Meeting Minutes Roundtable "Trends & Uses of a Gendered Human Security Approach: Identifying Dangers to the WPS Agenda"
WO=MEN, 10 December 2018

The meeting started by identifying how the researchers, Theresa Ammann and Tamara A. Kool, define a gendered human security – see Appendix – to then identify potential pitfalls and how these also relate to the WPS agenda. Recognising that although this is old wine in a new bottle, key conclusions for the WPS agenda from a gendered human security lens included:
- The need to recognise the multiple roles of women + men
- Within NAP, include internal-external focus
- The need to take a holistic policy approach
    - Recognising continuous change of policies and stakeholders' lived realities
    - Recognising policy effects are bound by other policies
    - Moving beyond binary categories
- Engaging all stakeholders: addressing global-local intersectional inequalities + the opposition

This presentation was then followed by an open discussion with those attending the session under the guidelines of the Chatham House Rule:[1]

When a meeting is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

During the discussion participants were asked (a) about their perceptions regarding human security and (b) to reflect on the relevance of applying a gendered human security lens in their own work. The following points emerged during the presentation and subsequent discussion:

- Human Security is widely regarded as a tool, but its usage is complicated by a practical need to focus on a specific elements. There is often a lack of understanding of its application, particularly within the security architecture. It tends to get tied to a specific element such as health, but it is not clear how to connect it to other elements in practice. The risk remains that crises tend to get hijacked by militarisation efforts – i.e., "hard" securitisation measures – rather than wider socio-economic measures – i.e., "soft" securitisation measures. So while Human Security has moved the *focus* of securitisation from a traditionally narrow focus to broader and deeper security matters, *approaches and measures* to securitise continue to be predominantly traditional, e.g., militarised responses to health crisis. There is therefore a need to support discourse changes with changes in approaches and measures. Moreover, there is the challenge of connecting the local issue back to the global issue.
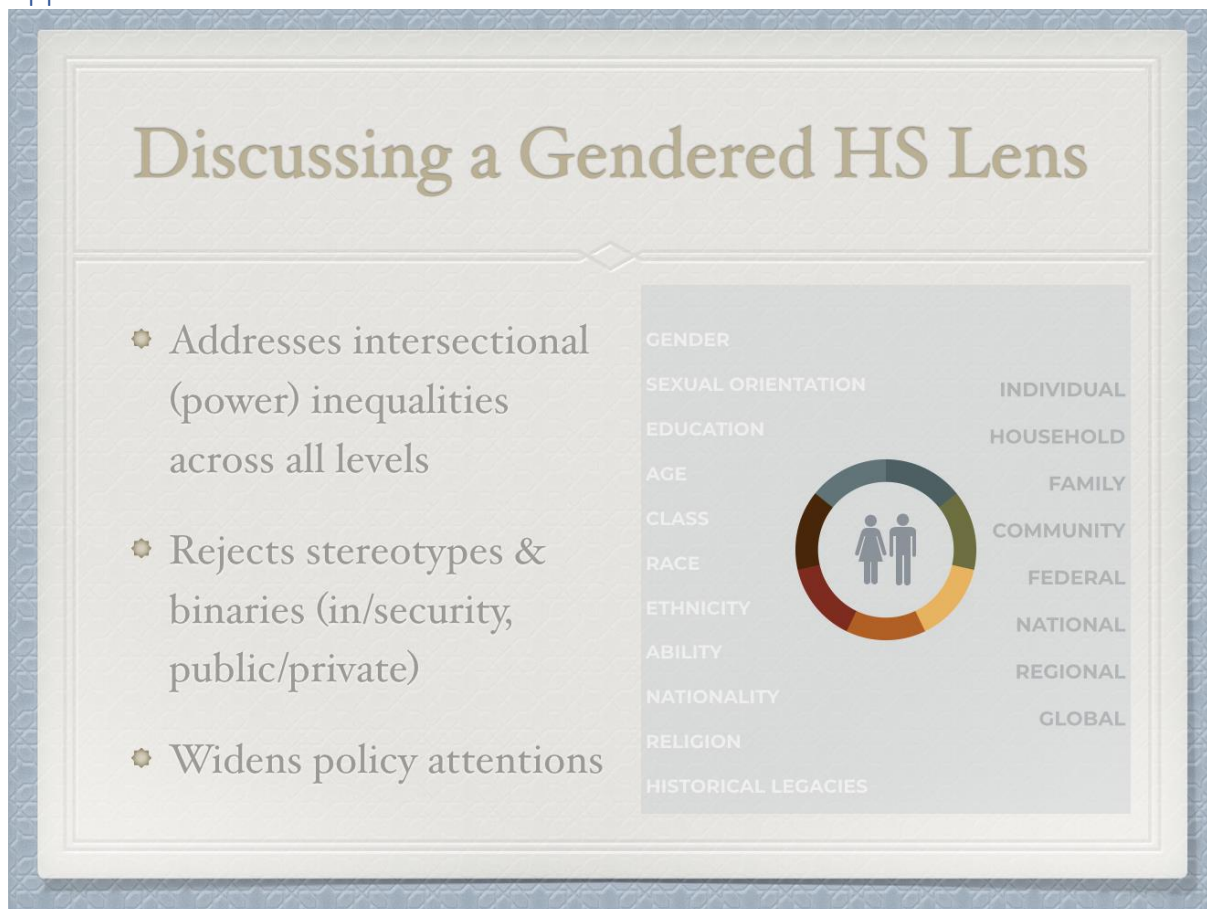
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[1] As such no reference is made to specific persons or organisations.

- Nonetheless, Human Security operates through the umbrella of security and foreign affairs. The question remains how to connect these and ensure a trickle down/up effect. The question is something that many of the participants deal with in their own organisations.
- During the peace talks on Yemen in Sweden, women are excluded from the discussion. They ended up organising their own side events. We need to recognise that women are part of the equation and that they inhabit multiple roles. Similarly, men are not just perpetrators. Nonetheless, while all state actors recognise that we should include women, the international commitment lacks, and it remains a big fuss.
- The interlinkages are there. These are also highlighted during the WPS week in NY in the end of October. It brings together actors working on human rights, development and WPS. But to understand why women are not included at the table, we need to recognise cultural specificity as well – think about the social system, the double burden that is placed on female civil society: engaging in their primary job and fulfilling their role as women. E.g., 1) In Uganda, a programme was aimed at teaching men how to cook to tackle domestic violence. Similarly, awareness was raised about the work that women are expected to do at home. E.g., 2) Need to consider DDR processes and how women are included, compare for example Sri Lanka to Colombia.
- Colombia is currently in transition. Issues at hand include GSBV, inclusion of young people, and female leadership. Many of the organisations are academic or elite women and it is sometimes difficult to translate this to the different social strata. Impact is determined by geographical focus. Human Right violations are still widespread and thus need to be included on the list but it takes time. Moreover, local rural development is shaped by land titles. The issue of women's rights and land rights are two concepts that are closely related. Also, women often work the lands but are not necessarily getting paid.
- The question is how to make sure local NGOs are taking up certain issues. Is there a role for embassies to play in supporting this? So how do we align the need to address complexities with national interests which favour securing simplicity rather than listen to complexity. E.g., Denmark's most recent policy to get rid of English-speaking BA programmes in the hope to keep EU citizens from attaining an education and state support (thereby failing to realise the benefits of such an internationalisation) illustrates this point. Can one tailor one's argument to such ultraright protectionist groups? If this is possible, how can one ensure that a holistic perspective is taken up instead of a simplistic focus which would undermine the cause. The element of intersectionality may help in this regard. It is imperative that the linkage between aspect is stressed and argued rather than focus solely on the argument that would speak most to the other groups.
- In Spain, sexual violence was pushed out of the agenda but this was also a response to Nationalist Andalusia. There is a sense of aggravated entitlement.[2]

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[2] Aggravated entitlement defines "a sense of righteous indignation, of undeserved victimhood in a world suddenly dominated by political correctness. [… Where men look] back nostalgically to a time when their sense of masculine entitlement went unchallenged." (Kimmel, 2018: xii-xiii). See Kimmel, M. (2018) *Healing from Hate: How Young Men Get Into—and Out of—Violent Extremism*. University of California Press.

- It is not just about economic participation but about participating equally. Even in terms of different payment of women in the Netherlands, or how to include them in the boards without imposing a quota. There is of course legislation such as the EU Directive.
- The question is whether economic empowerment solely focused at formal work (of women) is sufficient. It is still dependent on sociocultural constraints and lived reality that need to be considered. In the case of Fiji, economic security was an element that came forth from consultation in terms of national and personal security. Within the NAP formal and informal economy was taken into consideration and recognised that economic security requires legal and cultural changes. There is a CEDAW application at hand. Another part is to redefine hand-outs and to support economic models and to transform political participation.
- Note that there is a flipside to not having a rights-based but a Human Security approach. Human Security and Human Rights can be conflicting, nonetheless Human Rights is entangled in Human Security. To ensure human security in communities, one has to ask them what they need. E.g. in Fiji, women brought about development but their role is also linked to peace and security. The challenge to Human Rights is that peacekeeping is seen as weak. Human Security offers a different approach and can be an enabling voice and offer conversation with millions. Through it is various components it addresses the fundamental needs, and relate it back to person. Reframing the discourse needs work and new language.

Appendix

Source: Ammann and Kool, 2018