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UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING
INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

“Meet-the-expert” interview on INSTRAW’s *Gender, Peace and Security directory*

Question and Answer with

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[Questions] INSTRAW has just launched a Global Directory of Gender, Peace and Security Research Institutions. How does this project fall in line with INSTRAW’s goals?

[Answer] Since INSTRAW as a research institution has the goal of promoting applied research on gender issues and facilitating information sharing, the directory fits directly into our mandates. This directory is only one of the many initiatives developed by INSTRAW in the area of gender, peace and security.

For instance, we have conducted case studies , designed capacity-building programmes and information dissemination projects. In the field of gender, peace and security, INSTRAW works on a variety of issues including security sector reform, violence against women and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

[Questions] What range of issues are covered by INSTRAW’s directory? And what kind of information can be found there?

[Answer] Our directory includes a large range of “areas of specialisation”, not only issues related to war or conflict. For instance, women’s human rights, issues of refugees and internally displaced people, violence against women and women’s political participation, issues which are applicable in countries around the world.

This fully-searchable online tool contains the full contact information of each research institution as well as their region of work, languages, areas of specialisation, staff and whether or not they offer classes or degrees in gender, peace and security issues.

[Question] In order to mainstream gender issues in the context of armed conflict and peace, the need for the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is often stressed. Could this online directory of research institutions help turn policy into practice?

[Answer] The Resolution itself has a phrase that says “noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls” and then goes on to list all the specific mandates. I think that the Security Council Resolution itself acknowledges that there is a need for more data and the consolidation of information on the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls.

An online directory can improve and support the full implementation of the Resolution 1325 through providing the opportunity for researchers to exchange information, to increase collaboration and coordination and thus attain higher quality research. It can also facilitate exchange between researchers, practitioners and policymakers linking those who are searching for information to those who are researching gender, peace and security issues around the world.

[Questions] Who may be interested in utilising this online tool? And how could they make use of it?

[Answer] Anyone that is interested in gender, peace and security issues is going to find this a very useful tool. Not only people in academia but also practitioners who are looking for information on gender, peace and security issues. Anyone who is searching for experts can find information on gender, peace and security staff in this directory. Also students who are interested in pursuing studies in the field and want to find information on where they can take classes and where they can find degrees on this issues.

[Questions] There are other existing worldwide databases on gender and security issues. What makes this one different from the others?

[Answer] Other databases include detailed information on gender, peace and security issues. However they do not include information specifically focused on research institutions.

[Questions] What kind of institutions are included in this online directory ? What are the criteria for the organisations to get in?

[Answer] It is a diverse group of institutions which are included. Not only universities and colleges but also NGOs, independent research organisations and UN bodies.

Regarding the criteria, there are four specific criteria for the inclusion of the institutions in the directory. The first is whether they have a considerable number of publications on gender, peace and security issues. The second is whether the institution has renowned researchers on gender, peace and security issues. The third is whether they offer university degrees on gender, peace and security issues such as a BA, MA or PhD. And the final criteria is that they offer three or more classes on gender, peace and security issues. The institutions should meet one or more of these criteria for inclusion.

[Question] Is this directory a comprehensive tool? Is it too late for other research institutions to jump on the train?

[Answer] As of today, it includes 108 research institutions across the world. INSTRAW encourages interested research institutions to contact us. There is an online information form available for institutions to submit additional information and be included in the directory. It is a “work-in-progress” that is going to be updated continuously and we invite other research institutions not only to update the information they have online but to give us suggestions about other institutions that should be included in the directory.