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Case Study

Mobilising Male Allies to Support the Feminist Peace Roadmap in Yemen

Case Study by Peace Track Initiative

Headline Summary

The Mobilising Men for Feminist Peace (MMFP) project, implemented by the Peace Track Initiative (PTI), addresses the exclusion of women and marginalized groups from Yemen's peace processes by engaging male allies to promote gender equity and inclusive peacebuilding.

Amid Yemen's deteriorating humanitarian, political, and security conditions, the project established the Men Core Group (MCG)—a platform for male leaders to support feminist peace, particularly the Feminist Peace Roadmap in Yemen (FPR).

Through training, consultations, and structured dialogue, MCG members gained practical tools such as gender and conflict analysis frameworks and policy brief writing skills. These efforts deepened understanding among men of their role in dismantling patriarchal systems and promoting women's participation in peace efforts.

MCG members went on to co-develop policy papers contributing to PTI's Feminist Peace Roadmap and publicly voiced support for women's political participation in Yemen and international forums.

The MMFP Initiative demonstrates that male allyship, when integrated into feminist frameworks, can significantly strengthen peacebuilding and support Yemen's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

Background

Yemen's conflict has created profound political, economic, and security challenges over the past decade, resulting in one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises. Women and marginalized groups have been disproportionately affected, and gender inequalities have deepened. Recent Red Sea strikes and intensified Houthi repression have further disrupted humanitarian and development work, particularly in Houthi-controlled areas, where arbitrary detentions, accusations of espionage, and widespread fear have forced organizations to prioritize staff safety and adopt stricter security measures.

The peace process in Yemen remains largely exclusive, systematically sidelining women, youth, minorities, people with disabilities, and victims of rights abuses. Despite commitments to inclusive peacebuilding, formal negotiations and consultations facilitated by the Office of the

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen (OSESGY) have continued to face criticism for the limited inclusion of women and broader civil society, underscoring persistent barriers to meaningful participation.

These challenges underscore the urgent need for inclusive, locally led peace initiatives that address Yemen's deeply rooted political, social, and gender inequalities.

Feminist Peace in Yemen and the Feminist Peace Roadmap (FPR)

The Peace Track Initiative (PTI) is a feminist Track II organisation, founded in 2017 by women inside and outside Yemen to support peacebuilding and political transformation from a feminist perspective.

PTI works to create conditions for localised and inclusive peacebuilding by strengthening and consolidating movements for feminist peace in Yemen. It creates safe spaces for dialogue, produces feminist knowledge, and promotes feminist leadership to position diverse women's voices in the diplomatic tracks of peace and political processes at the local, national, and international levels.

Over the past years, PTI has worked to create space for Yemeni women from different regions and backgrounds to come together, discuss key issues, and plan joint actions. One of the most significant achievements of this collective work is the development of the **Feminist Peace Roadmap (FPR)** – a guiding framework for mediators and negotiators to achieve peace in Yemen, focusing on the priorities of local and most affected communities from a feminist perspective.

The FPR aims to ensure the implementation of inclusion mechanisms for women, with at least 30% representation in decision-making in all peace and political processes. It also proposes a multilateral peace process that reflects the diverse dynamics of the conflict in Yemen.

The participatory process through which this framework was developed is itself a tangible result of expanded feminist spaces, increasing grassroots civil society ownership of the final product. The draft was initiated by 30 women leaders from the Feminist Core Group—including political leaders, CSO representatives, and independent experts with diverse regional and political affiliations—and developed through consultations with more than 1,000 people, including community, tribal, local authority, political, and civil society leaders. Of those consulted, 73% were women.

What Changed and Why It Matters

In 2023, the Peace Track Initiative (PTI) - with the support of the WILPF Mobilising Men for Feminist Peace (MMFP) Initiative - established the Men Core Group (MCG) to engage male allies in the Feminist Peace Roadmap (FPR) process. This engagement has contributed to dismantling patriarchal norms within Yemen's peacebuilding efforts, ensuring that these processes are increasingly inclusive and feminist.

Through this process, members of the Men Core Group became more engaged with women's rights issues and began to champion feminist peace. They actively contributed to drafting policy papers that enriched the Feminist Peace Roadmap, and participated in advocacy meetings and public engagements promoting an inclusive peace process in Yemen.

This shift translated into concrete action in February 2026, when members of the group lobbied for the appointment of women in the newly formed government, contributing to the inclusion of three women in key ministerial positions, including, for the first time, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), after nearly a decade of women's absence from government. This milestone reflects the group's evolution from awareness-raising to active policy influence.

"The Men Core Group became more sensitive to women's rights issues and began to champion feminist peace—leading by example toward a peaceful, inclusive, and just future for Yemen."

The PTI Men Core Group has contributed to several key changes in Yemen's peace process, including drafting policy papers on the participation of minority groups, which ultimately informed the revised version of the Feminist Peace Roadmap, published in November 2024. The MCG also took part in high-level advocacy meetings organised by PTI, where members publicly voiced their support for an inclusive, feminist peace process in Yemen—challenging patriarchal norms and setting a visible example of partnership for gender equality.

By engaging male allies through the MCG, PTI has been able to bridge divides, challenge entrenched social norms, and promote inclusive dialogue. This innovative approach highlights the critical role of male allies in advancing feminist peace and fostering sustainable solutions to Yemen's multifaceted crises. The approach is both strategic and transformative: by equipping male allies with tools such as Gender and Conflict Analysis (GCA) and policy advocacy training, the project enables them to make meaningful contributions to feminist peacebuilding.

How and Why the Change Happened

The incremental change achieved through this initiative resulted from a series of carefully designed activities by PTI, supported at different stages by WILPF MMFP Initiative. This progress would not have been possible without WILPF's financial and technical support, as well as the continuous involvement of key members of the Men Core Group (MCG) throughout the initiative.

Key Activities and Stages

Establishment of the Men Core Group (MCG): In the second quarter of 2023, PTI invited a selected group of 12 male allies to join the Core Group. Participants included politicians from different political parties involved in the peace negotiations, journalists, academics, and a member of the judiciary. The MCG was designed as a structured platform for male engagement in feminist peace work.

Introductory Group Session: WILPF MMFP Initiative Director Dean Peacock and the Co-Director of the global MenEngage Alliance, Joni van de Sand, shared insights on strategies for engaging men in gender equality and feminist peacebuilding.

Online Capacity Strengthening – Gender and Conflict Analysis Training and Coaching: The Gender and Conflict Analysis (GCA) training aimed to enhance the MCG's understanding of gender dynamics in conflict and peacebuilding processes. Delivered in collaboration with a gender specialist, the workshop included both male and female participants and combined theoretical foundations with practical skill-building exercises.

Topics included:

- Key gender concepts
- Conventional conflict analysis frameworks
- Applying a gender-sensitive lens to conflict dynamics
- Practical exercises through group work, role play, and scenario-based discussions.

Conducted online and supplemented with additional office hours, the training received positive feedback, with participants expressing interest in further sessions on gender analysis and negotiation skills. Despite challenges with continuous attendance, the GCA training marked a significant step toward equipping men and women in Yemen with tools to apply gender perspectives to conflict analysis.

Online Session – “Men-to-Men Conversation”: Before proceeding with political dialogues between the MCG and the Women Core Group, PTI facilitated a session with three high-profile experts from WILPF and the global MenEngage Alliance. The session strengthened male allies’ commitment, deepened their understanding of feminist principles, and ensured their contributions were effectively integrated into broader peace efforts.

Development of Policy Papers for Gender-Sensitive Peacebuilding: Three policy papers were developed for the 2024 Feminist Peace Roadmap (FPR). MCG members actively contributed after being trained on PTI’s policy brief writing toolkit, which integrates gender analysis and advocacy approaches. Their contributions helped identify gaps, articulate recommendations aligned with feminist peace principles, and reinforced the role of male allies as transformative agents in advancing gender-responsive peacebuilding.

Policy Paper Highlights:

- **Local Peace in Hudaydah:** Led by a journalist and human rights activist from Hudaydah (MCG member), this paper addressed humanitarian, economic, and political challenges, including GBV protection, institutional strengthening, social safety nets, corruption, and Red Sea conflicts. Recommendations incorporated gendered impacts and actionable, localised strategies for sustainable peace.
- **Assessment of Rights of Minorities and Marginalised Groups:** Co-led by an MCG member and a Bahá’í community representative, this study examined conditions for marginalised populations, integrated gender perspectives, and provided evidence-based recommendations for inclusion and rights protection.
- **Local Peace in Taiz:** Focused on restoring community trust, rebuilding infrastructure, promoting inclusive governance, and amplifying women’s leadership. The paper emphasised the gendered impacts of conflict and offered concrete steps for sustainable local peace.

Expanded Visibility and Influence through Participation in Public Events: PTI’s work with the MCG was shared in high-level discussions and events where male allies could challenge stereotypes and publicly support women’s participation in feminist peacebuilding. Examples include:

- **Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue / PTI Meeting – “Men and Masculinities in Peacemaking” (19 April 2024):** Coordinated by WILPF MMFP Initiative with The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), PTI discussed the role of men and masculinities in peace-making. The session highlighted the potential of the MCG model to inspire other organisations to adopt similar approaches for advancing gender inclusivity and effective peace-making.
- **Fifth Meeting, Leveraging Track II Peacebuilding in Yemen (T2Y): PTI Session: “Enhancing the Release of Women Detainees in Yemen” (7 October 2024, Amman, Jordan):** As part of its ongoing efforts to promote gender-responsive peacebuilding, PTI organized a strategic session focused on enhancing the release of arbitrarily detained women in Yemen under the broader framework of the Prisoners Exchange Agreement, facilitated by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen (OSESFY). Members of the Men Core Group (MCG) actively participated, sharing perspectives on the siege of Taiz and broader justice issues.

- **Engaging Male Allies: Pathway Towards Inclusive Peace in Yemen – FPR Session (2024):** The first session highlighted Yemen's urgent need for inclusive peacebuilding amid its political and humanitarian crises. Central to the discussion were male allies from the Men Core Group (MCG), whose engagement demonstrated the critical role men play in challenging entrenched gender norms and advancing feminist peace. Five male allies shared perspectives reflecting their evolving understanding of feminist principles through the MMFP Initiative and their readiness to advocate for gender-responsive policies. Their participation offered a collaborative vision of male and female leaders working together to strengthen the Feminist Peace Roadmap (FPR). During the session, new recommendations on Taiz, Hudaydah, and the Rights of Minorities and Marginalized Groups in Yemen—developed with active MCG participation—were presented and discussed.



- **Seventh Feminist Summit – “Significance of Partnerships Between Women and Men to Achieve Feminist Peace in Yemen” (3 December 2024):** On the second day of the summit, the PTI session titled "Significance of Partnerships Between Women and Men to Achieve Feminist Peace in Yemen" provided a crucial forum for strengthening collaboration, advancing knowledge, and highlighting the importance of gender-inclusive approaches to peacebuilding. The discussion emphasized the need to engage men as allies in feminist peace efforts, fostering joint action to support inclusive and effective peace processes in Yemen. Participants shared experiences, practical strategies, and insights on how partnerships between women and men can address the complex challenges of the conflict.



- **The Fifth Feminist Peace Convening, Amman, Jordan (15–18 November 2025):** This convening marked an important milestone, bringing together male allies and the women's core group for their first in-person meeting, building on prior engagement and enabling more direct and substantive exchange. As a policy-oriented platform, it brought together civil society actors, experts, policymakers, donors, and regional and international partners to translate feminist practice in fragile contexts into a structured and actionable framework, particularly for the upcoming phase in Yemen. The convening sought to advance a practical understanding of feminist peace as an entry point for building resilient societies, while strengthening collaboration and generating concrete, implementable recommendations. Within this framework, the participation of male allies formed part of a deliberate effort to support more inclusive and accountable peacebuilding approaches, contributing to discussions grounded in implementation realities and the need to move from commitments to practice.



What are the implications for the future?

The Mobilising Men for Feminist Peace (MMFP) project has provided critical insights into promoting feminist peace in Yemen, highlighting the importance of inclusive, context-sensitive, and cross-gender collaboration.

Key Lessons for PTI and Other Organisations Using Male Engagement Strategies

- **Engaging Male Allies:** The involvement of the Men Core Group (MCG) has been transformative, showing that men can play a vital role in challenging patriarchal norms and advocating for gender-responsive policies.
- **Localization is Key:** Tailoring interventions to Yemen's complex cultural and political context has increased acceptance and relevance within communities.
- **Persistent Structural Barriers:** Despite progress, the underrepresentation of women in decision-making and enduring gender norms remain significant obstacles to inclusive peace.

Strategic Recommendations for PTI:

- **Expand Male Ally Networks:** Engage political, tribal, and community leaders to amplify the influence of male advocates for gender justice.
- **Strengthen Women's Leadership:** Focus on leadership development and increasing access to decision-making spaces for women.
- **Address Cultural Norms:** Implement long-term education and advocacy campaigns to shift attitudes toward gender equality.
- **Deepen Capacity Building:** Introduce advanced training in policy analysis, advocacy, and climate-resilient peacebuilding to build sustained expertise.

Through the MMFP Initiative, Peace Track Initiative received financial and technical support from WILPF to identify and operationalise the Men Core Group (MCG). The MMFP project was the sole contributor enabling PTI to dedicate resources to establishing the MCG, which in turn allowed PTI to engage male allies in the FPR process, dismantle patriarchal norms, and advance inclusive feminist peacebuilding in Yemen.

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