As the curfew is lifted for a few hours, an Israeli soldier hands back a toy soldier and a gun to a Palestinian boy at a checkpoint in the West Bank city of Hebron, 17 January 2003.
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MASCULINITIES AND PEACEBUILDING: A POLICY AND PROGRAMMING AGENDA

All around the world, men are the primary perpetrators of violence, making up 95 per cent of people convicted of homicide, as well as being the majority of combatants in conflicts.[1] In most cultures, violence is associated with men and boys in a way that it is not associated with women and girls. Interrogating the reasons behind this trend, this report does not argue that men are *naturally* violent. Rather, socially constructed gender norms often associate masculinity with power, violence, and control. Such notions of masculinity can play a role in driving conflict and insecurity.

Where this is the case, Saferworld suggests that peacebuilding efforts can and should address this by taking steps to promote notions of masculinity which favour non-violence and gender equality. A number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have developed programming approaches for engaging men and boys to promote gender equality and non-violence, which have made demonstrable impacts on the lives of men and women. International donors, policymakers and NGOs should consider how such approaches can be developed to help build peace.

INSIDE

- How violent notions of masculinity can drive and perpetuate conflict and insecurity

- How NGO programmes are working to transform attitudes towards masculinity

- Key considerations for including masculinities in peacebuilding efforts

- Case studies from Colombia, Kosovo, South Sudan, Somalia, and Sudan

GENDER-SENSITIVE PEACEBUILDING: THINKING ABOUT MEN AND MASCULINITIES

The need to apply a gender perspective to all efforts to prevent conflict and build peace is increasingly recognised. 'Taking a gender perspective' is often assumed to mean highlighting the roles, needs, and rights of women and girls – vital to addressing persistent gender inequalities in access to influence, resources, security, and justice. However, truly taking a gender perspective also requires critical examination of the roles and experiences of men and boys in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

A call to focus attention on men may at first seem surprising. After all, the presence and influence of men is ubiquitous in conflict and in peace processes: they make up the majority of military and political leaders, diplomats, negotiators, mediators, and media figures. Yet in the field of peacebuilding the attitudes, values, and behaviours of men are rarely considered from a gender perspective, leaving the socially constructed gender roles and identities of men and boys underexamined.

There have been some moves in recent years to bring masculinities under the spotlight in policy debates on women, peace and security. For example, the outcomes from the 2014 Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict noted agreement on the need to "challenge… notions of masculine identity as it affects sexual violence".[2] Yet attention to the relationship between masculinities and conflict – including forms of violence which are not usually thought of as 'gender-based' – has not become part of mainstream thinking on peace and security.[3]

This policy briefing summarises the key findings and recommendations of a longer research report, 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perspectives on men through a gender lens'. Taken together, these publications aim to move forward discussions about integrating a masculinities perspective into peacebuilding policy and practice by surveying the current state of play and posing key questions about how peacebuilders can meaningfully challenge gender norms which create and perpetuate conflict and insecurity. Saferworld hopes that this briefing and the accompanying report will provide a useful opportunity for donors, policymakers, civil society organisations, and academics to consider the implications of current knowledge about masculinities and conflict for their work.

As part of Saferworld's research on notions of masculinity in Eastern Nepal, local boys in Sunsari were asked to make figures from plasticine showing what they think makes an 'ideal man'.
© JULIE BRETHFELD/SAFERWORLD

# GENDER NORMS AS DRIVERS OF CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

What are 'masculinities'?

In all cultures, people have strongly held beliefs about the kinds of behaviours, attributes, and values that are most appropriate for men and those that are most appropriate for women, which are learned from a young age. The term 'masculinity' simply refers to anything which is associated with men and boys in any given culture, just as 'femininity' refers to that which is culturally associated with women and girls. Ideas about what is masculine and what is feminine vary over time, as well as within and between cultures, creating many different possible versions of masculinity – hence the term 'masculinities'. Expectations of manhood are also influenced by ideas about race, ethnicity, class, (dis)ability, and other sources of identity.

There are often differences between how men experience and envision their own masculinities and the ideals of masculinity which their societies expect them to live up to. Masculinity is usually seen not as something which men and boys automatically possess but as something to be achieved by acting in accordance with these ideals. In many contexts this may include, for example, being independent, a provider for the family, courageous, aggressive, competitive, and hiding signs of emotion or sensitivity – all characteristics which are linked to achieving and wielding power. Men who do not or cannot conform to societal expectations of masculinity may pay a high social price.

Masculinities and conflict dynamics

Research from a range of conflict-affected contexts shows how gender roles – and patriarchal notions of masculinity in particular – can fuel conflict and insecurity. Militarised notions of masculinity, which valorise domination and violence, can motivate men to participate in violence and motivate women to support them or pressure them to do so. The box on the right highlights the example of cattle raiding in South Sudan and its link to masculinity, rites of passage, and the bride price system.
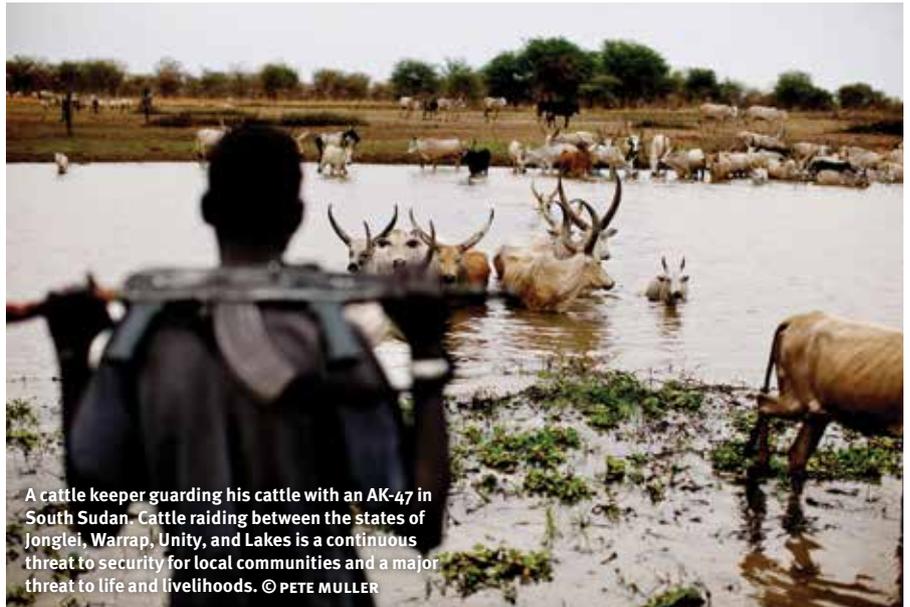
A cattle keeper guarding his cattle with an AK-47 in South Sudan. Cattle raiding between the states of Jonglei, Warrap, Unity, and Lakes is a continuous threat to security for local communities and a major threat to life and livelihoods. © PETE MULLER

MASCULINITY, CATTLE RAIDING AND VIOLENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN

In many parts of South Sudan, violence within and between communities is fuelled by cattle raiding. The increased availability of small arms in recent years has made cattle raids more deadly, often sparking revenge attacks and provoking cycles of violence which can leave hundreds of people injured or dead. Food insecurity, water scarcity, widespread unemployment, the availability of weapons, and the absence of effective security forces all play a role in perpetuating this cycle.

Gender norms are also deeply implicated in the practice of cattle raiding. Owning a gun and participating in a cattle raid are rites of passage for adolescent boys, and for men these are symbols of manhood and virility which confer social status.[4] While it is men who carry out the raids, women can also be instrumental in reinforcing the association between masculinity and cattle raiding. For example, in many parts of South Sudan, women sing songs to shame men who have not gone on a cattle raid or who have failed to bring back cattle, and songs of praise for those who are successful.[5]

This connection between masculinity and cattle in pastoral communities is also underpinned by the bride price system, in which a young man is expected to pay his prospective bride's family in cattle before the couple is able to get married. An unpublished 2011 UN report stated that bride prices had increased by 44 per cent since 2005, making it increasingly difficult for many young men to get married.[6] In some cases, young men take brides either by consent or by force without having paid the full price expected by the bride's family, which can result in revenge attacks. In South Sudanese society, young males are not considered to be 'men' until they are married. In pastoral communities cattle raiding, therefore, provides a means by which some young men can obtain enough cattle to pay the bride price and achieve manhood in the eyes of their communities.[7] Masculinity, weapons, cattle, and marriage are therefore closely linked, combining to create powerful incentives for young men to participate in violence.

A Kosovo Liberation Army soldier displays the tail
assembly of a Serbian missile in Rezala village,
22 August 1998. © RADU SIGHETI/REUTERS

MILITARISED MASCULINITIES AND WAR IN KOSOVO

In Kosovo in the 1980s and '90s both Serbian and Albanian nationalist discourses drew on national myths about masculinity to mobilise support for the war. Yugoslav state-run and Serbian media portrayed Serbia's national identity of toughness, dominance, and heroism as being emasculated by Kosovo's Albanian population. They offered militarism "as a way of winning back both individual manliness and national dignity", which played a role in "making war thinkable – even attractive".[8] Meanwhile, Kosovar Albanian nationalists invoked national myths and histories applauding dominant masculine men as freedom fighters, while the Kosovo Liberation Army spread the message that men who refused to join up were "like girls".[9] Clearly, a large range of factors drove conflict and violence in Kosovo in the 1990s, but manipulation of existing stereotypes of masculinity appear to have been an important tool for ensuring support for and participation in violence.[10]

Dominant notions of masculinity often look different during conflict than they do during peacetime, often closely linking being a man with being a combatant. Men may come under pressure to support military action, to take up arms, fight, kill, and be willing to die for their nation or community. In situations of prolonged conflict, the use and acceptance of violence often becomes normalised.[11] Expressions of masculinity which were valued during peacetime, such as being a breadwinner for one's family, are often much harder to achieve in conflict-affected societies.

Masculinities as mobilising tools

In some contexts, political and military actors may deliberately promote violent notions of masculinity in order to recruit and train combatants and build support for war.

In both state militaries and non-state armed groups, training and initiation processes often build discipline, group loyalty, and willingness to fight through linking being a soldier to being a 'real man.'[12] The amount of energy often expended in socialising men and boys to use violence underscores that it is not a natural tendency but something which is learned. While militaries and other armed groups may cultivate their own cultures of 'hyper-masculinity', these gain their potency by drawing on more widely accepted gender norms within their societies. For example, research on young men and conflict dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa found that young male combatants were often "acting out a socially recognised role of manhood taken to its extreme."[13]

Men's reasons for joining armed struggles vary widely, including political ideology and the need for income and protection, while many are also recruited by force. Similarly, participation in armed

groups may genuinely be necessary to defend oneself or one's community from violence or exploitation. It is not suggested here that gender norms are the whole story. Further research is needed to understand how ideals of masculinity interact with other social, economic, and political factors to make taking up arms appear a positive or necessary option for men and boys.

Furthermore, in most conflicts the majority of men and boys – including those who are unemployed or otherwise unable to perform traditional gender roles – do not participate in armed combat, sometimes despite considerable pressure to do so. Research is needed to improve understanding of the factors that precipitate this resistance and how alternative masculinities which favour peace and non-violence are developed and maintained in the face of militarisation.

'Thwarted' masculinities

The concept of 'thwarted' masculinities is sometimes used to describe the experiences of men who are unable to conform to standards of manhood imposed by their societies. It is argued that men who are not able to achieve the type of masculinity expected of them may be more likely to commit violence, whether in the home or as combatants in armed conflicts.[14] In such cases, violence can either provide a means of attaining other things deemed necessary to being a man – such as wealth or access to women – or can itself present a means of reasserting one's masculinity in the absence of other, non-violent means.

Of course, while understanding and addressing the social, economic, political and cultural conditions which may make men more likely to participate in violence is important, it does not negate the need to hold individual men accountable for any acts of violence they commit.

THWARTED MASCULINITIES AND CONFLICT IN SOMALIA

In Somalia, protracted conflict and the resultant economic hardship has made it difficult for many men to fulfil the traditional masculine gender role of economic provider and physical protector of their families. Many men who became refugees or were internally displaced have returned to their homes to find that women are now fulfilling roles that were previously reserved for men.[15] In Somalia's clan system, manhood is associated with becoming an elder, and power and status is traditionally concentrated in the hands of a subset of older men. It is possible for younger men to become elders, for example through respectable personal conduct and realisation of certain socially valued characteristics such as marriage, children, and employment. However in a context where unemployment and insecurity is widespread, there exist fewer opportunities for younger men to attain such status. For some young men, joining Al Shabaab offers the prospect of an economic livelihood as well as social status and power, which can provide an alternative pathway to manhood.[16] It has also been suggested that the desire to salvage thwarted masculinity is implicated in inter-clan conflicts, with unemployed men participating in fighting to gain status and acceptance within the clan.[17] Somali women have also played a role in encouraging this view of masculinity by cooking for militia and shaming men who were defeated in battle.[18]

MASCULINITIES AND DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION

Agencies implementing disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes with former combatants have in some cases found that ideas about masculinity have important impacts on the success of their programmes. Research conducted with former combatants, their communities and programme staff implementing DDR in Colombia has revealed that while male combatants have learned "to be hard and impenetrable, both physically and emotionally" as a result of their training and experiences of combat, these forms of hyper-masculinity have not served them well as they reintegrate into civilian communities.[19] While being a 'good man' in a paramilitary or guerrilla organisation had meant engaging in armed combat, in a civilian setting it meant providing for their families, and many former combatants struggled to readapt to this civilian masculine ideal. Staff running DDR programmes in Colombia noted high levels of domestic violence committed by former combatants, thought to be an effect of the militarised masculinity they learned as combatants.[20]

The UN's *Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards* states that "finding alternatives to violent ways of expressing masculinity is vital in periods of transition from war to peace."[21] It proposes that DDR programmes can take some steps toward changing attitudes toward masculinities, whilst acknowledging that transformational change may take generations.

The role of femininities

Just as a gender analysis of conflict does not entail a belief that men are inherently violent, neither does it entail a belief that women are inherently peaceful. In addition to masculinities, women's culturally prescribed gender roles can also fuel violent conflict. Cultural notions of femininity often cast women as weak and defenceless, requiring protection from men who are physically strong and ready to use violence. As the examples from South Sudan and Somalia demonstrate, women can put pressure on men to commit violence, thereby reinforcing dominant conceptions of violent masculinity which complement ideas of passive femininity. This phenomenon was also seen in Britain and the United States during the First World War, when women organised a campaign to give white feathers to men who had not enlisted in the armed forces as a means of marking them out as cowards.

This briefing and the accompanying report focus primarily on masculinities because this area remains relatively under-explored in the field of peacebuilding. While work on women and peacebuilding is not usually framed in terms of 'femininities', women's gender roles are nonetheless under the spotlight more than ever before in peacebuilding policy and practice. The increasing attention being given to supporting women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict prevention is a welcome development, and there is still much further to go in ensuring women a full and equal role in building peace and security. Saferworld suggests that a focus on masculinities in peacebuilding should come in addition to, and in no way be a diversion from, efforts to pursue the full implementation of international commitments on women, peace and security.

Masculinities and male vulnerabilities

As well as motivating men to fight, gender norms and expectations around masculinity can also render men and boys vulnerable to violence. The assumption that 'men of fighting age' are actual or potential combatants has led to their being targeted for violence on the basis of their gender. Reports of armed groups systematically killing men and boys whilst sparing women and girls have surfaced from conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, for example.[22] This also may explain why, in the current crisis in Syria, deaths among boys have been found to outnumber those among girls by two to one, and with older boys being "consistently the most frequent victims of targeted killings such as those involving sniper fire, execution or torture."[23]

Ideas about masculinity also directly underpin the use of sexual violence against men, mainly by other men. In conflict situations, acts such as rape, castration, and other forms of sexual mutilation are used to 'feminise' men, humiliating them by stripping them of their masculinity in the eyes of their communities and undermining their personal sense of identity. Norms of masculinity can also magnify the impacts of sexual violence in multiple ways. For example, social expectations that men should not show emotion or admit to their vulnerabilities make it difficult for male survivors to seek help, and the health and psychosocial impacts of sexual violence can prevent men from fulfilling their culturally defined masculine roles as economic providers for their families.

EXISTING PROGRAMMING TO TRANSFORM MASCULINITIES

Members of the 'Be a man' group in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, take part in rock climbing to raise awareness of violence against women on UN Orange Day.

A growing number of organisations and activists are implementing projects and programmes which engage with men and boys – and sometimes women and girls – to change attitudes toward masculinity. Most of these aim to address such issues as domestic violence, sexual health, and parenting roles. However, where these approaches have been shown to be successful in changing the behaviour of men and boys, there may be potential for adapting them to meet conflict prevention and peacebuilding objectives.[24]

An examination of existing programming highlights three main categories of intervention which have been used, mostly by civil society organisations, to influence attitudes toward masculinity successfully:

■ **Group education strategies:** These are efforts undertaken to bring boys and men together in formal or semi-formal settings in order to implement training activities of different types such as courses, workshops, and seminars. These typically require participants to reflect critically on how they have come to understand their gender roles, and identify areas in which positive changes can be made. Examples include the *Working with young men* training programme developed by Program H,[25] the masculinities programme run by the Centre for Popular Education and Communications (Cantera) in Nicaragua, and Rozan's *Humaqdam* men's programme in Pakistan.

■ **Community outreach strategies:** These are activities aimed at influencing culturally ingrained attitudes and values and behaviours on a wider scale, including through mass media campaigns, distribution of educational and informational materials, rallies, marches, cultural events including theatre, and training of activists to reach other men or organise community activities. Examples include the *One Man Can* campaign[26] run by Sonke Gender Justice Network in South Africa; Puntos de Encuentro's *Violence against women – a disaster that men can*

AN 'INTEGRATED STRATEGY' IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

The Young Men Initiative (YMI), supported by CARE International, combines group education workshops with young men in secondary schools with social marketing, advocacy, and media campaigns in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia. The project began with a formative research study in these countries, which identified that home and school were the two places where boys learned most about what it means to be a man.[27] The social marketing campaign *Budi muško* (or 'Be a man') targeted boys at school, spreading key messages from the workshops.[28] National level advocacy efforts were then used to start a discussion about how work on masculinities could be integrated into violence prevention efforts, engaging officials from ministries of education and justice.

A 2012 evaluation found that reported violence by young men against their male peers decreased across all intervention sites, while boys who had participated in the project showed more gender-equitable attitudes than those in control sites. The evaluation also noted that bringing together boys and men from countries which had previously been at war with each other brought potential benefits: "The opportunity to reflect together on and collaborate around a common cause helped to dispel the prejudices many of the young men held toward young men from other countries, thus contributing to peacebuilding among the younger generation".[29]

prevent project in Nicaragua; and the Abatangamuco movement in Burundi.

■ **Integrated strategies:** These use a combination of group education and community outreach strategies in a mutually complementary way.

Evaluative studies suggest some positive impacts from projects based on all three models, making them a useful starting point for changing understandings of masculinity which legitimise violence into ones more compatible with non-violence and gender equality. The lessons learned from these projects, and examples of their impacts on the attitudes and behaviour of men and boys, are summarised in the longer report, 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perspectives on men through a gender lens'.

Implementing organisations have relatively recently begun taking steps to scale up their interventions to achieve change at national level, including by influencing policymaking. Many project reports and evaluations on masculinities work acknowledge that in order to generate change on a wider scale, it is necessary to change policies and institutions which reinforce patriarchal gender norms. For example, organisations such as Promundo and CARE International are advocating for changes in school curricula, but also working with other ministries such as those for health, youth, and sport to disseminate their messages further afield. However, as of yet this area of work is relatively new, and it is too early to assess what the impacts might be.

MASCULINITIES: A PEACEBUILDING AGENDA

There exist a very small number of programmes which have begun to take some of these existing approaches and adapt them to begin addressing masculinities as drivers of conflict. One example implemented by the Women Peacemakers Program is outlined below.

Because this is a new development in the field of peacebuilding, there is not yet enough experience to provide evidence-based guidance for programme design. However, based on what is known about masculinities in conflict and on Saferworld's peacebuilding experience,

we suggest the following as issues to consider when developing a peacebuilding programming and policy agenda on masculinities.

Gender analysis of conflict

Although there are major cultural links between masculinity and violence in most, if not all, societies around the world, it does not necessarily follow that patriarchal masculinities play the same role in driving or enabling violence in all conflict-affected areas. To understand when and how they interact with conflict dynamics, it is necessary to conduct a gender-sensitive conflict analysis. In practice, the tools and methodologies used for conflict analysis are often gender-blind, and where they do include gender considerations, these are often limited to looking at the impacts of conflict on women. Research is needed to develop and test methods and tools for gender-sensitive analysis of conflict which can identify whether and how masculinities and femininities influence, and are influenced by, conflict.

Selecting a target audience and developing theories of change

Research in conflict-affected contexts suggests various ways in which masculinities can drive conflict and insecurity. This raises important questions about who should be the target audience for efforts to challenge violent masculinities and strengthen non-violent ones, and what are the underlying theories of change.

For example, men who are or have been combatants may be a key target for programmes, as well as those whose background or situation may make them particularly vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups, such as unemployed or disenfranchised young men. In some contexts, such as the case of cattle raiding in South Sudan, those who take part in armed violence do not necessarily belong to organised armed groups. In designing any programme, decisions about how to select the target audience and whether to work directly with current or former

Trainees and trainers for Women Peacemakers Program's 2009–2010 project 'Overcoming Violence: Exploring Masculinities, Violence and Peace'. © WOMEN PEACEMAKERS PROGRAM

WOMEN PEACEMAKERS PROGRAM *OVERCOMING VIOLENCE: EXPLORING MASCULINITIES, VIOLENCE, AND PEACE* PROJECT

The Women Peacemakers Program's (WPP) project *Overcoming violence: Exploring masculinities, violence, and peace* explicitly aims to address the role of masculinities in driving militarism and conflict. For its 2009–10 pilot project, WPP selected 19 men from 17 different countries affected by conflict or widespread violence.[30] All of the men selected were trainers with some knowledge on either gender or peacebuilding, and were well-placed to pass on the knowledge they gained through the project to others in their communities and networks. Following the training, participants in the training went on to implement a range of initiatives in their own countries.[31]

Initially, the men were given training in the theory and practice of gender-sensitive non-violence, masculinities, and gender-sensitive and participatory facilitation, as well as being encouraged to share experiences from their own country contexts. In the second stage of the project they were paired with female activists, who supported them to develop and conduct community projects and trainings based on what they had learnt. WPP felt that accountability to the women's movement was vital for any project investing some of the limited resources available for gender work in training men, and ensured that women were involved in every stage of the project.

combatants would need to be made based on careful analysis of what would be effective, feasible, and conflict-sensitive in the context at hand. In cases where militarised masculinities are deliberately promoted by powerful political or military actors, attempts to challenge these narratives may prove to be highly sensitive. On the other hand, given that such actors often draw on widely accepted beliefs about gender, it may be that peacebuilders should turn their attention to promoting non-violent masculinities and femininities within societies more broadly among women, men, boys, and girls.

Addressing gendered structures and working to scale

Gender exists not only on the level of ideas and beliefs, but is also embedded in structures and institutions which uphold it. Ideas about what it means to be a man are reinforced by, to name a few examples, education systems; laws around employment, marriage, and child custody; gendered marketing and media messages; military, religious, and cultural institutions. Therefore, in order to bring about genuine transformation of gender norms, it is necessary not only to work with individuals and communities to change the way people think about their own identities, but also to challenge structures which reinforce particular ways of thinking and behaving. As noted above, organisations carrying out programmes on masculinities are now beginning to do advocacy with policymakers in order to bring about such changes.

Working with the security sector

Depending on analysis of the conflict context and theories of change which emerge from it, it may be desirable to integrate work on masculinities into processes of security sector reform (SSR) or DDR. A United Nations (UN) toolkit on gender and SSR recommends that gender training for security sector personnel should address masculinities and men's understanding of themselves, in order to

challenge "'cultures of violent masculinity' which are often prevalent within the armed forces and the police".[32] This may need to be complemented by advocacy at the political level to ensure that institutional cultures are changed, as well as simply changing the attitudes of a few

individuals within those institutions.[33] Some NGOs have already begun integrating components on masculinities into SSR and DDR processes as part of efforts to prevent gender-based violence, such as in the example by Sonke Gender Justice outlined below.

Members of the One Man Can campaign in Sudan. The campaign aims to encourage positive forms of masculinity among DDR programme participants. © UNDP PHOTO

ONE MAN CAN AND DDR IN SUDAN

In Sudan, Sonke Gender Justice Network and Zenab for Women in Development collaborated with UN Development Programme and the Sudan DDR Commission to adapt and implement the *One Man Can* campaign in 2012 as part of the DDR process. Sonke had noted that many men felt disempowered due to unemployment and social changes resulting from the conflict, and tried to "reinstate their power" by committing acts of violence against women.[34] The programme design was based on the observation that patriarchal and violent masculinities were prevalent among both civilians and ex-combatants, and so the

programme was aimed at both. It was first trialled in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Khartoum states, targeting male and female ex-combatants, women associated with the armed forces, civilian men and women, community elders, and religious leaders.[35] Sonke notes that implementing this type of programme can be particularly sensitive in conflict and post-conflict settings, particularly where gender issues are highly politicised. However, Sonke and Zenab for Women in Development received government backing for the programme, and in 2013 trained a network of civil society organisations to implement it on a wider scale.

The role of international structures

In some contexts, many of the structures which play a role in influencing or re-inforcing gender norms are transnational ones. Multinational corporations, UN peacekeeping operations and development, and peacebuilding and humanitarian programmes run by international NGOs can all play a role in constructing masculinities and femininities in positive or negative ways. It is therefore important not to assume that structures which reinforce harmful gender norms are restricted to the local or national level, but to examine the role of international actors and structures. For example, when international donors provide support to security sector reform processes in conflict-affected countries, there is a tendency for them to export the same organisational cultures and working practices found in their own security sectors to recipient states. Not only may highly militarised notions of masculinity prevalent within many donor countries' security sectors be reproduced in other contexts, but they may also appear to bring with them the stamp of international legitimacy.[36]

Sensitivity to conflict narratives

Ideas about the masculinity and/or femininity of particular social groups (often ethnic groups) are sometimes deployed as a tactic to encourage and justify violence against them. For example, in Uganda, British colonisers divided communities, assigned roles, and developed administrative structures based on ethnicity. They recruited many Acholi men into the police and armed forces, while ethnic groups from the south, such as the Baganda, were recruited as clerks and managers. Acholi men developed a reputation for "militarism and violence", which has been used post-independence to help justify imposing military control over the primarily Acholi north.[37]

It is vital that any programmes aiming to understand and influence attitudes toward gender norms are based on a sound understanding of whether and how ideas about gender have been used
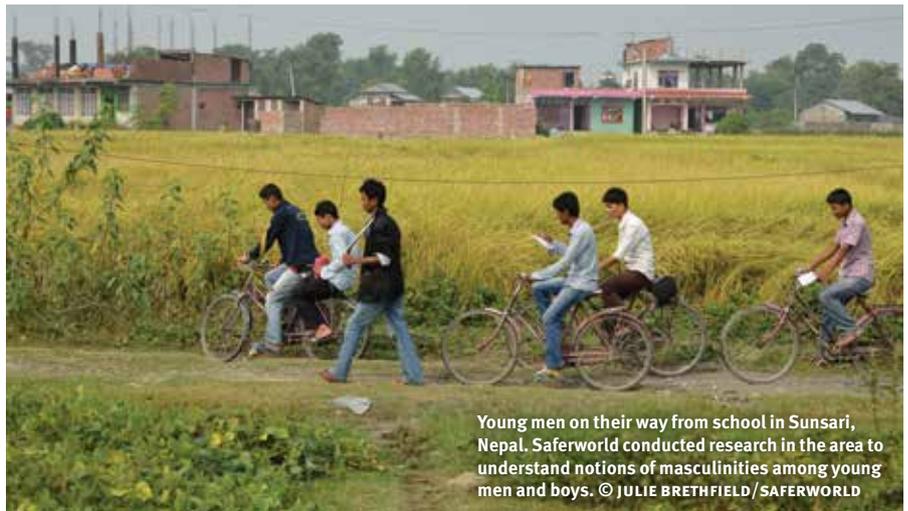
Young men on their way from school in Sunsari, Nepal. Saferworld conducted research in the area to understand notions of masculinities among young men and boys. © JULIE BRETHFIELD/SAFERWORLD

in this way. Programmes must take great care to avoid reinforcing (or being perceived to reinforce), and to actively challenge, narratives which fuel conflict and division – or, indeed, any narratives which reinforce stereotyped views. It is necessary both to acknowledge that patriarchal values fuel various forms of violence around the world, including in Western countries usually thought of as peaceful, and to examine the role that the West has played in constructing masculinities in the Global South, historically and today.

Acknowledging legitimate grievances

Patriarchal masculinities cannot be described as the sole cause of any particular conflict, but interact with other factors to produce conflict and violence. Therefore, where it has been identified that masculinities play a role in driving violent conflict these should be addressed at the same time as other conflict drivers. Conflict is often fuelled by a legitimate sense of anger at oppression, exclusion, and failures of governance, and it is vital to recognise and address these factors.

For example, it is important to acknowledge that young men who are unemployed due to a lack of economic opportunities and a failure by government to create jobs may have a sense of grievance not only because they feel

emasculated by their situations but also because they have a genuine economic need that is not being met. The need for men to rethink their ideas about manhood should not diminish the need for changes in other areas. While no single programme or organisation can hope to address every driver of conflict, a shared conflict analysis should form the basis for a coordinated response among donors, national and local authorities and civil society organisations which tackles each of the underlying causes of conflict, including their gender dimensions.

Keeping sight of gender equality

The goals of addressing masculinities as drivers of conflict and engaging men and boys for gender equality are inextricably linked. Peacebuilding programmes which promote non-violent masculinities must therefore also seek to promote gender equality and women's rights. Failure to do so would not only be a missed opportunity to make progress towards gender equality, but may risk doing harm. Changes in men's attitudes towards their own gender identities will inevitably change the way they relate to women, and so it is vital to ensure that these changes are positive ones. One way of doing this would be to build means of accountability to women in the target communities into each stage of a project.[38]

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is still much work to be done in developing a well-evidenced policy and programming agenda on masculinities in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Saferworld makes the following recommendations to international donors, policymakers, national governments, and peacebuilding organisations:

- **Look at men and boys from a gender perspective:** It is important that 'taking a gender perspective' is not interpreted simply as 'including women and girls' where they may otherwise have been ignored, though this is itself a necessary component of gender mainstreaming. Analysing the roles, attitudes, and behaviours of men and boys from a gender perspective can also deepen understandings of conflict and insecurity, and should be included in any gender analysis.

- **Deepen gender perspectives in conflict analysis:** Work is needed to develop effective conflict analysis tools and methodologies which incorporate a gender perspective. This must go beyond identifying the different impacts of conflict on women, men, boys, and girls by also seeking to understand the gendered drivers of conflict, including the role of masculinities and femininities in conflict dynamics. Gender analysis should be situated within a broader analysis of injustice, marginalisation, and other grievances and drivers of conflict.

- **Build the evidence base:** Using these enhanced tools and methodologies, further research is needed to explain how masculinities and femininities interact with conflict dynamics in specific contexts around the world. Existing studies provide rich analysis from a relatively small number of contexts: these should be expanded, updated, and repeated elsewhere. Strategies for action should be built around evidence of how men develop and maintain positive, non-violent masculinities and use them to promote peace in practice.

- **Develop theories of change and pilot programming approaches:** Where conflict analysis indicates that masculinities do play a role in driving conflict, donors, multilateral organisations, national governments, and civil society organisations should develop pilot projects that begin challenging those gender norms and lay the foundations for ongoing programmes. Careful research and analysis will be needed to develop and test theories of change which are tailored to each context, locally owned, conflict-sensitive, and which do not put participants at unnecessary risk.

- **Addressing gendered structures:** It is evident that gender norms are not simply a matter of attitudes and beliefs held by individuals, but are produced and perpetuated by political, economic, cultural, and social structures, including education systems, the media, religious institutions, welfare systems, security and justice systems, and so on. Challenging and reforming these structures is likely to be a long-term endeavour; it will take time to develop evidence as to how changing gendered structures can influence attitudes toward masculinities and to understand whether and how this can impact on conflict dynamics.

- **Mainstream a masculinities perspective in international interventions:** To fulfil their commitments to mainstream a gender perspective in peace, security and development efforts, international actors should examine how their activities – including, inter alia, development programming, military interventions, peacekeeping missions, and humanitarian assistance – influence masculinities. At a minimum, international actors should avoid promoting or entrenching notions of masculinity which perpetuate violence and inequality; wherever possible they should seek to promote non-violent and equitable gender norms.

- **Evaluate impacts of working with the security sector:** Where a focus on masculinities is already being integrated into SSR and DDR processes, much could be gained from documenting approaches and impacts. For example, a useful avenue for exploration would be to look at whether such approaches can help prevent security providers from committing human rights abuses and transform patriarchal institutional cultures – a potentially important contribution to conflict prevention.

- **Document long-term impacts:** While persuasive evidence has been produced that group education and community outreach strategies produce some degree of positive change in attitudes and behaviours in the short term, there is little evidence of what the long-term impacts are. Assessing long-term impacts is notoriously difficult due to the challenges of maintaining contact with participants and attributing changes to the programme intervention, but is nonetheless vital for setting the direction of future programming in this area.

- **Advance the women, peace and security agenda:** New avenues for research, policy, and programming on masculinities should be pursued in addition to, and not at the expense of, increasing resources and political will to implement commitments under the women, peace and security agenda, including the seven UN Security Council Resolutions, Beijing Platform for Action commitments on women and armed conflict, and Article 30 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. These two areas of work cannot be understood or pursued in isolation from one another. Efforts to promote and realise women's rights and efforts to break the links between gender norms and violence can and should be mutually reinforcing.
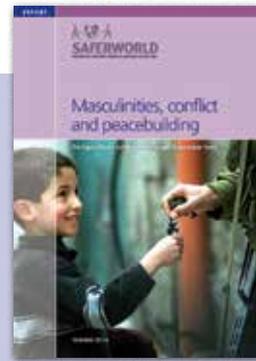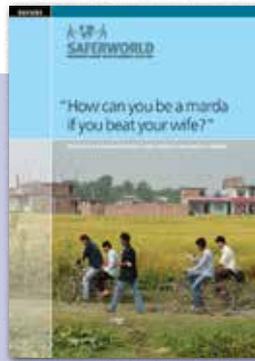
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- *Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perspectives on men through a gender lens*

- *"It's dangerous to be the first" Security barriers to women's public participation in Egypt, Libya, and Yemen*

NOTES

1 UNODC (2013) 'Global study on homicide' (Vienna: UNODC) p 13; Peace Research Institute Oslo (2009) 'Armed conflict deaths disaggregated by gender'.

2 UN Secretary General (2012) 'Prevention of violence against women and girls: Report of the Secretary-General', *UN Economic and Social Council* E/CN.6/2013/4; UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2014) 'Chair's summary – Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict'.

3 In this report, the term 'conflict' is used to refer to interstate or intrastate conflict and is sometimes contrasted with 'gender-based violence', 'sexual violence' or 'domestic violence'. Saferworld acknowledges that these types of violence are forms of conflict in themselves, and that sexual and gender-based violence is sometimes used as a tactic of war. Notwithstanding this, for conceptual clarity a distinction is made between these forms of conflict/violence in this report in order to describe the different focuses of projects to transform masculinities.

4 Saferworld and Conciliation Resources (2012) 'People's peacemaking perspectives: South Sudan'; Small Arms Survey (2010) 'Symptoms and causes: insecurity and underdevelopment in Eastern Equatoria', p 4; Oxfam (2013) 'Challenges to security, livelihoods and gender justice in South Sudan', p 13.

5 *Op cit* Small Arms Survey (2010) p 5.

6 Richmond M and Krause-Jackson F (2011) 'Cows-for-Bride Inflation Spurs Cattle Theft in South Sudan', Bloomberg News, 26 July, accessed at www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-26/cows-forbride-inflation-spurs-cattle-theft-among-mundari-in-south-sudan.html.

7 *Op cit* Saferworld and Conciliation Resources (2012); *Op cit* Small Arms Survey (2010), p 4; *Op cit* Oxfam (2013) p 26; United States Institute of Peace (USIP) (2011) 'Dowry and division: youth and state building in South Sudan', pp 4–6.

8 Bracewell W (2000) 'Rape in Kosovo: Masculinity and Serbian nationalism' in *Nations and Nationalism* 6(4) p 567.

9 Munn J, 'National myths and the creation of heroes' in Parpart J and Zalewski M (2008) *Rethinking the man question: Sex, gender and violence in international relations* (London: Zed Books) p146, 153.

10 For more in-depth analysis of the role of masculinities in conflict dynamics in Kosovo, see Saferworld (2014) 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perpsectives on men through a gender lens', p 9.

11 The use of some forms of violence, for example gender-based violence, can often also become normalised in countries usually thought of as being at peace.

12 Valasek K (2008) 'Security sector reform and gender' in *Gender and security sector reform toolkit*, UN INSTRAW and Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, p 3.

13 Barker G and Ricardo C, 'Young men and the construction of masculinity in Sub-Saharan Africa: implications for HIV/AIDS, conflict, and violence' in Bannon I and Correira M (eds), *The Other Half of Gender* (Washington DC: World Bank) p 173.

14 *Ibid* p 163.

15 Rift Valley Institute (2013) 'A war on men? The enduring consequences of war and conflict on Somalia men'; Oxfam (2013) 'Masculinities: Understanding the impact of war on men and gender relations in South Sudan, Somalia and DRC' (unpublished) p 11.

16 Rift Valley Institute (2013) 'A war on men? The enduring consequences of war and conflict on Somalia men'.

17 Oxfam (2013) 'Masculinities: Understanding the impact of war on men and gender relations in South Sudan, Somalia and DRC' (unpublished) p 10.

18 *Ibid*.

19 Theidon K (2009) 'Reconstructing masculinities: The disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants in Colombia' in *Human Rights Quarterly* 31, p 27.

20 *Ibid* p 21.

21 United Nations (2006) 'Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards', p 22.

22 Carpenter R (2006) 'Recognising gender-based violence against civilian men and boys in conflict situations' in *Security Dialogue* 37, pp 89–90.

23 Oxford Research Group (2013) 'Stolen futures: the hidden toll of child casualties in Syria', p 5.

24 Saferworld takes a human security approach which acknowledges that a society experiencing high levels of gender-based violence cannot be said to be at peace. As such, preventing and reducing gender-based violence is itself a peacebuilding objective. However, in this report Saferworld contrasts programming objectives which focus specifically on ending gender-based violence with those that take a broader approach to building peaceful societies by addressing the root causes of conflict.

25 'H' stands for *homens* in Portuguese or *hombre* in Spanish. Program H consists of four Latin American organisations: Instituto Promundo, Estudos e Comunicaçao em Sexualidade e Reproduçao Humana (ECOS) and Instituto Papai in Brazil, and Salud y Género in Mexico.

26 As it has evolved in recent years, *One Man Can* has begun to resemble an integrated strategy, but began as a community outreach project.

27 CARE International and International Center for Research on Women (2007) 'Exploring dimensions of masculinity and violence'.

28 Young Men Initiative, CARE International and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012) 'The Young Men Initiative – a case study 2012: Engaging young men in the Western Balkans in gender equality and violence prevention'.

29 *Ibid* p 27.

30 For more information on the pilot project, see Women Peacemakers Program (2010) 'Together for transformation: Men, masculinities and peacebuilding'.

31 *Ibid*.

32 Tōnisson Kleppe T (2008) 'Gender training for security sector personnel – good practices and lessons learned' in Bastick M and Valasek K (eds), *Gender and security sector reform toolkit* (Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR), p 7 & 8.

33 For more analysis on how individuals can work to change institutional cultures of masculinity, see Greig A and Edström J (2012) 'Mobilising Men in Practice: Challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings', Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

34 Sonke Gender Justice Network, 'Sonke's One Man Can campaign supports peacebuilding and gender equality in Sudan' accessed at www.genderjustice.org.za/case-studies/one-man-can-supports-peacebuilding-and-gender-equality-in-sudan.html

35 'Women associated with the armed forces' include the wives, partners and family members of male combatants; women working for or with the armed forces, for example as cooks or nurses; and those forcibly recruited, for example into sexual slavery.

36 Ní Aoláin F (2009) 'Women, security, and the patriarchy of internationalised transitional justice' in *Human Rights Quarterly*, (31:4) p 1,072.

37 Dolan C (2003) 'Collapsing masculinities and weak states – a case study of northern Uganda' in Cleaver F (ed), *Making men matter: Men, masculinities and gender relations in development* (London: Zed Books) pp 63–4.

38 International Rescue Committee (2013) 'Introductory guide: Preventing violence against women and girls: Engaging men through accountable practice'.