Concept Note

Sustainable, Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Community Structures in Somalia

Webinar (Zoom)

30 September 2020 (Wednesday) / 14.00-15.15 (The Hague time)

Somali women in Somalia are agents of change in cross-clan dynamics and play a significant, yet unrecognised, role in both conflict and peace, at times driving violent responses in support of clan interests. They often have multiple clan identities; while women themselves are not a homogenous group and are often themselves be divided by clan, this may also allow them to negotiate solutions or navigate avenues towards peaceful resolution of conflict that may not be available to men. There is evidence that when involved in clan processes, women have acted as intermediaries between opposing clans. Their formal role, however, is often transactional and tokenistic and, while the legitimacy and effectiveness of traditional, clan-based security and dispute resolution mechanisms is to some extent waning, the gendered norms through which they function have remained embedded in Somali society. Women have also been shown to reinforce notions of masculinity associated with violence and revenge. For example, it is reportedly common for women to encourage their sons, husbands or brothers to take part in violent conflict, or have castigated men for being unable to attain the status and resources connected to manhood. This implies that women have themselves taken on board traditional concepts associated with masculinity.

International support on women, peace and security issues has largely focused on mitigating threats and risks to women, as opposed to the root causes of violence and insecurity, or transforming the gender norms that perpetuate conflict or contribute to peace. Gender-sensitive approaches have been included as a technical element within protection frameworks, for instance focusing on increasing the numbers of women in AMISOM to improve response and redress on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), rather than seeking to transform clan-defined (mostly elder male) structures at local and national level. Thus, women continue to accept the existing norms and focus on how negative impacts can be mitigated, instead of seeking to challenge them. Our conflict and gender-sensitive approach and the combination of local, national, regional and international advocacy and influencing will adopt this gender transformation gap.

Saferword's **holistic and community-based approach**, recognize that while a national-level state building and peacebuilding process is important, it is only effective when complemented by community-based, multi-level peace and security processes. This will include strengthening existing informal dispute and justice mechanisms to bring them in line with women's rights and challenging gender norms that contribute to and perpetuate conflict and insecurity, and are barriers to women's meaningful participation in decisions on peace, security and justice.

One of the ways this work is done is through community security programs: Community Action Forums (CAF) and Police Accountability Committees are important mechanisms for community engagement. They are formed at the local level and hold dialogues within communities and between communities and state authorities, work collaboratively on security issues and plan responses. More specifically, CAFs often play an important role in conflict management, especially at the community level, and are a community platform in which women participate, raise their needs and challenge

norms and practices affecting women and girls. Their work includes conflict early warning and resolving issues related to: land, water, marital and GBV, inheritance and property disputes, murder, rape, banditry, inter-ethnic and inter-clan conflicts, and petty crime. GBV has concisely been prioritized as a driver of conflict in this work.

Through this webinar, Saferworld and KPSRL aim to share learnings on how communities in securitized environment can implement and utilize existing capacities to respond to different security needs like SGBV management and conflict prevention in a gender and conflict sensitive manner.

The webinar is part of Addressing Root Causes(ARC) learning online series aiming to sstrengthen relationships among the ARC grantees and create connections and linkages across of the ARC projects, engage with pertinent issues of collaborative learning and explore pathways to strengthen collaborative and creative action in learning for a better knowledge uptake in programming and policy.

Key questions to be addressed

· **Programme design/implementation & impact:**
   o To what extent are CAFs able to work on addressing root causes?
      ▪ Have we addressed harmful gender norms, women's participation, GBV?-
      ▪ How can we better engage with youth (Young men and women)?
      ▪ Are we producing research/analysis that we need to underpin these issues?
   · What does **sustainability** look like for this work?
      o What is the CAFs & PACs legitimacy/legal standing to allow them to continue to work with/be heard by authorities, elders, etc,
      o How do we work with police to ensure PACs work is sustained?
      o Strengthening coordination with similar/related community groups, networks and organisations for sustainability.

· How do we improve **efficiency** of the programme?
   o Strengthening coordination & networking with key stakeholders for advocacy phase (community, state, national level)
   o How has the programme contributed to conflict sensitivity?
   o How responsive are the existing structures in responding to sensitive matters such as SGBV? What are the gaps/challenges /how can we address it?

Speakers

1. Maryam Abdi, Saferworld's ARC Programme Manager in Somalia
2. Amina Arale-Advocacy Lead -Somali women development centre

Q&A

Moderated by KPSRL

14.00 – 14.05	**Introduction**	KPSRL
14.05- 14-15	Global overview on approaches to conflict sensitivity and gender	Melissa Booth
14.05 – 14.20	**Programme design/implementation & impact:** To what extent are CAFs able to work on addressing root causes? What does **sustainability** look like for this work?	Maryam Abdi, Saferworld's ARC Programme Manager in Somalia
14.20 – 14.40	How do we improve **efficiency** of the programme? 1.Strengthening coordination & networking with key stakeholders for advocacy phase (community, state, national level) 2. How responsive are the existing structures in responding to sensitive matters such as SGBV? What are the gaps/challenges/how can we address it?	Saferworld-Maryam Hassan SWDC-Amina Arale
14.40 – 15.10	Q&A	Moderated by KPSRL
15.10 – 15.15	Conclusion	Saferworld and KPSRL