MIDLINE REPORT

UK NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Produced for: DFID GEFA//April 2016

Afghanistan / Khadija's business is smelling sweet / © DFID

Produced by: Lydia Stone and Anna Parke

Social Development Direct

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	4
1 Introduction	6
2 Methodology	6
3 UK policy developments in Women, Peace and Security	7
4 Lessons learned from other countries' NAPS	8
4.1 Ownership and partnership	9
4.2 Geographic focus	11
4.3 UNSCR 1325 pillars	12
4.4 Monitoring & evaluation frameworks and financing	14
5 Options and recommendations for a post-2017 UK NAP	15
5.1 Implementation framework	16
5.2 Prioritisation and focus	21
5.3 Design, delivery and monitoring processes	23
References	29

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the many Women, Peace and Security (WPS) experts who were interviewed and consulted for this evaluation. A full list of those consulted is included at the end of the report.

Thanks are also given to the UK government's cross-Whitehall working group on WPS for constructive commentary and feedback on earlier drafts of this report.

ABOUT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECT

Social Development Direct (SDDirect) is a leading provider of expert social development assistance and research services. We work to build inclusive societies in which all women, men, girls and boys are valued and empowered to make choices about their own development.

SDDirect is consulted regularly on issues relating to WPS and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. The organisation has previously been engaged by UNIFEM to support the development of the UN Secretary-General's indicators on WPS in 2010, and in 2012 by UN Women to manage baseline studies in four countries for their global programme on UNSCR 1325. A SDDirect team also updated the DFID Guidance Note on addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) through security and justice programming, and has supported the development of a Nigerian WPS National Action Plan (NAP) through our partnership on the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP).

AUTHORS

The SDDirect team undertaking the multi-year evaluation of the UK's NAP brings together over 50 years' collective experience in conducting complex evaluations and in working on conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues.

The lead authors for this Midline Report are Lydia Stone and Anna Parke. Contributing authors are Alice Kerr-Wilson, Ann Kangas, Chitra Nagarajan, Emma Bell, Erika McAslan Fraser, Jessica Mony, Lyndsay McLean-Hilker and Rachel Mohun.

Somalia / Getting food and medicine to women and children in Somalia / © UNICEF / Iman Morooka

ACRONYMS

AUSAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CEFM	Child and Early Forced Marriage
CRU	Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Ireland)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSSF	Conflict Stability and Security Fund
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Ireland and Australia)
DFID	Department for International Development
DoD	Department of Defence (Australia)
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Australia)
FCAS	Fragile and Conflicted-Affected States
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAPS	Gender Action for Peace and Security
GBV	Gender- Based Violence
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
JACS	Joint Analysis for Conflict and Stability
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Denmark)
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NSRP	Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OfW	Office for Women, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Australia)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PSVI	Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNSCAR/ATT	United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation/Arms Trade Treaty
UNSCR 1325	United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WRO	Women's Rights Organisations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UK has a strong track record of working on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). The 2015 Baseline Evaluation of its National Action Plan (NAP) showed that the UK is implementing a raft of strategic and diverse programmes in this area. However, the evaluation also showed that the design of the NAP limited its ability to influence UK policy and programming.

Commissioned at the mid-term stage of the UK's 2014-2017 NAP, this light-touch Midline Report takes advantage of the opportunity to learn lessons from the Baseline Evaluation, and draw from global best practice, to prepare for a post-2017 NAP that could play a more significant role in leading UK policy and programming on WPS. The report looks towards a NAP that:

- is transparent and accountable, yet flexible and realistic.
- provides an overarching framework of priorities, while recognising that the WPS challenges in each conflict-affected country are different and that identifying context-specific issues and solutions predominantly lies at local level.

UK policy developments in Women, Peace and Security

The report begins with a brief review of UK policy developments since the Baseline Evaluation, and notes that two strategic documents released subsequently – the National Security Strategy, and Strategic Defence and Security Review and UK Aid Strategy – contain notable commitments on WPS. Furthermore, the Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) is taking steps to prioritise WPS in its programming.

Lessons learned from other countries' NAPs

As one of almost 30 countries that has an externally focused NAP on WPS, there is the potential for the UK to learn from the successes and challenges of other countries' experiences. This report takes five of the most highly regarded NAPs, as recommended by international WPS experts (from Australia, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden), and analyses their design and implementation. While we do not recommend a one-size-fits-all approach, the combined experiences of these countries draw out some useful lessons of what makes an effective NAP, including:

- engaging a wide range of stakeholders in government
- incorporating a domestic focus – for example, strategies for supporting women refugees and asylum seekers
- using the UNSCR 1325 pillars as a guiding framework rather than strict categorisation
- adopting focus countries to ensure accountability
- supporting adaptive and flexible implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Options and recommendations for a post-2017 UK NAP

The report concludes with an analysis of different aspects of the NAP with a view to presenting the following recommendations for a post-2017 UK NAP on WPS:

1	**Adopt a thematic framework broadly aligned with the pillars:** we recommend that the next NAP retains the basic framework of the four pillars but recognises the ability of an activity to feed into more than one pillar, and presents clear pathways of change. This should include provision for developing the enabling environment for working on WPS.
2	**Include output and process indicators:** output indicators should, where possible, be aligned with other existing indicators including those of the Global Goals, UN Secretary-General and EU.
3	**Adopt a two-tier approach to country-level implementation:** the UK should develop WPS action plans for 4-6 focus countries with the support of WPS experts. UK country offices in other (non-focus) conflict-affected countries would be asked to report annually on their contributions to the WPS agenda against a set of indicators.
4	**Include a number of relevant commitments on WPS in the domestic space:** in particular, the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers, and UK work on Countering Violent Extremism.
5	**Commit to undertaking WPS and conflict and gender analyses:** in a minimum number of pilot countries in preparation for the next NAP.
6	**Strengthen relations with UK civil society:** by holding regular meetings on the NAP focus countries. Preparation for the next NAP should begin as early as the latter half of 2016 and should involve consultations with civil society in the focus countries, as well as country-specific analysis informed by WPS experts.
7	**Ensure there are sufficient human resources to provide technical support to country offices:** from Whitehall, as well as expertise in-country, with a budget to conduct training with key country office staff and specific earmarked funding for WPS programming. The CSSF should have targets for fund allocation to WPS programmes or programmes with a strong WPS component. UK offices in all NAP focus countries should have a fund available for supporting Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on WPS, or contribute to a multilateral fund that supports women's rights organisations (WROs).
8	**A longer NAP with a flexible implementation plan:** the post-2017 NAP should be at least five years in length, with overarching thematic priorities determined at Whitehall level, with flexible implementation plans developed at country level and reviewed annually.
9	**Incentivise Whitehall and country office staff:** through the allocation of clear responsibilities for WPS issues in job descriptions and performance assessments. In addition, we recommend that the UK produce a simple guidance note for country offices outlining their responsibilities on WPS issues, as well as the technical support and budget they can request from Whitehall.
10	**Develop core indicators against which all UK country offices working in conflict-affected countries should report:** focus countries should have additional specific indicators with light-touch annual review and planning requirements.

Syria / From fishing net to safety net / © Russell Watkins / DFID

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2015 the UK published a Baseline Evaluation of its National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 2014-2017. This evaluation concluded that the UK is generally undertaking strategic, diverse and thoughtfully implemented programming on WPS. However, there was limited evidence to show that the NAP was influencing UK policy on WPS. In addition, the Baseline Evaluation also found several shortcomings around the design of the current NAP that limited its capacity to drive change, including:

- **Short duration:** at three years in length, the NAP does not have the opportunity to affect the planning cycles of UK programming.
- **Retrofitted programming:** the activities in the NAP's Implementation Plan were programmes that UK country offices already had in place.
- **Focus countries without budget:** the six focus countries chosen for the NAP received no additional support or incentives to undertake WPS programming.
- **Inflexibility:** despite being focused on delivery in conflict-affected countries, which are dynamic by nature, the NAP Implementation Plan was found to be inflexible.

The Baseline Evaluation pointed to a NAP that had been put together more to reflect the UK's current programming on WPS rather than to drive the agenda. The evaluation recommended that by giving more lead-time to prepare the UK's post-2017 NAP, it would be possible to develop a NAP that is more flexible, locally driven and contextually appropriate, and thus would have the potential to guide UK programming. The evaluation also found that in general the will and expertise exists within UK government to achieve this.

In collaboration with the cross-Whitehall working group on WPS, and in consultation with UK civil society organisations (CSOs), it was agreed that the Midline Report should be used to test the Theory of Change (ToC) of the current NAP and review best practice on WPS NAPs worldwide to inform the development of a post-2017 UK NAP (methodology outlined in section 2).

This Midline Report on the NAP therefore presents the following:

- A brief update on policy development since the Baseline Evaluation; whether and how it has been impacted by the NAP (section 3).
- Lessons learned from other countries' NAPs (section 4).
- Analysis of the Theory of Change (ToC) and options for a post-2017 NAP (section 5).
- Recommendations on a post-2017 NAP (throughout).

2 METHODOLOGY

After conducting a desk-based literature review we undertook three strands of research:

- **Learning lessons and best practice from other countries' NAPs:** in order to draw on lessons from other countries' NAPs, we conducted a rapid review of 29 donor country NAPs. In consultation with international WPS experts we shortlisted five countries' NAPs for more in-depth analysis: Australia, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden. These countries were selected as their NAPs were seen to present particular opportunities for lesson learning, and in addition these countries were seen to have similar development interests to the UK. We studied these five NAPs in depth and conducted interviews with government officials, civil society representatives and academics (see references at end of this report for list of key informants) who had been involved in NAP development and delivery.
- **Analysing the ToC:** the ToC for the UK NAP commits to very high-level outcomes and impact, and a vast range of activities. Within the scope of this study it has not been possible to conduct an in-depth examination of the entire ToC. However, the research team selected five of the 'activities' from the ToC and conducted rapid reviews to assess the evidence-base linking their contributions to impact at outcome level. As part of this exercise, and based on key findings across all components, we have proposed a new ToC.
- **Evaluating possible alternatives for a post-2017 NAP:** to establish possible alternatives for a post-2017 NAP, we drew on the findings of the previous two strands of research, as well as the findings from the Baseline Evaluation. The research team undertook a desk review of the most recent literature on NAP development and conducted interviews with international experts on WPS and NAPs, as well as members of UK civil society who have been active in the UK's NAP development.

3 UK POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Since the completion of the Baseline Evaluation, several UK government policy documents have been due for renewal, including Business Plans for the Department for International Development (DFID), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MoD). Unfortunately, finalisation of these documents has been delayed and this study has been unable to assess the impact of the NAP on these policies. As such these documents will be revisited in the Endline Evaluation. However, two other key documents have been published:

The National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review, released in November 2015, outlines a number of interventions and commitments that relate to the WPS agenda. It is encouraging to note that empowerment of women and girls is framed in the opening of the review as being core to the UK's values and critical to building successful societies. The document emphasises the importance of providing development assistance that works for women and girls, and providing equal opportunities. It includes a specific section on WPS, stating that "full attainment of political, social and economic rights for women is one of the greatest prizes of the 21st century, and central to greater peace and stability overseas". It also emphasises that women's rights will be ensured in the UK's work on Countering Overseas Extremism, humanitarian emergencies, in early warning and conflict analysis, and in new military doctrine, as well as ensuring women's active participation in peacebuilding discussions.

The UK Aid Strategy, also released in November 2015, is somewhat light-touch on WPS issues, given the commitment to increase emphasis on fragile states and the prioritisation of the needs of women and girls. The strategy highlights commitments in the UK's manifesto to become world leaders in tackling sexual violence in conflict, as well as helping women and children who have fled violence in Syria. With regards to implementing the government's commitment on 'Leaving No One Behind', to end violence against girls and women, including ending female genital mutilation (FGM), child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), and tackling sexual violence in conflict, all have explicit links with the WPS agenda. While it is encouraging to see WPS included in both of these documents, it is worth noting that the NAP is not referenced in either document.

Another important development since the Baseline Evaluation has been the ongoing establishment of the **Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)**, which was launched by the UK in April 2015. In its first year, the CSSF has produced a guidance note on integrating gender into CSSF programming, which has been funded by the Joint Secretariat. This is largely a set of practical tools and case studies, along with examples of best practice and general guidance on gender mainstreaming. Training for programme teams is also being developed alongside this document in order to offer practical support on mainstreaming gender within programmes and will be piloted in Iraq and Pakistan.

DRC/ Celebrating the power of women and peanuts in tackling malnutrition / © Russell Watkins DFID

It has been disappointing to note that the CSSF received fewer WPS-focused programme proposals than anticipated in its first funding round. The CSSF Joint Secretariat is responding by working on a more rigorous approach to capturing gender in programme documentation. It is also seeking to deliver strong messaging to programme teams on WPS, along with encouraging the appointment of gender advisers to key regional posts.

The Joint Secretariat is also encouraging programme teams to assign their own Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Gender Equality Markers in order to foster ownership over the process. This guidance is summarised in a separate Gender Equality Marker guidance document, which references the UK's NAP as well as emphasises the need to comply with the UK's International Development Act (Gender Equality) 2014. The CSSF has also provided £3 million in programme funds to Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and sub-Saharan Africa regions and Afghanistan for WPS and work on the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI): £1.5 million for MENA; £1 million for sub-Saharan Africa; and £0.5 million for Afghanistan, just for 2016/17. This money will help to enable sustained ambition on WPS. Further analysis of the UK's progress on WPS in key policies as well as programming will take place in the NAP's Endline Evaluation.

South Sudan / Women and girls marching in South Sudan / © Jenn Warren

4 LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES' NAPS

We undertook a review of five NAPs from countries with a similar profile to the UK: Australia, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden. The expectation in undertaking this exercise was not to discover the one 'winning formula' for NAP design and delivery, but rather to learn about different approaches, and draw out lessons on best practice. The table below presents an overview of some key features of the five NAPs.

Table 1. Summary of key features of other countries' NAPs

	UK (2014-2017)	**Australia** (2012-2018)	**Denmark** (2014-2019)	**Ireland** (2015-2018)[1]	**Netherlands** (2012-2015)[2]	**Sweden** (2009-2015)[3]
PILLAR APPROACH	✓	✓		✓		
FOCUS COUNTRIES	✓ (6)		✓ (11)		✓ (7)	
EARMARKED BUDGET					✓	
SIGNED BY MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS					✓	
INCLUDES DOMESTIC FOCUS[4]		✓		✓		
GENDER TRAINING FOR NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
WPS/NAP CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP/ COMMITTEE	✓	✓		✓		
FORMAL REPORTING MECHANISMS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY	✓	✓		✓		✓
CORRESPONDING COUNTRY-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS	✓					

[1] Previous iteration: 2011-2014
[2] The 2016-2019 edition had not been launched at the time of the review, but was published in March 2016.
[3] The first NAP was extended from 2012-2015; the NAP for post-2016 has not yet been launched.
[4] 'Domestic focus' in this context refers to programming and advocacy work carried out domestically. It should be noted that several of the countries reviewed, including the UK, undertake WPS capacity-building work of government staff as part of their NAPs.

4.1 OWNERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

While NAP ownership varied across the countries we reviewed, in most cases this involved the adoption of a 'government-wide' approach - an arrangement similar to the UK's, with the appointment of a single lead agency and responsibility for implementation being shared across government actors. For example, while the coordination of the UK's NAP implementation sits with the FCO, it is designed and delivered through the combined efforts of the FCO, DFID, MoD and the Stabilisation Unit, ensuring ownership across a range of government departments working on WPS. In some instances, ownership was shown to reflect prioritisation within senior leadership. For example, interviewees highlighted the significance of Australia's NAP originally being attributed to the (then) Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)[5], rather than AusAID[6] or the Department of Defence (DoD). Responsibility for implementation is now held by a WPS Inter-Departmental Working Group, which has been seen as contribution to improvements in coordination.

Government ownership was shown to be most successful where targeted efforts to strengthen accountability were adopted. In many cases this involved the inclusion of named actors in corresponding implementation and monitoring frameworks, the development of department-level NAP action plans, the appointment of senior operational-level focal points, and the development of oversight mechanisms, including WPS/NAP working groups and representative bodies such as Ireland's Oversight Group.[7] Despite identified gains, recurring challenges were identified by interviewees in relation to a lack of coordination and consistency between government actors, limitations around buy-in at senior levels, and limited clarification over roles and responsibilities. While a number of countries had put in place processes and structures to address these concerns, we found in some cases, the extent to which these actions had led to visible and meaningful improvements in terms of the delivery, and advancement of the WPS agenda on the ground, was limited.

The involvement of civil society actors in the design and delivery of NAPs was observed as a key feature across all but one of the countries reviewed. This is also the case with the UK, whereby the cross-Whitehall working group meets with Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) in a formal capacity twice a year. GAPS also meets on a regular basis with individual NAP leads in UK departments, and occasionally with the WPS working group on an ad hoc basis, and is able to provide feedback on NAP implementation and discuss other WPS-related issues. The nature of civil society engagement varied across the countries we reviewed, and included features such as joint monitoring exercises, platforms for shared learning and feedback, the inclusion of actors in consultative groups and workshops, and civil society taking a lead role in the implementation of practical accountability tools such as Australia's annual Shadow Report Card.[8]

[5] Now the Office for Women (OfW)
[6] Now integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
[7] Secretariat held by Ireland's Conflict Resolution Unit (CRU), https://www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/international-priorities/peace-and-security/women-peace-and-security/oversight-group/
[8] Hutchinson and Lee-Koo (2015)

In the case of Ireland's first NAP, the participation of civil society involved ongoing dialogue between civil society representatives and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), including lobbying for greater consultation with women affected by conflict (in and outside of Ireland), and more robust and accountable monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms. These efforts resulted in DFAT reconstituting its NAP Consultative Group, appointing an independent Chair and NAP drafter, and carrying out cross-learning consultations with women in Northern Ireland, Liberia and Timor-Leste.[9] In Sweden, a number of CSOs closely monitored and evaluated the country's first NAP and are currently involved in developing the new NAP for post-2016 through participation in a reference group. Despite these successes, there has been uncertainty over the extent to which the voices of women on the ground have been consistently and meaningfully captured and incorporated into NAPs.

Some countries demonstrated particularly **effective multi-stakeholder partnerships**. The 2012-2015 Dutch NAP is based on the understanding that "for the gender equality agenda to take hold in conflict affected environments, all policy and intervention levels should be covered".[10] The NAP was developed through close cooperation between government and civil society. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) together with the Dutch civil society gender platform WO=MEN took a central coordinating role. It was signed by 57 organisations, including four government ministries, the National Police, as well as a diverse group of international NGOs, smaller women's rights organisations (WROs) and four research institutes.

In our review of the Nordic NAPs (Denmark and Sweden), interviewees expressed the potential to achieve greater impact as a collective of smaller countries in the context of shared strategic interest or country focus. This was seen to potentially also open up effective platforms for sharing knowledge and expertise. While the current Danish NAP appears to be exclusively owned by the government, rather than civil society, one area where there is ambition for strong partnership is through multilateral organisations, particularly working with 'like-minded nations', including through the United Nations (UN), the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation/Arms Trade Treaty (UNSCAR/ ATT), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). There is particular emphasis on continuing Denmark's active participation in the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States,[11] working to ensure women's participation is reflected in the agreement. Working through multilaterals and likeminded nations on WPS could achieve greater impact for women and girls in conflict-affected countries. However, there may be challenges over the extent to which these approaches complicate individual country attribution, as well as a political drive to focus on a specific area of WPS in order to demonstrate success to a domestic audience.

[9] Conflict Resolution Unit (2012)
[10] Smits and de Nooijer (2014)
[11] The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States was signed by more than 40 countries and organisations at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness on 30 November 2011 in Busan, South Korea.

OWNERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP IN OTHER NAPS – LESSONS FOR THE UK

The UK government has succeeded in developing a tri-departmental NAP. However, the involvement of a broader range of government departments, including the National Security Council and the Home Office, would ensure a more effective whole-of-government approach and support the design and delivery of a domestic focus. The UK could also look to gain multiple stakeholder signatories in its next NAP.

The UK maintains a consultative relationship with UK civil society, primarily realised through regular meetings with Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS). However, examples from other countries show the benefit of strengthening this relationship by formalising relationships with civil society, particularly in regard to seeking country-specific expertise and feedback to enhance accountability. This could involve mandatory feedback and monitoring and evaluation sessions, as well as participating in (cross-country) learning exercises.

4.2 GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The UK NAP has identified six **focus countries** (Afghanistan, Burma, DRC, Libya, Syria and Somalia), and as illustrated in the Baseline Evaluation, the UK was shown to be delivering a number of strategic, diverse, and thoughtfully implemented WPS activities in these countries. However, this evaluation also found that the UK is delivering a number of activities outside of these focus countries that are helping to drive the WPS agenda forward, which are not currently captured in the UK's NAP. We examined the approaches of other countries to having focus countries in their NAPs.

The most recent Dutch NAP and the section under the MFA in the Danish NAP have identified focus countries. [12] Sweden is considering doing the same in its forthcoming NAP. The selection criteria for focus countries in the countries we reviewed took into account where the donor country already had close ties and a presence, where WPS activities were most needed, and where activities could potentially have the greatest impact. For countries such as Denmark that provide development assistance to a smaller number of countries than the UK, fragile states were prioritised. Focus countries were seen to be useful in marshalling resources and knowledge on specific WPS issues and allowing activities to be tailored to a specific context.

The Australian and Irish NAPs do not have allocated focus countries, but commit to undertaking a **coordinated and holistic approach internationally and domestically**. In the case of Ireland this is linked to two separate but interrelated features: (1) the country's direct domestic experience of conflict and post-conflict situations, which has predominantly affected women in Northern Ireland and those living in border counties commonly disadvantaged by the associated peace processes (highlighted by some interviewees as not being currently acknowledged within the UK NAP); and (2) a duty of care to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants arriving in Ireland who have experienced conflict, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). These approaches require ongoing attention to ensure consistency between a government's domestic and foreign policy, and a domestic focus is only appropriate if the relevant government departments are involved with NAP implementation.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS IN OTHER NAPS – LESSONS FOR THE UK

In common with Denmark and the Netherlands, the UK has chosen to use focus countries in order to deliver NAP commitments, and in most countries this approach has been acknowledged as useful in marshalling resources and increasing accountability. However, this is not an approach that has been shown to be appropriate or necessary for all countries.

A selection of countries incorporate domestic and an international focus, which has included a consideration of domestic experiences of conflict, as well as responding to refugee and asylum-seeking populations from external conflicts.

[12] The Danish MFA activities have focus countries as well as regional programmes.

4.3 UNSCR 1325 PILLARS

The UK's NAP currently aligns with the UNSCR 1325 pillar structure, with equally weighted outcome areas in Participation, Prevention, Protection, and Relief and Recovery. The Baseline Evaluation found that the UK is delivering a number of effective initiatives across all of these outcome areas. The UK is also dedicated to building national capacity, including a commitment to increase financial and technical resources available to WPS from the CSSF, and situational awareness in the armed forces at home and on deployment. However, this work has not translated through to the NAP's Implementation Plan, and the Baseline Evaluation found that while a number of training initiatives had been rolled out, including standalone training courses conducted by the Stabilisation Unit, the coverage of WPS training and provision of WPS mainstreaming in broader training programmes was limited.

All five of the NAPs we reviewed demonstrated **broad alignment with the UNSCR 1325 pillar structure**. Some were more focused on one or two pillars, some reconfigured thematic content and others included additional features, such as extra pillars or 'thematic areas'. Interviewees emphasised that alignment with the UNSCR 1325 pillar structure may helpfully leverage action. There was also acknowledgement of the widespread understanding of this framework across the WPS research/advocacy community, supporting effective communication and accountability. Participation was found to be a strong focus across all of the NAPs, and in the Irish, Australian, Danish and Swedish NAPs, there is a specific emphasis on increasing the numbers of women (and gender training) in national security forces involved in peacebuilding missions. For example, the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy and the Irish UN Training School in Defence Forces Centre provide gender training to military and civilian personnel involved in peacebuilding missions.

All of the NAPs reviewed included a focus on the Prevention and Protection pillars with a focus on survivors of SGBV, and women and girls at risk. The current Danish NAP is particularly strong in this area, committing Denmark to work towards combatting sexual violence in reconstruction efforts, especially where it relates to security sector reform and support for monitoring and evaluation sessions on the rule of law. The protection of women and girls in conflict situations was also one of the three focus areas of the most recent Swedish NAP, in which efforts to develop, implement and follow up the UN strategy for the prevention and elimination of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) are outlined. The most recent Dutch NAP also requires signatories to conduct gender analyses and measures to protect women from violence in their peacebuilding, security and defence policies, programmes and activities. The most recent Irish NAP combines Protection with Relief and Recovery into one pillar, and interviewees highlighted that the protection of women and girls from SGBV in conflict situations was a major strength of Ireland's first NAP and a defining feature of the country's humanitarian efforts.

Afghanistan / Women at a poultry association meeting, Afghanistan / © DFID

In a **departure from the conventional pillar structure**, both iterations of the Irish NAP have included a fourth pillar focused on the 'promotion' of the WPS agenda in regional and national arenas, and this is described as an 'innovation' under Ireland's first NAP.[13] In addition, the Australian NAP is structured around 'thematic areas' rather than pillars, as the term 'pillar' is seen to evoke 'images of individual entities operating in isolation from one another. This is misleading as the relationship between these five thematic areas is layered and complex – there are significant linkages and intersections between them'.[14] The Australian NAP also includes a fifth 'normative' thematic area, which is seen to cut across the four other pillars.

The experts we interviewed also drew attention to the ways that an **explicit focus on women** (rather than gender) in the WPS agenda has led to a lack of nuanced gender analysis, an insufficient consideration of the role of men and boys, and has perpetuated certain stereotypical binaries in certain contexts; for example, women as victims and men as perpetrators. Through our discussions and review of the wider literature, we found support for a focus on women that importantly does not negate a considered understanding and analysis of gender and broader multi-level intersections of inequality and exclusion. Several NAPs committed to understanding and acknowledging the diversity of women and girls' lived experiences. However, areas such as sexual orientation and gender identity (particularly non-binary identities) were not explicitly theorised in any NAP documents. The evaluation of the most recent Dutch NAP recommends that an operational UNSCR 1325 agenda requires a separate policy for gender, peace and security beyond just an NAP.[15] In the case of Sweden, the development of a feminist foreign policy (the first of its kind), may also provide insight into the potential scope and impact of standalone, but complementary policy.[16] Questions remain, however, about the advisability of extending the scope of a policy area that is already extremely broad.

UNSCR 1325 PILLARS IN OTHER NAPS – LESSONS FOR THE UK

Although all of the countries reviewed broadly align with the UNSCR 1325 four pillar framework, there is flexibility in interpretation, with some countries merging pillars or adding new ones to move beyond the concept of pillars as fixed, discrete entities. There was general agreement that considering the pillars in isolation from one another is not a helpful approach and that the pillars should be used in an interlinked manner.

[13] Irish NAP (2015-2018)
[14] Australian NAP (2012-2018)
[15] Smits and de Nooijer (2014).
[16] Sweden is the first country in the world to have a feminist foreign policy, launched in 2015. It aims to combat discrimination against women and has a strong focus on WPS. Sweden´s feminist foreign policy is also an approach that requires the activities of the Foreign Service to incorporate a gender equality perspective that can be summarised under three 'Rs': Rights, Representation and Resources.

4.4 MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORKS AND FINANCING

The UK's NAP is accompanied by a fairly detailed implementation matrix with a large number of indicators, and the UK has provided provision for external evaluations at baseline, midline and endline. While this provides a degree of accountability, the Baseline Evaluation showed that country offices found the process of reporting against the Implementation Plan to be onerous and duplicative for staff trying to deliver on the WPS agenda.

The five NAPs reviewed showed varying levels of detail and rigour in relation to **monitoring and evaluating WPS implementation**. Interviewees commonly emphasised that many countries had established relatively weak M&E systems, which in some cases had become milder and less ambitious over time, and lacked meaningful mechanisms to support robust implementation of these frameworks. There was a shared emphasis on the need to adopt SMART indicators, with a focus on capturing qualitative change and impact.

A selection of countries have undertaken external evaluations,[17] and in some cases annual reporting has been made publicly available. Some of the NAPs reviewed had a results or M&E framework sitting behind their core NAP documents that included named, responsible actors and specific actions. But none had an implementation or operational plan that mirrored the UK's structure/approach in terms of the inclusion of detailed programme-specific indicators, designated timeframes, or country-specific actions. The Australian NAP has developed a 'suite' of high-level measures to track its progress, which are attributed to the document's 'strategies, and are seen to be proxies "to assess the effectiveness of each strategy and do not directly align with individual actions".[18]

Several countries include an emphasis on the value of adopting an **adaptive and flexible approach** to M&E and implementation in light of the fragile and unpredictable settings of much WPS activity. The most recent Dutch NAP stated that its overall flexible approach would be accompanied by stricter M&E mechanisms. However, an evaluation of the Dutch NAP found that the M&E system was not fully adopted, the quantitative monitoring framework never became a reality, and there was no clear consensus about what constituted success, making it difficult to measure its impact.[19] The current Danish NAP has activities, indicators and corresponding owners facilitating a results-oriented reporting and monitoring mechanism, yet some activities and indicators are vague. The most recent Swedish NAP refers to the need for regular reporting and evaluation, including through annual meetings with the MFA, government agencies and civil society, but is vague as to what specific M&E mechanisms will be used.

[17] Ireland, Sweden, the Netherlands
[18] Australian NAP (2012-2018)
[19] Smits and de Nooijer (2014).

An additional key factor concerns **human and financial resourcing** attached to NAP development and implementation. While members of the UK government's cross-Whitehall working group on WPS have earmarked time for delivering the NAP, no other significant resources are allocated to it. Interviewees broadly supported the need for targeted resourcing to support and facilitate the furthering of NAP and WPS commitments. The Dutch MFA is an exception in that it earmarked a budget of EUR 16 million to support civil society-led projects focusing on promoting women's political participation and leadership, plus EUR 24,500 per year to compensate smaller voluntary organisations for their time. Although this funding mechanism has been applauded worldwide[20] and facilitated collaboration between partners, it also led to competition and tensions between stakeholders and a donor/implementer relationship, with the government ultimately having the power to decide where the money was spent.[21]

M&E FRAMEWORKS AND FINANCING IN OTHER NAPS – LESSONS FOR THE UK

The UK's M&E provisions for the NAP are rigorous compared to those of other countries. While accountability is important, it appears that a less prescriptive approach to implementation, and more flexible and adaptive delivery models, have benefitted other countries. External evaluations and annual reporting are viewed as important by the majority of countries and help to enhance accountability.

The UK is among the majority in its decision to not earmark funding for the delivery of the NAP, and the Dutch example illustrates that a discrete fund can be problematic. Of significance, is the amount of resources – in particular, human resources – that a government is willing to commit to a NAP.

[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

Lebanon / Knitting a brighter future for Syrian refugees in Lebanon / © Russell Watkins DFID

5 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A POST-2017 UK NAP

The Baseline Evaluation of the NAP highlighted several shortcomings in its design including the retrofitting of the Implementation Plan; the failure to adequately capture the UK's successes on WPS programming outside of the six focus countries; the silo approach to using the four pillars; and the NAP's lack of ability to drive the agenda on WPS.

While the previous section looked at other countries' NAPs, this section addresses some of the key issues in NAP design and implementation and makes recommendations for a post-2017 UK NAP based on the findings of the Baseline Evaluation, lessons learned from other countries and consultations with WPS experts.

Jordan / Syrian women refugees receiving psycho-social support counselling at an International Rescue Committee clinic in Jordan / © Russell Watkins DFID

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

In terms of the overarching framework for implementation of the future UK NAP on WPS, there are a number of issues to consider:

(i) Pillar-based Theory of Change?

The current 2014-2017 UK NAP's ToC takes the well-established UNSCR four-pillar model that focuses on Prevention, Participation, Protection and Relief and Recovery, as its basis and applies this at the outcome level.

These four pillars were developed in the UN Women, Peace and Security Report of the Secretary-General in 2010 (S/2010/173), alongside international indicators, reflecting the 2008-2009 UN System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP S/2007/567). The pillars are now widely used as a guiding framework by most countries' NAPs and serve a purpose of providing structure to WPS initiatives. Originally a fifth pillar was included in the UN SWAP that looked at normative change. Although the majority of interpretations leave out the fifth pillar, there is an increasing evidence base on the importance of normative change when addressing WPS issues, including the issues of violence against women and girls,[22] and this was one of the key findings from the Baseline Evaluation.

The pillar approach to WPS has been widely accepted by the international community and, with the fifth pillar of normative change included, we believe that the pillars are sufficiently all-encompassing to provide a suitable framework. While none of the interviewees for this study were unequivocally positive about the pillar approach, it was recognised by all as a common language that has helped to shape action. Interviewees identified the following challenges:

- There is significant overlap between pillars, especially the Protection and Prevention pillars (for example, actions to address SGBV are often categorised under both).
- Interventions under the Prevention pillar have often been narrowly focused on preventing sexual violence, with very little priority given to the broader area of conflict prevention.
- In general, the attention devoted to the Participation pillar, and women's empowerment objectives within it, has been fairly limited compared to other pillars (for example, the midterm report on Ireland's NAP recommended embedding women's participation and empowerment across all pillars in recognition of their cross-cutting importance).

At present, the UK NAP interprets the four pillars differently to the standard international interpretation. For example, the UN indicators for the relief and recovery pillar include a range of post-conflict initiatives such as education and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), whereas the UK NAP indicators and activities in the Implementation Plan are almost entirely focused on humanitarian programming. (see table 2 on the next page).

[22] Alexander-Scott, Bell and Holden (2016)

Table 2. Comparison between UN indicators and UK indicators

RELIEF AND RECOVERY	
UN INDICATORS	**UK NAP INDICATORS**
• Maternal mortality • Primary- and secondary-school enrolment rates • Extent to which strategic planning frameworks in conflict-affected countries incorporate gender analysis, targets, indicators and budgets • Proportion of funding allocated and disbursed to civil society organisations that is spent on gender issues • Number and percentage of women and girls receiving benefits through reparations programmes • Number and proportion of women and girls in DDR programmes	• Proportion of humanitarian funding disbursed used to address specific needs of girls and women • Proportion of total humanitarian funding disbursed to civil society that is allocated to address gender equality issues • Maternal mortality rate

By ensuring that the UK uses the same definition of the pillars as the UN system there would be greater alignment with the internationally understood definitions.

The Baseline Evaluation also noted that the UK NAP's ToC exclusively categorises WPS initiatives under one of the four pillars when many activities contribute to several of the pillars. As part of this study, we undertook an exercise to look at six different 'activities' from the current NAP's ToC. The purpose of the exercise was to assess the evidence base linking their contributions to impact at outcome level. We found that all the activities analysed contributed to at least two pillars. In many cases they contributed to all four pillars.

UK PROGRAMMES THAT DELIVER ACROSS SEVERAL PILLARS[23]

- In Syria, the UK is providing support to a security and justice programme, which aims to empower security and justice providers in partnership with local stakeholders. Addressing the security needs of women is a priority, and the programme is working to increase the numbers of women in the Free Syrian Police. At the point of review, the number of women in the Free Syrian Police had reached 23, which was seen to be a modest yet significant achievement in light of the high-risk/sensitive nature of this work. This initiative features under the Protection pillar in the UK NAP's Implementation Plan, but demonstrates close alignment with the Participation pillar.
- In Afghanistan, the UK's efforts have focused on strengthening the role of women in the Afghan National Security Forces. The UK has provided women with leadership training through the Afghan National Army Officer Academy. At the point of review, the first platoon of women officers had begun training and were due to graduate in June 2015. As above, this initiative links across both the Protection and Participation pillars – it currently features under the Participation pillar in the UK NAP's Implementation Plan.
- In Somalia, the UK is supporting efforts to prevent and respond to GBV in three districts of Mogadishu. Activities include capacity building with service providers, awareness-raising activities in communities, and engaging with legal bodies. In addition, this project has a conflict analysis and research component looking to understand linkages between conflict, social norms and GBV. This initiative currently features under the Prevention pillar of the UK NAP's Implementation Plan, but has strong links with the Protection pillar.

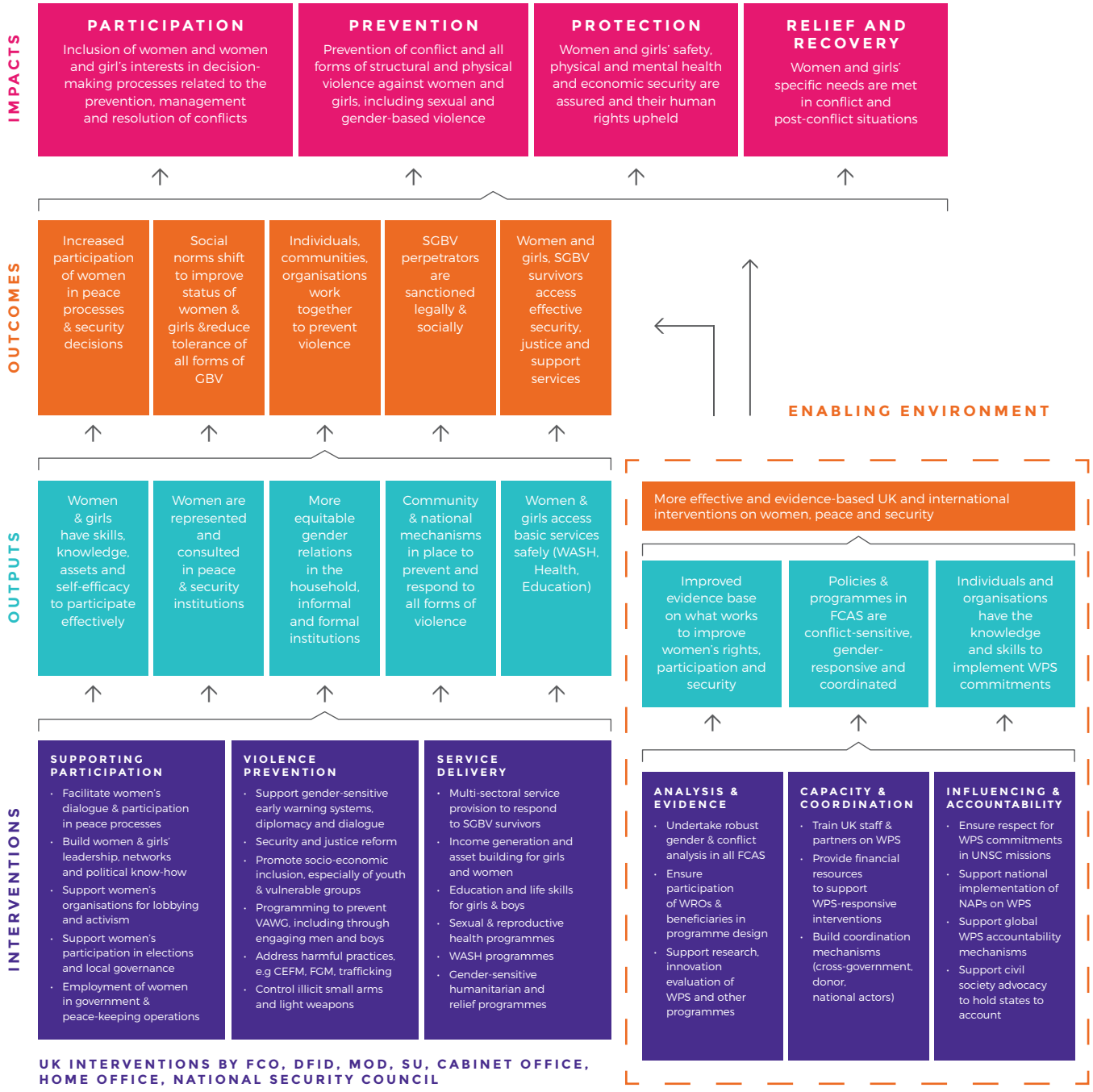
Rather than strictly adhering to the pillar structure, we recommend that the next UK NAP is inspired by, and broadly aligned with, the pillar framework, but does not structure its implementation plan strictly by the four pillars. Instead the UK could select key priority thematic areas for the next NAP period, in line with the UK's strengths – for example: supporting women's participation in peace processes and security institutions; addressing all forms of GBV in humanitarian emergencies (not just sexual violence); improving women's economic empowerment; and supporting women's rights organisations. In this way, action by the UK would prioritise a number of thematic areas linked to the WPS pillars, which are recognised internationally. The framework should acknowledge that activities are able to contribute to more than one of the pillars.

This could be seen as a similar approach to the Paris Principles[24], where each donor adopts a limited number of key sectors where it will specialise (for example, the UK focuses on health, education, and women and girls). Suggestions from interviewees for a UK focus included increasing women's participation in peace talks and security institutions – perhaps in addition to existing strong areas for the UK, such as addressing sexual violence in conflict and violence against women and girls in humanitarian contexts.

[23] Initiatives reviewed as part of the UK NAP Baseline Evaluation
[24] The Paris Principles are a set of international standards which frame and guide the work of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)

We recommend that the ToC supporting this NAP demonstrates more clearly how specific UK actions and programmes are intended to contribute to the outcome-level results specified, such that the pathways of change between interventions, outputs and outcomes are made more explicit. If the UK opts to have a more flexible implementation approach over the NAP period, where new interventions can be developed over time, then the ToC can be higher level, with new interventions specifying their pathways to change and contributing to the overall results framework. A proposed alternative ToC is shown below in Figure 1.

Diagram 1. Proposed ToC for a post-2017 NAP



POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

1 **Adopt a thematic framework broadly aligned with the pillars:** we recommend that the next NAP retains the basic framework of the four pillars but recognises the ability of an activity to feed into more than one pillar, and presents clear pathways of change. This should include provision for developing the enabling environment for working on WPS.

(ii) Which indicators?

A key decision for the post-2017 UK NAP will be about which indicators to adopt to track progress at different levels.

There are several overlapping sets of existing indicators pertinent to the WPS agenda that the UK could adopt or draw on. These include the UN Secretary-General's 26 indicators on WPS, which are now being tracked internationally by the UN system, but are also intended as a set of indicators that countries could wholly or partially adopt in their own NAPs. There are also the EU's agreed 17 indicators on WPS, which the UK has supported. Finally, there are now the Global Goals numbers 5 and 16, each with accompanying indicators. Adopting some of these existing indicators would both streamline reporting overall for the UK (for example, the UK has to report on Global Goal indicators anyway) and ensure that the UK is participating in collective delivery of the WPS agenda (measured by these sets of indicators).

Examples of indicators from other frameworks that might be used are as shown below:

GLOBAL GOAL INDICATORS	• Proportions of women (by age group, women with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service and judiciary) compared to national distributions • Percentage of women and girls subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months
UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S WPS INDICATORS	• Representation of women among mediators, negotiators and technical experts in formal peace negotiations • Women's participation in an official observer status at the beginning and the end of formal peace negotiations • Proportion of total disbursed funding to CSOs that is allocated to address gender equality issues • Extent to which measures to protect women's and girls' human rights are included in national security policy frameworks • Percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls • Percentage of (monetary equivalent, estimate) benefits from temporary employment in the context of early economic recovery programmes received by women and girls

EU WPS INDICATORS	
	• Number and percentage of women mediators and negotiators and women's civil society groups in formal or informal peace negotiations supported by the EU • Proportion of women and men among heads of diplomatic missions and delegations, staff participating in UN peacekeeping operations and UK missions at all levels, including military and police staff • Number and percentage of missions and operations with mandates and planning documents that include clear references to gender/women, peace and security issues and that actually report on this • Number of international- and regional-level dialogues that include specific attention to women, peace and security in outcome documents, conclusions and targets

Another important issue is to what extent the UK establishes indicators that measure the progress of the UK in prioritising and mainstreaming WPS issues – process indicators versus impact indicators (that measure impacts and changes on the ground). While the latter are clearly the end goal, establishing process indicators can be a key way to improve the quality and quantity of actions and ultimately achieve greater impact. To some extent, the UK has recognised this in its current NAP with the inclusion of pillar 5 of 'Building National Capacity', though this could include much more specific commitments and indicators.

Pertinent process indicators might include a commitment to undertake a gender and conflict analysis (or WPS analysis) in all NAP focus countries; a commitment that all future country operational plans in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) have to account for what they are (not) doing on the WPS agenda; a commitment to ensure key UK country office staff receive training on WPS; a UK commitment to push for women's participation in every UN deployment of negotiators or mediators; the inclusion of WPS competencies in job descriptions; budgetary commitments; country-level gender and conflict analysis; and staff training.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

2	**Include output and process indicators:** output indicators should, where possible, be aligned with other existing indicators including those of the Global Goals, UN Secretary-General and EU.

Somalia / Room for improvement of nutrition in Puntland, Somalia / © Save the Children / Colin Crowley

5.2 PRIORITISATION AND FOCUS

Another key issue is prioritisation and focus. Most experts interviewed for this study said NAPs were often over-complex and confusing. We recommend that the UK focuses on a few areas and invests money, time and human resources in these to make effective progress. There are two key areas to consider:

(i) Focus countries versus all countries

The Baseline Evaluation of the UK's NAP raised the question of what purpose is served by having focus countries. The evaluation noted that there is very little to distinguish the six 'focus countries' of the NAP from other conflict-affected countries in which the UK is carrying out work on WPS. The UK offices in the six focus countries were not given any additional resources or training to carry out WPS work and simply had a higher administrative burden of reporting.

While experts interviewed recognised the limitations of having focus countries (in terms of not capturing the breadth of interventions and results on WPS), there was almost unanimous agreement that focus countries were necessary in order to make an NAP achievable and realistic and to improve accountability. However, experts stressed that there needed to be a much more strategic approach in these focus countries, entailing proper analysis of the WPS landscape and the design of specific programmes and programme components to make progress on WPS commitments.

At the same time, experts emphasised that action cannot be limited to focus countries and that in addition there needs to be an overarching strategy for all FCAS. This, for example, would outline the minimum that the UK would do in all contexts – such as undertaking a rapid assessment of opportunities to mainstream WPS, or ensuring that a conflict and/or political economy analysis includes a proper gender analysis. Furthermore, interviewees suggested that all UK country offices in conflict-affected countries could report on their WPS activities annually, under broad headings.

The UK is carrying out a range of WPS programming beyond the six focus countries that is not being acknowledged in the reporting on the current NAP. We propose that a future NAP would benefit from a two-tier approach that still uses focus countries but also encompasses the UK's work in non-focus countries:

- **Tier 1 – Priority NAP countries:** a small number (suggested 4-6) of priority countries for full NAP implementation. In these countries, the UK could commit to engaging country offices to prepare a strategy for NAP implementation in that country from 2016. The would involve undertaking a substantive WPS, conflict and gender analysis (using existing or adapted tools) and then putting in place a strategy that entails a twin-track approach of maximising the impact of existing programmes on WPS outcomes (mainstreaming) and developing a small number of WPS-specific programmes. A simple M&E framework would be developed alongside the strategy, which would contain both higher-level core indicators on WPS and project-specific indicators, and could be monitored in collaboration with a local stakeholder group. Whitehall would provide technical support to the country office teams and potentially some central budget.

- **Tier 2 – All other fragile and conflict-affected countries:** in these countries, the UK will commit to implementing WPS programming through Conflict and Social Development Advisers, applying a checklist to new programmes with the aim to avoid harm and identify any opportunities to make positive impacts on WPS outcomes. These countries would also be asked to collect data on a small number of core indicators to support reporting on NAP outcomes (these could be mostly process indicators). There could also be the possibility of these country offices receiving technical assistance and applying for additional funding from headquarters.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

3	**Adopt a two-tier approach to country-level implementation:** the UK should develop WPS action plans for 4-6 focus countries with the support of WPS experts. UK country offices in other (non-focus) conflict-affected countries would be asked to report annually on their contributions to the WPS agenda against a set of indicators.

(ii) External and/or domestic focus

In contrast to several other donor NAPs, the UK NAP currently does not include any specific commitments at a domestic level such as increasing the proportion of women in the security forces, addressing the Countering Violent Extremism agenda, or addressing the needs of women refugees and asylum seekers. Many experts interviewed argued that a domestic focus on 'getting one's own house in order' is important for the credibility of a country's external efforts on the WPS agenda.

While the UK's NAP and Implementation Plan clearly attributes responsibility to different departments, there is the possibility to expand this beyond DFID, FCO and MoD. A wider range of UK government departments are spending Official Development Assistance (ODA), and the new CSSF is led by the National Security Council and includes additional departments such as the Home Office and Cabinet Office. The UK therefore needs to consider the role of these additional departments in the development and implementation of the next NAP, particularly in light of the increased role of national security interests in international development and Europe's current refugee crisis. As outlined in the previous section, the UK could also look to move beyond indicating UK government actor 'leads' at the highest level, to develop a more comprehensive and detailed plan mapping NAP roles/responsibilities, which would be reflected in a corresponding NAP Implementation Plan. This could be supported further through the development of department-level NAP implementation plans with WPS focal points within each department.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

4	**Include a number of relevant commitments on WPS in the domestic space:** in particular, the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers, and UK work on Countering Violent Extremism.

5.3 DESIGN, DELIVERY AND MONITORING PROCESSES

In terms of the process for the design, implementation and monitoring of the future UK NAP on WPS, the main issues to consider include:

(i) Analysis to inform NAP priorities

It will be important to consider what analysis will be undertaken to inform the focus and priorities of the UK NAP commitments. Many experts interviewed for this study felt that strong gender and conflict WPS analysis was essential to inform UK priorities at a country level and that the analysis process itself could serve as a key entry point as it involves engagement with other key actors. For example, both Sweden and the Netherlands are planning to undertake gender and conflict analysis for all focus countries in their new NAPs.

Analysis can be conducted at different levels:

- **Global level:** What are the key opportunities and obstacles to make progress internationally on the WPS agenda and how can these be addressed? (e.g. new commitments or resolutions from the UN Security Council, more member states drafting NAPs, advocacy on particular issues) What are the gaps? What can the UK specifically do?
- **Country level:** What are the priority WPS issues in a specific country context? What are the specific opportunities to make progress on the WPS agenda? Who are the important actors? What are the obstacles? What are the gaps? What can the UK specifically do?

Another consideration is which tools are used for the analysis. There are different options:

- **Ensuring WPS questions/issues are integrated into existing analyses conducted by the UK or partners:** for example, the Joint Analysis for Conflict and Stability (JACS), country gender-analysis stabilisation plans. The UK recently committed to ensuring all conflict analysis and assessment tools are gender sensitive.[25] It has recently produced: (i) UK Government guidance on gender and conflict analysis in the JACS; and (ii) a good practice guide on gender mainstreaming for the CSSF. The UK will be training CSSF programmers on how to incorporate gender into peacebuilding in 2016. This new guidance has yet to be fully implemented, and accountability mechanisms are not yet defined, but this seems like an important step to support NAP implementation. DFID also has some good gender-analysis tools; however, not every country uses these consistently and they are not comprehensive in terms of conflict and peace issues. DFID also sometimes commissions gender audits and conflict audits to assess the gender and conflict sensitivity across its portfolio of programmes and to identify opportunities for improvement.

[25] Also, in October 2015, Baroness Varma as part of the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in New York committed to integrating gender into conflict analysis and early warning by September 2016.

- **Commissioning a specific gender and conflict/WPS analysis in key countries:** to do a focused, thorough analysis of the current situation and opportunities and make recommendations for UK support. There are a number of models of analysis that could be used (for example, that recently published by Conciliation Resources, analysis being developed by Saferworld, or pieces by the Stabilisation Unit).

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

5	**Commit to undertaking WPS and conflict and gender analyses:** in a minimum number of pilot countries in preparation for the next NAP.

(ii) Consultations to develop and deliver the NAP

Most experts interviewed for this study spoke of the importance of civil society's involvement in the development of an NAP and described broad consultations as important in ensuring shared ownership of the NAP, as well as improving quality and accountability. However, it was also emphasised that consultations need to be carefully and transparently managed as they can become onerous and delay action.

While the UK government holds bi-annual WPS meetings with civil society in the UK, we have observed that these meetings cover such a broad range of subjects and countries that they are insufficient for gaining the greatest benefit of the CSOs' expertise or providing genuine accountability. We note that WPS meetings between civil society and the UK government that focus in depth on just one or two NAP focus countries would be a better use of the relationship and allow for genuine, context-specific engagement on WPS that utilises the expertise of civil society.

In addition to UK-based civil society consultations, there is a need for consultations to take place with civil society in the NAP focus countries. Although the current UK NAP commendably involved the consultation of CSOs in the focus countries, the timing of the consultations did not allow for the findings to feed into implementation planning of the UK's NAP, nor was it accompanied by a broader analysis that could have informed programme planning.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

6	**Strengthen relations with UK civil society:** by holding regular meetings on the NAP focus countries. Preparation for the next NAP should begin as early as the latter half of 2016 and should involve consultations with civil society in the focus countries, as well as country-specific analysis informed by WPS experts.

(iii) Budget and resourcing for the NAP

The question of whether or not an NAP should have a dedicated budget has been widely debated. Having a budget for a subject that benefits from being mainstreamed runs the risk of it becoming siloed and seen as 'somebody else's responsibility'. On the other hand, the Baseline Evaluation showed that some of the UK country offices in the focus countries felt frustrated that they were being asked to deliver on a subject area without additional resources to do so.

Across the board, experts interviewed for this study identified the lack of a specific budget allocated to NAP implementation as one of the biggest obstacles to implementation of individual NAPs and progress globally. Some suggested that NAPs should be accompanied by a budget with an annual work planning and budget allocation process.

With regard to resourcing and funding NAP implementation, it is important to understand the different modalities that this may take and whether the requirement is for a centralised fund for WPS programming or more money made available at a local level.

The Baseline Evaluation did not identify a shortage of funding available for UK WPS programming. Furthermore, the CSSF managers have flagged a disappointing shortage in applications by WPS-focused programmes, indicating that the resources are available if the programme proposals are made. Therefore the evidence indicates that sufficient funding already exists within the system and there is no requirement for a separate NAP Fund. However, the Baseline Evaluation highlighted inconsistencies in the UK's provision of funding to WROs and local organisations working on WPS in conflict-affected countries, indicating that in some countries the UK is failing to channel the funds towards grassroots organisations. The problem would appear to be therefore that the funding is available but country offices are not always prioritising WPS in their programming.

FUNDING CIVIL SOCIETY AND WPS IN BURMA

In Burma the UK has supported WROs through the UK-initiated Peace Support Fund (PSF). Established in 2014, the PSF seeks to increase the likelihood of sustainable peace by providing funding primarily to projects that provide direct, tangible support to the peace process; or seek to directly contribute to a reduction in inter-communal violence. The PSF has ensured that WPS is central to its purpose by insisting that all project applications must be inclusive of women's interests. Furthermore, PSF funding was used to undertake research on WPS in Burma. It has proved an agile vehicle for providing funding to WROs and has gone on to attract funding from Sweden and Australia. To date, the PSF has distributed funds equivalent to GBP 4.14 million annually.

The Baseline Evaluation also identified a need for more WPS resources to be targeted at UK government staff working in conflict-affected countries. Staff expressed a wish for more training on WPS issues and more access to WPS expertise. At present, support in this area is limited to a small number of courses provided by the Stabilisation Unit.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

7 **Ensure there are sufficient human resources to provide technical support to country offices:** from Whitehall, as well as expertise in-country, with a budget to conduct training with key country office staff, and specific earmarked funding for WPS programming. The CSSF should have targets for fund allocation to WPS programmes or programmes with a strong WPS component. UK offices in all NAP focus countries should have a fund available for supporting Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on WPS, or contribute to a multilateral fund that supports women's rights organisations (WROs).

(iv) Level of flexibility in implementation

There is a clear tension between the need and will to determine NAP priorities and drive implementation from Whitehall, and the wish to maximise positive impacts at a country level in ways that are achievable for country offices given other policy and programme commitments.

Most interviewees agreed it was important for overall objectives, results and indicators to be determined at headquarters level, but then decisions over priorities and interventions at a country level needed to be determined by country offices, with technical assistance centrally.

Many experts interviewed for this evaluation expressed frustration at the approach taken by several countries, including the UK, to package up existing programmes and activities that are already underway or being planned, rather than strategically designing new WPS programmes, programme components or activities. They highlight the potential for states to undertake analyses of countries where they are operating, and to look at how existing programmes might be extended or improved to address WPS issues as well as, in some cases, to develop new and specific WPS programmes.

MAINSTREAMING WPS – DFID PROGRAMMING IN NIGERIA

Following a conflict audit that was done in 2014, DFID put in place a process of integrating gender and conflict sensitivity. Under this approach, contractors will be obliged to design programmes with a conflict- and gender-sensitive approach. The DFID Senior Responsible Officer for the programme will review business plans, proposals and other documents using a matrix and checklist designed to ensure the gender and conflict sensitivity.

The current UK NAP includes an Implementation Plan for three years based on existing programmes and activities at country level. However, establishing a plan for implementation for the whole NAP period potentially means that relevant programmes that are developed after this time period end up not being included in the implementation framework and that there is no capacity to respond to new opportunities that might have an impact at country or global levels. Also, given that the NAP is implemented in conflict-affected countries, which are by their nature dynamic, a static implementation plan is not suited to the need and context. A different option would be to establish a higher-level results framework and set of indicators and then to have a more flexible annual planning process that would allow for additions to the portfolio of activities. A longer NAP with a flexible implementation plan would enable the NAP provisions to gain momentum and traction and have the ability to influence policy and planning.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

8	**A longer NAP with a flexible implementation plan:** the post-2017 NAP should be at least five years in length, with overarching thematic priorities determined at Whitehall level, with flexible implementation plans developed at country level and reviewed annually.

(v) Incentives for implementation and change

Incentives are another key issue that can facilitate or impede implementation. For example, during the Baseline Evaluation the research team in Burma learned that although the UK office in Yangon stated that WPS was a priority in security sector reform (SSR) planning, when a job advert was released for an SSR expert to support the design of a new programme the advert made no mention of the requirement for an understanding of WPS or gender. Including WPS understanding (if not expertise) in a person specification for assignments would incentivise individuals to better understand WPS and incorporate it into their work.

Experts interviewed for this study stressed the importance of having specific individual staff members both in Whitehall and at country level with responsibility for WPS issues and for implementing the NAP. These responsibilities need to be captured in job descriptions and recognised and rewarded.

The Baseline Evaluation found that some country offices in focus countries in the existing NAP found the process of contributing to the NAP implementation plan burdensome and top down. There need to be requirements in place that the next round of DFID country operational plans[26] have a paragraph on what the country will or will not do on WPS and that posts must report back on WPS issues to FCO London, but also incentives, such as Sweden's Gender Coach programme for senior military officials.[27] Although this programme is focused on the MoD, it is a model that could be adapted by FCO and DFID, whereby Ambassadors, Heads of Country Offices, Heads of Departments and other senior officials are assigned gender mentors. This programme could be offered on a mandatory or voluntary basis as part of professional development.

[26] Unfortunately, the timing is not ideal this time, as the DFID Bilateral Aid Review process has just been conducted for the next round of Country Operational Plans.
[27] In Sweden's Gender Coach programme, senior military officials since 2007 have been assigned a mentor on gender for two years. They have monthly discussions on how to integrate gender into their work and take part in annual workshops. This programme was seen by interviewees for this study as effective in terms of resources and time, with some senior people who previously were not gender sensitive now having become gender champions.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

9 **Incentivise Whitehall and country office staff:** through the allocation of clear responsibilities for WPS issues in job descriptions and performance assessments. In addition, we recommend that the UK produce a simple guidance note for country offices outlining their responsibilities on WPS issues, as well as technical support and budget they can request from Whitehall.

(vi) Monitoring and evaluating NAP implementation

A results-based M&E framework is important for accountability and should be able to report at outcome level, not just at activity and output levels. At the same time, this M&E framework needs to be kept relatively simple and should not over-burden busy country offices. The Baseline Evaluation found that the current implementation plan and reporting system were onerous for both the UK country-level staff and Whitehall-based staff, while providing little opportunity to influence the ongoing implementation. The best option seems to be a combination of core NAP indicators, which all country offices would report against, combined with specific indicators for particular programmes and countries. To the extent possible, these indicators should be ones that exist already. The core indicator set could be drawn from a mix of the Global Goals and existing WPS indicators (UN or EU); the additional indicators could be drawn from specific programme initiatives in focus countries. In addition, a number of process indicators for progress at a normative level (UK international action, but also UK capacity building) should be included. External evaluation of the NAP at outcome level will continue to be important for accountability.

One model may be to undertake a light-touch annual review and planning process. This would include reporting from country offices against core indicators and for priority countries; a short narrative report on the wider portfolio of WPS activities; a consultation with a wider group of WPS stakeholders via setting up a consultation mechanism with civil society and academics, for example; a review of needs for training, support and capacity building; and some allocation of additional resources for programming.

POST-2017 RECOMMENDATION

10 **Develop core indicators against which all UK country offices working in conflict-affected countries should report:** focus countries should have additional specific indicators with light-touch annual review and planning requirements.

DRC / Women singing and dancing at a community meeting in Kananga, DRC /© Stephanie Dunga/DFID

REFERENCES

Experts consulted in this review

NAME	JOB TITLE	ORGANISATION
Annika Bergman Rosamond	Senior Lecturer in Political Science	Lund University
Sarah Boyd	Specialist	Athena Consortium
Irina Bratosin D'Almeida	Senior Associate	European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)
Cate Buchanan	Specialist/Co-Managing Partner	Athena Consortium
Colm Byrne	Humanitarian Manager	Oxfam, Ireland
Mavic Cabrera Belleza	International Coordinator	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders,
Bethan Cansfield	Policy and Advocacy Manager	Womankind Worldwide
Lawrence Devlin	Conflict Adviser	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Pablo Castillo-Diaz	Protection Specialist	UN Women
Nahla Valji	Protection Specialist	UN Women
Sara Duerto Valero	Statistics and Monitoring Specialist	UN Women
Dr Nata Duvvury	Senior Lecturer, School of Political Science and Sociology	National University of Ireland, Galway
Abigail Hunt	Policy and Advocacy Manager	Womankind Worldwide
Disa Kammers Larsson	Policy Adviser for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda	Kvinna till Kvinna
Diana Koestler	Associate Member	OECD
Anne Kwakkenbos	Senior Policy Adviser on UNSCR 1325	Women Equals Men Gender Platform
Commandant Jayne Lawlor	Commandant, Officer Commanding, 2nd Cavalry Squadron	Irish Defence Forces
Dr Katrina Lee-Koo	Senior Lecturer in International Relations	Monash University
Patrick McLoughlin	Secretariat to the Oversight Group, National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security	Conflict Resolution Unit
Karen McMinn	Independent Consultant for Irish NAP	
Niall Morris	Governance, Human Rights and Gender Equality	Irish Aid
Emma Nilenfors	Deputy Director, Security Policy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Dr Catherine O'Rourke	Transitional Justice Institute	University of Ulster

NAME	JOB TITLE	ORGANISATION
Louise Olsson	Women, Peace and Security/ UNSCR 1325 Specialist	Folke Bernadotte Acadeamey
Dr. Niamh Reilly	Global Women's Studies, Catherine O'Rourke Transitional Justice Institute University of Ulster	University of Galway
Reiseal Ni Cheilleachair	Humanitarian Policy Officer	Trócaire, Maynooth
Emmicki Roos	UNSCR 1325 NAP Specialist	Institute for Inclusive Security
Annemarie Sancar	Senior Adviser, Gender and Peacebuilding	Swisspeace
Dr Laura Shepherd	Associate Professor of International Relations	University of New South Wales (UNSW) Australia
Rosan Smits	Deputy Director Conflict Research Unit / Senior Research Fellow	Clingendael – Netherlands Institute of International Relations
Sharon Smee	Research and Policy Advisor	International Women's Development Agency
Aisling Swaine	Associate Professor of Practice of International Affairs	The Elliott School of International Affairs
Sanne Tielmans	Senior Adviser, Policy and Practice	Conciliation Resources
Kim Toogood	Senior Peacebuilding Adviser	Alert/NSRP
Hannah Wright	Gender, Peace and Security Adviser	Saferworld

LITERATURE CONSULTED

Alexander-Scott, M. Bell, E. and Holden, J. (2016) DFID Guidance Note: Shifting Social Norms to Tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), London: VAWG Helpdesk

Bergman Rosamund, A. (2015) Women, Peace and Security – and Denmark DIIS Report 32, Copenhagen: DIIS

Chowdhury, E. (2013) Working Paper: Implementing Locally, Inspiring Globally: Localizing UNSCR 1325 in Colombia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Uganda, New York: Global Network of Women Peacebuilders in collaboration with UN Women

Coomaraswamy, R. (2015) Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace, A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, New York: UN Women

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2013) General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, New York: United Nations

Conflict Resolution Unit (2011) Ireland's National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325, 2011 – 2014, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland

Conflict Resolution Unit (2012) Voices of Experience: An Exploration of the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, A Report of the Cross-Learning Process of Ireland/Northern Ireland, 3 Timor-Leste and Liberia on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland

Conflict Resolution Unit (2015) Ireland's second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015–2018, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence and Justice Ministry (2014) Denmark's National Action Plan for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2014-19, Danish Government

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2012) Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012–2018, Australian Government

EPLO (2013) UNSCR 1325 in Europe, 20 case studies of implementation, Brussels: EPLO

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (2014), UK National Action Plan On Women, Peace & Security for 2014-2017, UK: Her Majesty's Government

Gordon, A. (2015) Applying Global Tools to Improve National Action Plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Washington DC: Institute for Inclusive Security

Government of Sweden (2009) The Swedish Government's Action Plan for 2009-2012 to implement Security Council Resolution 1325, Government of Sweden

Government of Sweden Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2014) Swedish Foreign Service action plan for feminist foreign policy 2015–2018 including focus areas for 2016, Government of Sweden

Government of Sweden and International Alert (2015) Swedish National Action Plan on UNSCR1325, Report on the consultation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Government of Sweden

Green, C. (2015) Assessing UK Government Action on Women, Peace and Security in 2015, Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS), London: GAPS

Hinds, B. and McMinn, K. (2013) Mid-Term Progress Report Implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, 2011-2014, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland

Hutchinson, S and Lee-Koo, K (2015), Second Annual Civil Society Report Card on Women, Peace and Security, Annual Civil Society Dialogue Steering Committee, Prepared for Steering Committee of the Annual Civil Society Dialogue

Jukarainen, P. and Puumala, E. (2014) The Nordic Implementation of UNSCR 1325: A Comparative Evaluation, Helsinki: 1325 Network Finland & Acaide Oy

Lippai, Z. and Young, A. (2014) What Matters Most: Measuring Plans for Inclusive Security, Washington, D.C: Inclusive Security

Olsson, L., Ahlin, M, Sundin, M, Lidstrom, A (2014) Gender, Peace and Security in the European Union's Field Missions, Stockholm: Folke Bernadotte Academy

McMinn, K. (2014) Final Review Report, Implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan, on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, (2011-2014), Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland

Miller, Pournik, and Swaine (2014), Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation, Washington, D.C: Institute for Global and International Studies

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011) Women: Powerful Agents for Peace and Security Olsson, Dutch National Action Plan (2012-2015) For the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace & Security A Dutch Partnership, Government of the Netherlands

Ormhaug, C. (2014) OSCE Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Oslo: PRIO, OSCE Secretariat

Pasquinelli, G. and Potter Prentice, A. (2013) Civil Society Dialogue Network Discussion Paper No. 1 Joining the dots: from national to European level tools to implement UNSCR 1325, Brussels: EPLO

Raaber, N. (2013) Working Paper: Financing for the Implementation of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325: Critical for Advancing Women's Human Rights, Peace and Security, New York: Cordaid and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders in collaboration with UN Women

Shepherd, L. J. (2016) 'Making war safe for women? National Action Plans and the militarisation of the women, peace and security agenda', International Political Science Review, 37(4)

Smits, R and de Nooijer, P. G. (2014) Gender, peace and security Evaluation of the Netherlands and UN Security Council resolution 1325, Conflict Research Unit (CRU) of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael in The Hague and the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Swaine, A. (2008) Stepping Up Ireland's Response to Women, Peace And Security: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Dublin: Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence

Swaine, A. and O'Rourke, C. (2015) Guidebook on CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, New York: UN Women

Zakharova, N. (2012) Women and Peace and Security: Guidelines for National Implementation, New York: UN Women

Somalia / Day of the African Child - calling for an end to Female Genital Mutilation /© DFID

Social Development Direct