Women, Peace and Security

Increasing the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacemaking, conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts is a key priority for the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). Women, Peace and Security (WPS) first made it on to the Security Council’s agenda in 2000, with the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS. However, despite many global and regional commitments and initiatives, the number of women included in formal peacemaking processes remains low; and many peace agreements do not include gender provisions that sufficiently address women’s security and peacebuilding needs.

In line with the Secretary-General’s forward looking goals for the decade (S/2019/800, para 120) and his directives on women, peace and security (S/2020/946, para 113), DPPA is supporting multi-track efforts that increase the involvement of women everywhere, integrate gender equality, and shape strategies based on the priorities of women’s rights constituencies. This includes working with Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General to design and support strategies for inclusive peace processes. From Colombia to Syria, the Department is also exploring new pathways for participation through digital inclusion strategies and virtual consultations and engagement.

In DPPA’s special political missions in the field, Gender Advisers or Gender Focal Points provide advice and support to the mission’s leadership - the Secretary-General’s Special Envoys and Special Representatives - on ways to promote women’s political participation, make peace processes and prevention efforts more inclusive, and include gender perspectives in the UN’s political work.
In contexts where the UN is supporting a peace process, DPPA and its special political missions (SPMs) work to promote women's direct participation through advocacy and by providing advice on inclusive mediation strategies. We also organize consultations with civil society and women's groups and provide advice on effective ways to include women and their views in the process. Furthermore, the Department promotes women's political participation in elections, for example through advice on Temporary Special Measures, including electoral quotas, during electoral support (https://dppa.un.org/en/elections). To assist mediation actors and Member States in their efforts to make peace processes more inclusive and gender-responsive, DPPA (then DPA) developed two Guidance documents for mediators and mediation experts; one on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements (2012); and one on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies (2017).

In 2016, the Department established a stand-alone Gender, Peace and Security Unit (GPS), which oversees the implementation of the WPS agenda. GPS has the responsibility to develop policy, build the capacity of DPPA staff involved in peacemaking and support DPPA's mission and headquarters staff in implementing Security Council resolutions on WPS and Conflict-related Sexual Violence. DPPA’s WPS Policy was issued in June 2019, to ensure that gender relevant issues and perspectives are integrated into all the Department’s activities. The Policy outlines five priorities for the implementation of the WPS agenda: a) Gender sensitive political and conflict analysis; b) Promoting inclusion and women’s meaningful participation in all peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts; c) Women's participation in electoral and political processes; d) Preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence as a priority for peace; and e) Programmatic – ensuring gender mainstreaming in all projects through resource allocations, gender markers and tracking.

The Department's approach to implementing the WPS agenda is that in addition to specific focus on WPS and WPS initiatives, gender is mainstreamed throughout DPPA’s work, and that WPS work is not only the responsibility of gender advisers, but the responsibility of every staff member in DPPA and its field presences.


Security Council Resolutions

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on WPS was backed by a diverse and geographically-representative coalition of Member States, and pushed by a strong global constituency of women civil society organizations. This was the first Security Council resolution to link women to the peace and security agenda, looking at the impact of conflict on women and women's contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

The resolution consists of four pillars: 1) The role of women in conflict prevention, 2) women's participation in peacebuilding, 3) the protection of the rights of women and girls during and after conflict, and 4) women's specific needs during repatriation, resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. A total of ten WPS resolutions have been adopted, and can be divided into two groups. The first group, initiated by 1325 and followed by SCR 1889 (2009), SCR 2122 (2013), SCR 2242 (2015) and SCR 2493 (2019), deals in short with the need for women's active and effective participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

The second group focuses on preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). The first dedicated resolution on CRSV, SCR (1820) was adopted in 2008. It acknowledges that sexual violence when used as a tactic of war can significantly exacerbate conflict and be a threat to international peace and security. Since 2008, four additional resolutions have been adopted on CRSV: SCR 1888 (2009), SCR 1960 (2010), SCR 2106 (2013), and SCR 2467 (2019).
Why Is Gender and Women Included in the UN Peace and Security Agenda?

There is no internationally agreed definition of the term ‘gender’, however, gender is understood to be a social and cultural construct that assigns different roles, behaviors, norms and traits to men and women in a society. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can evolve over time. In most societies, gender is hierarchical and produces political, social and economic inequalities. When gender intersects with other forms of discrimination such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, geographic location, sexual orientation and gender identity, the impacts can compound and lead to intersectional marginalization and discrimination. Because conflict affects people of different gender identities differently, an intersectional approach to peacemaking is needed to respond to different groups’ security and peacebuilding needs.

Men who predominantly occupy roles in both armed groups and public decision-making, have long been considered the only relevant actors in conflict and its resolution. However, women have always been involved in conflict in different roles, be it as peacemakers, combatants, dependents, politicians or activists, and are greatly – often disproportionately – affected by conflict. Women have a fundamental human right to participate in decision making processes that affect them, but women’s inclusion in peace processes is also a strategic imperative, as adding a broader range of perspectives can lead to more sustainable peace. For these reasons, and to answer to its responsibilities stemming from the human rights agenda, the United Nations is strongly committed to include women in its peace and security work.
IADS
Day 1 - Reading #2
ASEAN Regional Study
Women, Peace and Security
Since 2000, and the adoption of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has promoted women’s “equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.” WPS has now become a priority for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in line with the ASEAN Charter that “the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment.” WPS is not a niche agenda for women; it is a gender equality and peace agenda that seeks to mainstream gender perspectives on the differential impact of security policies and crises on women and men in order to better enable governments and people to prevent, prepare for, and/or respond to them.

In 2017, the ASEAN Committee of Women and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) produced for the first time a Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace, and Security in the ASEAN region. That statement recognized the importance of women’s participation in the political, security, and justice sectors, and encouraged women’s full participation in peace processes as negotiators, mediators, and first responders, including in the prevention of violent extremism. It defined security broadly, to encompass economic security, health pandemics, and disaster and climate change management and it committed to addressing the root causes of armed conflicts and violent extremism, which include gender inequality, discrimination, and poverty. This first ASEAN WPS statement was subsequently reaffirmed by a joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in 2019.¹

In recent years, we have seen significant momentum to advance an ASEAN regional normative framework for WPS, especially in the sectoral bodies under the ASEAN Political and Security and Socio-Cultural Community Pillars. The ASEAN-UN Plan of Action (POA) 2021-2025 adopted on 22 October 2020 explicitly aims to promote WPS as a multilateral approach to sustaining regional and global peace and security. Gender mainstreaming and cross-sectoral collaboration are seen as critical to advance WPS agenda in the region in this second ASEAN-UN POA²

This is a promising development in the ASEAN region. It is vital that ASEAN Member States come together to respond to traditional and nontraditional security threats and cross-border governance challenges, including pre- and post-conflict environments of gendered inequality and violence that destabilize communities and may undermine regional stability and peace. The WPS agenda is wide-ranging and goes beyond recognized situations of armed conflict, although some aspects of WPS and international law may require strict mandates in conflict-affected settings. In Southeast Asia, WPS is relevant to women’s political participation, including in peace and electoral processes, violent extremism, transnational crime, communal conflicts, climate-change, natural disasters, migration and displacement, as well as health pandemics. Recognizing and supporting women’s participation in decision-making roles and in crisis preparedness, response, and recovery in the region is crucial for ensuring safe and peaceful communities in the context of these challenges.
There have been significant advances in gender equality and key evidence has emerged on the efficacy of women’s peacebuilding in the ASEAN region upon which ASEAN can build a strong agenda for sustainable peace and security. Thus, it is critical that ASEAN and its Member States act now to take further ownership and responsibility in promoting gender equality and inclusion in context-specific peace and security in this diverse region. While the need for a cross-sectoral, cross-pillar ASEAN approach to WPS is recognized, and some collaboration exists across the three community pillars, such as in the area of “preventing violent extremism,” the institutional mechanisms charged with implementing this approach must be strengthened to realize the gains and the potential of women’s full participation and gender-responsive security.

This ASEAN study proposes WPS policy- and program-level recommendations to achieve greater stability and peace in the ASEAN region. The study also aims to show the relevance of WPS for a wider audience in the region by synthesizing knowledge and data on areas of progress and lessons learned and identifying opportunities to further enable ASEAN ownership and engagement with the agenda.

**Findings**

There are four major findings of the study across the ASEAN community pillars and bodies, and the 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS).

1. **Localization of the WPS agenda for the ASEAN context is occurring in AMS but there is scope for this to be scaled up.**

Meaningful implementation of the WPS agenda in AMS can enhance the region’s existing peace and security architecture through the sharing of and by building on successful Member State experiences. The study highlights innovative, evidence-based initiatives involving women’s participation and leadership, such as peace villages in Indonesia and community early warning crisis prevention in the Philippines. It also highlights two Member State examples: 1) the first iteration of the WPS National Action Plan (NAP) in the Philippines, which was based on comprehensive nationwide CSO consultation; and 2) the localization of various NAPs in partnership with subnational governments and the integration of WPS in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) NAPs in Indonesia. In both examples, the process allowed civil society to jointly develop actions, policies, and implementation mechanisms to further the WPS agenda.

With regional coordination and investment, these various action plan initiatives have the potential to be scaled up and replicated via a Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on WPS among the AMS. They present important lessons learned for all AMS as they consider the value that focus on WPS can bring to their distinct contexts. Civil society and government partnerships have been integral to successful ASEAN Member State WPS efforts and are positive models for ASEAN to build on through the ASEAN Civil Society Conference and People’s Forum. Bringing together an ASEAN regional WPS community of practice among government, the security sector, academic experts, and CSOs could further enable multi-stakeholder partnerships and governance for policy success.

2. **Women’s peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding networks are nascent developments in the ASEAN region although gaps exist in security sector leadership and representation in governance.**

**COVID-19 and WPS: Increased Needs Yet Decreased Attention**

In 2020 a WPS perspective highlighted the need for gender-responsive policies to address women’s political leadership and the need for inclusive decision-making to ensure effective and comprehensive responses to the health, social, and economic impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Yet this study found a reduced focus on WPS in ASEAN states during the pandemic. This is despite raised awareness of the impact of COVID restrictions on increased economic vulnerability and physical insecurity especially gender-based violence (GBV), affecting women, migrant workers, and their families. These impacts demand more gender-responsive policing and security as well as targeted support to frontline responders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), providing essential services to victims of violence and vulnerable communities.
The WPS agenda notes the importance of women’s participation in formal peace and security mechanisms and in decision-making processes. This study finds that important gains have been made in women’s peace and security participation in ASEAN. Notably, as of December 2020 there were 336 female peacekeepers out of 4,882 total troop contributions from the ASEAN region to UN Peacekeeping Operation. The peacekeeping training facilities located in the region have the potential to enhance gender training. Indonesia championed the proposal for the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2538, the first resolution on women and peacekeeping. Adopted on 29 August 2020, it encourages Member States “to develop strategies and measures to increase the deployment of uniformed women to peacekeeping operations” by providing access to information and training and by “identifying and addressing barriers in the recruitment, deployment, and promotion of uniformed women peacekeepers.”

With regard to peacemaking, in Track 1 negotiations between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), women achieved 40 percent of the peace negotiators, 69 percent of the secretariat, and 60 percent of the legal team showing that near gender parity can be achieved. As well, women have led and supported Track 2.0 peacebuilding initiatives in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Regionally, the establishment of the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry in 2018 recognizes the importance of women’s inclusion in formal peace processes and has elevated the profiles of women mediators. The N-Peace network, founded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has also given important recognition to the achievements of women peacebuilders in Asia-Pacific countries, including Myanmar and Indonesia, through an annual award campaign since 2010. The Southeast Asia Women Peacebuilders Network has the potential to provide an important platform for engaging in peace processes, including linkages to civil society and women’s organizations.

Despite these successes, the study finds that there are gaps in women’s participation in security sector decision-making and that seven out of 10 AMS do not have formal mechanisms for ensuring gender inclusion in peace and security leadership. Ensuring the ASEAN approach to peace and security for all will require men to become WPS champions. The fundamental purpose of WPS is to prevent insecurity and violence by harnessing the potentials of both women and men and addressing structural gender inequality and discriminatory gender norms that are the barriers to sustainable peace.

A WPS lens is increasingly being applied to preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and to nontraditional security issues, but there are gaps in protection addressing sexual and gender-based violence in the context of conflict and crisis and in approaches to crisis prevention.

WPS is a relevant and useful framework for enhancing prevention, preparedness, and response to a range of crises. The study shows that AMS have experience in bringing gender-inclusive perspectives to preventing violent extremism, human trafficking in persons (TIP), regional disaster management and response to climate change, and public health emergencies and pandemics. ASEAN has an opportunity to consolidate the gender perspectives applied to these nontraditional security issues and to coordinate a gender-responsive regional security approach through a WPS institutional mandate and accountable mechanism.

There are gaps in gender-inclusive protection in the region that need to be addressed, especially in fragile contexts where child marriage, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and discrimination are under-reported and overlooked, according to the study. Attempting to bridge that gap, Cambodia’s Safe Village/Commune policy is a valuable approach; it aims to combat a range of forms of GBV including trafficking and domestic violence and their connection to transnational crime.

ASEAN could build on its existing Regional Plan of Action on Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) to assist member countries to tackle sexual and gender-based violence in crisis and cross-border situations by enforcing laws and sanctions and providing remedies and reducing stigma for victims/survivors. More emphasis on prevention and the recognition of women mediators in mitigating crises and the escalation of conflicts is also required in the implementation of WPS in the region.
The ASEAN Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural Community Pillars have all engaged in preliminary ways with WPS, establishing a foundation for further regional institutionalization and integration. The WPS agenda is well integrated within the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community bodies and at an early stage of development in the Political and Security Community, where the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) and the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR) have brought a gender lens to peace and security issues and highlighted the importance of women’s meaningful participation in the promotion of peace. To ensure a more peaceful and secure region for all, ASEAN leadership is now needed to advance targeted actions that mainstream gender analysis and institutionalize the WPS agenda throughout ASEAN sectoral bodies, organs, and entities. A regional framework is vital to enable the exchange, coordination, and scaling-up of successful evidence-based WPS practices and lessons across the ASEAN region.

Recommendations

The study’s recommendations stress five key mechanisms and actions that are necessary to take forward the ASEAN WPS agenda to realize greater gains for regional peace and security in the future and elevate ASEAN in global debates on peace and security.

- **Formulate an ASEAN WPS Regional Plan of Action** with specific goals, objectives, activities, indicators, and a regional institutional mechanism to implement and coordinate these actions across ASEAN pillars and sectors that reflects the relevance and application of the WPS agenda in ASEAN beyond traditional conceptions of its application only in the context of armed conflict. Agree upon a timeframe that promotes the adoption of National Action Plans by all AMS. This is one of the key priorities highlighted in the Chair’s press statement from the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Retreat in January 2021.

- **Mainstream gender as a crosscutting issue** across ASEAN community pillars and sector bodies and within the analysis of traditional and nontraditional regional peace and security policy issues by adopting gender-responsive frameworks and capacity-building, for example in “One ASEAN, One Response,” which monitors risk and conducts early warning for impending disasters, terrorism, and conflict. Such mainstreaming will facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration on WPS in strategic policy, planning, and programming among key entities such as the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, the ASEAN-IPR and the AWPR.

- **Ensure the ASEAN approach to peace and security is for all** by encouraging male leaders to be advocates and allies for gender inclusion in peace and security decision-making and setting targets for the better representation of women in all ASEAN and Member State peace and security bodies, including at the highest level. Such measures will be crucial to achieve gender-inclusive governance and sustainable peace, as well as meet ASEAN’s gender mainstreaming and WPS commitments.

- **Build the institutional capacity for and commitment to WPS** through knowledge-building exercises, regional dialogues, and international engagement, especially in the ASEAN-IPR and the AWPR but also in the sectoral bodies with strong WPS mandates, such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women, the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), the ACWC, and the WPS Advisory Group. Institutional capacity for WPS analysis and responses to gendered insecurity needs to be scaled up across AMS, security sectors, universities and other research institutions, and civil society actors. This is necessary to build a community of practice able to recognize gender-responsive indicators of state and regional instability and further drive the ASEAN approach to WPS.

- **Raise awareness of the ASEAN approach to WPS among people and civil societies** through popular media and communications, arts, and culture that recognize the connections between gender equality and peace in the region and rewards men’s and women’s WPS leadership at all levels.
IADS
Day 1 - Reading #3
African Union
Reflection on Contributions
The African Union (AU) advocates for the meaningful participation and leadership of women and their efforts towards silencing the guns, enhancing good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, the rule of law towards a peaceful and secure Africa as outlined in Agenda 2063. In recognition of African women who have exceptionally advanced the women, peace and security agenda in Africa, the African Union and the United Nations will publish a commemorative book to celebrate the contribution of women in achieving Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063 and as part of the activities for the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

In July 2019, The African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) launched the call for nominations of African women who have exceptionally advanced the women, peace and security agenda in Africa. The selected women will be featured in an upcoming commemorative book set to be launched in the year 2020.
Twenty (20) African women will be featured in the book. A chapter will be dedicated to each woman to share her story or contribution to either of the four pillars of Resolution 1325 namely; prevention, protection, participation and/or relief and recovery as part of the peace and security activities.

The book aims to send a message of encouragement to women across our continent and in the rest of the world, by reflecting the exceptional stories and contributions of women to peace and security on the continent and serve as a learning experience and motivation to other women, especially young women involved in mediation, peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities. The commemorative book will be launched at the margins of the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of State and Government of the African Union (AU Summit), scheduled for February 2020 at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This will also align with the launch of the African Union theme of the year 2020 on Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive conditions for Africa's Development.

The AU's commitment to promoting women's participation in the peace and security agenda and in Africa's overall development is demonstrated in its policy formulation and allocation of resources - human, institutional and financial- towards attaining gender equality and women's empowerment, as a critical goal and strategy in the realisation of Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 that recognises the centrality of women in Africa's development. These efforts also act as a catalyst the achievement of the goals of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to further drive the women agenda in the peace and security architecture.

In 2014, Mme. Bineta Diop was appointed as the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security mandated to promote and elevate the voices of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as advocate for the protection of their rights, including putting an end to sexual and gender-based violence. Her efforts are also complemented by other mechanisms such as the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation - commonly known as FemWise-Africa. FemWise-Africa has vigorously mobilised women and girls from all over the continent and the Diaspora as it aims to promote and professionalise the role of African women in mediation processes, conflict prevention and peace-making efforts. Over the years, Africa has also developed strong, progressive and articulate policies to support the commitment towards the realisation of real transformation for gender equality and women's empowerment. To ensure effective assessment of, and reporting on the delivery of the commitments at the continental, regional and national levels in Africa, the AU Continental Results Framework (CRF) for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the WPS Agenda in Africa is a key reference tool and it provides twenty-eight (28) indicators for tracking and reporting on the implementation of the WPS Agenda.

The Department of Defense plays a key role in implementing the U.S. WPS Act and Strategy as characterized in the DoD Women, Peace, and Security Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan (SFIP). The DoD section of the 2022 Congressional report reflects annual data and information collected from across the Department for Fiscal Year 2021. FY 2021 was a pivotal year for the DoD WPS program. It was the first full fiscal year the Department operated with the DoD WPS SFIP and the first full year the Department collected on interagency metrics within the U.S. Strategy on WPS including the DoD specific metrics and indicators in the DoD WPS SFIP.

Over the past year, the Department spent $5.5 million to establish policies and programs to advance implementation of WPS, hire and train qualified personnel, and integrate WPS into relevant training curriculum and professional military education for the Armed Forces. The Department also notified $3 million from the International Security Cooperation Programs to conduct security cooperation programs that incorporate gender analysis and advance women’s participation in defense institutions and national security forces.

Notable efforts include:
• Military Departments hired dedicated WPS personnel for the first time. U.S. Space Command and U.S. Cyber Command also hired their first ever dedicated WPS personnel.

• The Joint Staff and Combatant Commands conducted a total of eight Operationalizing WPS training programs this year, training approximately four hundred DoD personnel to serve as Gender Focal Points (GFPs) and thirty personnel qualified to serve as Gender Advisors (GENADs). These gender advisory personnel are responsible for advancing the implementation of WPS across the Department.

• The Joint Staff adapted the DoD gender analysis framework to align with the Department of State and USAID gender analysis framework, enhancing interagency coordination in support of WPS.

• Air Force General Jacqueline Van Ovost assumed command of U.S. Transportation Command and Army General Laura Richardson assumed command of U.S. Southern Command.

• The Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military Implementation Roadmap provides guidance for WPS-specific initiatives to strengthen collaboration between the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel & Readiness and to identify resource requirements for full-time equivalent Gender Advisor billets across several DoD Components. These efforts represent unprecedented attention to the importance of alignment between our commitments to promote women’s meaningful participation in our own force and with partner nations.

• USNORTHCOM provided the first-ever gender advisor support during Operation Allies Welcome, led by the Department of Homeland Security. This included the mobilization, training, and deployment of twenty-seven DoD GENADs and GFPs to eight U.S. installations supporting Afghan evacuees from September 2021 to February 2022.
