



gender action for peace and security

Assessing UK Government Action on Women, Peace and Security in 2018

January 2019

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About GAPS

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) is the UK's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) civil society network. We are a membership organisation of NGOs and experts in the fields of development, human rights, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding. We were founded to promote WPS, including United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. GAPS promotes and holds the UK Government to account on its international commitments to women and girls in conflict areas worldwide.

GAPS welcomes its collaborative relationship with the UK Government as it develops, reviews and implements its WPS commitments. The dedication of the UK Government's cross-Whitehall WPS group is clear and remains an important mechanism for the implementation of the fourth UK National Action Plan on WPS (NAP).

This report builds on previous GAPS documents which include analysis of and recommendations for the UK Government's work on WPS. These include our previous annual shadow reports,¹ a written submission to inform the current NAP (April 2017)² and our six-month check-in to the current NAP (July 2018).³

¹ Including: <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Assessing-UK-Government-Action-on-Women-Peace-and-Security-in-2017.pdf> and <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Assessing-UK-Government-Action-on-Women-Peace-and-Security-in-2016.pdf>

² <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Informing-the-new-UK-NAP-on-WPS-GAPS-submission-April-2017.pdf>

³ <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/GAPS-NAP-Six-Month-Check-In-2018.pdf>

1. Introduction: UK Government Progress on its NAP in 2018

GAPS welcomed the NAP in our six-month check-in.⁴ Most notably, GAPS and our members welcomed the consultative nature of the NAP's development, the move to Strategic Outcomes, and the commitment and dedication of the UK Government officials who developed the NAP. GAPS was encouraged by the UK Government's inclusion of an Internal Capabilities Strategic Outcome, which committed the UK Government to ensuring its systems, processes, policies and people support and learn from NAP implementation.

The UK Government's 2018 annual report demonstrates that the UK has undertaken a range of WPS activities in the first year of the NAP. GAPS has consistently advocated for a reporting format that is both manageable for UK Government officials, and demonstrates and identifies the successes and disparities in implementation. Nevertheless, the ongoing use of an activity-style narrative format in annual reports (including the 2018 report) makes it almost impossible to assess: the impact of these activities; whether they meet the intended impact; or whether the NAP is having an impact overall.

GAPS welcomes the commitment to monitoring and evaluation in the NAP and the annual report, particularly the commitments to working with civil society on the evaluation. GAPS continues to offer support to this process to ensure it is rigorous and brings about the necessary changes for optimal implementation and impact on the lives of women and girls affected by conflict and gender inequality in Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS). Yet there are evident gaps in the UK Government's approach, including: the extent of unmeasured and/or unreported data in the Indicators Annex; and evaluation plans that will assess only whether the UK Government is using the NAP to develop and design policy and programmes in FCAS rather the impact of its WPS efforts.

The annual report clearly outlines activities taking place under each of the strategic outcomes, which is useful. However, the nature of the report makes it difficult to assess the inclusion of gender in "mainstream" peace and security work. For example, in some activities there is information on the amount of funding spent, in others not; in some areas the report outlines the numbers of women and girls targeted in a programme compared to male beneficiaries, and in others it just has the number of women. The collection and reporting of such data should be uniform to enable national and international civil society and partners to hold the UK Government to account. Furthermore, some of the figures need significant increases if they are going to be impactful. For example, 180 trained women in the Afghan National Army Officer Academy out of 3,000 represents only 6%. This falls significantly below the number of women needed to constitute a critical mass to impact change which, as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, is 30%. Equally, £25,000 for 10 organisations in Libya to work on gender-based violence (GBV) falls well below demand at an average of £2,500 per organisation.

GAPS has long believed that national capability (Strategic Outcome 7) is the area in which the UK Government will make significant difference. Only by getting systems, processes, policies and people to buy into and develop the UK Government's WPS efforts will there be long-term, systematic impact. There are clear areas in which the UK Government has undertaken work, including the publication of gender strategies for some focus countries. Yet the narrative section on Strategic Outcome 7 is relatively short, there are large data gaps in the Indicators Annex reporting for this outcome, and not one of the six Guidance Notes have been produced to date. The first year of NAP implementation was a major opportunity for the UK Government to develop its national capability to set itself up for five years of successful implementation. GAPS is committed to working with the UK

⁴ <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/GAPS-NAP-Six-Month-Check-In-2018.pdf>

Government in this area and believes a significant increase in activities is required for Strategic Outcome 7 to have the desired impact.

Whilst progress is clearly being made and the extensive commitment of the cross-Whitehall Working Group is evident, it remains vital that the UK Government upscales its efforts, particularly on:

- Funding for WPS, particularly for Women's Rights Organisations, peacebuilders and human rights defenders;
- Addressing the root causes and drivers of gender inequality and conflict;
- Meeting arms control commitments;
- Domestic implementation of WPS; and
- Community-based peacebuilding, including through the Department for International Development's (DFID) re-entry into Security and Justice work.

For the UK Government to achieve its global leadership role, it is vital that these areas are prioritised, funded, and that impact is monitored.

GAPS remains encouraged by and supportive of the cross-Whitehall Working Group for their commitment and dedication. GAPS hopes to continue our close collaboration with the UK Government on the NAP, as well as on gender and women and girls' rights in broader conflict and peacebuilding policy. GAPS particularly welcomes the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) partnership plans with GAPS for consultations in the UK and FCAS ahead of the 2019 Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) International Conference and 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020. This is clear and evident commitment to the UK Government's belief in partnership and the value of the role civil society plays in peacebuilding, women and girls' rights, and gender equality.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Women and girls' meaningful participation in all NAP monitoring and evaluation processes is key to identifying and understanding advances, challenges, opportunities and gaps to better enable the UK Government to undertake early and context-specific assessments of impact that inform the UK Government's policy and programming adaptation.⁵ We therefore welcome the UK Government's prior investment in consultations with women and girls in FCAS and UK civil society to review the impact of previous NAPs and inform the drafting of the current NAP. Such processes are key to qualitatively assessing whether the UK Government is delivering change for the primary beneficiaries of the NAP, women and girls affected by conflict. In line with the 2018 UN Women report,⁶ the UK Government should integrate support for women and adolescent girls' meaningful participation into all NAP monitoring and evaluation processes, including by providing adequate resources for effective and meaningful consultations in all focus countries. To ensure that such processes are supportive of the UK Government's overarching commitment to women and adolescent girls' participation, consultations should be locally-led and supported by UK civil society.

GAPS welcomes meeting the consultant undertaking the first stage of the UK Government's NAP evaluation and looks forward to working with officials on the terms of reference for the NAP independent process evaluation. However, there is a continued absence of a coherent monitoring and evaluation framework for the NAP, including a clear approach, reported on impact indicators, and a robust baseline. Whilst GAPS welcomes efforts by the UK Government to standardise

⁵ As noted in [UN Women \(2018\) Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements: Report of the Expert Group Meeting. New York, US, UN Women](#)

⁶ Ibid.

reporting, we remain concerned that the deadline for commissioning the evaluation has slipped to the second year of the NAP and that this indicates a continued focus on process rather than impact.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should **standardise meaningful consultations with women and girls affected by conflict, including to support monitoring and evaluation efforts**. Such consultations in focus countries should be **civil society-led, funded, meaningful, accessible and occur alongside ongoing dialogues** with diverse local women's rights organisations, human rights defenders and peacebuilders.
- The UK Government should **work towards a thematic (WPS) meta-evaluation of the NAP** that is: **participatory**; uses a robust **gender-sensitive approach**; includes developing a **baseline**; and has **impact indicators** to measure progress under each of the strategic outcomes.

3. Funding for Women Peace and Security

GAPS has consistently recommended that NAPs have a dedicated budget to support their effective implementation across the UK Government and in the nine focus countries, and to ensure that Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending on women and girls' rights in FCAS is openly and transparently reported on, including in annual reports (see introduction).⁷ This should build upon WPS spend that is mainstreamed into broader peace and security programming, as well as specific WPS programmes. It remains essential that any funding to WPS is tracked and reported on so that the UK Government can monitor and uplift spend where necessary.

In 2017, GAPS welcomed transparency from the UK Government in sharing overall Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) spend on gender equality. The expansion of the Gender Equality Act requirements to all ODA and non-ODA CSSF programmes in 2018 and setting it as a mandatory requirement for next year is a positive step, but this should not replace the need for dedicated gender and WPS programmes. Unless this data is collected and published, it is difficult to see the extent to which CSSF funds are actually advancing NAP-specific commitments and objectives.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should establish a **dedicated WPS fund** to support work on gender equality, women and girls' rights, women's empowerment work and to support NAP implementation. This should represent a minimum of 15% of all peacebuilding funds (multilateral and bilateral).
- The UK Government should **track and publish all spend in FCAS using the Gender Equality Marker (GEM)** to have more effective, open and transparent reporting on WPS spend.
- The UK Government should **provide dedicated, long-term, core, flexible funding for women's rights organisations** to support their vital work in providing front-line services in FCAS, building peace and promoting long-term development and change.

⁷ See, for example, [GAPS's written submission on the new UK NAP \(April 2017\)](#), our [six-month check-in \(July 2018\)](#) and our previous shadow reports ([2015](#), [2016](#) and [2017](#)).

4. Consultation and Analysis

In 2017, the UK Government set an important precedent by providing adequate resources to GAPS for effective consultations that gathered the views of civil society in NAP focus countries. GAPS members led consultations with civil society organisations from Afghanistan, Myanmar, Somalia and Syria responsible for implementing WPS activities at national and local levels.⁸ GAPS welcomed this collaborative approach to developing the current NAP and the increased commitment to engaging with women's rights organisations, peacebuilders and women human rights defenders in FCAS. GAPS welcomes the FCO's plans for consultations ahead of the PSVI International Conference in 2019 and 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020, and looks forward to working with the UK Government to deliver these. GAPS has since built on the consultations in 2017 and is partnering with some members on a project to develop a toolkit to ensure effective and meaningful engagement with women, girls and women's rights organisations in the development of programmes, policy and international events.

Meaningful dialogue must be grounded in the practical application of gender-sensitive conflict analysis tools and methodologies. This requires the UK Government to provide practical tools, guidance and resources to its staff and implementing partners to support the cross-government use of gender-sensitive conflict analysis to prioritise the identification and transformation of gendered causes of conflict and violence. This analysis can strengthen UK Government and partner capacity to better target their WPS efforts and respond more flexibly to changes.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should commit **further investment in consultation by providing sufficient funding and time** to engage with women's rights organisations, women human rights defenders and civil society both in the UK and FCAS. GAPS welcomes plans to do this for the 2019 PSVI International Conference and 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020.
- The UK Government should develop a **stronger, better funded and mixed-method** approach to consultation and analysis based on ongoing participatory and meaningful dialogue with women and girls in FCAS in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the NAP and other related UK Government policies. Such policies include DFID's Strategic Vision for Gender Equality, PSVI and the approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as any international events hosted jointly or solely by the UK Government. GAPS welcomes the positive steps the FCO is taking on PSVI and the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. This is essential to better meet the varying needs of women, girls and women's rights organisations to ensure a diversity of perspectives.
- The UK Government should systematically **embed the use of gender-sensitive conflict analysis** across all aspects of the NAP, including in all UK-funded activities in focus countries and all guidance, tools and training provided to guide staff and partners on conducting conflict analysis.

⁸ Gender and Development Institute (Myanmar); Medica (Afghanistan); Somali Women Development Centre; Somali Women Solidarity Organisation; and Women for Development Now (Syria).

5. Support and Funding to Women’s Rights Organisations, Women Human Rights Defenders and Peacebuilders

GAPS reiterates the fundamental importance of and need for space for women-led civil society, particularly women’s rights organisations and movements, and women human rights defenders, to achieving any WPS progress. Not only was this one of the principal findings of the UK Government-funded GAPS consultations into WPS priorities for the 2018-22 UK NAP,⁹ but the 2015 Global Study also asserted that “*normative advances in the framework for women, peace and security...are owed chiefly to [women’s civil society organisations] diligent, creative and strategic advocacy and activism*”.¹⁰ Efforts to close the gap between WPS policy and implementation will not be effective or sustainable without the full involvement of and support to women’s rights organisations, women human rights defenders and peacebuilders at local levels. This year has seen some progress on this front, including additional funding via the Jo Cox Memorial Strengthening grants and Ministerial meetings with women’s civil society organisations during overseas visits.

However, there remain significant opportunities for the UK Government to further its support for women’s rights organisations, peacebuilders and women human rights defenders. GAPS has long called for the UK Government to step up implementation on commitments to supporting women’s rights organisations and women human rights defenders, and to achieving “*the full delivery of Resolution 1325 by 2020*.”¹¹ Recognising that progress will not happen without women’s rights organisations and women human rights defenders will strengthen support for and commitments to their work. This in turn will lead to the most efficient and effective implementation of all strategic outcomes and the NAP as a whole.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should use the NAP to drive forward **core, flexible and long-term funding to organisations providing services and advocating for peace, women and girls’ rights and gender equality at local levels**. This funding should be aimed at programme delivery as well as supporting the infrastructure of women’s rights organisations who are often the first responders in crisis and deliver critical services.
- As one of the largest humanitarian donors, **the UK Government could advocate more strongly for the localisation of humanitarian aid, and power and leadership to national and local women’s organisations**. Global efforts to reform the humanitarian system through the Grand Bargain require sustained political attention and support, in addition to the policy, technical and operational developments being made.
- Future **UK Government annual reports on WPS should detail all forms of support being provided to women’s rights organisations and women human rights defenders**, including funding, diplomatic, capacity building, and human resources.

⁹ <http://gaps-uk.org/womens-voices-uk-national-action-plan-women-peace-security-summary-report/>

¹⁰ [A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325](#), page 32.

¹¹ Statement by Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the Security Council on security issues in the Sahel, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/women-peace-and-the-security-in-the-sahel>

6. Conflict Prevention, Root Causes and the Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism Agenda

NAP Strategic Outcome 6 on preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) is framed as most directly related to 'participation'. However, re-orientating Strategic Outcome 6 towards an approach targeting the gendered root causes of conflict and violence and the causal relationship with gender inequality would more comprehensively address the pillars of WPS, particularly protection and prevention.¹² This could be done by addressing the following two areas:

6.1. Root causes of violence and conflict

As outlined in the GAPS six-month check-in,¹³ of the NAP's seven strategic outcomes only Strategic Outcome 6 on P/CVE specifically addresses conflict prevention. Embedding the broader WPS conflict prevention and peacebuilding agenda within an overarching P/CVE framework poses a number of challenges and risks. For example, this approach may increase the instrumentalisation of women and girls to achieve P/CVE programming outcomes, and further squeeze women's rights organisations between terror and counter-terror in local communities.¹⁴ A focus on P/CVE also serves to deprioritise broader peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities that fall outside the remit of the P/CVE space. This directly counters the purpose of UNSCR 1325. It also narrows the scope for who should be engaged, potentially focusing on groups in areas deemed 'at risk of radicalisation' rather than basing initiatives on the broader structural and systemic issues causing conflict, violence and the exclusion of women and girls from peacebuilding efforts. Without emphasising the underlying socially- and culturally-mediated experiences of women, men, and gender and sexual minorities within specific conflict-contexts as well as the structures and institutions that perpetuate these experiences, policy and programming emerging from the NAP can only address the symptoms or effects of conflict rather than the fundamental root causes and drivers.

6.2. Emphasising local-level impact

For the NAP to have a significant impact on the gendered root causes and drivers of violence and conflict, programming should consider carefully the impact at sub-national and local levels, in addition to high-level national and international fora. Recent research on the local implementation of Afghanistan's WPS NAP offers important lessons on bridging the gap between high-level action and local-level engagement.¹⁵ The Afghan NAP's restricted interpretation of the WPS agenda is exemplified in a disproportionate focus on policy reform and legislative initiatives, and a lack of emphasis on regional, everyday gendered conflict-experiences and the impact on women and girls' rights. Alongside support to policy and legislation reform, there needs to be more investment in a holistic approach to women and girls' rights that includes: women's leadership in conflict resolution; inclusive security mechanisms at the local level; ending GBV; and women's participation in decision-making at all levels. Integrating mechanisms that focus on emphasising change at the sub-national and local levels into all WPS work in addition to high-level activities could foster real change. Bolstering attention to the impact of the NAP at this level could ensure that the WPS agenda becomes more inclusive for all women, men and gender and sexual minorities in conflict.

¹² http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/GAPS-report_Prioritise-Peace-Challenging-Approaches-to-P-CVE-from-a-WPS-perspective.pdf

¹³ <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/GAPS-NAP-Six-Month-Check-In-2018.pdf>

¹⁴ [Duke Law International Human Rights Clinic and Women Peacemakers Program \(2017\) *Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security*.](#)

¹⁵ [International Alert \(2018\) *The local level implementation of Afghanistan's national action plan on UNSCR1325: women, peace and security*.](#)

Recommendations

- The UK Government should **ensure that the NAP is more focused on conflict prevention** by orienting the framing of conflict prevention away from its current entrenchment in the P/CVE space towards an approach targeting the **gendered root causes of conflict and violence, underpinned by robust, gender-sensitive conflict analysis to map the gendered drivers.**
- The UK Government should **ensure the NAP emphasises the importance of, and integrates mechanisms to encourage, impact and change at all levels within society,** with particular attention to reaching beyond high-level fora to the sub-national and local levels. The integration of local-level and culturally-relevant impact indicators and monitoring and evaluation measures in the NAP could enable and encourage this dimension of WPS work.

7. The Arms Trade Treaty

GAPS continues to commend the UK Government for playing a significant role in the development and adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which makes clear that arms control is a gendered issue and emphasises the gendered impacts of the arms trade. Despite this positive step, GAPS was disappointed by the lack of leadership shown by the UK Government on the gendered impact of arms and the arms trade at the UN General Assembly Committee for Disarmament and International Security (First Committee) in October 2018. This sets back important and hard-fought work in this field and goes directly against UK Government policies and commitments, including those under the NAP.

Despite the ATT, the UK Government continues to export arms to countries which have used weapons in a disproportionate and illegal manner against civilians, including to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This contributes to the escalation of the Yemen conflict and to the violence committed against women and girls, who are suffering disproportionately. The lack of reference to the ATT in the NAP continues to be a concern and GAPS encourages the UK Government to use the NAP to reaffirm its commitment to the ATT and its related resolutions.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should give assurance that, in the course of the ongoing EU review of Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on Arms Exports by the COARM working group, it is **supportive of efforts to incorporate language on gender and on GBV drawn from Article 7.4 of the ATT into the Common Position,** as per the UK Government's Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria.
- The UK Government should **commit to achieving gender balance in UK Government delegations to all arms-related events and to include a WPS or Gender Adviser in those delegations wherever possible,** as per the request of Ambassador Jānis Kārklīņš of Latvia, the current president of the ATT process. The UK Government should also **support the priority theme for Latvia's presidency of the ATT, gender and arms-related GBV.**
- The UK Government should **conduct training** on the relationship between GBV, arms and arms transfers for export licensing and diplomatic personnel working on disarmament and disarmament-related issues. It should conduct **effective and transparent gendered impact assessments of international arms transfers** and use findings to inform decisions as part of the arms export licensing process and ensure the effective regulation of the UK's arms trade

to prevent the use of arms to commit or facilitate acts of GBV, in accordance with the obligations under Article 7.4 of the ATT. In addition, the UK Government should **publish information on the number of occasions gender was a factor in a license refusal** or was included as a cautionary factor in a licensing decision.

8. Gender-Based Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls

Preventing and responding to GBV relates directly and indirectly to all the other strategic outcomes of the NAP and is of direct and indirect relevance to all four pillars of the WPS agenda. While historically much of the work on GBV within the UNSCR 1325 framework has focused on the prevention of and protection from conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), especially against women and girls, it is an issue that is of relevance to participation and relief and recovery as well. GBV and CRSV are symptoms of broader inequalities and cannot be prevented without addressing the root causes of conflict and prioritising women and girls' participation. The NAP laudably takes a broader approach to GBV than only examining CRSV by recognising the continued and increased salience of preventing domestic and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) in contexts of conflict and displacement, in highlighting the risks of GBV faced by human rights defenders, and in underscoring that GBV is used against persons of any gender identity. The 2019 PSVI International Conference is an important opportunity for the UK Government to demonstrate its commitment to preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG) through holistic approaches that address the root causes of sexual and gender-based violence and meaningfully include women and girls.

Recent evidence calls for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of GBV in contexts of conflict and displacement. Much of this evidence base comes out of research, programming and policy development processes directly funded and supported by the UK Government, such as the DFID-funded What Works to Prevent VAWG. Although the UK Government has played a major, positive role in this field globally, not all of the areas highlighted in Strategic Outcome 3 have received adequate attention, such as the prevention of GBV against women human rights defenders and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should set an example at home by **ratifying the Istanbul Convention in the broadest way and without reservation**.
- The UK Government should ensure the **Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Action** are mandatory for all UK Government implementing partners in FCAS. All officials working on conflict issues should be well informed about the policy and programmatic objectives.
- The UK Government should continue to **encourage other governments to increase their funding for GBV prevention and response, particularly to local-level civil society organisations**, in particular women's rights organisations.
- We urge the UK Government to **use its diplomatic leverage and its bilateral programmes** (including training for the military and other security sector institutions) **to reduce acts of GBV by state and non-state actors, as well as to address DV/IPV** both in NAP focus countries and ones with which it maintains friendly relations.

9. Humanitarian

The launch of the NAP and DFID's Strategic Vision for Gender Equality in early 2018 saw welcome coherence between the two policies. The alignment between both documents on women and girls' participation and leadership in humanitarian response lays the groundwork for consistent implementation across all UK Government departments and partners involved in delivering the UK Government's humanitarian assistance and in system reform. They also provide an important foundation for the UK Government to further develop its work on the links between humanitarian and development efforts and ensure that peacebuilding and a rights-based, do no harm approach are firmly included in within this policy area.

In 2018, the UK Government has made welcome steps in this area, including updating the Technical Guidance Note on VAWG in Emergencies to include guidance on engagement with local women's groups in VAWG prevention and response. The UK hosted the Safeguarding Summit, and made subsequent commitments to increase women and girls' participation in the humanitarian system at all levels, implementing minimum standards, and shifting organisational culture. The UK Government has also represented the Informal Friends of Gender group for the Grand Bargain on the Facilitation Group and committed to advocating for gender mainstreaming within the humanitarian sector reform process. The UK Government should do more to understand and address issues of power, gender and accountability in the humanitarian system, which was missing from the outcomes document in the Safeguarding Summit.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should **undertake a review of the UK Government's use of Minimum Standards on Gender and Safeguarding in the Syria Response** and use the learning to **roll out cross-departmental strategies and DFID's Minimum Standards across all crisis settings**;
- The UK Government should **do more to address deeper issues of women and girls' rights, gender, power and accountability in the humanitarian system**. Despite reference to increasing women in senior leadership and changing organisational culture, the outcome documents from the Safeguarding Summit make no reference to inherent gender inequalities and power imbalances, nor acknowledge why women's leadership contributes to better, safer humanitarian assistance.
- The UK Government should **commit resources and political support to women's leadership within the localisation work stream of the Grand Bargain** (see Section 3 - Funding).

10. Domestic Implementation

UNSCR 1325 and the related resolutions apply to international and domestic policies and programmes in and related to peace and conflict. Furthermore, the SDGs require all countries to deliver the whole agenda both at home and abroad, including SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peaceful societies by 2030. However, the current NAP still focuses solely on the UK Government's work overseas. It does not extend the UK Government's WPS commitments to Northern Ireland or to refugees, asylum-seeking, migrant and trafficked women and girls from FCAS in the UK. Many migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls not only experience various forms of GBV before arriving in the UK but are also subjected to violence in the UK. It remains

essential that the UK Government follows best practice initiated by other donor countries and extends the NAP to these women and girls.

The CEDAW Committee has raised a question on UK Government progress made in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, including “reports that intimidation by paramilitary groups is a major barrier to women’s effective participation in peacebuilding and other political processes in Northern Ireland.”¹⁶ So far, the UK Government has not provided a full response to this specific issue.¹⁷

Recommendations

- The UK Government **should respond in detail to the concerns raised by the CEDAW Committee** on the day of dialogue in February 2019 with reference to UNSCR 1325 implementation in Northern Ireland and take steps, including temporary special measures, to realise the commitments in the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement on increasing the representation of women in Northern Ireland in political and public life.
- The UK Government **should include departments that have responsibility for domestic policy across the UK nations into the NAP implementation process**, including the: Home Office, Government Equalities Office, Northern Ireland Office, Policing Agency, and the international sections of the Ministry of Justice and Crown Prosecution Service.

11. Effectiveness, Coordination and Process

11.1. Internal capacity

GAPS welcomes Strategic Outcome 7 on UK capabilities. Internal capacity remains key to the implementation of any plan and policy as it supports training, skills, knowledge and buy-in of central stakeholders who will be delivering the NAP. The focus on internal capacity should also reflect on how regularly and effectively all UK Government staff working on WPS – both in the UK and in FCAS country posts – engage and consult with women’s rights organisations, peacebuilders and women human rights defenders. GAPS welcomes the training initiatives implemented by the UK Government for its staff. We note in particular the introduction of a Military Gender and Protection Advisers course held at the Defence Academy in November 2018. GAPS was pleased to present at the course to highlight the importance of equal, safe and meaningful engagement with civil society organisations in FCAS. GAPS looks forward to the findings from the pilot course and efforts to strengthen, streamline and standardise the course so that a growing number of British and international military personnel understand the importance of meaningful engagement with civil society organisations, women and girls’ rights, gender analysis, and the WPS agenda. GAPS is aware of the UK Government’s intention to develop Guidance Notes for each of the strategic outcomes in the NAP and welcomed the opportunity to speak with the consultant leading on the first Guidance Note which will be published in 2019.

11.2. Government coordination

GAPS welcomes and continues to be encouraged by the collaborative working relationship with the cross-Whitehall Working Group on WPS. As noted in the six-month check-in,¹⁸ the working group

¹⁶ <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhslidCrOIUTvLRFDjh6%2fx1pWATd%2b5F7KFTTOnQ%2bUzl09uI93F42A7z%2bGjipiAT06ul4pomHJ2URbluaN3X6V17lw3ohQBVBXmZCh1vYVL7jEj>

¹⁷ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/GBR/CEDAW_C_GBR_Q_8_Add-1_31122_E.pdf

¹⁸ <http://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/GAPS-NAP-Six-Month-Check-In-2018.pdf> Section 13

has provided a sound platform to drive forward UK Government policy on WPS. GAPS also notes 2018's introduction of a high-level Steering Committee for WPS chaired by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State at the FCO with responsibility for the WPS agenda. As the Steering Committee has only held one meeting GAPS is not yet able to comment on the impact and effectiveness of this body.

11.3. Gender Strategies, Country Business Plans, and Country Implementation Plans

GAPS welcomes the development of gender strategies for NAP focus countries, for example the Shared UK Government Approach to Gender in Syria.¹⁹ GAPS understands that gender strategies for other countries, including Libya, are being developed. GAPS also understands that context-specific implementation of the NAP's strategic outcomes will take place through Country Business Plans and Implementation Plans, both in focus countries and in other FCAS where the UK Government operates. Since these documents are not in the public domain, this makes it difficult for civil society to assess plans, activities and outcomes.

Recommendations

- The UK Government should ensure **training on gender-sensitivity and women and girls' rights in conflict is made compulsory** for all UK Government staff working in or on FCAS.
- The UK Government **should develop Guidance Notes in consultation with civil society** for all strategic outcomes in the NAP and should **publish them publicly** as soon as possible to ensure well-informed implementation of the strategic outcomes during the timeline of this NAP.
- The UK Government should continue its support to **the cross-Whitehall Working Group on WPS as well as its strong working relationship with civil society**, including continuing to reach out on an ad hoc basis when appropriate, for example in the build-up to national and international WPS-related events.
- The UK Government should **develop gender strategies for all focus country contexts and ensure Country Business Plans fully integrate the strategic outcomes of the NAP**. Country Business Plans and gender strategies should be developed through **meaningful consultation and analysis with national stakeholders, including women's rights and civil society organisations and women human rights defenders** to make sure they are rooted in the self-identified, localised and specific needs, priorities and experiences of women and girls.

¹⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685426/Shared_DFID_FCO_Approach_to_Gender_in_Syria.pdf



gender action for peace and security

www.gaps-uk.org

info@gaps-uk.org