the mandate to investigate gender dimensions. Give us the mandate to investigate sexual and gender-based violence, but also it is important to provide means for the support to be given to victims and survivors. Otherwise, we're just extractinginformation and evidence and we're creating more harm. So I you know so some oftentimes as an investigator doing these things, the first thing that we doas gender advisors is mapping out the service providers that can offer these these services, otherwise, your job is extremely difficult, and member states need to understand that. Member state needs to understand that we cannot conduct effective sexual and gender-based crimes and gender analysis of other crimes and violations unless there is appropriate support.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 29:02

I really appreciate your use of the word extractive there, because I do feel like alot of times, you know, our our exercises to try and help people also can be very extractive. You know, from investigations to even, you know, asking for witness testimony in the HRC or Security Council, andit leaves victims and survivors feeling very used at times and re-traumatized. And so the the care that you're putting into this is, I'm sure, very much appreciated by the populations you're interacting with. And I'm going to go kind of a step beyond just the resourcing questions, and say that you know, we know that the creation of these mechanisms and the information you're collecting and reporting on should not be an end in and of itself, but rather the beginning of kind of a longer series of multilateral steps to respond to atrocity situations. Do you think UN member states are doing enough with the vast reporting and evidence collected by fact finding missions and other investigative bodies?

Julie Dubé-Gagnon 30:10

Yeah, I think more can be done. I think more can be I mean, I've already talked about all the support and the, you know, the service providers that need to be funded. But it's one thing for us to collect the evidence and collect the information, and you know, also on perpetrators build those case files. But eventually, you know, member states need to open the pathway to universal jurisdiction and actually trigger their jurisdiction to open investigations and to hold perpetrators to account or refer and push the Security Council for referrals to the ICC because, I mean, the evidence is there. We're ready to share it. We want it to be used in a judicial accountability mechanism or tribunal or court. I think that that's really a gap, an accountability gap at this time, and could be the next step that member states could really push for. I think that internationallaw and accountability for atrocity crimes at this time is really under great threat. Anyway, I'm not going to go into politics here, but I think member states need to continue also funding grassroots women's organizations, LGBTQI+ organizations that not only provide services, but also do documentation. They're often the first responders to a crime scene in countries where we don't have access to as UN investigators. So they're they're the first responders, and they need to be supported. They need to be funded, because eventually they also send us their documentation that is could be also eventually used as evidence that we collect and that we use in our in our findings. Yeah, I'm going to stop here, because otherwise I get a bit emotional, but I also think that it's important to continue funding dedicated posts, including at the startup phases of these investigations. So often, when those investigations are mandated by the Human Rights Council, it takes several months to have them set up. So,JR and UN Women have been really, really good to deploy rapidly a gender advisor from the outset, from the very, very start of the investigation. And I thinkthat is very good practice that needs to continue being funded and supported. But I also think that member states could also potentially, allow a different investigative bodies to work on common methodologies and common policies and make those public and have; there needs to be a bit more transparency on how we do things, so people would trust us more. So I think there needs, I mean there could be some more engagement here from from UN member states,

Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 33:08

Reflecting back on your work with different investigative mechanisms, how do you think about their impact and success in shedding light on atrocity crimes, acknowledging the suffering of victims and contributing to holistic accountability processes? You know, to what degree are these tools assisting the people they are intended to support?

Julie Dubé-Gagnon 33:28

I'm gonna give you one example. So I think that there's been impact, there's been successes, but I'm also realistic. You know, I would like to see more perpetrators held to account and, you know, investigated and before courts andtribunals. But that's not, I mean, that's one part of accountability. That's criminal accountability. So as you mentioned, there are different facets to accountability. The Fact Finding Mission in Myanmar in 2018 we produced a 444 page report. It was the first time in the history of Myanmar, we had in one singledocument, an archive of the types of human rights violations amounting, oftentimes to international crimes that have been

committed in Myanmar all over, almost all over Myanmar, since 2011 so having that information in one place, creating an archive creating truth and memory and a place where victims and survivors can go to and say, that's what happened in my village, this is what happened. And there's a name to what they did to us. It's called, I don't know, crimes against humanity, or it's called an attack on civilian area or whatnot. So it gives them respect and recognition, and that is also extremely important. And also in those type when the UN investigative body has a reporting mandate, so makes public their findings and recommendations, I think that it has an impact to the sense in the sense that, for example. On Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar, we recommended the creation of the Independent, Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar to now look at the vast amount of evidence amassed by the Fact Finding Mission from a human rights perspective with the human rights methodology, and now convert that into criminal investigation and case files against those responsible for the commission of those crimes. So I think that that's clear example of an impact and success. Another success I would like to highlight is that following that report from the Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar, it led to historic proceedings before the ICJ, the International Court of Justice, where the Gambia took the lead and instituted a proceeding against Myanmar for violations of the Convention on Genocide. So basically, our report was the basis of the argument,almost all arguments put forward by The Gambia. So it was, it's extremely rewarding to see that the impact of our investigations, the findings, our public reporting, our recommendations, are actually implemented. But also, I mean, I'm just going to go, that's just one facet, right? But people, when you speak to victims, when you speak to survivors, they just, they just want to go back home. They want to go back to their normal lives. They want to go back to their village. They want to go back to their house that was destroyed, and they want to live a normal life in peace. So our recommendations, our findings, are also hopefully enabling change and political stability and a right to return to these survivors and victims to their to where they belong.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 36:50

I think that's a it's a great example, because, you know, Myanmar has so many mechanisms now, and so many different processes between the FFM, the IIMM, and the court case, you know, and it really shows how everything feeds into oneanother. They're not just independent actors. And I think it also your expertise and your kind of inside experience with this, you know, speaks to the value of these mechanisms in a way that you know, maybe even the member states whohelped create them don't fully understand the full extent of. You know, to close, you've shared a lot of of different examples and stories throughout this conversation, and I know that this work is is very challenging, you know, as someone who works in atrocity prevention and doesn't have as much field experience as you you know, be nice to be able to compartmentalize our lives. And have you know this is this is my day to day, and here's all of my my work experiences, but I also know that's very hard. So do you have any particular memories or experiences from your work that had a profound impact on you and how you view the significance of gender investigations and achieving accountability.

J Julie Dubé-Gagnon 38:08

Yes, I have many examples. I think that I remember every single person I interview, every single survivor I interact with, and I'm impacted by every story I hear. I think now, over 10 years, I've probably conducted, I don't know, like 1000 witness interviews. I don't know, don't

count, but, you know, maybe close to thatnumber. I remember their faces. I remember what happened to them. So of course, I myself as a human I'm changed by these stories. But I think that I remember. I'll just give a few examples of things that you know, triggered how I look at gender sensitive investigations differently because of these interactions I've had with a couple of witnesses. But in one of the investigations I was assigned to, I was interviewing a former member of the military who had retiredand had relocated to a third country, and he had done his military training with one of the main perpetrators that were looking for. So we had a lot of questionsfor him and so, and one of the questions we asked So, did you see this individual like the main preparator we're looking for? And anyway, so the information was leading us to more understand the command structures and the close net around that military figure. And then there was one detail our witness didn't remember, and he just in the middle of interview, he took his phone and he called his wife. He called his wife because he didn't remember thename, or didn't remember, you know, the date it was, or something. And in my mind, I was thinking, of course, the wives, the wives remember, why are we spending so much time to speak to these men, insider witnesses, when really. We should be, we should be interviewing their wives. Their wives. Remember where their husbands were deployed, in which military camp, in which unit, who was the commander, who they were forced to have dinner with, and that how horrible the commander's wife was. But you know, we could also be investigating commanders wives if they're criminally responsible, or if they've incorporated companies under their name and they're fueling the conflict because of all the money it's generating. So I had all these ideas just popping inmy head after this, witness had just took his phone and called up his wife askingfor a little detail. So after this interview, actually, we came back and we started interviewing insider witnesses, wives and we also started interviewing women, insider witnesses, women who had left these armed groups and that had a very different side of the story to share, an extremely valuable evidence to bring to the table. So this is like one example of, you know, conscious and unconscious gender biases that we have it with an arrow on investigation and how we need to break them so we actually have access to this evidence that is sometimes really surprising and quite amazing. Another example I can give, and I will stop here, but in the Burundi investigation. So the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, I remember, I was in the DRC in a refugee camp interviewing victims and survivors, and there was this one girl that came with her little toddler in that school that we had taken over for the interviews, and the little kid was like running all over the place, and he was being quite naughty and putting his diaper over his head and whatnot. And I thought, Oh, he's so cute. Anyway. So it turns out that the his mother, so the witness I was interviewing, had been raped multiple times when she had tried to, well, actually, because her brother had joined the opposition, the political opposition in Burundi, and she was found the interim with the militia came to her house to look for her brother, andactually she was gang raped multiple times, and the baby that was with her therefugee camp was actually a baby, you know, that came about as a result of those rapes. So moving forward myself as an investigator, I always ensured thatevery woman, every girl that came with a child, had childcare arranged for her, because you would be surprised of what comes up in a witness interview. You would be surprised of and you need to be make the witness comfortable, you know. So for me, as I was probably kind of young and experienced, but for me, this was a life changing, you know, moment for me as a SGBV investigator and gender advisor, that you always need to come prepared. You always need to come prepared. Because you know you never know what information can comeout. And for you know a baby born of rape, that you're actually investigated. And it was a beautiful also a demonstration of love. You know that she she loved her baby. He was, was so adorable and whatnot. So it's also a misconception to think that women who get impregnated as a result of rape don't love their children. So for me, that was also a moment that really impacted the rest of my career.

J Jaclyn Streitfeld-Hall 43:45

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