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Concept Note - Masculinities, Youth and Violence in Crisis Settings

Consultation Meeting

New York, United States

26-27 October 2016

1. Background

In recognition of the need to fill gaps in understanding the role of gender norms and masculinities in crises and the lack of programmatic experience in this area, UNDP commissioned a paper in 2012 entitled “Idle Minds, Empty Pockets? Masculinities, Youth and Violence in Crisis Settings” (hereinafter “Masculinities, Youth and Violence in Crisis Settings”). Looking at the interplay between masculinities, youth and violence, the paper identified ways in which UNDP can better support men and male youths, together with women and girls, to become positive agents of change. Using a “gender dimension of violence” lens to show how masculinities play out in crisis settings, the paper examined the social construct of masculinity and its influence on men’s behaviour and the different roles men and male youth play both as perpetrators and victims of violence. Focusing on UNDP’s programmatic work on crisis prevention and recovery and case studies, the paper identified key entry points for integrating the gender dimension of violence in UNDP programming in crisis and post-crisis settings and how transforming masculinities can alleviate risks and vulnerabilities in negative behaviour and reinforce resilience.

UNDP has undergone significant changes since the development of this draft paper. UNDP now operates under a new Strategic Plan (2014-2017) with specific outcomes on gender equality and women’s empowerment and on recovery. UNDP has also undergone an internal restructuring with the creation of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS). BPPS is currently updating its recovery and resilience policies to align with changes both internally in UNDP and externally in the humanitarian, peace and security and development landscape. There have also been important changes at the normative level across the humanitarian, peace and security and development pillars of the UN. 2015 and 2016 were critical years in terms of policy development with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the third international conference on Financing for Development, the Beijing+20 review, the three UN peace and



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security reviews, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the World Humanitarian Summit. Of particular relevance to this meeting is the dedicated SDG target 5.2 on eliminating violence against women, and related targets under health, education, security, governance and other issues, which provide a major reference and accountability framework for stakeholders. Highlighting the need to expand and scale up interventions that transform 'violent masculinities' as part of conflict prevention measures the recommendations of the Global Study to Review 15 years of UN Security Council resolution 1325 are also instructive for this meeting.

The 2015 Independent Evaluation of UNDP's first Gender Equality Strategy (2008-2013) recommended UNDP to explore new frontiers for engaging in gender issues and move away from the notion that gender equates to "women's issues". UNDP's most recent and relevant intervention on masculinities is the UN Joint Programme "Partners for Prevention" together with UN Women, UNFPA and UNV. The main outcome of the Programme's first phase was a multi-country study on men and violence in the Asia Pacific region and is the largest multi-country data set on how masculinities relate to men's perceptions and perpetration of gender-based violence. The findings of the study revealed that violent or peaceful behaviours in men respond to a complex multiplicity of factors at the individual, relationship, community and wider societal levels. The study concluded that these factors cannot be understood in isolation but rather within a broader environment of pervasive gender inequality.

2. Co-Hosts

Founded in 2006, the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) is a US based non-profit whose mission is to support civil society activism in promoting women's rights, peace and human security in countries affected by conflict, transition and closed political space. ICAN aims to support women's efforts through bridging the divisions between activists and the policy community, elevating the voices and experiences of women activists, building skills, and ensuring the exchange of knowledge and resources. ICAN achieves its mission through trainings, information generation, sharing and exchange, and dialogue facilitation.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) with National Sections covering every continent. Since its establishment in 1915, WILPF has brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace by non-violent



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means and promoting political, economic and social justice for all. WILPF's approach is always non-violent, and uses existing international legal and political frameworks to achieve fundamental change in the way states conceptualise and address issues of gender, militarism, peace and security. WILPF is a member of MenEngage Alliance and sits in its Global Board.

The MenEngage Alliance is an international network of more than 700 organisations connecting together the leading voices in the field of transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in women's rights and gender justice, including UN Agencies, I/NGOs, civil society organisations, Women's Rights organisations, LGBTIQ/social justice organisations, youth and empowerment organisations, academia and individual experts and activists. The Alliance is dedicated to engaging men and boys to end violence and discrimination against women and girls, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. It does so by challenging and aiming to transform violent versions of manhood, support the development of non-violent expressions, and support the mobilisation of men and boys at all levels of society, together with others. The mandate of the MenEngage Alliance is to explore contemporary issues and develop or support the development of knowledge products by developing, and providing support to, papers on themes related to men and masculinities. In this particular consultation, the Alliance will bring together experts in the field of transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys on gender equality and will build on its paper "Men, Masculinities and Changing Power" co-produced with UN Women and UNFPA in 2014.

3. Workshop Objective

The main objective of this consultation meeting is to bring together experts in the field of gender, violence, masculinities, and peace and security to develop a better understanding of masculinities and its relationship with violence. The meeting will also serve as an opportunity to present UNDP's revised conceptual framework based on its draft paper "Masculinities, Youth and Violence in Crisis Settings" and identify practical entry points for integrating key aspects of gender and masculinities in UNDP programming in crisis and post-crisis settings. Participants will also discuss ways of leveraging partnerships and collaboration between civil society organisations and the UN/UNDP for collective advocacy and joint programming on gender, violence and peace and security.

4. Participants

A group of 20-25 participants will be invited to the consultation, including the following:



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- Select MenEngage Alliance, WILPF and ICAN members
- Select UN/UNDP staff working on gender, violence and security
- External expert practitioners from women's rights community

5. Structure and Methodology

The consultation meeting will take place over one and a half days and be focused on the following agenda items (i) UNDP's updated conceptual framework, (ii) effective programming and country experiences, (iii) entry points for UNDP programming, and (iv) partnerships. Participants will engage in interactive and facilitated focused discussions which will be based on a number of guiding questions. Practitioner experts from different regions working on gender, violence and peace and security will present their experience of working on these issues and highlight priority areas to take forward. Participants will have the opportunity to gain and share a common understanding of the key concepts, challenges and opportunities presented by programming on gender and violence in crisis and post-crisis contexts as well as good practices and priorities for future areas of work.
