



Cintia Lavandera

Moving forward

Recommendations for the UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

“Until the human rights of women and girls are equally guaranteed, there is no justice or peace anywhere”

– Women’s Partnership for Justice and Peace, Sierra Leone

About Womankind

Womankind Worldwide is the UK's leading international women's rights and international development organisation working with 35 women's rights organisations across 14 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Many of our partners are based in fragile and conflict-affected countries, and work to eliminate violence against women and to increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels.



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Introduction

“The UK has been instrumental in building international consensus on women’s central role in preventing and resolving conflict”

“There is no greater strategic prize for this century than the attainment of full social, economic and political rights for all women everywhere, and their full participation in their societies. We will not secure that unless we change global attitudes to women, root out discrimination and violence against them wherever it is found ... and show the political will to make women’s participation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution worldwide a reality”

– Foreign Secretary William Hague, Statement on sexual violence in conflict, 28th November 2013

The UK government is a global forerunner in promoting women’s rights in fragile and conflict-affected countries. Currently leading on Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council, the UK has been instrumental in building international consensus on women’s central role in preventing and resolving conflict and ensuring sustainable peace.¹

In 2006 the UK became one of the first countries in the world to launch a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP). The government’s implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 progressed significantly throughout the second NAP (2010-2013).

The new UK NAP, due to be launched in June 2014, provides a renewed opportunity for the UK government to build upon this progress. Priority must be given to

coherence and the coordination of current and future Women, Peace and Security work. This will mean taking an integrated approach, in which all four pillars of UNSCR 1325 (Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery) are addressed through strong, transformative and mutually reinforcing initiatives.

This briefing delivers guidance to the UK government in four areas: supporting women’s meaningful participation in peacebuilding, preventing violence against women and girls, working with local women’s rights organisations in the design and delivery of the NAP, and developing impact-focused funding mechanisms. Condensed case studies and concrete recommendations relevant to these areas are provided to assist the UK government in developing an ambitious and far-reaching NAP.

1. Most recently through the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, the G8 Leaders Declaration and the Call to Action on protecting women and girls in emergencies.

Women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding

“Women must be able to be actively involved in and influence decision-making processes”

“Despite their contribution and rich experiences in building peace, women have been left out of peace negotiations and sidelined from decisions about the future of our country and communities. The barriers against women's participation persist – patriarchal attitudes, lack of security, lack of access to justice and support mechanisms.”

– Bandana Rana, Saathi, Nepal²

The UK NAP has to date largely focused on supporting women's participation in formal, national-level political processes.³ However, women's equal participation and influence at every level and in every institution is fundamental to representative, inclusive democracy and the fulfilment of women's rights.

Political and public life is a broad concept. It includes decision-making in governance institutions at the international, national and local levels (including traditional and informal governance institutions). It also includes decision-making processes on peace and security issues, within security and justice systems and in institutions that shape public opinion, including the media, civil society, women's rights organisations and social movements.

Whilst increasing the number of women in decision-making at all levels is critical and an important end in itself, it is also the beginning of the story. For representation to be meaningful, women must be able to be actively involved in and influence decision-making processes. Yet, entrenched structural barriers including traditional gender roles, attitudes and beliefs about women's role in public life, constraints on women's time and mobility, and violence against them hinder women's ability to participate meaningfully in decision-making fora.⁴ Women's influence in political and public life is also linked to their level of decision-making power in the household.

2. ActionAid, Womankind Worldwide & Institute of Development Studies. 2012. 'From the ground up: Women's roles in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone', p.4.

3. See Foreign & Commonwealth Office. UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security, Final Annual Review, October 2013.

4. Hoare, J. & Gell, F. (Eds.). 2009. 'Women's leadership and participation: Case studies on learning for action'. Rugby: Practical Action Publishing.

5. Womankind Worldwide, ActionAid & Institute of Development Studies. 2014. 'From the ground up. Country focus: Women's roles in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan'. Available: www.womankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/From-the-ground-up-Country-focus-Afghanistan.pdf (accessed 05/02/2014).

Case Study One: Women's leadership in Afghanistan – from the village to the parliament⁵

A decade ago the Afghan Women's Resource Centre (AWRC), a Womankind partner, began to support a number of women to be involved in Community Development Councils (CDCs) – two of whom became committee leaders at the district level. Following their experience and increased access to politics, the women ran for election in parliament, were elected and are now both MPs. Today, AWRC continues to follow this model and expects that six women will be elected at the provincial level in the upcoming 2014 elections.

“We are working at village level so we can bring women to CDC elections. Mostly when you see CDCs, women don't have the high positions. They are not the director, they are the secretary or assistant. We want to bring them first to that level of director at the community level. Then they can go to province level elections.”

– Maryam Rahmani, AWRC

“It is at the local level that many of the decisions that affect women’s lives are made”

Supporting meaningful participation in the NAP

Womankind welcomes the UK government’s clear commitment to putting women’s participation at the heart of the new NAP. This commitment must be translated into concrete proposals which will ensure women’s meaningful participation in peacebuilding.

It is important the new NAP seizes the post-conflict ‘window of opportunity’ to strengthen the institutional structures which define women’s participation. These structures include a country’s constitution, the electoral system, and legal special measures such as gender quotas.⁶

A country’s constitution can profoundly impact on women’s ability to participate in political and public life. The full participation of women’s rights organisations in post-conflict constitution drafting processes is vital to ensure that constitution documents uphold international women’s rights frameworks and guarantee women’s unrestricted citizenship status.⁷

As the CEDAW committee noted in 1997, temporary special measures such as gender quotas are an essential prerequisite to women’s equality in political life.⁸ The establishment of gender quotas is an important means of addressing the underrepresentation of women at all levels of decision-making. In addition, enabling

women to access training, networks, information and support is crucial to ensure their full and meaningful participation in political activities, both as candidates and after having attained political office.

It is at the local level that many of the decisions that affect women’s lives are made, and women’s political and public participation at the local level is an important aim and end in itself.⁹ ‘Bottom-up’ approaches which build on women’s roles in local peacebuilding are crucial.

Therefore women’s community-level decision-making should be supported, recognising that local leadership enables women to develop the skills required for nomination and election to district and provincial positions (see Case Study One).¹⁰

Finally, the impact of programmes aimed at strengthening women’s meaningful participation will be limited unless the structures that uphold gender inequality begin to change.¹¹ Longer term approaches aimed at understanding and tackling context-specific barriers to women’s meaningful participation and leadership should be pursued in the new NAP. To support this, a dedicated and fully-funded workstream aimed at supporting innovative approaches to increase women’s meaningful participation in peacebuilding should be established within the Department for International Development (DFID).

6. Markham, S. 2013. ‘Women as agents of change: Having voice in society and influencing policy’. World Bank, Women’s Voice, Agency, & Participation Research Series 2013 No. 5.

7. Notably Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of discrimination Against Women (1979) Articles 7, 14.2(f); Beijing Platform for Action (1995) Strategic objective G.1 & G.2.

8. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 23 (16th session, 1997).

9. Why women’s leadership matters – Key learning from Womankind Worldwide, February 2013.

10. For further case studies of in-country programming supporting women’s participation in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal and Sierra Leone see: www.womankind.org.uk/2014/02/country-focus-womens-roles-in-local-peacebuilding-in-afghanistan-liberia-nepal-and-sierra-leone/ (accessed 05/02/2014).

11. Hoare, J. & Gell, F. (Eds.). 2009.

Recommendations

To fulfil its commitment to putting women’s participation at the heart of the NAP, the government should:

- **Establish a ‘Participation Research and Innovation Fund’ within DFID to generate new evidence on women’s participation and leadership and to support pioneering programmes focused on tackling barriers to participation.**
- **Support women’s rights organisations’ participation in constitution drafting processes to ensure that constitution documents uphold international women’s rights standards and guarantee women’s unrestricted citizenship status.**
- **Support the establishment of gender quotas to address the underrepresentation of women at all levels of decision-making. This should be complemented with training, networks, information and support for women candidates and elected representatives to ensure their full and meaningful participation in political activities, including at the local level.**

Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls

“The escalation of conflict typically coincides with an increase of gender-based and sexual violence”

“... violence against girls and women is a global pandemic – one in three women is beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime ... And during conflict and humanitarian crises, all forms of violence against women dramatically increase ... DFID, my own department, has made preventing violence against girls and women a top priority”

– Secretary of State for International Development Justine Greening¹²

Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights – recent statistics estimate that 35% of all women will experience either intimate partner or non-partner violence.¹³ The escalation of conflict typically coincides with an increase of gender-based and sexual violence, targeted mainly at women and girls.¹⁴ This violence includes rape and other forms of sexual violence by soldiers, forced and early marriage, increased domestic violence and sexual violence by civilians, sexual exploitation and trafficking. Women and girls are targeted simply because they are women and for reasons inherently linked to conflict – for instance forcing communities to flee.

At the 57th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women, governments made a range of commitments directed at preventing violence against women in conflict including to ‘ensure that in all armed conflict and post conflict situations the prevention of and response to all forms

of violence against women are prioritised and effectively addressed’.¹⁵

Evidence suggests that violence against women and girls can be prevented by addressing the multiple and intersecting factors that are conducive to the perpetration of violence against women and girls.¹⁶ This involves changing social norms that devalue women and reinforce men’s greater power; transforming rigid gender stereotypes and male entitlement; and challenging attitudes in the immediate environment to tackle peer approval of violence and abuse. UNSCR 2106 affirms that women’s political, social and economic empowerment and gender equality are central to long-term efforts to prevent sexual violence.¹⁷

Supporting prevention of violence against women and girls in the NAP

In line with DFID’s Guidance Note Theory of Change for Tackling Violence Against Women

Case Study Two: National Association of Women’s Organisations (Uganda)

Womankind’s partner, the National Association of Women’s Organisations (NAWOU), aims to challenge attitudes and norms surrounding violence against women and girls and improve women’s access to services through community-based engagement, with a focus on the use of drama. NAWOU has trained drama groups to perform 4-5 drama performances a year in communities. The performances aim to raise awareness amongst members about women’s rights and legislation on gender-based violence. In addition, to gain the support of influential community members, a group of 50 community leaders in each region are convened on a quarterly basis to build their knowledge on violence against women and girls.

12. UK Government. Secretary of State Justine Greening speech on protecting girls and women from all forms violence and abuse in emergency situations, delivered 13 November 2013.

13. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. June 2013. Violence against women a global health problem of epidemic proportions.

14. UN Women. Gender-based Violence. Source: www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_war_peace/gender_based_violence.html (accessed 10/02/2012).

15. Commission on the Status of Women. March 2013. ‘Report on the fifty-seventh session’.

16. DFID. June 2012. ‘Guidance Note 1: A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls’.

17. S/RES/2106 (2013).

18. DFID. June 2012. ‘Guidance Note 1: A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls’.



Catherine Kirodotakou

Above: Women's empowerment programme participant, Sierra Leone

and Girls,¹⁸ Womankind recommends the new NAP takes a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to preventing violence, including sexual violence. The Theory of Change states 'integrated multi-sectoral approaches that use a variety of methods to create change are better able to tackle violence against women, especially in terms of primary prevention efforts.'¹⁹ In addition, the Guidance Note highlights it is vital to transform the social norms that perpetuate and condone violence (see Case Study Two).²⁰

DFID's Guidance Note A Practical Guide on Community Programming on Violence Against Women and Girls contains guidance on what works in tackling violence at the community level.²¹ Whilst recognising that context is critical, the Guidance Note points to several interventions whose principles

and lessons have proven successful across disparate examples, including:

- Community mobilisation
- Community conversations
- Media and technology
- Engaging men and boys

The development of a new NAP provides an opportunity to apply DFID's Guidance Notes on Violence Against Women and Girls. Whether organised as thematic pillars or focus countries – the NAP should analyse if, and where, there are gaps in prevention work using DFID's Guidance Notes as a framework. This analysis should then inform tangible and measurable commitments in the NAP on how any gaps will be addressed, including through the NAP refresh and the development of DFID Country Operational Plans.

Recommendations

- Take a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to preventing violence against women and girls, including across the individual, interpersonal and familial relationship, community and societal levels and across economic life, education, health, justice, security and health sectors.
- Clearly link DFID and FCO led initiatives to prevent violence against women, especially in regards to the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative.
- Using DFID's Guidance Notes on Violence against Women and Girls as a framework, identify gaps in violence against women prevention work and seek to address those gaps by making tangible and measurable commitments to address the root causes of violence against women and girls.

19. Ibid, p.8.

20. Ibid, p.5.

21. DFID. 2012. 'Guidance Note 2: A Practical Guide on Community Programming on Violence Against Women and Girls'.

Women's rights organisations – leaders for change

“Meetings between willing local women's rights organisations and visiting Ministers and UK government representatives are an important means of developing mutual understanding”

Working with women's rights organisations, including those operating at local level and outside of capital cities, is essential to ensure that the NAP reflects the priorities of women in fragile and conflict-affected countries. A comprehensive understanding of local social and political structures that violate women's rights means that effective social norm change work is best led by these organisations.²² They are also experienced in working with marginalised communities and non-traditional actors in peacebuilding.²³

As the 'missing link' between grassroots women peacebuilders and national and international-level processes,²⁴ women's rights organisations promote women's participation and interests at critical moments in political settlements, and at the highest levels of power.

Women's rights organisations are also key stakeholders in tackling violence against

women. This was powerfully demonstrated by a four-decade research programme in 70 countries, which found that the mobilisation of feminist movements is more important for combating violence against women than the wealth of nations, or the number of women politicians.²⁵

Womankind welcomed the in-country workshops which informed the 2012 UK NAP review, but further efforts need to be made to facilitate a widespread, inclusive and ongoing consultative process with in-country women's rights organisations (see Case Study Three). Meetings between willing local women's rights organisations and visiting Ministers and UK government representatives are an important means of developing mutual understanding. A participatory M&E process is also critical, which involves civil society in a 'locally-driven' approach which strengthens both national and international accountability.²⁶

22. Esplen, E. 2013. 'Leaders for Change: Why support women's rights organisations'. Womankind Worldwide.

23. Including disabled women, widows, women from ethnic or religious minority groups, ex-combatants, survivors of sexual violence, displaced women, and women living with HIV and AIDS.

24. ActionAid, Womankind Worldwide & Institute of Development Studies. 2012. 'From the ground up: Women's roles in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone'.

25. Htun, M. and Weldon, L. 2012. 'The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005'.

26. Institute for Inclusive Security, 2013. National Action Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit.

Case Study Three: Promising practice – The Netherlands

A main objective of the second Netherlands NAP, operational 2012–2015, is to create 'effective and efficient cooperation' between stakeholders involved in the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Women's rights organisations are 'to be actively involved in the implementation of this NAP'.²⁹

Drafting and implementation of country-specific programmes takes place in collaboration with local partners. Crucially, programme proposals are developed jointly with local women's rights organisations and women's movements in the focus countries and region.³⁰ This approach ensures that the programmes carried out under the NAP reflect local realities and priorities. Womankind's partner ISIS-Wicce endorses this focus on continued consultation, making a clear recommendation to the UK government:

“There are national organisations, such as Isis-WICCE, who have worked with [local women affected by conflicts] for over a decade, facilitated their organising, continued to enhance their capacities. They should be part of the review of the UK NAP. The Dutch did this and we can see the continuity of partnership is positioning the issues at national levels and beyond, and contributing to the growth of a movement of women peace activists here in Uganda.”

– ISIS Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (ISIS-Wicce), Uganda

Right: Management course at AWRC STEP Institute, Afghanistan



“The UK government could have regular consultation meetings ... to better understand the intricacies that exist in Nepal and other focus countries, regarding Women, Peace and Security issues.”

- Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO), Nepal

“The UK Government should organise nationwide consultative forums to capture the views of women. Each district should be represented by a fair percentage of women in the consultation.”

- Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society (WAVES), Sierra Leone

Women human rights defenders (WHRDs) face increasing threats and attacks whilst carrying out their work to defend the rights of women.²⁷ National governments hold ultimate responsibility for protecting their citizens. However, funders and donor governments should also consistently monitor and respond to security threats faced by in-country WHRDs as they work on women, peace and security. The EU Human Rights Defenders Guidelines provide an important framework, and should inform measures taken to support WHRDs in the new NAP.²⁸

27. Association for Women's Rights in Development, Women Human Rights Defenders.

28. European Union. 'Ensuring protection – European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders'.

29. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. 2012. 'Women: Powerful Agents for Peace and Security. Dutch National Action Plan For the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace & Security (2012-2015)', p.36.

30. Kesselaar et al. 'Netherlands Case Study', in EPLO. 2013. 'UNSCR 1325 IN EUROPE: 20 case studies of implementation'.

Recommendations

- **Work with in-country women's rights organisations to develop, implement and monitor progress on NAP objectives, recognising and supporting their context-specific knowledge, experience in working with diverse local communities and expertise in social norm and behaviour change work.**
- **Develop and implement a robust system of ongoing, meaningful consultation with women's rights organisations in fragile and conflict-affected countries. This should include invitations to participate in official meetings sent as standard to women's rights organisations every time a Minister from a NAP department visits a conflict-affected country.**
- **Address the security needs of women human rights defenders by building security and protection into women, peace and security programmes and funding mechanisms, and implement the EU Human Rights Defender Guidelines.**

Impact-focused financing mechanisms

“Womankind calls for a twin-track approach to funding women, peace and security”

“Supporting women’s rights organisations... to make change and build strong and inclusive social movements is the most effective mechanism for ensuring sustainable change in the lives of women and girls.”

– DFID Theory of Change for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, 2012³¹

“One of the major barriers for our organisation in delivering women, peace and security work is the lack of adequate funding.”

– Saathi, Nepal

A twin-track approach to women, peace and security funding

Predictable and sustainable financing for women, peace and security is essential if the UK NAP is to achieve maximum impact. To ensure this, Womankind calls for a twin-track approach to funding women, peace and security.

31. DFID. 2012. ‘How To Note: A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence Against Woman and Girls’.

32. S/RES/2122 (2013).

33. Earmarking refers to the dedication of public funds to a specific use.

34. United Nations. 2013. Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2013/525), New York, United Nations.

35. Cordaid & GNWP, 2013. Working Paper: Financing for the Implementation of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325: Critical for Advancing Women’s Human Rights, Peace and Security.

36. DAC Network on Gender Equality. 2008. Issues Brief 3: ‘Innovative Funding for Women’s Organisations’.

37. For more information see Espen. E. 2013. ‘Leaders for Change: Why support women’s rights organisations’. Womankind Worldwide. Available at: www.womankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/03/LeadersForChange-FINAL.pdf (accessed 03/02/2013).

38. See www.oecd.org/dac/stats/aidinsupportofgenderequalityandwomensempowerment.htm (accessed 20/01/2014).

An earmarked NAP budget

Firstly, a dedicated financing mechanism should be established, as recommended by UNSCR 2122 (adopted in October 2013). This includes ‘increasing contributions to local civil society’.³² There are numerous benefits to establishing a fully-costed and earmarked budget.³³ The UN Secretary-General recognises that earmarking funds can improve the effectiveness and outcomes of NAP development and implementation.³⁴ A dedicated funding mechanism can also enhance coordination and transparency in financial management.³⁵

To ensure these funds reach in-country women’s rights organisations, application processes must be in line with the guidance provided by the DAC Network on Gender Equality.³⁶ Intermediary funding conduits should be utilised, such as Women’s Funds, which have particular expertise in dispersing funds to smaller women’s rights organisations. These specialist bodies offer major benefits, with donors increasingly channelling grant-making through them.³⁷

“We recommend that the UK government revisit their funding criteria - that would encourage grassroots organisations to access their funding [which is important] as they interface directly with the local communities.”

– Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society (WAVES), Sierra Leone

Gender-responsive conflict funds

Secondly, women, peace and security should be mainstreamed and fully traceable throughout all conflict and development funding. Appointing gender experts to all funding boards is an important step to achieving this.

The new Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF, operational 2015) offers an important opportunity to strengthen women, peace and security expenditure monitoring and accountability. Within this, tracking direct and indirect allocation and disbursement of funds to women’s rights organisations is critical. Consistently screening all applicable CSSF expenditure against the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker is a vital step towards achieving this end.³⁸

A strong commitment to supporting gender equality must be embedded within the management and administration of the CSSF. This includes streamlining processes for the allocation and disbursement of funds to ensure that women’s rights



Above: Training session on elections, Afghanistan

organisations in fragile and conflict-affected states can access funding in a timely manner. It also means taking measures to strengthen the gender-

responsiveness of the CSSF's management structure, including the appointment of a gender expert to its Board.

Recommendations

- Establish a fully costed and earmarked budget for the implementation of the NAP, as proposed within UNSCR 2122 and by the UN Secretary-General.
- Increase the accessibility of earmarked funds to women's rights organisations by implementing the guidance provided by the DAC Network on Gender Equality, including by channelling money through Women's Funds.
- Use the DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker to screen expenditure of the new Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). This should include tracking financial allocations to women's rights organisations.
- Embed a strong commitment to gender equality within the administration and management of the CSSF, notably by appointing a gender expert to its Board.

About this briefing

The UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP) is due to be launched in June 2014. This provides a renewed opportunity for the UK government to build upon progress made to date in its implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325.

To assist the UK government in developing an ambitious and far-reaching NAP, this briefing delivers guidance, condensed case studies and recommendations in four areas:

- Supporting women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding
- Preventing violence against women and girls
- Working with local women's rights organisations in the design and delivery of the NAP
- Developing impact-focused funding mechanisms

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