Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: Office for Women

Final Independent Review of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018

24 October 2018

When you
think with a
global mind
problems
get smaller

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Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
ACMC	Australian Civil-Military Centre
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AGD	Attorney General's Department
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CT	Counter Terrorism
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DDR	Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIP	Defence Implementation Plan
GAI	WPS Global Acceleration Instrument
GAN	Gender Advisors Network
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GR 30	CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30
IDC	Inter-Departmental Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDWG	Inter-Departmental Working Group (on Women, Peace and Security)
IFR	Independent Final Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluating and Learning
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OfW	Office for Women
P/CVE	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
PM&C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Resolution 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBC	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & Time-based
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Executive Summary

Background and Purpose

The *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018* (the National Action Plan or NAP) was launched in 2012.[1] The National Action Plan guides whole-of-government actions to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000)[2] and the seven subsequent resolutions that together form the architecture of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.[3]

The purpose of this Independent Final Review (the Review or IFR) was to assess the high-level effectiveness of the National Action Plan 2012-2018 against its stated objectives and provide actionable recommendations to inform the development of the next NAP.[4] Commissioned by the Office for Women (OfW) in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), the IFR was mandated in the current NAP and intended to meet accountability requirements.

This Executive Summary provides a synthesis of the Review approach, findings on overall effectiveness, and presents the recommendations for Australia's next NAP which emerged from this Review. The body of the report is structured in four main sections:

- Section 1: Introduction – providing a background to the Review and methodology;

- Section 2: Review of the Literature - a tailored review of the relevant literature on emerging good practice in WPS NAPs;

- Section 3: Learning from Australia's first NAP - a thorough documentation of learnings from the first Australian NAP, substantively based on findings from stakeholder interviews;

- Section 4: Conclusion – highlighting key findings which guide stakeholders toward the development of the next NAP.

Review Design and Approach

In assessing the effectiveness of the NAP, the Review considered the following questions:[5]

1. To what extent has Australia's National Action Plan been effective in directing Australia's implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

2. To what extent is the structure of the National Action Plan, and the identified roles and responsibilities of Departments, appropriate to achieving its purposes.

3. To what extent are the governance arrangements and accountability mechanisms sufficient and appropriate, and which international best practices for governance and accountability are suitable for incorporation into Australia's next National Action Plan.

4. To what extent are Departments' actions supporting an appropriately balanced implementation of the pillars of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

5. To what extent are the actions to achieve the pillars appropriately realised across the breadth of commitments outlined in Women, Peace and Security resolutions.

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[1] Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018,
https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/national-action-plan_on_women%20peace-security-%202012-18.pdf
[2] UNSCR 1325: Annex 1
[3] At the time of writing the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council under the title of 'Women and peace and security' are: UNSCR 1325 (2000); UNSCR 1820 (2008); UNSCR 1888 (2009); UNSCR 1889 (2009); UNSCR 1960 (2010); UNSCR 2106 (2013); UNSCR 2122 (2013); and UNSCR 2242 (2015).
[4] Terms of Reference: Annex 2
[5] Ibid.

6. What can be learned from how other National Action Plans respond to emerging issues, new priorities and the evolving women, peace and security context.

7. What lessons learned from international best practice could inform a fit-for-purpose Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework in the next National Action Plan.

The Review was conducted in four phases utilising a range of methods, each designed to inform the next and/or validate emerging findings through a process of triangulation:

1. **Inception Phase :** This phase involved a preliminary review of documentation, stakeholder consultation and stakeholder analysis to verify and refine the scope of the Review and to assess evaluability.

2. **Desk-based research:** There were three elements to the desk-based review:

    i. *Document Review*: A systematic review and analysis of relevant reports including Annual Civil Society Report Cards, Round-Table & Dialogue Reports; NAP Progress Reports and other available government reports related to the Australian NAP 2012-2018.

    ii. *Literature Review*: A targeted review of the current literature with a focus on emerging good practice around NAPs globally (key findings are on page 24).

    iii. *NAP Case Study compilation and analysis*: Selection and analysis of seven NAP Country Case Studies (see Annex 5).

3. **Stakeholder Consultations:** The Review Team conducted semi-structured interviews in Melbourne and Canberra, interviewing 47 government and civil society stakeholders. Representation was proportionate across government agencies with only one agency not represented. A summary of key questions and interview participants is included in Annex 4.

4. **Analysis & Reporting:** Interview data was analysed by two reviewers independently to ensure inter-researcher reliability. Reviewers undertook detailed processes of coding and thematic analysis which is further described in the Methodology section on page 9. Data sources were triangulated against emerging subthemes, providing substance for the narrative of this Review and its Recommendations.

Key Limitations

- The NAP M&E framework focused on documenting and collecting a restricted set of quantitative data on activities, as opposed to outcomes and had a limited baseline; this posed a significant challenge in attempting to objectively measure and evaluate change at an outcome level and provide a basis upon which to draw conclusions about broader effectiveness and impact.

- Due to time constraints, the Review only engaged with representatives of the government implementing departments and civil society representatives in Australia and had no scope to engage (even from secondary data) in what was happening in field operations.

Key Findings on Effectiveness

The Review did not seek to capture progress against the NAP, as this has been comprehensively reported in the three Progress Reports (2014, 2016, 2018). Therefore, the outcomes and outputs summarised below are the 'top level' achievements that focus less on operational practice and more on the extent to which the NAP enables system-wide changes in practice.

The primary outcome of the current NAP is the attainment of its stated purpose, which is four-fold:

1. *Articulate Australia's ongoing commitment to implement UNSCR 1325 and the broader UN Security Council Women, Peace and Security agenda.*

2. *Establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.*

3. *Identify strategies and actions that Australia will undertake both domestically and overseas to implement UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, and measure the effectiveness of this work over a six-year period from 2012–2018.*

4. *Highlight the important work that Australia is doing in partnership with the international community to respond to women's needs, recognise their roles, promote equal participation, and protect women and girls' human rights in fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings.[6]*

This Review concludes that each of these objectives has been at least partially met. While the next NAP clearly needs a much stronger measure of impact and a more robust framework to enable effective monitoring and evaluation, the Review concluded that significant outcomes have also resulted from the adoption of the NAP in 2012.

One of the key achievements over the life of the NAP has been the degree of institutional learning across government agencies/Departments. There is a general sense that the understanding of WPS informing government practice in all NAP stakeholder agencies and Departments has matured substantially since the adoption of the NAP. The NAP's existence has raised the visibility of the WPS agenda across government, and the NAP itself has socialised a sophisticated understanding of WPS across government as well as a good understanding of mechanisms of implementation.

One of the primary purposes of the NAP relates to a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to NAP implementation specifically and WPS more broadly; achievement of this objective is evident. The extent to which whole-of-government approach has been embedded, through both formal and informal structures and arrangements, is a valuable achievement. Many stakeholders involved in the Review commented on how different entities have learned to work together and reported that whole-of-government collaboration has really developed and been consolidated under the NAP.

Another key area of achievement and impact relates to the relationship between civil society and implementing agencies/Departments. This relationship was held up by many stakeholders, from both government and civil society organisations, as a real strength and a key feature of Australia's international reputation in the WPS space. This relationship is both productive and rare internationally, and should be properly resourced and supported going forward. Civil society organisations can make a valuable contribution to establishing contextual knowledge and technical expertise and this kind of information-sharing between government and civil society should be facilitated.

The final dimension of achievement and impact relates to the international context of Australian WPS activity and the degree of international recognition that the government receives for the NAP and its WPS work. The NAP enables conformity with the WPS obligations that flow from UNSCR 1325 and associated resolutions, and reaffirms Australia's global position as a leader in WPS work. Australia is positioned well internationally, in part as a result of the productive and well-integrated relationship between government and civil society, and this is to be commended.

Recommendations

There was general consensus that the first Australian NAP was a sound document 'for its time', which kept key stakeholders to account and 'on track'. There are however, clear indications from both the literature and this Review of areas in which the next Australian NAP could be strengthened. These include:

- a NAP guided by a clear overall vison based on a simple and accessible theory of change;

- a significantly more robust system of M&E, inclusive of baseline and clear outcome statements;

- more streamlined, utilisation focused monitoring and associated progress reporting;

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[6] Ibid., p. 15.

- a stronger well situated & resourced mechanism for coordination and leadership;

- a more agile design to allow for adaptability to emerging issues and change;

- an appropriate focus on prevention;

- dedicated financing; and

- a clearer, and more formalised, mandate for engaging with civil society.

These areas are discussed in detail in the body of this report and summarised in the conclusions. They are also captured in brief through the 19 recommendations made throughout the report. The combined list of recommendations is presented here against the unit envisaged to be responsible for actioning or carrying forward that recommendation. For transparency, the table below also includes an indication to the key sources of information informing each recommendation (key is on page 6).

Responsible Stakeholder	Recommendation	Key Evidence Source
NAP lead / Coordinating Unit	**Recommendation 1:** Formally establish an appropriately located, mandated, resourced and funded NAP Secretariat, which should provide both effective administration/management and strong leadership.	🎤 📚 💼
	Recommendation 2: Clearly define, document and allocate budget for an appropriate mechanism to facilitate constructive and ongoing engagement with civil society; including consideration of funding a civil society secretariat for WPS.	🎤 💼
	Recommendation 3: Review the role and function of the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) and Subcommittee with considerations given to more effective approaches to foster high level discussion, policy dialogue and exchange across government.	🎤 📚
	Recommendation 4: Appropriately fund and resource both the development of the theory of change and development of the M&E framework for the next NAP. Ensuring that suitably skilled and experienced practitioners are utilised or contracted in for this process and the ongoing management and leadership of the M&E system.	💼 🎤 📚
Team designing the next NAP	**Recommendation 5:** Ensure that Australia's next NAP has a strong, focused and clear overarching vision or goal.[7]	🎤 📚 💼
	Recommendation 6: Ensure adequate focus and balance between the WPS pillars in the next NAP, with an adequate and appropriate emphasis for all relevant stakeholders on prevention.	🎤 📚 💼 📋
	Recommendation 7: Actively consider the benefit of constructing a high-level NAP which provides the strategic intent and broad framework for implementing agencies whilst supporting the development of agency specific, actionable, and more widely understood implementation plans.	🎤 📚

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[7] It is understood that work is underway to develop a vision statement for the next NAP.

Responsible Stakeholder	Recommendation	Key Evidence Source
	Recommendation 8: The NAP should include clear, time bound, and attributable outcome statements, which describe the specific and measurable changes knowledge, attitudes, skills, or practice that is expected as a result of effective implementation and which are supported by relevant indicators of change and monitoring processes.	
	Recommendation 9: Develop the theory of change and the associated M&E Framework through an inclusive, participatory process to ensure understanding and shared ownership; it should be based on sound situational and stakeholder analysis including comprehensive policy mapping and analysis.	
	Recommendation 10: Consider the value in undertaking some degree of institutional audit of WPS / gender equality actions across agencies and subsequently cost the actions required to fill those gaps.	
	Recommendation 11: Ensure that the next NAP is internally consistent in that key issues highlighted in any narrative preamble are appropriately featured or have adequate scope for inclusion under any 'Action matrix' or comparable guideline (for example intersectionality or the inclusion of men and boys).	
	Recommendation 12: Ensure adequate considerations of and resourcing for communications and media to enhance accountability and the production of more accessible and widely disseminated NAP publications and products.	
M&E Consultant or Team	**Recommendation 13:** Ensure that civil society inputs are explicitly described in any theory of change and that there are associated measures of change in the M&E framework to monitor and measure the value of their contributions.	
	Recommendation 14: Ensure that Annual Civil Society Report Cards and Civil Society Dialogues are formally acknowledged as accountability mechanisms and explicitly and purposely mapped onto /into the formal framework for monitoring and evaluation.	
	Recommendation 15: More clearly articulate process outcomes and measures, inclusive of whole-of-government collaboration and cooperation.	
	Recommendation 16: Streamline reporting with increased attention to purpose and audience for progress reporting.	

Responsible Stakeholder	Recommendation	Key Evidence Source
	Recommendation 17: Embed much more robust, formal review mechanisms into the next NAP with focus on both a capacity and clear authority to respond to emerging issues and change; the capacity for responsiveness to change could be incorporated as a review measure.	🎙 💼 📋
Implementing Departments	**Recommendation 18:** The NAP itself, and WPS principles more broadly, need to be better institutionalised across all implementing Departments, inclusive of more clearly distinguishing the NAP mandate from general commitments to gender-sensitive peace, security, and development work.	🎙 📋
	Recommendation 19: The appointment, resourcing, and continued professional development of gender advisors, including through investment in facilitating informal networking of gender advisors across agencies/Departments, should be supported.	🎙

Key for Evidence Sources

Stakeholder Interviews – At least thirty percent support this recommendation. 🎙

Literature Review – The literature directly supports this. 📚

Case Studies – At least half of case studies support this. 💼

Systematic Review – Credible analysis and evidence supports this. 📋

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Independent Final Review

The *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018*[8] (the National Action Plan or NAP) was launched in 2012. It was developed through a series of national consultations among relevant government agencies, academics, representatives from civil society and the broader Australian Public. The National Action Plan guides whole-of-government actions to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000)[9] and the seven subsequent resolutions that together form the architecture of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.[10]

The purpose of the NAP is four-fold; its objectives are to:

1. Articulate Australia's ongoing commitment to implement UNSCR 1325 and the broader UN Security Council Women, Peace and Security agenda.

2. Establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole of government approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.

3. Identify strategies and actions that Australia will undertake both domestically and overseas to implement UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, and measure the effectiveness of this work over a six-year period from 2012–2018.[11]

4. Highlight the important work that Australia is doing in partnership with the international community to respond to women's needs, recognise their roles, promote equal participation, and protect women and girls' human rights in fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings.

The National Action Plan addresses five thematic areas and five strategies. The five thematic areas reflect the content of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, and are reproduced in the framework of the UN 2008–2009 System-wide Action Plan.[12]

These five thematic areas are: [13]

1. ***Prevention*** *– incorporating a gender perspective in conflict prevention activities and strategies and recognising the role of women in preventing conflict.*

2. ***Participation*** *– recognising the important role women already play in all aspects of peace and security, and enhancing women's meaningful participation, both domestically and overseas, through: – striving for more equal representation of women and men in Australian peace and security institutions, and – working with international partners to empower local women to be involved in formal peace and security processes in fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings in which Australia is operating.*

3. ***Protection*** *– protecting the human rights of women and girls by working with international partners to ensure safety, physical and mental wellbeing, economic security and equality, with special consideration for protecting women and girls from gender-based violence.*

4. ***Relief and Recovery*** *– ensuring a gender perspective is incorporated in all relief and recovery efforts in order to support the specific needs and recognise the capacity of women and girls.*

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[8] Ibid.
[9] See Annex 1 for UNSCR 1325
[10] At the time of writing the resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council under the title of 'Women and peace and security' are: UNSCR 1325 (2000); UNSCR 1820 (2008); UNSCR 1888 (2009); UNSCR 1889 (2009); UNSCR 1960 (2010); UNSCR 2106 (2013); UNSCR 2122 (2013); and UNSCR 2242 (2015).
[11] An addendum was released in 2017 extending the NAP to June 30 2019 to allow for more comprehensive planning for the next Australian NAP. https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/addendum-australian-national-action-plan.pdf.
[12] United Nations Security Council, 2007, Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, S/2007/567, 12 September 2007, para. 42. Online, at https://undocs.org/S/2007/567.
[13] Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018, op. cit. p. 17.

5. ***Normative*** *– raising awareness about and developing policy frameworks to progress the Women, Peace and Security agenda, integrating a gender perspective across government policies on peace and security.*

Cross cutting these themes (or 'pillars'), the NAP articulated five high level strategies that describe what the Australian Government will undertake to progress the Women, Peace and Security agenda:

1. Integrate a gender perspective into Australia's policies on peace and security.

2. Embed the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the Australian Government's approach to human resource management of Defence, Australian Federal Police and deployed personnel.

3. Support civil society organisations to promote equality and increase women's participation in conflict prevention, peace-building, conflict resolution, and relief and recovery.

4. Promote Women, Peace and Security implementation internationally.

5. Take a co-ordinated and holistic approach domestically and internationally to Women, Peace and Security.

These strategies are further broken down into 24 Actions, presented in the NAP in a matrix. The matrix also provides an indication of which of the relevant government departments are responsible for each of these actions.

The Australian government agencies responsible for implementation of the NAP are:

- Department of Defence (Defence)

- Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC), identified separately, but also part of Defence

- Australian Federal Police (AFP)

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) – integrated into DFAT in 2013

- Attorney-General's Department (AGD)

- Office for Women, formerly in the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and since 2013, in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

The NAP provides robust guidance on Australia's valuable contribution to the WPS agenda. It outlines the expected contributions to advancing women's human rights, women's full and meaningful participation in decision-making processes of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peace-keeping and ultimately support for women to change their lives for the better. As Australia continues its focus on meeting its commitments to UNSCR 1325 and targeted actions addressing the women, peace and security resolutions, it is important that policy-makers, civil society, the Australian public and program managers have clear and accessible evidence on the effectiveness of this first NAP and how emerging learnings can be best integrated into 'what works' given the current global peace and security context and international good practice going forward. The processes for collecting evidence of progress against the NAP objectives and actions are detailed in the NAP, Section 7, Governance, Reporting and Reviews and in the associated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework in Part B of the NAP. This system provided for biennial Progress Reports which were completed in 2014, 2016 and 2018, and two Independent Reviews; [14] an Independent Interim Review was completed in 2015 and this report comprises the second Independent Review.

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[14] The three Progress Reports and the report from the Independent Interim Review can be accessed via the Prime Minister & Cabinet's webpage on Women, Peace and Security: https://www.pmc.gov.au/office-women/international-forums/australian-national-action-plan-women-peace-and-security-2012-2018.

1.2 Scope and objectives of the Review

The purpose of this Independent Final Review (IFR or Review) is to provide evidence to improve future policy, strategy and actions intended to realise women's and girls' human rights and to the elimination of discrimination against women. The Review was tasked with assessing the high-level effectiveness of the National Action Plan 2012-2018 against its stated objectives and providing actionable recommendations to inform the development of the next NAP.

The Review was guided by seven core questions focused on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the current NAP and designed to provide practical lessons and recommendations to inform the next NAP and future policy and actions. It is intended to build on the findings and recommendations of the Interim Review and Progress Reports. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Review are included at Annex 2; recommendations from the Interim Review are included at Annex 3.

The questions guiding this Review were:

1. To what extent has Australia's National Action Plan been effective in directing Australia's implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

2. To what extent is the structure of the National Action Plan, and the identified roles and responsibilities of Departments, appropriate to achieving its purposes.

3. To what extent are the governance arrangements and accountability mechanisms sufficient and appropriate, and which international best practices for governance and accountability are suitable for incorporation into Australia's next National Action Plan.

4. To what extent are Departments' actions supporting an appropriately balanced implementation of the pillars of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

5. To what extent are the actions to achieve the pillars appropriately realised across the breadth of commitments outlined in Women, Peace and Security resolutions.

6. What can be learned from how other National Action Plans respond to emerging issues, new priorities and the evolving women, peace and security context.

7. What lessons learned from international best practice could inform a fit-for-purpose Monitoring and Review framework in the next National Action Plan.

Whilst informing the next Australian NAP, the Review Team were appraised of the need for this Review process to stand independent of concurrent consultations processes, designed to inform the next NAP, whilst recognising the interdependencies between the two processes.

1.3 Review Approach and Methodology

1.3.1 Approach

The Review was designed to take a utilisation- focused approach with a view to emphasising strengths and drawing out learnings which would inform the next Australian NAP. The Review primarily drew on qualitative evaluation techniques, supplemented by quantitative data where available, taking a sequential multi-phase/mixed methods approach. This means that the data collection and analysis was iterative, taking stock after each phase in the research to discuss emerging findings and tailor subsequent research methods to explore developing themes.

1.3.2 Methodology

The Review was conducted in four phases utilising a range of methods, each designed to inform the next and/or validate emerging findings through a process of triangulation:

1. **Inception Phase :** This phase involved a preliminary review of documentation, stakeholder consultation and stakeholder analysis to verify and refine the scope of the Review and to assess evaluability. The overall purpose of an evaluability assessment is to improve the prospects for an evaluation or review process producing useful results. According to the OECD DAC definition, evaluability is "The extent to which an activity or project can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion".[15] A UK Department for International Development (DFID) Working Paper on Evaluability Assessment identified three dimensions of evaluability:[16]
   - evaluability " in principle", given the nature of the theory of change;
   - evaluability "in practice", given the availability and quality of relevant data; and
   - the utility and practicality of an evaluation, given the views and availability of relevant stakeholders

This stage therefore necessarily involved an inquiry to identify any explicit Theory of Change (ToC) for the current NAP, a review of availability and quality of relevant data and documentation which may be able to inform the evaluation of effectiveness as well as undertaking a stakeholder analysis to verify the scope and availability of relevant stakeholders for the Review process.

The assessment concluded that there was no documented Theory of Change for the Australian NAP. The principle data available on NAP performance was reporting against a selected number of activity level indicators; these were collated in weighty and largely inaccessible (due to volume and lack of synthesis) biannual NAP Progress Reports. There was no specific data available to report on the outcome of the NAP even for activity level indicators, there was limited baseline information available. Due to constraints of budget and time, the Review was to be limited to in-Australia stakeholder consultation.

These findings influenced the Review approach and methods. Given the dearth of outcome level data, a decision was made to undertake a detailed desk based review (of pertinent Civil Society and Government publications) to develop key themes and stakeholder interview questions, which would be subsequently investigated in depth through targeted semi structured stakeholder interviews. In keeping with the Terms of Reference for the Review, the Review also incorporated a detailed literature review and a series of NAP Country Case Studies.

2. **Desk-based research:** There were three elements to the desk-based review:

   i. *Document Review*: A systematic review and analysis of relevant reports including Annual Civil Society Report Cards, Round-Table & Dialogue Reports; Progress Reports[17] and other available government reports related to the Australian NAP 2012-2018.

   ii. *Literature Review*: A targeted review of the current literature with a focus on emerging good practice around NAPs globally.

   iii. *NAP Case Study compilation and analysis*: Selection and analysis of seven NAP Country Case Studies.

The desk based research enabled familiarity with the literature and available reporting on WPS as well as a nuanced interpretation of the Review questions (given evaluability constraints and stated priorities of the commissioning agency). This allowed for the development of preliminary 'themes' for the review and high level lines of enquiry/questions for stakeholder interviews. Based on these high level lines of enquiry/questions, detailed stakeholder specific interview guides were developed for each stakeholder grouping.

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[15] https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/evaluability_assessment
[16] Rick Davies, 2015, Evaluability Assessments: Reflections on a review of the literature, Evaluation, 21(2):216-231
[17] Note: The 2018 NAP Progress Report was not publicly available at the time of the Systematic Review so was not formally included in that stage. Once released in August 2018, the Review Team did review the 2018 Progress Report to further inform stakeholder interviews and subsequent analysis and conclusion.

3. **Stakeholder Consultations:** The Review Team conducted semi-structured interviews in Melbourne and Canberra, interviewing 47 government and civil society stakeholders (including nine men) in a mix of one to one interviews (n=19) and group settings (n=6). Interviews were predominantly held face to face (three were telephone interviews) over a two-week period in mid-August 2018; one respondent provided a written submission. Representation was proportionate across government agencies with only one agency not represented. Interviews were conducted by two members of the Review Team; one interviewer took hand-written notes while another captured responses on a laptop, generating typed notes. All but one of the interviews was also audio-recorded as an additional reference during analysis. A summary of key questions and interview participants is included in Annex 4.

4. **Analysis & Reporting:** Semi-structured interviews in Melbourne and Canberra generated a large volume of data to analyse. The interviewers undertook an independent process of data cleaning, organisation, and analysis. Data cleaning consisted of referring back to the audio recording to make corrections to typed/hand-written notes and filling in any gaps that were evident in the notes that were captured. At this stage, the hand-written notes were converted to a second, separate set of typed notes, although the Review Team worked independently of each other throughout the cleaning, organisation, and preliminary analysis process to ensure inter-researcher reliability.

Data organisation involved separating out the various responses captured in each set of typed notes under the five themes that guided the questioning:

i. Achievements and impact

ii. NAP design and accessibility

iii. Leadership and governance

iv. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

v. Accountability

This is the first phase of coding qualitative data. Once the volume of data was organised under the five broad themes, a more detailed thematic analysis was employed in a second phase of coding. Thematic analysis is 'a method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set';[18] application of this method involves identifying emergent themes within the data in each broad area. Within each of the five broad themes there were between seven and twelve sub-themes; there was also a category 'Other' for responses that did not fit within the five broad themes. The minimum number of responses coded to a sub-theme was two and the maximum was forty-five.

The interviewers independently analysed transcripts of the interviews and coded responses. Analysis was shared upon completion of the second phase of coding, prior to reporting, as a further measure of inter-interviewer reliability, with a high degree of consistency across the two data repositories. Outlier responses and minor sub-themes were identified and agreed upon by the Review Team and excluded from the reporting phase.

During reporting, the Review Team drafted evaluative analysis of the data collected under each broad theme, inclusive of interview data and data gathered during the desk-based research activities. Each of the two interviewers took the lead on each of the sections to produce an independent draft, which was then cross-checked and verified by the other interviewer against the interview data repositories and findings from the desk-based research. Revisions were made to each of the substantive sections during this process to ensure that the reporting accurately reflected the data in each case, and independent peer review was sought at the conclusion of the reporting phase.

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[18] Lorelli S. Nowell, Jill M. Norris, Deborah E. White, and Nancy J. Moules, 2017, 'Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1-13, 2.

1.3.3 Limitations to the Review

Measurement of effectiveness and results: The NAP M&E framework focused on documenting and collecting a restricted set of quantitative data on activities, as opposed to outcomes and had a limited baseline. This posed a significant challenge in attempting to objectively measure and evaluate change at an outcome level and provide a basis upon which to draw conclusions about broader effectiveness and impact.

No opportunity to undertake overseas field visits : Due to time constraints, the Review only engaged with representatives of the government implementing Departments and civil society representatives in Australia and had no scope to engage (even from secondary data) in what was happening in field operations.

Access to stakeholders for consultations: Given compressed timeframes for stakeholder interviews and competing priorities, a small but nonetheless significant number of relevant stakeholders were not available to meet with the Review Team. The Review Team were not able to meet with any representative from the Attorney General's Department.

2 Women, Peace and Security NAPs - the Global Picture

A review of the literature

In accordance with a mandate to explore international best practice and appropriately inform and situate this Review, a detailed literature review was undertaken. Relevant elements of this literature review are synthesised below.

The literature review involved a desk review of publicly available policy papers and statements, published NAPs from various countries and their associated evaluation reports, in addition to searches of online databases for peer-reviewed papers. As per the Terms of Reference (ToR) of this Review, most of the discussion below is taken from 'grey literature' from highly reputable, international policy and research centres, many governments' NAPs and United Nations (UN) organisations. There is now an abundance of literature on the WPS agenda, and hence only a careful selection has been reviewed. The literature is robust and reliable. The research evidence in the literature comes from highly experienced, well-trained researchers, practitioners and policy-makers. The scope of the project does not permit detailed critique. Some evaluative commentary on the strength of the literature is included.

2.1.1 Background and Global Context

The women, peace and security (WPS) agenda is a cross-cutting thematic approach across intersecting fields of:

- **Gender analysis** of inclusion/exclusion, power/powerlessness, empowerment/marginalisation, equality/inequality, human rights/abuse or repression of rights, justice/injustice;
- **Peace** – peacebuilding, peacekeeping, peacemaking, sustainable positive peace; and
- **Security** – insecurity, everyday well-being and different feelings of safety.

As the UN Women National Committee Australia explains, 'Women, peace and security is about achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in conflict and post conflict settings', identifying and addressing 'the differential impact of conflict upon women and girls.'[19] At its heart is a critical feminist drive to eliminate root causes of inequalities and injustices to create radical transformation of gender equality. Also, as a participant at the Asia-Pacific Civil Society consultation for the *Global Study* said: 'Women, peace and security is about preventing war, not about making war safer for women.'[20]

UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is unique in being a Security Council resolution and 'a wide-ranging policy artefact.'[21] It is used by governments to instigate policies at national, regional and international levels. At grassroots levels, it is used as a political instrument to further women's full involvement in all decisions pertaining to securing peace and security. There is scope for context-specific adaptability. 'How we *read* UNSCR 1325 determines priorities' (e.g., protection versus participation, foci (e.g., sexual and gender-based-violence versus structural violence) and understanding of political actors (e.g. UN as masculine protector and universal woman as victim.[22]

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[19] UN Women National Committee Australia, 2015, 'At the Centre of Conflict, Central to Peace. Women, Peace and Security. 15 years of Implementing UNSCR 1325: Progress, Barriers and the Future' Canberra: UN Women National Committee Australia, p. 5.

[20] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, 'Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace: A global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325'. New York: UN Women., p. 191.

[21] Paul Kirby and Laura Shepherd, 2016, 'The Futures Past of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda,' International Affairs, 92(2): 373-392, p. 373.

[22] Katrina Lee-Koo, 2016, 'Engaging UNSCR 1325 through Australia's NAP,' International Political Science Review, 37(3): 336-349, p. 337.

Whilst the critiques of the efficacy of UNSCR 1325 to further goals of the WPS agenda are valid – the lack of: consistency in application; data, political will and gender expertise -- it is a 'political tool,' which can, and does, 'mobilise actors' to create political opportunities to reframe issues that women's human rights defenders continue to advocate.[23]

UNSCR 1325 is interrelated with other Security Council resolutions and UN instruments. Subsequent 'sister resolutions' add supporting mechanisms that recognise specific, critical issues that need to be addressed, particularly, a focus on conflict-related sexual violence and the need to address impunity for this abuse. UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, and 2422 were all passed after UNSCR 1325, and are important extensions to the WPS agenda.[24]

Several significant global instruments are relevant to the WPS agenda and are directly connected to the implementation of UNSCR 1325, including:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goals 5 (gender equality), 10 (reduced inequality) and 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions).
- 20-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, critical areas: women and armed conflict, violence-against women, human rights of women and women in power and decision-making.
- High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations.
- Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.
- World Humanitarian Summit.

These global developments align with the WPS agenda to ensure a consistent global WPS perspective is mainstreamed into all efforts to build peace and security, including that member states fulfil their obligations in implementing UNSCR 1325.

2.1.2 Assessing Coverage of the WPS 'Pillars'

The WPS agenda is often described in terms of four (sometimes five) 'pillars': participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery (the fifth 'pillar' is the normative aspect, which arguably cuts across all aspects). In newer NAPs, the focus on the pillars is changing. The four pillars of prevention of violence, protection from violence, participation, and relief and recovery are interconnected. A holistic approach to the demands of these pillars is more likely to lead to optimal implementation of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda. For example, 'the participation of women in policy-making and in the armed forces increases the chances that relief, recovery, prevention and protection initiatives are appropriately tailored and carried out to meet the needs of women in conflict environments, creating more sustainable and effective solutions'.[25]

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[23] Natalie Florea Hudson, 2013, 'UNSCR 1325: The Challenges of framing women's rights as a security matter,' Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, Policy Brief, March 2013.

[24] UN Security Council, 'Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security', 31 October 2000, S/RES/1325 (2000); UN Security Council Resolution 1820, 19 June 2008, S/RES/1820 (2008); UN Security Council Resolution 1888, 30 September 2009, S/RES/1888 (2009); UN Security Council Resolution 1889, 5 October 2009, S/RES/1889 (2009); UN Security Council Resolution 1960, 16 December 2010, S/RES/1960 (2010); UN Security Council Resolution 2106, 24 June 2013, S/RES/21016 (2013); UN Security Council Resolution 2122, 18 October 2013, S/RES/2122 (2013); UN Security Council Resolution 2242, 13 October 2015, S/RES/2242 (2015).

[25] UN Women National Committee Australia, 'At the Centre of Conflict' op. cit., p. 8.

2.1.2.1 Participation pillar

Research by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) revealed that NAPs from most States focus on the **participation** pillar established in 1325.[26] However, it is not always clear what activities should be undertaken to enhance women's participation. Meaningful participation involves more than simply providing women with opportunities to be involved in decision-making on peace and security. 'It also requires Member States to provide a safe space for participation, and measures to ensure that women's contributions in these spaces are properly valued and not dismissed.'[27]

There are massive cultural obstacles to overcome in furthering women's participation in decision-making, links to human rights and equality are part of this process. In peace processes, there has been a noticeable rise in references to the participation of women as evidenced in the text of peace agreements. Out of 1168 peace agreements signed between January 1990 and January 2014, 18 per cent made references to women or gender. But if one examines changes before and after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the difference is notable. Prior to 2000, only 11 per cent carried such a reference. Post-2000, this percentage has increased to 27 per cent.[28] The overall participation of women in peace processes is improving slowly. In 2012, a study by UN Women indicated that out of a representative sample of 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011, only two per cent of chief mediators, four per cent of witnesses and signatories, and nine per cent of negotiators were women.[29]

Women's participation in peace processes may increase by broadening what constitutes peacebuilding beyond the male-dominated political and military elite, to all processes that build sustainable peace, and adjusting hierarchical conceptions of tracks 1, 2 and 3 peace processes.

2.1.2.2 Protection pillar

Where there is a focus in NAPs on **protection,** activities to protect women and girls often centre on creating awareness among military and police personnel on how best to aid victims. This is important, but is an immediate goal, part of establishing negative peace. Longer-term goals of protection target root causes of widespread gender-based violence, and require long-term funding to resource.

2.1.2.3 Prevention pillar

In the 2015 report of the Secretary-General reviewing progress on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the contemporary security context is characterised by: violations of human rights and humanitarian law, complex drivers of conflict, including non-state armed actors, new technologies and transnational connections. The report suggests that these challenges underline 'the need for stronger focus on prevention, more holistic and consistent approaches, and a focus on mechanisms that place human rights at the core of security, protection, political, humanitarian, peacebuilding and socio-economic development work.'[30]

Similarly, the *Global Study* emphasises the need for demilitarisation and effective strategies for prevention of conflict and non-violent protection of civilians. This is a key message that emerged strongly from the global consultations and deliberations.[31] A focus on conflict prevention in NAPs, enhances gender inclusion and women's roles in early warning, mediation, peace education and diplomacy. Conflict prevention is critical and often, it is a neglected pillar. Some NAPs contain references to disarmament and arms, for example the German plan identifies arms as a risk to women's security, and thus encourages intensified participation of women in disarmament and arms control in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The Japanese plan establishes an indicator that informs the status of gender issues in dealing with small arms control. The Argentinian NAP offers capacity-building on gender perspectives to deployed personnel in peace missions on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR). DDR is crucial now in Colombia.

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[26] Allison Muehlenbeck, 2016, 'Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security: Results-Oriented NAPs on WPS,' OSCE & Inclusive Security, p. 7.

[27] UN Women National Committee Australia, At the Centre of Conflict,' op. cit., p. 10.

[28] Christine Bell, 2015, 'Text and Context: Evaluating Peace Agreements for Their 'Gender Perspective',' University of Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, UN-Women, March 2015.

[29] Pablo Castillo Diaz and Simon Tordjman, 2012, 'Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence,' in UN Women Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security, UN Women.

[30] Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security, Sept. 2015, UN Doc S/2015/716, p. 3.

[31] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, op. cit., p. 135.

The international community has been slow to put in place effective early warning and prevention measures or address apparent root causes of violent conflict, but are quick to react to crises with armed responses. The *Global Study*'s call is that: 'An attitudinal shift is needed away from a primary focus on military responses, towards investment in peaceful conflict prevention strategies'.[32]

Most civil society groups which participated in the *Global Study* emphasised **the urgency of reprioritising the conflict prevention elements of the WPS agenda** to achieve the transformative potential of resolution 1325. 'They repeatedly called for long-term integrated strategies that address the root causes of armed conflict rather than just the symptoms'.[33]

2.1.2.4 Relief and Recovery

Regarding **relief and recovery,** OSCE research shows that 'a wide variety of relief and recovery activities mentioned women's inclusion, but rarely did they feature gender-sensitive disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration programs'.[34] Relief and recovery, like peacebuilding is a long-term project, requiring expertise in gender awareness and adequate resources.

2.1.3 Best Practice in Addressing Emerging Issues

Research finds significant emerging best practices on shared key international issues.

2.1.3.1 Countering and preventing violent extremism

In a survey undertaken for the Global Study, 84 per cent of those interviewed reported that violent extremism and counter terrorism were the emerging issues of concern.[35] Research and recent NAPs suggest that countering violent extremism (CVE) can be integrated into NAPs in the following ways:[36]

- include an evidence-based discussion on the links between CVE and WPS in the NAP's narrative section which highlights women's varied roles and experiences in relation to violent extremism;

- clearly define the distinctions the NAP may be making between preventing or countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and counter-terrorism strategies;

- articulate activities that will be undertaken to support women's participation in policy design and implementation of all strategies; and

- articulate activities that will be undertaken to support women's roles in preventing violent extremism in their own communities.

A critical finding grounded in the US-based Inclusive Security's work with governments and civil society to create high-impact NAPs, is that the strategic integration of women in the design and implementation of national-level CVE strategies is vital to the effectiveness and sustainability of these efforts.

A significant study by the Monash Gender, Peace and Security Centre on behalf of the Australian government conducted research in four sites in Indonesia, and found that responding to the activities of Islamist groups in everyday life is crucially important because it may prevent terrorist acts from occurring.[37] The research shows that 'investing in women's participation has the potential to prevent violent extremism in Indonesia and in South-East Asia' because women bring perspectives of family and community well-being to their views on security and what makes them feel safe.[38]

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[32] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, op. cit., p. 195.

[33] Ibid., p. 309.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., p.20

[36] Barbara K Trojanowska, Katrina Lee-Koo & Luke Johnson, 2018, 'National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus,' Australian Civil-Military Centre and Monash GPS, p. 26.

[37] Jacqui True and Sri Eddyono, 2017, 'Preventing Violent Extremism: Gender Perspectives and Women's Roles. Final Report: Preventing Conflict and Countering Fundamentalism Through Women's Empowerment and Civil Society Mobilisation, (2016-2017),' Monash Gender, Peace & Security Centre and Australian Aid, p. 6.

[38] Ibid., p. 7.

2.1.3.2 Humanitarian response and climate change

Research and emerging cases recommend that NAPs acknowledge the interplay between disasters and humanitarian crises (including climate change) in the following ways:[39]

- recognise the gendered impacts of humanitarian and environmental disasters in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable regions; and

- identify the overlap between strategies for disaster risk reduction and response, and conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Recognise the positive impact of women's participation in all areas of humanitarian response.

The issue of climate change is extremely relevant for Australia's work in the Pacific Islands.

2.1.3.3 Sustainable development goals (SDG)

Within the WPS agenda, there are strong connections between gender equality, sustainable development and the prevention of conflict. Despite the global failure to explicitly link these in the SDG's framework, NAPs can promote the links by:[40]

- explicitly noting in the NAP's narrative, the relationship between gender equality, sustainable development and conflict prevention and peacebuilding; and

- identifying and consolidating areas where WPS and SDGs overlap for countries to maximise resourcing and create a consistent and coherent approach between the two agendas. This may occur in the development and implementation of activities, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

2.1.3.4 Displacement

Today's civil wars and asymmetrical warfare, have resulted in the largest number of IDPs and refugees since World War II, leading to terrible humanitarian consequences.[41] Outward-facing NAPs have rarely engaged meaningfully with forcible displacement of conflict-affected women. Emerging NAPs show a willingness to:[42]

- consider the scope of WPS implementation to include women displaced in conflict-affected zones; and

- facilitate the inclusion of domestic agencies that address asylum claims and refugee resettlement into NAPs to ensure WPS principles are mainstreamed into asylum procedures.

2.1.3.5 Continuum of gender-based violence

Global research demonstrates the links between all forms of SGBV. Several NAPs are beginning to similarly acknowledge this continuum of violence by:[43]

- connecting conflict-related GBV to other forms of violence such as family and criminal violence; and

- explicitly linking conflict-related gender violence with national level policy frameworks that deal with violence against women.

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[39] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit., p. 28.
[40] Ibid. p. 30.
[41] The UN Refugee Agency cite figures of 68.5m forcibly displaced, 40m IDPs, 25.4m refugees and 3.1m asylum-seekers. http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/figures-at-a-glance.html accessed 19 June 2018.
[42] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit., p. 31.
[43] Ibid, p. 32.

2.1.3.6 Combatting sexual exploitation and abuse

Emerging NAPs resist the separation of sexual exploitation and abuse from both the WPS agenda and the continuum of GBV. This is evidenced in emerging NAPs which advocate stronger measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). These NAPs:[44]

- position SEA alongside conflict-related SGBV;

- ensure domestic procedures to prevent SEA, through pre-deployment training of peacekeepers;

- commit to investigate claims of SEA by nationals through reporting and justice mechanisms; and

- advocate regionally and globally for SEA awareness and improved response measures.

2.1.3.7 Intersectionality

Effectively engaging the breadth of women's diversity in NAPs is complex. To address diversity, countries may:[45]

- present an analysis of intersectional gendered identity issues in the narrative of NAPs;

- identify the most vulnerable or marginalised groups in each pillar; and

- commit to actions that will prioritise groups of women in specific contexts.

2.1.3.8 Men and boys

Few NAPs translate the important role that men and boys can play in ensuring successful WPS implementation, into activities. Where this is the case, NAPs may:[46]

- consider activities like training or community engagement that confront and challenge violent masculinities; and

- design activities that identify and support male role models (champions) of gender equality.

2.1.3.9 Geographic priority areas

Current outward-facing NAPs usually work across aid and development, defence and security, and diplomacy and advocacy sectors, but there is an emerging practice for NAPs to:[47]

- identify specific geographic areas of focus based upon transparent criteria;

- consolidate WPS activities and resources in those areas of focus; and

- identify national, regional and global platforms as sites of ongoing advocacy for WPS development.

The literature outlines that even when country-specific or a regional focus is present, localisation of a NAP is crucial. The *Global Study* confirms that 'the 'local' must clearly be the most important factor in our analysis'.[48] There is growing realisation of the importance of localised, inclusive, culturally-contextualised processes as central to national and international efforts to enhance WPS aims. Localisation of peacebuilding programs pay attention to diversity and difference in national and international contexts, responding to varying needs. Localised gender expertise involves skills that require training, experience and resources.

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[44] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit., p. 34.
[45] Ibid., p. 35.
[46] Ibid., p. 37.
[47] Ibid., p. 46.
[48] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study op. cit., p. 17.

2.1.4 Best Practice in Governance, Co-ordination, and Accountability

Identifying key actors to set up a coordination mechanism is a crucial early step in establishing high-impact NAPs. This means that roles and responsibilities 'are clearly delegated within a NAP coordinating body; members of the body share a mission-driven commitment to long-term objectives and the body includes a mechanism for holding implementers accountable (e.g., an oversight function)'.[49] Coordinating mechanisms include Working Groups: between Ministries (typically led by Minster of Foreign Affairs); between Ministries, civil society and research institutions; Inter-ministry Groups; Inter-Departmental groups, Steering Committees, or a Parliamentary group on WPS.[50]

It is crucial to develop a robust structure for co-ordination of all aspects of the NAP (including design, implementation, and M&E). 'Best practices include the creation of an oversight entity with terms of reference for members that outline the structure, responsibilities, timelines, and clear decision-making processes. It is important that this body, or its leaders, have the political clout to compel commitment from all stakeholders. As with other elements of a high-impact plan, there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to choosing a structure. It is, however, essential that mechanisms provide space within which government, civil society, and other key actors can regularly engage to sustain commitment to the NAP; something that goes beyond a mere set of rules or mandates on paper'.[51]

The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office suggest that coordination for high-impact NAPs:[52]

- create an inspiring vision;
- motivate people to buy into the vision;
- manage delivery of the vision; and
- build strong trust-based relationships to sustain the vision.

A study by Inclusive Security and the OSCE NAP Academy shows that a high level of coordination 'supports partnerships and strengthens shared commitments between government and CSOs.'[53] A West African resource states how a NAP increases its chance of being implemented when it is designed in collaboration with those responsible for implementation, monitoring and reporting.[54]

A European study of twenty European NAPS concludes that: 'on the basis of the evidence collected, it appears that those NAPs which are developed through inclusive processes in which CSOs are involved as advocates, drafters and implementers have a better chance of being implemented'.[55]

High-impact NAPs require strong leadership and effective coordination between the range of actors involved in realising the WPS agenda. The *Global Study* maintains that 'the choice of government institution to conduct the coordination of the NAP is crucial, and ideally the process should be led by a high-level ministry that not only has political influence but also enjoys the confidence of women's groups. Evidence points to stronger outcomes where these processes are coordinated by line ministries such as the Ministry of Defence or Foreign Affairs, rather than the Ministry of Gender.'[56] Put simply, the 'institutional site of a NAP inevitably determines its focus and influence.'[57]

[49] Lippai &Young, op.cit., p. 8.
[50] See European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, 2012, 'Comparing NAPs for UNSCR 1325 in Europe,' EPLO: Belgium.
[51] Ibid., p. 13.
[52] Ibid., p. 17.
[53] Allison Muehlenbeck, 2016, 'Results-Oriented NAPs in WPS,' op. cit., p. 14.
[54] West African Network for Peacebuilding, 2012, 'Development and Implementation of NAPs on UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions,' Accra, Ghana: WANEP, p. 22.
[55] European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, 2013, 'UNSCR 1325 in Europe: Twenty case studies of implementation,' Brussels: EPLO, p. 1.
[56] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study op.cit., p. 241.
[57] Sahla Aroussi, 2017, 'National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security as Tools of Foreign Policy: Reconsidering Gender Security in the West,' in Sahla Aroussi ed., *Rethinking National Action Plans on Women, Peace, and Security*, Amsterdam: IOS Press, p. 34.

In terms of emerging best practice on implementing agencies, the *Global Study* describes a high-impact NAP as one that is led by influential agencies with strong leadership and effective coordination capacity. In assigning responsibilities, these NAPs:[58]

- **ensure the lead agency has the infrastructure, culture and experience to lead implementation**;

- where an activity has multiple implementing agencies, consider appointing an agency to coordinate and lead on the activity;

- consider assigning activities to divisions within especially large agencies; and

- consider the role of agencies responsible for addressing domestic policy issues related to WPS.

Accountability requires appropriate mechanisms for regular review and assessment, 'as well as correction of inadequacies in implementation of the resolution'.[59] A core tenet of results-based governance, coordination and accountability is the use of 'results language'. Outcomes should answer the question 'what does success look like at the end of the NAP implementation?'

By focusing on a specific, desired change, countries will have a better sense of desired impact and will be able to assess whether the outputs and activities are sufficient to achieve that change'.[60] A study of 20 NAPs in Europe concluded that from the reporting and monitoring process, 'accountability lines also need to be as clear as possible in order to avoid a dispersion of responsibility'.[61]

2.1.5 Best Practice in Collaboration between Government and Civil Society

High-impact NAPs are also more confident in the strength of their relationship with civil society and more willing to be strengthened by external input and scrutiny.[62]

Women, Peace and Security resolutions and NAPs cannot be realized without the full participation of CSOs as critical partners and a primary source of innovation and impact. Civil society participation is of vital importance, with organisations and individual actors contributing to:[63]

- **Enhanced transparency and accountability of government institutions** in implementing the NAP on 1325 – achieved through CSO data collection including information from government institutions on the planned and executed activities in connection with NAP implementation;

- **Identifying challenges and developing solutions** in relation to NAP implementation; and keeping the public informed on the status of implementation. By including CSOs in the process of NAP implementation, the government signals to citizens its serious intention to improve the status, security and safety of women;

- **Providing information** (about the needs of individual social groups and the challenges they face). CSOs often play the role of 'intermediary' between social groups, whose interests, safety and security needs they represent, and the security sector;

- **Transmitting** the UNSCR 1325 'message' to the public;

- **Preventing the instrumentalisation and militarisation of UNSCR 1325**. Some women's organisations point out that often the implementation of UNSCR 1325 simply amounts to increasing the number of women in the security sector;

- **Increasing efficiency and impact of NAP related activities**. Participatory processes can contribute to identifying the needs of women and thus the ability to develop better responses.

[58] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op.cit., p. 51.
[59] NGO Working Group, 2007, 'Accountability for Implementing SCR 1325,' October 16, 2007.
[60] Allison Muehlenbeck y, 2016, 'Results-Oriented NAPs in WPS,' op. cit. p. 29.
[61] European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, 2013, 'UNSCR 1325 in Europe: Twenty case studies of implementation,' Brussels: EPLO, p. 70.
[62] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op.cit., p.68
[63] Gordana Odanović, 2013, 'The Role of CSOs in M&E NAPs for Implementation of UNSCR,' Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, pp. 4-5.

Overwhelmingly, evidence shows that individuals and civil society organisations are the prime implementers, advisers, advocates and planners for peacebuilding initiatives and responses to violence and conflict prevention activities in conflict-affected and fragile settings. Civil society remains central to generating the analysis and evidence of what success looks like, and how nations or communities can best position themselves to prevent, or respond to, conflict in the future.

NAPs produced through strong relationships with government and civil society demonstrate the following features:[64]

- civil society are resourced to undertake consultations prior to the adoption of the NAP;
- civil society have a clearly defined role in the drafting and feedback processes of NAP design;
- the formal roles of civil society are clearly outlined in the NAP; and
- civil society play a formal role in governance, accountability and M&E processes.

There are a range of models of engagement of government with civil society. Second and third generation NAPs are deliberately building meaningful spaces for broad-based involvement by civil society actors.

2.1.6 Best Practice in Budgeting and Finance

There is consensus that sustainable financing is a prerequisite for the effective realisation of the WPS agenda at both national and international levels. The message is reiterated in the literature that: 'the persistent failure to adequately finance the women, peace and security agenda must be addressed'.[65] The lack of funding to support WPS initiatives is repeatedly identified as 'the most serious and persistent obstacle to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda over the past 15 years.'[66]

A review of 47 NAPs in 2014 showed that only 11 had a specified budget, with great variation in terms of the proportion of the allocated budget.[67] In 2013, the Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid (Cordaid) and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) conducted a survey among Member States that have adopted NAPs, to establish the current financing landscape of such plans. Many common concerns and priorities were put forward by the respondents who participated in the survey. The findings reaffirmed the urgency of **adequate, sustained and dedicated financing** for the effective implementation of NAPs as well as the broader WPS agenda.

The main survey findings, showed that:[68]

- most governments do not earmark funding for either the development or implementation of NAPs;
- the sources and sustainability of financing for NAP implementation vary greatly, with implications for tracking, monitoring, and accountability;
- many governments finance the implementation of their NAPs based on shifting national priorities and do not fund all pillars adequately;
- mechanisms for tracking and monitoring NAP financing are often non-existent or inadequate;
- while many governments employ gender-responsive budgeting, the particular approach used varies, with funding for NAP implementation typically not guaranteed;
- the critical role of civil society – particularly women's rights organisations, networks and movements – in NAP development and implementation is not adequately supported, resourced, or recognised; and

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[64] Ibid. p. 67.
[65] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, op. cit., p. 16.
[66] Ibid., p. 372.
[67] Malika Bhandarkar, 2014, 'Mapping Progress of WPS Action Plans,' UN-Women.
[68] Natalie Raaber, 2014, 'Financing for the Implementation of National Action Plans on Security Council Resolution 1325: Critical for Advancing Women's Human Rights, Peace and Security', Cordaid, The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders.

- there is an expressed interest in contributing to funding a Multi-Stakeholder Financing Mechanism for NAP implementation (a suggestion that has been captured within the proposal for the Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI)[69] for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action).

Whilst many revised NAPs refer to the need to allocate budgets and resources from core funding, they do not specify exact amounts for peace and security work in a way a defence budget generally is specific.

2.1.7 Best Practice in Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

Monitoring and evaluation systems are at the foundation of government's management systems and external accountability reporting. Monitoring is an intrinsic part of the framework of controls used to ensure products or services are delivered in accordance with expectations, to identify any corrective actions required, as well as opportunities for improvement.

The OECD defines monitoring as follows:

> *Monitoring is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.*[70]

Monitoring and evaluation systems demonstrate whether results have been achieved. It is the effective use of resources that counts, not just their efficient use. Strong monitoring arrangements are those that are planned, continuous and systematic, and documented. **The ability of plans to adapt to changing (security) context**[71] – which is crucial if NAPs are to be effective **– is totally dependent on the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system**. Systematic monitoring and reporting on the *quality* of NAP activities directly supports program management, lesson learning and improvement, and adds to the accountability of funds committed for specific objectives.

Building an M&E system to continuously track performance is essential for accountable implementation of NAPs. The M&E system gives ongoing information (via select indicators) on the direction of change, the pace of change, and the magnitude of change. It can also identify unanticipated changes. All are critical to knowing whether policies, programs, and projects are moving in the intended direction. Monitoring data, in and of themselves, cannot address the strengths and weaknesses in the design of a NAP, project, program, or policy. Consequently, to address these and other important questions regarding the generation of appropriate results, evaluation information is necessary—the 'E' in M&E.

Monitoring and evaluation systems should enable the generation, collection and analyses of credible information on NAP activities and that apply internationally recognised characteristics of good practice, and is captured by several criteria which have been refined since 2007. The criteria are based on international experience and evaluation standards.

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[69] The Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) is a flexible and rapid financing mechanism that supports quality interventions to enhance the capacity to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, seize key peacebuilding opportunities, and encourage the sustainability and national ownership of investments; fifty per cent of funds are allocated to CSOs.

[70] Cited in The World Bank. 'Ten Steps to a Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation System' Accessed 25 October 2017 at https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/World%20bank%202004%2010_Steps_to_a_Results_Based_ME_System.pdf

[71] Teskey in his article, 'Thinking and Working Politically' argues that if aid is to have a transformative impact on critical 'wicked hard' in-country development problems (especially in a country context changing as quickly as Myanmar for example), then development programs must not only be politically informed in design, but also politically 'savvy' in implementation. Such programs need to be geared towards continuous political engagement which promote economic and social reform through adaptation to political challenges and opportunities. Lying at the very core of thinking and working politically, its leitmotif indeed, is the need for a flexible, adaptive and responsive programming capability. This is necessary to respond to the changing political circumstances of the day as well as the real-world problems of delays and unforeseen technical mishaps.

Monitoring systems are expected to generate credible information on all activities to satisfy and enable assessment of investments against the following criteria:

- **Relevant:** Contribute to higher level objectives of the WPS agenda as outlined in NAP strategies;
- **Effective**: Achieve clearly stated objectives and continually manage risks;
- **Efficient:** Manage the activity to get maximum value for money from funds, staff and other resources;
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Be able to effectively measure progress towards meeting objectives;
- **Analysis and learning:** Ensure that activities are based on sound technical analysis and continuous learning;
- **Sustainable:** Appropriately address sustainability of the benefits of the activity after funding has ceased, with due account given to government systems and stakeholder ownership and phase out; and
- **Gender equality:** advance gender equality and promote the role of women.

Thus, the key goal of M&E systems is to be able to effectively measure progress towards objectives. Furthermore, the use of monitoring (and evaluation) findings can promote knowledge and learning. Learning, has been described as: 'a continuous dynamic process of investigation where the key elements are experience knowledge, access and relevance. It requires a culture of inquiry and investigation, rather than one of response and reporting'.[72]

2.1.7.1 Emerging best practice M&E specific to WPS NAPs

More specifically in reference to NAPs, research shows that M&E frameworks for NAPs are gradually becoming stronger and more coherent, with greater specificity and attention to learning. There is a much stronger understanding that these frameworks need to better measure the impact of NAP activities against the stated goals and outcomes of the plan.[73]

Frameworks that are attempting to do this have the following features:

- inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative indictors that are specific and measurable;
- the inclusion of baseline data;
- the inclusion of timeframes and targets;
- the appointment of a consultant to design or advise on the M&E framework; and
- the collection of in-country impact data for outward-facing NAPs.

Examples of high-impact reporting include:

- a combination of internal and external/independent reviews;
- adequate resources dedicated to the reporting process;
- a feasible review structure focused upon the quality rather than the frequency of reviews; and
- a timeline and process in which government and the community can reflect upon learnings generated by the review and its recommendations.

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[72] The World Bank. 'Ten Steps to a Results Based M&E System, op. cit.
[73] Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit.,p.60

2.1.8 Summary

Evidence from the relevant literature suggests that key points for consideration in Australia's second NAP include:

- the dynamic context of global in/securities in relation to expansive ideas and practices on peace, security and human security and inherent need for adaptability to change and emergent priorities;

- there is a broadening number of global instruments that are relevant to the WPS agenda which both require reference and/or may complement the Australian NAP and its reporting;

- the value and need to reference the recommendations of the *Global Study; (see Annex 6)*

- growing realisation of the importance of localised, inclusive, culturally-contextualised processes as central to enhancing WPS aims;

- an increasing range of emerging issues and priorities that needs to be selectively considered to ensure peace and security for women and girls, and for men and boys;

- a growing emphasis on making the 'prevention' pillar pivotal to addressing the other pillars;

- understanding that a high-impact NAPs have clear goals, coherent strategies and SMART[74] indicators;

- an overall vision, connected to a theory of change is essential to transform gendered inequalities and insecurities;

- clarity around co-ordination, governance and accountability lines;

- positioning the coordination of responsibility for the implementation of a NAP is important;

- a high-impact NAP as one that is led by influential agencies with strong leadership and effective coordination capacity

- global trends in civil society engagement with governments, ensure that expertise from civil society and researchers are central in developing, implementing and reporting on a NAP;

- the urgency of adequate, sustained and dedicated financing for the effective implementation of NAPs as well as the broader WPS agenda; and

- importance of building a sound monitoring, evaluation and learning system to continuously track performance and respond to findings is essential for accountable implementation of NAPs.

- Subsequent NAP iterations (2nd, 3rd, 4th etc) will necessarily demonstrate growing maturity as states become more familiar with their own contexts, limits and opportunities; architects of NAPs need to be cognisant of this.

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[74] S- specific; M – measurable; A – achievable; R – relevant; and T - timebound

3 Learning from Australia's First NAP

3.1 Achievements & Impact

In accordance with the intention to examine the extent to which the Australian National Action Plan has been effective in directing implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Australia, the Review explored specific questions related to efficacy with the stakeholder groups. These questions also related to impacts of the NAP and key achievements under its auspices. Several themes emerged as significant from these discussions, permitting a robust evaluation of the effectiveness, implementation dynamics, and learning from the National Action Plan.

3.1.1 Outcomes and outputs

The Review did not seek to capture progress against the NAP, as this has been comprehensively reported in the three Progress Reports (2014, 2016, 2018). Therefore, the outcomes and outputs described in this section are the 'top level' achievements that focus less on operational practice and more on the extent to which the NAP enables system-wide changes in practice.

The primary outcome of the NAP is the attainment of its stated purpose, which is four-fold:

1. Articulate Australia's ongoing commitment to implement UNSCR 1325 and the broader UN Security Council Women, Peace and Security agenda.

2. Establish a clear framework for a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions.

3. Identify strategies and actions that Australia will undertake both domestically and overseas to implement UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, and measure the effectiveness of this work over a six-year period from 2012–2018.

4. Highlight the important work that Australia is doing in partnership with the international community to respond to women's needs, recognise their roles, promote equal participation, and protect women and girls' human rights in fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings.

The present Review concludes that each of these objectives has been at least partially met. Respondents noted that the NAP provides a common language to describe Australia's WPS commitments, and that it 'overarches' day-to-day practice. The NAP was described as a 'good tool', and it is evident that the document provides high-level guidance, influencing practice through integration with other documents.

Within the different implementing agencies/Departments, many key respondents suggested that the NAP informs and 'helped to shape how we do business' now, meaning that the NAP, alongside local-level documentation and plans, is affecting practices within those units as well as 'on the ground' in contexts into which Australian personnel are deployed. These local-level documents and plans are also guided by the NAP in most cases; the Australian Defence Forces (Defence), for example, has developed a *Defence Implementation Plan*, which explains how the NAP should be integrated into operations across the services, while the *International Operations Gender Strategy 2018-2022* that guides the activities of Australian Federal Police (AFP) maps the 'pillars' of the WPS agenda against the strategic priorities of the organisations.

These specific documents and the design and provision of a wide range of training and professional development options focussed on WPS have created an environment in which considerations around gender are routinely included in operational planning. One key stakeholder noted that 'we have done a great job embedding WPS into our own systems and processes', which is a positive outcome of the NAP. It is important to emphasise women in leadership, to deploy more female peacekeepers, and to train more gender advisors, for example, but it is also important to have an impact at the organisation and planning stage, and to ensure widespread and sophisticated understanding of the WPS and obligations under the NAP. Many Defence respondents in particular commented that the organisation

is keen to work with the next NAP, recognising that key targets regarding women's participation in the forces have been met and articulating a keen commitment to 'do better than that'.

One vector of change within agencies/Departments is the presence and profile of high-level leadership in support of the NAP and of WPS more broadly. This can be interpreted as both an achievement in its own right and as a means to future impact. In both Defence and the AFP, there is a sense in which the NAP has 'enriched' conversations about gender, and led to institutional learning (this is discussed in further detail below).

WPS work is clearly delivering on tangible goals in various locations. One achievement that was consistently highlighted during the conversations that informed the Review was the successful ASEAN-Australia Dialogue on Women, Peace and Security in 2018, which one respondent described as 'gold standard'.[75] This kind of high-profile, multi-sectoral event with high-level political buy-in both showcases Australia's commitment to the WPS agenda more broadly and highlight's the government's commitment to working in partnership with partners on strengthening the WPS agenda across the region.

It is much harder to assess impact than it is to identify outputs. Evaluating outcomes lies somewhere in the middle, as it is difficult to separate effects of NAP from broader reform agendas and initiatives that have informed practice across agencies/Departments. That said, and while the next NAP clearly needs a much stronger measure of impact and a framework to enable more effective M&E, the Review concludes not only that the primary purposes have been met but also that a number of outcomes have resulted from the adoption of the NAP in 2012. Achievements and impacts flowing from the NAP relate to both ongoing practice in conflict-affected and fragile settings that may impact the lives of women and girls, and the institutional cultures of implementing agencies/Departments.

Although no data was collected in conflict-affected and fragile settings for this Review (and further acknowledging the lack of baseline data available from the pre-NAP period), several respondents noted the work, captured in the biannual Progress Reports, that various implementing agencies are undertaking under the auspices of the NAP and which is arguably having an impact on the lives of women in these contexts (age-disaggregated impact is harder to establish, so conclusions about the impact on girls are tentative at this stage). Respondents pointed to, for example, Australian-led initiatives to support women in peace processes, and Australian leadership in programs to end violence against women; in relation to the latter, DFAT's Nabilan Program in Timor Leste is reportedly 'positively impacting social norms and attitudes towards violence in homes, schools and communities',[76] which has a flow-on effect of improving lives. It should be noted, however, that this improvement is evaluated from the perspective of the Australian government agencies and the Review Team, and thus does not necessarily represent the views of the women and girls themselves.

3.1.2 Implementation dynamics

One of the complicating factors in evaluating implementation is that implementation, and the guiding protocols, look a little different in each agency/Department. It is also sometimes difficult to, as one respondent noted, find 'direct line of sight' between the NAP and local practice. That said, the NAP was clearly a catalyst to drive implementation of key gender-sensitive operational strategies and provisions across the agencies/Departments. In many contexts, this has been driven by the creation of effective structural conditions, such as the appointment and resourcing of gender advisors.

The key implementing actors are Defence, DFAT, and AFP. The Review concludes that implementation has gained good traction in Defence in particular, where the NAP is evidently informing practice at a fine-grained and operational level, as well as being localised through the Defence Implementation Plan and now written into doctrine. AFP similarly reports good gender work, and a lot of work has gone in to thinking through implementation of the NAP in the various AFP contexts, although discussion is limited to international operations, and the complexity of managing

[75] https://www.acmc.gov.au/asean-australia-dialogue-wps-2018/.

[76] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, *2018 Progress Report Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-18*, 26. Online, at https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/2018-progress-report-women-peace-security.pdf.

the various aspects of the NAP was commented upon. Including states designated 'conflict-affected and fragile' dramatically increases the scope of AFP involvement, as does any suggestion that the NAP has a domestic dimension. Implementation in DFAT is reportedly less directly governed by the NAP; rather, the DFAT Gender Strategy is instrumental in guiding practice across the Department and its various divisions and branches. There were divergent opinions on the value and or degree of institutionalisation of WPS and the Australian NAP required to genuinely achieve change; these underlying assumptions and or pathways of change should be explicitly explored and verified during the design of the next NAP.

Recommendation: The NAP itself, and WPS principles more broadly, need to be better institutionalised across all implementing Departments, inclusive of more clearly distinguishing the NAP mandate from general commitments to gender-sensitive peace, security, and development work.

3.1.3 Institutional learning: Socialising Women, Peace and Security

According to stakeholders interviewed, one of the key achievements over the life of the NAP has been the degree of institutional learning across government agencies/Departments. There is a general sense that the understanding of WPS informing government practice in all agencies and Departments has matured substantially since the adoption of the NAP. The simple existence of the NAP has raised the visibility of the WPS agenda across government, and the NAP itself has socialised a sophisticated understanding of WPS across government as well as a good understanding of mechanisms of implementation. This is not universal, of course, and some work is needed in terms of distinguishing the NAP mandate from general commitments to gender-sensitive peace, security, and development work as described above. Of course, the government's commitment to gender equality and mainstreaming gender-sensitive considerations across peace, security, and development work is an important enabler of NAP activities also.

Despite the recognition that institutional change is 'generational plus', the Review acknowledges a significant change in a short period of time. There has been a visible change in institutional knowledge about WPS, and the NAP has mobilised agencies/Departments to take WPS seriously within the organisations, as well as operationally. Thus, despite the relatively short time period across which change is being measured, the Review identifies the beginnings of some quite significant cultural transformation in implementing agencies.

This includes the ways that the NAP has been leveraged as a tool to begin 'forcing the hard conversations' within agencies/Departments, to work on changing thinking around gender and WPS more specifically. As one respondent noted, 'the education piece was significant and a lot of that has now bedded in'. There is now widespread understanding about WPS across government, and the general level of understanding has deepened. Government agencies/Departments are also better able to articulate connections to other relevant agendas and obligations, such as CEDAW and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In sum, the NAP has been effective and influential, despite both resources and initial interest being limited, and the current NAP has certainly created a productive, enabling context for Australia's next National Action Plan.

3.1.4 Whole-of-government co-ordination

One of the primary purposes of the NAP relates to a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to NAP implementation specifically and WPS more broadly. Achievement of this objective is evident. The extent to which whole-of-government approach has been embedded, through both formal and informal structures and arrangements, is a valuable achievement. Many stakeholders involved in the Review commented on how different entities have learned to work together and reported that whole-of-government collaboration has really developed and been consolidated under the NAP. The NAP provides a whole-of-government framework to inform planning and operations, as well as supporting a whole-of-government architecture that encourages sharing and learning. The whole-of-government gender advisors network has similarly been effective at fostering collaboration.

3.1.5 The relationship between civil society and government

A fifth area of achievement and impact relates to the relationship between civil society and implementing agencies/Departments. This relationship was held up by many stakeholders, from both government and civil society organisations, as a real strength and a key feature of Australia's international reputation in the WPS space. Civil society input adds value, and those inputs should be taken seriously and acted upon; Defence, for example, reported positive engagement with recommendations from the Annual Civil Society Report Cards that affected the Defence Implementation Plan (DIP) – the DIP was adjusted as a result of these recommendations, which is evidence of a positive and effective relationship.

The Annual Civil Society Report Cards themselves are a very positive element of WPS work, and have functioned as a mechanism to bring civil society and government closer in their shared goals around effective NAP implementation. This relationship is both productive and rare internationally, and should be properly resourced and supported going forward. Civil society organisations can make a valuable contribution to establishing contextual knowledge and technical expertise and this kind of information-sharing between government and civil society should be facilitated. Internationally, there is precedent for this; UNSCR 2242 included a paragraph on the need for representatives of civil society to brief the UN Security Council at country-specific meetings, to reduce the 'siloing' of WPS themes and issues and mainstream WPS across the Council agenda. Since December 2016, 'the practice has been used in briefings on Liberia, the Lake Chad Basin, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Sudan'.[77] Where civil society organisations have technical and/or country-specific expertise that may be relevant to actions in country contexts, consideration should be given to mechanisms of facilitating information-sharing.

There remain low levels of public awareness and understanding of the WPS agenda. Part of the problem relates to the distinctions – and overlaps – between WPS and broader anti-violence, gender equality, and diversity and inclusion initiatives. The range of perspectives represented by those that attended the public consultations for the next NAP is evidence of this 'blurry boundary' between WPS and other issues. More work can be done in this area, and it affords a valuable opportunity for government to work with and resource both civil society organisations that are engaged already in advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns, and academic research institutions. That said, the number of people who attended consultations about the next iteration of the NAP should be recognised as an achievement in itself.

3.1.6 International recognition

The final dimension of achievement and impact relates to the international context of Australian WPS activity and the degree of international recognition that the government receives for the NAP and its WPS work. The NAP supports Australian activity under the auspices of the WPS provisions and principles that flow from UNSCR 1325 and associated resolutions, and reaffirms Australia's global position as a leader in WPS work. It positions Australia well to have good levels of implementation success across the different agencies/ Departments, and also to have such a productive and well-integrated relationship with civil society. Ways to forge closer links between the diverse international WPS actors, both within the region and further afield (e.g. NATO, the newly-formed WPS National Focal Point Network, the Group of Friends of UNSCR 1325, and various advocacy networks based in the New York), should be explored and supported. Similarly, the development of high-quality documents and collateral related to Australian WPS activity to support formal and informal engagement in the WPS space would be a good way to build brand, whether that is in the realm of government and diplomacy, civil society implementation and practice, or research.

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[77] https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-04/in_hindsight_women_peace_and_securityclosing_the_security_councils_implementation_gap.php.

3.2 Leadership & Governance

In accordance with the intention to examine the extent to which governance arrangements around the National Action Plan are sufficient and appropriate, and whether there are international best practices for governance that may be suitable for incorporation into Australia's next National Action Plan, the Review explored specific questions related to leadership and governance with the stakeholder groups. Several themes emerged as significant from these discussions, permitting a robust evaluation of the efficacy and appropriateness of the NAP governance structures and NAP leadership.

3.2.1 The importance of policy coherence and effective co-ordination

There was general consensus from the various stakeholder discussions that the National Action Plan – and thus to a large extent the successful implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda across Australia more broadly – requires leadership from the centre of government to be effective. One agency/Department or entity driving implementation can ensure consistency and coherence, as well as illuminating the expectations on agencies/Departments regarding their contribution to whole-of-government implementation. There is scope in the next National Action Plan to better facilitate whole-of-government collaboration, and to provide visible and well-resourced leadership across the agencies/Departments, which in turn will contribute to stronger policy coherence and clarity of messaging.

This coherence and clarity is required because, as one respondent commented, strong leadership is necessary to have a NAP that is 'more than the sum of its parts'. Across the board, the NAP requires due consideration be given not only to which agencies/ Departments are responsible for which actions, but also what that looks like operationally and how practice of various kinds aligns with the NAP. Several respondents contributed that they perceived a need for a cogent vision statement and guidance on strategic priorities and policy coherence under the NAP.[78] At present, this was perceived as an area for improvement, with a generalised sense that the NAP was lacking direction and leadership across government – although within agencies and Departments there was often strong coherence and clarity around implementation plans. For the effective implementation of the second National Action Plan, it is important to give consideration to the need for implementing agencies to be given clear guidance driven by a coherent vision or common goal. This should include clear specification of the scope, unit functions, and minimum resourcing for effective co-ordination.

It was evident from the stakeholder discussions that the NAP requires co-ordination within and between agencies/Departments for effective implementation. As a policy framework, the existence of the NAP affords an opportunity for the government to demonstrate capacity in and commitment to whole-of-government policy co-ordination. At the time of the Review, it was suggested that there is strong co-ordination and coherence across agencies, though room for improvement of course exists.

One of the key dimensions of inter-agency co-operation that emerged from the conversations with stakeholders was the role of the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC). There was strong and positive messaging about ACMC's role and capacity in working across agencies to foster collaboration around the Women, Peace and Security agenda. It appears that ACMC is currently playing a valuable role in facilitating information sharing and knowledge sharing around WPS. It was suggested that ACMC might play a more visible and formal role in supporting the Office for Women in fostering inter-agency co-operation, with one respondent noting the ACMC's efficacy in this space is likely related to the perception of independence and neutrality in the process of creating opportunities for collaboration.

Under this theme, several stakeholders raised the need to consider other ways to foster discussion and exchange across government, with one possible example being the installation of annual ministerial roundtables on Women, Peace and Security. This recognises the fact that, organisationally, agencies/Departments are driven by ministerial priorities, and thus in order to facilitate collaboration and co-operation there is a need for ministerial 'buy-in' and high-level leadership.

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[78] It is understood that the design of the next NAP will include a vision statement.

3.2.2 The importance of leadership

The majority of respondents commented positively about the development of prominent high-level commitment to the WPS agenda and the implementation of the NAP. One respondent suggested that visible Ministerial leadership is 'critically' important, and many others praised the efforts of various Ministers who have publicly and consistently expressed support for and commitment to various dimensions of the WPS agenda. Ministerial awareness and 'buy-in' is important, not only in terms of driving priorities within implementing Departments but also as a way of enhancing public awareness and performing a 'soft diplomacy' function in Australia's international relations. It was suggested that the WPS agenda has received a 'boost of energy' now that various Ministers are closely engaged, and that this enthusiastic leadership needs to be carried through to the next iteration of the NAP. This would extend to integrating WPS with the portfolio of the Minister for Women if co-ordination of the NAP were to remain with OfW within PM&C, in line with the leadership currently provided by the Minister for Defence and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.[79] Within agencies and Departments, high-level leadership is no less important. Several of the senior respondents noted the significance of good executive-level buy-in within their operational units.

In addition to Ministerial and executive-level leadership, the role of 'thought leaders' with the ability to make connections across various issue areas and mobilise strategic action was discussed during the Review. Many key stakeholders noted the utility of the informal 'Gender Advisors Network' (GAN) as a way of identifying leaders and disseminating good practice. Members of the GAN were often 'gender champions', although it was noted that gender champions exist elsewhere across the organisations of government as well. Such gender champions provide valuable and ongoing support, both formal and informal, to the implementing agencies/Departments as well as being champions of the WPS agenda across government. It is important to find ways to recognise, connect, and support these individuals.

That said, the Review reveals a significant risk related to NAP leadership, which is that investing too heavily in key individuals, as 'gender champions', may place undue emphasis on personality and personal qualities/characteristics rather than structures that support effective NAP implementation. While of course change or transformation of any scope is driven by people, not policies, at present much appears to depend on individual initiative, enthusiasm, and 'clout'. Going forward, it would be important to give consideration to the ways in which structural incentives for leadership could be embedded, for example having WPS key performance indicators (KPIs) incorporated in the job specification of key roles across the relevant agencies/Departments.

3.2.3 Where should the National Action Plan sit?

Following on from the above, all stakeholders generally agreed that the Plan needs a **central lead agency** that has the political authority and resources to provide leadership, foster collaboration and co-operation across government, and monitor progress effectively. Many respondents affirmed that the NAP should stay with the Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet. There were various reasons offered in support of this conclusion, including the ability of PM&C to work across government and the Department's political standing. It was further suggested that leadership and ownership by PM&C is symbolically important, as the Department has the level of power to elevate the NAP to a priority issue, and the ability to provide the degree of whole-of-government oversight that the Plan requires (although a question about resourcing necessarily remains, discussed below).

There was a distinction drawn, however, between PM&C and the Office for Women (OfW) within PM&C, with some stakeholders suggesting that the NAP should be housed in PM&C rather than OfW and others affirming that OfW – where it is currently located – is the appropriate entity to provide the necessary leadership. Those of the latter view tended to emphasise that the NAP is not a 'PM&C issue', as such, and that OfW can potentially add much value to NAP implementation, through connecting the NAP with related obligations such as reporting requirements under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. The OfW is naturally also centrally

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[79] Note: There have been Ministerial changes subsequent to the Review process being undertaken; further highlighting the inherent risk of over reliance on individual advocates.

concerned with gender equality, and housing the NAP in OfW creates a line of sight between the Plan and both the Minister for Women and the Prime Minister, as well as affording access to other relevant PM&C divisions and offices, such as the National Security Division. At present, OfW has a co-ordination role without implementing responsibility and there are certainly some who think that works well, affording OfW the status of an 'honest broker' in discussions about the NAP.

The location of the NAP with OfW is, however, contested. A concern was expressed by a large majority of respondents that if the NAP sits with OfW then it is inevitably seen as a women's issue, and is therefore deprioritised and under-resourced. The question of resourcing was raised many times, with the level of support provided to and by OfW deemed inadequate by the majority of interlocutors. Despite the level of commitment evident at OfW to the NAP, and the acknowledgement that OfW is one of the few government entities that could liaise effectively across Commonwealth and State levels, there is widespread discontent about the level of resourcing provided to and by OfW in relation to the NAP.

Many respondents commented on the difficulties faced by OfW in securing and maintaining an appropriate level of resource to support NAP implementation. Under the current National Action Plan, OFW attributes 0.2 FTE to support a Secretariat function. Current allocation of staffing for WPS by OfW is 1 FTE, including the Secretariat function and working on design activities related to the next NAP; this is supplemented by seconded or contracted staff where needs arise, with staffing levels at the time of the Review sitting at 4.3 FTE. Some respondents raised the point that, at present, the NAP is fundamentally disconnected from the rest of OfW's portfolio, so maintaining an appropriate level of knowledge and capability in WPS is hard, because that capacity cannot be deployed elsewhere in the Office. The resource gap clearly has an impact on the ability of OfW to generate strategic vision and provide leadership and policy coherence, as does the perceived positioning of OfW within government hierarchy.

Divergent views were communicated regarding alternative positioning of the NAP. There was broad acceptance that, because it has no allocated implementing responsibilities under the NAP, OfW has a comparative advantage in its ability to provide leadership and oversight. Some respondents did, however, express a benefit to the NAP sitting with an implementation agency. There was a suggestion that a more strategic or security focussed agency should provide operational leadership, but this was accompanied by a recognition that if the NAP was housed in the Department of Defence then this would prompt concerns about the 'securitisation' of the WPS agenda. The Department of Defence is also limited in its ability to leverage whole-of-government effort. Conversely, there was discussion about whether, if the next NAP is solely externally-focussed, or 'outward-facing', it would make sense for it to sit with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Some see the next NAP as an opportunity for DFAT to play a leadership role in the WPS agenda in Australia, though others raised caution about the possible marginalisation of Defence and the messaging that would flow from placing the NAP with DFAT: the agenda would lose its connection to domestic politics, and the protection of this link was seen as important.

Recommendation: Formally establish an appropriately located, mandated, resourced and funded NAP Secretariat, which should provide both effective administration/management and strong leadership.

3.2.4 Efficacy of governance structures

Turning from the question of leadership to the question of governance, a few key stakeholders expressed support for the existing governance arrangements, noting that the governance framework is quite effective mostly because of the people involved. The present governance structures consist of an Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) with high-level representation, supported by a Sub-Committee; this arrangement is in turn supported by a Secretariat that the Office for Women currently provides.

The IDC serves a governance function as a decision-making body, as well as meeting the government's commitment under the National Action Plan to 'Invite Australian non-government organisations to nominate a selection of representatives to meet with the Women, Peace and Security

Inter-Departmental Working Group once a year', [80] (Australian NAP, Action 3.3). The Sub-Committee was created to support the Interim Review of the NAP in 2015 and has continued on to oversee the 2016 Progress Report and the development of the next NAP. There was some suggestion that the IDC and the Sub-Committee play an effective co-ordinating role as well.

Many stakeholders described the Sub-Committee as an important deliberative forum, a space where different agencies/Departments can share information, share practice, and discuss implementation activities under the NAP. 'Buy-in' to the IDC and Sub-Committee was reported as generally good, with members recognising their obligation to go and participate in IDC or Sub-Committee meetings. A question was raised, however, about the personnel involved, and the extent to which there was or should be cross-over between the two groups. It was suggested that IDC should continue to be populated by Assistant Secretaries, or equivalent, with decision-making authority, as it was originally conceived as a decision-making body. This was contested, however, with some expressing a view that the effectiveness of the IDC is constrained by the level of knowledge of WPS that its members bring. This could be resolved, however, and the representative function of the IDC and its decision-making tasks made easier, through careful forward agenda-planning over a six- to twelve-month period to enable effective briefing of the Assistant Secretaries. Such endeavour would elevate and energise the IDC to render it more effective and proactive. As one respondent explained: 'a properly functional IDC means serious people and serious commitment to information sharing'. There is a need to tease out the role and functions of the IDC and the Sub-Committee, now that both are becoming embedded as a formalised NAP governance structure, and potentially to revisit the Terms of Reference of each to ensure that both groups have discrete and useful functions and are populated by people who possess or have access to subject matter expertise, with decision-making authority where needed.

Changes to the division of labour across, and the representatives present at, the IDC and Sub-Committee would help alleviate the issues that arise around the kinds of engagement that are facilitated between government and civil society through the IDC and Sub-Committee framework. Because there is a lack of clarity around the distinction between the two groups, civil society participation at meetings of the IDC and the Sub-Committee can be frustrating on both sides. There is a need to find a way to capture civil society knowledge and technical expertise, using, for example, annual or biennial focused policy dialogues convened around specific and 'live' issues over the life of the NAP, while respecting that government agencies/Departments also need a space to deliberate among themselves, to be self-critical and to take risks: reflection is essential to good governance. Stakeholder interviews suggested that the conflation, not only of the IDC and the Sub-Committee but also of bureaucratic functions and technical know-how, means that at present there is room for improvement within the governance structures supporting implementation of, and strategic direction setting for, the NAP.

Recommendation: Review the role and function of the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) and Subcommittee with considerations given to more effective approaches to foster high level discussion, policy dialogue and exchange across government.

3.2.5 The role of civil society in leadership and governance

The role of civil society in leadership and governance is varied and complex. It was noted during the Review process that the relationship between OfW and civil society has been very important and that civil society has a lot of expertise and knowledge to share in the WPS space. Further, and in addition to the obligations under the NAP described above, regular meetings between civil society and government enhance transparency and accountability around NAP implementation and governance.

It is not wholly clear, however, that having civil society representation on the IDC or Sub-Committee is the most appropriate mechanism for facilitating the kind of engagement that is necessary for strong and healthy NAP governance. Indeed, there are both risks and benefits to having civil society representation on the IDC and the Sub-Committee, as well as a question remaining regarding the

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[80] The Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG) was revised to become the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) following agreement of the Inter-Departmental Working Group in 2017.

nature of the representative function that the civil society representatives perform on a governance body for the NAP. The IDC and the Sub-Committee frequently conduct confidential business, limiting the ability of civil society representatives to brief back, or indeed gather views from the constituency on the matters arising. This leads to criticisms that the governance structures are exclusionary and lacking in openness, and not conductive to inclusivity and sharing practice, as well as consternation among civil society organisations about the substantive representative function performed by the civil society representatives.

There is a further issue related to the participation of civil society representatives on the IDC and the Sub-Committee, and this is the extent to which the expertise of, and preparatory work undertaken by, civil society representatives is valued and resourced. The preparation required to enable effective participation in IDC and in particular Sub-Committee meetings is lengthy and significant, and participation is not resourced. The government could consider paying a 'sitting fee', or equivalent, in order to redress this imbalance. This does not, however, address the concern expressed by civil society organisations during the Review that the expertise of various organisations in WPS activities is largely under-valued, and that even the representatives on the IDC and Sub-Committee do not participate as equals. There is a sense in which the governance arrangements and the treatment of civil society in relation to the WPS agenda more broadly are seen to be somewhat extractive, even exploitative.

The structures around NAP mean that effective civil society engagement is very challenging, and there seems to be a lack of clarity about the role of, and expectations on, civil society and a need to recognise the different forms of expertise that diverse civil society actors can bring to the table. There is an urgent need to rethink the structures that facilitate engagement between government and civil society in relation to the NAP, and to WPS more broadly. This might include funding a small Secretariat for the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security (WPS Coalition) with part-time positions and a dedicated operating budget; this could be managed through the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) or ACMC. Moreover, it is important for both government and civil society to think through the value and conditions of engagement in a way that is mutually productive and which benefits the advancement of the WPS agenda in Australia, harnessing the immense wealth of expertise on WPS that exists within civil society and the goodwill of the government to engage in a productive and meaningful way.

Recommendation: Clearly define, document and allocate budget for an appropriate mechanism to facilitate constructive and ongoing engagement with civil society; including consideration of funding a civil society secretariat for WPS.

3.3 Accountability

In accordance with the intention to examine the extent to which accountability mechanisms in the National Action Plan are sufficient and appropriate, and whether there is international best practice in accountability that may be suitable for incorporation into Australia's next National Action Plan, the Review explored specific questions related to accountability with the stakeholder groups. Several themes emerged as significant from these discussions, permitting a robust evaluation of the efficacy of, and limitations to, accountability mechanisms in the National Action Plan.

3.3.1 Vectors of accountability

Accountability is a complex and contested concept, with various dimensions and directions of travel. There were three vectors of accountability identified in the Review process: upward accountability (to the international community); horizontal accountability (where government is accountable to itself); and downward accountability (where government is accountable to civil society or the public more broadly). Within this frame, the NAP itself is an accountability tool, as Australia is bound by the Charter of the United Nations to honour its obligations under the UN Security Council resolutions that comprise the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Internationally, Australia plays a valuable role in

championing the provisions and principles of the WPS agenda, so upward accountability is clearly taken seriously within government and civil society.

Horizontal dimensions of accountability are, however, perceived as somewhat limited. Progress Reports are tabled in Parliament, and this is a form of accountability; the organisational structures of the IDC and the Sub-Committee are also accountability mechanisms of a kind, as they require resourcing and ongoing commitment from every implementing agency/Department. There is a concern about the extent to which there is meaningful horizontal accountability because there has been no Parliamentary response to any of the Progress Reports, nor to the Interim Review. There is scope to enhance horizontal accountability mechanisms.

Finally, downward accountability is limited because there is limited public awareness of the NAP and of the WPS agenda more broadly. There is clearly a need to explain to the public how public money is being spent and also to enable the public to hold the government accountable for commitments made under the National Action Plan. Better communications and media around the NAP, including, for example, the production of a simplified one-page overview with minimal text and relevant infographics, would assist with maintaining downward accountability. The work of ACMC early in the life of the NAP, including the production and launch events of the film *Side by Side – Women, Peace and Security*, was important in this space, and could have been supported and continued throughout the duration of the NAP.

The vectors of accountability are thus complex, because it is not very clear to whom, or to where, the NAP is directed. In considering accountability, it is important to ask not only to whom accountability is perceived but also who is accountable? There is an assumption that government is accountable, but this precludes recognition of civil society actions under the broad remit of WPS that could be counted as achievements under the NAP. While there is no support for the Dutch model of civil society partnership as signatories to the NAP, it may be useful to find a way to capture civil society actions under the NAP accounting and reporting mechanisms. This would need to go hand-in-hand with increased transparency about government actions, which would also enhance downward accountability.

Recommendation: Ensure adequate considerations of resourcing for communications and media to enhance accountability and the production of more accessible and more widely disseminated NAP publications and products.

Recommendation: Ensure that civil society inputs are explicitly described in any theory of change and that there are associated measures of change in the M&E framework to monitor and measure the value of their contributions.

3.3.2 The accountability function of reporting

Separate to a discussion about the efficacy of the monitoring & evaluation framework in its own right, it is important to acknowledge here the strengths of the reporting system in terms of its function as an accountability mechanism. There are several dimensions to this. The range of review and reporting activities, undertaken both by government and civil society, which include Progress Reports (2014, 2016 and 2018), the Interim Review (2015), the civil society Dialogues (2013-2017), four Annual Civil Society Report Cards and one Annual Civil Society Report (2013-2017) all perform a valuable accountability function. The very fact of compiling information about NAP implementation activities, and, in the case of the Dialogues and the Annual Civil Society Report Cards, providing that information to civil society organisations to inform an evaluation, demonstrates a commitment by the government to honouring downward accountability.

The second dimension of the accountability function of the review and reporting activities, however, is the extent to which the outcomes and recommendations of those reviews and reports are acted upon to change practice. The majority of key stakeholders expressed the strong view that not enough was done across government to work with the recommendations from the Interim Review, which were largely seen to be robust and useful. Similarly, there was widespread recognition that the Annual Civil Society Report Cards offer a regular form of quasi-independent review, and therefore hold the government agencies and Departments accountable for delivering actions under the NAP, but there

has been no formal response to the recommendations from the Annual Civil Society Report Cards. Given the estimation of most respondents that the Annual Civil Society Report Cards and the Dialogues are vital accountability mechanisms, as well as useful and interesting activities in their own right, there needs to be a commitment going forward to providing adequate information and resources to these activities.

Recommendation: Ensure that Annual Civil Society Report Cards and Civil Society Dialogues are formally acknowledged as accountability mechanisms and explicitly and purposely mapped onto /into the formal framework for monitoring and evaluation.

3.3.3 The role of civil society in accountability

As discussed above, the civil society Annual Civil Society Report Cards, and the Dialogues which inform them, are viewed as significant and strong accountability mechanisms. The independence of civil society is much valued in this dynamic, and thus although civil society supports government accountability mechanisms, the protection of civil society independence is seen to be of paramount importance. Prior to the drafting of the next NAP, civil society and government need to independently, then collaboratively, engage in a dialogue about the expected role of civil society going forward. The independent role of civil society can be enshrined in the next NAP, and adequately resourced engagement of civil society need not compromise this independence if it is carefully managed in a transparent and open manner. A stronger commitment by government to working with the recommendations of the civil society Annual Civil Society Report Cards, should they continue, would also enhance accountability.

Civil society engagement is premised on the ability to represent a diversity of views, and on the ability of civil society to bring knowledge and expertise to the WPS space. In an important sense, then, civil society is also accountable for representing these diverse views and experiences, and for constructive engagement in debates about WPS and NAP implementation in areas where the representatives (or the organisations they represent) have knowledge and expertise. Civil society should not be expected solely to do accountability work, although this is indeed an important aspect of their engagement, and the various vectors of accountability mapped out above – not just the downward accountability of government to public/civil society – should be planned for in the next iteration of the NAP.

3.4 Design and Accessibility

In accordance with the intention to examine the extent to which the structure of the NAP and identified roles and responsibilities were appropriate to it achieving its purpose and enabling an appropriately balanced implementation of the pillars of the WPS agenda, the Review explored questions relating to design, accessibility and 'fitness' for purpose of the NAP. These discussions elicited broad consensus on 'fitness' of the first NAP and provided a forum for examining features of the next Australian NAP in terms of structure, most notably in terms of its capacity to be responsive to emerging issues and new priorities in the WPS context. This is supplemented with examples from the analysis of NAP Case Studies which highlight features of High-impact NAPs.

3.4.1 Status of the NAP

> *For women and girls in conflict countries, all too often, governments see the resolutions as a policy document and not legally binding which translates into weak National Action Plans that do not allocate funding or support …* [81]

Throughout the Review process, the NAP was variously referred to as a plan, a strategic framework or strategy, and/or a policy. This use of language appeared to go beyond semantics and extend to the perceived obligations of enforceability of the NAP and its prescribed actions. Where referred to as a

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[81] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, Op.cit. p. 243

policy, it was oftentimes seen as a whole-of-government directive or requirement which could be seen translated into Departmental compliance or responsive actions. Where interpreted as a higher-level guidance framework or plan, adherence to the detail as the NAP was seen as merely needing to keep within the 'strategic intent' of the NAP but perhaps not responding to the ascribed actions detailed in the plan.

Whilst there appeared to be a broad understanding of the need to comply with the UNSCRs, there were divergent views as to which set of documents took primacy. That is, whether the NAP should be the executive document on WPS, based as it is on the UNSCRs - or whether conversely, Departments were independently working to global frameworks, inclusive of UNSCR 1325 and that the NAP sat as a separate Australian government reporting framework. In part this interpretation may emerge out of the current NAP being substantively based on the UNSCR – but talks much more broadly about WPS and should therefore reference many other related resolutions and frameworks. Interview respondents also spoke of Departmental white papers and internal strategies which were guiding their WPS practice. The next NAP should provide detail or guidance on navigating the space between these high-level Departmental papers and polices and NAP actions.

Given the varying levels of engagement between Departments and the inclusion of new players in the next Australian NAP, these issues may be an area for focus when designing the NAP, particularly where these issues have impact on allocation of funding.

3.4.2 Overall Design

There was general consensus that the first Australian NAP was a sound document for its time. In particular, Review respondents felt that the narrative section was strong, evidencing a good level of gender analysis and profiling potentially new concepts for some readers, such as intersectionality. This was in large part attributed to the consultations held in 2009-2010 in preparation for the NAP. The overall structure and sequencing of the document was reported to be logical and practical, that is in terms of providing contextual background and an action matrix, followed by sections on M&E and governance. Some key concepts highlighted in the narrative of the NAP were not translated into the Actions in the matrix (for example men and boys and intersectionality); this was identified by some respondents as a major shortcoming.

Whilst overall the language was thought to be accessible, specialised concepts such as intersectionality may have distanced some readers, particularly practitioners who found the concepts complex or difficult to translate to an operational context. Indeed, the diversity of stakeholders involved in NAP governance and implementation means that it would perhaps be overly ambitious to imagine that it were possible to create a document which holds meaning for all. This in part was presented as the rationale for some agencies/Departments to create their own implementation plan under the whole-of-government NAP; this strategy appears to have been largely successful for those that opted for this approach. There was therefore general support for the next NAP to therefore be framed as a higher-level document detailing the strategic intent and whole-of-government imperatives, which could then be complemented by agency/Departmental implementation plans, linked through a more nuanced M&E framework.

Accessibility to a hard copy of the NAP document was also reported to be limited, with hard copy format being expressed as the preferred format by some respondents. Whilst engaged respondents reported that the format was logical, some reported a need for a simpler one pager format or summary document; for example, a simple A3 infographic or poster which distilled the key concepts and elements for the uninitiated. This could be of utility not only in taking the NAP to senior bureaucrats and decision makers or the general public, but also to better disseminate the NAP within implementing agencies. There were whole Departments where only a handful of personnel had ever seen or read the NAP; whilst many of these personnel were cognisant of the UNSCRs and perhaps a broader WPS agenda, this was a note of concern.

Recommendation: Ensure that the next NAP internally consistent in that key issues highlighted in any narrative preamble are appropriately featured or have adequate scope for inclusion under any

'Action matrix' or comparable guideline in the next NAP (for example intersectionality or the inclusion of men and boys).

Recommendation: Actively consider the benefit of constructing a high-level NAP which provides the strategic intent and broad framework for implementing agencies whilst supporting the development of agency specific, actionable, and more widely understood implementation plans.

3.4.3 Specificity

Whilst a wide range of views were expressed regarding the degree of specificity of the NAP, there appeared to be general acceptance that, as a first NAP, it was 'reasonable enough', given that so many were new players to the space. A significant number of respondents did however feel that the NAP was too broad. Of notable mention was its inclusion of fragile states in addition to conflict and post conflict settings; this was particularly so for practitioners on the ground. There were numerous concerns expressed of overstretching the mandate of the NAP by including too broad a remit, or indeed attempting to incorporate domestic agendas which some respondents felt would dilute and redirect the intent of the NAP. There were a number of calls to 'keep it simple', locally relevant and focused.

The most resounding message was that the next iteration of the NAP requires a much stronger, clearer overarching vision or goal. A statement which provides a clear identity and focus for a truly Australian NAP, relevant to Australian and regional priorities. A simple, well-articulated statement would also serve to focus the NAP to the intent of the WPS agenda and a focus on conflict prevention. Table 1 below provides reference to the goals and vision statements of the Case Study Countries' NAPs. Whilst in isolation of the broader strategies or objectives these statements do not provide the full picture, it is clear that focused goal and or vision statements are a feature of high-impact NAPs.[82]

Table 1: Vision and Goal of Case Study NAPs

Country	Goal	Vision
Canada	More inclusive, gender equal and stable societies	Gender equality as a foundation for peace. The vision incorporates the role of civil society and local women's organisations to advance human rights. Men and boys are partners with women and girls in fostering transformative change.
Denmark	Creation of peaceful, prosperous and just societies	Principles of protection and participation of women are connected.
Finland	Creation of a secure, equal and effectively functioning society	Work on the 1325 agenda is guided by the principles of the human rights-based approach, consistency, openness and good governance. Finland asserts its global responsibility to promote gender equality.
Netherlands	sustainable peace and security for everyone	The central vision is a sustainable peace and security for everyone.
Philippines	Expand women's role in the peace process, and protect their human right in conflict situations	Contribute to the expansion of women's role in the peace process and conflict transformation and to the protection of their human rights in conflict situations'
Sweden	make visible and strengthen women's influence and meaningful participation as actors for peace and security	Gender equality as a foundation for peace - The overall Swedish priority is: to make visible and strengthen women's influence and meaningful participation as actors for peace and security. Its vision supports women as actors for peace and security by meeting the four main goals as Sweden's priority areas.

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[82] It is understood that work is currently underway to develop a vision statement for the next NAP.

Country	Goal	Vision
United Kingdom	to build lasting peace and stability through gender equality	The NAP adopts a theory of change approach aimed at 'more inclusive and effective humanitarian responses' (p. 23). The seven strategic outcomes set the vision. The vision incorporates capabilities, leadership and processes that are necessary to deliver the WPS commitment.

Source: See Annex 5 NAP Country Case Studies

In terms of the detail of the plan and associated actions matrix, a significant number reported that they felt that the NAP Actions Matrix was too vague and too open to interpretation. An equal number bemoaned the fact that it was too detailed and overly prescriptive. The conclusion being that it was a little bit of both. Certainly, the use of terms such as 'consider', 'promote' or 'support' can be open to interpretation – particularly when used in the absences of any concrete outcome statements or measures. Similarly, numerous agencies were listed as having responsibilities under these actions, but proportionality of that role or responsibility was not made clear in the matrix or the associated M&E framework. This clearly speaks to the need for much clearer, time bound and attributable outcome statements in the next NAP – supported by relevant indicators of change and measurement processes.

In terms of over prescriptiveness, a significant number of comments related to the inclusion of what were widely perceived as 'internal' Departmental human resource issues. Whilst focusing attention on important issues of gender equality, it was reported that this led to a disproportionate focus on the issues of female recruitment and deployment and was a major distraction from the intent of the NAP. This was compounded and exacerbated by the contemporaneous / concurrent reviews and processes related to the role of women in the defence forces (for example the Broderick Review and Pathway to Change initiative); for many defence personnel it was almost impossible to discern the difference between the two. Including internal HR issues under the NAP was seen by many as a 'mistake'.

Other examples of over prescriptive actions related to where field level solutions were prescribed (for example use of female engagement teams). This was reported to be inappropriate for a number of reasons, not least in terms of dictating Departmental level solutions but also because in many instances, agencies/Departments reported that in many instances they did not have the resourcing to meet those high-level expectations. That said, increased specificity was linked to greater access to resourcing; it is necessary to find a balance here.

A final comment on specificity relates to the overall agility of the NAP which is considered in more detail in a later section. Whilst a highly detailed NAP may be useful for holding people to account it provides no flexibility to adapt or respond.

Recommendation: Ensure that Australia's next NAP has a strong, focused and clear overarching vision or goal.

Recommendation: The NAP should include clear, time bound and attributable outcome statements supported by relevant indicators of change and measurement processes.

3.4.4 Balance across the Pillars

Review respondents described a significant (over) emphasis on protection in the NAP, possibly because 'protection was the easiest pillar to grasp'. It remained unclear however as to whether this was the fault of the NAP action Matrix or the interpretation of the matrix by personnel still unfamiliar with the broader WPS agenda.

Also highlighted (by defence personnel) during the course of the Review was the limited representation of the defence personnel under actions in the prevention pillar in the NAP action matrix[83] – with one Defence interviewee stating 'this is what we are designed to do'; the same

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[83] Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018, op. cit. p.21-25

respondent stated that this failure to allocate responsibility to defence for prevention actions has the potential to further reinforce the perceptions/ misunderstanding of other Departments of Defence's potential role in these prevention ('phase zero') activities.

It was broadly acknowledged that no one agency can cover all of the pillars and that balance between the pillars should be context specific and broadly guided and in keeping with the 'original intent of WPS'.

Recommendation: Ensure adequate focus and balance between WPS pillars in the next NAP with an adequate and appropriate emphasis for all relevant stakeholders on prevention.

3.4.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Notwithstanding criticisms of a lack of flexibility, new roles and champions for WPS have been emergent throughout the life of this NAP. One example has been the increasing engagement and acceptance of the role of ACMC. Both formally and informally, the ACMC has become a key player in NAP coordination, education and linking with and between various stakeholders. There were calls for their role to be more clearly acknowledged or 'codified'.

Despite being one of the great successes of the NAP, the relationship between government and civil society actors would nonetheless benefit from further clarification of role and expectations. This relates broadly across the role of civil society actors in implementation, but perhaps more substantively to their roles as representatives of civil society on governance committees and their engagement in the broad range of stakeholder dialogues, consultations and Shadow Reporting. There is no dispute that these emergent roles and inputs have had high value but due to the undocumented and unfinanced nature of the engagement, tension are beginning to emerge on both sides. It is absolutely imperative for both government and civil society to independently review their position and expectations for ongoing civil society engagement in the NAP and then come together to formalise this invaluable element of the Australian WPS response.

Although it is perhaps happening in an *ad hoc* fashion, the current NAP does not adequately capture the whole-of-government aspects of the plan. There were suggestions that this could be more explicit, in terms of the value and intent, and to be included as an outcome measure of the next NAP, inclusive of the nature and quality of inter-agency collaboration and communication.

Roles and responsibilities of the coordinating entity or unit are discussed elsewhere, but there were numerous calls for greater clarity in ensuring that the powers and functions of the Office for Women (or alternative structure) to be better documented in the next NAP. There were reports that the failure to adequately define their scope had limited implementation and had the potential to default to a substantively 'bureaucratic' function. As further explored in the Governance Section (3.2), there is a clear need for more comprehensively documenting the roles and expectations of the IDC and NAP subcommittee.

For a first NAP, the matrix structure used, and the broad allocation of responsibilities to a range of agencies was considered adequate, although at times ambiguous. This also allowed for agency specific interpretation of the scope and degree to which they would engage in particular actions. Across most agencies/Departments there was strong support for agency/Department specific implementation plans which provided the next level of detail and allocated responsibility. There were also suggestions of the utility of indicating where one agency or Department may take a 'lead' role as distinct from a lesser although still contributory 'enabling' role.

3.4.6 Emerging Issues

> *Need a way to develop a plan that is robust enough and has flexibility to grow and develop as we grow and develop and the world changes* [84]

A constant theme of this Review centred around change: changes in government (for example Machinery of Government changes); changes to, and an increase in complexity of the conflict

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[84] Interview respondent (Canberra, August 2018)

environment in which agencies are operating; and significantly, changes in the WPS discourse and regulatory framework. Working in this space, we are constantly reminded of the need for agility and an ability to adapt to change. And, whilst the NAP design was not adequately designed to respond to some of these (external) challenges, it is important to note some of the positives.

Most significantly has been the emergence and acceptance of civil society (as represented by the WPS Coalition) as a respected actor in the Australian NAP and the WPS agenda more broadly. Civil society representatives have been integrated into NAP governance and accountability systems, provide valuable professional development and opportunities for dialogue and continue to provide a high level of academic and representative input to the Australian NAP and its managers.

Civil society has therefore played a key role in monitoring and informing other stakeholders on the changing discourse around WPS. In order to respond to emergent issues, NAP implementors and decision makers need to be abreast of significant changes and global responses and facilitated to engage in dialogue about potentially relevant issues. This is a role that has been more than ably filled by Australian civil society actors across the life of the NAP. But, as highlighted in section 3.2, it is a role and relationship that currently requires reflection, formalisation and funding to ensure this necessary element of their role can be sustained.

Significant efforts have also been made across the life of the NAP to reconfigure and restructure governance mechanisms themselves, with the elevation of the IWDG to an IDC and the development of an active and well-credentialed subcommittee. Whilst work still needs to be done on getting governance right, things have not stood still and efforts have been made to respond to emerging (internal) needs.

That said, the NAP as its stands has no formal review mechanism. Whilst respondents generally agreed that six years was a reasonable term for a NAP, that is only if the NAP embeds a greater capacity to respond and adapt to the constantly changing environment and indeed in response to a functional M&E system which provides information on the effectiveness and progress of specified strategies and actions. This points clearly to an improved M&E system but also implies a clear mechanism of management to respond to information provided through this system; the absence of a clear process to tangibly respond to the Interim Review was highlighted as a case in point. This was seen as a significant missed opportunity. The next NAP also needs to resist being over prescriptive and locking implementors into actions which may no longer have relevance in certain contexts.

In terms of which emerging issues country NAPs choose to address, there needs to be due reflection on both the capacity and experience of that country in the WPS space as well as consideration of the parameters set by the overall vision and scope. The 2018 Monash study demonstrated that it was rare for a first or even second generation NAP to incorporate more than a few of the recognised issues in the WPS space, this was consistent with the Case Study NAPs reviewed and resonated with calls in this Review to be realistic about the number of issues that the Australian NAP had the capacity to engage with at this stage of its development and maturity.

Table 2. Emerging Issues Referenced in NAPs[85]

Country / Emerging issue	UK1	UK2	UK3	SE1	SE2	SE3	NL1	NL2	NL3	CA1	CA2
Violent extremism			X			X			X		X
SDGs						X			X		X
Disaster response and climate change			X								X
Displacement	X							X	X		X
Continuum of violence		X	X				X	X			X
SEA and human trafficking			X	X						X	X
Diversity	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X

85 Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit., p.20

Country / Emerging issue	UK1	UK2	UK3	SE1	SE2	SE3	NL1	NL2	NL3	CA1	CA2
Men and boys		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

Code: UK= United Kingdom; SE= Sweden; NL= Netherlands; CA=Canada.

In terms of the vision and scope, respondents felt that, within reason, this should be the strongest guide to which emerging issues to engage with. This was particularly discussed in reference to domestic issues and how an externally facing NAP could reasonably engage. Views were however mixed with some respondents feeling an urgent need to engage with internally displaced or refugee women, who had been victims of violence. Whatever the outcome (which was beyond the scope of this Review), there was a consistent call for policy mapping across related issues and where feasible some form of policy 'bridging' at a senior level to, at a minimum, analyse and understand how and where these issues intersect.

Recommendation: Embed much more robust, formal review mechanisms into the NAP which focus on both a capacity and clear authority to respond to emerging issues and change; the capacity for responsiveness to change could be incorporated as a review measure.

3.4.7 Design Process

Effective national implementation plans and strategies require broad participation of civil society organizations, academic institutions, donor partner governments, women, men, as well as local communities and populations directly affected by conflict. These actors can make substantial contributions to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and review of such plans.[86]

There is clear evidence from the literature on the importance of inclusive design for NAPs.[87] Respondents in this Review both acknowledged and commended the inputs from academics and interested civil society representatives in the preliminary consultations and development of issues papers which informed the development of the NAP. Numerous actors however noted that actions beyond their remit had been included in the Action Plan and or that they were not able to follow the logic of how their actions were contributing to changes in WPS at an implementation level. There were repeated calls for a much clearer articulation of not only clearer outcomes but of a clearer program logic demonstrating pathways of expected change; that is a clear Theory of Change (ToC).

The next NAP would thus benefit from continued engagement of civil society but also broader representation from all implementing agencies in the design process. A consistent message from respondents was the call for not only consultation, but also the opportunity to engage actively in a participatory process of developing a ToC for the next NAP. A process which requires expert facilitation and guidance. Such a process would be subject to a 'design plan' which clearly documented steps and stakeholders. As with any program design, it was stated that explicit attention should be paid to the steps of stakeholder and policy analysis. Perhaps using this step to map domestic, international and global policies using a process of political economy analysis or similar with a view to acknowledging policy gaps or key areas of dissonance and documenting any necessary plans for bridging or working within policy divergence.

Recommendation: Develop the theory of change and the associated M&E Framework through an inclusive, participatory process to ensure understanding and shared ownership; it should be based on sound situational and stakeholder analysis including comprehensive policy mapping.

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[86] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, p. 242
[87] See Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study and Muehlenbeck, 2016, 'Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security: Results-Oriented NAPs on WPS,' op. cit., p. 7.

3.4.8 NAP Financing

There is resounding consensus that predictable and sustainable financing is a prerequisite for the effective realization of the WPS agenda at both national and international levels …To guarantee sustainable funding, a comprehensive and realistic costing of NAPs must be carried out from the planning stage, and specific funding earmarked for their implementation.[88]

It would seem reasonable to state that in order to translate a plan into action, it requires some sense of baseline assessment and a process of costing and subsequently budgeting by the relevant bodies. Progress in this regard for the Australian NAP has been quite uneven and generally only noted in some of the subsidiary Department specific implementation plans, not in the NAP itself.

There are undoubtedly an infinite number of ways to proceed, but there is a clear need to undertake an assessment of what WPS / gender equality activities are already being pursued in implementing agencies, assessing gaps and concurrent to planning and design, undertaking a process of costing / budgeting to ensure that resources are available for implementation. Some respondents reported that biannual Progress Reports would be a key source of data for this exercise.

The undertaking of 'institutional audit' has become best practice in NAP development and was a feature of most recent NAP development for the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Ireland and Rwanda.

Recommendation: Consider the value in undertaking some degree of institutional audit of WPS / gender equality actions across agencies and subsequently cost the actions required to fill those gaps.

3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

An effective monitoring and evaluation system can help improve policies and programmes, strengthen commitment and partnerships, encourage accountability, and build a foundation for sustainable investments. Establishing such a system must take place necessarily at the planning stage, alongside a comprehensive context analysis and assessment of different factors, actors, risks and needs. The context analysis serves to create a baseline critical for future monitoring and evaluation.[89]

In accordance with the intention to examine how best to develop a fit for purpose monitoring and evaluation framework, the Review provided respondents an opportunity to reflect on learning from the implementation of the current NAP and provide relevant examples of best practice M&E from comparable initiatives. Discussions enabled a thorough review of the strengths and weakness of M&E in the current NAP, an exploration of positive features of M&E in high-impact NAPs globally and provided the space more broadly for a discussion of what constitutes 'best practice' M&E.

Monitoring and Evaluation was a key theme and a focus of recommendations for change in the Independent Interim Review. On the whole, this Review reaffirmed the findings and endorsed the recommendations made in the Interim Review (see Annex 3). The present Review did, however, provide an opportunity to reflect on M&E for the entirety of the NAP and elicit inputs from new players in the WPS space. This Review also had a clearer mandate for considering how best to develop a more fit for purpose M&E framework in the next NAP.

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[88] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, p. 246
[89] Ibid., p. 248

3.5.1 Strengths and Limitations of the current M&E

Whilst the monitoring and evaluation of the Australian NAP is much maligned, a strengths based approach demands some balance and reflection on any inherent strengths or benefits. To that end, it was reported that given the time constraints and the level of M&E expertise 'in the room', the initial M&E framework was still sufficient to provide guidance to some agencies/Departments. Indeed, despite its limitations, it was firmly reported as a mechanism which 'kept people on track' and 'to account' with regards to the NAP. Whilst this implies perhaps an imbalance toward upward accountability, it does demonstrate the utility of indicators in focusing actions.

Progress reports, though onerous, were further seen as a potential building of baseline data and a 'rich repository' of data, of utility in particular for future academic inquiry and research. The inclusion of independent reviews was also highlighted as a point of strength and a unique point of difference for the Australian NAP, with the Interim Review broadly considered a valuable and quality piece of work which clearly highlighted key areas for change. These monitoring and review processes, whilst imperfect, were viewed by some respondents as a process to which all agencies contribute, thus building a degree of cooperation and collegiality; steps in the right direction toward the desired whole-of-government collaboration. Indeed collaborating on this shared National Action Plan was said to have brought not only a maturity of understanding about WPS and internal responsibilities but also a greater respect for diversity and an understanding of the unique strengths each agency/Department brings. This was seen as achievement of a (process) outcome in itself, processes which are integral to the ultimate success of the NAP.

Whilst not envisaged nor formally detailed in the NAP M&E Framework, 'shadow reporting' undertaken by civil society, including dialogues, round tables and Annual Report Cards has been of significant value. Dialogues and round tables have been well attended, and report cards highly regarded, widely read, and responded to. This element of the Australian NAP has gained international recognition and interest with specific mention in the Global Report (p. 248).[90] It will be imperative to capture and appropriately situate this civil society reporting element in the next NAP M&E framework as well as addressing the fundamental funding issues of the WPS Coalition and or representative secretariat (as discussed in section 3.2).

The limitations of the NAP M&E framework were clearly and comprehensively described in the Interim Review. Findings from this Review supported these findings with a snapshot of critical issues highlighted as;

- inadequate baseline;
- absence of an overall vision or goal and or measurable outcomes;
- not situated within a pathway of change / program logic / theory of change;
- absence of targets / timeframes;
- highly quantitative measures;
- backward looking / retrospective accounting/ compliance reporting;
- no clear attribution of responsibility and scope of roles;
- onerous and in addition to existing internal processes;
- not well linked to global measures or international reporting mechanisms;
- inadequate analysis, reflection and review of the products of M&E; and
- no mechanism for capturing change on the ground / in communities.

Fundamentally the M&E framework proved to be of limited utility to the implementing agencies/Departments and their respective NAP focal points and there was a clear call for a 'complete re-design'- this was unanimous across all stakeholder groups. Whilst all reported a broad insufficiency of the M&E system, the process and product of progress reporting attracted particular

[90] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, 2015, op. cit. p. 248

ire. These were variously described as a 'colossal waste of time', 'painful', 'pointless' and 'painstaking' followed by firm statements of 'never again'. These reports were the product of massive effort and many person hours, and whilst assumed to be rich in data, it was reported that 'nobody would ever read it or get value from it'. There was widespread reporting 'fatigue'. Indeed the Review team struggled to find respondents (other than the subcommittee members) who had actually read these reports. Given the restrictions of having to report to a standard template, even the agency level reports were of limited utility. There is clear and urgent need for a rethink progress and Departmental level monitoring systems and reporting. This relates not only to the content and format of the reports but also to the intended purpose and audience. Equally importantly is the need to rethink the role of the subcommittee (including the pro bono contributions of civil society representatives) in reviewing / compiling any monitoring reports – particularly in light of the absence of any earmarked financing for this task and specialist inputs.

Recommendation: More clearly articulate process outcomes and measures, inclusive of whole-of-government collaboration and cooperation.

Recommendation: Streamline reporting with increased attention to purpose and audience for progress reporting.

3.6 Looking Forward

3.6.1 What should an M&E system measure?

M&E plans should frame questions in ways which encourage including qualitative updates about progress in addition to more traditional quantitative data, pushing implementers to think about the impact of their activities beyond reporting on workshops held or reports published.[91]

Any M&E system needs to incorporate appropriate levels of monitoring and review to track progress and effectiveness, ensure accountability and provide information and or opportunities to respond to emerging issues. This needs to be supplemented by periodic evaluative events to more formally assess and analyse progress toward stated goals and objectives. The 'what' of M&E would be largely informed by the theory of change and both the intended outcomes and predicted pathways of achieving that change.[92]

It is clear that the next NAP needs to shift focus from measuring and counting what has been done (for example numbers of personnel trained) to assessing both the quality of that process and undertaking assessment to see if that action has had the desired result; indeed, clearly articulating that desired result and associated assumptions as a first step in a theory of change process. There were strong calls from respondents for a greater emphasis on 'measuring the change we want to see' both short and long term.

Respondents also called for the M&E system to better consider the range of questions the diverse stakeholder groups need to answer through M&E. Ensuring that the information provided meets the diverse needs of implementors/ practitioners as well as coordinators, managers and policy makers and broader WPS advocates.

Almost all respondents saw the use of stories as a potential and valid tool with a number speaking of the urgent need to talk to women themselves (intended beneficiaries, not just intermediaries). There were a number of suggestions for the use of online hubs, websites and or similar electronic media to capture stories in real time – given this interest/ appetite for online forums, this may be an avenue to explore. There was however also an acknowledgement that both the process of engaging with beneficiaries to elicit stories and the process of crafting these into a useful narrative is a specific skill

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[91] Inclusive Security, 2016, Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); p. 18 https://www.osce.org/secretariat/294731?download=true
[92] Cabinet Implementation Unit, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2013, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Toolkit. https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/pmc/implementation-toolkit-5-monitoring.pdf

set – skills not widely held across implementing agencies. This implies an additional area for capacity building and support across and or between agencies.

3.6.2 Who should have responsibility for M&E?

Respondents were generally consistent in reporting that it was positive having an independent body (such as Office for Women) i.e. a non-implementing agency for co-ordinating M&E. Indeed, most felt that the higher level NAP M&E co-ordination would fall neatly into the responsibilities of whichever agency or Department was ultimately tasked with broader NAP coordination.

Concerns were however raised about the high level skills required for facilitating a multi-faceted whole-of-government theory of change and design process, and designing and managing an effective M&E system. Whilst respondents perceived the OfW's WPS unit as effective in its administration and coordination role, it was noted that such a complex and highly political process would benefit from specialist expertise - this position is supported by the literature review and case studies from other donors.[93] Stakeholders further commented that appointing externally contracted experts would be useful to help navigate the political environment and ensure that the process and final product was not overly influenced by internal pressures on departments or relationships between departments. Both the relevant literature and stakeholder feedback noted that expert M&E advisory should not be limited to the design process but should instead continue through the life of the NAP to ensure ongoing advisory and inputs to the M&E system management.

There is however a necessary element of M&E which occurs at agency/Departmental level, particularly for those agencies with their own implementation plans. And almost without exception, each agency/Department has its own in-house M&E expertise or unit, including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. There were however definite concerns and conflicts about which system would lead or have primacy and how duplication or additional layers of reporting could be avoided, that is concern both about the veracity or best fit of the system but also around resourcing for the inherent tasks of managing an M&E plan. There were also concerns expressed about language and the need for a shared understanding (and capacity to translate) terms used into Departmental language. Where new or potentially exclusionary terminology (for example even the terms 'theory of change' or logical framework), participatory processes should ensure shared acceptance and or understanding of the adopted lexicon (this extended to outcomes, outputs and the broad range of terms used in M&E). Once again, these concerns support the need for expert and external expertise to guide and facilitate these complex processes.

There was broad acceptance or in fact expectations for inclusive participatory processes in developing not only the theory of change, but also the associated M&E plan and framework. These processes would necessarily include civil society and be inclusive of steps to acknowledge the varying roles of civil society actors and or their representatives. This would perhaps enable a shift or at least a negotiation of the 'best fit' for civil society and perhaps a repositioning as more of a strategic partner rather than merely an external critic of where processes may be falling short.

It is broadly acknowledged therefore that civil society has an important role in supporting the M&E of the NAP, in cooperation with government who play a key role in terms of leadership and resourcing. Parliamentarians, as decision makers on policies, plan and budgets are also stakeholders and play a key role in systematic monitoring of the NAP. This can be done by seeking briefings, remaining appraised and actively involved on issues relating to WPS and promoting the allocation of human and financial resources to the NAP.[94] However the impact of the NAP can only be assessed if we consider and indeed consult a much broader stakeholder grouping – not least women's groups (in Australia and in our countries of operation), survivors of conflict (including migrant or refugee women) and survivors of gender based violence in countries where Australia is providing peacebuilding or development and humanitarian assistance.

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[93]   Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson, op. cit.
[94] Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, 2015, 'A Good Practice Guide for the monitoring and evaluation of national actions plans on United Nations security resolution 1325 on women, peace and security'. http://www.gbv.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Good-Practice-Guide1.pdf

Recommendation: Appropriately fund and resource both the development of the theory of change and development of the M&E framework for the next NAP. Ensuring that suitably skilled and experienced practitioners are utilised or contracted in for this process and the ongoing management and leadership of the M&E system.

3.6.3 How to develop an M&E Framework

There is an inherent complexity to developing M&E for a Whole-of-government initiative, not least one which is inextricably linked to international frameworks. Such complexity calls clearly for not only skilled and appropriately experienced M&E expertise but also perhaps some reflections on other Whole-of-government initiatives in Australia and successful models that could be learned from; such reflections were however beyond the scope of this Review. A number of useful tools are however emerging from the Women and Security space, not least the guides developed by Inclusive Security including *What Matters Most: Measuring Plans for Inclusive Security* (2014)[95], *Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security* (2016)[96], and the more recent and comprehensive *Creating National Actions Plans: A guide to Implementing Resolution 1325* (2017)[97] which provides a step by step guide to not only designing an M&E framework for NAP but also considerations for governance and coordination. The 2017 guide provides an eight step process to achieving a high-impact NAP:

1.   Build an enabling environment for your NAP

    5.   Identify key actors and set up a coordination mechanism

    6.   Develop a high-impact logical framework

    7.   Identify tools to measure success

    8.   Create a monitoring and evaluation plan

    9.   Make monitoring work

    10.   Evaluate the NAP

    11.   Use M&E information to improve and promote high-impact NAPs.

That said, M&E or its related field of results based management are fields of expertise in themselves and once an overall approach to design has been decided upon, the principles are largely transferable. And, numerous guides and guidelines to M&E already exist within government, for example the 'DFAT Monitoring and Evaluation Standards' (2017)[98] or the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's 'Toolkit for Monitoring, Review and Evaluation'. These respectively provide detailed checklists and key principles for the development of a robust M&E system; for example see key elements in Figure 1 below.

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[95] Inclusive Security, 2014, 'What Matters Most: Measuring Plans for Inclusive Security'
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/InclSec_MonitoringEvalGuide.pdf
[96] Inclusive Security, 2016, Designing Inclusive Strategies for Sustainable Security Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, op. cit.
[97] Inclusive Security, 2017, 'Creating National Actions Plans: A guide to Implementing Resolution 1325'
https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/creating-national-action-plans-a-guide-to-implementing-resolution-1325/
[98] https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/monitoring-evaluation-standards.pdf

Figure 1. Elements of effective monitoring, review and evaluation.[99]

As part of the planning process, clearly define the objectives and outcomes of the policy that is being implemented. It is essential to determine what successful outcomes will look like and what evidence will be needed to demonstrate success. As this has planning implications, thinking needs to occur from the outset and ensure activities are fit-for-purpose. Other important elements include:

Report to others: There needs to be a clear purpose and demand for undertaking monitoring, review and evaluation activities. Information produced from this process must be targeted for specific audiences and be incorporated into the governance arrangements in order to enhance transparency and accountability.

Involve stakeholders: All relevant stakeholders need to be engaged for monitoring, review and evaluation activities to be successful. Clearly communicating the benefits of activities and providing the necessary support creates opportunity for willing participation and ownership.

Monitor progress: Successful monitoring delivers timely and relevant information that allows you to track progress towards outcomes and make adjustments to implementation arrangements as necessary. Track progress in a deliberate and systematic manner at regular intervals during implementation. Implementation planning must define the data to be collected and the method used for monitoring. Obtaining advice from experts in data collection during the planning process will contribute to a robust and credible methodology.

Review regularly: Factor in reviews as part of your planning process to assess progress of implementation at critical milestones or in response to specific issues. Reviews are a 'snapshot' in the life of an initiative and tend to focus on operational issues, effectiveness of governance and project management structures, and may also include policy outcomes. Findings and recommendations from reviews should be used to improve implementation.

Evaluate the outcomes: Planning for evaluation should identify and map baseline information as well as ensure that ongoing access to consistent data sources will be available through monitoring over the life of the initiative. Data can be quantitative (hard or numerical data) or qualitative (soft or categorical). Effective evaluation is the result of a planning process over the life of the initiative.

There was across the board recognition of the need for high level external expertise in the process of NAP design, program logic development and all aspects of M&E. Whilst guides and guidelines exist to assist managers and coordinators, these are highly complex tasks requiring expert inputs, inputs which require financing and thus adequate levels of budget allocation. It was suggested that these inputs could continue through the life of the NAP. There were also calls for additional financing for not only the Shadow Reporting undertaken by civil society but also a greater investment into resources to be available for the Independent Reviews. Additional funds for Independent Reviews would enable a more nuanced exploration of progress toward and or achievement of outcomes.

3.6.4 Focus on Learning

The main focus of M&E in the first Australian NAP was toward accountability. Whilst this was of value in 'keeping people on track', the next NAP provides an opportunity to move from a simple quantitative M&E tool to more nuanced and qualitative MEL (or monitoring, evaluation and learning) approach. A well designed MEL framework will not only provide the evidence base to demonstrate NAP effectiveness and address accountability needs but will also ensure structured opportunities to reflect and respond to information.

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[99] Cabinet Implementation Unit, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2013, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Toolkit. Op. cit. p. 2

The need for incorporating a learning approach is demonstrated through not only calls for flexibility (a need to be 'nimble') but also through the clear appetite for learning from NAP implementors. The most repeated and not unrelated phrases or terms heard throughout the interview process were 'Community of Practice' and 'Gender Advisors Network'. The Gender Advisors Network, currently facilitated by ACMC, is a relatively informal mechanism for bringing together interested parties to share ideas and experiences and or learn from others. [100] The network creates a space for dialogue and has hosted seminar series and a range of expert speakers. These forums provided an opportunity for not only individual knowledge advancement but opportunities where 'we are all learning together – leveraging off the experience of other'. Whilst some respondents were resistant to formalising the network, (for fear of breaking something that is currently working well) many reported on the high value of this network for learning and linking across whole-of-government agencies. The network reportedly allows participants to 'step back' and get a perspective on 'what does whole-of-government approach mean … and how we fit'. In reference to this network, but also more broadly, ACMC were often presented as a 'safe space' and as a bridge builder between NAP implementing agencies. Given their emerging role in not only informing and educating but also bridge building and creating a space for Whole-of-government dialogue, this perhaps begs the question of whether the potential of ACMC in the NAP is being maximised.

This desire for learning and sharing not only from each other but also from the many and varied experts in the field, was expressed by many respondents as a need for a 'Community of Practice'. This was seen not only as a learning opportunity but also perhaps a more legitimate and better defined space for engaging with academics. A Community of Practice was also seen as a potential adjunct to accountability, particularly where dialogues or annual 'learning events' focused around key themes or activities; suggested provided at the Review included the value of collective reflections on joint exercises such as Talisman Sabre or periodic reviews of active deployments (e.g. Afghanistan). There were also suggestions that such Communities of Practice might provide linkages or leveraging and learning with domestic think tanks. But, like the Gender Advisors Network, any such action would require both a champion and financing, although could conceivably be managed under a funded civil society secretariat as recommended in section 3.2 of this report.

Recommendation: The appointment, resourcing, and continued professional development of gender advisors, including through investment in facilitating informal networking of gender advisors across agencies/Departments, should be supported.

3.6.5 What can we learn from other NAPS

Any discussion on M&E in NAPs needs to be prefaced by the acknowledgement that issues with M&E are not unique to the Australian NAP, with some nations still struggling to get M&E 'right' into their third NAP. Table 2 below summarises key M&E features of the seven NAP Country Case Studies. It should be noted that all of these 'good practice' NAPs are in fact (with the exception of Canada) third or fourth generation NAPs. Common features of M&E in these NAPs includes:

- Based on a theory of change approach.
- Utilising a participatory design process inclusive of civil society actors.
- Feature clearly articulated outcome statements.
- SMART indicators and defined targets and timeframes.
- Clear leadership.
- Allocate responsibility for reporting on indicators.
- Active role for civil society (exception of Denmark) in monitoring.
- Streamlined annual progress reporting for implementors.
- Include a process of mid-term review and final evaluation.
- Focus on learning as well as accountability.
- Incorporate processes to respond to learning/ emerging issues.
- A number feature country specific indicators / analyses.

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[100] As an adjunct or associated process, some agencies (e.g. defence) have their own internal gender advisor network with a related but more internal focus with attention towards collating Department specific lessons learned. This was deemed as necessary and complementary – and proposed as a consideration for those Departments that do not currently employ an internal GAN structure.

Table 2: Monitoring and Evaluation in Case Study NAPs

Country	Version	Monitoring and Evaluation
Canada	2nd	The NAP states that it uses a Theory of Change to identify how activities contribute to objectives, and that each supporting partner has its own implementation plan with objectives, actions and indicators. The plan states clear objectives, committed partners and strong targets. Annual, public progress reporting is undertaken, plus an independent mid-term review. Civil society are involved in monitoring. The plan recognises the crucial role of civil society, and has established an Action Plan Advisory Group to monitor progress and discuss emerging issues.
Denmark	3rd	The NAP specifies actions and indicators for each of the implementing agencies, with monitoring undertaken internally. Mid-term monitoring of NAPs is undertaken, with achievements and lessons learned regularly reported. A monitoring process is included for a partnership with the Commission of the African Union for the Gender, Peace and Security program. The overview of actions for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, includes activities and indicators for focus countries and regional programs. There is no provision for Civil Society involvement in M&E.
Finland	3rd	The action plan was prepared jointly by Ministers, parties engaged in crisis management, civil society organisations and experts in research institutions; and the same actors are included in implementation and monitoring. The plan identifies outcomes and outputs, with relevant parties separately identifying indicators. Technical working groups will be formed 'as necessary' to address different themes. Annual reports, mid-term and final evaluation reports will be prepared.
Netherlands	3rd	There are clear, tangible objectives and targets to measure progress. The strategies to meet the specific objectives include information-sharing, specific programs and advocacy. Country strategies have specific activities and relevant government signatories. The context-specific forums in focus countries have specific quantifiable activities and in each country, there is a gender-specific conflict analysis exploring the root causes of conflict and gendered inequality. The context specific M&E is based on SMART indicators (that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely).
Philippines	2nd	The current NAP includes institutionalisation of a comprehensive and systematic M&E mechanism to document, monitor, evaluate and report on implementation using evidence-informed tools. This occurs at multi-levels, including Regional Action Plans for Mindanao and the Cordillera.
Sweden	3rd	There is clear planning, leadership and accountability with a result-oriented perspective on reporting. There is continual follow-up with mutual learning and exchange of experiences. Implementation is integrated into regular operational plans. There is a strong emphasis on continual knowledge development and evidence-based research. There are also country-specific analyses, statistics and evidence-based studies. Earlier action plans had large numbers of sub-objectives and actions that didn't have a clear allocation of responsibilities regarding who was expected to implement and report.
United Kingdom	4th	The outcomes have specified indicators and are designed to be specific, measurable, achievable and relevant. The outcomes are based on evidence, local knowledge and contextual understandings that interventions differ across focus countries. Within the seven strategies, NAP indicators used are international measuring tools. There is now a more strategic approach to MEL that maintains accountability to Parliament and streamlines reporting for implementing team. A continuous lesson learning occurs between teams and Departments to provide best practices and emerging challenges.

4 Conclusions – Key Steps Towards a High-impact NAP

Australia's first NAP is … 'a conversation starter'. The Australian Government and civil society have shown a commitment to keep that conversation open, robust, and ongoing. The second NAP is an opportunity to capitalise upon these conversations and design an implementation framework that is inclusive and has impact.[101]

There is clear and strong agreement between the findings and recommendations of this Review and those of the Interim Review. These also echo the recommendations of the Fourth Annual Civil Society Report Card produced by the WPS Coalition on how to move forward and build on the solid achievements of the first Australian NAP toward a more mature and high-impact NAP. The *Global Study* on WPS outlined five key features of a high-impact NAP; the findings of this Review are considered in this concluding section through the lens of these five key features, in order to provide a robust framework for future NAP activities.

4.1 Strong leadership and effective coordination

High-impact NAPs require strong leadership and effective coordination between the range of actors involved in realising the WPS agenda. The *Global Study* states that high-impact NAPs are led by 'influential agencies with a capacity to effectively coordinate the plan's implementation'.[102]

Whilst commended for working efficiently within limited means, the team within OfW that has current responsibility for the NAP was perceived by respondents to lack sufficient resources to support the broader leadership role implementing departments were seeking from a coordination unit.

In addition to co-ordination within government, there is a clear need to demonstrate leadership in engaging with the broader range of WPS stakeholders. Although this has been achieved to an extent by the OfW, with significant support from the WPS coalition and ACMC, 'cracks are appearing' in the relationship with key civil society actors.

Whilst the central location of the unit within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet was broadly supported, the situation of the Australian NAP within the OfW was seen to position the NAP as a 'women's issue' and deprioritise it.

Respondents relayed a clear message to the Review Team regarding the need for a more formally mandated, appropriately located and resourced NAP or WPS Secretariat which would provide both effective administration/management and strong leadership.

4.2 Inclusive design processes

Across the world, individuals and civil society organisations are the prime implementers, advisers, advocates and planners for peacebuilding initiatives and responses to violence and conflict prevention activities in conflict-affected and fragile settings. Civil society thus remains central to generating the analysis and evidence of what success looks like, and how nations or communities can best position themselves to prevent, or respond to, conflict in the future. The appropriate involvement of civil society in inclusive NAP design processes contributes to a more coherent, specific and impactful NAP.

Civil society actors – including both those individuals and organisations engaged in program delivery overseas and those individuals and organisations whose work is more advocacy-focused – have been

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[101] Fourth Annual Civil Society Report Card, Australia's National Action Plan On Women, Peace And Security, p. 6 http://wpscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/fourth-annual-civil-society-report-card-on-the-national-action-plan-for-women-peace-and-security.pdf
[102] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, op.cit. p. 70

actively involved in supporting the Australian NAP. They contribute significant knowledge through research and publications on NAPs and WPS, engage actively in forums for information sharing and dialogues, provide a representative function on governance committees, and undertake valuable shadow reporting.

Whilst highly regarded, the structures around the NAP mean that effective civil society engagement is very challenging, There is an urgent need to rethink the structures that facilitate engagement between government and civil society in relation to the NAP, and to WPS more broadly. This might include funding a small Secretariat for the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security with part-time positions and a dedicated operating budget; this could be managed through the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) or ACMC.

Moreover, it is important for both government and civil society to think through the value, and conditions, of engagement in a way that is mutually productive and which benefits the advancement of the WPS agenda in Australia, harnessing both the immense wealth of expertise on WPS that exists within civil society and the goodwill of the government to engage in a productive and meaningful way. It is therefore imperative to more clearly define, document and allocate budget for an appropriate mechanism to facilitate constructive and ongoing engagement with civil society.

Inclusive design processes should also prioritise the active participation of actors from implementing agencies. Such engagement not only enhances a sense of ownership but also enables the testing of key theories and assumptions about the underlying process and pathways of change intended by the next NAP.

4.3 Costing and allocated budgets for implementation

According to the Global Study, the lack of funding to support WPS initiatives is repeatedly identified as 'the most serious and persistent obstacle to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda over the past 15 years'.[103] There is consensus that sustainable financing is a prerequisite for the effective realisation of the WPS agenda at both national and international levels, reaffirming the urgency of adequate, sustained and dedicated financing for the effective implementation of NAPs as well as the broader WPS agenda.

In order to achieve sustainable financing, the *Global Study* asserts that the first step is to undertake 'a comprehensive and realistic costing of NAPs' during the planning stage.[104] It would seem reasonable to state that in order to translate a plan into action, it requires some sense of baseline assessment and a process of costing and budgeting by the relevant bodies. Progress in this regard for the Australian NAP has been quite uneven and generally only noted in some of the subsidiary Department specific implementation plans, not in the NAP itself. The undertaking of 'institutional audit' has become best practice in NAP development and was a feature of most recent NAP development for the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Ireland and Rwanda.

There are undoubtedly an infinite number of ways to proceed, but there is a clear need to undertake an assessment of what WPS and gender equality activities are already being pursued in implementing agencies, assessing gaps and concurrent to planning and design, undertaking a process of costing and budgeting to ensure that resources are available for implementation.

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[103] Coomaraswamy, Radhika, et al., 2015, Global Study, op.cit. p. 372
[104] Ibid., p. 246

4.4 Monitoring and evaluation

The ability of plans to adapt to the dynamic context of peace and security – which is crucial if NAPs are to be effective – is totally dependent on the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system.

The Case Study NAPs considered in this Review had the following common features:

- Based on a theory of change approach.
- Utilising a participatory design process inclusive of civil society actors.
- Feature clearly articulated outcome statements.
- SMART indicators and defined targets and timeframes.
- Clear leadership with mandated authorities.
- Allocate responsibility for reporting on indicators.
- Active role for civil society (exception of Denmark) in monitoring.
- Streamlined annual progress reporting for implementors.
- Include a process of mid-term review and final evaluation.
- Focus on quality of and response to reporting.
- Focus on learning as well as accountability.
- Incorporate processes to respond to learning/ emerging issues.
- Country specific indicators / analyses.
- Adequate resourcing of M&E.

It is not uncommon for first generation NAP's to have weak M&E systems; this has, in fact, been a common feature of almost all first NAPs. As Australia designs its second NAP, there is however a clear pathway forward in terms of M&E building on both internal lessons learned and the learnings from other NAPs. Most critical is the need to ensure that the process of M&E design and management is adequately resourced and guided by appropriately skilled M&E experts. Particularly relevant to this Review was the call for much more streamlined progress reporting with a focus on addressing key informational needs.

In addition, there emerged a clear need for strengthened processes of both reflection and review; this reflection and review process can then inform formal response and action to outputs of the M&E system, 'closing the loop' on each set of evaluations and documenting both the key learning and the ways in which this learning will inform future practice in an iterative fashion.

4.5 Flexibility to adapt to emerging situations

As noted above, plans can only adapt in response to information: information received, analysed, and responded to within a functioning M&E system, under the auspices of a co-ordination mechanism with a mandated authority to respond. Fundamental to this flexibility is a clear and coherent design, one which features a clear and defining vision or scope for the NAP based on a well-developed and understood theory of change.

This provides a framework not only for responsiveness to emerging or changing priorities, but also for identifying which priorities the Australian NAP can address in the first instance. The first Australian NAP was considered by many to be too broad with a significant (over) emphasis on protection, possibly because 'protection was the easiest pillar to grasp'. Most civil society groups which participated in the Global Study emphasised the urgency of reprioritising the conflict prevention elements of the WPS agenda to achieve the transformative potential of resolution 1325. These sentiments were repeated in this Review, with an acknowledgment that, the balance between the pillars should be context specific and in keeping with the 'original intent of WPS '.

Whilst not explicitly addressed in this Review, there were frequent references or suggestions to which 'emerging issues' the next NAP should consider. There is certainly evidence that as NAPs mature and WPS becomes better institutionalised, countries have an increasing capacity to prioritise or engage with a larger range of key issues. This will to a degree depend upon the vision and scope of the next NAP and the national and regional priorities it identifies, however core issues such as improved consideration of men and boys and intersectionality were frequently mentioned during the course of this Review.

Conclusion

It would appear therefore that Australia is 'on track', with a general sense that the understanding of WPS informing government practice in all agencies and Departments has matured substantially since the adoption of the first NAP. The simple fact of the NAP's existence has raised the visibility of the WPS agenda across government, and the NAP itself has socialised a sophisticated understanding of WPS across government as well as a good understanding of mechanisms of implementation.

The second Australian NAP provides an opportunity for capitalising on these understandings and taking the 'conversations' to a new level. This Review and the concurrent NAP consultations provide an opportunity to reflect on the WPS literature, on learnings from NAP implementation in other countries but also an opportunity to better reflect on the unique Australian experience and how this will inform the next NAP. As new agencies are poised to join as NAP implementors, advice from one interview respondent resonates as a closing statement: 'Write the next plan simply … don't over complicate the theory of change … [we need] something that is written in a way that everyone can read, understand and support'.

Annex 1

UNSCR 1325

United Nations

(2000)

Security Council

S/RES/1325

Distr.: General
31 October 2000

Resolution 1325 (2000)
Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and *recognizing* the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and *urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, *invites* Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace

agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a)   The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b)   Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c)   Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9.   *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10.   *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11.   *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard *stresses* the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12.   *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13.   *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14.   *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15.   *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16.   *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and *further invites* him to

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submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

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Annex 2

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for the Independent Final Review of Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018

Background

The *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018* (National Action Plan) is a coordinated, whole of government approach supporting effective implementation of Australia's commitment to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and related Women, Peace and Security resolutions. The Minister for Women leads Australia's first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

The Australian Government is committed to the realisation of women and girls' human rights and to the elimination of discrimination against women. Australia's National Action Plan is a demonstration of commitment to the obligations embedded in United Nations Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Australia has committed to contribute to: increase women's roles in preventing conflict; the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence; increase participation of women in all levels of peace and security decision-making processes; and ensure a gender perspective is incorporated into all relief and recovery efforts, in fragile, conflict and post-conflict situations. Australia has also committed to the integration of the Women Peace and Security agenda into relevant government policies on peace and security.

Purpose

The National Action Plan is to be independently reviewed twice in its lifetime. The first Independent Interim Review (IIR) was completed in 2015. The IIR made 16 recommendations, some of which were directed at the next National Action Plan, including improved monitoring and evaluation through qualitative reporting, and including baseline data, resourcing and specific targets. The Independent Final Review (IFR) is the second review of the National Action Plan. The IFR will assess the effectiveness of the National Action Plan against its stated objectives and will provide concrete recommendations to inform the development of the next National Action Plan. Its recommendations should add to those included in the IIR. It will be published for the reference of government, civil society and the Australian public. It will be undertaken concurrently with stakeholder consultations intended to support the development of the next National Action Plan.

Scope

The Independent Final Review should examine the effectiveness of Australia's National Action Plan 2012-2018 and its contribution to realising the objectives of the Women Peace and Security agenda. This should include an examination of the current global peace and security context and how other Member States approach emerging issues as they are articulated in their National Action Plans. In examining the National Action Plan, the Review will/should make recommendations to support the development of Australia's next National Action Plan, and in particular, should consider:

to what extent has Australia's National Action Plan been effective in directing Australia's implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

to what extent is the structure of the National Action Plan, and the identified roles and responsibilities of departments, appropriate to achieving its purposes.

to what extent are the governance arrangements and accountability mechanisms sufficient and appropriate, and which international best practices for governance and accountability are suitable for incorporation into Australia's next National Action Plan.

to what extent are departments' actions supporting an appropriately balanced implementation of the pillars of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

to what extent are the actions to achieve the pillars appropriately realised across the breadth of commitments outlined in Women, Peace and Security resolutions.

what can be learned from how other National Action Plans respond to emerging issues, new priorities and the evolving women, peace and security context.

what lessons learned from international best practice could inform a fit-for-purpose Monitoring and Evaluation framework in the next National Action Plan.

Consultation

Stakeholder consultation is important to the delivery of this Review. The Office for Women, in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet expects the reviewer to be prepared to undertake purposeful consultation widely within government, and across all areas of civil society. The ability to optimize opportunities for broad and diverse consultation through the application of communications technologies will be considered favourably where these modalities support meaningful outcomes. A fully developed stakeholder engagement and consultation plan is required following acceptance of the tender and prior to the commencement of work.

Annex 3

Recommendations from Independent Interim Review

1. Maintain a broad approach to actions with the Australian NAP, allowing agencies to build activities that advance the WPS agenda and align with individual agency strengths and priorities.

2. Build assessment of new and emerging issues into the Australian NAP to encourage agencies to consider new developments and approaches to further advance the WPS agenda.

3. Maintain flexibility to adjust activities according to changes in context – while still contributing to the Australian NAP actions and broader WPS agenda.

4. Monitor NAP reviews and evaluations by other Member States and feed learning into Australia's implementation.

5. Revise the measures in the Australian NAP M&E framework so that they can track progress of all the actions.

6. Develop a theory of change for the Australian NAP, including an overarching goal and specific targets for the Australian NAP against which progress can be measured.

7. Strengthen baseline data, including through a stocktake or audit by each implementing agency and through reporting financial allocations for Australian NAP implementation in preparation for the final review in 2018.

8. Revise the measures in the Australian NAP so that they can measure impact and effectiveness of the actions and strategies, including clear outcomes that are being sought.

9. Supplement existing quantitative measures with qualitative indicators to reflect perceptions of impact, including unintended consequences of activities undertaken under the Australian NAP.

10. Conduct a workshop to undertake joint analysis of the emerging trends to provide complementary qualitative data for the 2016 progress report.

11. Supplement quantitative data on numbers of Australian Government personnel trained before deploying to conflict or post-conflict settings with post-deployment perceptions about the impact and applicability of WPS training for day-to-day operations.

12. Develop a publicly available whole of government implementation plan to strengthen transparency and coordination across agencies, encourage joint initiatives and facilitate institutionalisation of the Australian NAP.

13. Undertake a 'stocktake' or audit in the lead up to each progress report to enhance information sharing on all WPS activities and provide additional baseline data.

14. Make members of the WPS IDWG and its sub-committee designated WPS focal points who are accountable for Australian NAP implementation for their agency.

15. Release six-monthly informal WPS IDWG updates to enhance information sharing.

16. Enhance reporting on resourcing and financial allocations of Australian NAP implementation, including in the second Progress Report (to help prepare baseline for the final review and the Australian NAP revision).

17. Ensure there is a dedicated budget allocated to the Australian NAP implementation (linked to the whole of government implementation plan).

18. Review and strengthen the Civil Society Engagement Strategy in a participatory process which ensures that diaspora groups, academia and research institutions are fully incorporated.

19. In partnership with civil society, identify opportunities for strategic and formal engagement such as joint training, sharing lessons learnt and country-specific learning opportunities on WPS issues.

20. Assess the feasibility of providing financial support to the secretariat for the Australian Civil Society Coalition for Women, Peace & Security, to better enable more effective outreach and coordination.

21. Secure resources for the Office for Women to increase the required information sharing, transparency and engagement.

22. Civil society should undertake a mapping exercise, with increased inclusion of different civil society actors, to enhance coordination with the government in relation to the Australian NAP.

23. Ensure strong linkages between the Australian NAP revision and final review process to ensure the second iteration of the Australian NAP builds on learning highlighted in the final review

24. Review, assess and build on the proposed Final Review Framework

Annex 4

KEY Guiding Questions and Summary of Participants

Review Theme	Key Questions
NAP Design & Accessibility	Is the NAP a document that you regularly reference in the work that you do?
	To what extent is the structure of the NAP appropriate to achieving its purpose (realising its objectives)/ or How easy is the NAP to use in terms of translating ideas into practice/ understanding roles and responsibilities?
	What can be learned from best practice internationally in the design and implementation of NAPs? What makes for a "high impact NAP"?
Leadership & Governance	To what extent are governance arrangements suitable/ appropriate/effective? How could these governance arrangements be improved? (What is your understanding of existing governance arrangements?)
	To what extent are the roles and responsibilities identified within the NAP conducive to the Plan achieving its purpose (realising its objectives)? (What is your understanding of the roles and responsibilities identified within the NAP?)
	What, in your view, is the role of civil society in Australian WPS activities?
Accountability	To what extent does the NAP include clear accountability mechanisms?
	How effective are the existing accountability mechanisms of the NAP (where they are identified)? Who is ultimately accountable for successful and effective implementation? (What is your understanding of existing accountability mechanisms?)
	What, if any, do you think is the role of civil society within the existing accountability framework of the NAP?
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (Mel)	How might a fit-for-purpose Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework be developed for the next NAP?
	What have we learned from the first NAP?
Achievements & Impact	Overall, do you think the current NAP has achieved its stated objectives?
	What contribution do you think the current NAP makes to realising the objectives of the WPS agenda (improving the lives of women and girls in conflict and post conflict situations?
	Do you think that the NAP has engendered any kind of cultural change/ transformation in regard to structures of government?

Interviews Participants

The Review Team interviewed 47 targeted stakeholders. These included 6 group discussions and 19 individual interviews.

Government: 13 individual and 20 persons across 4 group interviews = 33

Civil Society: 6 individual and 2 groups of 4 persons = 14

Departments, agencies and organisations interviewed

Government (33)	Civil society (12)	Other (2)
Australia Civil Military Centre (3) Australian Federal Police (5) Department of Defence: Army, Air Force and Navy representatives (10) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (13) • Gender Equality Branch • Afghanistan Section • ASEAN & Regional • Fragility & Conflict • Peacekeeping & Conflict Prevention • Middle East Development • Indonesia Strategy & Performance • Multilateral and Global Counter Terrorism Office for Women, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2)	ActionAid International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) Care Australia ACFID World Vision Australia Monash Gender, Peace & Security Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Australia WPS Coalition Humanitarian Advisory Group	Independent consultants

Annex 5

Country Case Studies

Summary of Country Case Study NAPs and Justification of choice

Canada[105]:

The NAP presents a strong vision within a human rights framework. This vision is at the crux of a commitment to a feminist foreign policy.[106]

The NAP implementation has national and international elements. Each supporting partner has its own objectives, actions and indicators. The NAP emphasises Canada's commitment to its Feminist Foreign Policy, which requires engaging men and boys, alongside women and girls, as agents and beneficiaries of change in peace and gender equality. The NAP recognises the crucial role of civil society, especially local women's organisations and movements that advance women's rights. To amplify women's voices around the world, Canada will also collaborate with Canadian civil society and women's organisations at the grassroots level. Recognising the crucial role of civil society, Canada announced $150 million in funding for local women's organisations that will facilitate programming in a range of sectors, including reconciliation and conflict prevention. Even though the NAP includes budget for actions aimed at achieving its objectives, the NAP fails to address disarmament as a tool for promoting the WPS Agenda.[107]

Denmark:[108]

Denmark has a strong focus on lessons learned. It advocates systematic monitoring across an Inter-Ministry working group.

The revised Danish NAP is much more extensive and includes a section on 'Achievements and Lessons Learned 2005-2007'. Amongst other lessons it mentions that the first NAP was not monitored comprehensively and thus advocates for a systematic monitoring through an inter-ministry working group. Another key lesson drawn was that the first plan focused mainly on the protection of women and devoted less attention to promoting women's active participation in conflict solution and peace building. Thus, their second NAP attempts to pursue a more balanced approach in supporting protection and participation.[109]

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[105] Building peace and security for all Canada's Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

[106] Sam Cook explains that 'feminist interventions rely on ambiguous spaces' such as within the Security Council, a space 'characterised by uncertainty and unpredictability.' Sam Cook, 'Encountering Metis in the Security Council,' LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security,'15/2018, p. 12.

[107] http://www.peacewomen.org/nap-canada

[108] Denmark's National Action Plan for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2014 – 2019

[109] Miller, Pournik, & Swaine, 2014, Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation. Working Paper No. 13, Institute for Global and International Studies. Washington DC: The George Washington University.

Finland[110]:

The Finnish 1325 network mentions that civil society was included not only in a consultative manner, but in the writing process. The Finnish NAP includes representatives from civil society in the formal structures of the monitoring of the NAP as well as in practice.[111] It highlights the need for conflict prevention.

The 2018-2021 NAP sheds light on the link between arms proliferation and women's security and aims to incorporate a gender perspective into arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation. However, the 2018-2021 NAP does not include earmarked funding, an allocated budget or an estimated budget.[112]

The Netherlands[113]:

The Dutch NAP is a multi-state partnership between government, civil society and knowledge institutions, with civil society implementing partners. Thus, it is noted as a good practice example in the *Global Study*.[114] Its theory of change is clear. It adopts country-specific indicators.

The NAP mentions disarmament in general by stating that 'many approaches to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration reaffirm gender stereotypes and confirm the perception of women as victims, potentially undermining the empowering leadership roles that women can play and reducing the space for men to reconsider the gender norms that prescribe certain behaviour'[115]

The Philippines[116]:

It is important to include a NAP in Australia's region. The Philippines is ranked tenth in overall ranking of the Global Gender Index (Australia is ranked 35th from 144 countries).[117] The Philippine's NAP is strong on M&E with specific, measurable actions and indicators. However, there is no allocated budget in the NAP, which can potentially challenge NAP's implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

It adopts a broader framing of addressing the situation of women in armed conflict and recognising their contributions to peacebuilding. The NAP also incorporates some key recommendations made in the 2015 Global Study on UNSCR 1325 such as the prioritisation of conflict prevention, framing women peace and security from a human rights perspective, participation and leadership of women in all levels of the peace project, transitional justice, inclusive and participatory localisation efforts, combating extremism by supporting women peacebuilders, multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach to implementation, and financing initiatives aimed at materialising women, peace and security. Finally, the third generation NAP WPS is the explicit articulation of the incorporation of the gender perspective in the Six-Point Peace and Development Agenda.

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[110] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Women, Peace and Security Finland's National Action Plan 2018-2021

[111] Elin Danielsson 'Ranking the Nordic National Action Plans for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security,' p. 4.

[112] http://www.peacewomen.org

[113] The Netherlands National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security 2016 - 2019

[114] UN Women, *Global Study*, op. cit., p. 242.

[115] http://www.peacewomen.org

[116] Philippine National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security 2017-2022

[117] World Economic Forum, 2017, 'Global Gender Gap Index, 2017,' Geneva: World Economic Forum, p. 16.

Sweden[118]:

The Swedish NAP is very clear in its purpose and is driven by a theory of change that has clear roles and responsibilities across implementing agents. It provides a strong example of structural mechanics and in a broader sense is a NAP that people can connect with.

Sweden's 2016 NAP, like earlier NAPs, does not earmark a budget, names the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as responsible for implementation, and creates a country-focused objective. Additionally, it creates a new reference group under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, comprised of governmental and civil society actors, to assist in its development stage. The reference group will be involved in the implementation phase as well. Sweden does not have a recent history of conflict, but plays an important role in international peacekeeping and humanitarian operations around the world. As such, the Swedish NAP is focused on these international issues.[119]

UK[120]:

The third UK NAP was produced in collaboration with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence, with civil society, academics, including Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS), a network of UK-based NGOs and the LSE Centre for WPS and in-country civil society consultations in Afghanistan, Burma, Somalia and Syria.

The updated NAP strengthens opportunities for local women civil society to initiate partnerships that address local needs in the UK's efforts to build security and stability abroad. However, gaps remain in other key areas. Although domestic strategies such as on ending violence against women and immigration are recognised as complementary, the focus remains externally focused. This means the impact of gendered violence within the country, from immigration to the status of women in Northern Ireland, remain unaddressed. In addition, although the previous version of the NAP (2014-2017) expressed the UK commitment to control illicit small arms and light weapons, references to disarmament are missing in this NAP, particularly in reference to the consistent transfer of arms from the UK to various conflict zones in Africa and the Middle East.[121]

[118] Government Offices of Sweden, Women, Peace & Security Sweden's National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security 2016–2020
[119] 119 http://www.peacewomen.org
[120] HM Government, 2018, UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security 2018 - 2022
[121] 121 http://www.peacewomen.org

Case Study
Canada's National Action Plan
2017 – 2022

Canada's second NAP states a strong commitment to gender equality, empowering women and girls, promoting human rights, and preventing and responding to conflicts to build a peaceful world.

Vision: Gender equality as a foundation for peace

The vision 'is part of the Government of Canada's feminist agenda which prioritises gender equality and the rights of women and girls at its core'.
The vision incorporates the role of civil society and local women's organisations to advance human rights.
Men and boys are partners with women and girls in fostering transformative change.

Underlying Policy

Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy states a need to engage men and boys as well as women and girls as both 'agents and beneficiaries of change in peace and gender equality'.

Key Objectives

1. Increase meaningful participation of women.
2. Prevent, respond to and end impunity for sexual and gender-based-violence.
3. Promote and protect women's and girls' human rights, gender equality and empowerment.
4. Meet specific needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings.
5. Strengthen the capacity peace operations to advance the WPS agenda.

Canadian Armed Forces; and Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Support partners: Public Safety Canada; Status of Women Canada; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; and Department of Justice.

Budget and finance

There is no specific budget stated for implementation. There is mention that 95% of the Peace and Stabilisation Operations Program budget of $CAD 150m will target (15%) or integrate (80%) WPS activities. Also, $CAD 150m of funding is available for local women's organisations.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade are responsible for convening interdepartmental meetings. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is responsible for overall implementation. All policies and programs will use a feminist Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to assess diverse groups' experiences. The NAP states that it uses a Theory of Change to identify how activities contribute to objectives, and that each supporting partner has its own implementation plan with objectives, actions and indicators. Annual, public progress reporting is undertaken, plus an independent mid-term review. Civil society are involved in monitoring.

Emerging issues

The NAP responds to emerging issues of violent extremism, SDGs, disaster response and climate change, displacement, continuum of violence, sexual exploitation and abuse and human trafficking, diversity, indigenous peoples' rights and men and boys.

Governance

Lead partners: Global Affairs Canada; Department of National Defence;

Budget: 95% of PSOP budget (CAD150m) to target or integrate WPS, + CAD150m for local women's orgs

Goal: More inclusive, gender equal and stable societies

Time period: 2017-2022

Canada

NAP History

2010
Inaugural NAP

2017
Second and current NAP

Lessons Learned

This plan is deliberately a 'more ambitious approach' taken 'to identify the barriers to women's participation and seek the opportunities in conflicts, humanitarian settings, peace operations and state-building to challenge the status quo to transform gender relations and empower women'.
The plan acknowledges that indigenous women and girls face intersecting aspects of discrimination and violence.
It includes the immigration agency as a support partner.
The plan recognises the crucial role of civil society, and has established an Action Plan Advisory Group to monitor progress and discuss emerging issues.
The plan states clear objectives, committed partners and strong targets, but the targets are not specified in the plan, nor are there indicators or timelines listed.
Each lead action plan partner identifies a WPS champion who acts as key resource in their department.

Case Study
Denmark's National Action Plan
2014 – 2019

Denmark was the first member state to formulate a NAP in 2005. The third Danish NAP builds on the achievements and lessons learned in its second plan (2008-2013) which provided a 'comprehensive framework for the mainstreaming of women, peace and security issues in Denmark's foreign, security and development cooperation activities' (p. 8). Denmark's activities are in the context of humanitarian and peace operations in multilateral fora and at the bilateral level.

Vision

'The promotion of the WPS agenda is a cornerstone in Denmark's foreign, security and development policy' (p. 7). The continuous emphasis on 1325 and the sister resolutions in the EU, UN, NATO and OSCE cemented Denmark's reputation as a strong supporter of the WPS agenda. Principles of protection and participation of women are connected.

Underlying Policy

The priority area for the Danish government is a strong international engagement and the promotion of gender equality as a way of protecting the rights of the most vulnerable and contributing to building peaceful, just societies.

Key Objectives

1. support full, equal participation of women in accordance with 1325

2. promote the responsibility to protect (R2P) principles and transitional justice to end impunity for sexual and gender-based-violence

3. include a gender perspective in international dialogue on peacebuilding and state-building

4. promote women as peacebuilders in specific fragile and conflict-affected states

5. ensure the inclusion of gender perspectives in international operations and humanitarian efforts

Governance

Ministries with responsibilities include Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Justice, and Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. The plan is divided into three sections, with activities allocated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Danish National Police, and the Ministry of Defence. Fostering governance that reflects gender equality is a key part of overseas bilateral cooperation. Multilateral cooperation is with the UN, UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation/Arms Trade Treaty (UNSCAR/ATT), NATO, EU, AU and OSCE.

Budget and finance

No overall budget is mentioned. Budget is stated as an indicator for activities in Nepal and in the UN.

Monitoring and evaluation

The NAP specific actions and indicators for each of the implementing agencies, with monitoring undertaken internally. Mid-term monitoring of NAPs is undertaken, with achievements and lessons learned regularly reported. A monitoring process is included for a partnership with the Commission of the African Union for the Gender, Peace and Security program. The overview of actions for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, includes activities and indicators within Afghanistan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Myanmar, Nepal, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Zimbabwe. Regional programs have action and indicators for Syria/Lebanon/Jordan, Danish/Arab partners, Sahel region and with the Peace and Stabilisation Fund. There is no provision for Civil Society involvement in M&E.

NAP History

2005
First Danish NAP

2008
Second NAP

2014
Third and current NAP

Emerging Issues

The NAP responds to emerging issues of violence against women, humanitarian work and disasters, access to assistance for refugees from Syria and Lebanon, sexual and gender-based violence survivors, Arms Trade Treaty and acknowledging that a more peaceful, just and equal world benefits men and boys, as well as women and girls.

Lessons Learned

The Danish plan advocates for systematic and continuous monitoring through inter-Ministry working groups.

It states the need to be specific regarding activities to facilitate the delivery of results and follow-up.

It strongly supports the participation and protection pillars, as well as the prevention of violent conflict and the need for gender-sensitive reconstruction.

Case Study
Finland's National Action Plan
2018 – 2021

Finland's first plan covered 2008-2011. The second plan, 2012-2016, was more 'result-oriented' (p. 6). The third one, 2018-2021, is 'more active and practically oriented' (p. 7). The plan was drafted through cross-administration cooperation involving Ministries, representatives of civil society organisations and research institutions. Finland has a strong reputation in coordinating preventative work, sharing good practices and enhancing expertise.

Vision

'Work on the 1325 agenda is guided by the principles of the human rights-based approach, consistency, openness and good governance' (p. 19). Finland asserts its global responsibility to promote gender equality.

Underlying Policy

The new plan signals implementation at the local level in: regions affected by crises and conflicts; international organisations; and at national level in government programs. 'Promoting the rights of women and girls is one of the priority areas in Finland's human rights policy' (p. 7). Finland has a strong desire to maintain its high international profile in crisis management and peacebuilding.

Key Objectives

The key objectives are promoted at local and regional levels (p. 25). Each objective states outcomes with the Ministries and the civil society groups responsible.

1. Women play a more meaningful role and there is more emphasis on mainstreaming the gender perspective in mediation, peace processes and transition processes.

2. Women play a more meaningful role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

3. Mainstreaming of the gender perspective is more integrated into the security sector and crisis management.

4. Women and girls receive better protection, their rights are better safeguarded and their needs are better met during crises.

5. Finland promotes the objectives 1–4 in the policies, strategies and work of international and regional organisations and by encouraging the development of National Action Plans.

Governance

The plan is led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. One or more responsible Ministries have been designated for each objective of the action plan. Finland has extensive partnerships with bilateral cooperation, multilaterally within the EU and international organisations.

Budget and finance

There is no mention of overall budget, only a reminder that central government must provide financial support for civil society groups working on 1325.

Monitoring and evaluation

The action plan was prepared jointly by Ministers, parties engaged in crisis management, civil society

organisations and experts in research institutions; and the same actors are included in implementation and monitoring. The plan identifies outcomes and outputs, with relevant parties separately identifying indicators. Technical working groups will be formed 'as necessary' to address different themes. Annual reports, mid-term and final evaluation reports will be prepared

Emerging Issues

There is extensive acknowledgement of changes in international security, particularly the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria and refugee crisis in Europe. There is emphasis on the intersectionality of identities, support for the local, connections made between gender, climate change, natural resources and peacebuilding, and that inclusivity extends to meeting the needs of men and boys as well as women and girls.

NAP History

2008
First Finnish NAP

2012
Second NAP

2018
Third and current NAP

This plan builds on the Secretary-General's stress that conflict prevention is a priority and that peacebuilding should not be seen solely as post-conflict, but is part of the challenge of tackling root causes of conflict and building sustainable peace.

Rather than the four pillars, Finland has five priority areas:

1. peace processes and building meaningful participation;

2. core prevention and peacebuilding through economic and political empowerment, access to justice, incorporating gender perspectives into arms control and disarmament, and combating violent extremism;

3. security sector and crisis management, with mainstreaming gender perspective in operational planning, competence development, recruitment and leadership training;

4. protecting women and girls and safeguarding their rights in crisis, by fighting impunity, strengthening gender perspectives in humanitarian assistance, addressing migration, protecting human rights defenders; and

5. cross-cutting themes in WPS work with research topics analysing regional and international policies.

Case Study
The Netherlands' National Action Plan
2016 – 2019

The Netherlands builds extensively on its earlier plans of 2008-11 and 2012-2015. The third plan is a platform for cooperation between government and more than 50 civil society organisations and knowledge institutions.

Vision

The central vision is a sustainable peace and security for everyone. The plan adopts what it calls a 'pathway of change' (p.15) with three dimensions, to:

1. facilitate capacity-building and provide resources to support the empowerment and participation of women and men who strive for gender-sensitive approaches to peace processes;

2. understand and positively influence attitudes and beliefs that maintain and perpetuate the exclusion of women; and

3. influence the development and implementation of laws and policies that we can obstacles to women's participation and protection.

Underlying Policy

There is extensive work with grassroots organisations with local women's rights organisations seen to 'represent agents of change' (p. 10).

Key Objectives

The key objective is captured in this quote: 'together we contribute to an enabling environment for women's participation and empowerment in conflict and post-conflict environments, so they can meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, peace building, protection, relief and recovery' (p. 13). The overall objective is met with three specific objectives, to:

1. enhance protection;

2. decrease harmful gender norms; and

3. leverage equality in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery.

Governance

This is a multi-stakeholder partnership between government, civil society and knowledge institutions. Five Dutch Ministers presented the strategy: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Security and Justice, National Police and Dutch embassies. The coordinating partners are the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Gender Platform WO=MEN.

Budget and finance

The second plan had a budget of €4 million a year for 2012-2015 allocated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, a stress on obtaining funds for focus countries came at the expense of strategic cooperation. Hence the third plan does not mention its budget.

Monitoring and evaluation

There are clear, tangible objectives and targets to measure progress. The strategies to meet the specific objectives include information-sharing, specific programs and advocacy. Country strategies have specific activities and relevant government signatories. The context-specific forums in focus countries have specific quantifiable activities in Afghanistan, Columbia, DRC, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. In each country, there is a gender-specific conflict analysis exploring the root causes of conflict and gendered inequality. The context specific M&E is based on SMART indicators (that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely).

Emerging Issues

The Dutch plan acknowledges the current context of global insecurities, the upsurge in violence and violations of humanitarian law. It states the need to pay more attention to prevention in peace maintenance and focus on root causes of conflict to prevent relapse. It raises a wide span of emerging issues around threats to the LGBT communities, refugees, violent extremism, the role of women as early-warners and men's roles in perpetuating gender violence.

Development points for the NAP

2007
Inaugural NAP launched

2012
Second NAP

2016
Third and current Plan

Lessons Learned

Current challenges require coordinated responses by governments and civil society worldwide.

The first plan was too broad, the second plan focused specifically on women's political participation and leadership within six countries, but the countries focused on activities and funds and less on strategic cooperation.

Civil society are implementing partners.

Case Study
The Philippines' National Action Plan
2017 – 2022

The evolution of the first NAP was born from collaborative politics between civil society and government. After the first plan (2010-2016), a Women Engaged in Action on UNSCR 1325 (WE Act 1325) was established. This national network of women's rights, peace and human rights organisations became the main partner of government initiatives on WPS. The new NAP builds on the gains of its first one and addresses earlier gaps. It is oriented to national government agencies and local government units in conflict affected areas.

Vision

'Contribute to the expansion of women's role in the peace process and conflict transformation and to the protection of their human rights in conflict situations' (p. 12).

Underlying Policy

1. embeds the language of women's human rights and gender equality and integrates women's human security, before, during and after conflict

2. incorporates key recommendations made in the *Global Study* (2015) relating to conflict prevention, framing WPS from human rights perspective, fostering participation and leadership of women at all levels of peace process, transitional justice, inclusive and participatory localisation efforts, and adopting a multilevel, multi-stakeholder approach

3. explicitly articulates a gender perspective in the Six-Point Peace and Development Agenda of the Philippines government.

Key Objectives

The plan is built around an adaptation of the pillars. With each pillar, there is an:

1. outcome statement
2. overall strategy
3. action points

Substantive pillars:

1. empowerment and participation
2. protection and prevention

Support pillars:

1. promotion and mainstreaming
2. monitoring and evaluation

Governance

The plan is jointly owned by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence. There is a strong emphasis on senior political leadership and high profile WPS champions. Working with partners is important and civil society is a key contributor. There is a whole of government approach.

Budget and finance

While financing initiatives are mentioned, there is no specific detail.

Monitoring and evaluation

The partnership between government and WE Act 1325 led to a refinement in 2010 of the action points and indicators based on recommendations from the monitoring reports from civil society. Further assessment led to streamlining of action points and indicators in 2014 which were used in the 2015 evaluation of the implementation, particularly regarding recommendations to address gaps.

The current NAP includes institutionalisation of a comprehensive and systematic M&E mechanism to document, monitor, evaluate and report on implementation using evidence-informed tools. This occurs at multi-levels, including Regional Action Plans for Mindanao and the Cordillera.

Budget: no allocated budget

Goal: Expand women's role in the peace process, and protect their human right in conflict situations

Time period: 2017 - 2022

Philippines

NAP History

Aug 2009
Magna Carta of Women enacted

2010
First NAP

### 2017
Second and current NAP

Emerging Issues

There is extremely wide recognition of national and global concerns such as ethnic and communal violence, states of emergency, mass uprisings, war against terrorism, organised crime that leads to internal displacement and refugees, SDGs, and SGBV. It recognises the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity and religion.

Lessons Learned

This plan highlights women's agency as leaders and participants in informal and formal peace processes 'where women are involved in the front, back, and centre of the process' (p. 10).

There is a need to strengthen the coordination mechanisms on protection of women. The plan is extensive about protecting vulnerable groups and includes women, indigenous peoples, children, elderly, IDPs, people with disability and former combatants.

The NAP expresses that an attempt to practice localisation, results in 'domesticating' WPS (p. 10).
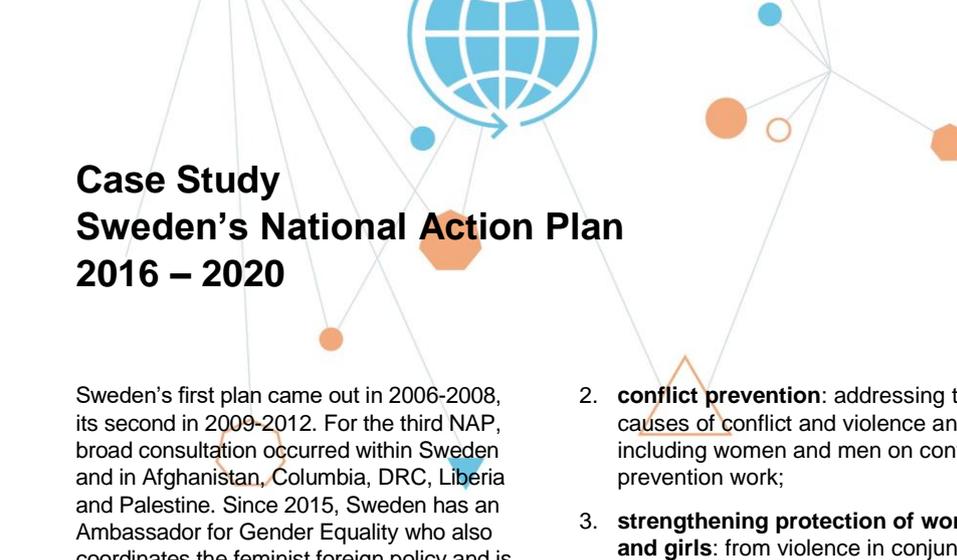
Case Study
Sweden's National Action Plan
2016 – 2020

Sweden's first plan came out in 2006-2008, its second in 2009-2012. For the third NAP, broad consultation occurred within Sweden and in Afghanistan, Columbia, DRC, Liberia and Palestine. Since 2015, Sweden has an Ambassador for Gender Equality who also coordinates the feminist foreign policy and is active in national and international contexts. Sweden plays a significant role in crisis management, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The work of this plan is incorporated into international alliances in Nordic countries, EU, Council of Europe, UN, NATO and OSCE.

Vision: Gender equality as a foundation for peace

The overall Swedish priority is: to make visible and strengthen women's influence and meaningful participation as actors for peace and security. Its vision supports women as actors for peace and security by meeting the four main goals as Sweden's priority areas.

Underlying Policy

Sweden's feminist foreign-policy is a clear focus on supporting women as active actors for peace and security. Sweden's NAP is an agenda for change with clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities. Strategies clarify:

- **what** Sweden prioritises in terms of overall strategic focus;

- **who** - which actors implement, allocate responsibilities and roles, with senior management of each Ministry and agency directly responsible; and

- **how** the designated practical activities translate in Sweden and in focus countries.

Key Objectives

There are four clear goals/priorities that translates into activities:

1. **inclusive peace processes and peacebuilding**: making visible and strengthening women's influence by meaningful participation in peace processes and in peacebuilding and state building:

2. **conflict prevention**: addressing the causes of conflict and violence and including women and men on conflict prevention work;

3. **strengthening protection of women and girls**: from violence in conjunction with and following armed conflict; and

4. **leadership and expertise**: reinforcing the gender perspective and expertise in the work for peace and security.

Governance

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has cohesive responsibility for implementation, along with the Ministry of Defence, and Ministry of Justice. Activities also affect Ministries of Health and Social Affairs and of Education and Research. Actors in civil society and academia are key partners.

Budget and finance

The NAP states the need to actively pay attention to the issue of resource allocation. Financing occurs within regular budget allocation and in focus countries the activities are financed within the framework of international development cooperation.

Monitoring and evaluation

There is clear planning, leadership and accountability with a result-oriented perspective on reporting. There is continual follow-up with mutual learning and exchange of experiences. Implementation is integrated into regular operational plans. There is a strong emphasis on continual knowledge development and evidence-based research. There are also country-specific analyses, statistics and evidence-based studies.

Budget: Financing occurs within regular budget allocation

Goal: make visible and strengthen women's influence and meaningful participation as actors for peace and security
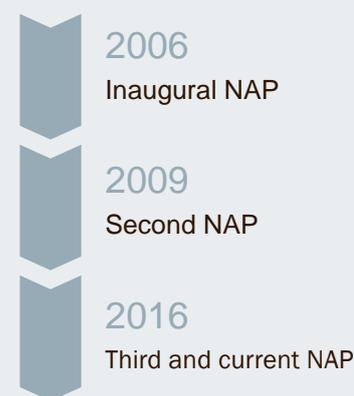
Time period: 2016 - 2020

Sweden

NAP History

2006
Inaugural NAP

2009
Second NAP

2016
Third and current NAP

Emerging issues

There is clear acknowledgement of global security challenges including violent extremism, humanitarian crises, diversity of identities and the need to involve women and men in peace processes. Regarding its work in foreign missions, Sweden has coherent and context-specific goals. Its title recognise the related resolutions.

Lessons Learned

Earlier action plans had large numbers of sub-objectives and actions that didn't have a clear allocation of responsibilities regarding who was expected to implement and report. The third NAP is very clear in its strategic focus with thematic priorities.

Context-specific activities are prioritised in focus countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Cyprus, DRC, Iraq, Liberia, Mali, Myanmar, Palestine, Somalia, Syria and Ukraine.

The drawing up of the third plan came from a reference group under the leadership of the Minister for Foreign Affairs representatives from Swedish government agencies and CSOs including WILPF, Kvinna till Kvinna, Operation 1325, Red Cross and 1325 Policy group.

Case Study
The United Kingdom's National Action Plan 2018 – 2022

The UK's first NAP was launched in 2006. Further NAPs covered 2010-2013 (with modification in 2012), 2014-2017 and 2018-2022. The WPS agenda and promoting global gender equality internationally is a key priority for the government. The UK is a global leader in this field with strong international partnerships. The UK NAP was produced in collaboration with civil society and academics, including the Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPs) Network and the LSE Centre for WPS, following in-country civil society consultations in Afghanistan, Burman, Somali and Syria.

Vision:

The NAP adopts a theory of change approach aimed at 'more inclusive and effective humanitarian responses' (p. 23) and links impact, outcomes, outputs and activities. These seven strategic outcomes set the vision. The vision incorporates capabilities, leadership and processes that are necessary to deliver the WPS commitment.

Underlying Policy

Given the evidence that gender equality is essential to building peace and security, it is a UK priority to attain political, social and economic rights for women. The third NAP concentrates on focus countries of Afghanistan, Burma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria, across defence, diplomatic and development concerns. There are 23 teams in these countries that are supported by policy teams in the UK.

Key Objectives

1. **Decision-making**: An increase in women's meaningful and representative participation in decision-making processes, including conflict prevention and peacebuilding at community and national levels.

2. **Peacekeeping**: A gender perspective is consistently applied in the setting and implementation of international standards and mandates for peace operations.

3. **Gender-based violence**: An increase in the number and scale of interventions that integrate effective measures to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, particularly violence against women and girls (VAWG) which is the most prevalent form of GBV.

4. **Humanitarian response**: Women's and girls' needs are more effectively met by humanitarian actors and interventions through needs-based responses that promote meaningful participation and leadership.

5. **Security and justice**: Security and justice actors are increasingly accountable to women and girls, and responsive to their rights and needs.

6. **Preventing and countering violent extremism**: Ensure the participation and leadership of women in developing strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism.

7. **UK capabilities**: HMG continues to strengthen its capability, processes and leadership to deliver against WPS commitments.

Governance

The plan is jointly owned by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development and the Ministry of Defence. There is a strong emphasis on senior political leadership and high profile WPS champions. Working with partners is important and civil society is a key contributor. There is a whole of government approach.

Budget and finance

There are targeted projects with gender equality mainstreamed rather than a funding pool. WPS work is funded from core budgets.

Monitoring and evaluation

The outcomes have specified indicators and are designed to be specific, measurable, achievable and relevant. The outcomes are based on evidence, local knowledge and contextual understandings that interventions differ across focus countries. Within the seven strategies, NAP indicators used are international measuring tools.

Emerging Issues

There are a wide range of issues included that acknowledge the changing security environment, including heeding complex diversity, the need to include men and boys as well as women and girls, violent extremism, disaster response and a continuum of violence in humanitarian emergencies.

NAP History

2006
First NAP

2010
Second NAP, with revision in 2012

2014
Third NAP

2018
Fourth and current NAP

Lessons Learned

This NAP has been developed based on lessons learned from the previous three UK NAPs and new research and evidence on WPS.

The UK moved from a first plan with general objectives but unspecific owners, to a second plan with increased specific activities and assign departments, to a third plan with specific outcome statements that are directed to outputs and activities.

The fourth NAP covers a longer period, enabling greater opportunity for the UK and implementing partners to demonstrate impact against long-term objectives and outcomes.

There is now a more strategic approach to MEL that maintains accountability to Parliament and streamlines reporting for implementing team.

A continuous lesson learning occurs between teams and departments to provide best practices and emerging challenges.

It sets out more clearly how it fits with wider UK government policies and strategies to ensure complementarity with other Government efforts.

The NAP positions WPS agenda across wide cross-government work on violence against women.

Annex 6

Recommendations from Fourth Annual Civil Society Report Card and Global Study

Recommendations from Fourth Annual Civil Society Report Card (2016)[122]

1. The government design a Theory of Change for the second NAP with expert support and civil society input.

2. The government engage in consultation with conflict-affected women and girls in the development of Australia's second NAP.

3. The government – in consultation with civil society – develop a public timeline for a multi-layered, inclusive, and funded consultation process for the design of the second NAP.

   12. The government engage with civil society and fund research on the links between WPS and emerging issues.

   13. The government address the barriers to Department of Immigration and Border Protection's effective engagement with the WPS agenda.

   14. The government provide a public response to the NAP's reviews and reports.

   15. The second NAP align with relevant national-level policies and frameworks.

   16. The second NAP recognise the interconnections between WPS and other global peace and security initiatives.

   17. Australia demonstrate global leadership in aligning its second NAP with CEDAW GR30 and the SDGs.

   18. The government strengthen the governance framework for the second NAP and formalise the NAP's subcommittee.

   19. The government streamline reporting for the second NAP with a focus upon quality of reporting and engagement with report findings.

   20. The leadership and coordination role must be effectively resourced by the government.

   21. The government consider establishing a standalone Secretariat within Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) that can lead and coordinate the next NAP.

   22. The second NAP formalise and clearly articulate civil society's role with regards to participation in governance, shadow reporting, and communication.

   23. The government fund civil society's WPS engagement and participation in NAP activities.

   24. The Government respond to the findings of the Interim Review, the Third Annual Civil Society Report Card, and the Global Study to develop a robust M&E framework.

   25. The government draw upon global research and independent expertise in the development of the second NAP's M&E framework.

   26. The government develop a transparent, dedicated, and sustainable funding model that ensures each department has the effective tools (financing, personnel, and expertise) to implement the second NAP.

   27. The government review advice from the United Nations Secretary-General and consult global best practice in designing its funding model for the second NAP.

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[122] Fourth Annual Civil Society Report Card, Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. http://wpscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/fourth-annual-civil-society-report-card-on-the-national-action-plan-for-women-peace-and-security.pdf

Recommendations of the Global Study

Based on their findings, the *Global Study* makes ten recommendations.[123] These recommendations are significant as second and third generation NAPs begin to include some in their new iterations.

1. No to militarisation, yes to prevention. All other means must be exhausted before resorting to military force.

2. The women, peace and security agenda must be respected as a human rights mandate. The agenda should never be 'securitised'. Women's agency must be respected, and their autonomy prioritised.

3. Mediators of peace processes and leadership of UN field missions must be proactive with regard to women's participation. Such participation makes peace sustainable.

4. Perpetrators must be punished and justice must be transformative. Impunity must come to an end and various reconciliation efforts are important after intense warfare.

5. Localisation of peacebuilding programs must involve women at every level and be supplemented by a comprehensive security plan to protect women and girls in the aftermath of conflict. Peacebuilding processes must respect the local context and women's participation is crucial for them to be sustainable. Without a Rule of Law system violence against women intensifies.

6. Funding women peacebuilders and respecting their autonomy is one important way of countering extremism. There is a correlation between women's rights and a lack of extremism in society. Women peacebuilders have a better understanding of local realities and expectations and are thus best equipped to fight for their rights.

7. All key actors must play their role. Member states, regional organisations, media, civil society and youth must all do their part to promote and implement the women, peace and security agenda.

8. It is crucial to move towards a well-informed Security Council that applies a gender lens to all issues that come before it. An informal expert group should be created in order to sustain the attention to the women, peace and security agenda.

9. Across the board, 15% of all peace and security funding should be earmarked for programs impacting women. There is a need to address the persistent failure to adequately fund the WPS agenda.

10. It is necessary to build a stronger gender architecture at the United Nations. The WPS agenda should be made a priority in the field and at headquarters, through a variety of measures.

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[123] Ibid., pp. 394-396.