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gender action for peace and security

Women, Peace and Security in 2020: United Kingdom consultation

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1. Introduction

In February 2019 the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Gender Action for Peace and Security network (GAPS) co-hosted consultations with civil society organisations, expert practitioners and academics in London to identify recommendations for UK government priorities for the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This report is a summary of the key recommendations and discussions from the consultation and will be a key document for the UK government as it determines its workplan on the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

2. Recommendations

The consultation was divided into three themes: Participation; Security, Justice and Legislation; and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG). The recommendations from the consultation are as follows, under each theme.

2.1. Participation¹

2.1.1. Grassroots funding: The international community, including donors, multilateral agencies and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) should provide long-term, core and flexible funding for civil society, specifically Women's Rights Organisations (WROs). This funding should be accessible and directed to the self-defined priorities of WROs. It should also support the development of networks working on Women, Peace and Security as well as strengthen existing networks.

2.1.2. Women, Peace and Security funding: The international community should track and publish how much their organisation spends on gender equality in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS). The OECD Gender Marker can be used to track this spend. The international community should also ensure it funds Women, Peace and Security-specific programming and should integrate gender into all programmes in FCAS.

2.1.3. Gender-conflict analysis: All peace and security policies and programmes should be based on inclusive, participatory gender-conflict analysis to identify and address barriers to participation. The international community should commit to demonstrating their gender-conflict analysis in the development of all policies and programmes.

2.1.4. Gender parity: All government, multilateral organisation and civil society delegations at peace and security events should have gender parity and should ensure that members of their delegation represent women and men in all their diversity and that women are given the space to participate meaningfully. Where civil society delegations are not included, governments and multilaterals should make efforts to include civil society in their own delegations.

2.1.5. Meaningful participation of women and girls: The international community should ensure the meaningful participation of women and girls in the design of all policy, programming and events on peace and security. This should include participatory research and/or meaningful consultation with diverse groups of women, girls and women's rights organisations in the design of policy and programmes, and the meaningful inclusion of diverse groups of women and, where appropriate, girls in all peace and security events.

2.2. Legislation, Governance, Security and Justice

2.2.1. Grassroots funding: The international community should fund civil society, including WROs, at grassroots and national levels to design and implement locally-owned governance, security and justice programming. *(See recommendation 2.1.1. on the terms of this funding, including accessible, long-term, core and flexible funding based on self-defined priorities.)*

¹ Consultation participants discussed specific actions for the UK government, including: a focus on the participation of diverse groups of women, girls and women's rights organisations in their National Action Plan (NAP) focus countries; commitment to and training on engagement with civil society and women's rights organisations for UK embassy staff based in FCAS; and Gender Adviser training for all areas of the UK Government, including the British military and international militaries.

- 2.2.2. Accountability:** Accountability mechanisms that relate to Women, Peace and Security should be more joined up and adequately resourced so that the international community is held accountable to, and reports on, its Women, Peace and Security commitments, including governance, security and justice, in a systematic manner.
- 2.2.3. Gendered root causes and drivers of conflict:** The international community should undertake participatory gender-conflict analysis to assess the gendered drivers and root causes of conflict when developing all governance, security and justice policy and programming. This should extend to violence in the private sphere, where violence disproportionately affects women and girls.
- 2.2.4. Women and girls' participation:** All governance, security and justice programming should have gender components to ensure it addresses women and girls' rights, needs and experiences. Women and girls should be consulted in the design of governance, security and justice programming.
(See recommendation 2.1.5. for further details on meaningful participation.)
- 2.2.5. Internal capabilities and expertise:** The international community should expand its capacity for gender equality within its own governance, security and justice staff to ensure policies and programmes are gendered. This should include, as a minimum, gender training for staff working on governance, security and justice in FCAS.

2.3. Violence against Women and Girls

- 2.3.1. Funding for protection and prevention programming:** The international community should ensure it continues to fund vital protection and prevention programmes to end VAWG. The UK Government could fund a long-term prevention programme that combines locally-led prevention programmes and research, specifically those led by WROs.
- 2.3.2. Grassroots funding:** The international community should provide direct and accessible funding to grassroots organisations working on service delivery and on the transformation of harmful social norms.
(See recommendation 2.1.1. on the terms of this funding, including accessible, long-term, core and flexible funding based on self-defined priorities.)
- 2.3.3. Preventing VAWG:** The international community should ensure that its policies and programmes to prevent VAWG are based on thorough assessments of structural violence and harmful social norms that perpetuate VAWG. Resulting programming should address structural violence and social norm transformation to ensure prevention approaches are effective and sustainable.
- 2.3.4. Women and girls' participation:** The international community should design all VAWG policies and programmes through meaningful consultation with women and girls in FCAS to ensure they are grounded in the rights, needs and experiences of women and girls affected by conflict.
(See recommendation 2.1.5. for further details on meaningful participation.)
- 2.3.5. Reaching all women and girls:** Programmes should be targeted to ensure all women and girls can access VAWG protection programmes and benefit from VAWG prevention programmes. It is particularly important that programmes reach diverse groups of women and girls and the most marginalised women and girls.
- 2.3.6. Internal capabilities and expertise:** All staff in international organisations operating in FCAS should be aware of and trained in VAWG prevention and protection to ensure all programmes integrate VAWG systematically.

3. Thematic Discussions

3.1. Participation

3.1.1. Grassroots funding

Participants identified 2020 as a key opportunity to increase funding to Women, Peace and Security. Participants agreed that existing funds should be strengthened as well as developing a dedicated Women, Peace and Security fund. Long-term, core and flexible funding supports the participation of women, girls and WROs by addressing their systematic exclusion from all levels of peace and security processes and discussions as well as the precarious situation for the survival of WROs

Long-term, core and flexible funding should: enable WROs to set their own agendas and fund programmes based on their self-identified priorities; be accessible and flexible to changing needs; support and strengthen network-building processes; support organisational capacity; recognise and promote the remuneration of the time and expertise of women and WROs; encourage the institutionalisation of engagement with women and WROs; promote women's leadership in conflict and humanitarian settings; and support the protection of Women Human Rights Defenders.

Networks are a valuable tool for sharing experiences, strategies, solutions and ideas in dialogue. Networks support learning from women and girls' rights and gender equality actors. Supporting the formation and consolidation of networks can facilitate the participation of diverse groups of women, girls and WROs.

3.1.2. Women, Peace and Security funding

The international community should track spend in FCAS to understand how funding for international peace and security contributes to gender equality and what percentage of peace and security funding is spent on gender equality. Funding should go to both Women, Peace and Security-specific programmes as well as to supporting gender equality in all activities taking place in FCAS. The international community should commit to using the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) and to no GEM-0 activities.

The discussion on appropriate funding mechanisms noted the importance of, but also the constraints on, existing multilateral funds such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and cross-government funds such as the UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. Priorities for multilateral funds should be based on the rights, needs and experiences of women, girls and WROs in FCAS rather than determined by governments. This would support funding to reach diverse organisations and avoid the "tick-box" approach to funding for WROs.

3.1.3. Gender-conflict analysis

Consultation participants noted that the inclusion of women, girls, WROs and organisations working on gender equality such as LGBTIQ organisations in gender-conflict analysis should be participatory and happen as early as possible to ensure their influence and impact. The international community should use inclusive, participatory gender-conflict analysis systematically to identify, understand and address barriers to inclusion and the gendered root causes of violence and armed conflict. Findings from gender-conflict analysis should feed into an evidence base on the barriers to participation.

3.1.4. Gender parity

The consultation discussion focused on the institutionalisation of gender parity at the multilateral level, national level and for civil society. Consultation participants noted the encouraging commitments that exist to support gender-equal participation but urged the acceleration of their implementation. The use of minimum targets for women's participation helps to build women's, and where appropriate girls', systematic participation in peacebuilding and peace negotiation frameworks.²

The consultation discussion noted a gap between verbal commitments to gender parity at events versus the actual numbers of women present. Funding should be designed to address accessibility issues such as travel costs, visa preparation costs, registration processes, childcare, and ensuring appropriate security measures are in place to enable participation. Using women co-mediators is a practical strategy to ensure that women are included from the start of political and peace processes.

To demonstrate leadership on promoting women and girls' participation, the UK government should commit to supporting only those processes which include women and WROs and should lead by example with gender-parity in its own delegations. Engagement with civil society should also meet gender parity, for example through the

² For example the call in the Beijing Platform for Action for a critical mass of 30% of women to be included in decision-making processes in order to ensure women's influence.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf> paragraph 182

development and use of protocols to establish and maintain relationships with WHRDs and WROs. Gender considerations in delegations should extend to the inclusion of LGBTQI organisations.

3.1.5. Meaningful participation of women and girls

Meaningful participation means that women, girls and WROs have influence, that their engagement is part of an ongoing dialogue, and that efforts are made to reach diverse groups of women, girls and WROs.

The international community should champion meaningful participation using evidence on successful tools and indicators for the inclusion of women, girls and WROs. This would support the institutionalisation of engaging women, girls and WROs at all levels and would promote efforts towards meaningful participation as a norm rather than as exceptional. Scorecards are a possible tool for measuring meaningful participation at international summits and conferences. Local and informal political and peace processes and discussions at grassroots should be supported alongside national and international processes. Civil society should be included in all these processes.

Participants suggested the possible use of indicators on the diversity of women, girls, men and boys where appropriate. Notably, this should take place systematically in peace processes with additional support to target the participation of marginalised women and girls, women and girls in vulnerable positions, women and girls in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes and LGBTQI organisations. The international community should measure and monitor the participation of women, WROs, and where appropriate girls, as well as efforts to support their participation to identify what works and to address ongoing challenges.

Meaningful participation should be grassroots-centred to foreground the challenges and priorities of WROs. WROs have the expertise and contextual knowledge to support Women, Peace and Security policies and activities to be effective and sustainable. Including WROs means providing capacity strengthening, for example through training designed to prepare women and girls' rights and gender equality actors for engaging in peace and security processes and discussions, including formal institutional processes. It also means addressing barriers to participation in the private sphere by supporting the transformation of harmful social norms.

Women, WROs and where appropriate girls, should be invited to participate on all issues that impact their lives rather than just those issues typically linked to women and girls, for example VAWG.

3.2. Legislation, Governance, Security and Justice

3.2.1. Grassroots funding

Funding the existing work of grassroots organisations on security and justice is essential to ensuring that initiatives supported and implemented by the international community are sustainable and build on existing work. Grassroots organisations have the context-specific expertise to inform the initiatives of the international community. Their work has greater influence in the transformation of harmful social norms which is essential to bringing about long-term change.

Funding should be accessible, long-term, core and flexible rather than short-term and projectised, to support organisational survival and promote locally-led *initiatives* (see section 3.1.1. for further details on grassroots funding). 2020 should also be an opportunity to highlight examples of effective, locally-led legislation, security and justice work, and examples of effective support given for this work.

3.2.2. Accountability

Accountability mechanisms related to Women, Peace and Security should be better coordinated and resourced. This would ensure that the international community is held accountable to and reports on its commitments relating to Women, Peace and Security in a systematic manner. This includes reporting on international legal frameworks, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and agreements specific to legislation, governance, security and justice. Participants also suggested establishing

minimum targets for the number of articles that reference gender in all transformative justice, political and peace processes.

Joined-up accountability mechanisms would require the international community to take a more holistic approach to understanding the root causes and drivers of inequality, discrimination and violence. A joined-up approach to accountability should and could also support the domestic implementation of Women, Peace and Security legislation, security and justice processes.

3.2.3. Gendered root causes and drivers of conflict

Women and girls' rights, needs and experiences, and their perceptions of security and justice at all levels should guide programming and activities related to legislation, governance, security and justice. Participatory gender-conflict analysis is essential to identify and deliver on these (*see sections 3.1.3. and 3.3.3.*). International political attention focuses narrowly on sexual violence. However, there needs to be a structural focus on the prevention of and protection from harmful social norms, including discriminatory issues related to security and justice. This would also support long-term legislative change required to protect and empower women and girls. Highlighting examples of successful change are a powerful way to support this shift in discourse. Furthermore, women and girls' access to legislation, security and justice that delivers on their rights should not be focused solely on VAWG. Legislation and the security and justice sectors should deliver to protect and uphold women and girls' rights.

Legislation, governance, security and justice approaches should challenge gender inequality and violence at the societal and community public sphere as well as in the private sphere. It is important to raise awareness of the barriers that women and girls face in the home, including violence, and to bring these into internationally-accepted approaches to legislation, security and justice.

3.2.4. Women and girls' participation

The meaningful participation of women, girls and WROs should not be siloed from legislation, governance, security and justice processes. Every security and justice process or programme should have a core component on women and girls' participation to ensure that legislation and the security and justice sectors deliver for women and girls. This is especially important for those programmes that are not seen as "typically" relevant to women, such as DDR. Inclusive and meaningful participation in security and justice processes means reaching diverse groups of women and girls, and should also extend to other groups often excluded from accessing the security and justice sectors, including LGBTQI people.

The international community should engage with women, girls, WROs and other organisations working on gender equality in the development of security and justice policies and programmes as early as possible to ensure that these processes address their rights, needs and experiences (*see section 3.1.5. for further details on women and girls' participation*).

3.2.5. Internal capabilities and expertise

The international community should build the gender capabilities within its own legislation, governance, security and justice sectors to ensure resulting policies, programmes and processes are gendered. States should strive to lead by example and should invite civil society to participate in monitoring and accountability processes to promote transparency where appropriate. States should use gender leads in all leadership and decision-making positions (for example: Heads of Department, Ambassadors, Special Representatives and Envoys, Ministers, Secretaries of State) with responsibility to promote gendered policies throughout institutions.

The international community should provide gender training for all staff working on legislation, governance, security and justice. Job descriptions and staff performance review processes should include dedicated gender and Women, Peace and Security specifications and objectives where appropriate to encourage institutionalised progress on gender equality. The international community should encourage the sharing of good practice and lessons learned when mainstreaming gender in governance, legislation, security and justice processes.

3.3. Violence Against Women and Girls

3.3.1. Funding for prevention and protection programming

The international community should provide accessible funding for VAWG response and interventions, both for protection from and the prevention of VAWG. Funding needs to be long-term in order to support holistic programming that transforms harmful social norms and addresses drivers of violence. Long-term work should complement life-saving VAWG response.

Tracking and analysis of VAWG funding against need should be improved in order to respond to the funding gaps. VAWG funding in crisis response often does not meet the need. These shortfalls in funding committed should be tracked to ensure they can be addressed.

DFID should use 2020 as an opportunity for a new flagship programme to come out of the What Works to Prevent VAWG programme, to highlight the importance of locally-led and well-resourced prevention and protection programming. This would also ensure that the evidence base generated by What Works on the impact of harmful social norms will continue to feed into programming.

3.3.2. Grassroots funding

The international community should provide accessible funding for grassroots organisations working in their communities to deliver protection and prevention programming (*see section 3.1.1. for further details on grassroots funding*). Grants should be small enough to be made directly to grassroots organisations and should be managed in a way that is not onerous for smaller organisations but that supports and maximises their service-delivery. Funding for grassroots organisations is essential to protect space for women-led civil society.

The international community should ensure funding for grassroots organisations to participate in VAWG programming monitoring, evaluation and learning. Grassroots civil society should have access to resources for shadow reporting to ensure that donors and governments are held accountable.

3.3.3. Preventing VAWG

The international community needs a reinvigorated, holistic approach to preventing VAWG. Prevention will only be successful if it acknowledges that the causes of VAWG are structural and embedded in harmful social norms. Prevention approaches should be rooted in gender equality and human rights standards in order to be sustainable and to effect long-term social norm transformation. Prevention programmes should also have clear links to protection programming to ensure a coherent approach across sectors.

As part of gender-conflict analysis (*see sections 3.1.3. and 3.2.3.*), the international community should systemically identify, understand and address common drivers of conflict and gender inequality that relate to VAWG to ensure comprehensive prevention approaches. This could include: relevant, appropriate, researched education, information sessions that equip women and girls to become advocates for themselves; community-based programmes that engage men and boys and focus on transforming harmful social norms; and legal reform to support long-term norm change. All programmes should be part of holistic, community-based approaches that also provide direct services to women and girls.

3.3.4. Women and girls' participation

The international community should promote and enable the meaningful participation and consultation of diverse groups of women, girls and women's rights organisations in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of VAWG policy and programming. This supports policy and programming to be context-specific and to address the specific rights, needs and experiences of women and girls (*see section 3.1.5. for further details on women and girls' participation*).

3.3.5. Reaching all women and girls

The international community should make targeted efforts to reach women and girls affected by or vulnerable to VAWG. It should acknowledge that all women and girls are at risk of violence and that VAWG increases in conflict.

Programming and policy should be tailored to understand and address the rights, needs and experiences of women and girls, particularly those less traditionally included in the Women, Peace and Security agenda, for example older women and adolescent girls.

3.3.6. Internal capabilities and expertise

The international community should lead by example by promoting and committing to gender parity in all delegations and at all levels. The international community should also commit to increasing and strengthening gender expertise within institutions, providing gender training to all staff working in FCAS and recruiting gender experts. Safeguarding should be systematically incorporated into all training for those working in FCAS (*see also 3.1.4. on gender parity and 3.2.5. on internal capabilities*).

4. Acknowledgments

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