



Press Release

Issued: Tuesday 30 2020

New mobile app to boost role of women in peace processes

A mobile app has been launched to help embed women's rights in peace negotiations in the Arab world and beyond.

Researchers from the Universities of Edinburgh and Monash in Australia and InclusivePeace in Geneva, have developed the data and technology to provide vital information on gender issues for those mediating peace processes.

The PeaceFem app brings together data on women and peacemaking in one easy-to-use app in English and Arabic.

UN Women supported the team on the development of the app – the body within the United Nations that globally champions gender equality, and the idea that all parts of an affected society should be included in its peace process.

The project contributes to the United Nations Security Council's call for greater awareness of gender issues in peace negotiations.

Experts say that including an explicit reference to women's rights in peace agreements recognises the importance of women for social cohesion and ensures that the process of rebuilding a society is fully representative.

The app provides information on 30 peace processes where gender inclusion was a key feature of the peace settlement. Users can search by region, country and peace agreement.

It also contains a fully searchable library of case studies that showcase the strategies used to include women in peace provision, the enabling or limiting factors and the agreements that resulted.

The app draws on data from PA-X – a unique online resource which charts the progress of peace agreements since the end of the Cold War. The online tool was developed by researchers at the Political Settlement Research Programme at the University of Edinburgh

Rachel Dore-Weeks, Head of UN Women Lebanon, said: "COVID-19 has served as a reminder to us of the importance of adapting and finding new ways of connecting, and of sharing and accessing information. This app is an important contribution to redefining how we work on peacemaking in the Arab region, and for taking down barriers that have restricted access to information in the Arab World and beyond."

Professor Christine Bell, Director of the University of Edinburgh's Global Justice Academy, said: "When the Second World War ended, the soldier given the task of drafting the surrender agreement with Germany immediately turned to past peace documents to help him in his drafting. Our experience is that in ending conflict today, parties often find looking at similar documents helpful. This app aims to support women in mediation processes to have access to this information very quickly. We hope it will provide wider inspiration to those seeking imaginative solutions to the conflicts they face, to see the role that



@EdinburghUni



edinburghuniversity



@UniversityOfEdinburgh



@university-of-edinburgh

women have played. We are also very proud to have collaborated with researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, and tech-experts to develop the app.”

PeaceFem also includes 30 case studies developed by InclusivePeace and Monash University’s Gender, Peace and Security Centre.

Jacqui True, Director of Monash Gender, Peace and Security Centre, said: “Gender provisions in peace agreements are major achievements for all parties but what happens to them after agreements are signed? The app provides a snapshot of the implementation challenges and progress for gender provisions in post-conflict settings across the globe. This will empower advocates to monitor commitments and hold states accountable, and gives policymakers the information they need to further target their support.”

Thania Peffenholz, Director of Inclusive Peace, said: “Gender provisions in peace agreements do not come from nowhere - women groups, mediators and their supporters have used different strategies to get them into agreements. PeaceFem provides its users with strategies that are key for getting gender and women provisions into agreements.”

For further information, visit www.politicalsettlements.org/peacefem.

The app was launched on Tuesday 30 June in a seminar discussing the role of women in peace processes. For more information visit <https://edin.ac/2NHMTmc>

PeaceFem is available in the Google Play Store:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=app.trigyn.PeaceFem>

It is also available on the Apple Store: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/peacefem/id1520152849>

For further information, please contact: Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office, 0131 651 4266, joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk