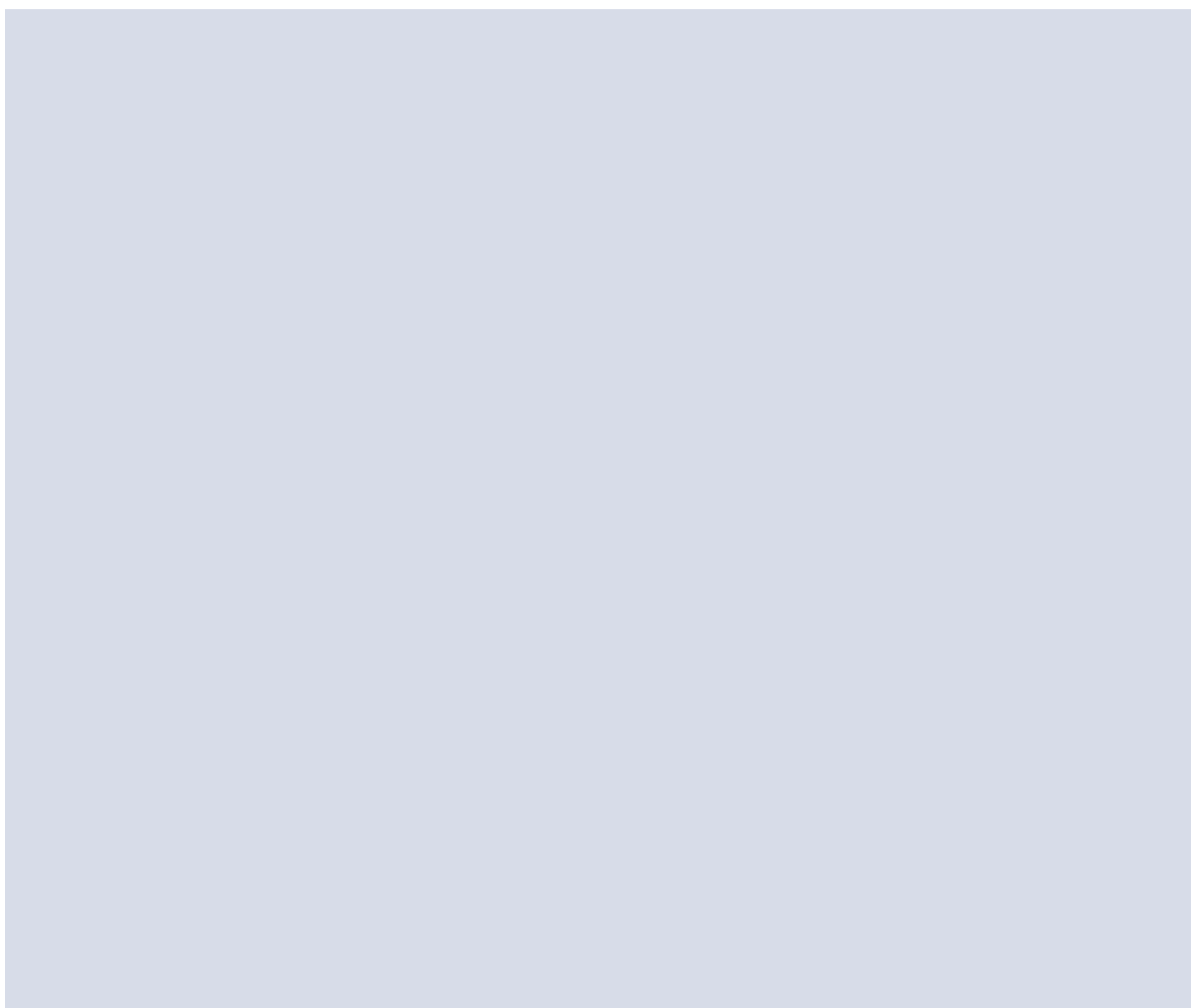




HM Government

UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security 2014-17

Report to Parliament



Cover image:

An Army sergeant of the Military Stabilisation Support Team (MSST) during a visit to Abbazhan School in Gereshk, Helmand. The MSST helped sink three wells and supplied books and desks for the students

Picture © POA(Phot) Sean Clee

UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security 2014-17

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Foreword



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development



Ministry
of Defence



Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict



The Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP

Minister of State for the Department for International Development



The Rt Hon Mark Lancaster TD MP

Minister of State for the Armed Forces

This report sets out the cross-Government action that the UK has taken to improve gender equality, tackle sexual violence in conflict, and protect vulnerable people in conflict zones from sexual exploitation and abuse.

We are proud that the UK continues to lead the world on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, delivering on our commitments under our National Action Plan through practical support, diplomatic action, and funding.

Our action to improve gender equality takes a number of forms. A key aspect of it has been promoting the participation of women in political processes and in mediation roles, for example we have supported women's participation in the Syrian, Somali and Colombian Peace Processes. Since February, the FCO's first ever Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, has also been leading work to deliver the Foreign Secretary's vision of a foreign policy that consciously and consistently delivers for women and girls.

Another aspect has been our ongoing work to protect vulnerable people by improving peacekeeping. Over the last three years the MOD has delivered pre-deployment training on gender and international humanitarian law to more than

7,000 peacekeepers from African countries annually. At the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London in 2016, the UK recognised the indispensable role of women in peacekeeping, and we have continued to work with countries from across the world to increase the number of women deployed to peacekeeping missions.

In partnership with the Canadian and Bangladeshi Chiefs of Defence, the Vice Chief of Defence Staff, General Sir Gordon Messenger launched the new WPS Chiefs of Defence Staff Network at the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in Vancouver in November 2017. The network aims to promote the integration of gender perspectives into military planning and operations, and to improve the participation of women in armed forces and peacekeeping. These aims are reflected in the practices the UK armed forces are already adopting.

The importance of our work on gender is referenced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. It is also evident in ongoing work to incorporate gender perspectives into

National Security country strategies on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, gender perspectives are included in the design phase of all development programmes and all Conflict, Stability and Security Fund projects.

The Government's pioneering Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) continues to support survivors of sexual violence in conflict around the world and to deliver justice for the crimes they have suffered. At the UN General Assembly in September, we launched the Principles for Global Action on tackling the stigma of Sexual Violence in Conflict as part of our #EndStigma campaign. DFID's wider work to prevent and address Violence Against Women and Girls includes specific activity on tackling all forms of violence in conflict and emergency situations including intimate partner violence. As part of this agenda we are funding ground-breaking research to generate new evidence on what works to inform UK and international efforts.

We are also taking action to tackle Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) of adults and children in conflict areas, recognising that these despicable crimes are committed not only by peacekeepers but also by civilians within the agencies and organisations sent to protect the vulnerable. In September the Prime Minister joined the UN Secretary General's Circle of Leadership, which was set up to rid UN peacekeeping operations and agencies of sexual exploitation

and abuse. As a sign of our resolve, we have made the UK's future core funding to UN and other development and humanitarian agencies dependent on a zero-tolerance approach to this issue.

Our three Departments have worked closely together with the Stabilisation Unit to deliver the outcomes of the NAP over the last three years. Many of the achievements described in this report have been made possible by the collaboration of other governments, international organisations and civil society groups. We take this opportunity to thank all our international partners for their continuing co-operation and support.

Looking ahead, it is clear that there is still a great deal to do. Women continue to be marginalised from post-conflict political settlements, excluded from negotiations and under-represented in UN peacekeeping operations. Too often the needs of women in humanitarian situations are overlooked. In short, the promise of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 remains unfulfilled. We remain steadfast in our commitment to that resolution and subsequent resolutions. We must stay the course and continue to put women and girls at the centre of international peace and security efforts. This commitment is reflected in the next National Action Plan which sets out Government's WPS agenda up to 2022.

Introduction and summary of progress

The current UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP) covers the period 2014-2017 and together with its Implementation Plan sets out the joint aims and activities of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to implement the Government's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments, with support from the Stabilisation Unit. It provides a strategic framework and rationale for what we do, which covers our diplomatic, development and defence interventions.

This third and final annual report for the current NAP reviews UK progress in delivering our commitments over the past year in addition to looking back over the three-year period. The report provides an update on our six focus countries, Afghanistan, Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Somalia and Syria as well as examples from other fragile and conflict affected countries. It also looks at our interventions at the international level and efforts to build our own capacity to deliver.

A key approach to delivering our commitments has been to increase our understanding of the specific contexts in the countries where we work, to ensure that the voices of women affected by conflict are heard and to work collaboratively with other stakeholders,

including international partners. We have also drawn on academic expertise and the experience of our partners as well as shared best practice and lessons learned.

Overall the UK has made good progress in delivering its 2014-2017 NAP commitments with the majority of targets in the Implementation Plan met, except for those we have had to postpone due to political, security or operational constraints.

Focus country reviews of progress

Afghanistan

Context

While huge strides have been made in improving the position of women in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, there remains much work to be done. One in five girls gets married before the age of 15 and more than half of women have experienced physical violence, most commonly at the hands of their husband. Over half of women under the age of 24 have had no education and almost two-thirds of girls are illiterate.

However, the rights of women are enshrined in law and defended by President Ghani and other key political figures. The First Lady of Afghanistan is an influential driver of the women's rights agenda. The government's National Priority Programme on Women's Economic Empowerment has supported 67,000 women working in agriculture, 35,000 working in livestock, 3,000 female teachers and 900 community midwives and nurses. Women make up a fifth of the labour force and surveys show that three quarters of Afghans now accept women's role there.

UK Response

The UK has focused its interventions on empowering women politically and economically, strengthening security, and reducing violence against women. We are working to increase the number of women in quality jobs and education, supporting the provision of services for women who have experienced gender based violence, increasing the number of women in the security forces and in politics, and helping build and nurture an environment that will support the generational change required to achieve a more gender equal Afghanistan.

We are strengthening the role of women in the security forces by mentoring the trainers of future female leaders at the Afghanistan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA). The first 21 female cadets graduated from ANAOA in June 2015 and over 100 female cadets have now passed out from the Academy. In November 2017, the top ranked cadet was a woman. The MOD's Gender Champion, Vice Chief of Defence Staff, attended the passing out ceremony on International Women's Day in March 2017 and acknowledged the importance of women in ANAOA as well as that of men in championing women's roles. We are also providing capacity building support to the Ministry of Interior Affairs to encourage better gender sensitivity and to increase the number of female police recruits.

We used our political and diplomatic influence including, a visit by Baroness Hodgson in May 2017, to continue to support Afghanistan's National Unity Government in ensuring that the historic gains on women's rights must be built on and not lost. We have also provided technical input into the development of the Afghan National Priority Plan for Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE-NPP), the Afghan National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security (NAP 1325), and the Afghan National Action Plan to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage. At a political level, we have encouraged the full implementation of the Elimination of Violence against Women Law, which was originally issued as a Presidential decree in 2009.

We are encouraging female voter participation in Afghanistan through dialogue forums to foster support for women's participation. The last elections saw an increase in newly registered female voters. We are working with election and gender Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the Election Management Bodies to encourage a further growth in participation in the next parliamentary elections, including addressing cultural concerns surrounding biometric voter registration. Our Tawanmandi programme has assisted civil society organisations and citizens (both women and men) to hold the government to account for the protection of their rights. Under the banner of Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI), we have also been supporting work specifically aimed at engaging men and boys on countering sexual and gender based violence against women and girls.

The Girls Education Challenge (GEC) remains a key part of our women's empowerment work. Since 2011, it has reached over 300,000 girls, including 264 girls with disabilities (traditionally the most excluded); trained over 9,600 teachers; and distributed over five million textbooks. We have also supported women's economic empowerment. The Zardosi programme trained women in rural areas in business skills and entrepreneurship, helping 6,500 women in the handicraft and textile sectors find work. Our investment climate support programme will support the WEE-NPP through regulatory and legal reform and supporting models that increase women's access to inputs, assets and markets.

Burma

Context

The Constitution ostensibly guarantees equal rights and protection before the law, yet the four Race and Religion laws passed in 2015 discriminate against women and religious minorities, including specific restrictions around co-habiting with unmarried partners, religious conversion, and marriage of Buddhist women to non-Buddhists. Burma remains a patriarchal society at all levels with women's participation in political activities limited. While women's parliamentary representation has risen from below 5% in 2012 to about 10% in 2016, Burma still lags behind its neighbours. Women account for less than 5% of regional parliamentarians and have virtually no representation (0.25%) among village-level administrators. Women were largely excluded from peace negotiations under the military government; only 2 out of 32 negotiators for the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement were women. But under the National League for Democracy (NLD) government more women have been involved in the Panglong Peace conferences (20% at the May 2017 conference). Sexual violence is an on-going concern, particularly emerging evidence of significant levels of sexual violence perpetrated in Rakhine State in recent months.

UK Response

The UK's approach on WPS in the last year has focused on policy coordination and participation and addressing the humanitarian crisis amongst the Rohingyas who have fled to Bangladesh. The UK is one of the largest bilateral donors to the crisis in Bangladesh. We have contributed £59 million including £5 million as part of an aid matching arrangement with the Disasters Emergency Committee. UK aid is making a material difference. It is providing over 170,000 people with food, 140,000 people with safe water and sanitation, and emergency nutritional support to more than 60,000 vulnerable children under the age of five years. We have also been working to encourage others to contribute.

HMG continues to work in Burma to ensure a more democratic, peaceful and open society, which is in the best interest of all communities, including the Rohingya and those living in other conflict affected areas of the country. We are adapting our programmes to strengthen our support for a solution in Rakhine and to reduce exclusion and conflict across Burma

We successfully supported the development of a nationally-owned action plan on gender equality, with a specific component on WPS. Development has involved establishment of specific 'technical working groups' on WPS and sexual and gender based violence, including high levels of engagement from a wide range of government and civil society actors. The development of the action plan culminated in a national workshop in October 2017 led by the Ministers of Planning and Social Welfare, where commitments to targets were agreed in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5.

We continued to support the Alliance for Gender Equality in Peace Process (AGIPP), and other grassroots women's organisations, to ensure greater representation in the peace process. We have provided funding to encourage greater women's participation in electoral processes, both as voters and candidates. There is a continued need for

advocacy for recognition of the importance of a gender perspective in all public life, as well as in peacebuilding and conflict responses. Looking forward, HMG is developing a revised strategy on gender in line with the new UK NAP framework, as well as a specific crisis response strategy.

The UK is a leading contributor to the Paung Sie Facility (PSF), which supports capacity building and best practice for women's rights organisations to secure women's engagement in peace processes and mainstreaming of WPS priorities into peacebuilding work. Under this programme, AGIPP has emerged as the leading advocate for women's participation in the peace process. The inclusion of women in peace talks slightly increased during the second session of the 21st Century Panglong conference held in May 2017, with an estimated 20% female representation and the meeting included a commitment to reach a minimum 30% participation in future dialogues.

The UK was the second largest donor to the by-elections, held in 19 constituencies across the country on 1 April 2017. Our support to the "She Leads" programme ensured increased awareness and participation of women in the country's nascent electoral processes.

A Ministerial visit in late 2016 to undertake advocacy on human rights priorities also galvanised cross-departmental thinking on some of the key Burma-specific issues of the PSVI. In November 2017 we deployed two civilian experts to Bangladesh to conduct a capacity needs assessment on investigation and documentation of sexual violence, and to provide recommendations on support for evidence gathering. The UK is supporting specific activities to prevent sexual violence in conflict, including the application of the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict. The UK is supporting a new programme called 'safe spaces', which raises awareness of urban safety issues affecting women and girls and bringing security and social actors together to address issues.

Since 2014, the UK has educated 167 senior and middle ranking military officers on courses, which included modules on, or raised, the issue of PSVI. In September 2017, all military education courses for the coming year, aimed at instructing up to 90 officers, were suspended in response to the Rakhine crisis.

The Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience (HARP) Facility was established in late 2016, marking a new phase of DFID's relief programming that emphasises better and more joined up ways of working. During 2017, the Facility has been establishing norms and practices to ensure all grants contracted with partners and implemented through the project cycle comply with DFIDs gender and protection policies and established best practice in respect of gender mainstreaming. The UK is engaged in on-going efforts to instil principles of protection and equality in the nationally-led crisis response plan in Rakhine.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Context

The DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world and has been blighted by prolonged periods of conflict. In 2017, instability and violence has continued to erupt in Eastern DRC and spread to new areas like the Kasais. As a result of deeply entrenched gender discrimination, women and girls have suffered the consequences of poverty and conflict disproportionately. Women and girls are exposed to multiple forms of violence with limited control over resources, assets and decision-making and little access to basic services both within and outside conflict zones. Only 8.2% of elected parliamentarians at national level are women, with few holding ministerial portfolios or gubernatorial posts. Discriminatory social norms, lower levels of education and confidence, and unequal distribution of household burdens lead to their marginalisation in public and private decision-making. Widespread sexual and gender-based violence is part of a complex web of conflict, poverty, cultural norms and entrenched gender inequality. Effecting lasting change remains challenging, given the scale of the problem in DRC.

UK Response

The UK has played an important role in ensuring the multi-donor International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy becomes more gender sensitive. For example, the multi-donor Stabilisation Coherence Fund, to which the UK contributes, requires 15% of funding to be dedicated to programmes addressing gender inequality.

UK diplomatic and development interventions have contributed to women's political participation, for example through DFID DRC's elections programme. UK engagement and lobbying helped ensure women's political participation is recognised as a key issue in joint donor programming for future elections. In 2016, UK advocacy contributed to the revision of the discriminatory Code de La Famille, which resulted in the legal requirement for women to seek their husband's permission before opening a bank account or taking up employment, being dropped in the revised legislation.

The UK also co-funded a joint evaluation on the impact of sexual violence programming in the Democratic Republic of Congo between 2004 and 2017 to help inform more effective interventions in the future. In 2017, the MOD deployed a military Gender and Child Protection Advisor to MONUSCO, the UN mission to DRC, to enhance work on integrating gender into planning and operations, and the changes in the development and promotion of best practice in the mission has recently won senior recognition at the UN.

On the UK's response to sexual and gender based violence in the DRC, key interventions have included a number of PSVI programmes through FCO bilateral and CSSF programming. In 2017, under a UK supported peacebuilding programme, a legal clinic for victims of sexual violence was established which responded to victims needs and provided legal support in some high profile PSVI cases, including the successful prosecution of a high ranking military officer for



Wearing a dress that celebrates International Women's Day, Elyse Musandji, president of one of the community nutrition groups in Masi Manimba, Democratic Republic of Congo, teaches members of a neighbouring community how to produce milk from peanuts

Picture © Russell Watkins/Department for International Development

war crimes. We have helped 10 Congolese lawyers to gain the necessary tools and expertise to litigate sexual violence cases to international standards, trained over 65 Congolese human rights defenders on the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict and provided legal assistance to over 200 victims. We have also trained 160 faith and community leaders to speak out against sexual violence and helped establish 20 Community Action Groups comprising 300 members to support survivors of sexual violence. Since the NAP began implementation, 1,979 survivors of sexual and gender based violence received Post Exposure Prevention (PEP) kits within 72 hours through DFID's health programme.

The UK has integrated gender equality throughout DFID and CSSF funding streams, including DFID's health, education, water and sanitation (WASH), humanitarian and private sector development programme. For example, Mercy Corps have undertaken innovative gender programming and introduced a Gender Status Index in the DFID funded Water and Sanitation programming. UK funding has supported the economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women in Kinshasa, reaching over 1,200 young women with direct interventions in 2017. We supported 3,350 people to undertake income-generating activities, with the majority of people targeted being women at risk from violence, survivors of sexual violence and former combatants.



Women chant and raise Libyan flags during celebrations.

Picture © UN Photo/Iason Foonten

Libya

Context

A lack of consensus over Libya's political settlement has left the country deeply divided along political, geographic, religious and ethnic lines. In October 2015, the UN envoy to Libya proposed a power-sharing arrangement—the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA). The interim Government of National Accord (GNA) has not yet secured House approval and several elements of the LPA have stalled, resulting in rival governments continuing to operate independently. A significant proportion of the population remain in need of humanitarian assistance, and there has been an upsurge of migrant and refugee movements. Despite intensive advocacy around women's representation in the first General National Congress (GNC), the quota for women was subsequently dropped to 10% by the Constitution Drafting Assembly (CDA). In addition, there has been limited women's participation within national (including UN-led) peace processes, but some documented cases of women's role in local mediation and reconciliation. Sustained insecurity in Libya restricts women's access to the public sphere, particularly in relation to safeguarding family honour. A negotiation has begun to try to amend the LPA in order to ensure inclusivity, but there is limited participation in this process.

UK response

The majority of UK NAP related delivery in Libya is channelled through the CSSF, which is structured across five pillars—Political, Security, Economic, Migration and Counter-Terrorism. UK efforts form part of coordinated international efforts, led by the UN, to support the Government to increase security and stability, and work towards a more inclusive society and security apparatus.

Whilst the Libya programme does not have any WPS or UK NAP specific strategies, a country-level CSSF forward Gender Work Plan has been developed to integrate gender sensitivity across portfolios. The Libya team have been engaging closely with the CSSF MENA gender adviser to integrate conflict and gender sensitivity across portfolios, particularly on the management side and the Stabilisation Unit undertook a gender assessment in 2017.

Significant UK interventions to address women's exclusion and to strengthen women's political participation include: Libya's first GEM2 (Gender Equality Marker) programme building on previous support for CSOs; women as mentors and engagement in local peacebuilding efforts; a media programme which includes training of women journalists; mainstreaming gender into the Security, Justice and Defence programme and integrating gender sensitivity and conflict across portfolios. Additional work includes the scoping of internationally supported CSO-centred initiatives around gender-related issues such as women's rights, political participation, economic participation, and sexual and gender based violence.

As a result of UK interventions, direct support and lobbying from UK officials in September 2017 in Tunis and New York to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) helped ensure that the renewal of UNSMIL's mandate included explicit language on gender equality for the first time. Other outcomes include the identification of 20 women-focused CSOs to work with over the next three years across Libya (the GEM2 project), training of 237 women in local peacebuilding and mediation efforts; and the media programme has effectively engaged 731,997 users on their platform, of which 40% are female, in the past three months.

Somalia

Context

A legacy of two decades of civil war is endemic violence against women and girls. Al-Shabab attacks across the country have exacerbated the vulnerability of women and girls to violence. The situation for women in Somalia is dire and in urgent need of improvement. Somalia is one of the world's worst places to be a woman and recent developments serve to reinforce that. Both Human Rights Watch and the UN issued damning reports of the number of sexual violence incidences, including by security forces. A patriarchal Somali clan system perpetuates gender inequality in Somalia—a major barrier to development and stability. Women are typically excluded from economic, social and political networks, despite their increasing role in the Somali economy. There is an urgent need for reform of the security sector, including more recruitment of women and the integration of gender sensitivity into security operations to protect women and girls. The President stated at the start of his term that he was committed to tackling sexual violence and reiterated his zero tolerance approach to sexual violence during a recent visit to London. These commitments have not yet translated into actions.

UK response

UK interventions have focused on international diplomacy as the means to enhance the space for women's political participation in Somalia and improve the quality of women's policy and decision-making. We have highlighted the need to increase educational opportunities for girls, enhance the justice system to respond to sexual crimes and make the security sector more responsive to women's security needs.

The UK supported a women's preparatory event for the London Somalia Conference in May 2017 and ensured that the Security Pact and New Partnership Arrangement for Somalia reflected issues of concern for women and girls. We also secured a visit by the then SRSG for Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura, to Mogadishu to promote Somali leadership and UN support.

A UK funded programme, Implementation and Analysis in Action of Accountability Programme, leveraged support for elections based on increasing the number of women in the legislature. As a result, 24% of representatives in the lower house are women (up from 14% in the previous parliament). Under another DFID programme, Social Norms and Participation programme (SNaP), new women MPs, Ministers and civil society activists were brought together to plan options for increasing women's participation as voters and candidates in the next federal election in 2020/21 and training was provided to women political aspirants on electoral and parliamentary matters. Support was also provided to ensure women's participation in parliamentary and district elections in Somaliland. But there are significant obstacles to overcome before elections in 2020, including the lack of legally binding provisions and the absence of accountability

for not upholding the female quota, the continuing bias against women in the traditional clan system as well as more traditional Islamic-leaning parties being formed, and lack of financial and security assistance for female candidates.

Under SNaP, the UK is also providing support to enable the Ministry of Women and Human Rights to lead on the development of the Somalia National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security. The UK also contributes to the UN-led Joint Programme on Local Government to recruit women into civil service positions. The UK is increasing educational opportunities for nearly 43,000 girls through the Girls Education Challenge Fund in Somalia. Key activities include scholarships or bursaries for vulnerable and marginalised girls, teacher training, community engagement and work to build the capacity of key government stakeholders. A health programme linked to protection and sexual and reproductive health is part of this support.

A UK Team of experts is working with the government to produce recommendations on how to enhance the justice system to support the successful prosecution of sexual violence cases and is seeking to build international support. Mobile courts have been established to provide legal aid to women who have experienced sexual and gender based violence. We assisted the establishment of PSG (Peace-building and State-building Goals) Working Groups which provide a platform for communities to discuss Women, Peace and Security issues.

The UK has also used CSSF funding for the development of effective referral pathways for medical and psychosocial services for survivors of sexual violence, alongside a community-based behavioural change approach to reduce violence against women and girls and associated stigma. A workshop on the stigma associated with sexual violence was conducted in December 2016 to understand better the challenges facing survivors and children born as a result of SGBV. This offered recommendations on future programming to tackle associated stigma and supported capacity building of the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (MoWHR) to fulfil its mandate on promoting and protecting human rights.

The UK Somalia Stabilisation Programme and UK Mission Support Team provided assistance for AMISOM to work with gender officers/advisers from Federal Government of Somalia, Somali National Security Forces, the British Peace Support Team (East Africa) and UN in writing and preparing Somalia-specific training materials for gender and human rights training for Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF). The Stabilisation Programme leads on 'Preventing the recruitment and use of children during armed conflict' which addresses, through a security sector approach, the recruitment of children, including girls, into armed conflict and delivers prevention-oriented training to SNSF and civil society.



27 year old Salma came to Jordan in 2013. Originally from just outside Damascus, she fled when violence forced the factory where she worked to shut down. But Al Dura Foods has since been able to open a factory in Jordan, and the Syrian run food processing company now employs both Jordanian and Syrian workers.

Picture © Stephanie Dunga/Department for International Development

Syria

Context

Six years of conflict has had a particularly significant impact on women and girls in Syria. Women have limited voice in national political processes, and they are frequently under-represented in local community-level governance structures. Gender-based exclusion, discrimination and violence against women are prevalent across Syria. There is significant documentation of SGBV and torture within regime detention facilities. Most communities have few resources to support SGBV survivors, with little medical or psychosocial care equipped to meet their needs, limited judiciary and law enforcement institutions to pursue cases, a culture of impunity, and persistent stigmatisation of survivors.

UK response

In response to the Syria crisis, UK support is enabling Syrian grassroots organisations, international NGOs and UN agencies to provide specialist assistance to those affected by SGBV. This includes clinical care, case management and counselling, reproductive healthcare and cash assistance to particularly vulnerable households. UK funding is also helping to systematically document SGBV in Syria, run awareness campaigns on the impact of SGBV, and train local first responders in Syrian communities.

The UK has been at the forefront of support to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Syria, allocating £29 million since 2013/14 to help reduce and mitigate sexual and gender-based violence. This includes a three-year grant of £25 million (2015-2018).

Senior UK officials have reinforced the importance the UK places on our gender work with key Syrian interlocutors. The Foreign Secretary's Special Envoy

for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, visited Turkey in 2017 and met several prominent Syrian women leaders, grassroots activists and UK project implementers.

UK diplomatic efforts, coupled with CSSF funded programming, is being used to increase women's political participation in Track 1 political processes—through the provision of strategic and expert technical advice.

UK funding is also supporting women's capacity building and technical assistance, enabling civil society leaders to build coalitions, and increase women's participation in local governance and decision-making structures. A "challenge fund" for projects implemented by women's sub-committees has been set up. A UK supported small grants fund is also enabling women's empowerment at grassroots level.

Between January and June 2017, UK aid supported 4,687 survivors of sexual and gender based violence across Syria. In addition, 4,346 individuals received psychosocial support and nearly 49,000 accessed safe spaces (including child and female friendly spaces). Over 2,500 individuals, including health workers and project staff, also received training on how to deal with mental health, psychosocial, and sexual and gender based violence issues.

Across our Syria programmes we are working to ensure that our programme approaches are empowering to women and girls, challenging social norms and enabling women and girls to participate fully at all levels across society. To this end, UK funding has helped contribute to: the provision of education to over 175,000 girls; the doubling of the number of women White Helmets to 147; and much needed female engagement in Syrian political dialogue, through negotiation and strategic-communication support to key figures in the Higher Negotiation Committee (HNC) Women.

UK support for women, peace and security in non-focus countries

Supporting participation and leadership

The inclusion of women in peace processes has been shown to enhance their sustainability. Research has shown that when women are included in peace processes there is a 35 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years. In Burundi, we supported a network of over 500 women mediators to partner with 2,900 local networks to prevent local violence, dispel false rumours and mitigate the ongoing political crisis on populations. Over 600,000 people participated in 7,063 dialogues at provincial, municipality and community levels on sensitive issues such as rape as a tactic of war, land conflicts, and the reintegration of returnees. In Nigeria, which will be a new focus country in the UK's 2018-2022 NAP, the UK's Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) has led to increased participation of women in peace and security through WPS Networks at federal level and in eight states, and supported the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in launching a National Action Plan and eight State Action Plans on UNSCR 1325. It has also been instrumental in developing Observatories on Violence Against Women and Girls to collect information and undertake advocacy in order to prevent and prosecute cases of SGVB. The UK Armed Forces, through the British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT) have worked closely with the Nigerian Armed Forces to improve their response to the conflict in that country. They have provided gender-sensitive pre-deployment training which includes instruction on Violence Against Women and Girls and have supported broader Defence reform, including the mainstreaming of gender in military doctrine and the development of a Gender Network to improve the understanding and integration of gender perspectives into Nigerian military operations.

The UK has partnered with Oxfam to empower women's organisations at the grassroots level in Iraq, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Yemen to empower them to influence decision makers at national and provincial levels to be more responsive to the practical needs and strategic interests of women in the region and to hold them to account. Women from these groups attended the Open Debate on WPS in New York in October and presented at a side event on "Promoting the Needs of Women in Conflict in the MENA region". In Nigeria, DRC and Afghanistan, Women for Women International have run a UK-funded Men's Engagement Programme to raise men's understanding and attitudes towards violence against women, the value of women's work, girls' education and women's participation in community activities.



Women of the Ziway Dugda woreda, Oromia Region in Ethiopia during former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to the area affected by drought.

Picture © UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

In Yemen the UK supported a project working with the Yemeni Women Pact for Peace and Security to promote and increase Yemeni women's leadership, advocate for their participation and inclusion in official peace processes, and enhance gender equality in peacebuilding and reconstruction. It now has the official status of a consultative body for the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen. In Pakistan, CSSF funding has supported the establishment of female community organisations to support women's inclusion in decision-making around rebuilding communities in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). By the end of financial year 2016/17, the number of community organisations increased from six to 23. In the Western Balkans, the UK has assisted Macedonian armed forces to meet their commitment to integrate women into peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Outcomes included production of a guidebook for local governments and facilitating agreement between civil and military decision-makers on an action plan to enhance the role of women in conflict. In Fiji, the UK funded a project from the Magna Carta Fund entitled "Speak up, Speak Out" organised in collaboration with a network of women's groups, to engage young women from all backgrounds in Fiji's ongoing democratisation process and help them mobilise to demand government accountability and transparency, justice and women's human rights.

Prevention and protection of violence against women and girls

Women and girls are the main victims of sexual violence during war and are often the most vulnerable. CSSF and the Rules Based International System (RBIS) Funds have supported projects to address this. In financial year 2016/17 the UK was the second largest donor to the UN Team of Experts which assists governments to strengthen capacity to address impunity for conflict-related sexual violence and provide protection for survivors. The UN Team of Experts worked with a number of governments including: Colombia, where we have helped ensure that the peace process includes accountability for sexual violence crimes in discussions and outcome documents; Côte d'Ivoire, where the Team helped strengthen the national army response to sexual violence crimes (reported cases of sexual violence have decreased from 180 noted cases in December 2014 to 34 in 2016) and Guinea, where deployment of UK experts has resulted in the comprehensive documentation of cases of high ranking officials committing sexual violence crimes in 2016. CSSF funding also enabled the UN Peacebuilding Fund to establish gender focal points in police commissions in Mali. Together with improved services to victims of SGBV, this project resulted in a dramatic increase over the past year in the number of SGBV cases being taken up by judicial courts, from 1% to 14%. The Stabilisation Unit is also providing civilian experts embedded in the EU Training Mission (EUTM) to train Malian Armed Forces on combating sexual violence in conflict.

CSSF also funded work to address sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers in Nigeria. Through bespoke UK-funded training, the UK has been able to raise awareness, promote accountability and build the capacity of the soldiers, police and civilians deployed to UN/African Union Peace Support Operations.

In South Sudan, which will be a new focus country for the UK's NAP 2018-2022, UK funding has supported a conflict, early warning and early response system in three states. Recent external evaluation findings show that this has made a positive contribution in reducing violent conflicts at the local level and building stronger community relationships. Stakeholders at state and county levels have reported significant reduction in large-scale cattle raids and large-scale communal conflict. Additional UK funding has improved women's capacity to participate in peace and conflict resolution initiatives at the grassroots and national levels. The State and National level Governments have recognised the crucial role played by the early warning and response mechanisms and offered their political will and support.

MOD has deployed nearly 400 military personnel in support of UNMISS, the UN Mission in South Sudan. Each rotation deploys a minimum of three military gender focal points, helping to ensure that the UK peacekeepers understand and comply with UNMISS gender and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI) requirements. All UK troops in the contingent are trained in PSVI prior to deploying, and women currently make up 11% of those deployed, including Force Commander.

In West Africa, successful activities undertaken by UK-mentored partners in 2016/17 included the dismantling of two child-trafficking rings. The first successful major safe-guarding operation, during which a group of Nigerian girls trafficked into prostitution at mining sites in Mali were safeguarded and four traffickers arrested. 41 victims were repatriated to Nigeria into the protection of the UK supported and CSSF-funded Joint Border Task Force.

Addressing women's and girls' needs in relief and recovery

In addition to progress listed under the focus countries, funding over the last three years has also helped survivors of sexual violence in countries such as Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Kosovo, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Uganda. UK funded projects have helped identify the political, social and economic consequences of the stigma that survivors and victims of sexual violence suffer; provide training on the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict; supported military and police personal in preventing and responding to sexual violence; and funded research on the extent of sexual violence against men and boys.

In South Sudan, we have supported a gender adviser for the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM), monitoring the South Sudan Peace Agreement, to strengthen reporting on gender based violence and ensuring that gender is incorporated into their monitoring, investigation and reporting. Engaging CTSAMM on gender issues has been challenging but agreement in principle to discuss gender issues as a standing item has been agreed,

Following on from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the UK published a new Humanitarian Reform Policy in October 2017, which sets out how we will challenge the international humanitarian system to deliver for people affected by crises, including women and girls. In 2017, the UK continued to provide high levels of flexible multiyear funding to support our humanitarian partners to meet the needs of the most vulnerable.

The UK is at the forefront of efforts to prioritise sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in humanitarian crises and co-hosted the London Family Planning Summit in July 2017 with UNFPA and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The UK committed to spend an average of £225m every year for the next five years on programmes to expand access to family planning, including in areas at risk of or affected by crises. DFID has also launched a challenge fund on SRHR in humanitarian settings, which will support grassroots organisations to test innovative ideas for service delivery.

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Thematic progress

Defence and security

The Ministry of Defence has included WPS into its Single Departmental Plan 2015-20, where significant progress has been made towards improving gender representation and awareness in the Armed Forces. Targets have been set to improve the participation of women in the Armed Forces and in peacekeeping roles. The UK now meets the UN target for doubling the number of women deployed to UN peacekeeping missions. Women now make up around 7% of those the UK deploys to such missions to, approximately double the UN average of about 3%. However, the MOD is working towards a target for 15% of recruits to be women by 2020. Military doctrine continues to be updated to be made gender sensitive on a rolling basis where applicable and appropriate, and all UK troops deploying on large scale overseas missions now receive training on WPS including gender awareness and prevention of sexual violence in conflict. From November 2016, there has been a phased approach to enabling women to serve in ground close combat roles. Women are now able to join the Royal Armoured Corps, both Regular and Reserve. By the end of 2018, all roles in the Armed Forces will be open to women.

In November 2017, the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Gordon Messenger launched the WPS Chiefs of Defence Network with Canada and Bangladesh at the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in Vancouver. The Network will enable military leaders to drive the integration of gender perspectives into their military planning, operations and

culture. The Network further aims to improve the participation of women in members' armed forces and in peacekeeping

The Armed Forces continue to deliver expert training to international partners through their overseas training establishments. The British Peace Support Team (Eastern Africa) (BPST(EA)) provides training on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) to more than 7,000 African peacekeeping personnel every year, while the Armed Forces also conduct an annual training programme to prepare the Malawian Contingent (MALBATT)—c.850 troops—for their yearlong deployment as part of MONUSCO, the UN mission in DRC. This intervention is led by the British Peace Support Team (South Africa) and includes training on PSVI, SGBV, and the Protection of Civilians and Children. In addition, UK personnel deployed to the British Military Training Team (BMATT) in Nigeria are supporting the development of a gender network within the Nigerian Armed Forces. The UK will deploy a military Gender Advisor to further support this work in Nigeria in early 2018.

Short Term Training Teams have also now provided gender-sensitive training to over 7,500 Kurdish Peshmerga in Iraq and in 2017 MOD deployed a Gender Advisor to MONUSCO, the UN mission to DRC. MOD also deployed a female Force Commander to the UN mission in South Sudan, where all UK troop rotations troops each have a minimum of 3 Gender Focal Points as part of the deployment, in order to maintain our gender capability in that country.

Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI)

The UK continues to lead on PSVI and throughout 2015–2017 we have focused on three key areas: tackling the stigma of sexual violence including providing better access to healthcare, psychosocial support and livelihood programmes; delivering justice for survivors including capacity building on evidence gathering, training of the judiciary and support with court processes; and prevention, improving how security forces around the world prevent and respond to these crimes.

A campaign on tackling the stigma of sexual violence was launched in early 2016 with a series of workshops held globally in nine PSVI focus countries which brought together survivors, experts, local governments, civil society, media and faith groups to identify and understand the issues and challenges in tackling stigma. These workshops contributed to the development of the Principles for Global Action which is a practical guide designed to raise awareness among policy makers of the challenges, issues and sensitivities of stigma from a survivor's perspective and help them to embed tackling stigma into their own work. The Principles for Global Action publication was launched at the UN

General Assembly in September 2017 by Lord Ahmad and the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten. Progress has also been made in delivering justice for survivors of sexual violence. In March 2017 the second edition of the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict was published. It contains a number of additions including: guidance on the specific context, challenges and techniques required for interviewing and documenting conflict and atrocity-related sexual violence against children and against male victims; further guidance on trauma; and a focus on analysing evidence and establishing patterns of violations.

DFID is providing £20m from 2014–2020 to the UN Trust Fund To End Violence Against Women, which funds civil society to implement interventions that prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women including gender-based violence in conflict. This has to date reached over 700,000 women and girls including over 89,000 survivors of violence.

Preventing and countering violent extremism

In 2015, the UK Government adopted a High Level Review commitment to ensure that our overseas work to counter violent extremism (CVE) includes programmes targeted specifically at women. The role of women and girls in relation to violent extremism is a contested one and has been less visible than that of men and the evidence base is still emerging. In October 2017, the Government held a roundtable chaired by Lord Ahmad with experts on countering violent extremism and the role of gender to begin exploring this area. The UK has co-sponsored the establishment of a CVE Unit within the Commonwealth Secretariat, which will support women's leadership in this area at local and national levels.

The UK recognises the importance of working with and through communities, including women and continues to contribute to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), to monitor and evaluate 'what works' in Preventing Violent Extremism and to fund grass roots community initiatives. In support of the 2016 UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism's specific recommendation, GCERF's commitment to "Gender equality and empowering women" is a key function of grant making—and a flagship initiative of the GCERF Secretariat. Examples

of programmes funded by GCERF include livelihood and confidence training in Nigeria for 198 women with low or no income and in Bangladesh, Mali, and Nigeria community-level initiatives to prevent violent extremism in which approximately 40% of those reached were women and girls. Robust non-discrimination policies uphold principles of inclusion in every aspect of GCERF grant making.

We also fund a range of P/CVE projects in Africa, South Asia, MENA and the Western Balkans. In the North Caucasus we focused on enhancing civil society efforts towards the prevention of radicalism and extremism involving young women and girls. The project stimulated public debate and awareness of radicalisation, women's rights and gender-based violence through a media campaign including 20 programmes on local radio and TV. It was subsequently expanded to include improving the psychosocial support system provided for women and girls most at risk.

Looking forward, we will include a strategic outcome on P/CVE in the new 2018–2022 UK National Action Plan, to help focus our efforts as we work to deliver our commitments on gender and preventing/countering violent extremism.

International and multilateral engagement

The UK works with the UN and country governments on WPS, PSVI and SEA issues, including through UN reform. The UK holds the pen on WPS at the UN Security Council and we have secured resolution language to reflect the experiences and needs of women and girls such as in PCVE or the Daesh accountability resolution, which the UK drove through the Security Council. We have secured responsibilities to protect and reduce violence against women into all Peacekeeping Mandates as they are renewed.

The UK fully supports the UNSG's efforts to eradicate SEA and to deliver the UN's wider WPS commitments. We have provided £2m worth of funding over two years to support the office of the Special Co-ordinator on SEA, as well as gender advisers in the Department for Political Affairs (DPA) and Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to ensure that women's political and security needs are integrated into UN policies and practices. We have funded a pilot communications campaign to help women who are victims of SEA to know their rights and report incidents. In parallel, we supported mandatory online training for all peacekeepers, training for the Office of Internal Oversight (OIOS) investigators on crimes against women and minors, a vetting process and central database to eliminate personnel who have been found guilty of SEA crimes from serving on future peacekeeping and peace building missions. On average, 8,000 personnel a month are now vetted by the team compared to 2,270 a month in 2016 and 869 a month in 2015. Those vetted include all national and international staff, independent contractors, and military contingents and police personnel.

The UK contributed £660,000 the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (formerly the Global Acceleration Instrument), which supports grassroots women's rights organisations in Burundi, Colombia, Jordan, Syria, the Solomon Islands and the Pacific

The UK is a founding donor to the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) Fund, which was launched at the World Humanitarian

Summit in 2016 to transform the systems and structures for how education is delivered in fragile contexts. ECW funding in Yemen will include a specific focus on addressing risks of violence against girls including supporting alternative education programmes, working with communities and families and building awareness through media campaigns.

The UK has worked with the European Union (EU) to assist other Member States to develop their own National Action Plans and provided language to strengthen the Code of Conduct (CoC) for EU personnel to ensure appropriate response to cases of SEA. The Minister also met with the EU's External Action Service Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSCR 1325 to ensure our priorities are incorporated into a revised EU policy for WPS, to identify areas for collaboration in implementing the EU policy and roadmap and to explore opportunities for increasing the number of EU- trained women mediators.

At the Organisation for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), in its capacity as chair of the Human Dimension Committee, the UK organised meetings on enhancing the participation of women in public and private life and women in mediation, to promote best practice exchange and to keep these issues high on the OSCE's agenda. We contributed actively—including through fielding experts from the UK—in discussions on increasing women's participation in the armed forces and provided practical guidance on engaging women on policy making and projects on small arms and light weapons, in support of new OSCE ministerial commitments we secured at the end of 2016.

The UK has worked to support NATO initiatives on mainstreaming UNSCR 1325 through debates at Council level and through the annual NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives. The UK also supported and initiated NATO public diplomacy campaigns on PSVI and eliminating violence against women.

Strategic diplomatic and political initiatives

There have been a number of Ministerial visits during 2017 to promote the objectives of the NAP. Baroness Anelay visited New York in March, May and July 2017 to advance UK priorities and objectives across a range of related themes, including WPS, SEA and peacekeeping reform. She also used the opportunity to build support for the UN SEA Co-ordinator's strategy and for the UK's PSVI plans including the launch of the revised International Protocol, update on the Principles for Global Action and the UK's work on women in mediation and political participation more generally.

Since Lord Ahmad's appointment as the Minister for the UN and the Prime Minister's Special Representative for PSVI, he has visited the UN, Ghana, India, Bangladesh, Australia, Fiji and Samoa. He has promoted PSVI and WPS during all his visits. The Foreign Secretary also championed WPS and PSVI during his joint visit to Nigeria with the then International Development Secretary. The Prime Minister agreed to work jointly with Canada to champion gender equality globally, including on WPS policy and programming.

Women, Peace and Security was a major UK priority at UNGA 2017, where we hosted and the women and peacekeeping and PSVI events and a seminar on Countering Extremism organised by the ICEG, featuring a panel discussion on women's role in CVE, and Lord Ahmad delivered a speech on the role of women in countering and preventing violent extremism. The Special Envoy on Gender Equality also played an active role at UNGA and has also made a number of bi-lateral visits including to Canada, Egypt, Sweden, Finland, Netherlands, Washington, Italy, Iraq, and Turkey for Syria, promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda and bi-lateral co-operation. The UK participated in the Open Debate at the UN on Women, Peace and Security and co-hosted a side event with Oxfam on promoting the needs of women in conflict in the Middle East and North Africa.

Building UK national capacity to implement WPS commitments

UK international leadership on WPS is matched by senior leadership within HMG who have determined that gender and WPS objectives should be mainstreamed throughout our international engagement and assistance. DFID has drafted a new Strategic Vision for Gender Equality, which includes an increased focus on our work in fragile and conflict affected states.

The MOD has integrated a PSVI module as part of the wider gender awareness and pre-deployment training for UK Armed Forces ahead of all large scale deployments, and is being integrated throughout the training cycle. Since publishing the last report, the MOD has trained six more military gender advisers through the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations. In addition the Armed Forces now have up to fifty gender focal points in their ranks. Early planning is underway to develop the UK's own specialist military gender courses.

The CSSF has made gender analysis mandatory to underpin CSSF programming, which is assessed through annual reviews. In addition to mainstreaming gender analysis, the CSSF also funds targeted programming in support of women and girls. (see CSSF Annual Report for further detail). The CSSF supports programme teams through the provision of guidance and expected standards, as well as by funding gender experts to provide technical advice and training. The FCO's first ever gender adviser supports CSSF programmes across the Middle East and North Africa to take a more strategic and evidence based approach to gender equality and security across the region.

FCO strategic programme funds, such as the Rules Based International Fund and the Magna Carta Fund have supported programmes in a number of countries to advance women's leadership, women's political empowerment and participation, women in mediation and PSVI. In 2017

over £8m from FCO Global Funds was allocated to WPS projects or projects that included a WPS element. The FCO has formed a new Gender Equality Unit to coordinate international gender equality work including WPS, SEA and PSVI. The Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, is leading the FCO's work on the Foreign Secretary's vision of a foreign policy that delivers for women and girls. The role brings together the FCO's gender equality work, including women's human rights, the WPS agenda and PSVI.

The UK continues to build its capacity to deliver effective, evidence-based programmes. The guidance for the Joint Analysis of Conflict and Stability, an HMG methodology for conflict analysis, includes guidance on integrating gender issues and perspectives. A gender audit of all CSSF spending in Sub-Saharan Africa resulted in the issuance of minimum standards on gender equality including reinforcing the application of the OECD Gender Equality Marker to all programmes. This marker enables the Government to assess the proportion of CSSF programming contributing to gender equality. In the last 12 months, the Stabilisation Unit has provided gender and conflict training to 183 HMG practitioners from all levels of FCO, MOD, NCA, DFID, GEO, the Armed Forces and police. DFID invests in research to develop robust evidence as a global good to drive more effective interventions. For example the five year £25m 'What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls' programme is generating ground-breaking new evidence to inform UK and international policy and programming.



Women leaders at the POC site in Malakal, Upper Nile State, South Sudan

Picture © UN Photo/JC McIlwaine

Engagement with external partners

The government has engaged with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women Peace and Security, civil society including the Gender Action for Peace and Security Network (GAPS) and the LSE Centre for Women Peace and Security in delivering the 2014-17 NAP and in developing the 2018-2022 NAP. Regular consultations have been held to review delivery and progress against the outcomes set out in the NAP and where appropriate, recommendations and advice adopted to strengthen delivery. In November 2016 the UK Government partnered with GAPS to consult with women's civil society organisations and activists on WPS on priorities in four of the focus countries: Burma, Somalia, Afghanistan, and in Turkey and Lebanon for the Syria response. The information gathered has informed

the development of the UK's 2018-2022 NAP to ensure that it is grounded in the realities that women face, to ensure that objectives and activities taken forward by the UK Government respond directly to their needs and support their initiatives. In June 2017, the UK Government discussed the early direction of the 2018-2022 NAP with civil society and academics at which GAPS presented their recommendations from the consultations and LSE presented their recommendations. Baroness Hodgson, co-Chair of the All Party Group also participated in the workshop.

External evaluation (SDD) and lessons learned

The Government commissioned Social Development Direct (SDD) to undertake an independent evaluation of the progress the UK has made in delivering the 2014-2017 NAP. The evaluation was based on interviews, field research and an examination of around 50 programmes and initiatives across the six focus countries. The evaluation found that the UK's work on WPS is generally of a high standard with a large volume of appropriate, relevant and strategic efforts to deliver against the range of outcomes and outputs in the NAP, delivered through a combination of discrete WPS programmes and mainstreaming initiatives in other thematic programmes. The review highlighted strong progress in the area of political participation and new initiatives that address the root causes of women's structural and sustained exclusion and discrimination. The report recommended

strengthening the UK's approach to WPS across its humanitarian programming and an increased focus on prevention programming and support for grassroots women's rights organisations. The evaluators noted the difficulty in evaluating the WPS impact in programmes where gender is mainstreamed in broader programmes, but praised the use of the OECD Gender Equality Marker system to assess the proportion of CSSF programming contributing to gender equality. Recommendations from the external evaluation have informed the development of the new UK NAP, for example increasing the length from three to five years to better reflect the nature of WPS interventions and removing the static implementation plans.





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