gaps uk [ ]

gender action for peace and security

GAPS strategy 2023– 2027

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

Mission:
Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) and its members work to prevent conflict and build peace by advancing and promoting gender equality and women and girls' rights.

Who we are:
GAPS is the UK's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) civil society network. We are a membership organisation of multi-mandated international NGOs, peacebuilding, women's rights, and human rights organisations. We were founded to advance the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Our role is to promote and hold the UK government to account for its international commitments to women and girls worldwide by working with GAPS members and global partners.

How we work:
Through our collective advocacy, campaigning, policy and research, GAPS highlights the realities of women, girls, and marginalised groups living in conflict-affected countries to decision-makers and practitioners and promotes their meaningful participation at all levels. Specifically;

- We work in **solidarity** with women, girls and marginalised groups in the UK and globally to ensure our work is rooted in rights, needs, and experiences.
- We **support** our members and partners in their advocacy on WPS by identifying, building and managing relationships with key stakeholders and creating channels of influence to decision-makers within government, parliament and civil society.
- We **amplify** our members' and partners' collective analysis, research, resources and influence to highlight to decision-makers the differing realities of women, girls, men, boys and gender and sexual minorities in conflict settings as well as how gender inequality is a driver of conflict 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 consider or uphold the rights of women and girls.
- We **collaborate** with partners, members, governments, parliaments, multilateral institutions, international and local CSOs, WROs and WLOs, NGOs, human rights defenders, and peacebuilders to achieve better policies and practices for gender equality and women and girls' rights.
- We **learn** with members, partners and allies around the world lessons learned and best practices for advancing WPS.
- We **communicate** clearly, openly, and democratically with our members, partners, government officials and ministers, and parliamentarians.
- We **commit** to advancing a decolonising aid agenda rooted in intersectional feminism, inclusivity, anti-racism, equality, and representation.
- We **ensure** our work addresses both existing and emerging crises as well as priority issue areas such as climate change, migration, and arms control.

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

Theory of Change

We highlight the realities and needs of women and girls living in conflict-affected countries to decision-makers and practitioners, advocate for their participation at all levels, and promote 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, women and girls' rights and peace.
3. Advocate for the development, funding and implementation of policies on WPS[1] that fully meet the needs of women and girls and bring about sustainable peace.

Then:

We will achieve improved global policies, practices and programming that protect and advance women and girls' rights, promote gender equality, and prioritise conflict prevention and peace.

Because:
- Policymakers understand the differential impacts of conflict on women and girls and the gendered root causes of violent conflict and recognize that peace cannot be achieved without promoting gender justice and equality, advancing and upholding women and girls' rights, and supporting their meaningful participation in peace and security.
- Governments have access to tools to develop gender-transformative approaches to peace and security that are effective and sustainable.
- There is sufficient political pressure and accountability from parliament and civil society on government to advance women and girls' rights and ensure implementation of WPS policies and practices.
- Women's rights organisations are sustainably resourced and treated as meaningful partners in achieving peace and security.

Objectives

Policy and Advocacy

1. Influence and improve the UK Government's policies, resourcing and commitments to Women, Peace and Security, including the National Action Plan (NAP).

Outcomes
   a. WROs in Fragile Conflict Affected States, including the focus countries in the UK WPS NAP, have the capacity and resources for and are included in creating and advocating for policy asks policy papers and reports with UK-based actors including GAPS but also the UK government, when mutually beneficial.
   b. The UK, and states, as they seek to implement their commitments to WPS, in coordination with key groups such as WROs and WLOs, involve, consult and invite GAPS, our formal members and other networks we hold to shape and influence their gender, peace and security work.
   c. New champions take up the work on Gender, Peace and Security across UK Government and Parliament

Activities
- Coordinate advocacy activities with members for at least two significant opportunities to influence the UK Government's engagement in specific conflict-affected contexts and to establish relationships with and influence the policies of other political parties in anticipation of a shift in government control.
- Provide evidence for the importance of sustained resources and funding for WPS commitments and women's rights organisations and to co-create intersectional feminist analysis on at least three UK Government policies related to peace and security, but with a particular focus on those that address transnational threats such as climate change, migration and arms control.
- Map out key actors and build new champions beyond gender teams within the UK government such as in the FCDO, Treasury, Ministry of Justice, and other relevant government departments

Indicators
- Number of WROs in Fragile Conflict Affected States involved in advocacy, and the extent of their involvement
- Number of consultations with key groups on gender, peace and security, and how they meet the 'meaningful' criteria

---

[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 context.

- Number of new champions beyond gender teams

2. **Monitor and hold accountable the UK Government's commitment to Women, Peace and Security both domestically and in foreign policy.**

Outcomes
   a. GAPS members use the network proactively to coordinate advocacy activities ahead of at least three significant opportunities to influence the UK Government's engagement in or on conflict–affected contexts.
   b. Deliver, at least four campaigns and broader civil society messaging on peace, security, gender and conflict prevention include language around WPS and gender that demonstrate GAPS's involvement
   c. Ensure fully funded participation[2] of women and adolescent girls from civil society in at least two peace and security activities the UK Government participates in or holds

Activities
- Coordinate and strengthen the All-Party Parliamentary Group on WPS to hold the UK Government accountable for WPS implementation by diversifying its membership and leveraging the impact of its public and private events
- Support government implementation of WPS by hosting quarterly meetings with FCDO and other relevant stakeholders to monitor and provide feedback on NAP implementation and other WPS-specific policies and by providing a shadow report once a year that assesses the implementation of all UK Government WPS policies, particularly the NAP, with evidence of impact from conflict-affected countries.
- Develop and implement increased opportunities for network members, including the Policy and Advocacy Working Group and Afghanistan Working Group, to collaborate on advocacy opportunities, co-create policy standpoints, and exchange knowledge and best practices in formal and informal settings

Indicators
- Number of MPs and key civil society and WPS stakeholders regularly engaging with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on WPS and its events
- Number of MPs appointed as officers of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on WPS and an overall more diversified and cross-party membership
- Number of policy outputs, communications messaging and advocacy asks co-created through the Policy and Advocacy Working Group, Afghanistan Working Group and GAPS network.
- Number of meetings, conversations and interactions with the FCDO and number of times FCDO make the initial contact as it pertains to the NAP implementation and other WPS-specific policies

3. **Build member capacity in Women, Peace and Security policy and practice and its intersection with other relevant issues areas such as climate change and migration.**

Outcome
   a. Members provide strengthened WPS technical expertise to governments, partners, other networks and organisations working on WPS and broader peace and security issues.

Activities
- To provide members, through its platform, opportunities to share learning, give updates and assessments on UK policies related to WPS and other transnational threats, facilitate and draft joint statements and recommendations and advance collective advocacy priorities with relevant UK and multilateral actors.
- To develop communication materials to keep stakeholders aware of and updated on GAPS's 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.
- To provide technical expertise to its members, as requested, on WPS and other gender issues including on UK advocacy priorities.

Indicators
- Number of increased interactions with GAPS's social media pages (Twitter and LinkedIn), GAPS's website as well

---

[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).
.

as engagement with GAPS's communication outputs.
- Number of increased interactions with the Policy and Advocacy Working group and Afghanistan Policy Working Group and the number of joint communications, policy recommendations and other relevant outputs through both working groups.

4. **Create a learning agenda that strengthens GAPS as a centre of expertise for members, partners and allies around the world working on WPS, women and girls' rights, gender, conflict and peace.**

Outcome
   a. Members adopt stronger anti-racist and gender-transformative practices through their operations and advocacy, including commitments to advancing inclusive and intersectional WPS.

Activities
- Bring into regular member meetings specific topic areas of interest such as climate change, anti-racism, and migration and to bring guidance as requested, for example on feminist foreign policy, and the intersections of these topic areas with WPS and to collaborate with experts to facilitate that learning.
- Facilitate knowledge and practice sharing by inviting members to present during monthly meetings on a topic pertinent to their work and relevant to the broader WPS agenda, including on anti-racism and a de-colonial approach to the agenda.
- Engage other WPS networks, domestic organisations within the UK and organisations outside of the UK working on WPS to share learning and best practices for advancing WPS and holding governments accountable through quarterly meetings.
- Create new and innovative knowledge on WPS and gender equality in policy through research, network building, and participation in global fora – including GAPS's coordinating role for the WPS Helpdesk.

Indicators
- Number of presentations and cross-learning events shared within the network that develops networks knowledge base on intersecting WPS issues and shares learning and best practices for advancing WPS.
- Number of internal organisational conversations and changes in internal policies, within the GAPS network as well as within the organisations that are members of the network, that adopt stronger anti-racist and gender-transformative practices.

Governance and Finance

5. **Ensure GAPS is a financially sustainable, compliant and accountable network.**

Outcome
   a. The UK and states rely on GAPS, and its networks, resources, policy papers and advocacy when shaping their gender, peace and security work.
   b. WROs and CSOs joining the GAPS network utilise and support the expertise provided by the network and possibilities of cross learning and co-creation that the network provides.

Activities
- Secure at least two sources of income each amounting to £40,000 for its core support, in addition to membership fees, and apply for two projectised funding opportunities.
- Retain 3 months reserves of core costs and at the beginning of each financial year has secured 50% of the subsequent years' income.
- Grown the network with at least two new members within the five-year period.
- The GAPS secretariat and Management Board continue to implement a monitoring and evaluating framework and report annually to its members.
- Assess and adjust all its structures, policies, and procedures against the external context and members' priorities as needed.

Indicators
- Number of accepted project funding opportunities.
- Number of CSOs and WROs that join the network within the five-year period.
- Number of meetings held by the GAPS secretariat with the Management Board that monitor and evaluate GAPS's work.