The Gendered Nature of PVE

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The masculine image of violent extremism had a clear impact on the mental model of policymakers and researchers which have been often slanted toward men. It is until recently that this conviction started to change with evidence overwhelmingly proving that prioritizing women’s inclusion increases the likelihood of peace; especially when women are involved in decision-making.

There is plenty of research on the role that gender inequality plays in the proliferation of violent extremism which confirms its nature as a highly gendered issue: it is highly sensitive to the propensity of gender inequality in a given society. The inclusive security report on 2015 observed that “Fourteen out of the seventeen countries at the bottom of the OECD’s index for gender discrimination also experienced conflict in the last two decades.” The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1325) has been a major milestone in mainstreaming gender equality in peace and stability; and resolution 2242 which recognizes the need to engage with women on CVE/PVE in peace and stability; and resolution 2242 which confirms its nature as a highly gendered issue: it is highly sensitive to the propensity of gender inequality in a given society.

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Women’s Engagement in Conflict Resolution Essential for Sustainable Peace

Nadya Khalife*

After the end of the Lebanese civil war in 1991 women were excluded from decision-making processes related to reconciliation, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. Women did not take part in the Taif Accord that brought the civil war to a halt in 1990 or subsequent national dialogues. In 2010, the National Dialogue Committee, set up by then President Michel Suleiman, included 19 male representatives from the country’s major political parties, and no women participated in the sessions of the national dialogue.

Today, Lebanon continues to face internal and external insecurities, economic instability and political turmoil contributing to the country’s increased volatility. In an effort to promote women’s roles in conflict resolution and prevention, UN Women recently formed two local women’s mediation networks in Abbassiyeh and Tyre in South Lebanon that aim to promote women’s leadership in decision-making processes to more effectively engage women to resolve community-level conflicts. Two additional mediators’ networks will soon be established in Ain El Helweh and Shatila to ensure that women’s roles in conflict resolution are also amplified within Palestinian communities.

One of the participants from Tyre, Hanan Saleh, a university professor, says “peace is necessary for the renewal of society and its development and we, in Lebanon, are in need of internal peace before external peace. These trainings contribute to a culture of increased dialogue for more effective conflict resolution.” She further notes “to decrease tensions, [we need] to concentrate more on our collective energies and benefit from our diversity and different points of views so that our diverse thoughts are seen as richness [for our communities] and not as reasons for conflict.”

Women’s mediation networks respond to the priorities set forth in Lebanon’s first National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women’s meaningful participation in peace and security issues. The NAP 1325 is pending endorsement by the Council of Ministers.

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