



National Action Plans and Beyond: Local Women Peacebuilders Strategies

Concept Note

Webinar

8th November 2022

10 – 11.30 am CET

Via Zoom Online Platform

Registration link: [here](#)

Background

National Action Plans (NAPs), today over a hundred in the world,¹ are very strategic tools, a precious opportunity for States to implement the “Women, Peace, and Security” (WPS) Agenda with specific priorities, focuses, and timelines. As a “living process” they also offer an **excellent opportunity to improve relations among major stakeholders** (political leadership, line ministries, armed forces, police, civil society organizations, activists, and experts).

Since Denmark adopted the very first NAP in 2005, states have been developing **different “generations” of NAPs** improving their structure and including new items according to the development of the WPS Agenda. NAPs differ in various aspects: the prevalence of a dominant pillar among the main three (Prevention, Protection, Participation); the inclusion of new security issues (such as terrorism, Countering Violent Extremism - CVE, transitional justice, women’s rights, LGBTQI and gender minorities); the focus on specific actions (e.g., peacekeeping, mediation, protection of girls); the leading role among the stakeholders (e.g., Ministries of Foreign Affairs or Defence, Women’s and Social Affairs, Civil Society, changing by region); achievements and challenges (i.e., political will, resources, inclusive design, and monitoring and evaluation).

The WPS agenda and the related NAPs failed to produce the expected change in peace and security. *“The Women, Peace and Security Agenda is not just an answer to historical wrongs and marginalization, but an opportunity to do things differently. Opening the door*

¹ WPS Focal Points Network, [Global map of adopted National Action Plans](#).

to inclusion and participation would result in giant steps forward in conflict prevention and peacebuilding".² Still, **women's meaningful participation in peace processes** remains one of the most challenging goals of the whole WPS normative framework, while locally based and women-led peacebuilding efforts - key for transformation - remain overlooked, underreported, and its funding unclear.

On the 20th anniversary of UNSCR1325, the UN Secretary-General launched a Call to Action aiming to fully display **the "transformative" potential of UNSCR 1325**: *"There is no time to lose. We must join forces with women's movements and young women who, against all odds, have been consistently at the forefront in advancing international peace and security."*³ Accordingly, community-based and local women's networks are to be prioritized and resourced; women's mobilization is accelerated and leveraged in peace and political processes; women's leadership is systemized to inform conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, and protection. The Call recognized the value of women's experience, knowledge, understanding, and expertise for accountable decision-making, and asks for partnership between policymakers and practitioners, also making resources available for technical gender experts.

To enhance the effective implementation of the WPS, as well as the UN's work (particularly in the Security Council) in achieving its unique mandate of maintaining Peace and International Security by peaceful means, **a shift in focus is required** and highly recommended. The focus must move away from elites and high-level leadership and government-led activities and centre instead on grassroots local peace initiatives.

Previously, the Group of Friends of Women, Peace, and Security, which comprises 65 Member States, called for all United Nations-supported peace processes to require and ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation. As this UN SG on Women Peace and Security (S/2022/240) states, the next year's report on Women, Peace and Security will be focused on that goal.⁴ Looking forward to renewed attention to Participation at the national and global level, **it is time to raise the momentum for a focus on local women peacebuilders' actions and strategies.**

² Women and Peace and Security, Report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/240). [I. Introduction, point 7.](#)

³ UN Action for Peacekeeping, [Call to Action: Women Transforming Peace and Security.](#)

⁴ Women and Peace and Security, Report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/240). [VI. Conclusions and recommendations, point 106 \(a\).](#)

Opportunity for Change

New opportunities are to be found in the evolving international framework on peace and security: the “**Youth, Peace and Security**” **Agenda** (UNSCR 2250/2015 et seq.) which acknowledges the urgent need to engage young peacebuilders in promoting peace and countering violent extremism, and the **Sustaining Peace Agenda** (A/RES/70/262, S/RES/2282/2016) which outlines the concept of *sustaining peace* “as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account”. Both agendas are useful frameworks to reinforce the role, voice, capacities of peace-oriented civil society organizations, able to bring women and youth into the spotlight as drivers of peace.

Other valuable opportunities might be found at the regional level, both in dedicated policies (e.g., EU, ASEAN, Arab League) and initiatives (regional mediators’ networks and advocacy networks), as well as at the local level with the development of local action plans. Consultations and activities at these levels could help NAPs to be tailored to the specific needs and capacities of local women peacebuilders and communities, reinforcing their transformative potential.

Rationale of the Discussion

The webinar intends to offer a space for sharing experiences on NAP provisions and implementation in different geographical areas, in particular on their attitude towards supporting local women peacebuilders strategies, considering possible synergies with policies and initiatives at global, regional and local level.

The speakers will bring their experience on WPS policy drafting, monitoring and implementation at the various levels (national, regional, global, local). An open discussion will follow with all participants (advocates and practitioners, representatives of CSOs and networks) to facilitate the sharing of good practices and lessons learned and possibly identify a way forward for joint action.

A summary document will be shared after the event.

Objectives

- 1) To provide space for sharing experiences on NAP provisions and implementation in different geographical areas.
- 2) To provide entry points and identify a way forward for enhancing the transformative potential of WPS, also considering possible synergies with policies and initiatives at the global, regional, and local levels.

Guiding Questions

- 1) What are the key features and characteristics of the NAPs of different geographical areas that make them tools for real change in peace and security?
- 2) Can regional and local policies and initiatives provide complementary policy frameworks for NAPs to fulfil the transformative potential of WPS Agenda?
If yes, how do they do so?
What are some examples of good practice?
- 3) Can the new global frameworks help NAPs to enhance the role of local women peacebuilders as agents of change?
If yes, which ones?
What are some recent examples of good practice?