UNSCR 1325 AT 20 YEARS

Perspectives from Feminist Peace Activists and Civil Society

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATT
Arms Trade Treaty

BPfA
Beijing Declaration and
Platform for Action

CEDAW
Convention on the Elimination of All
Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CFFP
Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy

CSO
Civil society organisation

GBV
Gender-based violence

GEF
Generation Equality Forum

IPI
International Peace Institute

NAP
National action plan

NATO
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NGO
Non-governmental organisation

NPT
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

OECD
Organisation for Economic
Cooperation and Development

PoA
Program of Action on Small Arms
and Light Weapons

SALW
Small arms and light weapons

SDGs
Sustainable Development Goals

SGBV
Sexual and gender-based violence

SIPRI
Stockholm International Peace
Research Institute

SRHR
Sexual and reproductive health and rights

SVIC
Sexual violence in conflict

UN
United Nations

UNSC
United Nations Security Council

UNSCR
United Nations Security Council Resolution

WCSOs
Women's civil society organisations

WHRDs
Women human rights defenders

WILPF
Women's International League for
Peace and Freedom

WPS
Women, peace, and security

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND METHODOLOGY

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Today, twenty years after its passage, we forget how astounding it was for those women thinkers, researchers, and activists to have succeeded in getting Security Council delegates to vote for this groundbreaking resolution. In fact, we may be slipping into a casualness when referring to "womenpeaceandsecurity." That's risky. It underestimates the past and present resistance. The resistance to both the analysis and the effective implementation to 1325 still runs deep, even if most official spokespeople know how to perform their public support. Relying on this shorthand [WPS] … can serve to unintentionally shrink what are in reality complex, always-in-motion dynamics between diverse women, the myriad understandings of peace, and the always-contested notions of security. When we shrink anything down to a convenient acronym, we risk underestimating the lived realities lying beneath that short acronym.

Cynthia Enloe[1]

The women, peace and security (WPS) agenda[2] has become a policy cornerstone within feminist activist and international policy circles alike. Yet, as the past twenty years have well demonstrated, words are not enough to produce commitment to peace and gender equality, nor do they guarantee accelerated action towards achieving a gender-just world. Furthermore, it is crucial, as also underscored by feminist antimilitarist scholar Cynthia Enloe, that we not take for granted what the agenda, or the primary words that comprise it, stands for both within and beyond the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

The words and actions of policymakers that occupy the seats of the Council have direct social, political, and economic implications for women's lives before, during, and after armed conflict. It is, therefore, vital that Resolution 1325, as well as the subsequent nine resolutions on women, peace, and security, do not become a mere rhetorical exercise that remains at the high-level corridors and chambers of the UN without positive impact on the lived experiences of diverse women and girls, and other marginalised populations, around the world.

This, so far, has not been the case. Despite the many normative frameworks to advance gender equality, ten WPS resolutions, and countless commitments by member states, we still live in a world with rampant armed conflict and instability, where women are disproportionately impacted, whether before, during, or after armed conflict.

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1   Donnelly, Phoebe. 2020. "Sustaining Feminist Curiosity for the Future of Women, Peace, and Security: Q&A with Cynthia Enloe." *IPI Global Observatory*. https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/10/sustaining-feminist-curiosity-for-future-of-wps-qa-with-cynthia-enloe/

2   In this report, "women, peace, and security agenda;" "WPS agenda;" "Resolution 1325;" and "UNSCR 1325" are used interchangeably.

This report was developed in the backdrop of the growing discrepancy between the transformative vision of feminist activists who advocated for UNSCR 1325 and the current state of its implementation, as well as the many anniversaries of 2020[3] that are taking place in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic with a disproportionate impact on women and girls.[4] With the goal to assess what the implementation of Resolution 1325 practically looks like on the ground for its original owners and partners–feminist peace activists, peacebuilders, and civil society members[5]–WILPF undertook a series of consultations that consisted of interviews with twelve WILPF National Sections and civil society partners; a group call with the members of the Young WILPF Network, representing six WILPF National Sections; an online multi-day global consultation with over 180 WPS practitioners and peacebuilders; and a survey that solicited input from all WILPF National Sections and Groups.[6]

Policymakers and practitioners alike often describe the lagging or problematic implementation of the women, peace, and security agenda with a "lack of political will," highlight the presence of a "siloed approach," and identify the absence of "women's meaningful participation" as major areas of concern.[7] These phrases have often become a shorthand for describing the problems that exist in implementing Resolution 1325, assuming a common understanding of what they mean across its community of practice. Yet, this common jargon can serve to create a façade of concern by states over lack of implementation, rather than a resolve to discuss why the lack is there to begin with. This analysis asserts that these phrases must not be taken at face value, nor should they be easily bandied as public displays of commitment or concern by states. Instead, commitment and effort must be assessed based on substantive change in the lives of women and girls.

So, instead, this report asks and reflects on the following: How does a lack of political will manifest itself on the ground and what are its impacts on the lives of women facing widespread obstacles as a result of this failure? What does it look like for the women, peace, and security agenda to be implemented in a siloed

3   In addition to being the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), the 5th anniversary of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 75th anniversary of the United Nations (UN), and the 10th anniversary of UN Women. These landmark moments were preceded by the 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)–the international human rights treaty, often described as an international bill of rights for women, that focuses on gender equality. Furthermore, taking these concurrent anniversaries as a rallying point to achieve women's and girls' human rights, UN Women, with the governments of Mexico and France serving as co-hosts, will be convening the Generation Equality Forum (GEF), a civil-society centred, multi-stakeholder global gathering focused on gender equality, in 2021 (postponed from 2020 due to the pandemic). The GEF comprises six thematic action coalitions to produce tangible actions towards attaining gender equality, with WPS among other thematic areas as intersecting to these action coalitions. While WPS was not a stand-alone action coalition, the GEF launched a Women, Peace, and Security-Humanitarian Action Compact with the goal to accelerate action towards WPS commitments.

4   CARE. 2020. *She Told Us So: Filling the Data Gap to Build Back Equal*. https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE_RGA_SheToldUsSo_Sept-2020.pdf

5   WILPF WPS Programme. 2015. *Through the Lens of Civil Society: Summary Report of the Public Submissions to the Global Study on Women, Peace and Security*. https://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/May-29-Copy-Through-the-Lens-of-Civil-Society-Executive-Summary-For-Summary-Report.pdf

6   One-on-one interviews were conducted with WILPF National Sections and civil society partners in Australia, Cameroon, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Denmark, Germany, Libya, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syria, and Yemen. The Young WILPF Network Call was conducted with representatives from WILPF National Sections in Germany, Ghana, Italy, Sweden, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

7   Taylor, Sarah and Gretchen Baldwin. 2019. "Focus on 2020: Opportunities for the Twentieth Anniversary of Resolution 1325." *IPI*. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/1910_Focus-on-2020.pdf

manner and how and why does this happen practically on the ground? What conditions do women think should be present to have meaningful participation across the social, political, and economic processes that are intimately connected to peace, and how do women engage with structures of power when their presence is ignored or actively excluded from those venues? Ultimately, the report reflects on these questions through the overarching issue of what peace and security mean for women peacebuilders and activists once removed from the militarised context of the United Nations Security Council.[8]

This report assesses the gaps in implementing Resolution 1325 through the perspective of feminist activists, peacebuilders, and civil society. The first section elaborates on the challenges to WPS implementation, identified across the consultations by WPS practitioners and peacebuilders. The following section offers key recommendations to these challenges and highlights entryways to reclaim the transformative potential of the WPS agenda towards achieving sustainable and feminist peace. The final section provides a summary of the political framework following the adoption of Resolution 1325 and reaffirms the need for and importance of structural changes to the effective implementation of the WPS agenda.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, in October 2000, feminist activists and women's civil society organisations paved the way to the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325[9] through their concerted efforts and a specific vision. Built on the progressive gender equality blueprints of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), this vision not only demanded a recognition of the disproportionate impact that conflict and wars have on women, but also of the important role women play in peace processes beyond their status as victims in conflict. In doing so, feminist activists also demanded that international actors, including global powers, shift how they approach the question of what keeps people safe, requiring reevaluation and reprioritisation from militarised security to human security.

The scope of Resolution 1325 has expanded in the past twenty years with the subsequent nine resolutions that have been adopted, all of which have collectively come to be known as the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda.[10] Within the WPS corpus, the UNSC now addresses issues such as women human rights defenders, gender-responsive reparations, structural gender inequalities, and women's leadership in peacebuilding. The resolutions have been accompanied by the development of comprehensive indicators in 2010 to monitor and evaluate

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8   WILPF WPS Programme. 2018. *Towards a Feminist Security Council: A Guidance Note for Security Council Members.* https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/WILPF_Feminist%20Security%20Council%20Guide_Print.pdf

9   S/RES/1325 (2000) https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000)

10 The UNSC adopted 10 resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS): Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019).

progress made on implementing UNSCR 1325.[11] Additionally, in 2015, the UN commissioned three high-level reviews on peace and security to assess progress and gaps in WPS implementation.[12] In 2016, the Informal Expert Group (IEG) on WPS was established to ensure coordination and oversight of WPS within the work of the UNSC.[13] Finally, member states have made numerous commitments towards the implementation of the WPS agenda at high-level stock-taking events in 2010, 2015, and 2019.[14]

Two decades after the adoption of Resolution 1325, the implementation of these and other commitments has not seen the same level of steady progress as the proliferation of WPS rhetoric. The most critical elements to fulfilling the transformative potential of the WPS agenda are also the least focused on in its implementation: human rights, disarmament, conflict prevention, and root cause analysis.[15] Alarmingly, there is increasing and explicit pushback from some Council members, primarily China, Russia, and the United States, to the presence of existing language in WPS resolutions on civil society, women human rights defenders, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)[16]–a direct contrast to the civil society-centred and rights-based framework that feminist activists and women's organisations advocating for Resolution 1325 had originally championed. Most recently, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNSC took weeks to address the situation as Council members disputed over the language to be used in the COVID-19 ceasefire resolution,[17] at the expense of millions of women and girls disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, especially in humanitarian settings.[18]

In addition to the multi-layered challenges that have hindered the substantive implementation of the WPS agenda, there is an inconvenient truth that remains to be addressed at the high-level debates and discussions within the Council chamber: the devastating impact of creeping militarism and military expenditure, including the actions and policies of some Security Council members, on the holistic

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11   The Global Indicators are a list of twenty-six qualitative and quantitative indicators, organised under the four pillars of the WPS agenda: participation; prevention; protection; relief and recovery. For the full list of indicators, see the UN Secretary-General's annual report on WPS: S/2010/498 https://undocs.org/S/2010/498

12   These reports are *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325* ("the Global Study"), https://wps.unwomen.org; the Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ("the HIPPO report"), https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2015/446; and the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of Peacebuilding Architecture ("the AGE report"), https://undocs.org/A/69/968

13   The IEG was established upon UNSCR 2242 (2015). The guidelines for the IEG were established through S/2016/1106: https://undocs.org/en/S/2016/1106. For a full list of IEG meetings, see Security Council Report. 2020. *Women, Peace and Security: The Agenda at 20*. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/research_report_women_peace_and_security_2020.pdf

14   For the full list of member states' commitments, see WILPF WPS Programme. 2020. "Call to Action on 2019-2020 Commitments." http://peacewomen.org/node/103695

15   UN Women. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

16   Taylor, Sarah and Gretchen Baldwin. 2019. "Focus on 2020: Opportunities for the Twentieth Anniversary of Resolution 1325." *IPI*. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/1910_Focus-on-2020.pdf

17   WILPF WPS Programme. 2020. *Centring Women, Peace and Security in Ceasefires*. https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/!FINAL%20WPS%20Ceasefire%20Brief.pdf

18   CARE. 2020. *Gender Implications of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings*. https://care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/gendered_implications_of_covid-19_-_full_paper.pdf

implementation of the WPS agenda.[19] There is a double face approach at play within the UNSC where states continue to reaffirm the importance of implementing WPS commitments while also spending tens or hundreds of billions per year on their militaries,[20] producing and exporting arms,[21] resisting ratifying arms control treaties,[22] and taking contradictory actions on denuclearisation.[23] This approach has increasingly turned Resolution 1325 into a framework that is utilised to make war and conflict safe for women rather than preventing or ending war and conflict.[24] Militarism, in its various facets, is one of the biggest obstacles standing in the way of the holistic implementation of the WPS agenda and achieving feminist peace.[25]

Yet, every year, debate after debate, member states make statements in support of the WPS agenda and commit to its implementation that lead observers to believe this time they are serious about taking tangible actions. During these occasions, countries, who flagrantly violate and undermine human rights, claim that they are worried about the state of women's lives around the world, or express grave concern about the consequences of conflict for women, while also exporting arms that fuel and exacerbate instability and violence. Such statements, however, have become commonplace and come even from those who stand as "WPS champions." Remarks are given, commitments are made, and then inertia persists until we find ourselves on the eve of another WPS anniversary, where states express concern, *yet again,* about the slow implementation of the WPS agenda. It is clear that something is amiss.

The persistent gap between rhetoric and reality, and the staggering pushback against women's rights at a global scale, and alarmingly, in the work of the UNSC itself, clearly demonstrate that milestone anniversaries of UNSCR 1325 must not be a cause for celebration, but a call to serious action that addresses the gendered root causes and consequences of conflict; reaffirms the rights of all women and girls; and urgently propels much-needed action towards conflict prevention, disarmament, and demilitarisation.

19   Ruane, Abigail. 2015. "Creeping Militarism: A Critical Challenge to Gender Justice and Peace." *Women, Peace and Security: 15 Years of 1325 Resolution*. http://www.icip-perlapau.cat/numero25/articles_centrals/article_central_3/

20   SIPRI. 2020. *Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019*. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/fs_2020_04_milex_0.pdf

21   SIPRI. 2020. *Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2019*. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/fs_2003_at_2019.pdf

22   Arms Trade Treaty. 2020. "Treaty Status." https://thearmstradetreaty.org/treaty-status.html?lang=fr

23   Acheson, Ray. 2014. "Editorial: A Tale of Two Securities." *OEWG Report*. Vol 2. No. 14. https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora/oewg/2016/may/reports/10822-oewg-report-vol-2-no-14

24   Otto, Dianne. 2017. "Women, Peace and Security: A Critical Analysis of the Security Council's Vision." *LSE Blogs*. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2017/01/09/women-peace-and-security-a-critical-analysis-of-the-security-councils-vision/

25   WILPF WPS Programme. "WILPF's Approach: Feminist Peace." http://peacewomen.org/why-WPS/solutions/integrated-approach

KEY CHALLENGES TO WPS IMPLEMENTATION

The findings from the consultations reveal three overarching themes as key challenges to WPS implementation: 1) militarism and militarisation; 2) patriarchal and political undermining of the WPS agenda; and 3) accountability for WPS implementation. While each thematic area has distinct manifestations and impacts on the challenges to effectively implementing UNSCR 1325, they are also interrelated and cross-cutting.

MILITARISM AND MILITARISATION

Resolution 1325 was envisioned as a conflict prevention framework by feminist peace activists and women's civil society organisations who advocated for its adoption. Nevertheless, as a framework enshrined within the state-centred traditional security structures of the UNSC, the transformative potential of Resolution 1325 to achieve feminist peace was limited from its inception.[26] Over the years, the prevailing and unquestioned militarism, including within the UNSC, has further resulted in a WPS agenda entangled with militarised power dynamics that impede substantive progress towards sustainable peace and the realisation of women's human rights before, during, and after conflict.

Absence of disarmament and demilitarisation

The WPS agenda is a strong framework; however, we still see UN Member States picking and choosing which aspects best suit their national interests rather than adopting a holistic approach that would also address hard-hitting issues like defunding the arms industry.

WPS Researcher, Belgium[27]

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26 In her critical appraisal of the WPS agenda, Zeynep Kaya underscores that the WPS agenda "embodies some key tensions which undermine its potential. It is an agenda with one foot planted in traditional security conceptions and structures and the other in transnational and feminist peace activism. It is caught between an urge to reflect existing international power structures and normative frameworks and the desire to eliminate, or at least reduce, gender inequalities and include women in peacebuilding. Although the WPS agenda is widely welcomed by feminist scholars and activists, it does not represent feminist peace and feminist security, mainly because of its dual position of being both an agenda for feminist women and for the UN Security Council." Kaya, Zeynep. 2020. "Feminist Peace and Security in the Middle East and North Africa." *Transforming Power to Put Women at the Heart of Peacebuilding: A Collection of Regional-Focused Essays on Feminist Peace and Security*. Oxfam. p. 38. https://oxfamilibrary. openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621051/dp-feminist-peace-security-essay-collection-210920-en.pdf

27 All quotes used in this report are based on our consultations, unless otherwise noted. The quotes that are attributed to a WILPF National Section or civil society partner are quotes from one-on-one interviews. All the other quotes are from the online global consultation conducted on September 15-17, 2020. We have kept all of these quotes anonymous for privacy reasons. The titles and countries that accompany the quotes are based on information gathered through the consultation application form.

The UN Secretary-General's 2019 Report on WPS highlighted the 2018 $1.8 trillion USD global military expenditure as a "call to action" to address the lagging progress made on WPS implementation.[28] Furthermore, in 2019, the permanent members of the UNSC (the "P5"), all of whom have veto power to block resolutions, were among the world's top 10 military spenders and among the world's top 10 arms exporters.[29] As highlighted by WILPF Secretary-General, Madeleine Rees, during her briefing in February 2020 at an Arria-Formula meeting on women human rights defenders, "there is a massive conflict of interest in this room. Those who sell weapons need wars in order to continue to sell weapons. In no other body would that be considered a true balance of power. Those who sell the weapons get to keep peace."[30] Furthermore, as also pointed out by many women civil society members who briefed the UNSC,[31] the presence of these weapons not only worsen conflict, but also further endanger women's lives.[32] Yet, despite the fact that investing in arms and armament runs directly counter to conflict prevention (a key pillar of the WPS framework), it is a glaring omission that none of the WPS resolutions address military spending.

Militarism and Militarisation

- Disarmament and demilitarisation are starkly absent from debates on and implementation of the WPS agenda.
- Resolution 1325 is still seen as a framework that only concerns conflict-affected countries.
- The narrow and militarised definitions of conflict, peace, and security directly impede root cause analysis.
- Conflict prevention is largely absent in debates on and implementation of the WPS agenda.
- Adding women into armed structures of power, specifically the military and peacekeeping operations, has become a major focus in WPS implementation.

Furthermore, disarmament and demilitarisation are starkly absent from debates on and implementation of the WPS agenda. As a representative from WILPF Germany observed, "people who talk about disarmament are not at the WPS table." Indeed, across the ten WPS resolutions adopted to date, the topic of arms and

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28 S/2019/800, para. 4, p. 3/38, https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

29 SIPRI. 2020. *Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2019.* https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/fs_2003_at_2019.pdf

30 WILPF WPS Programme. 2020. "Reprisals against Women Human Rights Defenders and Women Peacebuilders Who Engage with the Security Council and All of Its Subsidiary Bodies." https://www.peacewomen.org/node/103825

31 Alaa Salah, the civil society briefer for the 2019 open debate on women, peace, and security, for instance, stated that "many governments, continue to sell weapons that directly contribute to and perpetuate conflict, ongoing violations of human rights and forced displacement [in Sudan]. The widespread availability of weapons in my country is one of the factors fuelling violence and insecurity for all people, including women and girls." https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/statement-unsc-wps-open-debate-october-2019/

32 WILPF Reaching Critical Will. 2016. *Preventing Gender-Based Violence through Arms Control: Tools and Guidelines to Implement the Arms Trade Treaty and UN Programme of Action.* https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/preventing-gbv.pdf

armament is addressed through a narrow framework that focuses on small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their misuse as well as impact on gender-based violence (GBV), and only in 4 out of 10 WPS resolutions.[33] The presence of SALW, however, is only one specific component within the broader issue of disarmament. Furthermore, the focus of misuse alone (without substantive discussion about the reason for the presence of SALW in a given country) may open up loopholes for exporter states to evade responsibility for the repercussions of arms transfers.[34] This selective engagement with the topic also reflects a narrow approach that overlooks the broader challenge brought about by the lack of total disarmament to substantive progress in WPS implementation.[35]

In a similar manner, debates within the UNSC chamber do not sufficiently address the gendered social, political, and economic repercussions of the lack of disarmament and demilitarisation in implementing the key issues identified in Resolution 1325.[36] Commenting on how the WPS framework at the transnational level translates to country-specific situations, especially in conflict settings, one of WILPF's Libyan civil society partners, for instance, stated that "the conversation that is happening [within the UNSC] is not progressive enough to address the reality on the ground; [there is] no [talk of] demilitarisation, arms flow, or root causes." This perspective demonstrates that despite briefings from civil society members about the gendered impacts of weapons flows,[37] there is a clear disconnect between the lived experiences of women in conflict zones and the debates in the UNSC chamber, as well as a general reluctance by states to address disarmament and demilitarisation in a comprehensive and substantive manner.

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33 The four WPS resolutions that reference arms are Resolutions 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), and 2467 (2019). Resolutions 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), and 2467 (2019) also mention the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and its Article 7.4 on the risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and arms exports assessments.

34 WILPF Reaching Critical Will. 2015. *Trading Arms, Bombing Towns: The Lethal Connection between the International Arms Trade and the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.* https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/trading-arms-bombing-towns.pdf

35 Chinkin, Christine. 2020. "Arms Control, Disarmament, and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda." *United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).* https://www.unidir.org/commentary/arms-control-disarmament-and-women-peace-and-security-agenda

36 During the 2019 open debate on women, peace, and security, for example, only 11 states and regional blocs (12.1% of all speakers) mentioned the importance of disarmament for the WPS agenda. https://www.peacewomen.org/node/103697. This number was even lower for the 2018 open debate on women, peace, and security, with only 6 speakers (7%) mentioning the need for efforts towards disarmament in effectively implementing WPS commitments. https://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/security-council-open-debate-women-peace-and-security-october-2018

37 Khin Ohmar, the civil society briefer for the 2020 open debate on sexual violence in conflict, for instance, emphasised how arms and arms flow fuel gender-based violence. https://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/security-council-open-debate-sexual-violence-conflict-july-2020

Interpreting the WPS agenda as a concern for conflict-affected countries only

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Women in Japan and Korea have been continuing to advocate to their governments that National Action Plans should not only be looking at WPS within the framework of overseas development aid, but also on issues both domestically and within the Northeast Asian region. While WPS perspectives within international programmes are of course important this is hollow unless the same priorities are being recognised and implemented within their own countries and within the region; especially important [in contexts] where the legacy of sexual violence during wartime is such an enormous issue. Promoting WPS in Global South countries cannot be done in isolation; women's security and participation must also be ensured at home.

WPS Practitioner and Activist, Japan

The varying conflicts of interest and creeping militarism within the UNSC chamber clearly demonstrate that the straightforward classification of countries and political contexts as wartime or peacetime is a false dichotomy. States that are not in active conflict or war can and do contribute heavily to conflicts in other regions of the world through arms exports, deployment of troops, and maintenance of military bases as well as through foreign political and economic policies.[38] Nevertheless, across the consultations we held, feminist peace activists stated that Resolution 1325 is still seen as a framework that only concerns conflict-affected countries, with some states utilising the WPS agenda as a foreign policy tool.

This prevailing misconception is apparent in the outward-facing National Action Plans (NAPs) of Global North countries, who, as pointed out by representatives from WILPF National Sections placed in the Global North, often consider themselves as peaceful nations. By the end of 2019, 21% (18 out of 86) of NAPs[39] focused on implementing WPS outside of the given country's border where a NAP was adopted. Pointing at the heavy external emphasis of the country's NAP, a representative from WILPF Australia, for instance, stated that "Australia did WPS to others." In other words, the country focused on implementing the WPS agenda internationally, without paying attention to what could have been done at the domestic level or thinking about the interlinkages of the two domains. Likewise, a representative from WILPF Denmark pointed to the country's NAP focused on "helping" women in Afghanistan, and added that "they [the Danish government] didn't ask the women what they wanted," ignoring the fact that "there are women's organisations that [already] work with women in Afghanistan." This outward-facing approach to implementing the WPS agenda perpetuates a neocolonial framework of intervention, with Global North countries coming to the rescue of Global South countries to solve their supposed problems. This

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38   Acheson, Ray. 2020. "Demobilising War." *WILPF*. https://www.wilpf.org/thoughts-for-change/demobilising-war/

39   All statistics related to NAPs in this report are based on WILPF WPS Programme's NAP Monitor, as of September 2020, which includes one NAP which has not fully been made public. Additionally, the data for the monitor is compiled with the inclusion of Palestine, which is a non-member observer state at the UN, as part of the statistics on "member states." Therefore, the NAP statistics are based on a total of 194 states (instead of the 193 UN member states), unless otherwise specified.

approach also fails to account for the role of some Global North countries in contributing to these supposed problems through long-standing colonial pasts and legacies, including global capitalism.[40]

In implementing Resolution 1325, states must remember that the domestic, foreign, and transnational policies are intricately connected, with political implications for the lives of women within and across borders as well as for civil society members working towards the implementation of Resolution 1325.[41] The WPS agenda should not be seen as a foreign policy and development tool alone. Instead, states should also utilise the WPS framework to promote and advance peace and gender equality domestically.

The approach to the WPS agenda as a conflict-only framework also impacts the work of women activists and women's civil society organisations (WCSOs). Consultations with Global North-placed WILPF National Sections have consistently pointed out how governmental actors, and even some civil society actors, call into question the relevance of the WPS agenda in countries that are not in active armed conflict. A representative from WILPF Sweden, for instance, conveyed that because Resolution 1325 is assumed to be "a peace/war resolution," the overwhelming public perception of the WPS agenda, and any efforts towards its implementation, is that it is irrelevant for Sweden. Likewise, representatives from WILPF Germany highlighted that the general reaction to talking about matters of peace and the WPS agenda in the local context usually manifests itself through a questioning of why a "peace movement" is needed when they live in a "peaceful country." This stance perpetuates the simplistic equation of Resolution 1325 as a concern for conflict-affected countries alone.

On the other hand, as outlined by representatives from WILPF National Sections in countries that have experienced armed conflict, demands from women's organisations to implement the WPS agenda have sometimes been met with a response by governmental actors who indicate that WPS is a framework for ending conflicts, but is not necessarily applicable to post-conflict situations. A representative from WILPF Cameroon, for instance, conveyed that "the government felt like we don't need a NAP in a country where we have peace; they saw it [the WPS framework] as something to end conflict." In a similar manner, a representative from WILPF Colombia underscored that "the mention of women's issues in the peace accords is used [as a pretext] as being enough [for women's rights], and that there is no need for WPS implementation [in the country beyond the conflict]." This quote, and the experiences of other women peacebuilders, demonstrate that despite reaffirming the importance of the WPS agenda in public statements, states can be reluctant to acknowledge its value for their country contexts. This approach also highlights how gender equality and women's rights are still seen as disconnected from peace and security.

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40 Magni, Michela. 2018. "The Vicious Dichotomies of the Women, Peace and Security Framework: Bridging the Gap between Norms and Reality, Dignity and Freedom." *Disrupted*. Issue 2. pp. 33-35. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57cd7cd9d482e9784e4ccc34/t/5ee78252915ac6464beff20b/1592230533668/Disrupted+-+The+Post-Colonial+Issue+2.pdf

41 Achilleos-Sarll, Columba. 2018. "The WPS Agenda Requires a Complementary Approach to Foreign and Domestic Policy." *LSE Blogs*. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2018/03/05/the-wps-agenda-requires-a-complementary-approach-to-foreign-and-domestic-policy/

Absence of conflict prevention and root cause analysis

One of the contributions of the WPS agenda is how it helps us challenge the definition of 'security,' shifting the conversation to definitions centred more around 'human's security' than state security. The relevance of this discussion has been highlighted more with the pandemic: what type of investments make us secure? Certainly not tanks and jet craft[s].

WPS Practitioner, Canada

Within the discussions in the UNSC chamber, conflict usually refers to the situation brought about by two or more warring parties.[42] In this narrow framework of seeing conflict as an act that takes place in war zones only, there are civilians and armed groups; survivors and casualties; and humanitarian assistance to provide relief and recovery. Relatedly, this leads to an understanding of peace as an absence of violence, and security as the ability to protect one's citizenry from violence. Across the consultations we held, feminist activists and members of women's civil society repeatedly pointed out that this narrow interpretation is a major challenge to recognising the fact that violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and human rights violations, operate on a peacetime-wartime continuum. They are not standalone incidents, and have their roots in existing peacetime inequalities and harmful gender norms. The narrow and militarised definitions of conflict, peace, and security directly impede root cause analysis.

As highlighted by a WPS practitioner from Uganda, "there [are] other forms of conflicts that are always ignored, yet pose a great effect to women [such as] poverty and socio-economic deprivation; weak state structures; historical factors, such as divisive colonial policies; human rights abuses; proliferation of small arms; and poor governance." Echoing this statement, a WPS policymaker from the United States stated that "security (or lack thereof) expands into various realms of the private and public spheres—access to food, labour rights, social securities, healthcare, reproductive rights, domestic and sexual violence, punitive measures and access to justice."

It is, therefore, critical to approach definitions of conflict, peace, and security as conditions that also pertain to situations beyond conflict zones alone, as such an expansion will enable a focus on conflict prevention by prioritising root causes and human rights. The 2015 Global Study on WPS underscores that "effective conflict prevention must start from an understanding of the broad and deep insecurities that permeate women's lives prior to conflict, and the ways that pre-conflict structural inequality can facilitate violence and insecurity."[43] This remains a reminder of the need for structural transformation of systems instead of temporary fixes to them.

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42   Santos, Rita, Sílvia Roque and Tatiana Moura. 2013. "Missed Connections: Representations of Gender, (Armed) Violence and Security in Resolution 1325." *RCSS Annual Review.* https://doi.org/10.4000/rccsar.462

43   UN Women. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325.* p. 207. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

Nevertheless, across the consultations we held, women peace activists consistently brought up the absence of conflict prevention in WPS implementation both in their country-specific contexts and at the UNSC level. Indeed, conflict prevention is largely absent in debates on and implementation of the WPS agenda.[44] This observation was also brought up by a WPS researcher and activist in Senegal, who stated that "when it comes to conflict prevention/resolution, mediation and advocacy, women are sidelined. We send firefighters to put out the fire (conflict resolution) when no one wants to invest in prevention." As this comment demonstrates, states invest more in bringing conflicts to an end (or alleviating the effects of conflict) instead of expending resources to address the root causes that pave the way to violence and instability. As highlighted by a representative from WILPF Germany, states need to "change the approach [in WPS implementation] from a reaction to conflict to preventing it" in order for WPS implementation initiatives to impact substantive change towards permanent solutions, instead of patchwork fixes that momentarily alleviate problems that have much deeper root causes beyond the conflict zone.

This reactive approach does not end with conflict zones alone, and was most recently manifested through the COVID-19 pandemic. World leaders were quick to declare war on the virus and take militarised approaches to handling a public health emergency.[45] This reactionary and short-sighted crisis response approach has contributed to a disproportionate impact on women and girls, including through the alarming increase in violence against women.[46] The gendered implications of the pandemic are likely to be magnified for women and girls in humanitarian settings.[47] According to a recent assessment of COVID-19 conducted by UN Women, the repercussions of the pandemic carry the risk of reversing the gender equality gains of the past two decades for millions of women around the world.[48]

The repercussions of the pandemic are a direct result of the fragility of the systems built on corporate, neoliberal, and militarised investments.[49] As feminist activists and organisations have demonstrated through their call to action for a more equitable and demilitarised world, prevention must prioritise investing in systems and economies of care, not arms and military systems that only exacerbate global

44 During the 2019 open debate on women, peace, and security, for instance, conflict prevention was mentioned by 23.1% of the speakers, compared to other pillars and themes, such as participation, which was mentioned by 73.6% of the speakers, or peacekeeping, which was mentioned by 59.3% of the speakers. https://www.peacewomen.org/e-news/19th-anniversary-unscr-1325-enough-words-time-action. Furthermore, within the UNSC resolutions, prevention is addressed through the importance of women's participation in conflict prevention efforts; the prevention of sexual violence in conflict; and the prevention of violent extremism (specifically in UNSCR 2242 (2015)). However, the resolutions do not further elaborate on what conflict prevention entails or address specific conflict prevention measures at the structural level that need to be taken by states (excluding UNSCR 2467 (2019) OP 20 where "women's empowerment and protection" is mentioned as a means of conflict prevention).

45 Enloe, Cynthia. 2020. "'Waging War' against a Virus Is NOT What We Need to Be Doing." *WILPF*. https://www.wilpf.org/covid-19-waging-war-against-a-virus-is-not-what-we-need-to-be-doing/

46 UN News. 2020. "UN Chief Calls for Domestic Violence 'Ceasefire' amid 'Horrifying Global Surge.'" https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1061052

47 CARE. 2020. *Gender Implications of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings*. https://care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/gendered_implications_of_covid-19_-_full_paper.pdf

48 UN Women. 2020. *From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19*. https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142

49 Porobić Isaković, Nela. 2020. "What Has COVID-19 Taught Us about Neoliberalism?" *WILPF*. https://www.wilpf.org/covid-19-what-has-covid-19-taught-us-about-neoliberalism/

insecurity.[50] This shift will only be possible by expanding the definitions of peace, security, and conflict as notions that have an impact on the livelihood of people beyond war zones alone.

> *Increased representation of women in the military is often a distraction to achieving real, substantive and structural change. It is simply not enough and does not offer a way to address root causes, such as militarism, neoliberalism and patriarchy.*
>
> *WPS Policymaker, United States*

The observation that "it is now more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier in modern wars," originally spoken by the former UN peacekeeping operation commander in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has been reiterated by numerous other actors in the peace and security field to draw attention to the disproportionate impact that conflicts and wars have on women.[51] States seem to have taken this observation to heart—just not in the most accurate way. Overwhelmingly, partly as a result of the attention given to addressing the damaging effects of conflict on women, adding women into armed structures of power, specifically the military and peacekeeping operations, has become a major focus in WPS implementation. Indeed, 64% (55 out of 86) of National Action Plans (NAPs) focus on women in peacekeeping operations as part of their WPS implementation framework or objectives. Furthermore, in August 2020, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2538,[52] the first standalone resolution on women and peacekeeping, independent of the WPS agenda.[53] The WPS agenda has also been embraced by ministries or departments of defence as well as multinational military alliances, such as NATO. In fact, NATO developed its own WPS scorecard, which assesses the implementation of the WPS agenda within the armed forces of NATO member states and partners.[54]

This approach, which many WPS researchers and practitioners, including members of several WILPF National Sections with whom consultations were held, describe as the "add women and stir" model,[55] is perhaps the easiest and most convenient way that states can claim tangible success in having turned WPS commitments into action, as it is a quantitative indicator that serves to check the implementation box. Minimising

50 CFFP and WILPF. 2020. *Policy Brief: A Feminist Foreign Policy Response to COVID-19.* https://static1. squarespace.com/static/57cd7cd9d482e9784e4ccc34/t/5f034a694227530712b1b4f6/1594051182529/ Policy+Brief_+A+Feminist+Foreign+Policy+Response+to+COVID-19.pdf; *Feminist Impact for Rights and Equality (FIRE) Consortium. 2020. Feminist Principles for an International Post-COVID-19 Settlement.* http://konfliktbearbeitung.net/sites/default/files/feminist-principles-for-a-post-covid-19-settlement-b.pdf; NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. 2020. "Why Women's Rights Must be Central to the UN Security Council's Response to COVID-19." https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/womens-rights-security-councils-response-to-covid-19/

51 Behuria, Radhika. 2014. "Why Women Matter for Peace." *UNDP.* https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2014/7/3/why-women-matter-for-peace.html

52 S/RES/2538 (2020) https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2538(2020)

53 UN News. 2020. "Security Council Calls on United Nations, Regional Organisations to Bolster Role of Women in Peacekeeping, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2538 (2020)" https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sc14288.doc.htm

54 NATO. 2015. *The 1325 Scorecard: Preliminary Findings.* https://www.nato.int/science/project-reports/UNSCR-1325-Scorecard-Final-Report.pdf

55 Nikoghosyan, Anna. 2017. "Co-optation of Feminism: Gender, Militarism and the UNSC Resolution 1325." *Heinrich Böll Stiftung.* http://feminism-boell.org/en/2017/09/26/co-optation-feminism-gender-militarism-and-unsc-resolution-1325

the holistic framework of Resolution 1325 to simply increasing the number of women in security structures as a hallmark WPS initiative is problematic, however, because it assumes that the problems amplified as a result of structural inequalities, including gender inequality and eroding human rights, or rights violations heightened during conflict, can be easily fixed through quantifiable measures.

A simple focus on increasing the number of women in militaries alone eschews the more complex question of harmful gender norms produced by militarism, militarisation, and patriarchal culture, which glorify violent masculinities as well as perpetuating stereotypes about men as protectors and women as those in need of protection.[56] Adding more women in militaries as a panacea also overlooks the crucial question of what will happen to women in an environment that is, in many ways, hostile to their presence–sexual and gender based violence, including rape, is a rampant problem in militaries, even with a limited number of women present in the ranks.[57] Adding women into a structure whose culture operates on undermining women's capabilities runs the risk of further victimising women instead of women empowering themselves. The belief that quantitative increases alone will bring about positive change also falsely equates gender parity with the presence of a critical gender perspective.

Furthermore, the implicit assumption that the presence of more women peacekeepers will keep women in conflict zones safe is not always true, as women peacekeepers can also be complicit in exploitation[58] and be the subject of abuse themselves.[59] This assumption runs the risk of relieving states or troop-contributing countries of the responsibility to address sexual violence. It is, after all, harmful gender norms, and the social, cultural, and political structures that enable them, that result in violence against women — not necessarily the presence or absence of women in a given place or structure.

> *It is difficult to change the underlying patriarchal structures, and [women's] representation is just not enough. I think highlighting this can lead to more lasting peace and security and also pave the way for more gender-balanced foundations in various sectors of public society.*
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> *WPS Researcher and Policymaker, Canada*

56   Enloe, Cynthia. 2000. *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarising Women's Lives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

57   Sorcher, Sara. 2013. "How the Military's 'Bro' Culture Turns Women into Targets." *The Atlantic*. https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/09/how-the-militarys-bro-culture-turns-women-into-targets/279460/

58   Kirby, Paul and Laura J. Shepherd. 2016. "The Futures Past of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda." *International Affairs*. Vol. 92. Issue 2. pp. 373-392. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12549

59   Hernandez, Brianna Nicole. 2020. "Sexual Abuse in UN Peacekeeping: The Problem of Viewing Women as a 'Quick Fix.'" *E-International Relations*. https://www.e-ir.info/2020/02/20/sexual-abuse-in-un-peacekeeping-the-problem-of-viewing-women-as-a-quick-fix/

PATRIARCHAL AND POLITICAL UNDERMINING OF THE WPS AGENDA

The effective implementation of the WPS agenda will only be possible when human rights and gender equality are seen as integral to the WPS framework rather than peripheral to it. Not recognising the importance of these two issues, as well as the work conducted by women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and civil society, leads to an undermining of Resolution 1325, leading to the perpetuation and strengthening of patriarchal power structures. This, in turn, impedes substantive progress on implementing WPS commitments, leading to a public display of effort that is perfunctory or ad hoc.

De-prioritisation of gender equality and intersectionality

Gender equality is down-played in the WPS space. Patriarchy still has its fair share in the space, with more men taking most decision-making roles and women sidelined to caregiving roles.

WPS Activist, Zimbabwe

The 2015 Global Study on WPS highlights that gender equality is among the key predictors of peace and that women's participation in peace agreements make those agreements 35% more likely to last for at least 15 years.[60] Building just, equitable, and sustainable communities require the prioritisation of rights-based frameworks and policies rooted in human rights and gender equality. Nevertheless, gender equality continues to be seen as disconnected from peace and security.[61] According to the 2019 annual report of the UN Secretary-General on Women, Peace, and Security, between 1990 and the end of 2018, less than 20% of peace agreements included provisions addressing women, girls, or gender. In 2018, less than 8% of peace agreements included gender-related provisions, showing a drastic decrease from 39% in 2015.[62] Moreover, of the 30 gender-specific recommendations put forth by the three 2015 peace and security reviews (on peacebuilding, peace operations, and WPS), only 50% were being implemented or fully progressing, with 10% of those either having gone backwards or not progressing at all.[63]

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60   UN Women. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*. pp. 206 and 41-42. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

61   Lupel, Adam and Sarah Taylor. 2018. "In Peace and In War Gender Equality Is Everyone's Battle." *IPI Global Observatory*. https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/12/in-peace-war-gender-equality-everyones-battle/

62   S/2019/800, para. 15, p. 6/38 https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

63   S/2019/800, para. 7, p. 4/38 https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

Patriarchal and Political Undermining of the WPS Agenda

- The WPS agenda is downplayed as a "women's issue" and viewed as detached from purportedly high-level matters of peace and security.
- WPS implementation suffers from severe pushback on and absence of women's human rights, including at the UNSC.
- Women's civil society organisations (WCSOs) and women human rights defenders (WHRDs) carry the onus of implementing the WPS agenda, taking on myriad roles to protect and promote women's human rights.
- WCSOs and WHRDs carry out tremendous work to impact change in their communities, as well as at the national and transnational levels, and do so under increasingly precarious and volatile circumstances.
- Women's participation in decision-making processes remains pro forma, without meaningful inclusion or diversity.

This concerning trend of excluding a gender equality framework from matters of peace and security also revealed itself across the consultations we held, where feminist peace activists pointed out that the WPS agenda is downplayed as a "women's issue" and viewed as detached from purportedly high-level matters of peace and security. This approach undermines the significance of Resolution 1325 for building sustainable peace and impedes its effective implementation.

Consultations with women activists in Global North countries demonstrated that women's civil society in these countries have sometimes been told that WPS implementation should not be needed in that particular context since the country has already attained gender equality (despite the obvious gaps in gender equality gains). On the other hand, in conflict-affected countries, the de-prioritisation of the WPS agenda can occur in the form of delaying and postponing WPS implementation since so-called women's issues are not seen as critical to peace and security. One of WILPF's Yemeni civil society partners, for instance, stated that those at the negotiating table "think that 'women's issues' are not relevant to what is being done [during conflict resolution]." This stance is inaccurate, as the presence of women in peace processes, as well as the topics of women's rights specifically and gender equality more broadly in peace agreements, contributes to lasting peace.[64]

Women's presence and participation in all peace and political decision-making processes is not a favour bestowed to them, but a fundamental human right. As Alaa Salah, a Sudanese human rights activist, underscored in her briefing to the UNSC during the 2019 open debate on women, peace, and security, "given women's pivotal role in working towards peace and development, in the promotion of human rights, and in providing humanitarian assistance to communities in

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64   O'Reilly, Mary. 2015. *Why Women: Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*. https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Why-Women-Brief-2020.pdf

need, there is no excuse for us not to have an equal seat at every single table."[65] Equating women's presence as only needed and valuable when discussing so-called women's issues directly undermines women's right to participate in all social, political, and economic decision-making processes – all of which inevitably impact women's lives. Such an approach also runs directly counter to the WPS resolutions, all of which continually underscore the importance of women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding efforts.

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The 'gender' piece of the agenda has never really been embraced. Just look at the silences and absences around sexual and reproductive rights, the impact of conflict on sexual and gender minorities,[66] and the refusal to think more deeply about masculinities. Unfortunately, it's hard to be optimistic about the potential of the UNSC to offer leadership on these issues. It's up to us in our activities to practice the most diverse and inclusive definition of gender that we can.

WPS Researcher, Northern Ireland

In addition to the outright hampering of WPS implementation, approaching WPS as a "women's issue" can lead to its selective implementation by focusing only or primarily on issues that are seen as those that impact women only (e.g., gender-based violence), without looking at the root causes of the issues (e.g., harmful gender norms) or addressing the agenda holistically as a rights-based framework. This approach also collapses women and girls into a homogeneous category, without taking into account their diverse experiences across different contexts and based on factors including age, ethnicity, indigeneity, sexual orientation and gender identity, religion, economic access, disability, country, and citizenship status. Intersectional approaches also better enable broader discussions about gender norms (i.e., masculinities and femininities), and advancing the rights of LGBTQI persons and other marginalised populations.

Human rights, women human rights defenders, and shrinking civic space

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WPS has laid the foundation to look at structural violence against women in situations of conflict, but cannot be seen in isolation for what lies ahead. Not taking into account economic, health, environmental and political issues when addressing women in conflict will not do much to advance women in peace. It confronts women with an exponential level of barriers to address structural inequality.

WPS Researcher, Belgium

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65 NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. 2019. "Statement by Ms. Alaa Salah at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security." https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/statement-unsc-wps-open-debate-october-2019/

66 The word choice in this quote reflects the opinion of the consulted individual. WILPF prefers the term "LGBTQI persons" instead of "gender minorities."

Feminist activists and women's civil society have emphasised, time and again, that the WPS agenda is, at its core, a human rights agenda,[67] preceded by gender equality frameworks such as CEDAW and BPfA. Specifically, CEDAW highlights the importance of women's role in peace processes, with its General Recommendation No. 30 (adopted in 2013) offering a comprehensive guidepost on its application related to women in conflict prevention, conflict, and post-conflict situations.[68] Furthermore, General Recommendation No. 30 specifically recommends that states parties "ensure that the implementation of Security Council commitments reflects a model of substantive equality."[69] Building on CEDAW's extensive blueprint, BPfA outlines 12 critical areas of concern for gender equality and underscores the interconnected nature of gender equality and peace and security (including women's participation and leadership in conflict resolution and peacebuilding).[70] Most notably, the BPfA places particular emphasis on complete disarmament and reducing global military spending for social development,[71] both of which remain key gaps in the WPS agenda.[72]

The 2015 Global Study on WPS also conveys a resolute reminder that "Resolution 1325 was conceived of and lobbied for as a human rights resolution that would promote the rights of women in conflict situations. Any policy or program on women, peace and security must be conducted with this in mind."[73] Despite this call, WPS implementation suffers from severe pushback on and absence of women's human rights, including at the UNSC, while women's bodies continue to be used as battlegrounds on which political agendas are waged.[74]

According to the 2019 annual report of the UN Secretary-General on Women, Peace, and Security,[75] findings by the Special Rapporteur demonstrate that the increase in misogynistic, sexist, and homophobic language in the speeches of political leaders has contributed to the surge in violence against women, LGBTQI persons, and WHRDs. According to the findings of the Front Line Defenders' global analysis, 304 human rights defenders, 13% of whom were women, were killed in 2019.[76] Alarmingly, precautions and restrictions implemented as a result

67   WILPF WPS Programme. 2018. *Towards a Feminist Security Council: A Guidance Note for Security Council Members*. https://www.wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/WILPF_FeministSecurityCouncilGuide.pdf

68   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/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/guidebook-cedaw-general-recommendation-30-women-peace-security-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1850

69   CEDAW General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. 2013. para. 28(b), p. 7. https://undocs.org/CEDAW/C/GC/30

70   Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Critical Area E1. 1995. https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf

71   Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Critical Area E2. 1995. https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf

72   Myrttinen, Henri. 2020. *Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women Peace and Security Agenda*. https://unidir.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/UNIDIR_Connecting%20the%20Dots_2.pdf

73   UN Women. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*. p.15. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

74   WILPF WPS Programme. 2020. "25 Years, Limited Progress on Women's Rights." http://peacewomen.org/e-news/25-years-limited-progress-womens-rights

75   S/2019/800. para. 4, p. 2/38. https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

76   Front Line Defenders. 2019. *Global Analysis 2019*. https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/sites/default/files/global_analysis_2019_web.pdf

of COVID-19 have already been used as a pretext to curtail human rights[77] as well as to divert funds from gender equality programs, declaring them as non-essential with the pretence of an emergency.[78] This has further placed at risk women's civil society organisations and women human rights defenders, who already work under extremely volatile conditions, in conflict and non-conflict settings alike.[79]

At the level of the UNSC, progress pertaining to the protection and promotion of women's human rights has continued to reflect the alarming global trend of eroding rights. In 2019, for the first time since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, consensus and unanimity was broken during the adoption of a WPS resolution.[80] During the 2019 open debate on sexual violence in conflict, China and Russia abstained from voting on UNSCR 2467 (2019)[81] due to existing language on civil society and women human rights defenders, while the United States threatened a veto over references to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).[82] In the 2019 open debate on women, peace, and security, states unanimously adopted UNSCR 2493 (2019),[83] with the United States commenting that references to SRHR, or any reference that would promote a right to abortion, was unacceptable.[84] In addition to the rollback on previously agreed upon language, there is an increasing and sometimes explicit pushback from some Council members, primarily Russia and China, on the relevance of human rights and women human rights defenders to the work of the Council.[85]

The transformative potential of the WPS agenda can only be achieved by centring human rights into how the framework is spoken about and operationalised. This was also evident across the consultations we held, where WPS practitioners consistently underscored the importance of eliminating structural barriers to women's human rights. They highlighted accountability to the agenda becomes doubly challenging in conflict situations, where there is an erosion of human rights and flagrant disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law. A WPS researcher from South Africa, for instance, stated that the WPS agenda may appear as "too far removed" to reflect the daily realities experienced by marginalised communities, and underscored the need for practical tools to impact change for the full realisation of women's human rights.

77   Human Rights Watch. 2020. *Human Rights Dimensions of COVID-19 Response*. https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/19/human-rights-dimensions-covid-19-response

78   European Women's Lobby. 2020. *Women Must Not Pay the Price for COVID-19! Putting Equality between Women and Men at the Heart of the Response to COVID-19 across Europe*. https://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/ewl_policy_brief_on_covid-19_impact_on_women_and_girls-2.pdf

79   Amnesty International. 2020. *Daring to Stand Up for Human Rights in a Pandemic*. https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ACT3027652020ENGLISH.PDF

80   Taylor, Sarah and Gretchen Baldwin. 2019. "Focus on 2020: Opportunities for the Twentieth Anniversary of Resolution 1325." *IPI*. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/1910_Focus-on-2020.pdf

81   S/RES/2467 (2019) https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467(2019)

82   Hamid, Zarin and Sarah Werner. 2019. "Sexual Violence in Conflict: Rooted in Gender Inequality and Structural Violence." *WILPF WPS Programme*. https://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/security-council-open-debate-sexual-violence-conflict-april-2019

83   S/RES/2493 (2019) https://undocs.org/S/RES/2493(2019)

84   NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. 2019. "Analysis of the Women, Peace and Security Open Debate." https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/blog-analysis-of-the-2019-women-peace-and-security-open-debate/

85   Taylor, Sarah and Gretchen Baldwin. 2019. "The Global Pushback on Women's Rights: The State of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda." *IPI*. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/1909_Global-Pushback.pdf

Specifically, multiple WPS practitioners underscored the importance of strengthening women's economic access to sustainable and safe livelihoods, especially within post-conflict and transitional settings, with a WPS researcher from Belgium highlighting that women's lack of economic rights "can have grave consequences for the meaningful and diverse participation of women across society." These comments and observations demonstrate that human rights must be a core component of WPS implementation to effectively address the varying needs of women, LGBTQI persons, and other marginalised populations and ensure the dismantling of structural inequalities.

We teach women that systems of care should empower women, but that care isn't only their responsibility. We do demand from the government that they do their job [in ensuring peace and security] alongside doing their job [for them in their absence as members of women's civil society].

Representative from WILPF Colombia

Women at the grassroots level use the WPS agenda as a means to an end (creating sustainable, peaceful communities grounded in gender equality) rather than being an end in itself. Across the consultations, the direct impact of UNSCR 1325 was more evident in the work of some activists and peacebuilders. A representative from WILPF DRC, for instance, stated that "Resolution 1325 has given us a framework to talk about women in conflict." For activists in other contexts, Resolution 1325 did not drastically alter the work they do, as they stated that their work already entailed the core principles of the women, peace, and security framework: human rights, gender equality, and conflict prevention.

What is striking in this picture, however, is the fact that despite the existence of a normative framework, accompanied by numerous commitments from governments towards its implementation, WCSOs and WHRDs carry the onus of implementing the WPS agenda, taking on myriad roles to protect and promote women's human rights. This can sometimes mean, for example, that WCSOs step in to provide services (e.g., psychosocial support, access to shelters) to women in need in the absence of governmental support. However, it must be remembered that words on paper alone do not relieve governments of accountability to their commitments—it is not the responsibility of civil society to implement the WPS agenda. As underscored by a representative from WILPF Nigeria, "civil society cannot be acting as a state [to step in when needed]." The implementation of Resolution 1325, as well as the subsequent WPS resolutions, remains, and will continue to remain, ad hoc without substantive effort on the part of governments.

As online spaces become increasingly influential in shaping attitudes and promoting collective actions, online violence against women and girls is a key challenge that WHRDs, WCSOs and women trying to step into public/leadership roles face, both in terms of discrediting women's voices in this space as well as discouraging women to step forward.

WPS Practitioner, United Kingdom

WCSOs and WHRDs carry out tremendous work to impact change in their communities, as well as at the national and transnational levels, and do so under increasingly precarious and volatile circumstances. For some country contexts, this means that WHRDs may be targeted, threatened, attacked, or killed.[86] Representatives from WILPF Cameroon and WILPF Sri Lanka both underscored that such actions, including arrests of WHRDs, discourage other women who want to join the women's movement and send a direct message to them to not be involved in human rights work. In certain cases, as mentioned by a representative from WILPF Cameroon, WHRDs are also shunned and targeted by state actors as being anti-government, or with the accusation of defaming the name and status of the country in which they are based. As a result, there are, for instance, serious limitations for WHRDs to speak in international engagements (including as briefers at the UNSC) because of such fears of reprisal. Anti-terrorism laws also impact WHRDs in a similar way, restricting their freedom of speech and movement.[87]

Furthermore, in social contexts where gender norms largely dictate the domestic sphere to be the place where women belong, WHRDs are excoriated for choosing the "non-traditional" path of being outside of the household. As a result, they carry out their work under immense pressure. Women face discrimination, social isolation, and societal pressure for advocating for women's rights.[88] A representative from WILPF Sri Lanka, for instance, mentioned that WHRDs are subjected to a "character assassination" and stigmatised for their work. Harassment of and violence against WHRDs extends into the virtual world as well through online GBV, which leads to self-censorship for WHRDs, and sometimes ultimately their withdrawal from activism. Moreover, as underscored by a representative from WILPF Colombia, sometimes WHRDs themselves live in precarious conditions, especially facing poverty and economic vulnerability, which exacerbates the conditions under which they are trying to do their work. This consistently similar overall picture of challenges across varying country contexts clearly demonstrates that gender-sensitive measures are direly lacking in protecting and promoting WHRDs and the work they carry out.

86   A/HRC/40/60 https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/004/97/PDF/G1900497.pdf?OpenElement

87   Amnesty International. 2017. *Human Rights Defenders Under Threat: A Shrinking Space for Civil Society*. https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ACT3060112017ENGLISH.PDF

88   For more information about the psychosocial issues affecting WHRDs, see WILPF Colombia. 2020. *Bodily Harmonies: Memory and Resistance of Women Defenders, Following Up on Resolution 1325*. https://www.limpalcolombia.org/images/documentos/BODILY_HARMONIES_FINAL.pdf

Women's meaningful participation and engagement with civil society

Implementation of the WPS agenda requires concrete measures at social and political levels that would challenge existing gender stereotypes and pave the way for greater participation among women in peacebuilding and peace processes. In a society where patriarchal norms and inequalities have restricted women and girls to the boundaries of the society, deep-rooted challenges hinder women's meaningful participation in public and political spheres. Existing inequalities exacerbate sociocultural differences and disparities in access to rights and services, magnifying the gender divide in conflict and crisis scenarios. Ensuring women's participation at all levels in decisions related to peace and security is essential.

WPS Activist, Pakistan

Across the consultations we held, women peace activists and peacebuilders stated that participation is the pillar that they see most frequently taken up by states in WPS implementation. Despite this observation, they also pointed out that women's participation[89] in decision-making processes remains pro forma, without meaningful inclusion or diversity.

The vital work conducted by WCSOs and WHRDs generally remains unrecognised and underappreciated, including within the UNSC chamber.[90] According to the 2019 annual report of the UN Secretary-General on Women, Peace, and Security, less than 20% of all Security Council resolutions in 2018 (an overall decrease from previous years) mentioned the significance of protecting and promoting fundamental rights and freedoms for civil society, women's groups, and women human rights defenders.[91] This lack overlooks the great risks taken by civil society to brief the Council while demonstrating a complete disregard for the fact that political actions within the Council chamber have serious repercussions for the work and lives of WCSOs and WHRDs. Indeed, civil society representatives who go to great lengths to brief the Council and provide crucial information about the local implementation of WPS commitments continue to face threats and intimidation.[92] Furthermore, the lacking focus on women's civil society within the Council chamber directly undermines the WPS resolutions that Council members have agreed upon

89 This report defines participation as "direct, substantive, and formal inclusion of diverse women in positions of power so that they can influence the outcome of negotiations and other processes as well as their implementation." (See *2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace and Security*, p. 12) Furthermore, we contend that "ensuring meaningful participation also requires dismantling the barriers to participation for the majority of women, not just supporting a small number of women to reach leadership positions." (p. 5). NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security. 2020. *2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace, and Security*. https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-Civil-Society-Roadmap.pdf

90 O'Rourke, Catherine and Aisling Swaine. 2019. "Heading to Twenty: Perils and Promises of Resolution 2493." *LSE Blogs*. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2019/11/12/heading-to-twenty-perils-and-promises-of-wps-resolution-2493/

91 S/2019/800. para. 4, p. 2/38. https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

92 Asoka, Kaavya. 2020. "Support Civil Society at the UN Security Council." *NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security*. https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/support-civil-society-security-council/

in addition to perpetuating patriarchal power dynamics that continually discredit women's contributions to peace and security.[93]

Women continue to be actively excluded from peace processes as well. As a stark demonstration of this reality, in all major peace processes that took place between 1990 and 2017, women comprised only 2% of mediators, 8% of negotiators, and 5% of witnesses and signatories.[94] Furthermore, referring to a lack of gender-sensitive conflict resolution processes, one of WILPF's Libyan civil society partners stated that "women are missing in the room, but also a gendered perspective is missing." This comment demonstrates that an increase in the number of women in a given process is only one component of the participation question, as quotas alone cannot be a substitute to a gender-sensitive approach in social, political, and economic decision-making processes.

On the other hand, when women are included at the peace table, their participation often does not go beyond having a tokenistic presence, and the full range of their skills, expertise, and capabilities are not capitalised on. For men in leadership positions, the mere invitation for women to be at the table is often seen as having accomplished the task of women's or civil society inclusion without soliciting substantive input from women. A WILPF Syrian civil society partner underlined that "women are included [in peace talks] as victims; they're there for the emotional work, but not expertise." This observation is also reflected across the work of the UNSC, where the violation of women's rights are instrumentalised as evidence to the gravity of a given conflict and used to justify specific action taken by the UNSC or its members, not to meaningfully promote the protection of women's rights.[95] This approach reduces women to the status of passive victims in need of saving, directly countering the acknowledgement in Resolution 1325 of women's contributions to peacebuilding.

Women peacebuilders across the consultations conveyed that on the path to getting to the negotiating table, women are also confronted with a gendered hierarchisation of skills and expertise. Women's participation in peace processes is hampered by a demand for "qualifications" (on why they deserve to be included in a given process) while men are not held to the same standards—for men, having taken up arms as a warring party is treated as enough to deserve a seat at the table. One of WILPF's Yemeni civil society partners, for instance, stated that women get excluded from peace talks because they are seen as having done community work only and lack experience in disarmament. In a similar observation, a WPS practitioner from Lebanon stated that "women are not listened to enough, because they are seen as the 'peace makers.' But when they want to weigh in on war or conflict, they are usually sidelined." Such active obstruction of women's participation in peace processes undermines the vital role women

93   For more information on how WPS commitments appear in UNSC resolutions, with particular attention to country-specific resolutions on the DRC, Libya, Syria, and Yemen, see, Werner, Sarah K. and Elena Stavrevska. 2020. *Where are the Words? The Disappearance of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Language of Country-Specific UN Security Council Resolutions*. https://www.wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Report-WILPF-LSE_Web.pdf

94   S/2018/900. para. 25, p. 7/34. http://undocs.org/S/2018/900

95   NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security. 2020. *2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace, and Security*. p.3. https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-Civil-Society-Roadmap.pdf

play in advancing just and equitable communities and ignores the importance of grassroots peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, it also displays patriarchal hypocrisy at play when it comes to women's inclusion in decision-making venues. No matter what they have done, women can never seem to achieve the hypothetical "qualifications," as their experiences are discredited no matter what they entail.

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Civil society should be allowed to play an important role as [a] catalyst between the grassroots communities and the government. They are able to survey the needs of women at the grassroots levels (both practical and strategic) and ensure that the government adheres to its gender commitments.

WPS Researcher, Jordan and Tunisia

The undermining of women's meaningful participation also manifests itself across political actions at the local level. States' NAP development processes are a case in point. While it does look like a significant portion of NAPs (66 of 86 NAPs or 77%)[96] allocate a specific role to civil society in the different stages of the NAP implementation process, the engagement with civil society can be tokenistic, with CSOs consulted and given advisory status, without meaningful partnership in decision-making processes. A representative from WILPF Cameroon highlighted this challenge with the following statement, "at the UN, it looks like Cameroon has a NAP and that civil society is included, but that's not how it is on the ground." This comment demonstrates how civil society inclusion can turn into a check-the-box exercise to display public effort towards implementation without substance on the ground.

Furthermore, WCSOs who are included in their country's NAP adoption process may also be asked about their opinions without any follow-up about the outcome, or incorporation of the provided ideas into the finalised NAP. A representative from WILPF Sweden, for instance, stated that "there is a lack of partnership between CSOs and the government. They [the government] are good at having meetings, but [there is] no dialogue." Likewise, a representative from WILPF Germany stated that despite the invitation to participate in the NAP development process, they "don't know how much [of what is being said] is taken into account." In this case, even though women are "at the table," their presence mostly still remains perfunctory. In fact, some consulted WILPF National Sections interpret the invitation to and presence of civil society as a governmental effort to give credibility to the overall process. Once again, the inclusion of civil society appears to be done to fulfil a requirement that merely displays public effort on the part of governments.

In order for NAPs to serve as effective WPS implementation tools, civil society must be active partners and decision-makers in NAP design, development, and implementation, including the NAP's monitoring and evaluation. This requires a shift from turning civil society engagement from an initial consultative invitation with no future follow-up to an ongoing conversation and feedback loop. Through NAPs, member states must also prioritise raising awareness about the WPS agenda at the local, regional, and national levels, and focus on WPS implementation in a holistic way.

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96   WILPF WPS Programme NAP Monitor: https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WPS IMPLEMENTATION

While there is no scarcity in member states' commitments to WPS implementation, holding states accountable to actually delivering on their commitments and ensuring that these commitments are ones which will make a tangible impact is still a challenge. Accountability is directly linked to monitoring, evaluation, and financing; however, it is not simply a structural issue. The absence of accountability has direct repercussions for what gets to be implemented within the WPS agenda and how the implementation takes place.

Policy coherence and an integrated approach

An integrated approach is vital to the effectiveness of WPS implementation. Crucially, this approach needs to be more holistic by undertaking gender-relational analyses, which are often overlooked in the WPS agenda. Gender-relational approaches allow for gaining a much more complete overlook of conflict dynamics and their root causes by analysing the experiences of women, girls, men and boys, and their relationships with defining societal factors such as culture, religion, race, sexuality, and how these interact within and contribute to conflict settings.

WPS Policymaker, United Kingdom

The four primary pillars that have come to make up the WPS agenda–participation; prevention; protection; relief and recovery–are cross-cutting and complementary. In other words, they are designed as part of a framework where the implementation of each pillar cannot be thought of separately from the others–when one is given comparably more attention, the holistic implementation of the agenda, as well as its transformative potential, suffers by default. It is not possible, for instance, for women to participate in peace and political processes if states do not protect their right to safety, expression, and movement. Furthermore, when a state is simultaneously committing to implement the WPS agenda while also creating and exporting the weapons which fuel or exacerbate conflict, and thereby endanger the lives of women and violate their rights, it is incongruent to expect conflict prevention as priority. It is critical that the pillars of the normative framework are understood and treated as inseparable from each other.

Lack of Accountability

- WPS implementation suffers from a lack of holistic implementation, with governments, and international organisations, picking and choosing among issues they deem fit to focus on within the agenda.
- WPS implementation is generally marked by a lack of policy coherence, both in terms of a state's engagement with domestic and international frameworks.
- WPS implementation lacks and suffers from accountability not only at the country level, but also on the part of international actors, including the UN.
- The localisation of the WPS agenda remains a key challenge, with limited awareness of the agenda, both at the governmental and civil society level, and support for its implementation.
- NAPs have become a way to put forth an often public effort of WPS implementation, which perpetuate WPS rhetoric, without always providing substantive and meaningful implementation.

Instead overwhelmingly, both states and the UNSC continue to interpret the agenda's primary pillars in a siloed way—as disparate from rather than complementary to each other. In a similar manner, WPS implementation suffers from a lack of holistic implementation, with governments, and international organisations, picking and choosing among issues they deem fit to focus on within the agenda.[97]

This is particularly evident in the expansion of the agenda within the framing of the nine resolutions adopted after UNSCR 1325 with an emphasis on the protection pillar, with specific attention given to sexual violence in conflict (SVIC). This focus does have a positive angle, as it recognises the disproportionate impact of war on women and girls, specifically through the frequent usage of SGBV as a weapon of war. This recognition also highlights the need to hold perpetrators accountable and end impunity. Nevertheless, this siloed approach inevitably undermines conflict prevention efforts. A focus on protecting women and girls and addressing rights violations during conflict and humanitarian settings alone is insufficient. The roots of women's victimisation during armed conflict lie in structural and gender inequality that exist before the conflict.[98] Therefore, implementing all pillars of the WPS agenda holistically is vital to accelerating action towards preventing conflict instead of making it safer for women.

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97   NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security. 2020. *2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace, and Security*. https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-Civil-Society-Roadmap.pdf

98   Hamid, Zarin and Sarah Werner. 2019. "Sexual Violence in Conflict: Rooted in Gender Inequality and Structural Violence." *WILPF WPS Programme*. https://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/security-council-open-debate-sexual-violence-conflict-april-2019

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COVID-19 has exposed even more the existing gender and social inequalities, and contradictions. In particular, the Australian government's recent decision to significantly increase funding for the military, during the pandemic as unemployment grows, and while many communities still struggle to recover from the tremendous fires of last summer, sends a powerful message about priorities. And leaves us with many questions about what does security really mean in this time of COVID and climate change?

WPS Practitioner, Australia

The selective implementation of the WPS agenda items extends into the realm of policy making and application as well. WPS implementation is generally marked by a lack of policy coherence, in terms of a state's engagement with both domestic and international frameworks. Discussion of the environment, the impact of militaries on the environment, climate change, or climate justice, for instance, are all starkly absent in WPS debates and implementation.[99] In the words of a representative from WILPF Australia, "there are structural inconsistencies" in WPS implementation. This is partly because the lack of accountability enables states to pursue WPS implementation in a siloed way, without having to address the incoherence in various policies they employ. As highlighted by a WPS practitioner in Belgium, taking a siloed approach allows states to avoid asking difficult questions and making difficult decisions to change their policies.

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There is such weak accountability for non-performance against WPS norms; this must be one of the reasons behind 'resolution creep'; it's so easy to sign up and look good when there will be no penalty for non-delivery. A question I like to ask is "what difficult decision would you make to show your support for this agenda? What policy of your own would you change/flout to show support for this agenda?" I fear that we have sold the agenda as a simple "win-win" without making it plain that difficult decisions will have to be made and that in some cases, some groups, notably men, must indeed step back from exclusive power-holding to make the transformation possible and real.

WPS Practitioner, Belgium

Likewise, this lack of accountability also allows states to overlook the militarised structures they continue to invest in, and to evade holding themselves accountable to their commitments. A representative from WILPF Sweden aptly stated that "it's easier [for states] to be radical at the UN with speeches, but they don't implement it [in practice]." As an example, Sweden, the first country to have announced a feminist foreign policy,[100] sells arms to Saudi Arabia, despite Saudi Arabia's role in the conflict in Yemen.[101] Likewise, Germany was among the world's top five arms exporters in 2019, with a 17% increase in exports from 2010-2014 to 2015-2019,

99   Smith, Elizabeth S. 2020. "Scope for Improvement: Linking the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to Climate Change." *LSE Blogs.* https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2020/06/18/scope-for-improvement-linking-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda-to-climate-change/

100   CFFP. 2020. "A Quick History of Feminist Foreign Policy." https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/feminist-foreign-policy

101   WILPF Reaching Critical Will. 2016. *The Swedish Arms Trade and Risk Assessments: Does a Feminist Foreign Policy Make a Difference?* https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/swedish-arms-trade.pdf

despite its leadership in matters related to WPS implementation at the UNSC.[102] Highlighting the country's incongruous stance on announcing WPS commitments while also benefiting from the arms trade, a representative from WILPF Germany commented that "Germany wants that power position [that comes through armament] within the international community, but you cannot have WPS and that power game at the same time." In a similar manner, a representative from WILPF Australia pointed out the country's Defence Export Strategy, adopted with the goal to make Australia one of the biggest arms exporters in the world,[103] and stated that, "There is no acknowledgment that this sits totally counter to the WPS agenda and/ or conflict prevention." As pointed out across the consultations, such contradictory policies are incompatible with the WPS agenda and directly undermine the core pillars and framework that Resolution 1325 rests on.

Similar to the cross-cutting and complementary nature of the WPS pillars, implementing WPS commitments must also embrace complementarity in seeing and acting on the cross-cutting nature of other international frameworks. In particular, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have two goals that are especially relevant to the WPS agenda: SDGs 5 and 16.[104] These goals focus on achieving gender equality and peace, justice, and strong institutions, respectively, with the overarching aim to empower women and girls as well as promote peaceful and inclusive societies. SDGs 5 and 16 are intricately linked and hold specific importance, alongside the core principles undergirding the 2030 Agenda, to taking an integrated approach in implementing the WPS agenda.[105] Other international frameworks, such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)[106] and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT),[107] must be integrated into the implementation of WPS commitments as well in order for the commitments that states sign up for to impact substantive change. This is also the primary way states will attain policy coherence at the domestic, national, and transnational level.

102 SIPRI. 2020. *Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2019*. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/fs_2003_at_2019.pdf

103 True, Jacqui. 2018. "WPS 2018: Feminist Foreign Policy in Australia." *The Strategist*. https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/wps-2018-feminist-foreign-policy-australia/

104 There are a total of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 5 addresses gender equality, specifically, "achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls." SDG 16 refers to peace, justice and strong institutions, specifically, "promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels." For more information, see: https://sdgs.un.org/goals

105 WILPF WPS Programme. 2020. *A WILPF Guide to Leveraging the SDGs for Feminist Peace.* https://www.wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/WILPF_WPS-SDGs-Guide_Web.pdf

106 UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. Arms Trade Treaty. https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/arms-trade-treaty-2/

107 UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/

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The UN can't be taken serious[ly] or trusted to prioritize [sic] the implementation of their stated priority area [on strengthening the meaningful engagement and protection of WCSOs and WHRDs, mentioned in the Secretary-General's 2018 and 2019 reports on WPS[108]], if they can't even see the need to start implementing radical reform from within. What really is the excuse for not increasing the number of women in UN operations and highest decision-making spaces and processes when they have a specific and deliberate Resolution in 1325?

WPS Practitioner, Activist, and Researcher, Uganda

Across the consultations we held, feminist activists and civil society members indicated that the lack of accountability to WPS commitments reaches beyond member states. WPS implementation lacks and suffers from accountability not only at the country level, but also on the part of international actors, including the UN. Civil society members cited the lack of gender parity in UN missions and the sometimes antagonistic working relationship missions can have with members of civil society as a failure of the UN to hold itself accountable to the WPS agenda, and its general failure to a gender-sensitive approach to its operations.

As the most stark example to the international community's lack of accountability to the WPS agenda, feminist activists in conflict-affected countries cited the problematic execution of peace talks, where international actors have generally failed to advocate for both the participation of women as well as the inclusion of women's human rights.[109] One of WILPF's Libyan civil society partners exemplified the international community's involvement in the country's peace talks with the following words: "Even though the process itself was very much international, when it came to women's inclusion, international actors started saying, 'It's not the international community's role to include women.' The issue [women's participation] got shifted to be a national issue," with the international community relieving itself of any responsibility. This is a clear lack of accountability and directly undermines the recognition of Resolution 1325 on women's role in peace processes.

Women activists across the consultations also highlighted that peace talks are problematically designed at the outset, without consideration for the diverse contexts they take place in. Urging for a more thoughtful redesign of conflict resolution processes, one of WILPF's Syrian civil society partners stated that "we haven't redefined what peace processes look like. The WPS agenda is still an add-on [to these processes]." These observations demonstrate that accountability to the WPS agenda at the transnational level still remains problematic. While UNSC resolutions as well as member states continually reaffirm the importance of women's participation in peace processes and contributions to peacebuilding, the reality on the ground demonstrates that the words within the UNSC chamber do not get translated to country contexts and local realities. In fact, they can be actively undermined.

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108 S/2018/900 https://undocs.org/en/S/2018/900; S/2019/800 https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

109 Riccoboni, Genevieve. 2020. "Arria-Formula Meeting on Women and the Afghan Peace Process: Ensuring Women's Participation and Promoting Their Rights." *WILPF WPS Programme*. https://www.peacewomen.org/node/103905

Localisation of the WPS agenda

Whilst I have seen some wonderful initiatives at the hyper local level, through women's grassroots organisations and networks, there is a lack of (both male and female) champions pushing the agenda forward at the policy/government level, which results in local efforts not being able to foster broader, systemic change.

WPS Practitioner, United Kingdom

Translating the WPS agenda to community, country, and regional contexts is vital to effective WPS implementation. However, the localisation of the WPS agenda remains a key challenge, with limited awareness of the agenda, both at the governmental and civil society level, and support for its implementation, even in countries that appear as WPS champions in the international arena. Localisation is also crucial to making relevant and applicable high-level debates to grassroots realities. But women activists have stated that grassroots civil society organisations and local government entities may not know that the WPS agenda exists or what it entails, even when they are tasked with its implementation.

There is [a] need for creativity on the part of those entrusted with responsibilities of leading [the] WPS national agenda. The syndrome of business [as] usual is dwindling the growth of the agenda at [the] national level. In this context, there is a huge gap in terms of linkage between the national WPS and women networks on peace building and mediation which is crucial in the empowerment of women mediators/peace not only at the peace table but also at grassroots levels. If the agenda is to be vibrant, much emphasis should be on awareness of the agenda so that those with skills are given the responsibility to push [the] agenda to greater levels.

WPS Practitioner, Malawi

Even though localisation is an important component of implementing the WPS agenda, any effort to translate Resolution 1325 to country contexts will have a limited impact if human rights and root cause analysis are not amplified within that effort. Therefore, in order for the WPS agenda to have a transformative potential and permanent impact on the ground, localisation must entail complementarity with country-level human rights policies and frameworks,[110] with input from women's civil society. As a WPS practitioner from Lebanon stated, the WPS agenda "needs to be adapted to suit local understanding and concepts in order to [be] implement[ed] fully. In order to do so, local women need to be introduced to the WPS agenda and have a chance to contribute to it. Without this local contextualisation, the agenda will fall short." In a similar manner, as highlighted by a WPS researcher and practitioner from the United States, marginalised women need to be a part of the conversation for the meaningful implementation of the WPS agenda across the various levels and contexts the agenda is being translated to.

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110   This must go beyond simply mentioning or providing an overview of these policies in a NAP, and instead demonstrate how the actions identified in the NAP will be implemented in tandem with existing human rights and gender equality frameworks.

To ensure a holistic implementation of NAPs, I think there needs to [be] a shift in ideology. The UN and states in particular need to see the WPS agenda as equally crucial and important as any other UN document.

WPS Researcher and Activist, United Kingdom

National Action Plans (NAPs) are the primary means through which states have translated the WPS agenda into their country contexts.[111] As of October 2020, 86 out of 194 (44%) member states, including the observer state of Palestine, have adopted a NAP.[112] Despite their popular embrace as a WPS implementation tool, NAPs have become a way to put forth an often public effort of WPS implementation, which perpetuate WPS rhetoric, without always providing substantive and meaningful implementation. Since there is no system wide accountability mechanism within the normative framework to ensure that commitments are met, states can devise a plan that may appear thoughtfully produced on paper, but remain words instead of action (especially if the plan lacks funding as well as monitoring and accountability frameworks). Even in country contexts where complementary legal and policy frameworks exist that seemingly promote gender equality, stark discrepancies may exist between policy and practice.

I would say that a NAP is exactly as good and effective as the process to produce it allows it to be; if the process is inclusive, constructive, well-informed and advised, and if the plan is accompanied by inclusive political will and funding, then wonderful. If it is used as a fig leaf, or to silence equality critics by recruiting more women into armies; or if it is produced, beautifully laid out and then left on a shelf, with no financial resources, at the underfunded Ministry of Women/Gender Affairs, run by a budget-less Minister with no Cabinet position... then... nothing will happen. We need to think of resolutions, NAPs etc not as static norms but dynamic tools which need constant attention to stay alive and stay relevant to the lived needs of women on the ground.

WPS Practitioner, Belgium

NAPs should first be seen as a tool to advance an intersectional approach to peace and gender equality and designed with a rights-based framework to address domestic needs and realities. As highlighted across the consultations we held, NAPs should be seen as dynamic rather than static documents. This means that they should evolve based on a given country's social, political, and economic context as well as the needs of women in that particular context. This, so far, has not been the case. Only 38% (33 out of 86) of member states that have adopted a NAP have also developed multiple versions of their action plans.[113] Furthermore, 41% (35 out of 86) of the adopted NAPs are outdated, with implementation periods

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111   There are also 11 regional action plans (RAPs) that have been adopted to implement the WPS agenda. https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states. Additionally, some states have also developed local action plans (LAPs). Jacevic, Miki. 2019. "What Makes for an Effective WPS National Action Plan?" *Inclusive Security.* https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/2019/03/25/what-makes-for-an-effective-wps-national-action-plan/

112   WILPF WPS Programme NAP Monitor. https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states

113   WILPF WPS Programme NAP Monitor. https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states

ending in 2019 or earlier.[114] This is also highlighted by a WPS researcher from the United Kingdom, who commented that "the adoption of a revised national action plan is [a] necessary means of revisiting and adjusting efforts to promoting and attaining feminist peace, but hardly would you see states do[ing] this." This picture demonstrates that NAPs may be seen as one-time-only documents, merely fulfilling states' obligations to international frameworks on paper rather than a tangible commitment to effectively implementing the WPS agenda.

Financing WPS implementation

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The intention of UNSCR 1325 was transformational, and the way it was created was specifically different (civil society driven) than other UNSCRs; but while it has clearly entered the discourse - which is good - I certainly feel that it has been instrumentalized [sic]. The fact is that women's grassroots peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts are still massively underfunded and under-supported, and the international WPS bureaucracy, while it has positive aspects (evidence gathering, norm messaging, advice giving - though I see challenges here too) has not either successfully penetrated the machinery of powerful decision-making or created more direct channels for funding and political support to women on the ground.

WPS Practitioner, Belgium

Across the consultations we held, financing was one of the primary obstacles brought up by civil society activists to the work they do, regardless of where that work takes place. In a similar manner, the 2015 Global Study on WPS indicates that "despite the wealth of evidence highlighting the benefits that investing in women can bring in terms of conflict prevention, crisis response and peace, the failure to allocate sufficient resources and funds has been perhaps the most serious and persistent obstacle to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda over the past 15 years."[115] This obstacle is particularly concerning for women's organisations who carry out vital work for their communities. Indeed, in 2016-2017, women's organisations received only 0.2% of the total bilateral aid to fragile and conflict-affected states.[116] The consultations we held with civil society activists and peacebuilders confirmed that the funding gaps persists, both at the level of receiving governmental support and international donor funding.

As a case in point, while NAPs may be the primary tools through which states are localising the WPS agenda, lack of financing is a major problem towards their implementation. In other words, budgets are still a missing component in NAP design, with only 33% (28 out of 86) adopted NAPs including an allocated budget.[117] The lack of dedicated funding gravely hampers WPS implementation

114   WILPF WPS Programme NAP Monitor. https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states

115   UN Women. 2015. *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*. p. 372. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf

116   S/2019/800. para. 4, p. 2/38. https://undocs.org/S/2019/800

117   WILPF WPS Programme NAP Monitor. https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states

before it even begins since there are no resources to implement the determined actions. Moreover, as mentioned by multiple WPS practitioners and peacebuilders across the consultations, a NAP with no budget signals to civil society members that the government is not taking WPS implementation seriously. Similarly, respondents see the lack of dedicated resources as a de facto de-prioritisation of not just the WPS agenda, but also a government's commitment to peace and gender equality.

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International donors can ensure that there are adequate financial and human resources allocated to boost human rights, including women's rights. Ensuring human resources and following up by providing technical support and capacity building is important as this will help to ensure national ownership and sustainability of implementation. Also, it is important to help in networking among all the different groups and organisations working on WPS at the national and regional level. This will coordinate efforts and therefore prevent duplication and confusion.

WPS Researcher, Jordan and Tunisia

Across the consultations we held, women activists and peacebuilders also highlighted the problematic process of acquiring funding from international organisations and donors to conduct their work. Specifically, the dependency on donor funding; the project-based, temporary, and ad hoc nature of the support; and the complex application and reporting procedures were among the primary problems mentioned. One of WILPF's Libyan civil society partners, for instance, stated that "there is a lot of talk about flexible funding, but no application; [everything] is so technical." Trying to address this level of technicality and meet donors' requirements demands from WCSOs significant time and labour, without always yielding tangible results towards their own goals due to the short-term nature of the funding received. This situation demonstrates funding processes must be redesigned in a sustainable way to address the needs of local organisations, with activists and women's organisations defining what the notions of accessible and flexible look like for their work and operations.

Women activists and peacebuilders across the consultations also pointed out the restrictive nature of donor priorities in acquiring funding to conduct their work. They stated that these priorities can appear as a preference for funding certain fields (such as humanitarian work over peacebuilding) or a preference for funding certain topics (such as gender-based violence).[118] These restrictions force local organisations and activists to make their work fit into priorities pre-determined by donors, which can appear rather detached from local needs and realities. Additionally, these priorities may also increase opposition among local organisations, competing against each other for an already limited number of resources.[119] Underscoring the need to implement funding policies differently,

118 For an analysis of the priorities of 14 major OECD donors, see SEEK Development Donor Tracker. 2018. *Empowerment How? Development Policy and Funding for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment across 14 Donors*. https://donortracker.org/sites/default/files/insight_pdfs/DT_Highlight%20Story_%20July_2018_Empowerment%20How.pdf.pdf

119 OECD. 2016. *Donor Support to Southern Women's Rights Organisations*. https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/OECD-report-on-womens-rights-organisations.pdf

a representative from WILPF Sri Lanka, for instance, highlighted that "people at the international level lack knowledge about the local context" and called for funding initiatives that prioritise context-specific needs as well as providing WCSOs with ongoing support for implementing projects funded.

As an additional funding challenge, some activists pointed out that COVID-19 has further jeopardised the already volatile funding stream for gender-sensitive services as a result of the diversion of funds to what are considered essential services. Expressing concern about the adverse impact of the pandemic on women activists and WHRDs, a WPS practitioner from Belgium, highlighting the importance of accessible funding, stated that "better resourced organisations are likely to be better organised, be able to involve in meaningful long term strategic planning, and be harder to ignore." Calling for more accountability on the part of international organisations, they asked, "how can Northern/Western based organisations up their game in terms of providing channels for resources and voice and not standing in the way?" This question, as well as the experiences of women activists on the ground, clearly demonstrate that accountability to the WPS agenda does not just include providing financing towards its implementation, but also being cognizant of how that financing impacts the work of WCSOs and local organisations. There is an obvious need for an overhaul of funding programs by making women's organisations equal partners and decision-makers in all aspects of the program design and implementation process.

CHANGE WOMEN ACTIVISTS AND PEACEBUILDERS DEMAND

The demands of women peacebuilders and activists must be taken seriously by governments, the UN, and members of the UNSC for the implementation of Resolution 1325. Accountability to the WPS agenda must be a sustained and ongoing effort within, as well as an integrated part of, peace and security discussions, including by the UN bodies and senior officials tasked with the institutional oversight of the normative framework. This means a shift from a militarised crisis response to conflict prevention, with emphasis on disarmament and demilitarisation. States must cut military spending, which should be redirected into systems and infrastructure that strengthen social and environmental wellbeing. This, without question, includes developing and strengthening programs to address the root causes of conflict, human rights, and conflict prevention.

To address the heart of the WPS agenda, it is critical that human rights be an integral part of *all* peace and security debates and policies, including global military expenditure and arms transfers. This requires governments to halt trade in arms and ammunition and fully implement the legally-binding provision on gender in Article 7.4 of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as well as upholding other complementary frameworks, such as the Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA) and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Connected to a human rights-centred approach to implementation, the agenda requires an intersectional and integrated

approach to meet the challenges of the contemporary moment. Considerations about all matters pertaining to women, peace, and security must be informed by a gendered and intersectional analysis, incorporating the experiences of diverse groups of women, LGBTQI persons, and other marginalised populations.

Furthermore, policies and practices, such as emergency response measures for COVID-19 or counter-terrorism laws, used as a pretext to target or silence WHRDs, undermine the agenda in real time. States, the UN, and the UNSC members must not only actively denounce these but act promptly to investigate any murders, attacks, or threats against WHRDs, and go further by developing comprehensive strategies to support and protect women peacebuilders and peace activists, with specific measures for women human rights defenders (WHRDs). This also means integrating the WPS agenda into and across all national and local policy and legislative frameworks, with an approach that protects and promotes human rights and gender equality, and addresses the root causes of conflict, human rights, and conflict prevention.

WPS implementation must be grounded in existing complementary international frameworks such as BPfA, CEDAW, and the 2030 Agenda. This means states, the UN, and the UNSC members substantively promote the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women across all areas of social, political, and peace processes, including eliminating structural barriers that impede women's livelihoods and ensuring women's access to essential services.

Women are equal partners in all economic, social, and political matters, and must be treated as such. This means going beyond superficial measures such as quotas alone or placing women in advisory versus decision-making roles. In conflict-affected countries, peace processes that do not include women in a meaningful manner should not be supported by international actors, especially by the UN, until they include substantive participation by diverse women. In fact, WPS implementation must continue to be integrated into all UN operations, by incorporating gender analysis and WPS obligations to country-specific discussions on the UNSC agenda and not just in thematic discussions on WPS as well as ensuring the representation of diverse women in leadership positions across the UN structures.

States, especially those who speak as champions of the agenda, must lead by example in this area and adopt a feminist political economy perspective as a principal mechanism to inform all legal and policy frameworks, including in peace processes, post-conflict reconstruction and recovery planning, and crisis response mechanisms. Post-conflict economic planning must prioritise gender-equitable investments in universal social protection systems and public services.

Lastly, NAPs must be developed to address the WPS agenda holistically, accompanied by comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and financing structures to ensure movement away from a check-the-box exercise. NAPs with a rights-based framework promote gender equality as well as being tailored to country-specific needs and realities, and their success requires civil society to be active partners and decision-makers in all stages of the NAP design,

development, and monitoring process. For the sustainability and strength of WCSOs who do the heavy lifting in peacework within communities, it is critical that governments and international organisations continue to provide direct, sustained, accessible, and flexible funding. This includes simplified design, application, and reporting processes, directly informed by the needs of civil society. Women's organisations must be seen as equal partners and decision-makers in program design and follow-up, with continued support towards promoting their work rather than ad hoc measures.

CONCLUSION

Policymakers and practitioners working on the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda have continually pointed out the widening gap between rhetoric produced on the agenda and its actual implementation on the ground to impact change. These urgent calls become heightened during the anniversaries of Resolution 1325, but the recognition of the gap does not seem to accelerate action.

As this report demonstrates, it is not normative frameworks, civil society effort, or a lack of understanding of the gaps and challenges of WPS implementation that impede progress on the agenda. On the contrary, extensive blueprints exist, civil society actors have been working tirelessly towards building just, equitable, and sustainable communities, and report after report has shown where the problem lies.[120] There is no shortage of suggestions and recommendations on how to holistically implement the WPS agenda. What is missing in this picture is actionable commitment through structural shifts by powerful actors, including the UNSC, the UN, and member states across the globe to building the systems that will serve the needs and interests of all people rather than those of a select few.

The resistance to recognising the WPS agenda as a framework that must be centred on human rights, root causes, and disarmament remains a persistent challenge to translating rhetoric into action. Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, there may have been a shift in framework where women are not just seen as passive victims of war and conflict. Nevertheless, they are still not regarded as equal partners in decision-making processes, with patriarchal power structures continuing to dominate the realm of politics and the UNSC chamber alike. Twenty years later, women want more than a simple recognition of their roles and contributions to peace building; we demand the dismantling of systems where "women's rights and peace are always seen as secondary to men's priorities and military security."[121]

120 For some recent civil society reports that identify gaps and challenges in WPS implementation, see Cordaid. 2015. *Candid Voices from the Field: Obstacles to a Transformative Women, Peace and Security Agenda and to Women's Meaningful Participation in Building Peace and Security*. https://www.cordaid.org/media/medialibrary/2015/10/Candid_Voices_from_the_Field.pdf; Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS). 2019. T*he 10 Steps: Turning Women, Peace and Security Commitments to Implementation*. https://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/The-10-Steps-Turning-Women-Peace-and-Security-Commitments-to-Implementation-GAPS.pdf; and Kvinna till Kvinna. 2020. *A Right Not a Gift: Women Building Feminist Peace*. https://kvinnatillkvinna.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/A-Right-Not-A-Gift.pdf

121 Ruane, Abigail. 2015. "Creeping Militarism: A Critical Challenge to Gender Justice and Peace." *Women, Peace and Security: 15 Years of 1325 Resolution*. http://www.icip-perlapau.cat/numero25/articles_centrals/article_central_3/

Feminist peace activists and civil society reiterate that it is not enough for governments to simply reaffirm past commitments. The next decade's approach must be centred on working towards structural changes to promote systems and economies that prioritise gender equality, human well-being, dignity, and livelihood. In order to achieve sustainable and feminist peace, the UN, UNSC, and all states must address the gendered root causes and consequences of conflict; protect and promote the rights of all women and girls; and take much-needed action towards conflict prevention, disarmament, and demilitarisation. This starts with ensuring that women are owners of and partners to the agendas that inevitably affect them and their communities, and that women's voices be included and listened to in all cross-cutting issues and debates. Women's rights and gender equality are not just a part of peace and security, but are *inextricably linked* to it.

WHAT DOES PEACE MEAN FOR YOU?[122]

equity · dialogue/empathy · harmony · safety · justice · equality · participation · non-violence · discussions/debates · inclusivity

WHAT DOES SECURITY MEAN FOR YOU?

dialogue · equality · just societies · freedom from fear · equal access · absence of profiling · being able to walk/commute · peace · respect · justice · community empowerment · anti-racism · food on the table · active debate · safe environments · living in safe ecosystem · freedom of expression · community engagement

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122 During the Young WILPF Network call, members who joined the call were asked to respond, in one word, what peace and security meant for them. These word clouds were generated during the call.

ANNEX I:
WPS RESOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Adopted 31 October 2000

First time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women.

Recognises the under-valued and under-utilised contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.

Stresses the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security.

◀ **1325 (2000)**

1820 (2008) ▶ **Adopted 19 June 2008**

Recognises sexual violence as a weapon and tactic of war.

Notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide.

Calls for training of troops on preventing and responding to sexual violence.

Calls for more deployment of women in peace operations.

Adopted 30 September 2009

Reiterates that sexual violence exacerbates armed conflict and impedes international peace and security.

Calls for leadership to address conflict-related sexual violence.

Calls for deployment of a Team of Experts where cases of sexual violence occur.

◀ **1888 (2009)**

1889 (2009) ▶ **Adopted 5 October 2009**

Focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding and on women's participation in all stages of peace processes.

Calls for the development of indicators to measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Adopted 16 December 2010

Reiterates the call for an end to sexual violence in armed conflict.

Sets up "naming and shaming" listing mechanism, sending a direct political message that there are consequences for sexual violence including: listing in Secretary-General's annual reports, referrals to UN Sanctions Committees and to the ICC, international condemnation, and reparations.

◀ **1960 (2010)**

2106 (2013)

Adopted 24 June 2013

Focuses on operationalising current obligations rather than on creating new structures/initiatives.

Includes language on women's participation in combating sexual violence.

Supports recourse to avenues of justice.

2122 (2013)

Adopted 18 October 2013

Explicitly affirms an "integrated approach" to sustainable peace.

Sets out concrete methods for addressing women's participation deficit. Recognises the need to address root causes of armed conflict and security risks faced by women.

Calls for the provision of multisectoral services to women affected by conflict. Links disarmament and gender-based violence by mentioning ATT twice.

2242 (2015)

Adopted on 13 October 2015

Encourages assessment of strategies and resources in regards to the implementation of the WPS agenda. Highlights the importance of collaboration with civil society.

Calls for increased funding for gender-responsive training, analysis and programs.

2467 (2019)

Urges gender as a cross-cutting issue within the countering violent extremism and counter-terrorism agendas.

Recognises the importance of integrating WPS across all country situations.

Adopted 23 April 2019

Recognises that sexual violence in conflict occurs on a continuum of violence against women and girls.

Recognises national ownership and responsibility in addressing root causes of sexual violence, including structural gender inequality and discrimination.

Recognises the need for a survivor-centred approach; it further encourages member states to ensure that prevention and response are non-discriminatory and specific.

Affirms that services should include provisions for women with children born as a result of sexual violence in conflict as well as men and boys.

Urges member states to strengthen access to justice for victims, including reparations.

2493 (2019)

Adopted 29 October 2019

Calls on the comprehensive promotion of women's human rights, including civil, political, and economic rights.

Urges member states to increase WPS financing and international donors to track and assess the gender focus of their aid contributions.

Strongly encourages for the creation of safe and enabling environments for civil society, including women peacebuilders, political actors, and human rights defenders.

This report assesses gaps and challenges in implementing Resolution 1325–the landmark resolution of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda from the perspective of feminist activists, peacebuilders, and civil society.

The report identifies three overarching challenges to the effective implementation of the WPS agenda: militarism and militarisation; patriarchal and political undermining of the WPS agenda; and accountability for WPS implementation.

The report offers key recommendations to these challenges and highlights entryways to reclaim the transformative potential of the WPS agenda towards achieving sustainable and feminist peace.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR
PEACE & FREEDOM