

5

Where to next?

Designing peacebuilding responses

In Saferworld's 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perspectives on men through a gender lens' report (2014), we summarised lessons learnt on effective approaches to challenging attitudes towards masculinity from programmes across the world. Most of this focused on issues such as GBV, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and fatherhood.¹ We also presented some initial analysis on how practitioners might go about adapting those approaches for addressing gender norms that drive conflict, including how it might relate to processes such as security sector reform and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. The report also emphasises the need to avoid colonial narratives which problematise gender norms in conflict-affected regions in the Global South without also acknowledging the role of external factors – including international systems and interventions, which can also promote and perpetuate harmful gender norms – in causing conflict in those contexts.²

More work and piloting of different approaches is needed to understand how best to go about changing social norms, including those relating to gender. However, the report does give some positive examples from organisations already doing this type of work.

What kind of peace?

Deciding how to address gender norms which are driving conflict and insecurity raises big questions about what 'peace' means and what part gender plays in that.

Peacebuilders promoting a vision of 'positive peace' argue that gender equality is an integral part of peace. That is, 'positive peace' is not only an absence of war or violence, but the presence of active processes for addressing injustices and solving conflicts non-violently. On this understanding, challenging gender norms which fuel insecurity and injustice is essential not only to ending violent conflicts, but also to promoting a more positive vision of peace. However, what kind of gender equality would best support this is a matter of heated debate.

For example, many projects which aim to challenge harmful masculinities frame their work as part of efforts to promote more 'positive masculinities', usually meaning those that emphasise equality and non-violence. But many would argue that the very notions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', which impose different norms on people of different genders, create inequalities and injustices.³ Following this line of thinking, peacebuilding efforts would reject the idea of replacing one version of masculinity or femininity with another, and instead seek to break down the distinction between masculinity and femininity altogether, and promote positive norms for everyone, which are not linked to gender. Others argue that this is impossible: that gender is an inevitable feature of societies, but that it can simply be an aspect of people's personal identities which is not linked to power and inequality.⁴

This toolkit does not take a position on this debate, but highlights these different perspectives in order to illustrate that careful thinking is needed when deciding how to act on the findings of your analysis.

For example, women peace activists in many contexts have noted that women are often assumed to be naturally peace-loving. Rather than challenging this feminine norm, some activists have used it strategically as a way to persuade authorities that women should have a greater role in peace processes. At the same time, others have argued that the same set of stereotypes which portray women as peace-loving, weak or submissive have often been used to justify women's exclusion from positions of power.⁵

They therefore argue that the association between femininity and peace should not be reinforced: rather, new norms should be developed which position peacefulness as valuable for everyone, regardless of gender.

In cases such as this, where a particular norm has been identified which may contribute to peace, a decision needs to be made about whether to promote that norm as one which should be understood as an aspect of masculinity or femininity, or whether the goal is to break down the distinction between masculinity and femininity altogether. In doing so, it is important to consider not only what reinforcing this norm would mean for conflict and peacebuilding, but also what implications it would have for the lives of women, men and SGMs.

Further resources

Gender and conflict – additional reading

- Cockburn C (2013), 'War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues' in *Gender and Development* 21 (3)
- Cockburn C (2001), 'The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence' in Moser and Clark (eds), *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, (London: Zed Books)
- Cockburn C (2010), 'Gender relations as causal in militarization and war' in *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 12 (2), pp 139–157
- Cohn C (1993), 'Wars, wimps and women: talking gender and thinking war' in Cooke and Woollacott (eds) *Gendering war talk*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press)
- Cohn C and Enloe C (2003), 'A conversation with Cynthia Enloe: Feminists look at masculinity and the men who wage war' in *Signs*, 28 (4), pp 1187–1207
- Connell R (2002), 'Masculinities, the reduction of violence and the pursuit of peace' in Cockburn C, Zarkov D (eds), *The Postwar Moment: Militarities, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping* (London: Lawrence and Wishart)
- Duncanson C (2013), *Forces for good? Military masculinities and peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)
- Duncanson C (2016), *Gender and Peacebuilding*, (Cambridge: Polity Press)
- Ekvall A (2013), 'Norms on Gender Equality and Violent Conflict', article, E-International Relations, www.e-ir.info/2013/06/10/norms-on-gender-equality-and-violent-conflict
- El-Bushra J, Sahl I (2005), 'Cycles of violence: Gender relations and armed conflict', (Nairobi: ACCORD)
- Enloe C (2016), *Globalization and militarism: Feminists make the link*, second edition, (London: Rowman and Littlefield)
- Herbert S (2014), 'Links between women's empowerment (or lack of) and outbreaks of violent conflict', GSDRC Helpdesk report 1170, available at www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq1170.pdf

- Hutchings K (2008), 'Cognitive short cuts' in Parpart and Zalewski (eds), *Rethinking the man question: Sex, gender and violence in international relations*, (London: Zed Books)
- Myrntinen H, Naujoks J, El-Bushra J (2014), 'Rethinking gender in peacebuilding', available at http://international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Gender_RethinkingGenderPeacebuilding_EN_2014.pdf
- Peterson V S (2013), 'Gendering Insecurities, Informalization, and "War Economies"' in Tripp, Ferree and Ewig (eds), *Gender, Violence, and Human Security: Critical Feminist Perspectives*, (New York: NYU Press)
- Strachan A L, Haider H (2015), 'Gender and conflict: Topic guide' available at www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/gender_conflict.pdf
- Theidon K (2009), 'Reconstructing masculinities: The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants in Colombia', in *Human Rights Quarterly* 31
- Women Peacemakers Program (2014), 'Gender and militarism: Analysing the links to strategise for peace', available at <https://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/assets/CMS/May-24-gender-/May-Pack-2014-web.pdf>
- Wright H (2014), 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: perspectives on men through a gender lens', available at www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/862-masculinities-conflict-and-peacebuilding-perspectives-on-men-through-a-gender-lens

Analysis and research tools

- Anderlini S N (2006), 'Mainstreaming gender in conflict analysis: Issues and recommendations', (Social Development Papers No. 33)
- Conciliation Resources (2015), *Gender and Conflict analysis toolkit for peacebuilders*, available at www.c-r.org/resources/gender-and-conflict-analysis-toolkit-peacebuilders
- Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (2004), *Conflict-sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack. Chapter 2 – Conflict Analysis* – www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/148-conflict-sensitive-approaches-to-development-humanitarian-assistance-and-peacebuilding
- Fisher S, Ludin J, Williams S, Williams S, Abdi D, Smith R (2000), *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*, Zed books in Association with Responding to Conflict

- ICAN (2015), The Better Peace Tool, www.betterpeacetool.org/
- KOFF and Swisspeace (2012), 'Gender Analysis of Conflict Handout', available at http://koff.swisspeace.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/koff/Publications/GENDERAnalysis_of_Conflic_Handout.pdf
- Moser A (2007), 'The Peace and Conflict Gender Analysis: UNIFEM's research in the Solomon Islands', in *Gender and Development* 15 (2): pp 231–239.
- Participatory methods – online resource: www.participatorymethods.org
- Peacebag for Euromed Youth, *Conflict Analysis – Key concepts, models and tools* – <http://peacebag.org/articles/toolkit-p4-conflictanaly.html>
- Reimann C (2013), *Trainer Manual: Mainstreaming Gender into Peacebuilding Training*, Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) & Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).
- Scott-Villiers P, Scott-Villiers A, Wilson S, (2012) 'Action Research: how a group of young people did it in Napak and Moroto in Karamoja, Uganda', available at <http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/strength-creativity-and-livelihoods-of-karimojong-youth-method-paper-low-pdf>
- Sudhakar N, Kuehnast K (2011), 'The other side of gender: Including masculinity concerns in conflict and peacebuilding', United States Institute of Peace.
- United Nations Development Programme (2006), 'Can Conflict Analysis Processes Support Gendered Visions of Peacebuilding? Reflections from the Peace and Stability Development Analysis in Fiji'
- United Nations Development Programme (2007), 'Working Guidelines: Gender and Conflict-related Development Analysis (CDA)', a draft UNDP document.
- UN Women (2012), 'Gender and Conflict Analysis', available at www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Media/Publications/en/04AGenderandConflictAnalysis.pdf

NOTES

- 1 See chapter 2 of *op cit* Saferworld (2014).
- 2 *Ibid.* chapter 3.
- 3 See, for example, Lorber J (2005), *Breaking the bowls: Degendering and feminist change*, (London: WW Norton & Co); Gillett G (2014), 'We shouldn't fight for "gender equality" . We should fight to abolish gender', *New Statesman*, 2 October, www.newstatesman.com/society/2014/10/we-shouldn-t-fight-gender-equality-we-should-fight-abolish-gender
- 4 E.g. Berlatsky N (2015), 'Should we really do away with gender?', *Ravishly*, 30 April, www.ravishly.com/2015/04/30/should-we-really-do-away-gender/; for more on this debate see Connell R W (1995), *Masculinities*, second edition, (Cambridge: Polity Press), chapter 10.
- 5 Tickner A (1992), *Gender in international relations: Feminist perspectives on achieving global security*, (New York: Columbia University Press), p 59; Duncanson C (2016), *Gender and peacebuilding*, (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp 52–54.