

Concept note

Conflict, Colonialism, and Masculinity

14 December 2022 | 3.00 - 4.15 PM (CET)

Online discussion via Zoom

Registration link: shorturl.at/GI467

Building upon the commitments of GPPACs [Gender Policy](#) to challenge and transform harmful gender practices in conflict-affected societies, the **Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND)**, with the support of the **Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict**, is hosting an online dialogue on Conflict, Colonialism and Masculinity on Wednesday **14 December** (Wednesday) **3.00 - 4.15 PM (CET)** check your local time [here](#). Registrations are required and available [here](#).

Background: The colonial project disrupted gender orders and constructed new hegemonies so the colonial elites could continue their rule on the “emasculated” colonised men. This emasculation happened because of their alleged inability to protect their own women. This particular construction was enormously influential in shaping gender relations in the post-colonial world. When gender relations became an acceptable area of research, “hegemonic masculinity” also came under scrutiny. Research on hegemonic masculinity brought to the fore its relation to identity, power, violence, and war. Researchers drew a correlation between men, masculinity, and war, while on the other hand, women were assumed to be peaceful. In consequence, women often did not participate in major peace initiatives, primarily due to their traditional distance from political power. Moreover, the hegemony of the colonial power was mirrored in the hegemony of the colonized men over colonized women. However, in post-colonial typologies, some masculinities are harmful, and some are not. There is a new generation of young men brought up by feminists in contrast to those brought up with only traditional toxic masculinities as examples.

For example, this is also evident in the context of occupied Palestine where Israeli settler-colonialism is not only thriving but growing stronger. The violent military occupation is pushing Palestinian men towards violence (including rejection of all nonviolent means by Israelis, such as their campaign against the movement for boycott, divestment, and

sanctions – BDS) at the same time as it humiliates and therefore emasculates them in front of their women.

Participants: Gender and conflict prevention and peacebuilding experts, members of the GPPAC network, and beyond.

About the discussion: *Masculinities* is a key concept for understanding gender relations. Understanding the meaning of this concept is essential to working with the imbalance of power and root causes of violence. Understanding *masculinities* both positively and negatively is, therefore, of vital importance in preventing violence and armed conflict. *Masculinities* in different conflict contexts need to be explored and understood within and across GPPAC as we work on applying the gender transformative approach we committed to in the GPPAC Policy.

This webinar will focus on masculinities in colonial and post-colonial contexts, as highly relevant for GPPAC and our work on the transformative gender approach. Progress in transforming harmful gender roles depends on the inclusion of work with men and boys as allies. The discussion will centre on the notion of masculinity and how it impacts peacemaking. We will also take up the intersectionality between caste, class, ethnicity, and gender and its effects on peacemaking, and explore how traditional gender roles are emphasized and instrumentalised in occupation/conflict; how the powerless resort to asserting power in the only context in which they can get away with it.

The webinar will be conceptual and political in its approach.

Expected change: GPPAC GFPs start exchanging and work jointly/hold discussions on masculinities and exchanging with men and boys, including traditional and faith-based leaders.

Key questions for the discussion:

- *How does masculinity impact peacemaking?*
- *What is the intersectionality between caste, class, ethnicity, and gender and its effects on peacemaking?*
- *How are traditional gender roles emphasized and instrumentalised in the contexts of /conflict, repression, and occupation?*
- *How do the powerless resort to asserting power, and with what consequences?*

A summary document with key findings will be circulated after the event.