GAPS strategy 2018 – 2022

Vision

A peaceful, equal world where all women and girls are free from violence.

Mission

GAPS and its members promote gender equality, women and girls' rights, building peace and the prevention of conflict.

Who we are

- We work in **solidarity** with women and girls in the UK and globally and ensure our work is rooted in rights, needs and experiences.
- We **support** our members and partners in their advocacy on Women, Peace and Security by identifying, building and managing relationships with relevant stakeholders within government, parliament and civil society, creating channels of influence to decision makers.
- We **amplify** our members' and partners collective analysis, research, resources and influence to impress upon decision makers the realities of women, girls, men, boys and gender and sexual minorities in conflict settings and make clear their needs and recommendations for peace.
- We **advocate** for evidence-based changes in policies and practices that directly affect women and girls' rights, security and ability to live safe, peaceful and fulfilling lives.
- We **challenge** policies and practices that undermine peace, perpetuate or exacerbate conflict, and do not uphold and consider the rights of women and girls.
- We **collaborate** with our partners, members, governments, parliaments, multilateral institutions, international and local NGOs, human rights defenders and peacebuilders to achieve better policy and practice for peace, gender equality and women and girls' rights, and we hold all and ourselves to the highest standards in this regard.
- We **learn with** members, partners and allies around the world to share lessons and best practice in progressing Women, Peace and Security through policy and practice.
- We **communicate** clearly, openly and democratically with GAPS members, partners, government officials and ministers, and parliamentarians.

Theory of Change

We highlight the realities of women and girls living in conflict, and help make more visible their peacebuilding, humanitarian and human rights work.

If we:
1. Support and amplify the collective voice, research and resources of GAPS members, Women's Rights Organisations and partners in our advocacy with policy makers;
2. Build and sustain political support for the achievement of gender equality and peace;
3. Advocate for the development, improvement and implementation of policies on Women, Peace and Security[1] that meet fully the needs and rights of women and girls and bring about sustainable peace.

Then:
We will achieve improved policies and practices that protect women and girls' rights, promote gender equality in conflict, and prioritise peace and conflict prevention (over militarised solutions to conflict).

Because:

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[1] Policies on Women, Peace and Security include but are not limited to the National Action Plan. They include all policies related to peace, conflict, security, development, humanitarian assistance gender and women and girls' rights in conflict-affected contexts.

- Policy makers understand the differential impacts of conflict on women and girls and understand that peace cannot be achieved without gender equality, women and girls' rights, and their full and equal participation in peace and security.
- Governments have access to tools to develop gender-responsive approaches to peace and security that are effective and sustainable.
- There is sufficient political pressure from parliament and civil society on government to take seriously women and girls' rights and gender issues and there is sustained expectation for genuine implementation and willingness to prioritise peace.
- Women's rights organisations are sustainably resourced and treated as meaningful partners in achieving peace, security, gender equality and sustainable development.

Problem statement

Conflict has a specific impact on women and girls and their human rights because of their gender. Yet, women and girls' rights, gender equality and peace are not political priorities and women and girls' voices and experiences continue to be largely ignored. Despite some improvements in domestic and international policy relating to women girls' rights, these are still largely siloed and not seen to be or treated as relevant to public policy issues, especially in relation to foreign policy. This is even more so the case today where there is a vocal pushback on women and girls' rights on a global scale which in some contexts and political arenas is perceived to be legitimate.

There remains very limited progress on the implementation of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policies, as well as its inclusion in broader conflict and peace policy and programming. Current approaches seem tokenistic and are not comprehensive despite more expressions of commitment, National Action Plans (NAPs), awareness, mechanisms and technical expertise than at any other time, particularly since the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000.

Objectives

Policy and advocacy

1. **Influence UK Government policies, resourcing and commitments to Women, Peace and Security, including the National Action Plan.**

Key Performance Indicators:
   a. GAPS provides comprehensive assessments of and evidence on the implementation of all UK Government WPS policies, with evidence from conflict-affected countries.
   b. GAPS provides evidence and advocates for more and sustained resources and funding for WPS and gender equality, including for Women's Rights Organisations, in all of its policy papers and reports.
   c. GAPS coordinates the All-Party Parliamentary Group on WPS as a transparent mechanism to hold the UK Government accountable for WPS implementation, with at least 6 events per year.
   d. GAPS provides feminist gender analysis of and evidence on at least three UK Government policies related to peace, conflict, gender, security and development.

2. **Monitor the UK Government's inclusion of Women, Peace and Security and gender issues in their response to ongoing and emerging crises and conflicts.**

Key Performance Indicators:
   a. GAPS coordinates the All-Party Parliamentary Group on WPS and targets influential cross-party Parliamentarians to influence the UK Government to strengthen and increase the inclusion of WPS in specific countries, contexts and actions.
   b. GAPS members use the network proactively to coordinate advocacy activities ahead of at least two significant opportunities to influence the UK Government's engagement in or on specific conflict-affected contexts.

c. GAPS contributes WPS and gender language and evidence to at least four campaigns and broader civil society messaging on peace, security, gender and conflict prevention.
d. GAPS lobbies for the fully funded participation[2] of women and adolescent girls from civil society in at least two peace and security activities where the UK Government participates.

Communications and network building

3. **Build member capacity in Women, Peace and Security policy and practice and strengthen GAPS as a centre of expertise for members, civil society allies, global stakeholders and movements working on women and girls' rights, gender, conflict and peace.**

Key Performance Indicators:
a. GAPS supports members' Women, Peace and Security and gender capacity by providing a platform to share learning from and inform their policy, advocacy and programming work through at least 3 annual events.
b. GAPS uses communication channels to keep its government, multilateral, and international and local NGO stakeholders updated on and aware of GAPS and its members' policy resources, research and events through a monthly newsletter, regular calls and meetings, and dissemination of all GAPS reports and policy papers.
c. GAPS collaborates, shares learning, and partners with other networks and organisations beyond its membership, with a greater international focus through monthly and quarterly meetings and calls.
d. GAPS and its members provide expertise to governments and other gender, peace and security actors when they request input from GAPS and its members that is relevant to the GAPS strategy and annual work plans.

Finance and governance

4. **Consolidate GAPS as a financially sustainable, compliant and accountable network.**

Key Performance Indicators:
a. GAPS secures at least two sources of income amounting to £30,000 in addition to membership fees.
b. GAPS retains its 6 months reserves of core costs and at the beginning of each financial year has secured 50% of the subsequent years' income.
c. The GAPS secretariat and Management Board redevelop and implement a monitoring and evaluating framework and report annually to members.
d. GAPS assesses and adjusts all of its structures, policies and procedures against the external context and members' priorities in 2021.

Values and principles

Our work is guided and informed by our commitment to and belief in: peace, participation, representation, non-violence, non-partisanship, cooperation, democratic decision-making, transparency, openness, intersectional feminism, anti-racism, equality, clear communication, learning, integrity and independence.

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[2] Meaningful participation. That such participation: a) will influence on decision-making (i.e. is not tokenistic); b) is open to women and girls' own responses (i.e. is not directive); c) ensures women and girls are fully informed and consent to engaging; d) provides capacity building support to facilitate their engagement if needed (i.e. it is accessible); e) is part of an ongoing process (i.e. is not a one-off exercise); f) is inclusive of marginalised and disadvantaged women and girls; g) includes women, and where appropriate girls, in sufficient numbers that they can visibly contribute (i.e. a minimum of 30% total participants).