



gender action for peace and security

UK National Action Plan: Midline Recommendations Next Steps for the New, Forward Looking NAP 2018+

Below GAPS has outlined detailed feedback on the [National Action Plan \(NAP\) Midline Recommendations](#). The feedback is outlined per recommendation.

Recommendation 1:

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

- We agree that the NAP should adopt a thematic framework based on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) pillars and acknowledges the ways in which the pillars cross over. This was a finding from the consultations GAPS facilitated during the development of the current NAP. In the workshop reports and summary of the findings, participants highlighted the intersection across the pillars of the NAP. Participation was used as a key example of this with consultation responses demonstrating the importance of women and girls participation across the pillars of UNSCR 1325.
- GAPS was supportive of the intervention framework in the current NAP. It would be useful to see this developed further in the new NAP and used as a foundation for results-based planning and a sound Theory of Change to underpin HMG's WPS commitments.
- GAPS has comments on the initial drafts of the Intervention Framework which we could re-send for the development of the new NAP and development of a comprehensive thematic framework or Theory of Change.

Recommendation 2:

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

- We are pleased to see reference to indicators in the Midline. We agreed that they should be aligned to other existing indicators. However, the NAP is likely to also need independent indicators, particularly regarding Building National Capacity. The indicators need to be measureable and SMART to enable effective monitoring and evaluation.
- Indicators that are used and aligned to other programmes, policies and strategies should account for: the global targets for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – these including indicators for SDGs 5 and 16 and as well as indicators that apply to WPS in other SDGs, such as 1.4 proportion of population living in households with access to basic services, and with secure tenure rights to land, which are being gender disaggregated; 4.1 extent to which education for sustainable development, including gender equality, is mainstreamed at all levels (including in national education policies); and 8.5.1 assessing the average hourly earnings of female and male employees; the indicators could also include the national and county-specific indicators that are being developed for the SDGs; VAWG strategies (domestic and international); programming indicators; and Country Business Plan indicators.
- In addition to SDG 5, SDG 16 indicators can play a critical role in the NAP, particularly because several of the indicators are perception-based, and therefore contribute to a rounded picture of progress. For example, indicators 16.1.4 and 16.7.2 measure whether people feel safe walking alone in the area they live, and the proportion of population who

believe decision-making is inclusive. Using such indicators contributes to a more comprehensive picture of progress and helps avoid misleading results – by looking at perceptions and numbers of women. However, women and men are not homogeneous categories, thus ensuring data disaggregation by a range of identity markers will be vital.

- In order to develop sound indicators that are SMART, work should to collate and develop indicators should take place as soon as the NAP starts to be developed to ensure the NAP is forward looking and can be monitored and evaluated effectively. It needs to be based on sound aims and objectives from which indicators and activities can be chosen and developed.

Recommendation 3:

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

- The current approach is already two tier with focus countries included in the NAP and Implementation Plan, and other countries reported on annually.
- The country plans should remain public for transparency and accountability. They should also, where possible, be translated into the official languages of the WPS focus countries to ensure accountability to people in the focus countries. The country plans should be integrated into the NAP and published at the same time as the NAP. WPS-focused activities outlined in country plans and/or the NAP should also be integrated into HMG country-focused departmental plans to ensure widespread and deliberate uptake of the WPS agenda.
- GAPS recommends the upcoming NAP maintains as many of the same focus countries as possible. In the previous NAP, decisions on and negotiation with country and desk-staff to gain agreement on the focus countries took approximately six months. This ate into valuable NAP development time and political capital in getting country offices and embassies on board.

Recommendation 4:

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

- GAPS and the WPS Team in the FCO, DFID and MOD engaged in reaching out to other government departments who should be involved in the NAP in 2013. These included, the Home Office, UK Police Training, cross-Whitehall Countering Violent Extremism teams, the Government Equalities Office and the Northern Ireland Office.
- GAPS agrees that integration of WPS principles and commitments into relevant parts of these departments is required to ensure that the NAP is inward looking as well as outward looking. This will not only be important for the UK's credibility but also because the UK also faces domestic challenges when it comes to achieving the WPS agenda in the UK. Efforts that are needed include VAWG, refugee and trafficked women, appointing more women to senior roles in the security services and civil service, and with relation to Northern Ireland.
- GAPS supports the integration of other departmental work into the NAP, however, any work on gender and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) should be carried out with caution given the risk of the Women, Peace and Security agenda being instrumentalised

for CVE purposes. This could be directly harmful to women and girls in fragile contexts. For example, restrictions on financial transfers to areas subject to counter-terror measures often [prevent](#) women's organisations from receiving funding, while [attempts](#) to justify military interventions based on concerns about women's rights risk provoking a violent backlash against women's rights activists. Recent [research](#) underlines that counter-terror strategies also frequently serve to deepen conflicts and undermine efforts to build peace. While women can and do play important roles in preventing radicalisation in their communities, [simplistic notions](#) that empowering women is *the* key to ending violent extremism risk [placing a huge burden](#) of responsibility on individual women without addressing the many other injustices and failures of governance which so often drive conflict and radicalisation.

Recommendation 5:

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

- Conflict and gender analysis is vital. Gender analysis should be integrated as a standard element of any conflict analysis and should not be treated as a separate process or an optional extra. This should be done systematically through the JACS and NSC Country strategies and apply across the departments, and in CSSF, CVE and DFID programming.
- Conflict and gender analysis requires sound Women, Peace and Security and gender experts.
- Gender as well as conflict analysis should be comprehensive and include consultation with the national Women's Rights Organisations and civil society whose expertise are essential in the development of gender analysis.
- Gender analysis should be integrated into the NAP itself, all conflict policy and programming in FCAS. This needs to assess the role of gender norms and identities in driving conflict and insecurity, including the role of men in perpetrating violence. Funding and programming stemming from such analysis should be targeted at addressing these gender norms. For example, VAWG programming should be based in the gendered norms that exist and prevail and should aim to transform these norms.

Recommendation 6:

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

- GAPS welcomes the recommendation for strengthening relations with UK civil society and hopes to use the upcoming NAP to build-on our already strong relationship with HMG.
- GAPS agrees that the development and consultation on the new NAP should start as soon as possible to ensure it can be developed in a systematic manner. The emphasis on the need for consultations with civil society in the focus countries is welcome. However, it could be further emphasised by stressing that: these consultations should be comprehensive and regular and not a one-off consultations; a variety of civil society actors should be consulted, including but not exclusively Women's Rights Organisations; and that civil society will need to be given notice well in advance of any consultation. The NAP should also clearly demonstrate how the input from civil society has been taken into account.

- Civil society – both in the focus countries as well as in the UK – should continue to be consulted throughout the NAP implementation period in order to reassess and, if necessary, adjust the set priorities.
- During the development of the new NAPS, GAPS welcomes a clear plan and accompanying timeline for the development of the NAP, adequate time to review the documents, and feedback on recommendations made.

Recommendation 7:

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

- Resources are key for the implementation of the NAP. We welcome the recommendation for funding for training of in-country staff, which we had recommended in the current NAP. GAPS believes that this training should be mandatory for UK-based, SAIC and locally engaged staff working in or on policy and programming in FCAS.
- GAPS believes that the requirement for a NAP training budget is evidence that the NAP and WPS needs its own, ring fenced funding. Budget is required for training, consultations, meetings in-country with civil society and women and girl's rights organisations, and NAP monitoring and evaluation. It is also required to ensure that HMG is able to set and meet targets for funding WPS programming that is accessible to local civil society, particularly Women's Rights Organisations. The UN Secretary General [recommended that 15% of all peacebuilding funds](#) is dedicated to gender equality, the UK to strive to meet this call.
- We also welcome the recommendation for having CSSF targets as well as fund for CSOs and Women's Rights Organisations. We believe this is best funded through ring-fenced funding to ensure targets are in place, monitored and achieved. Funding for women's organisations was a commitment in UNSCR 2122, but many countries are yet to deliver on it. Developing a mechanism for such funding would be a progressive step which could demonstrate the UK's leadership on Women, Peace and Security.
- GAPS hopes that HMG will use the successful gender marker tracking of CSSF to track other funds and programming. OECD's upcoming research on the gender marker in FCAS should provide useful guidance on this.
- Internal resources could also ensure that Country Business Plans and Departmental Business Plans for FCAS, particularly the NAP focus countries, include reference to and objectives on Women, Peace and Security and/or the NAP.
- Furthermore, human resources should be dedicated on all HMG funding boards and well as appointing a Gender Champion or WPS Champion on the National Security Council. Ensuring dedicated gender and or WPS leads on the NSC and all funding boards will help HMG ensure that gender analysis is integrated into policy and programming in FCAS.

Recommendation 8:

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

- We support the recommendation to extend the length of the NAP. However, should the NAP period extend, it is vital that the NAP is based on results-based planning, a sound Theory of Change and policy coherence.
- Any extension to the NAP needs to include a strong monitoring and evaluation plan, including a baseline, midterm assessment and midterm consultation with civil society in the UK and in-country and final evaluation. The findings from these should result in updates to the NAP if required.
- This should also include a continued commitment to the annual written and oral reports to parliament.
- Should HMG adopt flexible implementation plans, it should commit to these being public documents. This is an important sign of transparency and accountability.

Recommendation 9:

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

- GAPS supports the inclusion of WPS in job descriptions and performance management systems. GAPS recommended during the development of the current NAP that WPS be included in the job descriptions of staff in the focus countries and that Embassies, High Commissions and Country Offices have a WPS Champion. All policy and programme staff in-country in FCAS should have WPS objectives. This would not only support HMG's ability to meet WPS objectives in country, but will also support the extension of knowledge of the NAP and WPS across HMG.
- Such commitments must be supported by mandatory training (see recommendation 7), and guidance to staff to enable them to effectively develop and meet their targets.
- Objectives should include, among other things, a commitment to meet with civil society, particularly Women's Rights Organisations, on Women, Peace and Security on a regular basis

Recommendation 10:

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

- GAPS believes that indicators are essential in the upcoming NAP. Those indicators need to reflect the objectives, outputs and activities in the NAP. This includes for the focus countries.
- See responses under recommendations 2 and 7 for feedback on indicators and country offices and Embassy recommendations, respectively.