

GAPS Submission to the Lords Select Committee on Sexual Violence in Conflict

18th September 2015

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Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) is the UK's only Women, Peace and Security civil society network. We are a membership organisation of 17 NGOs and experts in the field of development, human rights, humanitarian and peacebuilding.

Questions answered:

The International Policy Agenda

1. What evidence is there on the effectiveness of the UK's engagement to date, with the global policy agenda on preventing sexual violence in conflict?

c. How can the UK use its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to advance the global policy agenda on preventing sexual violence in conflict, for example, through the UK's input to the Security Council's High-level Review of Resolution 1325?

d. How might the UK use the World Humanitarian Summit that will take place in May 2016 to further the prevention of sexual violence in conflict? What other fora might the UK use to advance its objectives?

Participation

6. How can the UK best use its influence to promote and increase the participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution?

a. What are the barriers to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and how can the UK assist in tackling these?

Military

7. Does UK military doctrine and training adequately support the prevention and response to sexual violence in conflict?

a. What is military good practice in this area and how can this be scaled and implemented?

c. How can the UK best work with the EU, NATO and other bodies to ensure the prevention of sexual violence in conflict is appropriately incorporated into training programmes, missions and multilateral defence policy?

ANSWERS

1. What evidence is there on the effectiveness of the UK's engagement to date, with the global policy agenda on preventing sexual violence in conflict?

c. How can the UK use its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to advance the global policy agenda on preventing sexual violence in conflict, for example, through the UK's input to the Security Council's High-level Review of Resolution 1325?

i. The UK is an established global leader on Women, Peace and Security and has permanent member status at the UN Security Council, membership of NATO, the EU, the Commonwealth, and is a leading aid donor. Following on from the UK's global leadership on the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, and the Call to Action on Protecting Girls and Women in Emergencies, the UK Government must now ensure it continues to galvanise global attention, resolve and funding for the issue of Women, Peace and Security.

ii. Ahead of the High Level Review of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 taking place in October, GAPS has produced a position paper calling on the UK Government, through both its own policies and international role on Women, Peace and Security, to deliver commitments in the following three priority areas. It is paramount that the commitments made by the UK are specific and measurable to ensure progress can be measured annually in fora such as the Security Council as well as at UK level:

1. Support the inclusive and comprehensive implementation of the Women, Peace and Security framework, with a focus on women's and adolescent girls' participation.

For example, HMG should:

- **Commit to supporting women's leadership and meaningful participation in international and regional peace and security meetings, peace negotiations and donor conferences, and associated consultations.**
- **Pledge to ensure that UK support to the six UK NAP focus countries to develop and/or implement their own costed and funded National Action Plans will include a technical focus on creating spaces for women's full and meaningful participation in their design, ongoing review and revision, and UK funding to facilitate such participation by local civil society organisations and women's rights groups.**
- **Call on the World Humanitarian Summit to advance gender equality and women's and girls' rights and leadership in all humanitarian action (see answer to question 1.d)**
- **Commit to scale up deployment of senior and operational gender advisors to UK military operations, as well as to UN Missions from the outset, and integrate their advice into planning, operations, training and Military Doctrine (see answer to question 7).**

2. Commit new, dedicated and accessible funding for Women, Peace and Security, and better tracking of all HMG spend for Women, Peace and Security activities.

For example:

- **Commit earmarked funding to UK Women, Peace and Security activities, with a clear and transparent budget for the four pillars of the NAP, tracked through the use of gender markers (including OCED and IASC markers). This should align with the UN target for a minimum of 15% of peacebuilding spending**

to be dedicated to further women's empowerment and gender equality and should include long-term funding support to women's rights organisations through the roll out of accessible funding streams for grassroots organisations.

- **Commit new additional UK funding to the proposed Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security.**

3. Strengthen leadership and accountability for Women, Peace and Security at global, regional and UK levels.

For example:

- At the global level: **Encourage other Member States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, with a focus on implementation of Article 7 (4)**, which requires the exporting State Party to take into account the risk of conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.
- At the UK level: **Announce dedicated capacity for Women, Peace and Security in all UK embassies in fragile and conflict-affected countries as well as in diplomatic missions to regional and global institutions** (ie dedicated Women, Peace and Security desk officers and training programmes).

iii. For the full GAPS position please visit: <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/GAPS-HLR-Policy-Brief1.pdf>

The International Policy Agenda

1.d. How might the UK use the World Humanitarian Summit that will take place in May 2016 to further the prevention of sexual violence in conflict? What other fora might the UK use to advance its objectives?

iv. All too often, humanitarian leadership fails to hold actors accountable to gender-responsive funding, planning and programming or to prioritize actions that ensure lifesaving gender-based violence (GBV) services and risk reduction. GBV coordination mechanisms lack capacity, limiting action on the ground and advocacy to mobilise other humanitarian sectors on GBV risk reduction. Women and girls are excluded from humanitarian assessment, design, planning and implementation. All these factors lead to poor and insufficient gender analysis which, in turn, leads to a paramount failure to (i) put in place specialised GBV services, (ii) to ensure risk reduction approaches across all programming to prevent GBV, or (iii) to identify opportunities to support the transformation of gendered power relations in the work of all humanitarian sectors.

v. GAPS, the Gender and Development Network and InterAction have produced a briefing paper in which we call on all stakeholders involved in the World Humanitarian Summit to work with us towards realizing a transformative change in the way the humanitarian community prioritizes, integrates and coordinates gender equality and GBV in emergency response efforts. Towards this end, we call on the UK Government (alongside and other governments, UN agencies, civil society, and the private sector) to make the following pledges at the World Humanitarian Summit and through the summit preparations:

- 1. Empower women and girls from crisis-affected populations to participate in humanitarian assistance, protection and recovery programmes, as well as in 'accountability to affected populations' efforts.**

2. Prioritize the engagement of local women’s groups in humanitarian action through reforms in humanitarian funding, partnerships, leadership and coordination.

3. Strengthen government capacity to address gender equality and GBV in national disaster risk reduction (DRR), resilience, preparedness and response strategies and programmes.

4. Put minimum standards on gender equality and GBV at the heart of World Humanitarian Summit outcomes on humanitarian aid effectiveness and accountability.

5. Use the ‘Call to Action on protection from GBV in emergencies’ Roadmap to 2020 and the 15th anniversary review of UNSCR 1325 to guide gender equality and GBV outcomes of the WHS; and include specific references to GBV in the World Humanitarian Summit outcomes on International Humanitarian Law.

vi. Building on point 5, GAPS is calling for the UK Government to make the following commitments at the High Level Review of Resolution 1325 in relation to the World Humanitarian Summit (see answer to question 1c) and its humanitarian response work,

Specifically **we are calling on the UK Government to:**

- **Use its international leadership role to call on the World Humanitarian Summit to advance gender equality and women's and girls' rights and leadership in all humanitarian action**, by calling on humanitarian agencies and sectors to prioritise gender equality and address violence against women and girls (VAWG) in all emergency and humanitarian assistance, emergency assessments and response plans.
- **Provide immediate funding at the onset of an emergency for the deployment of gender based violence/ violence against women advisors and gender/GENCAP advisors** to support response efforts through the cluster system.

vii. The full briefing paper is available here: <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Position-Paper-on-the-World-Humanitarian-Summit.pdf>

Participation

6. How can the UK best use its influence to promote and increase the participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution?

a. What are the barriers to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and how can the UK assist in tackling these?

viii. While much action on gender and conflict to date has provided a welcome spotlight on sexual violence, an **increased focus is needed on women’s and adolescent girls’ leadership and their right to full and equal participation in all efforts to establish peace and security, at all levels.** Such approach is critical in achieving transformative change for women and girls in fragile and conflict affected settings, and stopping violence before it starts.

ix. The UK can play an international leadership role in this regard by giving greater prominence to the importance of women's participation in peace building as part of the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative. It is by ensuring women and girls are effectively integrated into conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding that will we see formal and informal institutions support the realisation of women's rights and gender equality. Without this, the unequal gendered power relations between men and women that drives sexual violence in all contexts, will not be addressed.

x. The UK should also model the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda by anchoring its work under the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative within the broader UK Women, Peace and Security agenda and National Action Plan for Women Peace and Security (NAP). This will foster greater linkages between the NAP pillars on the prevention of violence against women and women's participation in peacebuilding, as well as the pillars on humanitarian action and protecting women's rights.

xi. Better integration across the pillars of the NAP will also help to ensure the government takes a holistic approach to addressing violence across multiple levels (individual, relationships, community and society) and across sectors (economic life, education, health, justice, security and welfare) in line with DFID's Guidance notes.

xii. The government should ensure that it consults regularly with women's rights organisations in the planning and implementation of Women, Peace and Security work to identify civil society priorities and relevant national processes and ensure that any activities to address violence against women take a survivor-centred approach.

Military

7. Does UK military doctrine and training adequately support the prevention and response to sexual violence in conflict?

7a. What is military good practice in this area and how can this be scaled and implemented?

7c. How can the UK best work with the EU, NATO and other bodies to ensure the prevention of sexual violence in conflict is appropriately incorporated into training programmes, missions and multilateral defence policy?

xiii. As part of the package of commitments GAPS is calling on the UK Government to make at the High Level Review on Resolution 1325, we are calling specially for the UK to commit to scale up deployment of senior and operational gender advisors to UK military operations, and UN Missions, and integrate their advice into planning, operations, training and Military Doctrine (see answer to question 1c)

xiv. These gender advisors should be supported by the appointment of a senior UK dedicated military Gender Advisor to assist in advice to the Command – at top UK Defence level including the Chief of Defence Staff and the new UK Military Champion for Women, Peace and Security.

xv. In addition, GAPS is urging the UK to advocate for reform within the UN Missions at the High Level Review by calling for mandatory pre-deployment gender training for all peacekeepers as well as ongoing gender sensitivity training for all UN staff.

xvi. By deploying UK gender advisors on UN Missions the UK would set a strong example and complement the work being done by other Government departments who are involved with the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative.

xvii. While the MoD training on sexual violence has increased in recent years to support the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, further training on Women, Peace and Security is needed for all UK military personnel as well as part of all training and assistance to overseas military.

ENDS