

A GLOBAL HANDBOOK



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PARLIAMENTS AS PARTNERS SUPPORTING

**THE WOMEN
PEACE AND
SECURITY
AGENDA**

A GLOBAL HANDBOOK

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United Nations Development Programme
Oslo Governance Centre
Kongens gate 12, 0153 Oslo, NORWAY
www.undp.org

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A G L O B A L H A N D B O O K

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2000, the UN Security Council endorsed the groundbreaking Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on women, peace and security (WPS). UNSCR 1325 responded to a raft of lessons learned over the previous decade or more on peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The nature of warfare was changing, with civilians increasingly targeted, and women, in particular, often bearing the brunt of conflict. Women suffered a range of harms, from sexual and gender-based violence inflicted by combatants, to the loss of their spouses and families, to the loss of their livelihoods and personal autonomy. Furthermore, even during transitional and peacebuilding periods, it became clear that women continued to be marginalised, with domestic and international stakeholders overlooking their contributions and excluding them from peace processes. There is now a growing understanding that sexual minorities and non-binary gender identities also face distinct vulnerabilities during conflict, which should be reflected in a broader framing of the WPS agenda.

UNSCR 1325 called on countries to address the impacts that conflict had on women and girls around the globe and to systematically include women in peacebuilding efforts, including peace talks, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Over the last two decades, UNSCR 1325 has been complemented by an additional nine resolutions on women, peace and security (see Figure 2 for more detail). Together, these resolutions provide guidance to national and international actors on their roles in relation to WPS.

The women, peace and security agenda remains critically important in a world that grapples with complex conflict, whether it be violent state-based warfare, civil war, internal conflict or violent extremism. In nearly 80 countries, National Action Plans (NAPs) on women, peace and security have been developed to set priorities for action by government bodies and other agencies. In other countries, gender-sensitive peace and security priorities have been captured in sectoral strategies on gender, justice or national security. The participation of parliaments in efforts to support the women, peace and security agenda has been variable, with many parliaments either unaware of or uninvolved in national implementation efforts.¹

The Handbook

This Handbook seeks to provide guidance to parliamentarians on their role in supporting the UNSCR 1325 agenda. The objectives of this Handbook are three-fold, namely to:

- Provide information to parliamentarians on the global women, peace and security agenda as it applies domestically.
- Provide guidance on how parliaments and parliamentarians can help implement the women, peace and security agenda. This guidance is for use not only by Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff, but also by development practitioners who work with parliaments.
- Share examples of good practice from other parliaments and projects.

¹ Only Europe has undertaken a systematic review of parliamentary engagement in supporting the WPS agenda, through the survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly on WPS implementation. In other regions, there is only sparse information available and a simple review of existing WPS NAPs shows only limited inclusion of legislatures; see Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves, *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018)*, DCAF: Geneva, p.12-13.

This Handbook is aimed at all Members of Parliament (MPs) of whatever sex. Addressing peace and security issues that affect women is an issue not only for women MPs; it is the role of all MPs to ensure that every member of society has the protections and opportunities to live peaceful and prosperous lives. The Handbook is organised this way:

- Chapters 1-3 give an overview of the WPS agenda and its relationship to other global and national commitments to gender equality and sustainable development.²
- Chapters 4-8 discuss how the WPS agenda can be implemented in the context of each of the core functions of a parliament — namely, lawmaking, budgeting, oversight, and representation. These chapters provide action ideas and examples of good practices for parliamentarians and other stakeholders interested in working to advance the WPS agenda.
- Chapters 9-10 reflect upon how parliamentary groupings and staff can support women's peace and security.

At the end of each chapter is a short series of self-assessment questions and a set of action ideas to spark reflection, discussion, and action on the WPS agenda.

This Handbook is not a “one-size-fits-all” template for action. Instead, it offers information, questions and ideas that parliamentarians can apply in their own contexts to ensure implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

2 For more detailed guidance on UNSCR 1325, refer to:
(a) UN Women Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security.
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/10/un-women-sourcebook-on-women-peace-and-security>; and
(b) UN Women Guidebook on CEDAW general recommendation no. 30 and the UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/8/guidebook-cedawgeneralrecommendation30-womenpeacesecurity>



CHAPTER 1

THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA: OVERVIEW

Understanding the gendered nature of conflict

Since the year 2000, global understanding of the gendered nature of conflict and peacebuilding has grown substantially. Not only do we now know that conflicts are experienced differently by women and girls than by men and boys, but also that their roles in conflict and peacebuilding are varied and complex. Women and girls have long been targets of war, regularly subjected to sexual and gender-based violence and enslavement as part of the strategy of combatants. Often left to manage home life when men go off to war, in many countries, women have also been active in protecting their homes and communities. Women may act as peacebuilders, including through women's organisations and by using their influence in families and communities. They may also be agents of violence, acting as supporters or combatants in the armed groups. Finally, they may move between these roles, depending on the situation they find themselves in and the opportunities they are given.³ In recent decades, as war has morphed from inter-state conflicts between competing armies to include violent armed insurgencies and violent extremist groups, the impact on women has become even more troubling.

Despite decades of effort by the women's movement to focus attention on the gendered impact of conflict, the increase in UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations during the 1990s saw the continued application of narrowly-focused military responses, with little attention paid to addressing the particular needs of women in conflict-affected contexts. Women also continued to be overlooked for peacekeeping operations and excluded from subsequent peace processes. In response to ongoing gender-blind international responses to conflict, the women's movement ramped up its efforts to force governments to act. In 2000, this lobbying came to a head, with the UN Security Council leveraging the political momentum of the new millennium to officially acknowledge women's exclusion from peace-making and peacebuilding and to call for action.

UNSCR 1325 and four pillars of WPS

The Women, Peace and Security ("WPS") agenda was formally initiated by the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which was adopted on 31 October 2000.⁴ UNSCR 1325 affirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building initiatives. The WPS agenda rests on four pillars: prevention, participation, protection and relief and recovery. (See Figure 1.)

³ UNDP, ICAN, "Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Rehabilitation and Reintegration from Violent Extremism" (2019).

⁴ UN Security Council, Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), 31 October 2000, S/RES/1325 (2000).

FIGURE 1 FOUR PILLARS OF THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY FRAMEWORK

UNSCR 1325 is a wide-ranging resolution that reaffirms the important role of women in the conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. It stresses the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.⁵

UNSCR 1325 urges all stakeholders to take action to increase the participation of women and calls on the UN to incorporate gender perspectives into all of its peace and security efforts. It calls on stakeholders to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.

Subsequent resolutions

In the years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the UN Security Council has adopted nine more resolutions on women, peace and security, in order to provide more detailed guidance on specific aspects of war and its impact on women, addressing such issues as sexual and gender-based violence, human trafficking and the gendered aspects of peacekeeping efforts.

Relevance to all country contexts

UNSCR 1325 was designed not for any one type of development or conflict context, but for all contexts. It applies to countries in ongoing violent conflict that urgently need to address protection and recovery issues, and it applies equally to so-called "stable" countries that may still need to address issues such as violence against women or the gendered aspects of increasing radicalisation.

UNSCR 1325 is also directed at countries that deploy forces for peacekeeping operations. These countries still need to ensure that women are included in decision-making and leadership roles in military and civilian peace operations, and that all forces are properly trained in gender-sensitive peace operations, have the skills and resources to address the conflict issues faced by women and girls where they are deployed, and are properly managed to address any shortcomings in these areas (including punishing sexual or gender-based violence committed by peacekeeping troops). Likewise, countries that provide more general development funding to support women's empowerment and peacebuilding need to ensure that their contributions are conflict-sensitive and contribute to the WPS agenda.

⁵ UNSCR 1325, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325>.

FIGURE 2 UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS RELATED TO WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Resolution 1325 (2000)	Addresses the impact of conflict on women and recognizes the contribution of women in preventing and resolving conflict and their role in maintaining international peace and security.
Resolution 1820 (2008)	Recognizes conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of war used by warring parties to achieve military or political ends and resulting in impunity, which require strengthened efforts to end sexual violence in conflict.
Resolution 1888 (2009)	Provides for more effective implementation of Resolution 1820, including by establishing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to provide high-level leadership, and establishing women protection advisers within peacekeeping missions.
Resolution 1889 (2009)	Focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding, includes a strategy for increasing the number of women participating in peace talks, and calls for the development of global indicators to measure the implementation of Resolution 1325 by the UN and Member States. A set of 26 indicators have now been developed to track and account for implementation, organised into 4 Pillars: Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery. The indicators are listed in the Secretary-General's Report (S/2010/498).
Resolution 1960 (2010)	Reaffirms the earlier commitments required to address sexual violence in conflict and mandates the creation of tools to combat impunity by listing perpetrators and establishing monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements.
Resolution 2106 (2013)	Requests all actors, including the Security Council, to do more to implement earlier resolutions and to combat impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict. Acknowledges the importance of civil society in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict.
Resolution 2122 (2013)	Sets in place stronger measures to improve women's participation and representation in conflict resolution, especially through leadership positions. Reaffirms that gender equality is central to achieving international peace and security. Sets out the need for humanitarian aid to ensure access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services.
Resolution 2242 (2015)	On women's roles in countering violent extremism and terrorism and improved Security Council working methods on women, peace and security CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 (2015). Links the women, peace and security agenda to CEDAW, providing detailed guidance on implementation of the agenda. (See Chapter 3 for more.)
Resolution 2272 (2016):	Provides measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse in peace operations.
Resolution 2467 (2019)	Calls on parties to conflicts around the world to put an end to sexual violence immediately, to prevent such acts in the future, and introduces accountability measures for perpetrators of sexual violence and calls for effective support measures for victims of sexual violence to be implemented.

Implementation challenges and opportunities for parliamentary action

In the years since the endorsement of UNSCR 1325, there have been some improvements in how states protect and include women during and after conflict. However, women around the globe continue to suffer severely. In an effort to learn from efforts to implement UNSCR 1325, in 2015 the UN Secretary General published a Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (“Global Study”).⁶

The Global Study revealed that while the women, peace and security agenda had contributed to significant changes in international norms surrounding women’s political leadership and decision-making on peace and security, its effect on the lives of women at local levels has been limited. Some of the issues the Global Study identified can be addressed by parliamentary action, such as legislation on:

- The protection and promotion of women’s rights (see Table 1 in the next chapter for some common examples of such WPS-related laws).
- Insufficient funds from the national budget for WPS National Action Plans (NAP).
- Lack of monitoring and accountability for WPS NAP implementation.
- Lack of coordination across government bodies and levels of government, as well as with civil society, to ensure WPS activities are effectively implemented.

These approaches will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Ensuring that the women, peace and security commitments have a meaningful impact on the lives of women and girls is a critical problem. How can governments — and parliaments — take the words of UNSCR 1325 and its supporting resolutions and make them a lived reality for women and girls, especially for those living in areas affected by conflict?

LEGISLATING UN RESOLUTIONS ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Since UNSCR 1325 was approved in 2000, it has been complemented by additional resolutions on emerging issues. For example, Resolutions 1820, 1888 1960 and 2106 draw attention to sexual violence and rape as a tool of war and call on governments to take urgent action.

Parliaments are now starting to report on their own efforts to implement these resolutions.⁷ For example, **Croatia** reported as part of a 2018 NATO study on WPS priorities that it passed the historic *Act on the Rights of Victims of Sexual Violence during the Military Aggression against Republic of Croatia in the Homeland War*, which was in response to sexual violence perpetrated during the wars of 1991–95. Under the law, rape victims receive a single payment of HRK100,000 (about US\$14,500), in addition to a monthly HRK2,500 allowance, free counselling, health care and legal assistance.⁸ It was the first law of its kind, providing financial reparations for wartime acts of sexual violence against women.

The **Latvian** Saeima, or parliament, passed the *2015 Asylum Law*, which requires that interviews with asylum seekers should be conducted by officials “sufficiently competent to take into account the personal and general circumstances of the asylum seeker,” including sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.⁹ Croatia also adopted the *2015 International and Temporary Protection Act*, which ensures that “appropriate support shall be provided for applications in relation to their [asylum seekers] personal circumstances” through “special procedural and reception guarantees,” including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and exposure to rape and sexual violence.¹⁰

6 Radhika Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (UN Women, 2015).

7 Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves, *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly* (2018), DCAF: Geneva, p.12–13.

8 (2015) “Croatia: Legislation Gives Benefits to War-Time Rape Victims,” Library of Congress: Washington DC, 5 June, <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/croatia-legislation-gives-benefits-to-war-time-rape-victims/>; (undated) “Compensation for Croatian survivors of sexual violence in conflict, 20 years after the war,” Global Fund for Women, <https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/rosa-croatia/#.XBIEPmgzbZs>

9 Ibid. p.13.

10 Ibid. p.13.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPS AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: RAISING AWARENESS OF WPS AND MEASURING PREPAREDNESS IN PARLIAMENT

- Parliamentary staff can raise awareness of WPS in parliament by distributing materials to MPs on the women, peace and security agenda (e.g., this Handbook, key resolutions, a WPS National Action Plan, national reporting on WPS issues).
- Interested MPs, women's caucuses or parliamentary committees can work with staff, civil society organisations or development partners to organise a seminar for MPs on the WPS agenda.
- Interested MPs, women's caucuses or parliamentary committees can undertake a WPS self-assessment based on the questions in this Handbook. Such self-assessments can benefit from involving external partners (e.g., women's organisations, local politicians and CSO leaders, development partners) who can offer their expertise, resources or facilitation support.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Have any information sessions or trainings been held for MPs on the WPS agenda?
 - ✓ If parliament runs an induction programme for MPs following national elections, does the induction include briefings on gender and/or WPS?
 - ✓ Has the parliament reached out to the national WPS focal point or relevant departments to request a briefing or training for MPs on the WPS agenda?
- Has the parliamentary secretariat or a relevant government department provided MPs with any materials or information seminars on the women, peace and security agenda?
 - ✓ Has this Global Handbook on Parliaments and the Women Peace and Security Agenda been shared with all MPs?
- Has the parliament reviewed the status of implementation of the WPS agenda and agreed to a set of priorities to move forward?

CHAPTER 2

ALIGNING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA WITH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Since the endorsement of UNSCR 1325, other resolutions have been agreed upon that provide further guidance on how Member States can ensure women's peace and security. At the same time, the international community has continued to implement global frameworks on this agenda. After the publication of two major UN reports on peacebuilding — the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations¹¹ and the global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325¹² — the UN General Assembly and Security Council passed complementary “peacebuilding resolutions” in April 2016 (referred to as the “Sustaining Peace” resolutions)¹³ which addressed peace at all stages of a conflict and in all its dimensions, with specific references to the needs of women and girls in line with UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions. Together, UNSCR 1325 and other global resolutions form a set of measures that Member States have committed to implementing.

Alignment with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, 193 Member States of the United Nations endorsed Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (“2030 Agenda”). The 2030 Agenda is supported by 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),¹⁴ which together set out universal, long-term development objectives intended to guide the world towards more sustainable economic, environmental and social development. Agenda 2030 came into force on 1 January 2016 and all countries are now moving forward with planning and implementation efforts to achieve the SDGs by December 2030.

11 High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, ‘Uniting Our Strengths for Peace — Politics, Partnerships, and People: Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations’ (United Nations, 2015), https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/446.

12 Radhika Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (UN Women, 2015).

13 ‘A/RES/70/262: Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.’

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_262.pdf

‘Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016)’ 1, [https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/S/RES/2282\(2016\)](https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/S/RES/2282(2016)).

14 The SDGs replace the eight Millennium Development Goals that were to be achieved during the years 2000-2015.

FIGURE 3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

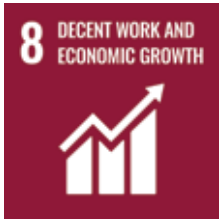
- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Although the women, peace and security agenda was endorsed in 2000, the SDGs, adopted in 2015, do not replace the agenda, but instead complement it. The SDGs also complement the global gender equality commitments that were reflected in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, an agenda which has driven global efforts on WPS in the years since it was agreed upon in 1995. These efforts eventually resulted in UNSCR 1325. The aims of the Beijing Platform, UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions are now captured in the SDGs, and efforts to implement these commitments will contribute to achievement of SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 16 (inclusive governance and peace).



GOAL 5 commits countries to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. SDG 5 is broken down into six targets, with Target 5.2 specifically calling on governments to “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.” This tracks closely with the women, peace and security agenda, as do additional targets on ending all forms of discrimination against women (Target 5.1) and increasing women’s role in decision making (Target 5.5). This last target is particularly relevant to parliamentarians. Research by the Inter-Parliamentary Union has shown that both women MPs and staff are vulnerable to experiencing sexism, abuse and violence as part of their work environment.¹⁵ SDG Target 5.5, when read with the WPS agenda, encourages MPs to reflect on whether their own parliament has policies and mechanisms to ensure safe conditions for women to participate equally in the work of the legislature.

¹⁵ *Issues Brief: Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Europe* (October 2018), IPU: Geneva, <https://www.ipu.org/file/5472/download?token=PjtucdkS>.



GOAL 8 commits countries to promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. SDG 8 is broken down into ten targets, a number of which directly relate to the need for women, including in conflict-affected contexts, to have secure work. Target 8.5 calls for “decent work for all men and women,” while Target 8.7 calls for an end to forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking and Target 8.8 calls for safe working environments for all workers, including women migrants and those in precarious employment.



GOAL 16 commits to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. There are often trade-offs within countries regarding which SDGs are more important for a country’s development aspirations, with SDG 16 sometimes being treated as less important for governments that focus on economic growth, poverty reduction, health or education. However, the risks of not investing in SDG 16 are considerable: conflict and violence can reverse development gains; injustice and exclusion can fuel violence; insecurity, lack of access to justice and inequality is cyclical and mutually reinforcing and can lead to the outbreak of violent conflict.¹⁶ SDG 16 is supported by twelve targets, some of which focus on the rule of law, protection from violence and addressing the causes and effects of conflict. Target 16.7 focuses on ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, and highlights the role of parliament to promote gender-responsive decision-making. This approach recognises that women’s peace and security is inseparable from society’s peace and security, and that parliaments have an instrumental role in ensuring that laws concerning peace, justice and inclusion, including issues related to WPS, are discussed and adopted.

¹⁶ The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, ‘Enabling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16+: Anchoring peace, justice and inclusion’, United Nations, New York, 2019, www.sdg16hub.org.

PARLIAMENTARY EFFORTS TO PROMOTE SDGS IMPLEMENTATION

Parliaments have an important role to play in supporting sustainable development efforts at home and around the world.

From 2000 to 2015, the global development agenda was guided by the Millennium Development Goals, a set of eight goals developed primarily by the executive branch of governments. In 2015, these Goals were replaced by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, which were developed through a much more participatory process, including with inputs from parliamentarians via regional groupings and the global Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The SDGs reinforce the WPS agenda; both the SDGs and WPS reflect the understanding that peace, conflict and inclusion — especially of women and girls — are inextricably linked.

Since the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda, considerable attention has focused on ensuring that parliamentarians are engaged as active partners in implementing the SDGs. Two guides have been published to assist MPs to identify how they can most effectively use their law-making, budgeting, oversight and representational roles to effectively progress the SDGs agenda:

- *Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: A Parliamentary Handbook* (UNDP, GOPAC, IDB).¹⁷
- *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: A self-assessment toolkit* (UNDP, IPU).¹⁸

UNDP and the IPU have been working with parliaments across the world to facilitate parliamentary self-assessments based on the abovementioned Toolkit, thus helping MPs to determine how their parliaments can systematically support the SDGs. This *Handbook on the Role of Parliaments as Partners in Advancing the Women, Peace and Security* is intended to be used alongside such an SDGs self-assessment, with a special focus on SDG 5 and WPS.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: INTEGRATING WPS IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES ON THE SDGS

- If parliament undertakes a self-assessment on the SDGs, the questions in this Handbook can be used as a supplement to ensure that parliament integrates the WPS agenda into its efforts on the SDGs.
- If parliamentary committees have been tasked with oversight of the SDGs, these committees could also review progress to implement the WPS agenda, in support of SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and inclusion). See Chapter 8 for more on promoting the WPS agenda through parliamentary committees.

¹⁷ *Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: A Parliamentary Handbook* (UNDP, GOPAC, IDB),

https://www.undp.org/content/dam/serbia/Publications%20and%20reports/English/DobraUprava/UNDP_SRB_Parliaments%20role%20in%20implementing%20the%20SDGs.pdf

¹⁸ *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: A self-assessment toolkit* (UNDP, IPU),

<https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/handbooks/2017-01/parliaments-and-sustainable-development-goals-self-assessment-toolkit>.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Does Parliament have a committee that is mandated to monitor SDGs implementation progress and/or has the SDGs agenda been mainstreamed into the mandates of one or more existing committees?
- Has any parliamentary committee undertaken an inquiry into how best to align the WPS agenda with national SDG plans and programming?

Alignment with international human rights frameworks and processes

Since the establishment of the United Nations, the protection and promotion of human rights has been at the heart of the commitments of member states to ensure that their people can live safe, peaceful and prosperous lives. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights set out these commitments in 1948 and has been followed by numerous subsequent declarations and conventions that elaborated on those fundamental principles. Implementation of the commitments in these declarations and conventions are continually monitored by UN committees and processes and by civil society groups. The most relevant of these human rights frameworks and processes are described below.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Even before the endorsement of UNSCR 1325, international frameworks already existed which sought to ensure women's rights and gender equality in all spheres of life, including as a prerequisite to peace. Most notably, one of the seven core international human rights treaties was specifically dedicated to women's rights, namely the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* ("CEDAW"). The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons also recognise the intersectionality of the identities of women and girls, an approach that also informs efforts to implement UNSCR 1325.

CEDAW clearly underpins the peace and security priorities elaborated upon in UNSCR 1325. CEDAW was drafted in 1979 and came into force in 1981. Since that time, it has become one of the most ratified treaties in the history of the UN, with 189 States Parties¹⁹ (only Iran, Palau, Somalia, Sudan, Tonga and the USA have not ratified). It sets out a framework of rights and duties, calling for action by States parties to address ongoing discrimination and inequality in political, social, economic and cultural life.

None of CEDAW's provisions refer to the WPS agenda, but the Preamble recognises that "the cause of peace requires the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields." To provide more explicit guidance for States parties, the UN CEDAW Committee, in 2013, issued General Recommendation No. 30 ("GR-30") on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, which offered measures to ensure women's rights are protected before, during and after conflict. GR-30 explicitly affirms CEDAW's linkages with the women, peace and security agenda. It also makes clear that CEDAW applies in all forms of conflict and post-conflict settings and addresses crucial issues facing women in these settings, including violence and challenges in access to justice, education, employment and health. It also provides guidance on the obligation of States parties to ensure due diligence with respect to crimes against women by non-State actors.

¹⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en.

For more detailed guidance on CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30, please refer to the UN Women Sourcebook on GR-30. See the resource listings at the end of this Handbook.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS / INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES IN OVERSEEING CEDAW AND UNSCR 1325 IMPLEMENTATION

Almost every legislature has a parliamentary committee with a mandate to oversee issues related to international relations or foreign affairs.

Such parliamentary committees can play an active role in overseeing national efforts on the women, peace and security agenda, especially when overseeing CEDAW implementation. All countries that have ratified CEDAW must regularly report to the UN CEDAW Committee on implementation, including in relation to WPS issues. In 2010, CEDAW issued guidance on the role of parliaments in relation to CEDAW (see Annex 1). For example, national CEDAW reports should be tabled for discussion in parliament, at least by the relevant parliamentary committee. Once the CEDAW Committee provides its written recommendations to the government, these should also be tabled in parliament, in order to identify what, if any, action parliament should take to advance the recommendations.

Recommendations from the CEDAW Committee often include guidance on law reform priorities.

UN Universal Periodic Review process

Each of the core human rights instruments agreed to by Member States has a process in place designed to oversee implementation. CEDAW has the UN CEDAW Committee, and other such committees have been established that require Member States to regularly report on their progress. In 2006, in an effort to support a more comprehensive approach to national human rights reporting, the UN replaced the previous UN Commission on Human Rights with a new UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and established a Universal Period Review process, which would require states to report to the UNHRC every five years on their progress in promoting and protecting human rights²⁰

The Universal Period Review (UPR) process is designed to “prompt, support, and expand the promotion and protection of human rights on the ground... [by] assessing States’ human rights records and addressing human rights violations.... The UPR also aims to provide technical assistance to States and enhance their capacity to deal effectively with human rights challenges and to share best practices in the field of human rights among States and other stakeholders.”²¹ The UPR is a useful venue to address the human rights implication of the WPS agenda. States are required to report across all of their international human rights commitments, which enables reviewing States to provide observations and recommendations on the cross-cutting issues regarding women and girls whose lives are affected by conflict and instability.

²⁰ ‘A/RES/60/251: Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 15 March 2006 on the Human Rights Council,’ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/502/66/PDF/N0550266.pdf?OpenElement>.

²¹ OHCHR | UPR Basic Facts about the UPR, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BasicFacts.aspx>.

PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT IN THE UPR PROCESS

Legislatures have a critical role to play in protecting and promoting human rights, including through their engagement with the UPR process. Parliamentarians or parliamentary committees can, for example,

- Request from the executive a copy of the draft UPR report for review.
- Join the delegation that presents the UPR report to the Human Rights Council, to hear the HRC's inquiries and recommendations first-hand.
- Review the recommendations of the HRC on the national UPR report, and recommend law reform or other actions.

In 2018, the UN issued a report produced in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on parliaments' contributions to HRC and the UPR process.²² The UN/IPU study provides considerable detail of how parliaments across the world have been using their powers to promote human rights, including women's rights in the context of peace and security. Of the 56 countries that responded to a survey, 35 had dedicated human rights committees; while their mandates varied, they had a lot in common, including initiating legislative reviews and amendments, undertaking parliamentary oversight of the executive's efforts to fulfil its human rights obligations, and engaging in debates and hearings on human rights.²³ The study included an annex that guided parliaments on how to establish and run parliamentary human rights committees.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: WPS AND TREATY REPORTING

UPR and treaty reporting provides multiple opportunities for parliaments to engage with WPS issues.²⁴

- During the preparation of the national UPR and/or CEDAW report, parliaments can hold hearings and have the resulting recommendations integrated into the final national report that is submitted to the UN by the executive branch. In this way, the legislature can play an important role in facilitating feedback directly from communities and civil society.
- MPs can take part in the UN review of the UPR and CEDAW reports. Some national delegations include MPs whose remit covers human rights and/or women's rights. This is an excellent opportunity for MPs to champion women's human rights internationally.
- Once the UPR and CEDAW Concluding Reports are produced by the Human Rights Council and CEDAW Committee respectively, MPs can also call for the report to be tabled in parliament and referred to relevant parliamentary committees for further consideration and action.

²² 'A/HRC/38/25: Contribution of Parliaments to the Work of the Human Rights Council and Its Universal Periodic Review - Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.'

²³ OHCHR Summary Report: Meeting on "Increasing Parliaments' Engagement with Human Rights" (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 28 June 2018). <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/UPR/Parliaments/SideEventParliamentsSummary.docx>.

²⁴ 'A/HRC/38/25: Contribution of Parliaments to the Work of the Human Rights Council and Its Universal Periodic Review - Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,' <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/135/75/PDF/G1813575.pdf?OpenElement>. Constance Hybsier, 'The Universal Periodic Review and Parliament: Opportunities for Engagement' (PowerPoint presentation, Viet Nam, 10 December 2014), <http://www.vn.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Article/NA%20PDF%20Connie.pdf>.

'Conclusions: Workshop on Strengthening The Role Of Parliamentarians In The Implementation Of Universal Periodic Review Recommendations' (IPU & Commonwealth Secretariat, 12 and 13 November 2012), <http://archive.ipu.org/splz-e/hr12/conclusions.pdf>.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Does Parliament have a committee that oversees foreign affairs issues, including reporting to the UN?
- Does the government submit its CEDAW reports and other UN human rights reports to parliament for consideration?
- Does a parliamentary committee review national CEDAW and UPR reports — including any recommendations from UN human rights bodies — in relation to the women, peace and security agenda?

CHAPTER 3

PARLIAMENTS AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

As the elected representatives of the people, parliamentarians have a duty to ensure that all people, including women and girls, can live their lives safely, securely and peacefully and have equal opportunities to build peaceful and secure societies. To these ends, parliamentarians can use their powers in the legislature to promote laws, budgets, policies and programmes.

WPS and core functions of parliament

Parliamentarians are valuable partners in ensuring the accountable, inclusive, participatory and transparent governance that is necessary to achieve sustainable development for all. The core functions and powers of parliaments provide MPs with avenues to promote the WPS agenda.

There are four key functions that practically all legislatures have as part of their mandate, though they may vary from one country to another. These functions include law-making, budget approval and oversight, oversight and control of the executive branch, and representation and outreach.

Table 1 summarises some of the entry points for parliaments to support the agenda, and the next four chapters discuss these approaches in more detail.

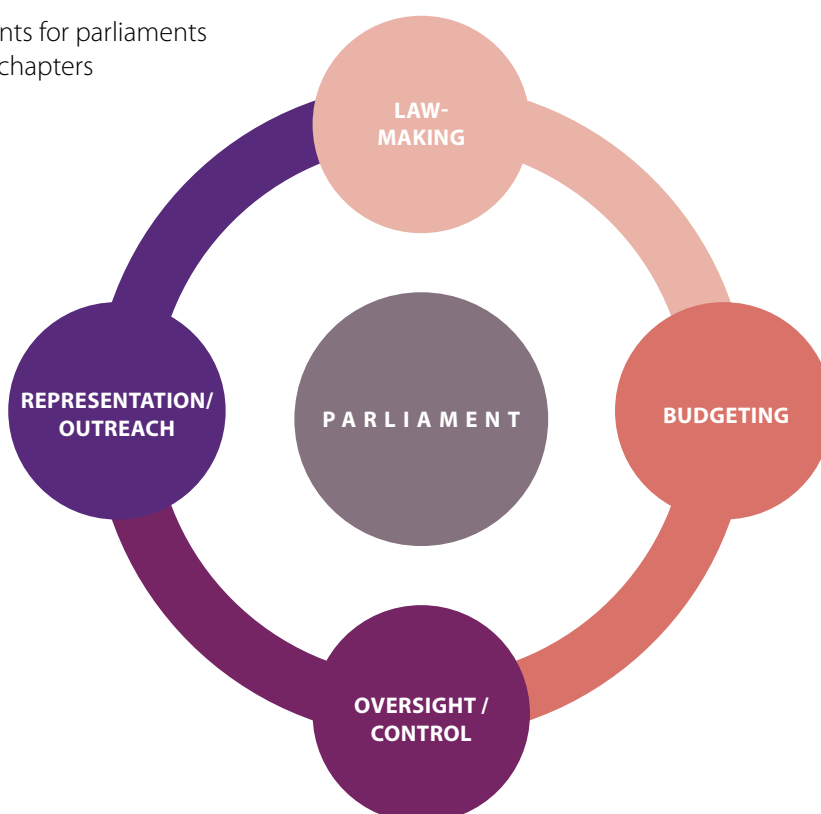


TABLE 1 SUPPORTING THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA THROUGH THE CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE LEGISLATURE

	Law-making	Budgeting	Oversight / Monitoring	Representation / Outreach
WPS planning & monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enshrining WPS commitments in legislation ✓ Requiring governments by law to produce a WPS NAP and annual WPS reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources for WPS coordination agency to support and monitor WPS NAP implementation ✓ Resources to strengthen capacities of various WPS implementing agencies ✓ Budget Committee oversight to ensure resources allocated for WPS provided and expended effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Annual review of WPS NAP implementation by the executive branch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inclusion of MPs in WPS Inter-Government Coordination Groups ✓ Local MP community forums on the WPS agenda, in collaboration with local government and civil society groups ✓ Meetings with women and youth rights activists and groups to learn how MPs and parliament can support their WPS work
Prevention: Prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Legislative review to identify existing discriminatory laws for amendment (e.g., marriage, inheritance, ownership, nationality) ✓ Anti-discrimination laws ✓ Gender equality legislation ✓ PVE laws ✓ Human and sexual trafficking laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources to support institutions tasked with implementing laws (e.g., gender commission, human rights commission, ministry of justice, police or security sector) ✓ Resources for programmes (e.g., PVE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regular committee review of UPR, CEDAW and other recommendations from all treaty bodies related to women's rights and GBV, including WPS reporting ✓ Committee review of implementation of laws listed under "Law-Making" to identify areas for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MP community forums to address local tensions and potential conflict triggers and their gendered impact, in collaboration with local government and civil society
Participation: Women's equal participation and gender equality in peace and security decision-making at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quotas and other measures for increasing women in national parliament and other local and public bodies ✓ Quotas and other measures to encourage increase in women in security forces ✓ Quotas and other measures to increase women in diplomatic corps and/or peace negotiation and mediation teams ✓ Employment laws, property and inheritance laws, family law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources for increasing political participation of women at local and national levels ✓ Training for women candidates ✓ Resources for training security personnel on gender and peace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of levels of women's participation in peace and security decision-making ✓ Review of national peacekeeping efforts, including on WPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support for parliamentary women's caucus to work on WPS issues, drawing on expertise from officials and civil society ✓ MPs mentoring women leaders at local level ✓ MPs mentoring women candidates or potential candidates
Protection: Women and girls are protected from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and their rights are protected and promoted in conflict-affected situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sexual and gender-based violence law ✓ Criminalisation of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers ✓ Sexual harassment law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources to implement SGBV legislation, such as women's shelters, counselling services, police services, court processes ✓ Resources to train security forces and/or peacekeepers on their WPS and gender obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of effectiveness of existing criminal or SGBV laws and their implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MP community forums to discuss local SGBV issues and challenges and their impact on the rights of women and girls, conducted in collaboration with local government and civil society
Relief & recovery: Relief needs of women are met and their capacities to act as agents in relief and recovery are strengthened in conflict and post-conflict situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Laws promoting reconciliation and reparations for women in post-conflict situations ✓ Laws promoting women's economic empowerment ✓ Laws ensuring disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) programmes ✓ Laws to ensure support for war widows, women ex-combatants and women-headed households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resources to implement government relief programmes, including for conflict-affected women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of relevant government DDR programmes ✓ Review of relevant government programmes on women's economic empowerment ✓ Review of government relief programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MP forums to support peacebuilding, e.g., to discuss local conflict or women's issues, especially in collaboration with local government and civil society

The development of WPS NAPs should be done through an inclusive, participatory process that brings together relevant government agencies, the national security services (both police and military), civil society and, ideally, parliament. In practice, however, the involvement of parliaments in the development of NAPs has been variable.

Most commonly, the WPS NAP development process has been led by either the national women's ministry or the ministry for national security. The lead agency sets up a working group, drawing together different stakeholders to conduct a problem analysis and develop an action plan. The NAP development process is an opportunity for parliament to get involved in setting the priorities for WPS implementation. MPs may be directly involved in the drafting process, and the final WPS NAP may be officially submitted for consideration and endorsement by the legislature.

ENGAGING PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

Good practice suggests that MPs should be involved in the development of National Action Plans as early as possible. MPs can benefit the NAP with their knowledge of the most critical issues in their home constituencies, law reform, budgets and parliamentary procedure.

When a WPS NAP is under development — whether or not the parliament is included in the drafting process — it may be useful to raise awareness with MPs on WPS and its relevance in their country. This will lay the groundwork for MPs to feel more ownership over the final WPS NAP and to take charge of ensuring oversight of its implementation.

A parliamentary briefing on WPS could be organised for MPs as a way to position the WPS agenda within larger development frameworks such as the SDGs or national development plans. Such a seminar would also provide an opportunity to start building commitment for elements of the NAP which may require parliamentary support, most notably, law reforms and peacebuilding in constituencies.

UNDP supported such WPS awareness-raising workshops in Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan through the “Global Project on the Role of Parliaments as Partners in Women, Peace and Security (2018-19).” These workshops were organised with local partners and included government officials to brief MPs on key issues. Including officials in such briefings facilitates relationships between parliaments and the executive branch, which is useful for ongoing monitoring efforts.

In **Sierra Leone**, following a UNDP-supported “WPS Workshop for Parliamentarians” in July 2018, women MPs became more actively engaged in the design of the second Sierra Leone WPS NAP (SiLNAP), which was launched by the government in August 2018. The chair of the Women's Caucus participated as a member of the National WPS Steering Committee and took part in several planning meetings during the drafting process. She was also part of the team to validate the assessment tools to be used for the consultations. Eight MPs — four men and four women — then participated in the regional consultations on the second SiLNAP draft and contributed their inputs.²⁷

²⁷ Sarah Ferbach and Audrey Reeves, *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018)*, DCAF: Geneva, p.15.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: ENGAGING IN THE WPS NAP PROCESS

- Parliamentarians can be included in the working group responsible for developing the WPS NAP. This way, parliamentarians can offer their knowledge of the priorities of their electorate. It can also be a first step to generate buy-in for law reform and budgetary aspects of the WPS NAP that will need to be approved by parliament.
- Even where parliament was not involved in developing the WPS NAP, once endorsed by the government, the WPS NAP can be submitted to Parliament by the responsible Minister, for acknowledgement or endorsement.
- Regular progress reports should also be submitted to Parliament to enable monitoring (see Chapter 7 below for more on parliamentary monitoring).

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Are there opportunities for MPs to be involved in developing the WPS NAP, either during the consultation and drafting process or once a final draft has been agreed upon?
- If a NAP has been developed, was the final version submitted to Parliament for its information, debate or endorsement?

National or sectoral strategies or development plans

Not all countries have developed a WPS National Action Plan. In some countries, WPS may not have been prioritised amongst a range of other pressing national agendas. Other countries may have integrated WPS issues into other national development plans, recognising the importance of mainstreaming gender issues across all sectors or to ensure that they attract the resources and political will necessary for their implementation.

Most commonly, a national gender strategy will be developed, which will include an analysis of and recommendations on women's security. Some countries have passed legislation that requires such a gender strategy to be produced and presented to parliament, which is an excellent opportunity for MPs to advocate for WPS issues. For example, in Iceland, the *Act on the Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men No. 10/2008* required that, "Within one year following a general election, the Minister shall present to the Althingi [Parliament] a motion for a parliamentary resolution on a four-year gender equality action programme" listing proposed activities and budgets.²⁸

In some countries, the national human rights machinery may develop strategies to address the needs of women affected by conflict, as part of their overall work to protect marginalised groups. Instead or in addition, national defence, police, peacekeeping or security strategies may also include a gender analysis, with recommendations and resources for WPS gaps or priorities. Sectoral strategies, policies or action plans may include WPS priorities such as: establishing Women's Desks to handle SGBV complaints at police stations; enabling the National Human Rights Commission to receive complaints relating to war violence; or requiring gender-sensitive training for defence personnel deployed as peacekeepers.

²⁸ Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men No. 10/2008, as amended by Act No. 162/2010, No. 126/2011, No. 62/2014, No. 79/2015, No. 117/2016 and No. 56/2017, <https://www.government.is/library/04-Legislation/Act%20on%20equal%20status%20and%20equal%20rights%20of%20women%20and%20men%20no%2010%202008%20as%20amended%20101%202018%20final.pdf>.

INTEGRATING WOMEN'S PEACE AND SECURITY NEEDS INTO NATIONAL PLANS IN SRI LANKA

For more than 25 years, **Sri Lanka** experienced civil conflict, which came to an end in 2009. Women were deeply affected by the conflict, whether as war widows, wives of the disappeared, internally displaced people, combatants or survivors or victims of violence. At the end of the war, the many husbands lost to war resulted in a disproportionate number of women-headed households as well.

Despite the gendered impacts of the conflict, the Sri Lankan government has not developed a WPS National Action Plan. Instead, the government mainstreamed the needs of the large proportion of women affected by the conflict into existing national sectoral plans. For example, the National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (2017-2021) includes numerous priorities for addressing the needs of women affected by the war identifying priorities for action by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, as well as the Ministries of Justice, Law and Order, Rehabilitation, Health, Agriculture and Local Government. This approach recognises the need not only for justice, but also for women's economic and physical security.

The Policy Framework and National Plan for Action to Address Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka (2016-2020) takes a similarly cross-sectoral approach to addressing SGBV, identifying priorities for eight ministries. Both plans call on the government to develop a Policy Framework for Women-Headed Households, which are a continuing reminder of the impact of the war.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: INTEGRATING WPS IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

- Many countries develop not WPS NAPs but national development or sectoral plans, and these address WPS issues such as plans on gender equality, human rights and peacebuilding. Parliamentarians can be included in the working group responsible for developing such plans.
- Even if parliament has not been involved in the development of such plans, they can be submitted to parliament by the responsible MP for acknowledgement or endorsement, after they have been finalized by the government.
- Regular progress reports should also be submitted to parliament to enable monitoring of implementation (see Chapter 7 for more on parliamentary monitoring).

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- If a WPS National Action Plan has not been developed, has Parliament inquired into whether WPS issues have been integrated into other national or sectoral development plans?
- Have any national development or sectoral development plans been prepared which include WPS issues? If so, was the plan developed or drafted with parliamentary input?
- Has legislation been passed that requires, at a minimum, that some form of gender equality action plan be developed by the government and presented to parliament? If so, does the plan include issues related to WPS, and was it submitted to parliament for information or endorsement?

CHAPTER 5

MAKING LAWS TO IMPLEMENT THE WPS AGENDA



MPs are responsible for reviewing, debating, amending and enacting legislation, and this is one of their most important powers. Most commonly, draft laws are developed by the executive branch, but in some countries, MPs also have the power to initiate legislation, either because the legislature is a truly co-equal branch of government or through so-called “Private Members Bills,” which enable individual MPs or groups of like-minded MPs to table their own draft laws. Law reform is a key way for parliaments to support the women, peace and security agenda.

Identifying law reform priorities

In countries where a WPS National Action Plan has been developed, law reform priorities may already have been identified. In some countries, reports from the UPR process, the UN CEDAW Committee and other relevant human rights processes may also contain recommendations for law reform. National sectoral strategies, in sectors such as human rights, gender equality, defence national security and peacebuilding, could also contain guidance on priority areas for legislation.

Advocating for, initiating, debating and enacting law reform is a key contribution that parliaments can make to supporting implementation of the WPS agenda. In support of law reforms to promote women’s peace and security, MPs may want to request parliamentary staff to undertake a law reform assessment to identify which laws need to be amended and whether any new laws are needed to implement the WPS agenda. (Ideally this will be embedded within a whole-of-government process such as the development of a WPS NAP.) In support of SDG 5 on gender equality, ideally any such assessment would examine not just law reforms to promote WPS, but also to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment more broadly.

PARLIAMENTARY RULES REQUIRING A GENDER REVIEW OF PROPOSED LAWS

In some countries, parliament is required to undertake a gender assessment of draft legislation to identify whether a proposed law is gender-sensitive and protects, and does not diminish, gender equality and women’s rights. In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, the Law on Normative Legal Acts 2009 guides the Jogorku Kenesh (parliament) on how it reviews draft laws. Article 20 specifically requires that draft laws be subjected to an analysis to assess their impact on human rights protection, gender, anti-corruption, and ecological protection.²⁹ In **Fiji**, Parliament’s Standing Orders provides the mandates of committees to review draft laws and undertake inquiries and then states that committees “shall ensure that full consideration will be given to the principle of gender equality so as to ensure all matters are considered with regard to the impact and benefit on both men and women equally.”

29 Development Alternatives Inc. (2011) *Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Programme (KPSP): Assessment of Parliamentary Legislative Drafting Process in the Kyrgyz Republic*, USAID: Bishkek, p.8, <https://www.auca.kg/uploads/Tian%20Shan%20Policy%20Center/Reports/Country%20Reports%20and%20Assessments/KPSP%20Assessment%20of%20Legislative%20Drafting%20Process%20-%20Final.pdf>.

Depending on the extent and complexity of the law reforms that are required, MPs may wish to discuss the results of any law reform assessment to prioritise reforms. This may even result in the development of a broader legislative reform agenda, which could be used to guide efforts of both the executive branch and parliament to draft and enact laws.

Common WPS law reform issues

There are no templates for legislation to promote women, peace and security, but experience around the world shows that parliaments have taken action to legislate on a range of different issues. For example:

Non-discrimination, equality and equal participation

- Omnibus gender equality laws that set out general principles in relation to equality, non-discrimination and women's rights, or which may include the establishment of key gender equality structures (such as a Gender Commission or National Women's Council). Such laws may also include provisions on women's involvement in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
- Legislation outlawing gender discrimination, perhaps including some form of institutional mechanism to oversee its implementation (e.g., a commission on sex-discrimination or human rights).
- Legislation introducing affirmative action quotas for women's participation in political institutions and decision-making or recruitment for military, police, public service, peacekeeping or diplomacy (especially in relation to peace operations).

Preventing and responding to violence and trafficking

- Legislation to address SGBV, passed as a stand-alone law or package of laws, or through amendments to an existing criminal code.
- Legislation addressing SGBV committed in conflict contexts, including provisions allowing for extra-territorial jurisdiction to allow prosecution of offences committed overseas (e.g., by peacekeepers).
- Legislation providing criminal and civil penalties for sexual harassment in the workplace, on public transport or in public.
- Legislation outlawing human trafficking, including specific provisions allowing for extra-territorial jurisdiction to allow prosecution of offences committed overseas (e.g., by peacekeepers).
- Gender-sensitive legislation on transitional justice, both in terms of process (i.e., including women) and substantive issues (i.e., topics relevant to women and girls).
- Gender-sensitive legislation addressing the prevention of violent extremism and/or radicalisation, taking into account the different experiences of men and women in such contexts.
- Legislation providing for economic support for people affected by conflict, including gender-sensitive provisions addressing the special needs of women ex-combatants, war widows, children orphaned by conflict and/or post-conflict woman-headed households.

INTEGRATING LAW REFORM ANALYSIS AND ACTION INTO WPS NATIONAL ACTION PLANS IN NIGERIA AND IRAQ

In some countries, a law reform needs-assessment is part of the research undertaken to develop the WPS National Action Plan. For example, the **Nigerian** WPS NAP (2017-2020) identifies five pillars of work, which are supported by five core strategies to implement the priorities; one of these strategies is “Legislation and Policies.”³⁰ An annex gives more detail on the law reforms that are needed to achieve the NAP’s objectives.

The **Iraq** WPS NAP (2014-18) identifies “Legislation and Law Enforcement” as one of the six pillars requiring action, and the objective of this pillar is to harmonize “national legislation with international standards and mechanisms for women’s rights.”³¹ The NAP also identifies two larger strategic objectives: “Adopting legislation that respects the basic universal human rights for all women and men; [and] Ending impunity for perpetrators and enhancing legislation.”

Advancing WPS law reforms

Different legislatures have different procedures for drafting, submitting and enacting laws. Most commonly, the executive branch will be responsible for initiating and drafting legislation or amendments. In such cases, although MPs are less likely to initiate a draft bill, they can still push for action, such as by raising a question about law reform, proposing a motion or using the committee inquiry process as an opportunity to discuss WPS and propose legislative reforms.

Once a government-initiated bill is finalised, it will be submitted by a government minister to the legislature for debate, amendment or enactment. During this process, draft bills will commonly be referred to a relevant parliamentary committee for further review. This is an important process for committee members, who can take the opportunity to propose amendments to the draft law. Once the committee process is complete, the draft bill returns to the main plenary for debate, amendment and a final vote. In bicameral parliaments, the process may then be repeated in the upper house.

In many presidential or semi-presidential systems, the legislature has more power to initiate its own draft laws. In such contexts, groups of parliamentarians (grouped by party or by issue) or even individual parliamentarians can develop their own draft law and then work to advocate for their bill to be included on the legislative agenda for a hearing. Where a bill is accepted for consideration by the leadership of the legislature, it then goes through a similar process as described above, usually involving a committee review, followed by debate, amendment and enactment in the main plenary.

In some countries, an MP may be able to push for what is called a “Private Members Bill.” In such cases, a member will draft the proposed law themselves (often drawing on the expertise of civil society organisations) and try to get it on the legislative agenda. This approach is less successful in countries with strong political parties, where it is usually only party-endorsed bills that are taken up by the whole legislature. That said, in some cases, for example, on a people-focused issue such as WPS, Private Members Bills may have cross-party appeal and be accepted.

³⁰ *National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security in Nigeria (2017-2020)*, Federal Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Social Development: Abuja, p.14, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-nigeria>.

³¹ *Iraq’s Women Peace and Security National Action Plan*, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-iraq>.

In the UK, a Members Bill was proposed in 2018 to address weaknesses in existing national legislation dealing with female genital mutilation.³² In the speech introducing the Bill, the initiator referenced multiple UN resolutions on the issue, demonstrating the value of international commitments to encourage domestic law reform. The advocacy and cross-party support of a Women's Caucus can be particularly useful in support of Private Members Bills, as women from multiple political parties may group together to drive forward WPS-related legislation (see Chapter 9 for more).

PHILIPPINES CONGRESS TAKES ACTION TO PASS LAWS IN SUPPORT OF WPS

The **Philippines** has produced two WPS National Action Plans, the first from 2010-16³³ and the second from 2017-22.³⁴ Both NAPs reference key laws as the basis for further reform efforts, including the Anti-Rape Act of 1997 (RA 8353), the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998 (RA 8505), the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (RA 9208) and the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (RA 9262). The NAPs recognise that these laws already contribute to the national legislative framework protecting women's security.³⁵

The Philippines has also passed two pieces of legislation that provide good practice models for consideration by other countries. Republic Act 7192 "recognizes the role of women in nation building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."³⁶ The law requires that a large portion of official development assistance from foreign governments or multilateral agencies be dedicated to programs for women, that government departments ensure that women benefit equally from such programs, and that government agencies remove gender biases from their regulations and procedures.

In August 2009 the Philippines Congress enacted what is called the *Magna Carta for Women* (RA 9710), which promotes gender equality broadly, and, in particular, provides for increased participation of women in peace-building and their protection against gender-based violence in armed conflicts. One section of the law, for example, called for an increase in women in decision-making in the peace process and greater inclusion of women's concerns in the peace agenda.

32 David Alton, 'Female Genital Mutilation Bill Debated in the House of Lords: 200 Million Women Are Subjected to FGM' on DavidAlton.net (20 July 2018), <https://davidalton.net/2018/07/20/female-genital-mutilation-bill-debated-in-the-house-of-lords-200-million-women-are-subjected-to-fgm/>.

33 Progressing WPS law reforms Philippine National Action Plan O UNSCRs 1325 & 1820: 2010-2016, http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/philippines_nap.pdf.

34 Philippine National Action Plan on UNSCRs 1325 & 1820: 2017-2022, http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Philippines_20172022NAP.pdf.

35 The Women in Development and Nation Building act, <https://www.pcw.gov.ph/law/republic-act-7192>.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: LAW REFORM

- Ideally, the development of a WPS NAP or another sectoral plan will have been supported by a legislative needs-analysis. Where this has not been done:
 - A systematic law reform assessment can be commissioned to identify laws or amendments needed to advance the WPS agenda.
 - MPs can engage with their constituents, NGOs, academics, national law associations and other experts to identify the most critical areas requiring law reform.
- Depending on the size and complexity of the law reforms identified, MPs or parliamentary committees may wish to formally discuss the results of any assessment to prioritise law reforms. This may result in a legislative reform agenda, which could be used to guide efforts of both the executive branch and parliament to draft and enact laws.
- In support of an agreed set of law reform priorities, MPs or parliamentary committees can:
 - Request the executive branch to prioritise key law reforms.
 - Raise a question about law reform during Question Time (see Chapter 7 for more).
 - Propose a motion on WPS to draw the attention of parliament and the government to a key concern (see Chapter 7).
 - Use the committee inquiry process to discuss a WPS issue in detail and propose legislative reforms in the form of committee recommendations (see Chapter 7).
 - Work with the parliamentary legal counsel or consultants to develop draft laws.
- In some countries, an MP or group of MPs may be able to develop and lobby for their own “Private Members Bill” on topics related to women, peace and security.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Has a systematic Gender and WPS Law Reform Assessment been undertaken (whether as part of a NAP development process, sectoral plan development process or by parliament itself) to identify law reform priorities?
- Has an annual legislative plan been developed to guide parliament’s work with regard to key WPS law reform priorities?
- Do MPs and parliamentary committees have access to legal expertise to support their efforts to advance WPS-related law reforms?



CHAPTER 6

BUDGETING FOR WPS IMPLEMENTATION

While it is vital that countries commit in law to ensuring that women have agency and can live safe and peaceful lives, experience has shown that one of the most critical weaknesses in current efforts to implement the WPS agenda is a failure to allocate proper resources to plans and programmes. The global non-governmental organisation PeaceWomen has reported that of the 79 WPS National Action Plans adopted around the world, only 34 included a budget.³⁷ Of these 34, considerably fewer allocated the budget that was requested in the Plan.

The national budget is largely an act of parliament. In most countries, parliaments have constitutional powers for debating and adopting the national budget. In some countries, they can amend it, though usually this power is limited to deleting items. Parliament is also responsible for monitoring implementation of the annual state budget,³⁸ often through a dedicated parliamentary budget or public accounts committee. The process of debating, approving and monitoring the budget is known as the “annual budget cycle,” and is often a constitutionally mandated duty of parliament.

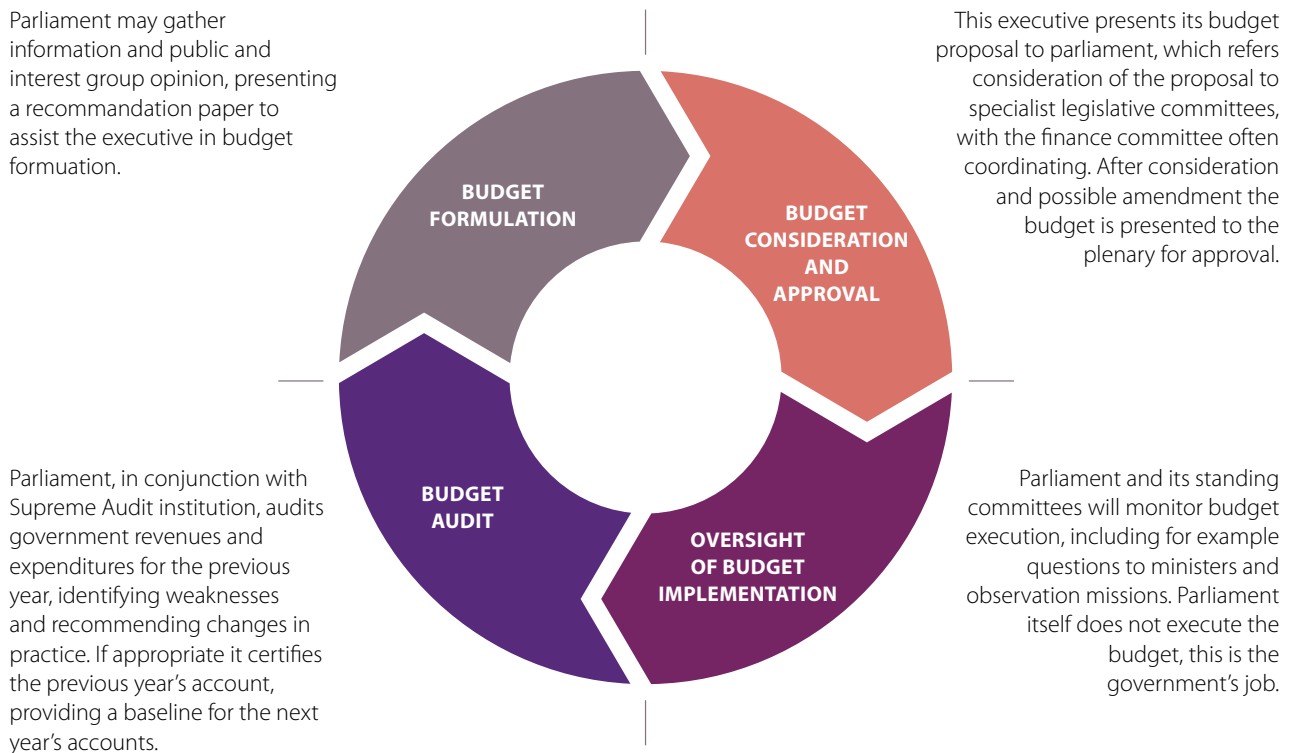
Despite this, in many jurisdictions, parliaments play only a limited role in debating the budget, often simply accepting the budget proposed by the government. Similarly, one of the most common parliamentary committees to exist throughout the world is one with a remit to review the proposed budget, as well as final expenditures,³⁹ however, the effectiveness of these committees has been variable.⁴⁰ If the WPS agenda is to be successfully implemented, parliamentary action to ensure adequate resources is essential.

37 Countries with WPS National Action Plans are listed at <https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states>.

38 Parliament’s role with regard to the annual state budget is often considered a cross-cutting issue. Thus, the law-making function is exercised in the passage of the budget, while the monitoring of the budget’s implementation is oversight. Throughout the budget cycle, the engagement of the public is a form of representation.

39 Bill Woodley, Vinod Sahgal and Frederick Stapenhurst, ‘Scrutinizing Public Expenditures: The Role of Public Accounts Committees’; Joachim Wehner, ‘Best Practices of Public Accounts Committees’, <https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Best-Practices-of-Public-Accounts-Committees.pdf>.

40 Ibid.

FIGURE 4 PARLIAMENTS AND THE NATIONAL BUDGET PROCESS ROLE IN SDGS, P.32

(taken from UNDP-GOPAC-IDB "Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: Parliamentary Handbook")

Securing resources for WPS

The lack of funding for WPS action is a critical issue that MPs can be proactive in addressing.

Specifically, when the draft National Budget is tabled in the legislature, MPs can use their powers in plenary, as well as during the committee review process, to ask questions about whether and how WPS issues have been funded.

At a minimum, parliamentary scrutiny could include a hearing by a committee responsible for reviewing the national budget and with representatives from the ministry or department for women's affairs. Officials would be asked whether and how they have budgeted to address priority WPS issues for the country. Such budget review could also involve holding hearings with a broader cross-section of relevant ministries, including, for example, the ministries responsible for foreign affairs, the police force, military and security services, welfare, employment and peacebuilding. Each of these ministries could be asked about what funds they have allocated to the WPS agenda.

It is important to review a budget holistically, and not just focus on funds for the women's affairs ministry, because addressing WPS requires a cross-sector approach. Commonly, budgeting for WPS becomes a request for additional resources, but in many countries with a limited budget, this may not be possible. Nonetheless, parliament can still inquire whether existing budgets could be used more effectively or efficiently.

SRI LANKA PUBLIC FINANCE COMMITTEE HOLDS BUDGET HEARINGS ON WPS

The **Sri Lankan** parliament adopted a series of reforms, which included establishing strong parliamentary committees with clear oversight mandates for the first time in many years. These new committees cover a range of sectoral issues and include two committees focused on ensuring proper expenditure of government funds — pre-expenditure and post-expenditure reviews.

In October 2018, the Public Finance Committee held a special hearing on budgeting in support of the WPS agenda. In attendance were representatives of the Ministries of the Women and Child Affairs, Justice, Health, Finance, Mass Media, Law & Order and others.

These bodies all have responsibilities for WPS issues, under the Policy Framework and National Plan for Action to Address Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka (2016-2020) and the National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (2017-2021). The chairperson inquired on a wide range of relevant issues, including, for example, funding allocations for shelters for women fleeing violence, the provision of psycho-social support to victims of violence, and the role of the police in increasing women's access to justice.

Ensuring WPS budgets are effectively used

Even where an adequate budget is allocated towards gender equality or women's peace and security, it is still critical for parliament to assess whether such funds were received by the relevant government department and used efficiently and effectively. In many countries, officials complain of money being budgeted but not actually allocated in practice. MPs can address this issue by using their oversight powers to track actual disbursements by the government.

Most countries have a parliamentary committee dedicated to reviewing expenditures at the end of the budget cycle, commonly called a Public Accounts Committee. Such committees usually have strong powers to hold hearings and undertake a thorough review of expenditures. Such a review should look both at value-for-money but also the actual results for people, in particular the most marginalised and needy. In practice, many such finance committees draw on information and analyses already produced by the national Supreme Audit Institution, and some even call on the audit office for advice in dissecting the technicalities of budget and expenditure reports and the impact of public spending.

Members of the expenditure review committee have an especially powerful role, but other MPs can also play a role in budget oversight, by engaging with their own constituents to find out whether the services promised by the government were actually delivered. For example, were survivors of violence able to access police and welfare services? Were shelters for women operational and accessible? Were livelihoods opportunities for war widows or women-headed households actually made available? Were pensions for war widows actually paid out to the right people?

USING PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES TO ASSESS THE GENDER AND WPS IMPACTS OF BUDGETS

For many years, countries have been encouraged to implement “gender-responsive budgets,” but limited resources in the executive and legislative branches have often hampered their ability to undertake a proper gender analysis of the budget. Nonetheless, some countries have forged ahead.

In **Bangladesh**, for example, gender issues are integrated into the Medium-Term Budget Framework, which requires ministries to link their objectives back to the advancement of women’s rights, including WPS. Their annual budgets must then also identify how gender equality is being promoted. A gender budget analysis of all ministries is then done by Ministry of Finance and submitted to the Parliament during each budget session. The government has presented a gender budget since the 2009-10 financial year, and now applies across 43 ministries or divisions.⁴¹

In **Namibia**, UNDP has worked with the Parliament to provide training to MPs on gender-responsive budgets to assist MPs to more effectively review proposed budget and final budget expenditures.⁴² This work with MPs advanced the commitments in Namibia’s National Gender Policy 2010-2020 and the National GRB Guidelines, whereby MPs are in charge of overseeing the application of GRB principles in the national budget in accordance with 2014 Cabinet Decision.

In **Canada**, the government produces a Gender Budget Statement that provides a gender-based analysis of the budget, identifying how policies may affect women differently than men. Additionally, committees have used the budget review process to examine gender and WPS issues. In 2018, two House of Commons Standing Committees joined together to examine the spending of governmental departments responsible for the implementation of the WPS agenda.⁴³ MPs questioned the Minister of National Defence on the recruitment of women, its commitments to peace operations, and its policies on eliminating inappropriate sexual behaviour in the military.⁴⁴

41 This case study from Bangladesh was based on Md Osman Al (2018) “Parliament’s role in gender responsive budget,” 27 June 2018, *The Independent*. <http://www.theindependentbd.com/post/155490>.

42 “Members of Parliament trained on Gender Responsive Budgeting,” 1 November 2018, UNDP: Windhoek, <http://www.na.undp.org/content/namibia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2018/members-of-parliament-trained-on-gender-responsive-budgeting.html>

43 Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves, *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018)*, DCAF: Geneva, p.16.

44 Ibid.

ACTION POINTS FOR MP^s AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: WPS AND THE BUDGET CYCLE

- MPs can engage gather information from their constituents on whether and how government programmes have been useful in advancing the WPS agenda. This information can be used to inform parliamentary questions and hearings on the budget.
- When the draft national budget is tabled in the legislature, MPs can use Question Time to ask whether and how WPS issues will be funded.
- Committees responsible for reviewing budgets can commission the parliamentary secretariat to undertake an analysis to identify how existing budgets could be targeted more effectively to address WPS, such as by redirecting existing funds or using them more efficiently.
- Committees responsible for reviewing public finances can hold hearings with representatives from relevant ministries, including the ministry for women, but also ministries responsible for foreign affairs, the police force, military and security services, welfare, employment and/or peacebuilding. Each of these ministries could be asked about what funds they have allocated towards implementation of the WPS agenda and whether and how they have set performance indicators to assess the impact of such funds.
- Committees responsible for reviewing budget expenditures at the end of the budget cycle can hold hearings with government departments to review what government funds were actually spent and whether they had a positive impact. Such a review should look both at value-for-money but also the results for people on the ground.
- Committees that interact with the national Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) can examine audits or other reports to focus attention on WPS implementation. Committees may wish to recommend that the SAI integrate some form of gender audit into their work, and/or undertake performance audits that include gender equality and WPS issues.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Have MPs or parliamentary staff received training on gender responsive budgeting, especially budgets to support women's peace and security?
- Does the country and/or the legislature implement gender responsive budgeting? In any case, is an analysis of gender and WPS impacts of the budget produced for MPs to inform their work?
- Have any parliamentary committee/s responsible for reviewing the proposed national budget held hearings to examine budget allocations for national gender equality and WPS priorities?
- Have any parliamentary committee/s responsible for reviewing budget expenditures held hearings or asked questions of ministries to assess whether budget allocations to implement national gender equality and WPS priorities (i) were provided as budgeted, (ii) were expended efficiently, and (iii) were expended impactfully to improve the lives of women and girls, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised?

OVERSIGHT OF WPS IMPLEMENTATION



One of the most powerful mandates that legislatures have is the ability to oversee the activities of the government. Oversight can be done by all MPs, for example, by asking questions, making interpellations or debating resolutions to provide guidance to the government (see later sections for more).

However, it is particularly the role of parliamentary committees, which have a mandate and powers to review the work of government bodies and/or issues of public interest. Committees are known as the workhorses of parliament, because they are responsible for undertaking the longer-term, more detailed reviews of government policies and programmes. Committee inquiries can be a particularly effective monitoring mechanism, because they allow MPs to call witnesses, demand and review government documents, organise public hearings and debate policy issues in greater depth. They also enable committees to involve the public in their work, not only by holding their hearings in public but also by inviting written or oral submissions from any member of the community. At the end of an inquiry, the committee will table a report in the House for debate and consideration by the government. Producing and debating committee reports can be an excellent opportunity for MPs to participate in policymaking, by making recommendations for concrete action to be taken by the government.

Committee oversight of WPS NAPs

Where a WPS National Action Plan has been developed, parliamentary committees can play a key role in overseeing government implementation. Very often, WPS NAPs include a mechanism by which the lead ministry issues annual progress reports. In some countries, these are also shared with the legislature. For example, in **Finland**, the WPS NAP requires that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs prepare an annual report to the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament on implementation of NAP.⁴⁵ In **France**, the first iteration of the WPS NAP (2010-13) required annual WPS NAP reports to be presented to the relevant parliamentary committees, and in the second WPS NAP (2014-16), this was reduced to a final report on WPS NAP implementation.⁴⁶ In **Australia**, three progress reports have been tabled to the parliament, with a report submitted every two years for the WPS NAP (2012-18).⁴⁷ **Germany's** most recent NAP (2017-20) requires a report on the outcomes of the WPS NAP to be presented to the Bundestag (parliament) at the end of the Plan.⁴⁸

Most commonly, WPS National Action Plan implementation is reviewed by a foreign affairs or international relations committee, in recognition of the fact that the WPS agenda is set out in multiple UN Security Council Resolutions. These committees sometimes send their members to take part in international conferences on gender, CEDAW or the WPS agenda, and they typically have the power to review the policies and programmes of foreign affairs ministries, which in turn may deploy officials to support the WPS aspects of peace operations.

45 WPS NAP (2018-21), p.64, WPS NAP (2012-16), p.41, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-finland>.

46 WPS NAP (2010-13), p.10, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-france>.

WPS NAP (2014-16), p.8, https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/PNA_en_DEF.pdf.

47 Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012–2018,

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/office-women/international-forums/australian-national-action-plan-women-peace-and-security-2012-2018>.

48 WPS NAP (2017-20), p.9, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-germany>.

In addition, it is increasingly common for parliaments to set up a committee focused on gender equality.⁴⁹ This is an observable trend, as more countries develop dedicated gender equality action plans or WPS National Action Plans that require oversight and recognise the need for all arms of government to prioritise SDG 5 on gender equality and the wellbeing of half of their population. An existing gender equality and women's affairs committee will clearly have a role to play in providing oversight over the WPS agenda. Such a committee will often undertake joint hearings so that MPs can share their gender expertise while harnessing the sectoral expertise of other committees. It would be good practice, for example, for a review of implementation of the WPS agenda to be undertaken jointly by a foreign affairs committee and a gender equality committee.

GROUNDBREAKING REPORT ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY FROM CANADIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS & INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The **Canadian** Federal Parliament has been one of the most active proponents of the women, peace and security agenda in the world. Most notably, in September 2016, the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development studied the WPS agenda and Canada's role in its implementation, both through its national contributions to peace operations and through its development assistance. It launched a final report, *An Opportunity for Global Leadership: Canada and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*,⁵⁰ in October 2016, following an open process of oral and written submissions. Witnesses involved in the committee review reflected a broad range of perspectives, including the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, UNDP, UN Women, Global Affairs Canada and a range of NGOs, academics and practitioners.

The Standing Committee then released two complementary reports. The first was published in October 2016 and focused on *Development Cooperation for a More Stable, Inclusive and Prosperous World: A Collective Ambition*.⁵¹ The second report, released in November 2016, looked specifically at the WPS agenda, with an overview on *Supporting Peace and Development in Guatemala and Colombia for the Long-Term*,⁵² and produced an additional report as a case study, *Guatemala and Colombia — Women, Peace and Security and Countries of Focus for Bilateral Developmental Assistance*.⁵³

Committee oversight on specific WPS sectoral issues

While committees dealing with foreign affairs or international development have clear mandates to deal with UNSCR 1325 and related WPS resolutions and activities, many other committees have related mandates. Ensuring women's peace and security is a cross-cutting issue that may require action across a number of sectors, including the military, police force, human rights, education, economic development, religious affairs and peacebuilding. In many parliaments, these sectors will be dealt with by different parliamentary committees, meaning that each has a right to inquire into aspects of the WPS agenda that relate to their mandate. For example:

→ **SDGs committee:** More parliaments are beginning to establish dedicated SDGs committees. Such committees can assess WPS as part of the review of implementation of SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 8 on economic development and SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

49 As part of the global efforts to track implementation of the SDGs, IPU is now keeping track of relevant parliamentary committees working on gender equality and women's rights in support of SDG 16.7.1a reporting. For information, <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/Instancelist.asp>.

50 <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/FAAE/report-3/page-5>.

51 <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/FAAE/report-4/>.

52 <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/FAAE/report-5/>.

53 <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/FAAE/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=9225021>.

- **Justice, police or law and order committee:** It is common for parliaments to have some form of committee dedicated to oversight of domestic law enforcement and justice agencies. Parliament has an important role in overseeing their effectiveness in ensuring access to justice for victims of violence, and in promoting gender equality and awareness in such institutions (e.g., by reviewing efforts by such agencies to recruit and promote more women officers or to provide gender-sensitivity training to staff).
- **Armed forces, defence or security services committee:** Many parliaments have a separate committee dedicated to oversight of the military and national security agencies. Such committees can examine military and civilian peacekeeping activities, as well as the gendered impact of any domestic military operations.
- **National security committee:** In addition to committees focused on security sector institutions, some parliaments also have committees mandated to review national security processes and priorities. Such committees can also review WPS issues as they relate to the security sector. Notably, such committees are also increasingly being mandated to examine national efforts focused on the prevention of violent extremism. Such powers can be used to examine the gender-specific aspects of both violent extremism and prevention efforts.
- **Peacebuilding or reconciliation committee:** Where countries are recovering from violent conflict, it is common for the government to develop a peacebuilding plan and programmes. Parliament may create a peacebuilding or reconciliation committee to oversee such policies and activities. Such committees have a role in overseeing implementation of the WPS agenda, including the impact of peacebuilding efforts on women and girls.
- **Economic development, employment or livelihoods committee:** Many parliaments have set up one or more committees to review government economic and employment policies. A key aspect of the WPS agenda is ensuring that women affected by violence are included in recovery efforts, including efforts to rebuild their economic security in the aftermath of conflict. Such committees can review government programmes to assess whether they are gender-sensitive and include components to address the special economic needs of women affected by conflict.
- **Social welfare committee:** In some countries, the WPS agenda has included support to women affected by violence through pensions or other welfare payments or programmes. Committees with a welfare focus can examine the impact of such programmes, such as whether beneficiaries are receiving the rightful entitlements.

Any of these parliamentary committees can initiate an inquiry on a topic within their mandate. Parliament may also pass a resolution in plenary tasking one or more committees with undertaking an inquiry, for example, into SGBV implementation, welfare and employment benefits for war widows or peacekeeping deployments in particular countries. Where an inquiry is of sufficient public interest to warrant its own dedicated resources, parliament may also choose to establish an ad hoc or special committee, which will disband upon completion of its work.

Question Time / Interpellations

In many countries, there are processes that MPs can use to push for action where the government or the ruling parliamentary party has not prioritised key issues or reforms. Such processes can be useful to draw attention to WPS issues. They can also be useful in countries that have a WPS National Action Plan, to provide oversight on implementation progress.

One of the most common forms of oversight that an individual MP can use is to ask a question of the government. Depending on the type of parliamentary system that exists in a country, this can be done via a question asked during Question Time or as a written interpellation:

- **Question Time:** Many countries have a regular time during the plenary parliamentary session for individual MPs to ask questions of Ministers. (This is in addition to the opportunity to use parliamentary committees to hold longer hearings with Ministers.) MPs could take this opportunity to ask about WPS implementation, and to draw government attention to key law reforms and other WPS priorities.
- **Interpellations:** In countries where the system of government means that Ministers do not sit within the parliament, Question Time may be replaced or complemented by interpellations. Such interpellations enable an individual MP to ask a question in writing of a Minister and receive a response. Interpellations can help MPs access detailed information on what the government is or is not doing on the WPS agenda.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS CAN BE USEFUL TO DRAW ATTENTION TO WPS ISSUES

The **Norwegian** Storting (Parliament) and individual MPs have been active in supporting the WPS agenda. A number of them have used their powers to ask questions and make interpellations to draw attention to WPS issues.

During Question Time in 2016, MP Hon Olaug Bollestad asked the Minister of Defence what was being done to safeguard women recruits to the Armed Forces, “so that they are appreciated and shown respect and so there are attitude changes?”⁵⁴

In 2015, MP Hon Kjell-Ingolf Ropstad submitted a question in writing to the Minister of Defence, which asked (in summary): “What signal does the government believe it sends to women that the Armed Forces do not invest in material and logistics to get them geared in line with men and what will she do to ensure that this will take place?”⁵⁵

In 2010, MP Hon Ine Eriksen Søreide submitted an interpellation to the Minister for Foreign Affairs asking, “What has Norway done to contribute to the implementation of UN1325?”⁵⁶

In 2018, German MPs asked the federal government about allegations of sexual violence in international missions. Similarly, the Turkish Parliament asked for updates from the government regarding the constantly evolving situation of women displaced and affected by the Syrian conflict.⁵⁷

Parliamentary motions and resolutions

Many countries allow individual MPs to propose motions or resolutions to the plenary, which serve as an opportunity to call for action on a particular issue. Such motions cannot usually force a government to do something, but they draw attention to a particular topic, such as WPS, generate public debate and put pressure on the government to take action.

⁵⁴ Question, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Sporretimesporsmal/et-sporretimesporsmal/?qid=64403>.

⁵⁵ Question, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Skriftlige-sporsmal-og-svar/Skriftlig-sporsmal/?qid=62239>.

⁵⁶ Question, <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2010-2011/110118/4#a2>.

Debate: <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Sporsmal/Interpellasjoner/Interpellasjon/?qid=48428>.

⁵⁷ German and Turkish examples come from Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves, *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly* (2018), DCAF: Geneva, p.16.

USING PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES TO FOCUS GOVERNMENT ATTENTION ON WPS

In countries with strong political parties, it can be difficult for MPs to push for action outside the party system. Nonetheless, parliamentary processes exist that MPs can use, whether they sit as independents or simply want to take action on their own because an issue is important to them.

In **Portugal**, MPs have used parliamentary resolutions to draw attention to WPS issues they wanted the government to act on. In 2017 and then 2018, members of the Portuguese National Assembly passed two resolutions calling on the government to address and combat discrimination against women in the Security Forces; invest in gender-appropriate facilities in the Security Forces; and provide guidelines for maternity rights for women in the Security Forces.⁵⁸

In 2018, MPs from **Sierra Leone** participated in a “WPS Workshop for Parliamentarians” supported by UNDP, which produced an outcome statement capturing MPs’ discussions and identifying priorities for parliament and recommendations for the government. The chairperson of the Sierra Leone Women’s Caucus later worked with the Clerk of Parliament (with UNDP support) to develop those outcomes into a parliamentary resolution. The 2019 debate over the resolution covered critical issues such as an amendment to the Chieftaincy Act and to ensure land, property and succession rights for women. At the end of the debate, the resolution was formally adopted by parliament. The resolution now commits parliament to do a host of things, including moving forward with an affirmative action bill to promote women in decision-making. Also in 2019, the parliament held a one-day workshop on the new Sierra Leone WPS National Action Plan (SiLNAP). With input from relevant ministries, the MPs then identified which items in the new SiLNAP would be prioritised, and this parliamentary WPS action plan will be used to guide further work.

Independent oversight bodies reporting to parliament

In addition to internal parliamentary processes whereby members take on oversight activities, some countries have created independent bodies which have a mandate to conduct such monitoring. Such bodies are typically set up as independent statutory authorities, with their mandates established by legislation. These bodies may then report annually to the legislature, with their reports tabled in the plenary. Sometimes these reports are then sent to a relevant parliamentary committee for further review and debate.

Examples of such bodies are diverse. Many countries use an ombudsman, who might be responsible for investigating complaints about improper conduct or repeated problems with gender-sensitivity in the security services. In other countries, such independent monitoring may be done by a National Human Rights Commission or Gender Commission, which will have an overarching mandate to examine complaints regarding gender equality and women’s rights, including the failure of the government to properly implement elements of the WPS agenda. These bodies are typically required to report to the legislature, which provides an opportunity for MPs to initiate discussion on how to implement the WPS agenda. Even where such bodies are not obligated by law to report to the legislature, parliaments can still develop cooperative relationships to access information and reports to inform their work.

⁵⁸ Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic No. 132/2017: Recommends that the Government take measures to value the participation of women in security forces and services, <http://www.parlamento.pt/ActividadeParlamentar/Paginas/DetailheDiplomaAprovado.aspx?BID=20057>.

Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic No. 244/2018: Recommends that the Government combat discrimination against women and promote gender equality within security forces and services, <http://www.parlamento.pt/ActividadeParlamentar/Paginas/DetailheDiplomaAprovado.aspx?BID=21156>.

GERMANY PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR THE ARMED FORCES

In **Germany**, the Bundestag (Parliament) appoints a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, who is responsible for oversight of the Bundeswehr (armed forces). The Commissioner is elected by the members of the Bundestag in a secret ballot for a 5-year term of office. He/she is not a member of Parliament nor a civil servant. The Commissioner's overarching role is "to safeguard basic rights and to assist the Bundestag in exercising parliamentary oversight" over the armed forces, a task enshrined in the national constitution.

The Parliamentary Commissioner produces an annual report which is tabled in parliament for its consideration. Its reports include a section on women in the armed forces. This section provides reflections on implementation of the *Act on Equal Opportunities for Female and Male Personnel of the Bundeswehr*, which parliament passed to require at least 15% of the Bundeswehr to be women. The Parliamentary Commissioner does not, however, report on armed personnel deployed overseas.

A separate report on implementation of the German WPS National Action Plan is required to be submitted to the Bundestag at the of implementation of the next phase of the WPS NAP in 2020. The 2017-2020 NAP calls on the government to implement WPS-related legislation already passed by the Bundestag, namely that on gender equality in federal bodies and equal opportunities in the Bundeswehr.⁵⁹ In the context of the WPS agenda, these laws require the government to "Implement gender-equitable personnel development in foreign, development, security and defence policy."

ACTION POINTS FOR MPS AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: OVERSIGHT

- MPs can engage with their own constituents to gather information on whether and how government programmes have been useful in advancing the WPS agenda. This information can be used to inform parliamentary questions and hearings.
- Where a WPS NAP has been produced, parliamentary committees can hold regular hearings to assess progress with implementation and provide recommendations accordingly.
- Where WPS priorities are included in a national development plan and/or different sectoral plans, parliamentary committees can hold their own or joint hearings to assess progress with implementation and provide recommendations accordingly.
- MPs can use Question Time, interpellations or parliamentary motions to draw the attention of Ministers and the whole House to WPS issues.
- MPs or parliamentary committees can use the tabling of reports by independent oversight institutions (e.g., national human rights institution, Police Ombudsman, Supreme Audit Institution) to draw attention to WPS issues. Parliamentary hearings can be held to examine such reports and/or ask questions of Ministers.

⁵⁹ Action Plan of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for the Period 2017-2020, p.18, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-germany>.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Does your parliament have a committee on foreign affairs, international relations, gender equality or other area with an interest in conducting (i) a regular review of progress on the WPS National Action Plan if one exists or (ii) a review of national implementation of the WPS agenda?
- Has a review been undertaken by the parliamentary secretariat to inform parliamentary sectoral committees on whether and how they could use their mandates and powers to advance inquiries on key WPS issues?
- Are Question Time or other forms of individual MP inquiry being used effectively to ask Ministers questions regarding implementation of WPS priorities?
- Are there any WPS issues that would benefit from MPs proposing a resolution to the House for debate and endorsement?



CHAPTER 8

REPRESENTATION

Members of parliament are elected by the citizens of a country to represent their interests in political decision-making. This means that MPs should constantly be engaging in a two-way dialogue, sharing the activities of parliament with their constituents and collecting information from them to inform their work. In order for a parliament to maintain its legitimacy, it is critical that citizens are provided with meaningful opportunities to provide feedback on the work of MPs and parliament, including about the WPS agenda.

Parliamentarians as representatives

Parliamentarians in almost all countries are elected by members of the public to sit in the legislature as representatives of the public interest. In some countries, MPs are elected directly by a geographical constituency, in others, they may represent a segment of the public — a demographic such as youth or women or a sector such as unions or military. Regardless, their job is to make decisions on behalf of all members of the community, not just those who vote for them.

Good practice from around the world has shown that it is important for individual MPs to develop and maintain open channels of communication with their constituents, whether by email, social media platforms or other means.

In the context of the WPS agenda, effective representation means that parliamentarians should reach out to women and men, young and old, to find out what issues are most impacting women's peace and security. In addition to online communications, experience from around the world highlights two common approaches to MP outreach:⁶⁰

- **Local Public Forums:** A parliamentarian can organise public forums, for instance in their local community, for citizens to provide feedback on topics such as SGBV, war widows or government implementation of the WPS agenda.
- **Public Consultations:** Parliamentary committees can consult with civil society as they consider draft laws and conduct inquiries. Such consultations can range from the informal (e.g., reporting sessions, online feedback, social media) to the more formal (e.g., public hearings); and from the technical (e.g., surveys) to the simple (e.g., request for submissions via SMS).

When reaching out to communities to engage them in the WPS agenda, parliamentarians are encouraged to partner with civil society organisations, which often have strong community networks, convening power and gender expertise.

60 This good practice draws on guidance in Kevin Deveaux & Charmaine Rodrigues (2017) *Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: A Parliamentary Handbook*, UNDP, GOPAC, IDB: Geneva.

KYRGYZSTAN MPs HOST NATIONAL WPS FORUMS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

Kyrgyzstan was a pilot country for UNDP’s “Global Project on the Role of Parliaments as Partners in Women, Peace and Security (2018-19).” UNDP worked with parliament and a local NGO to organise a meeting in November 2018, bringing together MPs with government officials and civil society to agree on a Parliamentary WPS Action Plan.

Participants noted that state actors were largely unaware of the WPS agenda, and so agreed to conduct Regional WPS Forums in all seven provinces of the country. The forums, organised in partnership with local NGOs, were well-attended and received excellent media coverage.

At the forums, participants raised a variety of WPS issues, including:

- Improving interagency coordination in the area of protection and defence against violence.
- Ensuring better financing of WPS activities at the local level.
- Creating work plans to implement the WPS agenda locally.
- Addressing conflict and security issues in border areas.
- Introducing standards of services to counteract violence and conflict.

The forums helped localise the WPS agenda in each region. MPs gathered important insights for their own work and that of civil society.

Parliamentarians as gender-sensitive peacebuilders

In addition to their work as representatives, parliamentarians have a critical role to play as peacebuilders. It is an unfortunate reality that parliamentarians and other leaders can play a role in inciting violence amongst their followers; however, they can also demonstrate leadership in peacebuilding.⁶¹

At a very minimum, in times of crisis, there is a duty on all parliamentarians to take care that their engagement with the community does not inflame tensions or encourage partisan violence. MPs can have a huge impact on public sentiment, and as such they are encouraged to use language that promotes moderation, reduces tensions and encourages peaceful resolution of conflict. Similarly, MPs can encourage their followers to respect human rights, including the rights of women to live securely and peacefully.

Parliamentarians can use public forums or other means to build peace amongst communities and call on community members to respect women’s rights. MPs should ensure that both men and women are included in such forums. In the aftermath of conflict, parliamentarians can also promote reconciliation amongst warring groups, address the harm to women and girls, and develop strategies to address such harm.

⁶¹ This was recognised by UNDP in the 2006 publication on *Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery: Guidelines for the International Community*, https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Parliamentary%20Development/guidelines_on_the_role_of_parliaments_in_conflict_and_post-conflict_situations.pdf.

DEVELOPING THE CAPACITIES OF MPs TO ENGAGE AS EFFECTIVE PEACEBUILDERS IN SOMALIA

Over the last two decades, MPs' roles in promoting peace has been better understood. A 2005 report by the World Bank discussed *Parliaments as Peacebuilders*,⁶² and in 2006, UNDP published *Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery*.⁶³ These guidelines recognised that MPs can facilitate dialogue between community groups in order to ease tensions and build consensus.

Some countries and agencies are supporting MPs' roles in peacebuilding. For example, in 2014, the IGAD Office of the Facilitator for **Somalia** Peace and National Reconciliation in collaboration with the Federal Parliament of Somalia organised a 5-day capacity-building training attended by 27 MPs, including six women parliamentarians. The workshop covered leadership skills and peacebuilding topics such as types and sources of conflict, mediation and peacebuilding. Participants expressed interest in participating in the ongoing stabilization and peacebuilding processes underway in Somalia by putting in practice what they earned during the training.⁶⁴

Parliamentarians as partners

In areas such as women's rights or peacebuilding, MPs often work closely with NGOs or other civil society organisations, local trade unions or business groups. Global experience has shown that parliamentary committees on gender equality or women's rights (see Chapter 7) and women's caucuses (see Chapter 10) have often worked closely with women's rights NGOs on shared objectives. Committees such as foreign affairs, human rights, welfare and even security also often draw on the expertise of NGOs in areas such as human rights, women's rights, security sector reform and peacebuilding. Such partnerships can bring benefits to both partners, with MPs able to draw on technical the advice, research skills and community trust of beneficiary groups, and NGOs able to harness MPs' official convening power and more effectively channel their advocacy towards law reform or programming outcomes.

Especially in the area of human rights, women's rights and the WPS agenda, NGOs have produced their own "shadow reports" to provide a community-based perspective on national implementation. Where governments produce a WPS NAP monitoring report or annual report, NGOs may offer up a shadow report, which presents their own analysis of whether and to what extent the Government has been meeting its international and national commitments. These shadow reports are commonly shared with international UN bodies, but can also be a useful source of information for MPs and parliamentary committees, seeking to cross-check the government's own data.

62 *Parliaments as Peacebuilders: The Role of Parliaments in Conflict-Affected Countries*, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/6532>.

63 *Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery: Guidelines for the International Community*, http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Parliamentary%20Development/guidelines_on_the_role_of_parliaments_in_conflict_and_post-conflict_situations.pdf.

64 This case study is drawn from an IGAD web-based news story, <https://igad.int/programs/66-somalia/926-capacity-building-training-on-good-governance-leadership-conflict-resolution-and-development-communication-to-the-federal-government-of-somalia-members-of-parliament>.

PARLIAMENT-CSO PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT BETTER COORDINATION AND OUTCOMES

In **Ukraine**, the Equal Opportunities Inter-Faction Union created a Public Council on Gender to coordinate the efforts of MPs, civil society and international organisations to advance gender equality. The Council's main objective is to launch a platform to ensure information flow and cooperation on gender issues. The council has six permanent thematic groups, one of which is focused on security and peacebuilding, with a mandate to monitor implementation of the UNSCR 1325 NAP and support women's participation in peacebuilding.⁶⁵

In the **Pacific**, the Regional Rights and Resources Team (RRRT) — a unit in the Secretariat for the Pacific Community that began its life as a development project — has long been working with MPs, NGOs, and other stakeholders on law reform around women's rights. RRRT partnered with the **Fiji** Women's Rights Movement to produce the region's first Legislative Lobbying Toolkit⁶⁶ and thereby promote gender-sensitive legislation. This work dovetailed with RRRT's annual Regional Human Rights Meeting for Pacific MPs, which educated MPs on human rights issues such as CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. RRRT's work has borne fruit, with 11 parliaments in the region enacting domestic and family protection legislation over the last decade or so.⁶⁷

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION

- MPs can reach out to constituents to learn about their concerns on women's peace and security, through such means as email, social media and public forums, or through official public consultations on draft laws or WPS topics.
- MPs and parliamentary staff can develop their own peacebuilding skills. MPs can participate in mediation and sensitivity training⁶⁸ and use these skills to engage in peacebuilding activities ranging from local mediation to high-level peace talks.
- MPs can develop partnerships with civil society and NGOs, which can provide expertise, research services or assistance in convening community meetings.
- MPs can work with the media to raise community awareness of WPS issues and any work that parliament is doing to address these issues.

65 (2016) *Strengthening women's political participation: An analysis of the impact of women's parliamentary networks in Europe and Central Asia*, p.10, UNDP: Istanbul, <http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/dam/rbec/docs/undp-rbec-strengthening-womens-political-participation-final.pdf>.

66 *Changing Laws: A Legislative Lobbying Toolkit*, <https://rrrt.spc.int/resources/publications/changing-laws-a-legislative-lobbying-toolkit>.

67 Pacific MPs united on ending violence against women, <https://rrrt.spc.int/media/stories/2012/08/pacific-mps-united-on-ending-violence-against-women>.

68 For example, the nonprofit Folke Bernadotte Akademie runs online and in-person courses on conflict and mediation issues, <https://fba.se/en/how-we-work/courses/upcoming-courses/>.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Do parliamentarians engage in regular local forums or public consultations? If so, have any such forums or consultations been organised to discuss WPS issues?
- Does Parliament have a public outreach or communications unit that can help parliamentarians engage in dialogue with their constituents on WPS issues?
- Have parliamentarians received any peacebuilding training, such as on conflict analysis, mediation, dialogue or consensus-building?
- Do parliamentarians work with groups or communities at risk of conflict, in order to build trust and mitigate potential conflicts? Are parliamentarians aware of the civil society organisations that work on WPS in their community? Do they meet with these organisations regularly?

CHAPTER 9

ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS



It is common in parliaments around the world that MPs are members of political parties, with their parliamentary activities guided by party priorities. Political parties can be an effective mechanism for aggregating the contributions of individual MPs and using the strength of numbers to push for parliamentary action. Sometimes, however, party politics constrain individual MPs, as party priorities surpass those of its individual members.

Cross-party parliamentary groups can be one key way for parliamentarians to work outside their parties, by grouping together with other like-minded MPs to advance issues or activities that they choose to prioritise. In this context, cross-party parliamentary groups can be a useful vehicle for driving the WPS agenda within the legislature.

Cross-party women's caucuses

As the number of women MPs around the world has grown, so, too, have women's caucuses proliferated. They are now a common parliamentary mechanism for bringing together women MPs across party lines to work on issues of shared importance.

In an institutional context where women were historically and significantly outnumbered, women's caucuses started as a way of enabling the small cohorts of women MPs to bloc together to more effectively lobby within parliament on gender equality and women's rights. Even in parliaments where women appear larger numbers, these caucuses are still seen as an important mechanism to focus lawmakers' attention on gender equality and women's rights. In some countries, these caucuses come together more informally, while in others, they have an official status within the legislature.

Whatever form they take, women's caucuses have proven effective in harnessing the power of women MPs across multiple parties for the benefit of gender equality.⁶⁹ Such caucuses are also often a useful contact point for women's rights NGOs to engage in parliamentary processes.

The WPS agenda is an agenda not only for women MPs, but for all MPs. Nonetheless, women's caucuses often play a key role in promoting gender-sensitive laws and policies, including in relation to WPS. In Italy, this role has been institutionalised, with the WPS National Action Plan requiring that "the parliament's Cross-Party Caucus for Women, Women's Rights and Gender Equality publish an annual progress report on the implementation of the WPS agenda, in collaboration with civil society organisations and the Interdepartmental Committee for Human Rights."⁷⁰

69 *Strengthening women's political participation: An analysis of the impact of women's parliamentary networks in Europe and Central Asia*, (2016), UNDP: Istanbul, p. 10, <http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/dam/rbec/docs/undp-rbec-strengthening-womens-political-participation-final.pdf>.

70 Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves (2018) *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018)*, DCAF: Geneva, p. 17.

A GROWING CHALLENGE TO WOMEN'S PEACE AND SECURITY: MITIGATING THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Since 2000, when UNSCR 1325 was endorsed, violent extremism has become an increasing threat to the safety and security of people, including women and girls, around the world. A gender analysis of violent extremism shows that women may be involved as perpetrators (sometimes because of coercion from male authority figures) and supporters (including as family members), as well as active stakeholders in work on preventing violent extremism.⁷¹ The need to focus on the gendered impacts of violent extremism was recognised in UNSCR 2242 (2015), as part of the broader WPS agenda, and in the UN Secretary General's 2015 *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism*, which included a section on gender.⁷² In 2018, the IPU also established a High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG-CTVE).

In **Pakistan**, members of the Parliamentary Women's Caucus have been active in promoting gender-sensitive laws and policies. They have worked to ensure that efforts to combat violent extremism and radicalisation were gender-sensitive.⁷³ Civil society from the State Province of Balochistan formed an alliance with the provincial women's parliamentary caucus, which agreed to support the coalition's recommendations on preventing violent extremism and WPS in the Balochistan Provincial Assembly.⁷⁴

Cross-party women, peace and security parliamentary groups

Around the world, there has been a growing trend for MPs to come together across parties through parliamentary groups that are dedicated to particular issues. These cross-party groups enable dialogue outside the official processes of parliament, and are common particularly in relation to human rights issues such as women's peace and security. Such groups promote consensus-building, and may even jointly propose laws or other reforms.

A women's caucus is one of the most well-known forms of cross-party parliamentary group, but a group may also form on an issue such as women's peace and security. This can be particularly useful in recognition of the reality that WPS is not a "women's issue" but an issue that affects all of society and requires action from all MPs. Male MPs have increasingly been engaged in cross-party gender equality advocacy via the HeforShe campaign promoted by the United Nations.⁷⁵ For example, in 2017, the Icelandic Parliament used the annual HeforShe activities to organise a "barbershop conference" for all MPs on sexual violence and harassment, encouraging men to take part in discussions on gender equality, and allowed them to "educate themselves on how both genders gain from gender equality."⁷⁶

71 (unpublished) *Issues Brief: Prevention of Violent Extremism — A Gender Perspective*, UNDP: New York.

72 UN (2015) *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General*, A/70/674, 24 December, https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674.

73 Panel Discussion: Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan: Why Women Must Have a Role, 2 April 2014, Washington DC, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/component/event/detail/countering-violent-extremism-in-pakistan>.

74 Sarah Chatellier (2012) *Pakistani Women Moderating Extremism: A Coalition-Building Case Study*, p.9, Institute for Inclusive Security: USA, <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Pakistani-Women-Moderating-Extremism-A-Coalition-Building-Case-Study.pdf>.

75 HeforShe campaign, <https://www.heforshe.org/en>.

76 Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves (2018) *The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018)*, DCAF: Geneva, p.11.

UK ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (APPG-WPS)⁷⁷

Registered in 2006, the APPG-WPS brings together more than 40 MPs from the UK Parliament to discuss WPS issues and action. The APPG-WPS has a permanent secretariat, which is hosted by Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS),⁷⁸ a network of 17 NGOs working on WPS issues.

With the support of GAPS, the APPG-WPS works to raise the profile of WPS issues within Parliament, strengthen the existing network of MPs and link them to NGOs, advocate for government action on WPS and share information from other jurisdictions. The APPG-WPS hosts the UK government's annual Report to Parliament on Women, Peace and Security, which provides an opportunity for MPs to discuss the UK's approach to WPS. The APPG-WPS also holds events on international WPS issues in Somalia, Yemen, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Iraq and Northern Ireland.

ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF: WPS AND PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS

- Urge all MPs, regardless of sex, to discuss, debate and address WPS issues.
- A cross section of MPs may come together to form a Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace and Security, which can be used to promote the WPS agenda within and outside parliament, including by organising seminars on WPS topics, working with CSOs to develop policy briefs or using the group's influence to engage with the media on WPS issues.
- Women MPs may use a Cross-Party Women's Caucus to come together as a like-minded group to promote women's rights, including the WPS agenda.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Does the parliament have a women's caucus? If so, does it have a clear action plan and necessary resources to implement its priorities? Do these priorities include activities to advance the WPS agenda?
- Do MPs have the power to establish cross-party parliamentary groups? If so, are there Members who would be interested in setting up a WPS Parliamentary Group? Is there any NGO or other body that could support such a group?

⁷⁷ This summary is taken from the webpage on the APPG-WPS hosted by Global Action for Peace and Security: <http://gaps-uk.org/about/appg/>.

⁷⁸ For more information see <http://gaps-uk.org/about/>.

CHAPTER 10

SUPPORT FROM PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

Feedback from parliamentarians around the world demonstrates that the support of capable, well-informed staff are crucial in enabling them to discharge their mandates effectively. MPs often have a heavy workload, and the assistance of staff is invaluable in managing their roles and responsibilities.

In many countries, a professional staff is employed to service Ministers in relation to their parliamentary business, individual MPs and committees. These staff usually have a strong understanding of the rules of the parliament, as well as good research and analytical skills. However, many parliaments report that they have insufficient staff to assist with their research, reporting and even review of legislation.

With regard to the WPS agenda, it is important to ensure that MPs have proper staff support to undertake their reviews of laws, programmes and policies. Staff themselves may benefit from capacity-building seminars on gender equality, the WPS agenda, the WPS NAP if one exists, peacebuilding and gender responsive budgeting.

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS FOR MPs AND PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

- Parliamentary staff can be identified within the parliamentary secretariat for capacity development in relation to WPS issues, to ensure that in-house expertise is available to MPs in relation to the WPS agenda.
- Parliamentary staff can engage with MPs and civil society to help facilitate the development of partnerships.
- Parliamentary staff can stay alert for national, regional and international opportunities for MPs to engage in WPS events and activities.

QUESTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT

- Do committees responsible for overseeing implementation of the WPS agenda have sufficient staff to discharge their duties effectively?
- Is there sufficient specialist staff who can provide MPs with gender analysis as needed, including in relation to WPS issues?
- Is there sufficient specialist staff who can provide MPs with gender responsive budget analysis?

USEFUL RESOURCES

UN Security Council Resolutions

- UNSCR 1325(2000) on Women, Peace and Security, <http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325%282000%29>.
- UNSCR 1820 (2008) on Conflict Related Sexual Violence, <http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1820%282008%29>.
- UNSCR 1888 (2009), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1888>.
- UNSCR 1889 (2009), <http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1889%282009%29>.
- UNSCR 1960 (2010), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1960>.
- UNSCR 2106 (2013), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2106>.
- UNSCR 2122 (2013), <http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2122%282013%29>.
- UNSCR 2242 (2015), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2242>.
- UNSCR 2272 (2016), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2272>.
- UNSCR 2467 (2019), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2467>.

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

- CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 (2015), <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GComments/CEDAW.C.CG.30.pdf>.
- Decision 45/VII National parliaments and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Statement by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its relationship with parliamentarians, <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=dtYoAzPhJ4NM4Lu1TOebKyFD%2FJ4TiLtzcpQI5kRkVEDK6Uh2EoozwYNCYV3ou6izawaMVX%2FfHO%2BXqR%2F0ACa9Q%2FQhbxFbFaf0C0PgEc5fgjgJbWRIabove2qXX8tgxO>.

Guidelines & reports

- Sarah Ferbach & Audrey Reeves (2018) The role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda: A Survey by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (2018), DCAF: Geneva, https://www.nato-pa.int/download-file?filename=sites/default/files/2018-11/NATO%20PA%202018%20report_DCAF_Final.pdf.
- UN Women (2015) Guidebook on CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 and the UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/8/guidebook-cedawgeneralrecommendation30-womenpeacesecurity>.
- UN Women (2012) Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/10/un-women-sourcebook-on-women-peace-and-security>.
- UNDP, ICAN, Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Rehabilitation and Reintegration from Violent Extremism, <https://www.icanpeacework.org/2019/01/11/invisible-women/>.
- UNDP, Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism, https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/oslo_governance_centre/development-approaches-to-preventing-violent-extremism.html.
- UNDP, Toolkit: Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming, https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/oslo_governance_centre/improving-the-impact-of-preventing-violent-extremism-programming.html.



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United Nations Development Programme

One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY, 10017 USA
Tel: +1 212 906 5081

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