

# The 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation

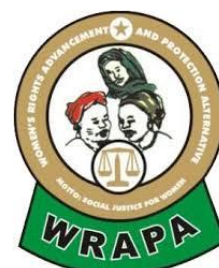
Global Women, Peace and Security Consultation Findings



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office



gender action for peace and security





## The 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation

### Global Women, Peace and Security Consultation Findings

#### Background

The United Kingdom (UK) Government funded Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) and its partners to undertake 8 global consultations on Women, Peace and Security to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2020. The consultation participants from civil society organisations in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and the UK developed recommendations for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNSCR 1325 for how governments, multilateral institutions, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and civil society can meet their Women, Peace and Security commitments and, importantly, make progress for women and girls affected by conflict and gender inequality in Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS).

#### Consultation Findings

This report brings together the findings from the consultations to provide a sound body of evidence that outlines how progress can be made and Women, Peace and Security commitments implemented. It demonstrates that action is needed across peacebuilding, humanitarian, development, legal, conflict and stability policy and programming to ensure all actors – multilateral agencies, governments, INGOs and civil society organisations – implement Women, Peace and Security commitments and monitor the change made.

The consultation findings demonstrate that commitments on Women, Peace and Security are vast and comprehensive. However, in practice this has not translated into the inclusion of gender perspectives and women and girls' rights in policy and programming. The consultation findings provide a body of evidence that outlines the need for the implementation of existing commitments through a holistic approach, including: gender-conflict analysis; funding to civil society and Women's Rights Organisations; strengthening the international community's internal capacity; technical support to governments in FCAS; National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security (NAPs); holistic approaches to gender equality and women and girls' rights; women and girls' participation; preventing and responding to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG); strengthening legislation and access to justice; social norm change and awareness raising; and comprehensive approaches to bring together and implement commitments made. Built on extensive consultation, the implementation of these recommendations will progress the Women, Peace and Security agenda into one that delivers for and upholds women and girls' rights, includes gender perspectives, and supports a world in which women, girls, men and boys can live in peace.

#### Project Partners

245 organisations and individuals were consulted across eleven countries as part of this project. Eight countries participated in the consultations coordinated by GAPS, which were organised by the Afghan Women's Resource Centre (AWRC), ASUDA, CARE, Community Initiative for Development Organisation (CIDO), GAPS, Legal Action Worldwide, Together We Build It, UNFPA, Witness Somalia, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Women for Women International UK and Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA). The project partners designed the consultations in a participatory manner and used the resources available to maximise the breadth of the consultations. The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) also undertook key informant interviews in Myanmar, with the UK Mission to the United Nations in New York, and on the Syria response, the results of which have been integrated into this report.

GAPS is grateful to all organisations and individuals involved in this project, including our member agencies and their partners, civil society organisations from FCAS whose time, knowledge and expertise form the foundation of this body of evidence, as well as the FCO for their support. Consultation should form the basis of all policy and programme design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation in FCAS and this project demonstrates a commitment from all actors involved in this project to ensure that the rights, needs and experiences of women, girls, men and boys affected by conflict inform policy and programmes.



## Recommendations

### The 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation

- 1. Gender-conflict analysis and consultation:** Gender-conflict analysis and consultation with civil society and governments should form the basis of all Women, Peace and Security, gender, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development policy and programming in FCAS. The international community should undertake participatory, intersectional gender-conflict analysis and include meaningful consultation systematically in the design, monitoring and evaluation of all policy and programmes in FCAS.
- 2. Funding for Women's Rights Organisations and civil society:** Funding for civil society, particularly Women's Rights Organisations, should be a priority. This should be situated in a commitment to increase Women, Peace and Security funding that includes flexible, accessible, long-term funding for Women's Rights Organisations to implement their self-defined priorities.
- 3. International community diplomacy and capacity:** The international community should implement its Women, Peace and Security commitments in full, including through its diplomatic work, and should commit resources to strengthen its capacity to do so.
- 4. Government technical support:** The international community, particularly multilateral institutions and donor governments, should provide technical support to governments in FCAS to support them to implement their Women, Peace and Security commitments.
- 5. National Action Plans:** Every country should develop and implement a NAP that is funded, consulted on, monitored and evaluated. NAPs and their development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation should be supported systematically by the international community based on national need rather than donor priorities.
- 6. Women and girls' meaningful participation:** Women and girls' meaningful participation at all levels of socio-economic and political life should be supported by governments and the international community, including in: grassroots peacebuilding; local, regional and national politics; economic empowerment; security and justice; and peace processes.
- 7. Violence Against Women and Girls prevention, protection and response:** An integrated approach to VAWG should be funded and implemented across the development, peacebuilding and humanitarian sectors and should focus on VAWG prevention, protection and response.
- 8. Complementary legislation and access to justice:** Legislation and access to justice are essential to uphold women and girls' rights, and should be advocated for, developed, passed and implemented by governments and supported by the international community.
- 9. Social norm change and gender-transformative approaches including public awareness raising:** Social norm change that focuses on gender transformative approaches, including awareness raising, should be implemented across the peacebuilding, humanitarian and development sectors. It should include advocacy and service provision to enable gender-transformational approaches and build peace across sectors.
- 10. Comprehensive, coordinated and accountable approach:** The international community should implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda in its entirety, ensuring that it is accountable for commitments in UNSCRs and related commitments, including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).



## In-Depth Recommendations

### The 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation

- 1. Gender-conflict analysis and consultation:** Gender-conflict analysis and consultation with civil society and governments should form the basis of all Women, Peace and Security, gender, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development policy and programming in FCAS. The international community should undertake participatory, intersectional gender-conflict analysis and include meaningful consultation systematically in the design, monitoring and evaluation of all policy and programmes in FCAS.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, governments, INGOs and civil society*

Understanding the gendered root causes and drivers of conflict is the only way in which to develop effective and meaningful responses to both conflict and gender inequality. It is therefore essential that the international community and national actors develop all policy and programming based on participatory gender-conflict analysis. This analysis should be intersectional, account for the different rights, needs and experience of women, girls, men and boys, and should be applied at all stages in the conflict cycle. All peacebuilding, humanitarian and development policy and programmes should be developed based on participatory gender-conflict analysis rather than independently of it.

Consultation with women, girls, men and boys as well as civil society, particularly Women's Rights Organisations, should be central to gender-conflict analysis and all policy and programming approaches in FCAS. Without considering the rights, needs and experiences of people affected by conflict, the responses will be ineffective.<sup>1</sup> Consultation should be funded and designed to be intersectional, considering participants' race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, health status and/or disability, location, education, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship status and living conditions.

#### **Country evidence**

Participants in **Afghanistan** outlined the root causes of insecurity, which have specific impacts on Women's Rights Organisations. They highlighted the impact that insecurity has on women's political participation, including on voting and as candidates. Only by assessing the root causes and gendered drivers of insecurity can responses be effective and better enable women's political participation at all levels. As a result, policies and programmes to increase and support women's political participation in Afghanistan should be developed based on both gender-conflict analysis and consultation to identify the opportunities and barriers to participation that can be integrated into programme and policy design, implementation and monitoring.

Participants of focus group discussions in **Myanmar** highlighted the need for systematic, meaningful consultation that is planned in advance, includes a pre-briefing, reaches outside Yangon, has guided-facilitation, and is also followed-up on so participants know the outcome of their engagement. Furthermore, participants outlined the need for the international community, particularly embassies, to include organisations that they do not fund and to engage more systemically with Women's Rights Organisations from across Myanmar.

In **Iraq**, participants highlighted the need for women-led and feminist organisations to be considered as critical partners in gender equality and peacebuilding. They should be included in strategic discussions, consultations and meetings where future planning frameworks are deliberated on to ensure the perspectives of women and girls are included in these critical decision-making spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> See the GAPS, Women for Women International, Amnesty International UK, Saferworld and Womankind Worldwide tool – **Beyond Consultations** – on meaningful consultation with women and women's organisation in FCAS: [www.beyondconsultations.org](http://www.beyondconsultations.org)

- 2. Funding for Women's Rights Organisations and civil society:** Funding for civil society, particularly Women's Rights Organisations, should be a priority. This should be situated in a commitment to increase Women, Peace and Security funding that includes flexible, accessible, long-term funding for Women's Rights Organisations to implement their self-defined priorities.

***Recommendation for:*** Multilateral institutions, donors, governments, and INGOs

Funding for Women's Rights Organisations and civil society was outlined as a need in all the consultations. Women's Rights Organisations are undervalued by the international community despite their multifaceted role in service provision before, during and after conflict, in addition to the long-term advocacy they undertake where they drive change at all levels of governance for a more meaningful, impactful and sustainable approach to women and girls' rights and gender equality. Funding for Women's Rights Organisations should be flexible, accessible, long-term and for their self-defined priorities. In addition to funding for Women's Rights Organisations, consultation participants highlighted the need for increased funding to Women, Peace and Security to enable a holistic approach based on national need rather than donor-driven priorities.

### Country evidence

In **Iraq**, participants outlined the need for civil society organisations, especially women-led and feminist organisations, to receive funding. They play a key role in service provision and in supporting accountability and transparency in government performance, for example by undertaking continuous and participatory monitoring of the situation for women in Iraq, and by monitoring and assessing the implementation of government national strategies and action plans on women and girls' rights. These advocacy efforts stem from holistic, multisectoral, and participatory approaches that include women and members of local communities, working from the bottom up to ensure women and girls are protected from gender-based violence and to enhance their political and active participation in decision-making at all levels. Their role is wide ranging in terms of: geographical coverage; a multisectoral approach; and ensuring culturally-appropriate gender programming that includes men and boys to safeguard the sustainability of efforts and to mitigate community resistance.

Participants in the **DRC** highlighted the importance of a coordinated donor approach to funding civil society, including Women's Rights Organisations, to avoid duplications of work and maximise impact. Participants stated the need for funding to be combined with capacity strengthening of civil society based on their self-identified needs.

Current civil society funding mechanisms in **Libya** are difficult to access, short-term and based on donor priorities. Such mechanisms need to change to ensure they are long-term, flexible, accessible and enable civil society to identify their own priorities. Civil society funding should include long-term capacity strengthening where necessary. Plans to support Women's Rights Organisations should integrate diplomatic support to advocate for civil society space in Libya so that national and grassroots organisations can continue their essential work.

In **Somalia**, participants highlighted the need for long-term, flexible funding for conflict prevention, prevention of VAWG and access to justice.

Participants in **South Sudan** highlighted the need for funding to Women's Rights Organisations to enable them to increase their vital work on accountability and advocacy, which is essential to ensure that other actors in decision-making roles are held accountable to Women, Peace and Security commitments, policy and programmes.

**Myanmar** participants outlined the difficulties with current funds that are inflexible and do not allow organisations to change activities when there is a need to do so. They outlined the extensive reporting requirements by donors when activities need to change. The need for a fund that is flexible, accessible and allows organisations to implement their self-defined priorities is essential.



**3. International community diplomacy and capacity:** The international community should implement its Women, Peace and Security commitments in full, including through its diplomatic work, and should commit resources to strengthen its capacity to do so.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, and governments*

Consultation participants outlined the need for the international community to implement its Women, Peace and Security commitments in its own systems, structures, policies and diplomacy. In order to do this effectively, multilateral institutions, donors and governments should critically assess their internal capacity to deliver their commitments to gender equality and should strengthen capacity where necessary. The consultations highlighted a wide range of areas where this was required including: ensuring commitments in related international treaties, norms and conventions are met (such as the ATT and localisation agendas); increasing the number of women in leadership positions in embassies, missions and delegations; support to peace processes; and systematic and meaningful consultation with Women's Rights Organisations.

Consultation participants stated that providing support to the governments of FCAS alone would be insufficient if the international community did not integrate Women, Peace and Security into its own diplomacy, in the same way it uses diplomacy to strengthen other areas of human rights, humanitarian response and trade. Similarly, if the international community does not strengthen the capacity of its own staff on Women, Peace and Security, they cannot implement their commitments in their entirety. This means that training should increase, as should establishing systems, processes and structures to ensure Women, Peace and Security is part of everyone's role rather than sitting solely with a limited number of Gender Advisors who are not given the authority to make change.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **Libya** consultation outlined a range of examples in which the international community is failing to implement its Women, Peace and Security commitments in its own missions, policies and programmes. This includes the lack of women in leadership roles in international missions and the minimal number of women invited to international peace and reconstruction events relating to Libya. Women's exclusion from such spaces demonstrates a lack of commitment to women and girls' rights on the part of the international community and models the wrong behaviour. Crucially, the systematic exclusion of women and girls makes it almost impossible for gender to be included meaningfully or effectively in discussions and resulting decisions. In order to redress this, the international community should assess its diplomatic approaches and better integrate Women, Peace and Security within them.

**Nigeria** consultation participants highlighted the need for the international community, particularly donors and multilateral institutions, to use their diplomatic leverage to support the Government of Nigeria to develop, pass and implement legislation relating to Women, Peace and Security. The use of diplomacy should be extended to Women, Peace and Security to ensure the international community implements its own commitments.

Similarly, in **Syria**, interviewees of the UK-Government-organised key informant interviews outlined the need for the international community to embed Women, Peace and Security more strategically in its approach to ensure gendered-needs are considered in the Syria response.

Participants in the **UK** consultations outlined the importance of gender parity in all government multilateral and civil society delegations at all peace and security events. This should ensure that members of international delegations represent women and men in all their diversity and that women are given the space to participate meaningfully. They outlined the need for government delegations to include civil society in their delegations to demonstrate their commitment to Women, Peace and Security.

4. **Government technical support:** The international community, particularly multilateral institutions and donor governments, should provide technical support to governments in FCAS to support them to implement their Women, Peace and Security commitments.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, and governments*

Technical support to governments of FCAS to implement their Women, Peace and Security commitments was highlighted as essential in almost all consultations. Such technical support should work with all government departments and the security and justice sectors, focusing on Women, Peace and Security principles and gender capacity strengthening. It should include long-term training, standardised protocols, and support in developing national strategies and plans and accountability frameworks to monitor progress in implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda and gender policy, programmes and legislation. Participants outlined the need for multilateral agencies and donors to provide financial and technical programmes on a range of policies to support governments of FCAS to implement their commitments at all levels of government.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **Nigeria** consultation outlined the importance of increasing the awareness of government officials on Women, Peace and Security focusing on the need for all departments at national and state level to implement commitments made. Such programmes should raise awareness of Nigerian legislation related to Women, Peace and Security. Participants also outlined the need for technical support and long-term capacity strengthening for the Government of Nigeria and its security and justice sectors. This includes a standardised protocol for government and security and justice sectors' representatives, an accountability framework to monitor progress, and a government-wide approach to gender-sensitive training and capacity strengthening. Such training should be long-term rather than one-off training packages delivered in the short-term, which do not deliver the necessary systemic change. Support to the security and justice sectors should extend to supporting the establishment/funding of special courts and police units to prosecute cases of VAWG. Training should be survivor-centred to ensure survivors' rights and protection are upheld.

Technical support to the Government of **South Sudan** was identified as a priority. Participants highlighted the importance of government institutions in delivering Women, Peace and Security commitments to ensure that they take a holistic approach to women and girls' rights and gender perspectives in conflict prevention and in state and peacebuilding initiatives.

Participants in the **Afghanistan** consultation outlined the crucial need for the international community to provide technical support and capacity strengthening for representatives of the Afghan security and justice sectors, including legislators, prosecutors, judiciary and the police. This would enable them to implement Women, Peace and Security commitments and uphold women and girls' rights. The development of a monitoring system that is inclusive of civil society to improve accountability was identified as essential. Similarly, in the **DRC**, participants outlined the need for support to the national and provincial Governments to accelerate the implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments.

Participants in the **Libya** consultation outlined the low levels of awareness of UNSCR 1325 in Libyan Government institutions. There is a need for Presidential directives and more women in leadership roles to initially push work on Women, Peace and Security forward. This should be complemented by long-term training for gender leads in all government departments. In Libya there is a need for increased understanding of gender perspectives and connections between women and girls and the government. Participants suggested a national women and girls and gender conference to increase the connections to government and their understanding of gender perspectives.

Mechanisms and processes to implement national strategies and plans are essential in **Iraq**. The international community should provide technical and financial support to the Iraqi Government to enable the creation of necessary tools and procedures to update national strategies and action plans and ensure their implementation and evaluation over a set timeframe.

5. **National Action Plans:** Every country should develop and implement a NAP that is funded, consulted on, monitored and evaluated. NAPs and their development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation should be supported systematically by the international community based on national need rather than donor priorities.

***Recommendation for:*** Multilateral institutions, donors, and governments

NAPs remain an essential tool for progressing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, particularly in meeting commitments already made. To be effective, NAPs should be consulted on, fully funded, implemented, monitored and evaluated. Without these essential elements, NAPs will be ineffective and unaccountable. The consultations outlined concerns around NAPs being developed and unimplemented, and connected this to a lack of funding, monitoring and evaluation. There were examples of funding provided by donors for NAP development which stopped when the NAP was to be implemented.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **Iraq** consultation outlined that despite the Iraq NAP being the first in the MENA region, it has been inadequately implemented, partly due to security, political and military challenges. It is essential that the new Iraq NAP receives the necessary funding to overcome the shortcomings of the first Iraq NAP and specifically addresses the rights, needs and experiences of women and girls in diverse settings and at different stages of the conflict cycle in Iraq. This, and women's participation at all levels, would pave the way towards civil cohesion, feminist peace, the urgently required prevention of conflict-related violence, and protection of survivors of VAWG. To deliver this, the Iraq NAP should be based on participatory and meaningful consultation with women and girls, have an implementation budget, and be monitored and evaluated.

In the **Afghanistan** consultation, participants outlined the need for the international community to provide better technical support, capacity strengthening and increased funding to the Government of Afghanistan to implement its NAP. They also identified the importance of a comprehensive monitoring system that is inclusive of civil society.

Participants in the **Libya** consultation considered a NAP as essential for progress on UNSCR 1325. In addition to a funded, implemented, monitored and evaluated NAP, participants outlined that the NAP should be based on good practice and inclusive of civil society. Participants highlighted that the international community should use its diplomatic work to advocate for a NAP with the Libyan Government.

The **DRC** 'second generation NAP' requires a specific budget for Women, Peace and Security in the national budget. Consultation participants noted that a new process should have clearer demonstration of political will by the Government of the DRC to involve women in the implementation of the NAP with a strategic approach to women's meaningful participation, increased awareness of the NAP in government departments, and the development of a structured monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess progress, challenges and impact of the NAP.

**Sudan** Sudan's NAP was developed during active conflict. For the NAP to have impact, participants in the South Sudan consultation highlighted the need for donors and multilateral institutions to support its implementation. If implemented, the NAP will contribute significantly to the delivery of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in South Sudan by increasing women and girls' role in crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding. It will, if implemented, also support the protection of women and girls from VAWG. Participants outlined the need for the South Sudan NAP to be monitored by and inclusive of civil society.

6. **Women and girls' meaningful participation:** Women and girls' meaningful participation at all levels of socio-economic and political life should be supported by governments and the international community, including in: grassroots peacebuilding; local, regional and national politics; economic empowerment; security and justice; and peace processes.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, governments, INGOs and civil society*

Women and girls' socio-economic and political participation at every level – from grassroots and local to regional, national and international – is essential for delivering on women and girls' rights as well as the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Despite this, progress on women and girls' participation is slow at every level. International and national structures and unequal gender and patriarchal norms systematically prevent women and girls' participation. This is particularly evident on an international stage in internationally supported peace processes. Global rhetoric on women's meaningful participation remains strong; however, in practice little has changed, and the international community continues to support processes that systematically exclude women and girls. Action is required to support women and girls' participation at grassroots, local, regional, national and international arenas.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **South Sudan** consultation highlighted that the international community should fund holistic participation programming at all levels to enable women and girls to attain decision-making and leadership roles, from which they are currently excluded. To facilitate this, policymakers need long-term systematic training on women and girls' rights and gender perspectives to ensure that political systems become less exclusive, patriarchal and tokenistic, and more accessible to women and girls. Programming should be tailored to the needs in different parts of South Sudan, accounting for the different barriers and opportunities to participation. It should also support the creation of women's networks to provide networking spaces for women and girls.

Participants in the **Iraq** consultation outlined the need for the international community to monitor the Iraqi Government's implementation of its commitments to international conventions and resolutions that support women's meaningful participation at all levels. While women hold 25% of parliamentary seats in Iraq, they have never been assigned decision-making roles due to dominant hypermasculine and patriarchal social norms that produce stereotypical expectations and roles for women. To keep its commitments to Women, Peace and Security, the international community should advocate for the Iraqi Government to set a 50% quota for women, including in leadership roles in political parties and decision-making roles. This should extend to all sectors and across all national and local levels.

Key informant interviews undertaken by the UK Government on the **Syria** response emphasised the exclusion of Syrian women from international platforms and the need to redress this as well as to create spaces in which Syrian civil society and women in political roles can share experiences.

In **Somalia**, participants highlighted the need for women and girls' participation at all levels, particularly political participation. Participation approaches should integrate work on creating an enabling environment. Whilst no legislation in Somalia specifically promotes women's participation in politics, there is an informal agreement under the current government to ensure women's participation in all areas of political governance meets a 30% quota.

Women and girls' participation in the peace, security and justice sectors in **Libya** is low due to harmful social norms, gender inequality, and lack of commitment from, and lack of pressure on, the Libyan Government. Internationally-organised High-Level Meetings on Libya in 2018 excluded women; no women were invited to the May 2018 High-Level Meeting in Paris and only three women were invited to the Palermo meeting. The three women were included as a result of a national advocacy campaign for women's inclusion in formal peace process. Such campaigns should not be necessary. Quotas of at least 30% of women in decision-making positions and delegations were recommended to increase women's participation and create a critical mass of women who can influence decision making.

7. **Violence Against Women and Girls prevention, protection and response:** An integrated approach to VAWG should be funded and implemented across the development, peacebuilding and humanitarian sectors and should focus on VAWG prevention, protection and response.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, governments, INGOs and civil society*

VAWG funding has been concentrated in narrow areas of VAWG response to date. Consultation participants emphasised that the international community should fund more holistic VAWG programming that addresses prevention, protection and the root causes of VAWG.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **Somalia** consultation outlined the need for a holistic approach to Women, Peace and Security programming that integrates VAWG programming within peacebuilding, humanitarian and development approaches.

Key informant interviews undertaken by the UK Government on the **Syria** response highlighted the importance of referral and coordination pathways between civil society organisations and humanitarian organisations, for immediate and long-term VAWG responses.

Consultation participants in the **UK** outlined the importance of funding for protection and prevention which includes long-term prevention programming that combines locally-led prevention programmes and research, particularly those led by Women's Rights Organisations. They highlighted the need for prevention programmes to be based on thorough assessments of structural violence and harmful social norms that perpetuate VAWG. Programming should address structural violence, harmful social norms and social norm transformation to ensure prevention approaches are effective and sustainable.

In **South Sudan**, participants highlighted the need for the international community to increase funding for women and girls' access to VAWG prevention and response services as well as to funding programmes that assess and identify entry points for such programming. Participants stated that VAWG prevention and response services should be inclusive of diverse groups of women and girls including: targeting teenage mothers to access health services, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); creating spaces for adolescents in women-friendly spaces; and providing static and mobile prevention and response services to access hard-to-reach locations that do not have services. Particular attention should be paid to promoting holistic programming that ensures collaboration across multiple sectors. This includes protection, shelter, WASH, health, SRHR, nutrition, food security and livelihoods, camp coordination and camp management/settlements programmes so that these sectors integrate VAWG risk mitigation to protect and empower women and girls. Where gender and protection are not integrated comprehensively and effectively across all sectoral and multi-sectoral activities, opportunities to enhance the empowering and protective nature of all humanitarian and development programming are missed. All organisations involved in humanitarian response should develop a guide or check list of potential opportunities for mainstreaming and integrating gender and protection into the sector's activities to ensure that gender and protection are embedded into programme design and implementation.

**8. Complementary legislation and access to justice:** Legislation and access to justice are essential to uphold women and girls' rights, and should be advocated for, developed, passed and implemented by governments and supported by the international community.

***Recommendation for:*** Multilateral institutions, donors, and governments

Consultation participants highlighted the need for complementary legislation to support the Women, Peace and Security agenda as well as access to justice for women and girls. Legislation is fundamental for the realisation of gender equality and women and girls' rights. It provides a legal framework for multilateral institutions, governments, INGOs and, most importantly, civil society to advocate for institutions to uphold women and girls' rights and gender equality, and it forms the foundation of access to justice. The development, passing and implementation of such legislation requires a significant increase in political will and leadership.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **Iraq** consultation outlined the need for the international community to urge the Iraqi Government to reform domestic legislation in line with international norms and conventions on women's rights, especially those Iraq has ratified and is bound by. Such an alignment may be attained by repealing discriminatory provisions that violate women and girls' rights, enacting legislation that protects and supports women, and fully implementing the 67 recommendations in the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee in 2014. The absence of equality between men and women before the law creates an imbalance in gender dynamics, weakens the social and economic standing of women, limits their meaningful political participation in key decision-making positions and increases the likelihood of women and girls being subjected to sexual and gender-based violence. Legislative change is required and should be implemented alongside programmes to increase women and girls' access to justice. This would require the Iraqi Government to accelerate the enactment of the draft Protection Against Domestic Violence law, which would guarantee women's unimpeded access to justice, building on the positive example from Kurdistan Region of the Republic of Iraq (KRI). The international community should provide financial and technical support to ensure the enforcement of the law by forming a special court to consider cases of VAWG and establish alternative law enforcement bodies that provide women and girls with a safe and confidential reporting mechanism.

Participants in the **Nigeria** consultation emphasised the importance of implementing existing legislation at state level, such as gender-based violence legislation, the Child Rights Act and Chapter 4 of the Nigerian Constitution. They also identified the need to harmonise relevant laws such as the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act and review of the Penal and Criminal Codes in all states to ensure current legislation does not inhibit progress on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Nigeria has statutory, customary and sharia laws in place, and there are several instances where these are not aligned. A review is essential to ensure legislation meets international legal standards. For full implementation of current and new legislation, long-term training is required in addition to increased resources and authority for the Nigerian Ministry of Women's Affairs. Furthermore, access to justice should be improved, including by providing technical support to the security and justice sectors. This requires long-term training and new systems and structures, such as special gender-based violence police units and courts for VAWG cases that are survivor-centred.

In **Libya**, participants outlined the need for gender-based violence legislation as well as the importance of the future constitution referencing UNSCR 1325. This will provide a framework for comprehensive work on Women, Peace and Security which will be founded in national legislation.

In **Myanmar** participants emphasised the Prevention of Violence Against Women Bill, which needs to be passed into law. However, pressure on the government means the law is likely to be weakened and not as comprehensive as women's rights organisations had campaigned for.

Participants in **Somalia** highlighted the importance of women's leadership in security and justice sectors to better support women and girls' access to justice. They stated that this should be supported by legislation on gender-based violence, inclusivity and women's participation.

9. **Social norm change and gender-transformative approaches including public awareness raising:** Social norm change that focuses on gender transformative approaches, including awareness raising, should be implemented across the peacebuilding, humanitarian and development sectors. It should include advocacy and service provision to enable gender-transformational approaches and build peace across sectors.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, governments, INGOs and civil society*

Gender inequality exists in every country and society in every part of the world. In conflict, gender inequality is exacerbated. Gendered social norms exist everywhere, including in conflict, and gender transformational approaches should be part of all programming and policy to make strides towards women and girl's rights and make gender equality a reality. This requires awareness raising, capacity strengthening and programmatic approaches that undo the patriarchal structures that cause gender inequality. Social norm policies and programmes can create a backlash, particularly against prominent women and girls and Women's Rights Organisations and human rights defenders. Programmes should therefore be locally-led and integrate risk assessments and protection mechanisms for women human rights defenders.

### Country evidence

The **Afghanistan** consultation identified the need to tackle social-cultural norms, given the impact that social norms have on women's socio-economic and political participation, high prevalence rates of VAWG and gender inequality. Local level rights-based approaches that focus on power, discrimination and social norms and engage men and boys on gender equality were identified as central means to work on increasing awareness and tackling gendered social norms. Furthermore, programmes which include women's rights and gender equality on the school curriculum, particularly targeting men and boys, could be key ways to address gender inequality.

Participants in **Nigeria** outlined the need for holistic social norm change programmes that combine a range of approaches, including awareness raising. Participants noted the need for holistic programmes at the local level as well as through media campaigns, poetry, drama and music that integrate gender equality themes.

**Libya** consultation participants outlined the importance of social norms and women and girls' rights programming, including public awareness raising. Such programmes should be community-based and work with women, girls, men and boys to ensure they address pervasive social norms, promote women and girls' rights, and work with community 'gate-keepers', in addition to avoiding dangerous backlash. Furthermore, capacity strengthening for civil society is essential to ensure all civil society organisations are aware of and implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Civil society capacity strengthening should be long-term and include ways in which civil society can integrate Women, Peace and Security into their programmes on service delivery, advocacy, training, peacebuilding and community-based work.

In the **DRC** consultation, participants outlined the prevalence of social norms as a central barrier to women and girls' participation and a cause of further violations of women and girls' rights as they increase their vulnerability to violence and exclusion. Tackling social norms at a local level through rights-based approaches, and increasing awareness by focusing on power, discrimination and social norms as well as promoting 'positive masculinities' in the school curriculum, were identified as key programmatic approaches that the international community should support.

Participants in the **Iraq** consultation highlighted the impact of legal, cultural, social and institutional factors on women and girls' access to justice. In addition to legislative and security and justice sectors approaches, addressing patriarchal social norms and discriminatory factors should be designed and implemented by feminist and women-led organisations who have the contextual expertise to develop programmatic approaches that are gender transformational and context-specific.

**10. Comprehensive, coordinated and accountable approach:** The international community should implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda in its entirety, ensuring that it is accountable for commitments in UNSCRs and related commitments, including CEDAW, the SDGs and the ATT.

***Recommendation for:*** *Multilateral institutions, donors, governments and, where applicable, INGOs and civil society*

Consultation participants outlined the connections between Women Peace and Security and related international commitments, frameworks and mechanisms and the need for robust accountability mechanisms to implement these commitments. These include, but are not limited to, the ATT, CEDAW and localisation agendas. These connected agendas demonstrate the need for multilateral institutions, donors, governments and, where applicable, INGOs and civil society to take a comprehensive approach to their multifaceted commitments and ensure they are accountable for implementing them. Furthermore, consultation participants highlighted the importance of ensuring that gender equality, social norm change, and Women, Peace and Security are integrated into all peacebuilding, humanitarian and development approaches.

Consultation participants across the eight countries outlined the importance of more holistic approaches that meet the national needs and deliver on women and girls' rights, needs and experiences. This requires multilateral institutions, donors, governments, INGOs and civil society to coordinate so that programming is delivered across the pillars of UNSCR 1325 and that programmes are adequately funded on: VAWG, participation, gendered peacebuilding, access to justice, and, where necessary, civil society capacity strengthening. Such programmes should be Women, Peace and Security-specific as well as integrated into all peacebuilding, humanitarian and development work.

### Country evidence

Participants in the **DRC** consultation emphasised the importance of taking a more holistic approach to gender and women and girls' rights. This approach should combine VAWG, participation and peacebuilding in order to address the root causes of gender inequality.

Participants in the **Nigeria** consultation outlined the need for holistic programming that comprehensively addresses education, skills training and socio-economic empowerment.

In **Somalia**, participants highlighted the need for a more comprehensive approach to conflict, peacebuilding programmes and responding to and preventing VAWG. Such an approach should invest in initiatives that work with communities, build trust between communities and government bodies and meaningfully engage women, girls, men and boys in peacebuilding.

In **South Sudan**, participants outlined the need for shelter, WASH, health and food security and livelihoods programmes to identify and maximise all opportunities to mainstream and integrate gender and protection into programming.

Consultations in **Iraq and Libya** outlined the impact of the arms trade on conflicts in both countries. In Iraq participants outlined the unregulated proliferation of weapons, which contributes to the imbalance of gender-power relations in society. Participants in Iraq also emphasised that the proliferation of arms increases the likelihood of women being subjected to gender-based violence in conflict. In Libya, consultation findings outlined the need for the international community to acknowledge the impact of arms on the conflict and specifically the gendered impact of arms. The international community should increase its disarmament and arms control policies and programmes in Libya as well as investigating the illegal online arms trading, given the impact it has on escalating conflict and the gendered dimension of arms sales and arms proliferation.

Consultation participants outlined the lack of accountability in the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the impact this has had on implementation. Findings from the UK-Government led key informant interviews on the **Syria** response



outlined the lack of monitoring mechanisms to assess the implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments in the Syria response, as well as the lack of monitoring of protection systems for women and girls. In other consultations, NAPs were referenced as ways in which governments can be held accountable for their commitments. However, it was agreed that there is an overall lack of global accountability for Women, Peace and Security, even where NAPs exist.

Consultation participants in **Iraq and Myanmar** referenced the importance of CEDAW to women and girls' rights and the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Participants in the **UK** consultation highlighted the need for increased accountability in the Women, Peace and Security agenda. They outlined the need for a more joined-up and adequately resourced approach so that the international community is held accountable for, and reports on, its Women, Peace and Security commitments in a systemic manner.

Participants in the **Iraq** consultation outlined the need for the international community to encourage the Iraqi Government to set up an official body to address issues affecting women and girls. Such a body should have the authority to establish accountability mechanisms and ensure that the implementation of national strategies and action plans are adequately funded, reviewed and monitored. Good practice may be gleaned from the progress achieved by the Higher Council for Women's Affairs in the KRI.

## **Conclusion**

The eight consultations in Afghanistan, the DRC, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and the UK, in addition to key informant interviews undertaken by the UK Government in Myanmar, with the UK Mission to the United Nations in New York, and on the Syria response, demonstrate the need for progress on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Participants outlined challenges to implementation as well as opportunities for change. Commitments on Women, Peace and Security are vast, yet implementation is slow. Civil society has outlined a range of reasons for why progress has been so slow, including: lack of political will; lack of funding allocated globally and nationally to Women, Peace and Security and gender equality; lack of donor prioritisation of peacebuilding; lack of dedicated funding to Women's Rights Organisations and civil society in FCAS; gendered social norms and patriarchal systems that systematically exclude women and girls; lack of regard for and investment in gender expertise; lack of effective and meaningful gender mainstreaming in peace and security; and policy and programmatic silos which have traditionally situated Women, Peace and Security separately from peace and security.

It is essential that progress is made. This can be achieved through a holistic approach including: gender-conflict analysis; funding to civil society and Women's Rights Organisations; strengthening the international community's internal capacity; technical support to governments in FCAS; NAPs; holistic approaches to gender equality and women and girls' rights; women and girls' participation; preventing and responding to VAWG; legislation and access to justice; social norm change and awareness raising; and comprehensive approaches bringing together and implementing commitments made. By implementing these ten recommendations – The 10 Steps – multilateral institutions, governments, INGOs and civil society can make transformational progress that aims to create a more peaceful world in which women, girls, men and boys' rights are upheld. "The 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation" provides an important body of evidence for this essential progress and transformation.

## Project partners

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| <p><b>Afghan Women’s Resource Centre (AWRC):</b> AWRC is a non-governmental women-led organisation established in 1989 dedicated to contributing to Afghan women’s empowerment and protection. It offers quality services in the education, health, capacity building, income generation and human rights awareness, and enhances women’s capabilities to improve their economic and social well-being. It advocates with and on behalf of Afghan women to ensure their equal and meaningful participation.</p>  | <p><b>ASUDA:</b> In 2000, ASUDA opened its first safe shelter for Kurdish women in Kurdistan region. The NGO strives to provide protection and multi-sectoral services to women subjected to violence as well as survivors, in order to provide women with a safe, harmless environment where they can enjoy their full rights and equality before the law, as well as make use of the legal services and empowerment and awareness frames to defend their rights.</p>  |
| <p><b>CARE:</b> CARE’s mandate ‘fighting Poverty, defending dignity’ and our explicit focus on women and girls compel us to work in South Sudan. Our interventions start at community level where we respond to emergencies, build peace and strengthen resilience. Together with our partners, we: Address needs and vulnerabilities in emergencies; Defend and promote gender equality and rights; Empower women and girls to achieve a more inclusive South Sudan.</p>  | <p><b>Community Initiative for Development Organisation (CIDO):</b> CIDO exists to mobilise and organise communities in South Sudan to harness their resources, plan effectively and generate solutions for socio-economic advancement. CIDO works on governance; natural resource management; essential services; and human rights.</p>  |
| <p><b>Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS):</b> GAPS is the UK’s Women, Peace and Security (WPS) civil society network. We are a membership organisation of NGOs in the fields of development, human rights, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding. We were founded to promote Women, Peace and Security (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.</p>                                  | <p><b>Legal Action Worldwide (LAW):</b> LAW is an independent, non-profit organisation comprised of a network and think tank of prominent human rights lawyers and advisors. LAW provides innovative legal assistance to the least represented people in fragile and conflict-affected states.</p>  |
| <p><b>Together We Build It:</b> Together We Build It is a non-profit organisation that was founded and launched in 2011 to support a peaceful democratic transition in Libya, through empowering women and youth to participate in the political and public sphere, and emphasizing the relevant role of women and youth in the peace-building process.</p>  | <p><b>UNFPA Somalia:</b> UNFPA Somalia supports humanitarian responses and recovery efforts. It also works with health services to reduce maternal mortality, among the highest rates in the world, by strengthening community midwifery and the supply of commodities. Further efforts have focused on conducting nation-wide population estimation surveys. Engaging with the government and civil society to provide services for vulnerable youth, UNFPA promotes reproductive rights and the elimination of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting.</p>   |
| <p><b>Witness Somalia:</b> Witness Somalia is a local non-profit human rights monitoring organizations based in Mogadishu Somalia with mandate of documenting human rights violations and abuses with specific focus on IDP communities, marginalised and other vulnerable groups of the community.</p>  | <p><b>Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF):</b> WILPF is a worldwide non-governmental organisation with national sections covering every continent, an international Secretariat based in Geneva, and an office in New York focused on the work of the United Nations. Since our establishment, we have brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace. Our approach is always nonviolent, and we use existing international legal and political frameworks to achieve fundamental change in the way states conceptualise and address issues of gender, militarism, peace and security.</p> |
| <p><b>Women for Women International:</b> Women for Women International supports women who live in some of the world’s most dangerous places. Women enrol on the charity’s year-long training programme, where they learn how to earn and save money, improve their family’s health and make their voices heard at home and in their community. Since 1993, the charity has helped almost half a million marginalised women survivors of war in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Sudan.</p> | <p><b>Women’s Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA):</b> WRAPA is a non-governmental organisation that promotes the promotion, protection and realisation of women’s rights. WRAPA is a leading voice in the advocacy and campaign against violence against women across Nigeria.</p>   |
| <p><b>Funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO):</b> The FCO promotes the United Kingdom’s interests overseas, supporting our citizens and businesses around the globe.</p>   |   |





gender action for peace and security

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