



Approaches to implementing National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security

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Question

What programmes and approaches have been used by countries to implement their National Action Plans on Women, Peace, and Security?

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The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.

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1. Summary

National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) express countries' commitments to supporting UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the WPS resolutions that followed it, which recognise how women and girls are affected by violent conflict, recognise their right to participate in peace negotiations and reconstruction efforts, and address a range of peace- and security-related topics including operationalising WPS, developing indicators, measuring outcomes, recognising and combating the use of sexual violence in armed conflict, and increasing access to justice for victims of sexual violence (Hamilton et al., 2020, p. 1). Ninety-eight countries have adopted National Action Plans as of September 2021 (PeaceWomen, 2021a). However, National Action Plans are often presented in terms of broad goals and objectives, and do not describe specific activities (such as programmes and projects) that nations will implement to achieve their objectives. Notably, the overwhelming majority of National Action Plans do not specify any budgetary allocations (Hamilton et al., 2020, pp. 13–14, 31).

This report aims to identify a selection of programmes and projects undertaken by countries under their respective National Action Plans. It focuses on discrete, large-scale (global or regional in scope) initiatives that specifically target aspects of the WPS agenda and aim to influence change outside the implementing agencies, rather than changing agencies' own policies and practices.

Common themes that appear frequently across these programmes and projects include:

- supporting **global pools of technical capacity** on WPS and on peacebuilding generally;
- **training military, police, and other personnel from partner countries**, including building women's professional capacities as well as training personnel in WPS-related good practices;
- supporting **WPS networks and forums** to share experience and expertise;
- extensive use of **multilateral mechanisms** for channelling funding and for sharing technical capacity;
- extensive **support to and collaboration with civil society organisations**;
- initiatives focusing on combating **violent extremism** and **counter-terrorism**;
- initiatives focusing on preventing **sexual exploitation and abuse** in peacekeeping and humanitarian contexts;
- a wide range of commitments to stopping **gender-based violence**; and
- support for **sexual and reproductive health** initiatives.

All of the countries discussed in this report also undertake considerable efforts to **change policies and practices within their own agencies** through measures such as mainstreaming gender perspectives, creating dedicated organisational units, posts, or other structures, or engaging in consultations and discussions to incorporate diverse perspectives into policies and programmes; to **advocate** for WPS through diplomatic channels and other types of meetings and discussions; to **train their agencies' own personnel** and undertake other internal capacity-building measures; to increase **recruitment, retention, and deployment of women** and other under-represented groups; and to undertake **research** to better inform policy-making and practice. In addition, all of the countries discussed in this report undertake a range of initiatives

focused on individual countries; smaller donors, in particular, often focus many of their own programmes on single countries while using multilateral mechanisms to engage at the regional and global scales. However, in accordance with the terms of reference for this report, these types of activities are not discussed below.

In the time available for this report, it was possible to review six countries' activities. These countries were selected for inclusion because they had sufficient documentation readily accessible in the form of action plans, implementation plans, and progress reports; they are donor countries with significant international activities that may be considered peers to the UK; and/or they have been cited in the literature as being leaders in promoting the WPS agenda.

2. Australia

Australia's first National Action Plan covered the period from 2012-2018, and its Second National Action Plan covers 2021-2031. As of the date of preparation of this report, implementation plans for the Second National Action Plan are not yet available from all agencies, so this report draws on progress reports from the first National Action Plan, the final independent review of the first National Action Plan, the Second National Action Plan, and the implementation report published by the Department of Home Affairs, which is the only departmental implementation plan for the Second National Action Plan that is currently available.

Key reference document links

[Progress report 2018](#)

[Independent review of the first National Action Plan 2018](#)

[National Action Plan 2021-2031](#)

[Home Affairs implementation plan 2021-2023](#)

Agencies involved

Five government departments or agencies are involved in implementing the Second National Action Plan (Australian Government, 2021, p. 52):

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (lead agency)
- Department of Defence and the Australian Defence Force (ADF)
- Australian Federal Police (AFP)
- Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC)
- Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force

Each implementing agency will develop its own implementation plans, typically covering two-year periods (Australian Government, 2021, p. 52). The independent review of the first National Action Plan noted that implementation approaches varied somewhat across departments and agencies (Hartley et al., 2018, p. 26).

Programmes and approaches

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Maintained the post of Ambassador for Women and Girls¹** to engage in international advocacy, public diplomacy, and outreach in support of gender equality, women's empowerment, and the human rights of women and girls. This post was first created in 2011; the current Ambassador, Christine Clarke, is a former Australian Navy officer (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2022).
- **Founded the Network of Women in International Law** (2017), an informal network bringing together female Ambassadors, judges and international legal experts to foster professional and personal connections and enable women to share information, experiences, and knowledge (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 130).
- **Supported the Women Peace and Security Focal Points Network²**, launched in 2016, which supports women's participation in peace and security, conflict prevention, the security sector and its integration into National Action Plans and National Strategies on WPS (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, pp. 48, 131).
- **Contributed AUD 26.3 million (approx. £13.9 million³) to the SPRINT programme on Humanitarian Response Preparedness⁴**, which supports sexual and reproductive health and rights in humanitarian settings (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 77).
- **Contributed AUD 7 million (£3.7 million) to training police from countries across the Pacific on combating violence against women and girls** (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 79)
- **Contributed AUD 6 million (£3.1 million) to UN Women's Women, Peace and Security Global Facility** (2015-2018) to provide technical capacity, resources and knowledge to support women's participation and leadership in all areas of conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building, and to prevent violent extremism and train female military officers (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, pp. 44, 76, 116).
- **Contributed AUD 5.5 million (£2.9 million) to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund⁵** (2015-2019), a global pooled funding mechanism supporting local women's organisations to enhance women's engagement, leadership and empowerment in peace,

¹ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/gender-equality/ambassador-women-and-girls>

² <https://wpsfocalpointnetwork.org/>

³ Amounts in Australian dollars have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

⁴ <https://www.ipf.org/our-approach/programmes/sprint-sexual-and-reproductive-health-crisis-and-post-crisis-situations>

⁵ <https://wphfund.org>

security, and humanitarian work (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 77).

- **Contributed AUD 4.5 million (£2.4 million) to support UNFPA pre-positioning of sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence supplies** (2016-2020) across disaster-prone countries in the Asia-Pacific region for rapid distribution in the event of humanitarian crises (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 109).
- **Contributed AUD 2.9 million (£1.5 million) to the UN Women programme ‘From Communities to Global Security Institutions’** (2011-ongoing) to empower women in conflict and post-conflict contexts to contribute to the reduction of conflict through involvement in peacebuilding, security sector reform, and increasing accountability for national and international commitments to the set of UNSCR 1325 resolutions (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 115).
- **Contributed AUD 2 million (£1.1 million) to the ICRC appeal on ‘Strengthening the Response to Sexual Violence’** (2013-2016), supporting work on responding to and preventing sexual violence, overcoming barriers to reporting incidents, providing medical, psychological and social care, encouraging States to improve response and prevention efforts, and staff sensitisation and training (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 106).
- **Contributed AUD 1.4 million (£0.7 million) to the Inter-Agency Standby Capacity Support Project (ProCap)⁶ and Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap)⁷** (2016-2017), which deploy protection and gender specialists to increase capacity and collaboration between humanitarian agencies globally and provide protection and gender training and context-specific analysis and program design (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 107).
- **Contributed AUD 1 million (£0.5 million) to UNHCR Sexual and Gender-based Violence Protection Initiatives** (2016-2017) earmarked to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in refugee and internally displaced populations; additional core funding to UNHCR also supported other work (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 107).
- **Military gender advisor training is offered to partner countries;** the Operational Gender Adviser course, launched in 2017, is available to partner countries to strengthen regional capability and meet the growing need for trained gender advisers on regional and international operations and exercises (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2018, p. 17).

⁶ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/protection-standby-capacity-project-procap>

⁷ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-standby-capacity-project-gencap>

3. Canada

Canada's current National Action Plan covers the period from 2017 through 2022. It is the second National Action Plan; the first was drafted in 2006 and adopted in 2010 (PeaceWomen, 2021b). This report draws on the Action Plan, the implementation plans developed by each partner department or agency, and the latest progress reports published by each partner department or agency.

Agencies involved

Three government agencies are designated as 'lead partners' for implementing the National Action Plan (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 11):

- Global Affairs Canada⁸ (lead agency)
- Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Four other 'supporting partners', which normally focus on domestic policies and programmes, also support the implementation of the action plan to lesser degrees:

Public Safety Canada; Women and Gender Equality Canada (formerly Status of Women Canada, until 2018); Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; and the Department of Justice (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 11).

Implementation plans have been developed by each partner agency, with coordination by Global Affairs Canada, and different departments' implementation plans do not necessarily follow a consistent structure (Trojanowska et al., 2018, p. 99). The Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP, and the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship provide specific targets, baselines, activities, and indicators which are largely quantitative, while other agencies' plans tend to state objectives without specific action points, targets, or indicators (Trojanowska et al., 2018, p. 100).

Programmes and approaches

Global Affairs Canada classified CAD 679 million (approx. £393 million⁹) of its spending in 2019-2020 as contributing in some way to the WPS agenda, consisting of '261 projects that fully

Key reference document links

[National Action Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Implementation Plan 2017-2022](#)

[Summary progress report 2019-2020](#)

[Global Affairs Canada 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Department of National Defence and The Canadian Armed Forces 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Public Safety Canada 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Women and Gender Equality Canada 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

[Department of Justice 2019-20 Progress Report](#)

⁸ The Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development was renamed Global Affairs Canada in 2015. It was formed in 2013 from the merger of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada with the Canadian International Development Agency.

⁹ Amounts in Canadian dollars have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

integrated gender considerations' and '127 projects that aimed to advance gender equality' (see Table 1) (Government of Canada, 2021).

Table 1: Global Affairs Canada disbursements contributing to gender equality

	Funding by fiscal year (£ millions, approximate)		
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Gender-responsive peacebuilding, peace-making, and post-conflict state-building, including support to women and women's groups working on peace-related issues	15.6	14.2	12.6
Prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, including ending impunity and providing services to survivors, and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse	35.0	32.3	29.2
Promotion and protection of women's and girls' human rights and empowerment in fragile and conflict-affected settings, including support to a gender-responsive security sector, women's political participation, girls' primary education and combatting violent extremism	61.6	75.3	118.7
Advancing gender equality in humanitarian settings	58.3	57.9	98.5
Sexual and reproductive health and rights in fragile, conflict-affected states and humanitarian settings	65.4	93.2	128.9
Strengthening the capacity of peace operations to advance WPS	0.4	14.8	5.3

Source: Government of Canada, 2021. Currency conversions are approximate, using exchange rates in effect in February 2022, rather than exchange rates in effect during the time periods referred to.

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Co-chaired and supported the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations¹⁰**, a multilateral project launched in 2017 to increase the participation of women in UN peace operations in police and military roles. Canada has taken a leading role through advocacy and diplomatic efforts, technical assistance and training partnerships, research, and developing standards. Canada is the largest contributor to the Initiative's multi-partner trust fund, the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations, having contributed a total of CAD 17.5 million (£10.1 million) through 2020 (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).
- **Committed CAD 650 million (£376 million) over three years to support sexual and reproductive health and rights** in humanitarian assistance programming, supporting a wide range of activities including: sexuality education; reproductive health services, family planning and contraception; abortion services and post-abortion care; prevention and management of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections; prevention and

¹⁰ https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/elsie_initiative-initiative_elsie.aspx

response to gender-based violence including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting; training of healthcare professionals; advocacy and public engagement; addressing social norms; and removing legal barriers to the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights (Government of Canada, 2020, p. 19, 2021).

- **Contributed CAD 300 million (£173 million) in 2019 to a new Equality Fund¹¹** which aims to address funding gaps faced by women's organisations working on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in developing countries. The Equality Fund has a grant-making stream focused on crisis and humanitarian settings, including conflict-related crises, which contributes to WPS objectives (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).
- **Established the post of Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security¹²** in 2019, a high-level role supporting the implementation of the National Action Plan, working across government at the ministerial level, working with other stakeholders, and representing Canada in national and international initiatives related to women, peace and security (Global Affairs Canada, 2021; Government of Canada, 2019a, 2019b).
- **Contributed CAD 1.5 million (£0.9 million) to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund¹³** (2018-2019), a global pooled funding mechanism supporting local women's organisations to enhance women's engagement, leadership and empowerment in peace, security, and humanitarian work (Government of Canada, 2020, p. 3).
- **Contributed CAD 800,000 (£463,000) over 2017-2021 to the operations of NATO's Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security**, which promotes gender mainstreaming at NATO and the development and delivery of training. Canada also supported the expansion of the WPS Office and contributed a WPS expert to the Office in 2019 (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).
- **Contributed CAD 300,000 (£174,000) to the UN Trust Fund in Support of the Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse¹⁴** (2017-2019), which provides support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and to children born as a result, including medical care, legal services, and psycho-social support (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).
- **Contributed CAD 300,000 (£174,000) to the Office of the UN Special Coordinator against sexual exploitation and abuse¹⁵** and deployed a military legal officer to support the Special Coordinator on improving the UN's response to sexual exploitation and abuse (2019-2020) (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).
- **Influenced partners** by requiring partners receiving funding to undertake measures such as completing a simplified gender-based analysis as part of funding applications, consulting with women and/or girls during project development, reporting on gender equality results, having a code of conduct to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation

¹¹ <https://equalityfund.ca>

¹² https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/women_peace_security-femmes_paix_securite-rep.aspx?lang=eng

¹³ <https://wphfund.org>

¹⁴ <https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/trust-fund>

¹⁵ <https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/un-special-coordinator-0>

and abuse, mitigating and responding to gender-based violence, and integrating gender considerations in humanitarian work (Global Affairs Canada, 2021).

4. Ireland

Ireland's current National Action Plan, covering 2019-2024, is its third, following previous action plans adopted in 2011 and 2015 (PeaceWomen, 2021c). This report draws upon the National Action Plan, the Defence Forces Action Plan, and the Annual Report that covers the first year of the current Action Plan, July 2019 through June 2020.

Key reference document links

[National Action Plan 2019-2024](#)

[Defence Forces action plan 2020-2024](#)

[Annual Report 2019-2020](#)

Agencies involved

The National Action Plan is implemented through a whole-of-government approach involving the following departments and agencies (Government of Ireland, 2019, p. 12):

- Department of Defence and the Defence Forces
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of Justice and Equality
- An Garda Síochána (the national police and security service)
- Health Service Executive
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Community and Rural Development
- Other state agencies.

The Department of Defence is the only government department to have produced its own action plan apart from the national action plan, and is the lead agency for integrating WPS in overseas peace missions; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has responsibilities for regional and international cooperation; and the other departments have primarily domestic responsibilities (Government of Ireland, 2019, p. 12).

Programmes and approaches

The Irish government reports that 76% of its bilateral ODA contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment in 2019, and 86% of Irish aid in fragile contexts contributes to gender equality (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 12).

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Contributed EUR 13.7 million (approx. £11.4 million¹⁶) for programmes aimed at preventing gender-based violence** (2019) delivered through bilateral assistance and NGO partnerships. These programmes include work to transform deeply entrenched attitudes and behaviours that enable violence (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 14).
- **Supporting multilateral programmes on gender-based violence** including a partnership with IRC across Africa, collaboration with the Centre for Behaviour Change to understand the problems of gender-based violence and lack of economic empowerment in behavioural terms, and multilateral contributions through UN Women, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, and other pooled funding mechanisms (Government of Ireland, 2021, pp. 14–15).
- **Contributions to a range of multilateral programmes supporting women’s voices in decision making** including the Inter Parliamentary Union’s Women in Politics programme, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Trust Fund, the African Women Leaders Network, and a range of civil society partners including Trócaire and Action Aid (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 16).
- **The IRC-Irish Aid strategic partnership for women and adolescent girls on leadership and advocacy** supported capacity-building activities for women and girls in five countries across Africa, empowering them to lead more than 40 actions addressing issues affecting women and girls in the community (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 16).
- **Funding for women’s rights organisations reached EUR 5.7 million (£4.8 million) in 2018** (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 17).
- **Contributed EUR 2.2 million (£1.8 million) to initiatives related to gender equality in emergency settings**, including responding to and preventing gender-based violence, and notably supporting IRC work on protecting women and girls in acute emergencies and protracted crises (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 19).
- **Providing technical specialists and training to support humanitarian responses to gender-based violence**, particularly through the Rapid Response Roster of Experts, some of whom have been deployed with UNICEF and UNHCR across multiple countries (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 19).
- **Training NATO and UN member state personnel on the investigation of sexual and gender based violence** in conflict situations and peacekeeping operations (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 19).
- **Supported global networking events with UN Women and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders¹⁷** to take stock of the WPS agenda and the impact of COVID-19 on their work, leading to a high-level event in 2020 (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 26).

¹⁶ Amounts in Euros have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

¹⁷ <https://gnwp.org>

- **Supported the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund¹⁸**, a global pooled funding mechanism supporting local women’s organisations to enhance women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment in peace, security, and humanitarian work (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 27).
- **Supported UN Women and the African Union’s Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security¹⁹** to hold a consultative meeting to assess the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa (Government of Ireland, 2021, p. 34).

5. Norway

Norway’s current National Action Plan covers the period 2019-2022, and is the country’s fourth Action Plan, following predecessors adopted in 2006, 2011, and 2015 (Norwegian Government, 2019b, p. 4; PeaceWomen, 2021d). This report draws on the National Action Plan and the two most recent available annual progress reports, covering 2019 and 2020.

Key reference document links

[National Action Plan 2019-2022](#)

[Progress report 2019](#)

[Progress report 2020](#)

Agencies involved

Norway’s National Action Plan was jointly developed by four government ministries (Norwegian Government, 2019b, p. 62):

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Justice and Public Security
- Ministry of Children and Equality

Inputs and analysis for the Action Plan also came from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and several other government agencies, research institutes, and civil society (Norwegian Government, 2019b, p. 62).

The Action Plan is considered to be delivered jointly by all participating ministries and agencies, including ‘foreign service missions and delegations, relevant ministries, directorates, academia and civil society’ (Norwegian Government, 2019b, pp. 57, 62).

Programmes and approaches

Much of Norway’s work on WPS is undertaken through contributions to a wide range of multilateral²⁰ and civil society partnerships. In its bilateral work on WPS, Norway focuses on ten priority countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, the

¹⁸ <https://wphfund.org>

¹⁹ <https://www.peaceau.org/en/page/40-5676-static-bineta-diop>

²⁰ Norway is a strong supporter of the multilateral system, with 57% of its total ODA delivered through multilateral organisations (SEEK Development, 2021).

Philippines, South Sudan and Syria. It also engages with the African Union and operates a grant programme for civil society organisations (Norwegian Government, 2020, p. 4).

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Committed to allocate NOK 50 million (approx. £4.2 million²¹) per year for women, peace and security activities** during 2019-2022, which will be spent on targeted measures with a priority on delivering activities through embassies in priority countries (Norwegian Government, 2019b, p. 59).
- **Committed to allocate NOK 25 million (£2.1 million) per year for civil society efforts for women's participation and rights in peace and reconciliation**, to be available non-Norwegian organisations and administered by Norad (Norwegian Government, 2019b, p. 59).
- **Committed to invest NOK 9.6 billion (£800 million) over five years in programming related to sexual and reproductive health and rights** (2020-2025) at the 2019 Nairobi Summit marking the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 28)
- **Committed NOK 760 million (£63 million) to support a new International Strategy to Eliminate Harmful Practices²²** (2019–2023) addressing female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, and son preference (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 28; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 5).
- **Contributed NOK 40 million (£3.3 million) to support the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership²³** (2018-2022), which brings together women rights and peace practitioners, organisations, and networks engaged in preventing extremism and promoting peace, rights and pluralism (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 27; Women's Alliance for Security Leadership, 2021).
- **Contributed NOK 10 million (£0.8 million) to support Women, Peace and Security work within the Beijing+25 process** (2019) through a partnership with UN Women, aiming to bridge implementation gaps identified by the UN Secretary General's report on Women, Peace and Security in 2019 and to include young peacebuilders and intergenerational dialogue in the process (Norwegian Government, 2020, p. 24).
- **Supported the GenCap²⁴, ProCap²⁵ and NorCap²⁶ programmes by deploying experts on gender and protection** (2019-2020) to assist governments, UN agencies and other organisations working to strengthen operational responses to gender,

²¹ Amounts in Norwegian kroner have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

²² https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/fc55501761024732bc7b13d82346e313/eliminate_harmful_practices.pdf

²³ <https://icanpeacework.org/our-work/womens-alliance-for-security-leadership/>

²⁴ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-standby-capacity-project-gencap>

²⁵ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/protection-standby-capacity-project-procap>

²⁶ <https://www.nrc.no/expert-deployment/aboutnorcap/>

protection and gender-based violence and contribute to integrating the gender perspective in humanitarian response (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 23).

- **Working with the UN Police Division to train female police officers from ten contributing countries** to enable them to fulfil requirements for participating in UN missions (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 19).
- **Supported the Centre for Mediation in Africa**²⁷ at the University of Pretoria to enhance knowledge and expertise in conflict resolution, mediation and negotiations across Africa; the programme emphasises training African women involved in peacebuilding (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 26)
- **Contributed NOK 24 million (£2 million) to the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund**²⁸ (2018-2020), a global pooled funding mechanism supporting local women's organisations to enhance women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment in peace, security, and humanitarian work. Norway was on the board of the Fund in 2019, as one of its four largest contributors (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 27).
- **Supporting the African Union’s Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security**²⁹, who works to promote and support women’s participation in and influence on peace processes; including support for the development of the Continental Results Framework³⁰ for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the WPS agenda by AU member states and sub-regional organisations (Norwegian Government, 2019a, pp. 71–72, 2020, p. 75).
- **Supported the formation of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks**³¹ (2019) which links six regional networks to support women’s participation and influence in peace processes at all levels (Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks, 2021; Norwegian Government, 2020, p. 11), and **FemWise Africa, the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation**³², since its establishment in 2017, including enabling its first set of long-term field deployments (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 72, 2020, p. 76).
- **Supporting the Training for Peace**³³ programme in collaboration with the African Union, which has provided training to enhance the capacity of women in peace processes and AU operations and missions (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 72).
- **Supported the Global Index for Women, Peace and Security**³⁴ (2017-2021), a biennial review of data on women’s rights, participation, and access to justice in

²⁷ <https://centreformediationafrica.org>

²⁸ <https://wphfund.org>

²⁹ <https://www.peaceau.org/en/page/40-5676-static-bineta-diop>

³⁰ <https://au.int/en/documents/20190204/continental-results-framework-reporting-and-monitoring-implementation-women-peace>

³¹ <https://www.globalwomenmediators.org/femwise-africa/>

³² <https://www.globalwomenmediators.org/femwise-africa/>

³³ <https://trainingforpeace.org>

³⁴ <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>

conjunction with security developed by Georgetown University and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 27, 2019b, p. 48).

- **Supported the establishment of the Global Survivors' Fund³⁵** (2019) in partnership with the Mukwege Foundation and others, which works with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence to develop holistic responses including developing reparations programs and guiding states and other stakeholders in designing survivor-centric initiatives (Norwegian Government, 2019a, p. 27, 2020, p. 25).

6. Sweden

Sweden's latest National Action Plan covers the period 2016-2020, and is the country's third action plan, following predecessors adopted in 2006 and 2009 (PeaceWomen, 2021e). This report draws on the National Action Plan and on two annual progress reports covering 2018 and 2019.

Key reference document links

[National Action Plan 2016-2020](#)

[Progress report 2018](#)

[Progress report 2019](#)

Agencies involved

Sweden's National Action Plan is led by three government ministries (Government of Sweden, 2016, p. 5):

- Ministry for Foreign Affairs (lead agency)
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Justice.

Several other agencies play smaller roles in implementing selected aspects of the Action Plan, including the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Swedish National Courts Administration, the Folke Bernadotte Academy, the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Defence University, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish Coast Guard, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swedish Defence Research Agency and the Swedish Prosecution Authority (Government of Sweden, 2016, pp. 5, 10–15).

Programmes and approaches

The National Action Plan highlights the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine, Colombia, Iraq, Palestine, and Syria as focus countries, but notes that Sweden will also engage globally on the WPS agenda through other activities including humanitarian work, peacekeeping, peace building, and civil society engagement (Government of Sweden, 2016, pp. 22–23) and in the latest available progress report notes that Sweden undertook WPS-related work in more than 40 countries in 2019, including the 12 focus countries (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 12). The total amount of funding allocated to activities supporting the National Action Plan was SEK 957 million

³⁵ <https://www.globalsurvivorsfund.org>

in 2018 and SEK 1.03 billion in 2019 (approx. £75.3 million and £81.1 million, respectively³⁶) (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 14), but published progress reports do not provide expenditure data for specific programmes or projects.

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Supported many multilateral organisations and processes**, including the EU, many UN agencies, OSCE, NATO, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Sweden was the largest donor to UN Women in 2019 and was also the largest donor to UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict for a ten-year period (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 9, 2019, p. 12).
- **Contributed experts on gender equality and conflict-related gender-based violence to international missions** including work with UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, OSCE, the EU, and other UN agencies and missions (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, pp. 9–10, 2019, pp. 12–13)
- **Contributed judges to assist in European Security and Defence College training** on the prevention and investigation of gender-related violence in conflict areas and other gender-related training (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 19, 2019, p. 15)
- **Supported training on gender equality linked to the EU's common security and defence policy** (2019) (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 15).
- **Delivered training on gender counselling** to gender counsellors, focal points and specialists from 15 different countries in 2019 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 15).
- **Supported the Swedish Women's Mediation Network³⁷**, established in 2015 and coordinated by the Folke Bernadotte Academy, which aims to strengthen the role of women as mediators, support women who are active in peace processes, and cooperate with mediation networks for women around the world. The network has supported political and peace processes in countries such as Afghanistan, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, and Zimbabwe in 2018 and 2019 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 12).
- **Supported a pool of experts at the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict³⁸**, which supports countries in investigating and counteracting conflict-related sexual violence, through providing funding and supplying personnel (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 16, 2019, p. 12).
- **Provided training for correctional officers from various countries**, including for example training in Benin in 2019 for female prison guards from ten different countries in collaboration with the UN Department of Peace Operations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 17).

³⁶ Amounts in Swedish kronor have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

³⁷ <https://fba.se/en/about-fba/publications/the-swedish-womens-mediation-network/>

³⁸ <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict>

- **Supported the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in integrating gender equality and human rights in disaster risk management**, by providing expertise in gender equality and gender mainstreaming, capacity-building activities, and technical support in areas such as gender mainstreaming in risk and vulnerability analysis (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 17).
- **Supported the West Africa Network for Peace Building³⁹ in its work on countering violent extremism** by developing early warning indicators in support of traditional mechanisms as well as increasing knowledge about gender-linked dimensions of violent extremism (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 14)
- **Supported the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom⁴⁰ in developing a tool for gender-conscious power analysis** which supports conflict prevention measures and early warning systems, for example by including specific indicators for women, peace and security linked to national budgetary processes (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 14).
- **Supported the Nordic Center for Gender in Military Operations⁴¹ in incorporating gender equality into training** on counter-terrorism and other work on radicalisation and violent extremism at NATO's Center of Excellence - Defense Against Terrorism (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 14).
- **Carried out training for the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations and the Department for Field Support** for the implementation of the UN's gender parity strategy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 18).

7. United States of America

The USA's current *Strategy on WPS* covers the period 2019 to 2023. It is the USA's third such plan, following predecessors adopted in 2011 and 2016 (though it is identified as a 'strategy' rather than an 'action plan', as the first two were), and it is significantly shorter than the earlier action plans (PeaceWomen, 2021f). This report draws on the national strategy, the implementation plans produced by each of the participating government agencies, and a Congressional Report on progress which was submitted in 2021.

Key reference document links

[National Strategy 2019-2023](#)

[Department of State implementation plan 2020](#)

[USAID implementation plan 2020](#)

[Department of Homeland Security implementation plan 2020](#)

[Department of Defense implementation plan 2020](#)

[Congressional Report on progress 2021](#)

³⁹ <https://wanep.org/wanep/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.wilpf.org>

⁴¹ <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/swedint/nordic-centre-for-gender-in-military-operations/>

Agencies involved

Four government departments or agencies are involved in implementing the Strategy (United States Government, 2019, p. 2):

- Department of State
- Department of Defense
- Department of Homeland Security
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Each implementing agency has developed a departmental implementation plan, but all four implementation plans are written at the level of strategic objectives, outcomes, and indicators, without defining specific programmes, projects, or expenditure commitments. The 2021 Congressional Report contains more concrete details of programmes and projects undertaken under the national strategy.

Programmes and approaches

The Department of State invested approximately USD 138 million (approx. £101 million⁴²) in FY 2018 and FY 2019 in programming to advance WPS, and identified 127 programmes with dedicated funding for WPS activities in 2020 (The White House, 2021, pp. 1, 5). The US Agency for International Development (USAID) invested USD 27 million (£19.8 million) in dedicated funding (2017-2018) to support the Strategy on WPS through programmes to empower and protect women and girls and help missions incorporate WPS objectives within their programming through targeted training and technical assistance (USAID, 2019, p. 3).

Selected global and regional programmes and projects (excluding single-country initiatives) include:

- **Funded 201 activities in FY 2019 and 2020 worldwide combating gender-based violence through capacity-building of criminal justice actors and peacekeepers**, including support for survivors, building the capacity of prosecutors, judges, and service providers, and broader awareness campaigns (The White House, 2021, p. 8).
- **Earmarked USD 104.2 million (£76.5 million) for preventing and responding to gender-based violence within humanitarian assistance programmes** in FY 2019 and 2020 delivered by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (The White House, 2021, p. 9).
- **Provided training and capacity building on investigating peacekeeper misconduct with a focus on sexual exploitation and abuse** to 170 participants from 36 countries through the State Department's Global Peace Operations Initiative (The White House, 2021, pp. 6–8).
- **Provided financial assistance to survivors of gender-based violence** and provided technical support to civil society organisations and government stakeholders working to

⁴² Amounts in US dollars have been converted to British pounds at the exchange rate in effect in February 2022 as an approximate guide for comparison purposes; they do not represent the equivalent values at the time of the actual expenditures.

prevent and respond to gender-based violence through the Voices Against Violence Initiative⁴³, a global mechanism managed by the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (The White House, 2021, p. 8).

- **The Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund⁴⁴ focused on the theme of Women, Peace and Security** in 2020 and supported 79 WPS projects in 67 countries in 2020. Projects are led by alumni of government-sponsored exchange programmes, take place in partner countries, and are relatively small scale (Department of State, 2021; The White House, 2021, p. 7).
- **Support to the Sisters Without Borders⁴⁵ network**, a cross-border women's network that participated in the development and implementation of Kenya's strategy for countering violent extremism by adding a pillar on gender equity and equality, and is now expanding across the Horn of Africa, contributing to countering violent extremism (The White House, 2021, p. 6).
- **Supported Women Without Borders**, a program that trained 142 mothers to educate and empower other mothers in communities vulnerable to radicalisation (The White House, 2021, p. 6).
- **Supported partner countries in developing National Action Plans on WPS** through advocacy, technical assistance, developing a toolkit on best practices, supporting efforts to engage with civil society, and supporting international meetings and workshops including the Global Focal Point Network on WPS and co-funding workshops through the OSCE (The White House, 2021, p. 12).
- **The WPS Incentive Fund finances activities that promote women's participation in peace and security processes**, protection from violence, and addressing the needs of women and girls affected by violent extremism (USAID, 2019, p. 4).
- **Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity⁴⁶** (2019–2023) is a whole-of-government approach to protection and care for vulnerable children and their families; USAID will develop synergies between work under this programme and WPS strategies, including projects such as community-based child-protection mechanisms, psychosocial support, and family tracing and reintegration (USAID, 2019, p. 4).
- **Expanded and strengthened programmes for capacity-building, technical training, and overcoming barriers** to enable women's participation and leadership in conflict prevention and early warning, peacebuilding, post-conflict transition, security-sector initiatives, and political processes. Programmes included rapid-response funding to address childcare and transportation costs; targeted training in leadership and negotiation skills; and support for women's organisations to build coalitions and platforms for action (USAID, 2019, p. 6).
- **Supported the Women in Power project** which will fund activities to prevent and address violence, harassment, and intimidation that targets women in politics, including as candidates for office, elected officials, and voters, operating from the premise that

⁴³ <https://www.vitalvoices.org/what-we-do/signature-programs/vav/>

⁴⁴ <https://alumni.state.gov/aeif>

⁴⁵ <https://www.wiishoa.org/sisters-without-borders/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1866/advancing-protection-and-care-children-adversity>

violence against women in politics is a significant barrier to participation (USAID, 2019, p. 8).

- **Invested USD 400 million (£294 million) in programming to empower and protect women and girls in countries affected by crisis, conflict, violent extremism, and natural disasters**, including over USD 41 million in dedicated funding to advance WPS objectives in countries such as Somalia, Pakistan, Kenya, Niger, Morocco, Iraq, and Nepal (The White House, 2021, p. 17).
- **Provided USD 95 million (£69.8 million) in FY 2020 for gender-based violence programmes in humanitarian emergencies** (2020), supporting 277 projects across 27 countries, of which 102 projects supported field-level gender-based violence prevention and response services including psychosocial support and case management for survivors and community-based prevention measures (The White House, 2021, p. 17).
- **Adapted humanitarian assistance programmes to support survivors of gender-based violence** by establishing and expanding ‘women and girls only’ community centres, psychosocial support services, adapting programmes to account for women’s time and caregiving burdens, enabling social workers to provide support over the phone or through virtual platforms, increasing staffing for gender-based violence hotlines, and training and supporting health responders to support gender-based violence survivors (The White House, 2021, p. 21).
- **Supported the #NotTheCost campaign⁴⁷ to stop violence against women in politics in Pacific island states**, which undertakes research, dialogue, awareness raising, networking, training, and advocacy to help protect women participating in politics (National Democratic Institute, 2021; The White House, 2021, p. 22).
- **Supported the African Union in establishing a Continental Results Framework⁴⁸ for WPS Activities** to strengthen the AU’s capacity to support AU member states in protecting women’s rights and promoting participation in peace processes, track the implementation of relevant international instruments, and support member states in developing their own National Action Plans (The White House, 2021, p. 24; USAID, 2019, pp. 11–12)
- **Supported the Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Project** (since 2017) which mainstreams the inclusion, participation, and protection of the most at-risk groups in disaster risk management, including women and girls, to promote recovery and resilience in communities affected by disasters (The White House, 2021, p. 25).
- **Supported the G5 Sahel member states to develop a Regional Gender Policy** which includes policies, plans, and capacity to improve the participation of women in peace and security in the region and to monitor and ensure the implementation of international instruments that protect women’s rights and enhance their participation in peace processes across West Africa (The White House, 2021, p. 25).
- **Supported the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) to integrate gender in its data**

⁴⁷ <https://www.ndi.org/not-the-cost>

⁴⁸ <https://au.int/en/documents/20190204/continental-results-framework-reporting-and-monitoring-implementation-women-peace>

systems through the inclusion of incidents of gender-based violence (The White House, 2021, p. 25).

- **Provided WPS-related training to military personnel from partner countries** through a variety of mechanisms including courses at the William J. Perry Center, the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies; training by US Africa Command offered to female military personnel from multiple African countries; supporting a UN Gender in Peace Support Operations course in Kenya; hosting the Women’s Communication Symposium, a military capacity-building event with African partner countries; and collaborating with Australia to launch an Asia-Pacific WPS training network (The White House, 2021, pp. 39–40)

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