

Men, Masculinities and UNSCR 1325 / WPS agenda
Summary of recommendations

This document by the [MenEngage Alliance](#) brings together the recommendations from some key publications addressing the roles of men, and transforming violent/hegemonic masculinities with the women, peace and security agenda.

Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: perspectives on men through a gender lens

SaferWorld, November 2014. Author: Hannah Wright

www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/862-masculinities-conflict-and-peacebuilding-perspectives-on-men-through-a-gender-lens

Research tells us that socially constructed gender norms which associate masculinity with power, violence and control can play a role in driving conflict and insecurity. Examining the reasons behind this, 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding' aims to advance discussions about integrating a masculinities perspective into peacebuilding policy and practice. It examines existing INGO programmes that promote non-violent and gender equitable masculinities and poses key questions about how these can be further developed to challenge the gender norms which drive conflict and insecurity.

Recommendations to key actors, including:

- Examine gender perspectives during conflict analysis, looking at men and boys from a gender viewpoint;
- Develop theories of change and pilot programming approaches that begin challenging masculine gender norms;
- Mainstream a masculinities perspective in international security and development interventions, examining how activities are influencing masculinities;
- Advance the women, peace and security agenda, as efforts to promote and realise women's rights and efforts to break the links between gender norms and violence should be mutually reinforcing.

Incorporating a Masculinities Perspective in UNSCR 1325 Implementation

Policy brief, Women Peacemakers Program (WPP).

www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/assets/CMS/Resources/Reports/Policy-Brief-Masculinities.pdf

Recommendations:

- The lack of including a broader gender perspective - incl. masculinities - in WPS policies and NAPs contributes to instrumentalist implementation approaches, with a predominant focus on women as victims or 'add-ons', without linking this to a broader picture. Many UNSCR 1325 initiatives are just 'scratching the surface', failing to address the deeply patriarchal conflict roots and practices; such as exploitative neo-liberal socio-economic policies and states' investments in the military industrial complex rather than in an inclusive labor market, education and healthcare systems accessible to all. **A holistic and transformative WPS approach requires addressing the human security issues that the majority of the population faces, and which women/feminists often bring to the table.**
- Violent notions of masculinities are at the core of armed conflict and militarism. **Integrating a masculinities perspective in the WPS agenda helps to uncover the gendered roots of armed conflict, and to redefine peace and security from a holistic gender perspective.** As such, BPfA components – the importance of investing in conflict prevention and nonviolent conflict

resolution; disarmament; the prevention of policies of aggression; and diverting excessive military expenditures to social development - can be reclaimed and integrated in WPS implementation.

- **When integrating masculinities into the WPS agenda, it is important to do this from a feminist perspective.** Working on masculinities is going beyond 'working with men' – it is about changing patriarchal mindsets and addressing the need for structural and institutional change. Including men in the WPS agenda carries a huge potential for creating more peaceful and gender just societies, but it can also easily become instrumentalized, generating programmatic approaches that merely focus on treating the symptoms (treating men's war traumas/ increasing discipline amongst the troops to reduce the occurrence of sexual violence and exploitation, etc.) without addressing the roots (patriarchal power and privilege). As such, there is a risk that the work becomes completely disconnected from the women's movement and feminist analysis, and only generates a slightly "friendlier" form of patriarchy – without men giving up space, power, and privilege. In this regard, the **concept of "women and men as partners"** is important during the implementation process - in terms of both role modeling as well as ensuring accountability to the women's movement. The partnership approach should therefore be integrated in all stages - from analysis, development, implementation to evaluation of impact stage.
- It is important to link the topic of masculinities to the WPS agenda, but to **still recognize women's need for their own spaces by investing in a two-track strategy.** Women's groups are concerned that working on masculinities might divert the limited funds available for women's rights and peace work to men's projects. It is therefore important to monitor that a broader gender approach to WPS does not harm women's ambitions, space, and organizing.
- Addressing militarism starts by exposing its gendered dimensions and related human costs, as well as **investing in alternative conflict resolution methods.** Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolence offers a comprehensive framework of analysis and tools to analyze and address conflict.
- There are no shortcuts; paradigm shifts take time. **Social change is a long-term process, and hence requires donors that are willing to invest in new and groundbreaking approaches** that are looking into transforming our peace and security paradigm altogether, which requires a long-term commitment.

Conflict, security and peace-building

In: *Engendering Men - A Collaborative Review of Evidence on Men and Boys in Social Change and Gender Equality Edited*, by Jerker Edström, Alexa Hassink, Thea Shahrokh and Erin Stern - Evidence Report, September 2015

<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/7059/EMERGE.pdf?sequence=1#page=140>

Programmatic recommendations for interventions:

- Programmes that engage men and boys in initiatives for women and girls should be created thoughtfully so that they do not inadvertently exacerbate trauma or harmful norms. These programmes should provide safe spaces for men to heal, but also to educate, raise awareness and build skills to restore men's and women's physical health, bring perpetrators of abuses to justice, change social norms, rebuild families and provide opportunities for jobs and economic growth (Kaufman 2012).
- It is essential that engaging men and boys in post-conflict restoration programming happens in a context where men's needs are not being juxtaposed against the needs of women and girls, who are generally in the most vulnerable positions. Spaces must exist where women and girls feel safe and have their own health and support needs provided for, including immediate access to critical

services, psychosocial and mental health support, post-rape care, access to safe abortion, police protection and legal aid (United Nations 2014).

- As men hold the majority of positions of political and economic influence, those in roles of peacekeepers, police, soldiers, aid workers, and government officials can play key roles in ensuring access to services for women and men post-conflict (including medical services and psychosocial support services), as well as access to justice and plans for restoration (Kaufman 2012).
- As well as shorter-term services, longer-term engagement in post-conflict settings may include men's positive involvement in women's economic empowerment programming, campaigns and programmes to encourage men's caregiving and alleviate the inequitable burden of care on women, and transformative programming for adolescent boys and girls, designed to question traditional or harmful norms (Kaufman 2012).
- Important directions in programming include: continued, tailored mental health support for those (including children and adults) who have experienced conflict, life skills training (interpersonal communications, relationship skills, conflict management, etc.), and addressing and providing alternative definitions of masculinity, particularly for excombatants (LOGiCA and Promundo 2014).

Action research *"Candid Voices from the Field: Obstacles to the Practical Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security"*

With discussion on the reframing of the WPS agenda beyond the UNSCR 1325 framework to deliver transformative change, by GPPAC, Cordaid and WPP.

<https://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/assets/CMS/Action-Research/WPP-15-01-WPP-publicatie-LRPages.pdf>

Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace

<http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf>

An exhaustive global study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by several UN agencies. It offers candid assessments about where implementation has fallen short and recommendations about where future efforts should focus. It includes recommendations on prevention and important attention to root causes:

A new way of looking at conflict prevention is critical, the study argues – specifically, “an attitudinal shift is needed away from a primary focus on military responses, towards investment in peaceful conflict prevention strategies” – and within that, attention to the “root causes and structural drivers of conflict, such as exclusion, discrimination, attacks on dignity and structural inequality.”

Its recommendations concerning the engagement of men and boys and the transformation of masculinities:

- “Member States, the UN and civil society should provide financial, technical and political support to encourage educational and leadership training for men, women, boys and girls, which reinforces and supports non-violent, non-militarized expressions of masculinity.” (p. 214)
- “UN and Member States should engage men and boys to strengthen gender equality within DDR and SSR (Demobilization and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform) processes, and prevent and respond to human rights violations, including sexual abuse.” (p. 405)