

RESEARCH PAPER

EIGHTEEN YEARS ON: ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNSCR 1325 WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA IN THE ARAB STATES REGION



JANUARY 2019
UN WOMEN

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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ARAB STATES

Cairo, January 2019



About this study

This guidance note was commissioned by the UN Women Regional Office for Arab States, and is part of a series of reports on issues of peace and security in the Middle East and North Africa.

About the authors

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This report was generously funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Suggested Citation:

Parke, A, Farr, V, and Alodaat, L, (2019), Eighteen Years On: Assessing the Implementation of the UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Arab States Region; UN Women.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 31 October 2000. This resolution, for the first time, recognized the disproportionate and unique impact of conflict on women, and their under-valued contributions as active agents in peace, security and recovery. While states, civil society actors and women's rights actors heralded its passage, the buy-in and implementation of UNSCR 1325 (and its seven subsequent resolutions¹), has varied considerably across regions and countries. With its diverse countries and exceptionally complex and multifaceted operating contexts, the Arab States region is no exception.

Building on the findings of the 2015 landmark Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325,² this report takes stock of progress, challenges and opportunities for the implementation of WPS agenda across the Arab states region. It is structured across three sections: the first provides a rapid overview of key status updates drawing on available evidence across a selection of core WPS themes; the second explores key opportunities and challenges for implementation, as highlighted by those supporting the implementation of the agenda on the ground; the final section outlines a series of recommendations aimed at the collaborative and committed engagement of a cross-section of stakeholders, including member states, donors, implementing agencies and civil society.

Our Approach

Working in collaboration with a team of regional and global WPS experts, this report is based on:

- A review of published literature, including an analysis of online WPS content in English and Arabic;
- Country case studies focused on Iraq, Libya, Palestine, Syria and Yemen, which involved key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with civil society actors, donors, and former and current government officials;
- A selection of interviews with stakeholders operating at the regional level, including representatives across UN agencies, donor organisations, implementing partners, civil society organisations and academics.

Key Findings

There is significant diversity within and across country contexts across the Arab States region, and **distinct political dynamics and histories of women's organising**. As such, discussions of 'regional' WPS implementation must necessarily be approached with caution and nuance. However, drawing on available literature and primary data collection, this rapid review finds that **WPS implementation across the region has been uneven**, at worst limited. There are also significant **evidence deficits and data gaps**, which highlight that the full complexity and depth of these issues is still unknown.

In one respect, changes across the region have offered **tangible opportunities for women to engage in political and public life and provided important openings for women's activism and reform**. However, as conflicts intensify, women have been exposed to **escalating and multi-level risks**. Exclusionary and discriminatory social norms continue to prohibit women's behaviour and opportunities, and the space for civil society and rights-based actors is increasingly shrinking across many countries. Therefore, the need for **comprehensive, coordinated and resourced solutions** to deliver against the WPS agenda is more urgent than ever before.

In this context, there has been a **steady increase in the visibility of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda**, across the government, donor and civil society space, most notably since 2010-2011. This has resulted in increased efforts to support women's engagement in peace and security processes, or at a minimum, increased interest from across the

international community for the need to do so. Correspondingly, legislative and policy gains are notable in some areas, including through the adoption of **five country WPS National Action Plans (NAPs)**,³ and **one regional Member-State endorsed plan** (the League of Arab States). UNSCR 1325 has also been leveraged by civil society actors in specific ways, including to influence constitutional drafting processes (including in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya) and to hold Member States to account on issues such as military occupation (Palestine). While this represents important progress, the deepening of inequalities, the scale of violence and exclusion, the disruption of family and social structures, and the limited educational and livelihood options continue to create an **increasingly complex landscape at the implementation level**.

There have been **gains for women across some forms of political engagement**. For example, overall there have been **increases in women's parliamentary representation** across the region. This is thanks, in part, to the introduction of measures such as gender quotas. For example, 30 women were appointed to Saudi Arabia's Shura Council (advisory body) for the first time in 2016, and following Iraq's 2018 elections, 25.53% of women have seats in Iraq's parliament (a small increase from the 2010 elections). Moreover, **where women have been well represented on constitution drafting committees**, including in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen,⁴ the resulting draft constitutions have introduced, or intended to introduce, **strong measures to improve women's representation and protections**. However, women continue to have limited access to influential political decision-making processes and spaces, and at worst, have been manipulated for party politics or military purposes. Women's representation in local councils and as ministers also remains low.

There have been **targeted efforts to increase women's representation in track one political dialogue processes**, as reflected through the establishment of parallel fora such as the Yemeni Women's Pact for Peace and Security (the Pact), and the Women's Advisory Board (WAB) and Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) in Syria. These bodies offer important opportunities for engagement in political dialogues and provide a pragmatic solution for women's participation where parties to the conflict refuse to accept adequate representation

or influence. However, they have been critiqued for offering a **questionable degree of influence and seeking to require consensus across civil society actors**. There has also been **limited recognition of women's often substantial roles in conflict resolution and peacebuilding at the local level**, including in extremely dangerous and difficult contexts such as Syria, Yemen and Libya. In related terms, across the region, **only 26.8% (32 out of 119) of peace agreements signed have gendered provisions** – which remains lower than the current global average of 50%.

There have been **positive gains in women's representation within some areas of the security sector in some countries**, including, though not exhaustively, in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. For example, the Jordanian Armed Forces have established its first female company for special security tasks, and in Saudi Arabia and Qatar women were given access to certain roles within their military for the first time in 2018. However, overall, **women represent only a fraction of the workforce in the armed forces, police and the general security forces across the region**. Moreover, women also tend to dominate within **lower level administrative roles** and are often excluded from decision-making. Further, despite gender perspectives being much more evident in all aspects of peacekeeping operations, **efforts to include women and mainstream gender equality principles remain ad hoc and limited in scope and scale**. For example, across the four UN Peacekeeping Operations in the Arab states, women make up on average just 5.5% of all military and police personnel.⁵

Cases of conflict-related sexual violence, and **many other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) – including intimate partner violence (IPV) are widespread**. In some contexts, violence has been exacerbated by conflict dynamics, resulting in increases in child marriage among communities from Syria, Libya and Yemen and targeted sexual violence against women from minority groups in Iraq. Accountability for violence continues to remain limited despite: i) an **increase in mechanisms to monitor and document forms of VAWG and other human rights violations**, such as: UN Commissions of Inquiry (CoI) and fact-finding missions, and the creation of bodies such as the **Office of the Special**

Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict requesting annual reporting against relevant resolutions, and ii) a growing trend towards **combatting VAWG through standalone legislation or penal code reforms**, including the abolishment of so-called ‘marry your rapist’ laws in Palestine (2018), Jordan (2017), Lebanon (2017) and Tunisia (2017).

There has been **some progress on gender mainstreaming through humanitarian programming**, but these efforts continue to **insufficiently address the complex gendered dimensions of emergency response**, with many organisations failing to fulfil basic requirements of gender mainstreaming, including ensuring the prevalence of gender analysis and the collection of sex disaggregated data. There are also specific gaps across the UN system in supporting these processes, for example, in 2017 the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen issued 14 statements on the humanitarian situation, and only one included gender analysis.⁶ There also remains chronic under-funding of gender-targeted activities in response plans, and insufficient funding channelled directly to women-led organisations. This is in spite of the fact that **women from the region have taken on lead roles in the delivery of humanitarian aid**, despite being exposed to significant risk in doing so.

In response to many of these issues, civil society, and **specifically women’s rights organisations and activists have undertaken significant and dedicated work** across the region. In some cases, these activities have been positively influenced by increased knowledge of UNSCR 1325, allowing women to organise their peace-making initiatives around coherent peace and security issues. This engagement has also created, in some cases, **new opportunities for collaboration**. However, there is a lack of awareness and consensus around how UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda translate at local levels into positive change. Moreover, there is a perception that the agenda is dominated by the same (often urban and ‘elite’) individuals and organisations and is ‘silent’ on crucial issues affecting women on the ground, including disarmament and militarisation. This perception is compounded by a scarcity of available WPS resources in Arabic. These issues have coalesced to create **limited localisation and ownership of the agenda** among women and civil society actors due

to a growing perception that such ownership **does not translate into action or positive impact**, limiting its relevance and buy-in.

Further, despite positive actions taken forward by some Member States, including the development of WPS NAPs, there is a shared perception that **government actors lack the capacity and political will** to deliver against the WPS agenda. Moreover, while there have been some examples of positive collaboration between civil society and government actors on the agenda (including on the development of NAPs), these efforts are broadly seen to be **unrepresentative and unsustainable**. Issues of **national and regional identity and policy coherence** have also been disrupted by historic political and social divisions, which have impacted on women’s desire or interest to work on a singular set of goals.

While women’s rights actors continue to advocate and programme across a broad range of WPS related issues, **there is an urgent need to strengthen women’s effective and meaningful political participation and access to decision-making** (including in the security sector) as a means to shape and influence women’s experiences of peace, security and stability. However, feminist observers have cautioned that while donor and international support for women’s engagement in the political sphere is crucial, this engagement must not be reduced to simply increasing numbers of women at the table and on seats, at the expense of neglecting the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the structural factors that hinder women’s access and influence to decision-making in both public and private life. This includes understanding the personal risks and consequences for women who push through barriers to take a visible and public role.

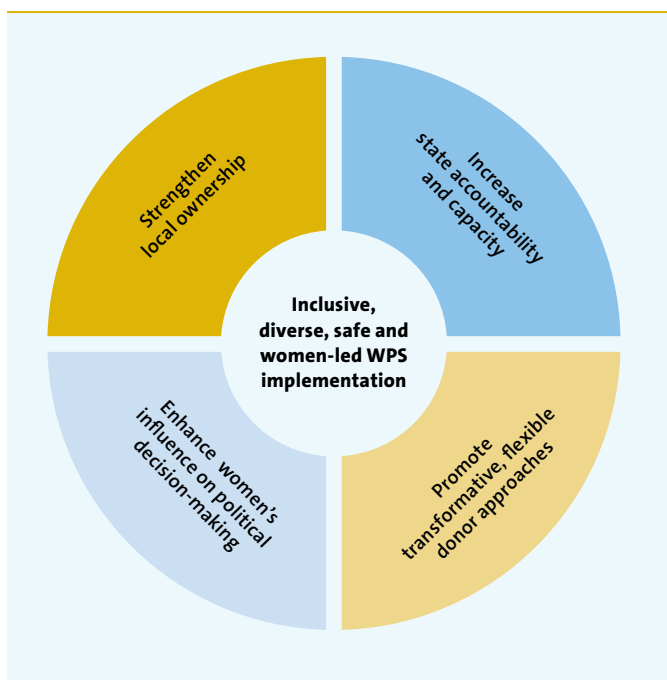
In addition, **donor priorities in the region have been increasingly focused on the delivery of short-term humanitarian aid**, which is perceived to be **obscuring and obstructing the longer-term gender and women’s rights agenda**. This is causing some civil society organisations, including women’s rights groups and activists, to pause or neglect their strategic gender justice work. The international community also continues to demand consensus across women groups and civil society actors, which is shrinking and distorting the space for women’s movement building and its diversity.

Recommendations

Comprehensive and integrated solutions are needed to address the wide-reaching nature of the WPS agenda across the diverse and complex landscape of the Arab states region. The below recommendations are therefore aimed at the collaborative and committed engagement of a cross-section of stakeholders, including Member States, women's rights actors, donors, implementing agencies and civil society. However, it is important to note that these recommendations focus on only a small selection of perceived cross-cutting issues, which surfaced most strongly through this report's primary data collection. As such, broader change and long-term impact must be conceptualised as part of a much bigger, ongoing, longer-term process of enquiry and action.

Strengthen local ownership

- Where NAP processes are jointly called for by both government and civil society actors, efforts should be made by **Member States, donors and partners** to replicate growing best practice around inclusive and participatory design and development processes and match implementation with government buy-in and resources. The development of Local Action Plans may also offer opportunities for the localisation of NAP delivery and the translation of international and national level dialogue into tangible local priorities and action.



- **Donors, Member States and partners** should support the production of locally-validated WPS material, translated into Arabic, French and local languages. Those working in this field should consider the accessibility and dissemination of WPS products and content in their intervention designs, working in collaboration with **gender experts from the region** to help convey difficult concepts in a locally-accessible manner.
- **National and international actors** should facilitate the development of both practical and innovative platforms to support the circulation and cross-fertilisation of WPS related knowledge-sharing, including both virtual and physical hubs. The diaspora community may also be key ally in these processes where local activism is difficult - helping to build connections and networking opportunities between local, national and regional actors.
- There may be opportunities for **donors and implementing agencies** to more effectively link and fund synergies between both the CEDAW and WPS frameworks, in contexts where women and civil society actors are keen to build these connections. This also provides an additional mechanism through which to hold **Member States** to account.

Increase state accountability and capacity

- **Member States** should call for, and **donors and implementing agencies** should support, targeted efforts to develop understanding and buy-in of the WPS agenda across government institutions. **Member States** should also identify and support WPS champions to help push this work forward within state structures and mainstream the agenda's relevance across departments and teams.
- Where there is regular reporting requirements to the Security Council or other UN bodies, there is an opportunity for both **Member States** and **civil society actors** to ensure references are consistently made to relevant WPS recommendations, and that links between these mechanisms are made explicit.
- Government and civil society should be supported to document WPS-related violations, including supporting networking and partnering opportunities with human rights and legal bodies to adopt an evidence-based approach to documenting violations, as well as strengthening the safeguarding elements of this work, including encryption and parallel psycho-social services.

- **Donor support** to Member States, including bilateral government relationships should consider the extent to which Member States have effectively delivered against WPS commitments. Donor governments providing security assistance should ensure that these initiatives support WPS objectives with regard to, for example, providing training for security services that is gender sensitive.

Enhance women's influence on political decision-making

- The **international community** should continue to lobby for the engagement of women in both track 1 and 2 diplomacy processes as part of a coherent strategy of prioritised support to women's participation in political and peace processes in the region. Negotiating parties should be supported with specialized training, logistical support, and by adding delegate seats reserved for women. These efforts may also be well-supported by targeted deployments of women rights activists as Special Envoys and other senior representatives in situations of armed conflict within the **UN system**.
- Aspiring women leaders should be connected to mentorship opportunities with women operating across both government and civil society spaces, who can offer insight and technical guidance on both the formal and informal skills required to successfully manoeuvre within these political spaces.
- **Member-States** should work to lobby/support the appointment of women (including from affected communities) into leadership positions within

the security sector and humanitarian system. The engagement of humanitarian actors such as Humanitarian Coordinators within the **UN** also have a role to play in championing and supporting women leaders and working with women to identify priorities across humanitarian response plans.

Promote transformative and flexible donor approaches

- **Donors** should pursue more transformational, long-term strategic work on gender justice. This includes channelling direct multi-year funding to women-led organisations and ensuring that reporting mechanisms are simple and flexible. There should also be concerted shifts away from forcing consensus across organisations. These efforts will help to both protect and support the continuation of feminist dialogue and movement-building, which is an essential component of WPS implementation in the region.
- **Member States and donors** should commission more research to help plug significant data gaps, including across 'hidden' WPS related issues such as trauma and intersectionality, and the experiences of marginalised and under-represented groups. The results of this work should be translated into Arabic and local languages to help inform conceptually more coherent, contextualised and refined understanding of WPS at the country level. As part of these processes there is also a need to strengthen and sharpen tools to undertake gender and conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive and ethical data collection.

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INTRODUCTION

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 31 October 2000, recognising, for the first time, the disproportionate and unique impact of conflict on women, and their under-valued contributions as active agents in peace, security and recovery. While states, international actors and women's rights activists have heralded its passage, the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (and the seven subsequent WPS focused resolutions⁷), has varied considerably across regions and countries. The Arab states region, with its diverse portfolio of countries and exceptionally complex and multifaceted operating context, is no exception.

The Global Study⁸, a landmark report coordinated by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), presented the first comprehensive assessment of implementation against UNSCR 1325 since its adoption in 2000. Building on the findings presented in this report, consolidating available published evidence, and drawing on the voices of a range of actors working on the implementation of the WPS agenda across the Arab states region⁹, this report provides:

- An overview of key status updates, drawing on an up-to-date compilation of current evidence against a selection of WPS themes (**section 2**);
- A discussion of challenges and opportunities to implementing the WPS agenda in the Arab states region, drawing on the voices of implementing stakeholders, including civil society actors, donors, and former and current government officials (**section 3**);
- An overview of key recommendations, aimed at the collaborative and committed engagement of a cross-section of stakeholders, including Member States, donors, implementing agencies and civil society, in support of strategic and long-term change and impact (**section 4**).

1.

PROGRESS AGAINST IMPLEMENTATION—AN OVERVIEW OF EVIDENCE

Changes across the region have offered many tangible opportunities for women to engage in political and public life and provided openings for women’s activism and reform. In addition, there have been key legislative and policy developments in the prevention and protection of violence against women and girls (VAWG), and high rates of education and health spending in a selection of countries. However, the (often contradictory) status of women’s rights, and the inconsistent nature of WPS implementation across the region is increasingly acknowledged by practitioners and academics¹⁰, and women and girls continue to be exposed to escalating and new risks as conflict intensifies and inequality deepens.¹¹ The space for civil society and rights-based actors continues to be restricted across many countries in the region.¹² The deeply entrenched and discriminatory sociocultural and gender norms further inhibit the participation of women in public and private spaces, and shape expectations around women’s behaviour.¹³

The 4 pillars of UNSCR 1325

	Description
Protection	Promote and support women’s active and meaningful participation in all peace processes as well as their representation in formal and informal decision-making at all levels; improve partnership and networking with local and international women’s rights groups and organizations; recruit and appoint women to senior positions in the United Nations, including Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, and in peacekeeping forces, including military, police and civilian personnel.
Participation	Strengthen and amplify efforts to secure the safety, physical or mental health, well-being, economic security and/or dignity of women and girls; promote and safeguard human rights of women and mainstream a gender perspective into the legal and institutional reforms.
Prevention	Mainstream a gender perspective into all conflict prevention activities and strategies; develop effective gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms and institutions, and strengthen efforts to prevent violence against women, including various forms of gender-based violence.
Relief & Recovery	Promote women’s equal access to aid distribution mechanisms and services, including those dealing with the specific needs of women and girls in all relief recovery efforts.

The following section offers an overview of key status updates related to the implementation of the WPS agenda across the region, drawing primarily on a review of published literature. The achievements drawn on were and continue to be supported by a range of government and non-government partners – national and international. Listing all would require an extensive list, which could never be exhaustive. It is worth reiterating that this agenda is delivered on by a large range of governments, inter-governmental bodies including the League of Arab States and the Arab Women’s Organisation, UN agencies (including UN Women, UN missions and special envoy teams (from the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping), the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Refugee Agency, the United Nations Children’s Agency, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and others), international organisations (including the European Feminist Initiative, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Kvinna till Kvinna, Oxfam, Care International, the International Civil Society Action Network, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, and many others), regional bodies including Karama and the Centre of Arab Woman for Training and Research (CAWTAR), national organisations (which are unfortunately too many to list given all of the countries in the region), individuals and alliances.

The four pillars of UNSCR 1325 (Protection, Participation, Prevention and Relief and Recovery) are expansive and cross-cutting. This review has focused on a selection of sub-thematic areas (VAWG, political representation and dialogue, security and peacekeeping and humanitarian action), and does not commit to providing a comprehensive overview across the full scope of the agenda. The section is organised across the following categories:

- Political Representation and Dialogue: Participation
- Security and Peacekeeping: Prevention
- Humanitarian Action: Relief & Recovery

- Building Political Buy-In and Recognition: Member States and Civil Society Engagement
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG): Protection

1.1 Building Political Buy-In and Recognition: Member States and Civil Society Engagement

1.1.1 WPS National Action Plans (NAPs)

There has been a steady increase in the visibility of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda across the Arab states region, which can be most visibly seen through the design and adoption of WPS National Action Plans (NAPs). These efforts respond directly to UNSCR 1889 (2009), which called for steps to improve the implementation of UNSCR 1325, laying the foundation for Member States to take forward the development of NAPs as the primary WPS accountability tool. As global and regional evidence attests, NAPs can help countries to identify priorities, allocate resources, and “create the mechanisms needed to respond appropriately to exacerbated conflict or high-risk situations for women and girls in post-conflict settings”.¹⁴

Five WPS NAPs have been developed in the region: Iraq (2014 and an emergency Special Contingency Plan in 2015), Palestine (2017), Jordan (2018) and Tunisia (2018), with efforts underway across several other countries in the region, including Lebanon. In 2015 a Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 was also developed by the League of Arab States, and efforts to ensure biennial monitoring of implementation are underway. In some contexts, NAP development processes have stalled, including in Libya where NAP dialogue was brought to an abrupt end by the July 2014 confrontations in Tripoli.¹⁵ There have also been interesting and progressive developments attached to the localisation of NAP processes in the region. In Iraq, a local plan has been developed in Diyala (eastern Iraq), where there has been specific engagement with women who are internally displaced and returnees, and civil society actors have been directly engaging with local councils, governorates authorities, the police and the army. There are also plans to develop NAPs for the ‘heated areas’ such as Al-Anbar, Ninawa, and Kirkuk.¹⁶

While the initial drive and impetus to start the NAP development process in each country is not concretely known (or agreed upon), there appears to have been a number of shared experiences across countries, including a combination of active and politically connected individuals within a lead government agency (empowered to lead the process), and a process of building on/working off the back of momentum generated from a strategic political 'moment' (e.g. public presidential endorsement, political campaign periods). In addition, each of the four countries with adopted NAPs put in place mechanisms (whether committees, working groups etc.) to encourage the participation of, and collaboration between government agencies and civil society – at least in the design phases. The Jordan NAP is particularly notable for its participatory approach, in which the first year of development was spent undertaking nation-wide consultations. Finally, each country had access to resources (both technical and financial) primarily through UN Women and/

or another external donor, which enabled them to start the design and consultative process.

While the passing of NAPs represents an important achievement in itself, their implementation in the region has “proven difficult, largely due to insufficient political will, a dearth of governmental leadership and buy-in, and a lack of necessary and targeted resources”, as discussed further under the challenges section of this report.¹⁷ This is in spite of the fact that national women’s machineries within government structures across the region have played a key role in supporting the implementation of NAPs and broader WPS related activities – particularly in Jordan, Tunisia, Iraq and Palestine.¹⁸ However, as evidence highlights, the “effectiveness of national machineries is entwined with the strength and legitimacy of state institutions that enact these rights and uphold the rule of law. Therefore, if overall state institutions are weak, then so will be gender machineries”.¹⁹



Government of Jordan and UN Women security sector consultation for the JONAP 1325, Jordan.
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BOX 1

WPS National Action Plans (NAPs) in the region²⁰

IRAQ NAPs (2014 – 2018)

- After an initial intervention supported by the European Feminist Initiative, the process was led by the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) with cooperation between the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence in Baghdad and the Ministry of Interior and Women's High Council in Kurdistan and the Iraqi NAP1325 Initiative (I-NAP1325 Initiative).
- The Iraq NAPs were adopted as part of the National Strategy for Advancing Women that was developed by the Women's Affairs Ministry and approved in 2013 following pressure from civil society actors.
- A Cross-Sector Task Force (CSTF) established to work on developing the plan, consisting of 22 representatives of ministries and institutions in Iraq and KRI including state actors, parliamentarians, legislators, and security forces, in addition to civil society actors including women's rights organisations and representatives from the I-NAP1325 Initiative and the Iraqi Network for 1325 UNSCR.
- ISIL's take over in 2014 and the mass displacements and violations against women led to the development of a Special Contingency Plan for UNSCR 1325 launched in 2015.

PALESTINE NAP (2017 – 2019)

- Developed through a national effort led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs as the head of the Higher National Committee for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, which includes representation of civil society organisations – and supported by UN Women.
- Integrates the directions of the WPS Advocacy Strategy, which was developed by the National Coalition for Implementing UNSCR 1325 in 2015.
- The Women's Coalition for UN Resolution 1325 was established and led by the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) with the participation of local NGOs. However, it is unclear if civil society has a formal role in monitoring NAP implementation.

JORDAN NAP (2018 – 2021)

- Led by the Jordanian National Commission for Women and the National Coalition on UNSCR 1325, which has over 60 representatives from government ministries, civil society organisations, security sector and international partners – and supported by UN Women.
- At the governorate level, seven consultative dialogues were held with diverse stakeholders, including women, men, youth, local officials, religious leaders, police, and civil society).
- A national budget allocation is included in the goals of the NAP.
- The NAP includes a pillar on preventing violent extremism.

TUNISIAN NAP (2018 – 2020)

- Led by Ministry of Women, Family and Children, with support from UN Women. The Ministry created a steering committee and 4 technical committees composed of 12 key ministries representatives and 10 CSOs representatives. The plan was adopted in February 2018 and was approved by the Cabinet on August 8, 2018.
- The NAP focuses on five components namely prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery and advocacy and communications.
- It was developed through broad consultation, and engagement with representatives of civil society (including through a large consultation in Tunis that brought together more than 100 civil society participants).
- The NAP includes language and action on preventing violent extremism.

1.1.2 WPS focused civil society activism and organising

UNSCR 1325 has been leveraged by civil society actors in specific ways and has helped revitalise organising efforts of national actors around women's rights, peace and security. For example, in Palestine, activists have used the framework as a means to hold the State of Israel accountable for violence perpetrated through its military occupation, as evidenced by the work of organisations such as MIFTAH (2015) and YWCA-Palestine (2015). Similarly, in Syria, Yemen and Libya activists are organising around UNSCR 1325 as a platform to influence constitutional drafting processes.

Across a selection of countries, specific networks have been established to work on UNSCR 1325. Some of these platforms have played a lead role in the development of WPS NAPs and were formed in response to the process of NAP development. Others have worked more broadly to increase awareness of the agenda and programming in WPS related areas, including through workshops consultations, government lobbying, international advocacy and participation in monitoring and implementation bodies. For example, in Iraq the Alliance for the implementation of the National Action Plan for 1325 (established in 2008) and the Iraqi Network for UNSCR 1325 (established in 2010) were among the leading networks to work on 1325, both comprised of several member organisations. In Palestine, the 1325 Network (established in 2010) by the General Union of Palestinian Women, represents a national network for the advancement of UNSCR 1325, while the Ministry of Women's Affairs has established a UNSCR 1325 National Committee. In Libya, the 1325 Network in Libya is a network of CSOs and independent activists working on promoting women in peace and security processes and educating the government(s) on the necessity of developing a WPS NAP.

Regional networks such as Karama also work across a number of countries in the region to scale up communities' understanding of women's rights (advocacy) and influence (lobby) governments, policymakers and lawmakers for reforms, leveraging international human rights mechanisms, along with actors such as the Centre of Arab Woman for Training and Research (CAWTAR).

1.2 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG): Protection

1.2.1 Conflict-related sexual violence and VAWG in conflict

There are significant evidence gaps to illustrate the true scale and impact of VAWG across the region. However, there has been some increased interest and documentation of certain types of VAWG across the international and donor community, namely "conflict-related sexual violence".²¹ For example, efforts such as the signing of an agreement of cooperation on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence in Iraq (the "Joint Communiqué") between the UN and government of Iraq in 2016 reflect steps towards notionally more "structured collaboration" across the international community in support of more comprehensive responses.²² In addition, following the creation of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, in 2013 (UNSCR 2106), the Security Council requested annual reporting on the implementation of its directives under resolutions 1820 (2008), UNSCR 1888 (2009) and UNSCR 1960 (2010).

Data and analysis from countries including Iraq, Jordan (related to the refugee population), Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen are captured in regular reporting to the Security Council, and data from 2017 highlights that sexual violence in these contexts has continued to be used as a tactic of war. This includes widespread strategies mass rapes committed by several parties connected to armed conflict, and often in conjunction with other crimes, including forced displacement and arbitrary detention.²³ The 'strategic' nature of this violence is said to be evident, in the "selective targeting of victims from opposing ethnic, religious or political groups, mirroring the fault lines of the wider conflict or crisis".²⁴

Evidence also reveals a systematic rise in sexual violence against girls and women in Iraq during ISIL's Caliphate, especially among the Christian and Yazidis aged between 8 and 35.²⁵ The UN's former Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura²⁶ noted that ISIL institutionalised sexual violence within their ideology, most visibly in Iraq and Syria.²⁷ A more

recent report from UN Women (2018) demonstrates that the targeted use of gendered language by ISIL reinforced discriminatory messages of men's power and dominance over women, and sought to legitimise the use of sexual violence.²⁸ However, this is an issue that extends beyond territories previously under ISIL control; in Libya and in other countries, sexual violence perpetrated by armed groups, including those pursuing extremist ideologies, is a source of serious concern.²⁹

While the increased recognition of the scale and veracity of conflict-related sexual violence in the region marks an important step across the international community, an over-focus on some forms of VAWG over others = can obscure the proliferation of broader forms of VAWG, and the impact of conflict dynamics on this violence. For example, evidence shows that levels of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV) is the most prevalent form of VAWG in the region, estimated at 37%.³⁰ Existing patterns of violence, including IPV, early marriage, sexual harassment, and trafficking also often intensify during conflict. New forms and pathways of violence have also emerged in fragile or conflict-affected parts of the region, including forced and 'temporary' marriages to fighters, political detention, and rape and torture by state actors, which form part of the political economy of conflict in these settings.³¹

In Syria, increased rates of IPV have been connected to the disruption of social roles as a result of conflict. Both men and women have reported that IPV is 'understandable' given the external pressures and the stress that husbands face in being unable to fulfil culturally-expected roles as household providers.³² In a UN Women report on the status of Syrian refugee women across Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, VAWG features prominently, with high rates of reported VAWG and agreement that VAWG is increasing within refugee communities. Nearly half of the women interviewed in Lebanon (45%) reported that VAWG was a problem in the Syrian refugee community, with 37% reporting that it has increased since the start of the Syria crisis. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), almost half of women interviewed (47%) stated that VAWG was an issue within their communities, with an additional 12% stating that it was a major issue; one-fifth of women (19%) said that VAWG has increased since the onset of the Syria crisis.

Conflict and insecurity are also driving particular increases in child marriage among communities from Syria, Libya and Yemen. A recent study of 2,400 Syrian refugee women and girls living in Western Bekaa in Lebanon found that 24 % of girls surveyed between the ages 15 and 17 were already married compared to prior to the crisis in Syria when only 13 % of girls were married before age 18.³³ Another study on women Syrian refugees in Lebanon emphasised that overcrowding and a limited access to facilities contributed to VAWG in refugee communities.³⁴

1.2.2 Violence against women's rights defenders

Evidence highlights the specific vulnerabilities of human rights defenders, who still face many risks, including killing and assassinations, abductions, death threats, severe beatings and torture, arbitrary arrests, harassment and unfair trials despite the adoption of Resolution 53/144 in 1999 by the UN General Assembly.³⁵ In 2012, 51 urgent appeals by Front Line Defenders (the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders) were made for human rights defenders in 14 countries across the Arab states region.³⁶ The extent of impunity across the region, and the specific threats this poses to the rights of women are noted in the assassination of prominent women human rights defenders such as Salwa Bugaighis and Intissar al-Hassaeri in Libya³⁷, and the recent arrest of Samar Badawi in Saudi Arabia.³⁸ In Iraq, between 2003 and 2013, 28 female journalists were assassinated.³⁹ And more recently, women of influence are being targeted for assassination in Iraq.⁴⁰

1.2.3 Legislative developments

Discriminatory laws and policies help to drive VAWG by contributing to public understanding of what is socially acceptable (or unacceptable).⁴¹ As such, positive and growing trends in the region to combat VAWG through standalone legislation or penal code reform represent important and progressive gains in efforts to address impunity and promote accountability for VAWG, including abolishing so-called 'marry your rapist' and domestic violence laws (see Box 2). More than half of Arab states have set 18 or higher as the minimum age for marriage for girls; however, as in most countries around the world this may be undermined by the fact that girls under 18 can be married with parental (or judicial) consent.

A selection of countries have an absolute minimum age for marriage (see Box 2).

In countries affected by conflict, the impact of legislative reform is minimised or entirely undermined by the ongoing deterioration of the security context and rule of law. In countries suffering from conflict, large territories fall out of the ruling government's control, leaving the population under parallel, ad-hoc basic legislative systems. Rule of law bodies in areas of government control are often severely diminished and negatively impacted by conflict. In addition, local interpretations of customary law, in countries such as Yemen and reversions to 'tribal' law (inflected by Sharia) in countries such as Libya, may not be consistent with legislative prohibitions, with many marriages of minors obscured from official statistics because they are conducted according to customary norms.⁴² As such, progress made at the legislative and policy level must be matched by an equal focus on reparations, services, and comprehensive

redress for survivors, which have remained limited and under-funded across the region.⁴³

In related terms, most countries in the region have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), however, the obligations established by CEDAW have yet to be translated into comprehensive legislation or changes in social norms across most countries in the region.⁴⁴ There is also an emerging trend of activists using General Recommendation 30 in their CEDAW shadow reports, such as in Yemen, Syria and Palestine, which have a long history of women's organisation, and have successfully engaged with CEDAW since its national ratification in 2003 (Syria), Yemen (2008), and 2015 (Palestine). Tunisia was the first country in the region to withdraw all its reservations to CEDAW. The decision was announced in 2011 and took effect in April 2014. The other Arab states without reservations to CEDAW are, Morocco and Palestine.



UN Women beneficiary, Basirma Camp, Kurdistan, Iraq. ©Christopher Herwig. UN Women.

BOX 2

VAWG related policy and legislation

- Palestine (in 2018), Lebanon (in 2017), Jordan (in 2017), and Tunisia (in 2017) have all abolished so-called ‘marry your rapist’ laws, following Morocco (2014) and Egypt (1999). Six states in the region still have this provision (Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, and Syria).⁴⁵
- Morocco has recently adopted a new domestic violence law, which includes positive provisions, such as a definition of violence against women to mean “any act based on gender discrimination that entails physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm to a woman.” However, it “does not provide a definition of domestic violence and does not explicitly criminalize marital rape”.⁴⁶ In 2011, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) introduced a law on domestic violence, and Article 2 defines child marriage as an act of domestic violence.⁴⁷ In 2015 Iraq developed a draft Anti-Domestic Violence law, but further amendments have been called for in line with international standards and best practice.⁴⁸
- In 2016, Bahrain’s parliament proposed a full repeal of the law that allows rapists to escape punishment by marrying their victims, but the Cabinet rejected the proposal. Parliament is considering a new proposal in which the exemption will now be allowed in cases of gang rape.⁴⁹
- In April 2018, a member of the Iraqi Parliament, Intisar al-Jubory, submitted a proposal, with support of other MPs, to repeal Article 398 of the Iraqi penal code. This article voids all legal procedures if the offender marries the victim.⁵⁰
- Countries with an absolute minimum age for marriage, include Egypt at 18 years, although no judicial exceptions are allowed.⁵¹ In Iraq, there is an absolute minimum age of 15 years in the Kurdistan region this is 16 years.⁵² Countries with a minimum legal age less than 18 years for women, but where parental/ judicial consent imposes no legal age, include Bahrain⁵³, Palestine⁵⁴, Qatar⁵⁵, Syria.⁵⁶ Countries with a minimum legal age of 18 years or over, for women but where parental/ judicial consent imposes no legal age include Algeria⁵⁷, Jordan⁵⁸, Libya⁵⁹, Morocco⁶⁰, Oman⁶¹, and Tunisia⁶². Countries with no minimum legal age for marriage, include Lebanon⁶³, Saudi Arabia⁶⁴ and Yemen⁶⁵.

1.2.4 Accountability mechanisms and frameworks

There has been an increase in mechanisms to monitor forms of VAWG and other human rights violations, including UN-mandated CoI and Fact-Finding Missions. Each COI and fact-finding mission deployed within the region since 2000 has included a sexual and gender-based violence investigator, with the objective of increasing attention to – and the reporting of – incidents of sexual and gender-based violence. As a result of this and extensive advocacy by civil society actors, the UN CoI on Syria recently dedicated a thematic report on VAWG, which found that parties to the conflict, have perpetrated violations and abuses amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity including rape, sexual violence, murder and torture.⁶⁶ It has also been documented that sexual violence appears to have been most frequent at times when the Government of Syria was at its most fragile

(2011-2014) and in areas it was most afraid to lose.⁶⁷ Transitional justice structures such as the Truth and Dignity Commission (established in 2014) in Tunisia⁶⁸ have also empowered many women to “seek legal remedies and public recognition” of VAWG related crimes⁶⁹.

However, overall accountability remains limited. This is for a range of complex reasons that include constraints of existing national legal systems to prosecute sexual violence in conflict, lack of political will and interest, social stigma associated with reporting crimes, costs related to prosecution, issues of physical access and challenges around adequate civil documentation (in contexts where those affected may be displaced populations).⁷⁰ Impunity may also be driven by a lack of representation of women within the judiciary. Overall the proportion of female judges across the region remains low, with limited data available; only a handful of countries report sex-disaggregated data in the composition

of the judiciary, which is based on data reported to the OECD in 2014.⁷¹ Women practicing as judges are predominantly found sitting on lower-level courts, typically those handling family matters.⁷²

1.3 Political representation and dialogue: Participation

1.3.1 Women's representation in government structures

There have been increases in women's parliamentary representation across the region, but figures are still lower than the global average (18% compared to 23.3%⁷³). Of note, in 2013, 30 women were appointed to Saudi Arabia's Shura Council (advisory body) for the first time, representing 20% of seats by 2016. Algeria has also undergone important electoral reforms, including the introduction of a gender quota in 2012, which raised the percentage of women MPs to 32% in 2013, a 6.2% increase. In the 2017 elections, however, this went down to 25.8%.⁷⁴ The percentage of female MPs has more than

doubled in Bahrain (from 3% to 8%) and doubled in Morocco (from 11% to 21%).⁷⁵ Numbers of women parliamentarians have also been sustained in some conflict-affected countries in the region; following Iraq's 2018 elections, 25.53% of women have seats in Iraq's parliament⁷⁶ - a minor increase since the 2010 elections (25.23%).

The introduction of parliamentary gender quotas by 14 Arab countries⁷⁷ has contributed, in part, to these improved numbers. However, as global evidence highlights, gender quotas in and of themselves do not guarantee women's meaningful influence, or necessarily indicate women's political power or authority in the region. Manipulation of women's participation for the purposes of party politics or military purposes continues to alienate women from political activities that they do not consider to be democratic or representative.⁷⁸ Further, where gender quotas are badly designed, they can also be subverted by power-holders to extend their own control by selecting loyal or 'proxy' women to fulfil these positions.⁷⁹



Syrian refugees performing at the New London Theatre in the new Queens of Syria Tour 2016 supported by UN Women. ©UN Women/Queen of Syria tour.

TABLE 1
Electoral quotas for women⁸⁰

Country	Single/lower house	Upper house	Local councils
Algeria	Reserved seats	No quota	Reserved seats
Bahrain	No quota	–	No quota
Comoros	No quota	–	No quota
Djibouti	Reserved seats	–	No quota
Egypt	Legislated	–	Reserved seats
Iraq	Reserved seats	–	Reserved seats
Jordan	Reserved seats	No quota	Reserved seats
Kuwait	No quota	–	No quota
Lebanon	No quota	–	No quota
Libya	Legislated	–	Reserved seats
Mauritania	Legislated Candidate Quotas	Legislated Candidate Quotas	Reserved seats
Morocco	Reserved seats	No quota	Reserved seats
Oman	No quota	No quota	No quota
Palestine	Legislated Candidate Quotas	–	Reserved seats
Qatar	No quota	–	No quota
Saudi Arabia	Reserved seats	–	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Syrian Arab Republic	No quota	–	No quota
Tunisia	Legislated Candidate Quotas	–	Electoral law
United Arab Emirates	No quota	–	–
Yemen	No quota	–	–

There continue to be particular evidence gaps around women's presence in local councils, and where data is available, estimates of women's representation in these bodies are low.⁸¹ There are notable exceptions, such as Tunisia where women make up 47% of local council positions⁸² and northern Syria, where in Kurdish-controlled areas a power-sharing system requires a female counterpart in all positions at all levels of government along-side a 40% quota of women in all governmental institutions and bodies.⁸³ There are also limited number of women ministers in the region; of those where data is available, the United Arab Emirates has the highest representation (26.7%), followed by Algeria (13.3%), Morocco (13%), Egypt (11.8%), Iraq (10.5%), Jordan (7.1%), Qatar (6.3%), Syria (6.1%), Yemen (5.4%), Bahrain (4.5%), and Lebanon (3.4%)⁸⁴. No women are represented as Heads of State or Speakers in parliament and, where women are represented as ministers, they are often given 'soft' ministries, considered to be less strategically important.⁸⁵

Overall, while there have been increases in women's political representation, the available evidence supports the notion that overwhelmingly, both women's access to, and influence within, the formal government space remains hindered by a number of interacting factors, including: the prescriptive nature of exclusionary and discriminatory social and cultural norms that shape expectations about women and men in power, conservative interpretations of religion and a rejection of feminism, and systemic legislative and institutional barriers, which implicate women's ability to participate in public and political life.⁸⁶

1.3.2 Women's engagement in constitution-building and peace and stabilisation processes

While gains across women's formal representation within the political sphere have been less pronounced in countries affected by armed conflict in the region, peace agreements and constitutional reform processes offer "rare opportunities to renegotiate more power and rights in favour of

women".⁸⁷ Participatory approaches have come to the forefront of constitution making in recent years, in terms of their potential to foster legitimacy and national ownership, as well as supporting the contributions and inclusion of diverse groups, particularly in deeply divided societies. Yet, women are consistently unrepresented, averaging just 19% seats in constituent assemblies in countries experiencing conflict, unrest, or political transition.⁸⁸ This is in spite of the fact that where women have been well represented, the resulting draft constitutions have introduced strong measures to improve women's representation.⁸⁹

However there are a number of notable successes across the region that are influencing regional practices. In Tunisia's constitution-building process, women were able to secure 31% of seats in the constitution-making body, following a combination of dedicated civic organising, timely advocacy, and support from male allies. As a result, women were able to ensure the inclusion of significant provisions advancing their representation in elected bodies, eradicating VAWG and guaranteeing equality of opportunities between women and men across a number of different areas.⁹⁰ Similarly, women played a key role in Yemen's National Dialogue process (with 30% representation) and shaped various gender equitable outcomes, including a quota system of 30% for women, 20% for youth, and 50% for Southerners, in addition to raising the legal age of marriage.

The Global Study⁹¹ attributes this success to a range of factors including the role of the UN mediator (Jamal Benomar), the design of the rules and structures of the political dialogue, and, critically, pressure from women's national movements and international actors. However, commitments made in the Yemeni context have been destabilised with the onset of conflict. As discussed further below, recent evidence⁹² highlights that while the dialogue process achieved notionally positive outcomes, failures and challenges with the process suggest that these gains would not necessarily have been realised.

TABLE 2
Women's Political Representation in Yemen⁹³

Before the war	Percentage
Signature of GCC Peace Agreement (2011) (1 woman)*	10%
Reconciliation Government 2012-2014 (3 women)**	8%
Competency Government 2014 – 2015 (3 women)**	7%
Presidential Authority of the National Dialogue Conference (1 woman)***	11%
National Dialogue Preparatory Committee (6 women)***	19%
National Dialogue Conference (161 women)***	28%
NDC Consensus Committee (2 women)***	33%
Chairing Thematic Working Groups at NDC (3 women)***	33%
NDC Standards and Discipline Committee (2 women)***	28%
NDC Implementation Monitoring and Supervisory Authority (22 women)***	26%
Constitution Drafting Committee (4 women)**	23%
Federal Regions Committee (2 women)**	9%
Parliament 2003-2014 (1 woman)**	0.3%
Local Councils 2006 – currently (38 women)**	0.5%
Since the conflict	
Bin Daghr Government 2015 – currently (2 women)**	6.8%
Negotiations held in Kuwait (3 women)*	10%

Data available in this table is drawn from:

*Media reports

**Official Source/Decrees

***NDC website

A growing body of evidence has also illustrated that women's participation in political dialogue contributes to the conclusion of talks and the implementation and durability of peace agreements;⁹⁴ when women are included in these processes there is a 20% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 2 years, and a 35% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting a minimum of 15 years.⁹⁵ However, women continue to be under-represented in political dialogues: between 1992 and 2011 women made up only 2%

of chief mediators, 4% of witnesses and signatories, and 9% of negotiators in peace processes globally.⁹⁶ In the region, no woman has served as a UN-appointed mediator.⁹⁷ That said, women are now leading important UN presences across the region, including in Iraq and Yemen.

There are few examples of women in chief negotiation roles, and as members of delegations, women continue to be greatly under-represented in the region. In Yemen, before the conflict erupted, President Hadi sent a mediation delegation

to Saada to mitigate further escalations of the conflict. The mediation delegation included one woman (Nabila Alzubair) who was Head of the Saada working group during the national dialogue.⁹⁸ In Libya only one woman was represented at the National Transitional Council (NTC), which served as the de facto Government of Libya for a period during and after the Libyan Civil War (2011-2012).⁹⁹ Current low levels of women's participation continue to be observed in the current Syrian and Yemeni peace processes. At the end of 2016, women represented 20% of the formal delegations for both the government and opposition in the Syria UN-led Geneva process, which reduced to 15% in 2017.¹⁰⁰ Women were completely absent from the Astana process. In Yemen, as at 2017, only 3 women were represented in negotiations held in Kuwait (see Box 4 for further details).

This is in spite of targeted efforts to increase women's representation in Track 1 peacemaking in the region. Where direct representation has not been achieved, women's rights actors have taken to developing parallel dialogue structures in efforts to influence peacemaking. In Yemen, UN Women supported women from political parties, media, and civil society to come together to form the Yemen Women's Pact for Peace and Security (the Pact) in order to promote an alliance of women's rights actors calling for an end to war and inclusive political dialogues (September 2015). The Pact was able to conduct consultation meetings with women's groups inside Sana'a, Yemen and Amman on different topics, ranging from local governance to security management, de-escalation and malnutrition. A selection of women from the Pact were also able to attend peace talks mediated by the UN in Kuwait to present common messages to the warring parties.¹⁰¹ In one of the recent rounds of Yemen consultations (Geneva, 2018) the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) formed a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for women, which sought to influence the design and substance of the process.

Another example relates to the UN Women-formed and DPA managed Syrian Women's Advisory Board (WAB), an advisory body to the UN Special Envoy on Syria established in 2016. The WAB was created as a mechanism of support to women's participation in the peace process, following significant attempts by the UN, Syrian women's rights defenders, women politicians and national and international. Similar to the WAB is the Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) to the Higher Negotiations Committee¹⁰² (Syria opposition body). It was formed in 2015 to influence the opposition's positions and delegations, and to call for a quota of 25% women in all opposition delegations. The Civil Society Support Room was also established in 2016 by DPA as a body to promote broader engagement in the political process.

While there is limited documented analysis regarding the quality and nature of women's participation in both the Syria and Yemeni processes, critics argue that the selection of women across these different mechanisms has lacked transparency. They also argue that these entities offer questionable and limited degrees of influence over the formal peacemaking negotiations, and that they have significant levels of disconnect with actors on the ground.¹⁰³

In related terms, only 26.8% (32 out of 119) of peace agreements in the region have gendered provisions (see Box 5) – which remains lower than the current global average of 50%. Only two agreements¹⁰⁴ – Bahrain and Yemen – make provisions or address violence against women; two agreements – Syria and Yemen – make special provision for women and children affected by conflict. Twelve out of the 32 agreements address women's political representation and participation, with Iraq, Libya and Yemen defining quotas for women's public representation in official bodies.¹⁰⁵ After consistent increases between 2010 and 2015, the percentage of signed peace agreements containing gender-specific provisions globally declined in 2016; only half of the six signed agreements contained such provisions, as compared with 70% in 2015¹⁰⁶.

BOX 3

Gendered dimensions of peace agreements

- The Iraq and Yemen agreements in 2010 and 2011 did not include any women in mediation, or witnessing¹⁰⁷, and only the 2011 Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) agreement had one female signatory.¹⁰⁸
- Only 32 out of 119 peace agreements in the Middle East and North Africa region have gendered provisions according to the University of Edinburgh's Peace Agreements Database.¹⁰⁹
- Only 2 agreements¹¹⁰ – Bahrain and Yemen - make provisions or address violence against women. 2 agreements – Syria and Yemen - make special provision for women and children affected by conflict.
- 12 out of the 32 agreements address women's political representation and participation, with Iraq and Yemen defining quotas for women's public representation in official bodies.¹¹¹
- 5 agreements¹¹² make reference to the role of women in peacebuilding, reconstruction and conflict resolution, including in Libya, Palestine and Yemen.

1.4 Security and peacekeeping: Prevention

1.4.1 Women's representation within the security sector

There is evidence and growing recognition that women's presence in the security sector can contribute to lower rates of misconduct, improper use of force, and inappropriate use of weapons.¹¹³ It is also increasingly acknowledged that integrating gender equality principles more comprehensively across processes of security sector reform (SSR) can enhance local ownership, effective service delivery and oversight and accountability.¹¹⁴ Progress in these areas is notable in a selection of countries across the region, though quantitative data remains limited, and overall numbers remain modest. In Lebanon, the General Security (GS) Directorate was the first agency to recruit women in 1974, and during this time several women rose through its ranks to become generals, the highest rank for women in the region.¹¹⁵ In addition, there are increasing numbers of women represented within the municipal police.¹¹⁶ And since 2012, the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) have supported the enrolment of women within the ISF and have taken proactive measures to train ISF soldiers on how to properly respond to reported cases of VAWG.¹¹⁷

In Palestine, the Civil Police force is keen to address women's rights and apply a gendered lens to their work, as evidenced by gender trainings at the Police

Academy and the three-year Police Gender Strategy launched in 2016. This is a significant development considering the limited visibility of gender considerations within military manuals, national security policy frameworks, codes of conduct and standard operating procedures/protocols of national security forces across the region. Further, the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) Gender Unit was established in 2011, along with a Gender Steering Committee in 2013, composed of the deputy's heads of key PCP departments (Ministry of Interior & Palestinian Civil Police, 2016). There have also been key gains in women represented within the Presidential Guard. In Yemen, the conflict has given an opportunity for women to work in state security sector noting an increase in demand for these services by the state, including retirees.¹¹⁸

Iraq has also witnessed modest but important gains around women's representation within the police, with support from both the government and donor community. The Directorate of Police Affairs within Iraq's Ministry of Interior has confirmed that women now account for approximately 2% of the total police force, and International Organisation for Migration (IOM) have been working to strengthen the specific role of women in local community policing.¹¹⁹ In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) female troops of the Peshmerga contributed to the military campaign to liberate areas from ISIL control¹²⁰, and important efforts are ongoing to increase the number of women in the police force – in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme.

In Jordan, the total number of women in the military remains small but symbolic, and in 2016, the Directorate of Women's Military Affairs at Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) committed to reaching a target of 3% female officer representation in non-medical career fields, in addition to providing wider career opportunities for service women.¹²¹ This was driven by a ten-year strategy introduced by the (JAF in 2005 to increase the number of women in the military. More recently, the JAF has established its first female company for special security tasks, including counterterrorism and crisis management, and opportunities for women are increasing in the police, Royal Guard, military intelligence, and air traffic¹²². In addition, in 2009 Algeria's president promoted appointed the first female military officer to the rank of General, and four more women have gone on to occupy these posts during 2014 and 2015.¹²³ This makes Algeria the country with the most high-ranking female military officials in the region.¹²⁴ Similarly in 2018, Saudi Arabia and Qatar¹²⁵ allowed women into certain roles within their military for the first time.

Specific efforts such as the Tunisian National League of Police Women (LNTFP) founded in 2015 by three women from the Tunisian national police¹²⁶ and the Egyptian Violence Against Women (VAW) unit established by the Ministry of Interior in 2013 and composed of 10 officers (of which four were women)¹²⁷ represent important steps towards supporting the gender-sensitivity and responsiveness of security sector institutions. However, to date, the impact of these initiatives has been limited, and critically, beyond technical reforms, "a broader process of security sector reform is needed to address the structures and practices of the police that have led to abuses and to the police's failure to address the security needs of Egyptian citizens, including establishing strong accountability and oversight mechanisms."¹²⁸

ESCWA also highlight that overall women represent only a fraction of the workforce in customs, the armed forces, the police and the general security force across the Arab states region.¹²⁹ This is driven in part by perceptions and social and gender norms, which uphold the notion that these roles are unsuitable for women.¹³⁰ Moreover, despite some

examples of women gaining access to positions within the security sector, they are still largely excluded from meaningful positions of authority and decision-making, and the environment within these institutions continue to be largely gender-blind. Given the often heavily male-dominated nature of security sector institutions, female officers might experience verbal or physical harassment from their colleagues, and very little research exists on this issue.¹³¹

1.4.2 The gendered dimensions of peacekeeping

Evidence highlights the centrality of having women in peacekeeping missions as a means to broaden skill sets, ensure that women's needs and demands are taken into account, and promote female role models in countries affected by conflict and war.¹³² Recruiting women in these missions also ensures that women's rights and needs are advocated¹³³ and can enhance force credibility, facilitating greater access to communities and vital information, and increases reporting of sexual and gender-based crimes.¹³⁴ Countries such as Jordan have been applauded for their "pioneering"¹³⁵ approach to engaging women in peacekeeping operations, and have contributed 21 female police personnel to peace-keeping missions.¹³⁶ Despite a notable increase in gender mainstreaming across aspects of peacekeeping operations, countries across the region deploying peacekeeping battalions continue to fall short of meeting the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) target of 20% female representation across deployments.

The UN Department of Peacekeeping has four operations in the Middle East: United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). As at July 2018 the numbers of women represented in these missions was on average just 5.5% of all military and police personnel. However, the region does currently host the world's only UN female force commander, Major General Kristin Lund, Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of UNTSO.

TABLE 3
Women in peacekeeping missions¹³⁷

Peacekeeping mission	% combined police and military personnel
Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)	4.8%
United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)	3.9%
United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNFIL)	4.8%
United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)	7.8%
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)	6.6%

1.4.3 Women’s engagement in Countering/ Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE/PVE)

In 2015, UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2242 set out the link between the WPS agenda and efforts to counter and prevent violent extremism (CVE/PVE) and the need to mainstream gender in the activities of Security Council counter-terror and CVE bodies. The UN Secretary-General’s Action Plan on Preventing Extremism (PVE) also states that counter-terror and CVE/PVE strategies should protect and empower women. However, the gendered dimensions of violent extremism remain neglected in both research and practice¹³⁸, which is of increasingly relevance when considering the active role that many women play in violent extremist organisations, including across the region. For example, in Jordan research highlights that the majority of respondents to believe that women face greater risks as a result of radicalisation than men, due to the impact of radicalisation on women’s freedom and access to their rights.¹³⁹

Criticism has emphasised that attempts to deliver on the CVE/PVE agenda risk instrumentalising the broader WPS agenda and undermining women’s rights, such that conflicts’ are “increasingly viewed through a narrow CVE/PVE lens, with international actors favouring simplistic counter-radicalisation measures rather than holistic strategies that prioritise peace, good governance and gender equality”.¹⁴⁰ Women are also overwhelmingly underrepresented in influential security institutions such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee – a subsidiary body of the Security Council¹⁴¹ – limiting their ability to

effectively influence the formulation of relevant definitions, strategies and approaches.¹⁴² At the same time, women’s organisations and their organising is increasingly negatively affected by counter terrorism legislation across the region. Nonetheless, there are positive examples in the region of state attempts to address issues of gender equality in their PVE responses, and to bring women into PVE work as peace actors. Morocco’s *morchidat* programme sees female imam’s engaged in efforts to address and prevent violent extremism.¹⁴³

1.5 Humanitarian Action: Relief & Recovery

1.5.1 Gender responsive humanitarian programming

The region continues to experience complex humanitarian emergencies on an unprecedented scale.¹⁴⁴ Nine years after the onset of conflict in Syria, there are now over 11 million Syrians displaced, including approximately five million refugees across the region.¹⁴⁵ Continued violence and instability in countries such as Libya, Palestine, Iraq and Yemen are also triggering new waves of displacement. There has been some progress on basic gender mainstreaming through humanitarian programming, which has been supported through mechanisms such as the IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Gender and Age Marker, which all international agencies funded through UN appeals must complete. Several organisations have also developed their own organisational specific gender markers as well as guidelines on GBV

related service provision.¹⁴⁶ In addition, the IASC have developed tools to support the mainstreaming of gender equality issues throughout humanitarian response - notably the recently updated Gender Handbook (2018) and guidelines on GBV case management and survivor care (2017). Bodies such as the Gender Standby Capacity Project, an IASC initiative created in 2007 in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), aims to facilitate and strengthen capacity and leadership of humanitarian actors to undertake and promote gender equality programming at global, regional, and country levels.

Despite this progress, humanitarian efforts continue to insufficiently address the complex gendered dimensions of emergency response, with many agencies failing to fulfil the most basic requirements around gender mainstreaming, the disaggregation of data. There also remains a chronic under-funding and articulation of gender-targeted activities. For example, in 2017, the UN in Yemen issued 14 statements on the humanitarian situation, and only one included a gender analysis (half included a mention of women, largely combined with children and in relation to civilian casualties). Further, only 2.6% of the 2018 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan and 8.4% of the Syria Response Plan's GBV cluster is currently funded.¹⁴⁷

Moreover, there are still "considerable deficits in the way that the humanitarian system consults with women, delivers services, and engages women and youth in substantive positions in the response".¹⁴⁸ This speaks to a broader point that while organisations are "increasingly aware of, and work towards addressing, gender dynamics, in practice" it "remains a challenge to address social norms within limited timeframes, budgets and without the adequate methodology or experience", and, "[a]lthough aid organisations are increasingly concerned about promoting gender equality, when faced with people's immediate needs and the urgency to addressing them as fast as possible, social interventions can rely on, and reproduce, unequal gender roles and norms, rather than working to improve them".¹⁴⁹

Emerging evidence also highlights the significant risks that women face as first responders in humanitarian response, including cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. These issues are highlighted

in a joint assessment of VAWG in the region, which concluded that humanitarian assistance was being exchanged for sex in various governorates in Syria.¹⁵⁰ Central to this is funding for national and local women's organisations that have the access to those affected by conflict. While there is no available data on the percentage of humanitarian funding currently going to Syrian and other women-led organisations in the region, globally women-led organisations have an average annual budget of less than US\$25,000, and as one example, received 0.3% of Canada's gender equality focused aid in 2013/14.¹⁵¹

In examining humanitarian financing, there are concerns that shifts towards humanitarian aid funding streams result in deprioritising the longer-term gender development agenda,¹⁵² resulting in many civil society organisations "putting their strategic gender justice work on pause".¹⁵³ While lifesaving interventions must continue to be prioritised, longer-term gender justice work must also continue to be a collective priority.

Evidence highlights a continued dearth of recognition of the linkages between women's meaningful participation in humanitarian response and improved outcomes for delivering relief and conflict resolution.¹⁵⁴ The World Humanitarian Summit and resulting Grand Bargain commitments have gone some way to addressing these issues at the global level, providing important acknowledgment, that while women are often survivors of crisis, they are also often amongst the first responders.¹⁵⁵ This is supported by evidence from the region, which shows that in many countries, women have taken on lead roles in the delivery of humanitarian aid and local level peace-making efforts.¹⁵⁶ For example, in Yemen, women have taken on significant roles in the delivery of first aid, child protection, psychosocial support within communities, the demilitarisation of schools, and the reintegration of combatants.¹⁵⁷ Similarly in Jordan, Syrian refugees are effectively organising themselves around a number of issues, including developing informal networks helping to shape policy recommendations on education, freedom of movement, livelihoods and countering xenophobia that they were planning to present to parliamentarians.¹⁵⁸

2.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPLEMENTING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

The following section presents a discussion of perceived challenges and opportunities to implementing UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda in the Arab States region, drawing predominantly on interviews and focus group discussions from stakeholders supporting the delivery of WPS agenda at country and regional level. Respondents included individuals from a range of UN agencies, donor organisations, government representatives, implementing partners, civil society organisations and academics. Where relevant, published literature has been used to illustrate or substantiate findings, but this section largely focuses on bringing out the voices of the individuals interviewed.

Challenges and opportunities in this context are complex, multi-faceted and contextually specific. As such, this section does not commit to presenting a broader discussion around the delivery of all activities and thematic content related to the UNSCR 1325 pillars, but rather focuses on a synthesised snapshot of findings across countries, across

a selection of four common themes that emerged most strongly:

- 2.1. Local ownership and relevance**
- 2.2. Political will and commitment**
- 2.3. Women's political participation and influence**
- 2.4. Donor engagement and dialogue**



UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) conduct a ceasefire patrol near the border with Mauritania. ©UN Photo/Martine Perret.

2.1 Local ownership and relevance

Key challenges:

- Women’s rights work has been positively influenced by increased knowledge of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda in some contexts, allowing women to organise their peace-making around coherent peace and security issues. This engagement has also opened up new opportunities for collaboration. However, there is a lack of awareness and consensus around the ways in which UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda translates at local levels. This is compounded by a lack of localised and Arabic content, and a tendency for workshops and meeting spaces to be dominated by the same (often urban and ‘elite’) individuals and organisations. There is also a shared perception across some WPS actors, that the agenda is ‘silent’ on crucial issues affecting women on the ground, including disarmament and militarisation, and forced migration.
- These issues coalesce to create a lack of local ownership of the agenda among women and civil society actors, which is limiting its perceived relevance and uptake.

Key opportunities:

- If localised effectively, including building meaningful ownership and buy-in of key civil society actors and diverse groups, and leveraging the efforts of existing women’s rights work such as efforts around CEDAW, the WPS agenda could be provide a powerful platform for unified and collaborative efforts at a local, national and regional level.

2.1.1 A common language?

Evidence highlights that UNSCR 1325 may offer a “common language” and approach for unifying efforts toward ending VAWG and broader WPS issues in the Arab states region,¹⁵⁹ and interviews with women in Palestine (Gaza), Libya (women in the south), and Yemeni activists described how local women have been able to use the ‘language’ of UNSCR 1325 and WPS to organise their peacemaking around coherent peace and security issues. However, interviews also revealed a lack of awareness around the core concepts of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda across local actors; even where government and civil society actors are engaging on this agenda, there is limited consensus around what it means, practically. This is compounded by a lack of printed and online WPS related Arabic content, and the fact that the “terminology of UN Resolutions tends to be broad and highly technical” emphasising a need for the resolution’s content to be “deconstructed and made relevant to each state’s national socio-political contexts”.¹⁶⁰

Women working on WPS issues at a grassroots level agree that the agenda is primarily ‘owned’

“Women are organically and instinctively doing WPS work but have never had a framing language for it before” (Regional WPS Expert)

“When you say ‘WPS agenda’ there isn’t one harmonised understanding of what it means and how it can be used” (Civil society, Lebanon)

“You see the same people in similar events, they carry the same messages, very valuable messages, but what about the other voices?” (Civil society, Syria)

and utilised by a selection of more prominent organisations and individuals, leaving dialogue and workshops spaces often inaccessible to non-elite women. This is because many women and women-led organisations are unable to travel to certain locations, or secure invites because they lack connections or language skills in English. In more extreme circumstances, there has been suspicion and hesitancy to engage with UNSCR 1325, which has been perceived as an external and Western-driven agenda, which threatens sociocultural values.¹⁶¹

2.1.2 Perceived gaps and connections

Despite the comprehensive nature of the WPS agenda,¹⁶² respondents also identified a number of perceived ‘gaps’ across the thematic considerations within UNSCR 1325. These included issues of disarmament, militarisation, military occupation, forced migration, the role of trauma and mental health, intersectionality and the role of social norms. Civil society actors highlighted that they have been making inroads in their ability to use CEDAW Committee’s General Recommendation no. 30 to align WPS analysis and activism with rights claims, as framed in CEDAW, especially through its regular reporting processes. This raised a perceived need for the WPS agenda to more effectively link with wider human rights agendas, including CEDAW, which women’s movements have been effectively using in many contexts.¹⁶³

Specifically, civil society actors in Gaza highlighted that CEDAW, in contrast to UNSCR 1325, has enabled activists and women’s rights actor to engage on issues around military occupation in a meaningful way.

There are strongly held views that the WPS agenda is seen as only relevant for countries in ‘active conflict’, which respondents felt strongly inhibited the effectiveness of the framework in the region.¹⁶⁴ As summarised by a UN staff member, *“the real challenge is coming from the title of the agenda. It rings a bell that this is about war and conflict. This leads countries to say this isn’t a concern for us”* (UN, Lebanon).

“The linkage between the military occupation and CEDAW is very important for us as women as it gives more value and allows us to use this framework” (Civil society, Gaza)

2.1.3 Consultation and engagement

There was consensus across a large portion of respondents that there is a lack of buy-in for the implementation of WPS NAPs at both the government and civil society level, emphasising the importance of NAP development and implementation processes being backed by resourcing, operational strategies and political engagement for plans to move beyond simply being “ink on paper”.¹⁶⁵ Civil society actors also emphasised a lack of sufficient consultation and engagement in NAP design and development processes. For example, in Iraq despite a multi-sectoral working group being set up within the framework of the NAP, there is a perception that the NAP development process could have been more broadly consultative. In some cases, certain groups have been actively excluded from the design and development process. Respondents from Palestine also underlined that no women from the Gaza Strip were consulted even though activists are now doing what they can to implement NAP initiatives.

“We try to sell these interlinkages – there is no peace without development there is no development without peace” (UN agency, Lebanon)



Border between Israel and Gaza. ©UN Photo/Mark Garten.

2.2 Political will and commitment

Key challenges:

- Despite positive actions taken forward by Member States, including the development of WPS NAPs, there is a shared perception that state actors lack the capacity and political will to deliver against the WPS agenda. Minimal demonstrations of implementation have caused civil society actors to question the extent to which WPS NAPs can meaningfully be used as a tool to further WPS objectives, and hold state actors to account.
- While there have been some examples of positive collaboration between civil society and government actors on the agenda (notably NAP development), these efforts are broadly seen to be tokenistic, unrepresentative and un-sustained.
- Issues of national and regional identity and policy coherence are also disrupted by historic political and social divisions, which have impacted on women's desire or interest in working on a singular set of goals, in addition to ineffective or non-functioning state machineries.

Key opportunities:

- If capacity to deliver against the WPS agenda (and existing NAPs) is built from within state institutions, matched with resourcing and wider incentives to support delivery, with the full, inclusive and effective engagement of civil society actors, there is an opportunity to take forward areas of shared interest. There may also be important strategic opportunities at the regional and sub-regional level to help increase the pressure and accountability of Member States to support delivery against agenda – including those states not in active conflict.

2.2.1 Government capacity and political will

As highlighted in section 2, Member States have taken forward positive steps in support of delivery against the WPS agenda, including most visibly, the development of WPS NAPs. Interviews with UN and civil society representatives highlighted that NAPs can create opportunities for shared collaboration between civil society and state actors, and that *“developing a NAP is the only cross-cutting issue that can be understood similarly across organisations and government”* (civil society representative, Lebanon).

However, overwhelmingly respondents emphasised a lack of awareness, interest and capacity to engage on UNSCR 1325 at the government level. These views were held by both civil society actors and individuals working at the government level. In one case in Libya, a government official was incorrectly under the impression that the country already had a WPS NAP in place.

In some cases, a lack of effective collaboration between civil society and the state was seen to

“NAPs provide a concrete space around which women’s organisations and governments can talk to each other and that doesn’t always happen”
(UN, Jordan)

“Implementing this plan should be both ways (top-down and bottom up) but unfortunately it’s not happening” (Government official, Palestine)

“There was no political will to implement the plan”
(Civil society, Iraq)

be the primary disabling factor. This has caused civil society actors to question the extent to which WPS NAPs can meaningfully be used as a tool to further WPS objectives and hold state actors to account. In the Palestinian case, women's rights actors have specifically questioned the utility of such a framework while Israeli occupation continues. Women agreed that *“there is a lack of mechanisms to apply 1325, as well as a lack of disciplinary actions*

“No one in the government meetings is talking UNSCR 1325 and most often no one knows it” (Senior official in GNA, Libya)

to guarantee the commitment of different parties to the resolution [...] even though Israel has endorsed CEDAW and should be bound by the Security Council resolutions” (Palestinian researcher, Gaza).

2.2.2 National and regional framing

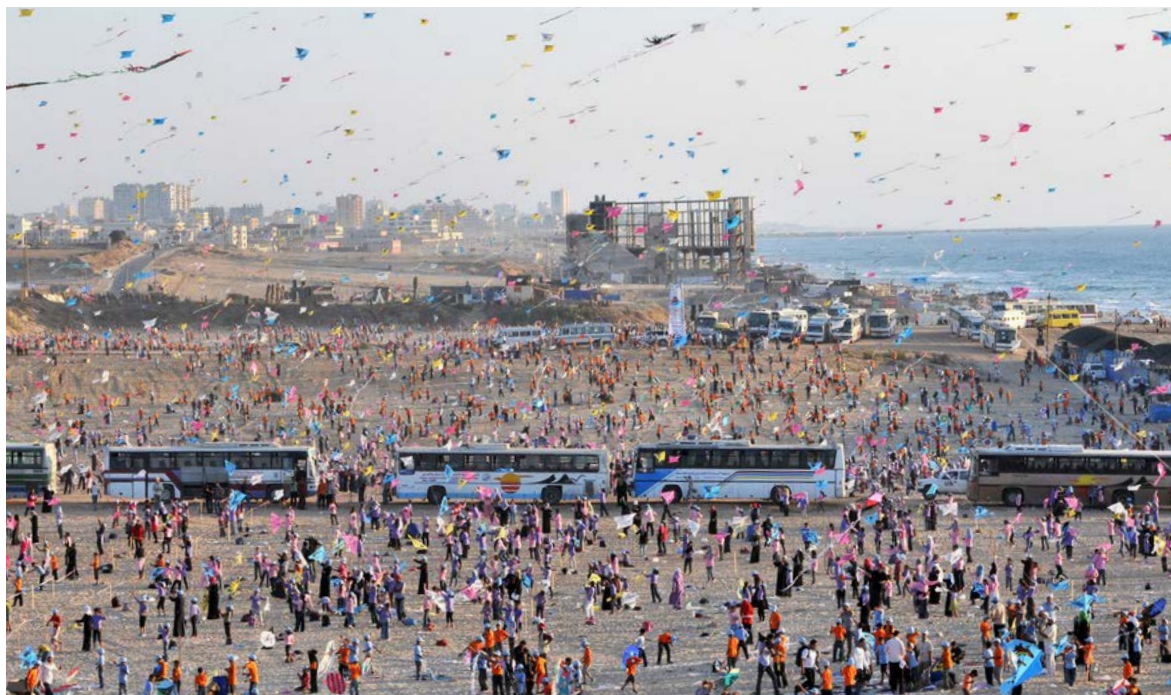
In some contexts, the emphasis on ‘nationhood’ within WPS dialogue was also noted as a stumbling block, where historic political and social divisions have had a significant impact on women’s desire or

interest in working on a singular set of goals. Those interviewed noted significant diversity within and across country contexts, which was discussed as often insufficiently respected, or recognised, by the international community.

A selection of respondents highlighted the complexity of discussing ‘regional implementation’; some individuals felt that there may be opportunities to leverage regional and sub-regional dynamics, others felt that it was highly problematic to discuss ‘regional’ in this context, as summarised, *“if we talk about the ‘overall’ WPS agenda across the region it suggests that there is coordinated effort to implement, which there isn’t. It’s very difficult to talk about ‘regional implementation in this way”.*

“How do you, as a woman, influence an “NAP” when you don’t have a nation?” (Palestinian activist, Gaza)

“There is a lack of mechanisms to apply 1325, as well as a lack of disciplinary actions to guarantee the commitment of different parties to the resolution” (Palestinian researcher, Gaza)



Palestinian children fly kites on the beach of the northern Gaza Strip, Gaza. ©UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan.

2.3

Women's political participation and influence

Key challenges:

- Women's rights actors and civil society organisations continue to prioritise women's effective and meaningful political participation (including in the security sector) as one of the most important mechanisms to help shape their experiences of peace, security and stability.
- Feminist observers have cautioned that while donor and international support for women's engagement in the political sphere is crucial, this engagement must not be reduced to a focus on simply increasing numbers of women at the table and on seats, at the risk of neglecting the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the structural factors that inhibit women's access and influence to decision-making in public life.

Key opportunities:

- Women's access to decision-making both within the political sphere, and security apparatus, emerges as a strong shared objective across the women's rights space, and has also received traction with the international community. There is an opportunity to leverage these shared interests, and a need to sustain a focus on the broader structural context within which participation and influence can be realised.

2.3.1 Women prioritise their political empowerment

Women's rights actors and civil society organisations interviewed consistently prioritised women's effective and meaningful political participation, and access to decision-making across sectors, as one of the most important mechanisms to help shape their experiences of peace, security and stability. Yet, respondents emphasised that they remain chronically under-represented, including through their side-lining into parallel processes, which often show no measurable effect in influencing "official" (i.e. male) decision-making.

"This agenda does not have the power of implementation because women leaders are not able to engage in a political dialogue amongst themselves or with the male leadership, hence their inability to make a difference" (Civil society, Gaza)

There was significant consensus across respondents on an immediate need to amplify and legitimise women's representation within the political sphere. Several women specifically emphasised their support to push for gender quotas as important step to secure women's political representation, and notably in the Libyan case, as one activist summarised, *"without quotas women will not reach positions or succeed in elections"* (woman activist, Libya).

Another commonly-cited area of interest across respondents focused on the importance of women's participation in the security sector, as a UN representative underlined, *"one of the problems around extremism is the lack of trust in government and the fact that security forces are part of the dynamic in creating people who push back. It's important to have more women throughout the apparatus – not just women in police – also women in the intelligence services – in the army. Something we could all do more on together"* (UN representative, Jordan).

2.3.2 Moving beyond numbers

Linked to the discussion on representation and influence, respondents reiterated a desire for donor and international support to not be reduced to a focus on increasing numbers of women at the table. Efforts in this area need to ensure they do not neglect the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the structural factors that inhibit women's access to the political space in the first instance, and the barriers that limit their

“Donors focus on participation because baselines and targets can be reduced to numbers [...] participation in numbers alone is low hanging fruit - the pillar that requires least dismantling of the system” (regional WPS expert)

ability to influence and lead in these spaces once they have access.



UN Women beneficiary, running small business. Zarqa, Jordan. ©Christopher Herwig. UN Women.

2.4 Donor engagement and dialogue

Key challenges:

- Donor priorities in the region are increasingly focused on the delivery of short-term humanitarian aid, which is overtaking, and in worst case scenarios, obscuring the longer-term development agenda. This is causing civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations, to put their strategic gender justice work on pause.
- The international community often demands consensus across groups of women and civil society actors, which is shrinking and distorting the space for women's movement building and its diversity.

Key opportunities:

- There is an opportunity for donors to pursue more transformational, long-term strategic work on gender justice, and direct funding to women-led organisations, to protect and support the continuation of feminist dialogue and movement-building. Donor targets could also be created to ensure a minimum spend for activities with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment.

2.4.1 Dilution of gender agendas

Beyond broader shrinking spaces for Civil Society Engagement, as discussed in section 2, shifts in donor focus and funding priorities are seen to have isolated many grassroots women's organisations, as well as distracted from progress towards feminist and women's rights agendas. Complexly, a selection of respondents also highlighted that the WPS agenda has been specifically re-positioned or 'neutralised' to focus on specific issues, which serve to distract women from the rights-based work. Feminist critics from within, and working on the region, caution that WPS work, as currently articulated, is being presented as a more acceptable and less contentious space for women to focus on than their historic human rights agenda.

For some, the UN are seen to play a specific role in these processes; a selection of respondents felt that the UN were often unable to maintain a focus on human rights in the face of hostile partners and lack the conceptual and analytical resources and incentives to substantively support women's activism. However, respondents also asserted that when the

UN does combine forces to promote gender equality, positive results emerge. In Lebanon for example, there appears to have been a positive experience of UN agencies working together, as one respondent reports, *"one agency can't do everything. We're going to develop a new 1325 initiative. We meet almost monthly if not more. We decide things together. It's not just one agency taking on the whole process."* (UN, Lebanon).

2.4.2 Consensus and collaboration

Many respondents agreed that donors and the UN expect and ask for consensus from women's rights actors about their understanding and use of UNSCR 1325 – even when it is counter-productive for activists to hold a unified position on WPS priorities. Discussed in section 2, this has been particularly notable in the case of women's engagement in political processes and dialogue.

Divergence between and within activists and implementers in different parts of the same country is to be expected and can be carefully managed to excavate and form strategies to manage common problems, but such space is rarely given by those who expect quick results in exchange for the outlay of funds. Respondents highlighted the importance of protecting and respecting diversity and creating space for difference and growth across

"The women's movement has been co-opted by the humanitarian agenda" (INGO, regional office - Jordan)

“The whole system is flawed, when the civil society actors are forced to have consensus on issues that are not in line with their principles and values”
(Syrian activist)

“Having a space for feminist actors to communicate is critical - we need to support the feminist movement to exist” (WPS expert, regional)

women’s movements, whether within a territory or nation-state or in the region as a whole. Some representatives also suggested that examples of forcing consensus have inhibited progress towards

either formulating or implementing a localised WPS agenda – both in terms of competition for scarce resources, and in reaching shared strategies and objectives.

Discussions with WPS experts in the region also underscored the fact that diversity and difference are inevitable, necessary, and yet difficult to deal with: *“on the one hand, this is healthy – good that there is space for them to disagree, but it is holding the movement back”*. As such, *“having a space for feminist actors to communicate is critical - we need to support the feminist movement to exist”* (regional WPS expert).



Saharawi refugees at sunset. Saharawi refugee camp near Tindouf, Algeria. ©UN Photo/Martine Perret.

3.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comprehensive and integrated solutions are needed to address the wide-reaching nature of the WPS agenda across the diverse and complex landscape of the Arab States region. The below recommendations are therefore aimed at the collaborative and committed engagement of a cross-section of stakeholders, including Member States, donors, implementing agencies and civil society. However, it is important to note that these recommendations focus on just a small selection of perceived cross-cutting issues, which surfaced most strongly through this report's primary data collection. As such, broader change and long-term impact must be conceptualised as part of a much bigger, ongoing, longer-term process of enquiry and action.

In being guided by the voices of the women and organisations delivering against the WPS agenda on the ground, it is hoped that crucially, these recommendations speak to both the local practical uptake of WPS implementation, as well as provide guidance to those operating at both the Member State and international community level, who have roles in supporting and influencing processes of implementation.

3.1

Strengthen local ownership

- **Inclusive and participatory NAP processes:** As evidenced, consultative NAP development processes, which are backed by meaningful and sustained political will, are far more likely to lead to plans appropriately resourced and implemented. As such, where NAP processes are jointly called for from *both government and civil society actors*, efforts should be made by **Member States, donors, and implementing agencies** to replicate growing best practices around inclusive and participatory design and development processes and must be matched with government buy-in and resources. If these parameters cannot be achieved, NAP development should not be automatically pursued. As discussed, the specific development of Local Action Plans may also offer particularly powerful opportunities for the localisation of NAP delivery and the translation of international and national level dialogue into tangible local priorities and action.
- **Make locally relevant WPS related content available:** The availability of accessible and user-friendly

WPS content remains a key challenge across the region. **Donors and Member States** should fund the production of locally validated WPS material, translated into Arabic, French and local languages. **Implementing agencies** should consider the accessibility and dissemination of WPS products and content in their intervention designs, working in collaboration with **local gender experts** to help convey difficult concepts in a locally accessible manner. This could also include the development of low-literacy versions of key materials. These materials (both published and online) should be effectively disseminated and accompanied with training and awareness raising to help national and local actors gain confidence and understanding about the agenda and how it can be helpfully implemented and utilised.

- **Create safe spaces for knowledge-sharing and open dialogue:** Women's rights actors and activists continue to have limited access to safe, exploratory and open platforms to share learning and best practice around WPS delivery across the region. **Donors and implementing agencies** should facilitate the development of both practical and innovative platforms to support the circulation and cross-fertilisation of WPS related knowledge-sharing, including both virtual and physical hubs. **The diaspora community** may also be a key ally in these processes where local activism is difficult, helping to build connections and networking opportunities between local, national and regional actors.

- **Leverage and build on existing civil society work on CEDAW:** In many country contexts, women’s rights actors and activists have been effectively engaging with CEDAW in support of advocacy related efforts, including using General Recommendation no. 30 to develop shadow reporting. There may be opportunities for **donors and implementing agencies** to more effectively link and fund synergies between both the CEDAW and WPS frameworks, in contexts where women and civil society actors are keen to build these connections. This also provides an additional mechanism through which to hold **Member States** to account.
- **Develop capacity to document violations using international standards:** Drawing on learning from Palestine under the Israeli military occupation, and the body of work being led by local organisations playing a major role in documentation processes in some country contexts, **donors and implementing agencies** should help develop civil society capacity to document violations. This could include supporting networking and partnering opportunities with human rights and legal oriented organisations to adopt an evidence-based approach to document violations, as well as strengthening the safeguarding elements of this work, including encryption and parallel psycho-social services.

3.2 Increase state accountability and capacity

- **Build and invest in governmental institutional capacity:** Many government actors are resistant to engage with the WPS agenda and fail to see its relevance. This is arguably connected to both a lack of understanding of what UNSCR 1325 and the subsequent resolutions are, as well as limited understanding and buy-in around the ways in which related lines of accountability, strategic connections and relevance can be achieved in their own work. As such, **Member States** should demand, and donors and implementing agencies should support, targeted capacity development efforts focused on developing understanding and buy-in across government institutions. **Member States** should also identify and support WPS champions to help push this work forward within state structures and mainstream the agenda’s relevance across departments and teams.
- **Link WPS objectives to existing accountability mechanisms:** Where regular reporting requirements to the Security Council or other UN bodies exist across country contexts, there is an opportunity for both **Member States** and **civil society actors** to ensure references are consistently made to relevant WPS recommendations, and that links between these mechanisms are made explicit. This could also include **donors and implementing agencies** supporting recommendations made by the CEDAW committee being widely disseminated, and public follow-up mechanisms to monitor states’ responses to CEDAW recommendations and reporting cycles being supported.

- **Include adherence to UNSCR 1325 as criteria for development and military assistance:** Where NAP are developed Member States should be held to account in terms of their delivery. This could include consideration from **donors**, including bilateral government relationships, around the extent to which **Member States** have effectively delivered against commitments outlined in their NAPs. **Donor governments** providing military assistance should ensure that initiatives support NAPs with regard to, for example, providing training for security services that is gender sensitive. Where states do not have a NAP in process or developed, the international community should continue to lobby for/develop more effective and accountable measures and funding strategies.

3.3 Enhance women’s influence on political decision-making

- **Apply pressure and create political incentives to support women’s engagement across multi-track diplomacy and broader political processes:** Evidence highlights that women’s engagement in peacebuilding, statebuilding, and broader political processes has both instrumental and intrinsic benefits, including strengthening the sustainability and durability of political outcomes. As such, the international community, including **donors and implementing agencies**, should continue to lobby for the engagement of diverse women in both track 1 and 2 diplomacy processes, and work to develop a coherent strategy of prioritised support to women’s participation across the spectrum of political and peace processes in the

region. Negotiating parties could also be supported with specialist training, logistical support, and by adding delegate seats. These efforts may also be well-supported by targeted deployments of feminist-identified women as Special Envoys and other senior representatives in situations of armed conflict within the **UN system**.

- **Grow leadership potential:** Beyond simply encouraging the meaningful *participation* of women in these political processes, growing women's *leadership potential* and ability to influence is critical. While multi-pronged strategies that address both sociocultural and structural barriers are needed to build and sustain women's leadership, women from across the region highlight the perceived importance of learning from peers and role models in positions of influence. As such, **donors and implementing agencies** should connect aspiring women leaders to mentorship opportunities with women operating across both government and civil society spaces, who can offer insight and technical guidance on both the formal and informal skills required to successfully manoeuvre within these political spaces.
- **Champion women in leadership roles in the security and humanitarian sector:** Beyond the political space, increasing evidence highlights the valuable leadership roles that many women are playing across both the security and humanitarian sector in the region, and the ways in which this contributes to the effectiveness of the delivery of these services and related outcomes. However, in many cases these women are exposed to heightened risks and are under-supported financially and technically. **Donors and implementing agencies** should work to lobby/support the appointment of, and targeted support to, women (including from affected communities) into leadership positions within the security sector, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) processes, and the humanitarian system. The engagement of humanitarian actors such as Humanitarian Coordinators within the **UN**, also have a role to play in championing and supporting women leaders, and working with women to identify priorities across humanitarian response plans.

3.4

Promote transformative and flexible donor approaches

- **Fund women's rights organisations and their long-term strategic gender justice work:** Women's rights actors and activists across the region are calling for **donors** to pursue more transformational, long-term strategic work on gender justice. This includes **Member States and donors** channelling direct multi-year funding to women-led organisations and ensuring that reporting mechanisms are simple and flexible. There should also be concerted shifts away from forcing consensus across organisations. These efforts will help to both protect and support the continuation of feminist dialogue and movement-building, which is an essential component of WPS implementation in the region.
- **Fund and commission more research and refine analysis and data collection tools:** As highlighted across this report, there are significant evidence deficits and data gaps across almost all WPS-related sectors and issues across the region. Further, certain themes (including mental health and trauma, intersectionality and the role of social norms), and certain groups of women (including women with disabilities, women belonging to religious minority groups and LGBTQI populations) remain largely invisible. As such, **Member States and donors** should fund further research and independent reviews/evaluations to help address these data gaps and to help provide data and give voice to those most marginalised groups and issues. The results of this work should be translated into Arabic and local languages to help inform a more coherent, contextualised and refined understanding of WPS at the country level. As part of these processes there is also a need to strengthen and sharpen tools to undertake gender and conflict analysis and conflict-sensitive and ethical data collection.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The Security Council has adopted eight resolutions on WPS: 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015)
- 2 Coomaraswamy (2015a)
- 3 Iraq (two NAPs – the first published in 2014 and an emergency Contingency Plan published in 2015), Jordan (2018), Palestine (2017), and Tunisia (2018)
- 4 Note that the Yemen Constitution has not been ratified.
- 5 Data analysed for this study. See body of report for breakdown.
- 6 Half included a mention of women, largely combined with children and in relation to civilian casualties.
- 7 The Security Council has adopted eight resolutions on WPS: 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015)
- 8 Coomaraswamy (2015a)
- 9 This rapid review involved two stages of data collection, including desk-based research and country case studies, and a review of Arabic content online. A total of 43 interviews and 2 FGDs were undertaken as part of our country case studies and regional review. A pool of WPS experts were also consulted throughout the review process.
- 10 See: Anderson (2017); Pratt (2013); Rayman et al (2016)
- 11 See: Alsaba and Kapilashrami (2016); Farr and Boukhary (2017); Manjoo and McRaith (2011); Rayman et al (2016)
- 12 See: Bishop (2017)
- 13 Abbott (2017); El Feki et al (2017)
- 14 IWSAW (2016: 13)
- 15 Laessing (2014)
- 16 Key informant interviews (KII) for this review.
- 17 Rayman et al, 2016: 1.
- 18 Chaban et al (2017: 63)
- 19 Anderson (2017: 34)
- 20 Data largely gathered from PeaceWomen of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) (<http://www.peacewomen.org/member-states>) and key informant interview (KIIs).
- 21 Defined as "rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. This link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator (often affiliated with a State or non-State armed group, including a terrorist entity or network), the profile of the victim (who is frequently an actual or perceived member of a persecuted political, ethnic or religious minority, or is targeted on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity), the climate of impunity (which is generally associated with State collapse), cross-border consequences (such as displacement or trafficking in persons) and/or violations of the provisions of a ceasefire agreement. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons when committed in situations of conflict for the purpose of sexual violence/ exploitation" (The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (2017: 3)
- 22 <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/united-nations-sign-landmark-agreement-prevention-and-response>
- 23 The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (2017: 5)
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 iKNOW Politics (2016)
- 26 Note that the current Special Representative is Pramila Patten.
- 27 Tharoor (2015)
- 28 Lahoud/UN Women (2018)
- 29 The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (2017)
- 30 WHO (2014)
- 31 See: Alsaba and Kapilashrami (2016); El Masri et al (2013); GBV IMS Task Force (2015); Gonzalez (2016); Heidari and Moreno (2016); Herbert (2014); Muller and Barhoum (2015); Parker (2015)
- 32 GBV AoR (2017)
- 33 UNFPA (2017)
- 34 Anani (2013)
- 35 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (nd)
- 36 Ghazzaoui (2016: 5)
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Human Rights Watch (2018b)
- 39 Puttick (2015)
- 40 <https://www.smh.com.au/world/middle-east/iraq-s-women-of-influence-targeted-in-murder-spree-20180930-p506xo.html>
- 41 Michau et al (2014)
- 42 Prettitore (2015); Klugman (2017)
- 43 Coomaraswamy (2015b)
- 44 UNICEF (2017a)
- 45 Human Rights Watch (2018c)
- 46 Human Rights Watch (2018d)
- 47 UNFPA (2016)
- 48 Human Rights Watch (2017)
- 49 Begum (2017)
- 50 Jarzmik (2018)
- 51 UNICEF (2017b: 65)
- 52 UNFPA (2016:5)
- 53 In October 2007 the Minister of Justice fixed the legal age for marriage at 18 for males and 15 for females (CEDAW, 2008: 17). In some contexts, it is possible for a Sharia court to give permission for a marriage to take place before a girl reaches the age of 15, in cases of 'urgent need' (CEDAW, 2011: 51)
- 54 Palestinian Child Law No.7 of 2004 specifies a minimum age of 18. However, Personal Status Laws in force in West Bank and Gaza Strip set the minimum age of marriage for girls at 14 years and six months (UNDP, 2011:23)
- 55 Minimum legal age of marriage, under Article of the Family Act is 18 for males and 16 for females. CEDAW (2012:94)
- 56 Personal Status Law set the age of marriage at 18 for boys and 17 for girls (Amnesty International submission (for PSWG), 2013:6)
- 57 Marzouki, Nadia (2010: 37)
- 58 In 2001 the minimum legal marriage age was set to 18 calendar years. The 2010 Provisional Personal Status law No. 36 article 10b states marriage is permitted by obtaining approval from the Chief Justice at 15 'Calendar' years, instead of the previous 15 years for girls and 17 for boys calculated in lunar years, which would mean 14 years and six months for girls. (UNICEF, 2014:13)
- 59 Minimum legal age of marriage is 20, but a woman can marry younger if a court and the woman's guardian gives permission (CEDAW, 2009: 23)
- 60 Special authorization may be granted to women and men under 18 years old (the minimum legal age) to contract marriage (CEDAW, 2006: 58)
- 61 Custom recognises marriages under the legal minimum age of 18 years. (UNICEF, 2011b: 12)
- 62 Boys and girls under the legal minimum age of marriage can get married after the consent of both their guardian and mother, and with a special authorization from the judge (UNICEF, 2011c: 4)
- 63 UNICEF (2011a: 2)
- 64 Human Rights Council (2009: 20)
- 65 UNICEF (2011d: 4)
- 66 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018)
- 67 Forestier (2017)
- 68 The Commission was mandated to investigate all human rights violations from 1955, shortly before Tunisia's independence from France, to 2013. It has received more than 62,000 complaints and it held confidential hearings for more than 50,000. It is mandated to publish a final report and recommendations, Human Rights Watch (2018a)
- 69 Zaki (2016)

- 70 UN Women, UNDP, the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. 2018. Identifying Gaps in Theory and Practice of National Jurisdiction in the Arab Region
- 71 See <https://stats.oecd.org/> for country specific data
- 72 See for example Report on Women, Law and Judicial Decision Making in the Middle East and North Africa: Towards Gender Justice. Seminar, Amman, 14 June 2006 Organized by: UNESCO (Social and Human Sciences Sector, Paris) UNESCO Jordan National Office, Amman UNIFEM Bureau for the Arab States, Amman
- 73 IPU (2017)
- 74 IPU (2018a)
- 75 ESCWA (2017: 9)
- 76 IPU (2018b)
- 77 Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Qatar and Tunisia
- 78 See Krook (2014); O'Neil and Domingo (2016); ESCWA (2017)
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Based on data from the Quota Database. Available from <http://www.quotaproject.org> and cited in ESCWA (2017: 12)
- 81 ESCWA (2017)
- 82 UN Women (2018c)
- 83 <https://www.albawaba.com/news/how-syrian-war-shifting-role-women-politics-1035990>
- 84 IPU (2017)
- 85 IPU (2017)
- 86 ESCWA (2017); O'Neil and Domingo (2016)
- 87 O'Neil and Domingo (2016:18)
- 88 Tamarum et al (2018)
- 89 ESCWA (2017)
- 90 Tamarum et al (2018)
- 91 Coomaraswamy (2015a)
- 92 See Jarhum (2018)
- 93 Data compiled by Rasha Jarhum for report: Women and girls paying the heaviest price in Yemen (July 2018), Joint submission to the Universal Periodic Review (completed by members of the Women Solidarity Network: Awam Foundation, Ejad Foundation for Development, Foods4Humanity, Peace Track Initiative, Sawasiah Organization for Human Rights, and To Be Foundation for Rights and Freedoms, in collaboration with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom).
- Note that following the July (2018) submission a series of further talks took place, including in: London Wilton park consultative meeting where only 3 women out of 22 participants were invited; Geneva consultations only one woman (Hadi delegation) out of 24 members of both delegations participated; the Envoy also invited 8 women as a technical advisory group. The southern women block issued a statement in objection to the low representation of southern women in the advisory group. The Peace Track Initiative, WILPF with funding from UN Women sent a four women delegation to participate on the side lines - data provided by Rasha Jarhum (October, 2018).
- 94 Paffenholz et al (2016); O'Reilly et al (2015)
- 95 Stone (2015)
- 96 Diaz and Tordjman (2012).
- 97 The incoming SRSG for the UN's Iraq special political mission, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, will be female – the first female SRSG in the region.
- 98 Data provided by Rasha Jarhum
- 99 FIDH (2012)
- 100 Kapur (2017)
- 101 Anderson (2017)
- 102 An umbrella body which was created to represent the Syrian opposition in the planned Geneva peace talks in 2016
- 103 See Kapur (2017); Jarhum (2018)
- 104 Bahrain: Bahrain National Dialogue Proposals, Executive Summary, and Yemen: National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document.
- 105 Bahrain: Bahrain National Dialogue Proposals Executive Summary, National Action Charter of Bahrain; Iraq: Constitution of Iraq, Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period; Israel/Palestine: Annex II, Protocol Concerning Elections, Israeli Palestinian Interim Agreement on The West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II); Libya: Libyan Political Agreement (Sukhairat Agreement); Syria: UN Security Council Resolution 2254, Final Communiqué of the Action Group for Syria (Geneva Communiqué); Tunisia: "Charte d'Honneur des Partis Politiques, des Coalitions et des Candidats Indépendants pour les élections et les référendums de la République Tunisienne"; Yemen: The Peace and National Partnership Agreement, National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document, Agreement on the Implementation Mechanism for the Transition Process in Yemen in Accordance with the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC Implementation Mechanism).
- 106 Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (2017)
- 107 <http://peacemaker.un.org/yemen-transition-mechanism2011>; <https://www.fes-syria.org/research/womens-involvement-in-peace-security-and-transition-processes-in-the-arab-world/>
- 108 The GCC agreement in 2011 was signed by one woman in Yemen. Ms Amat Alrazak Hummad the social and labour affairs minister.
- 109 <https://www.peaceagreements.org/>
- 110 Bahrain: Bahrain National Dialogue Proposals, Executive Summary, and Yemen: National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document.
- 111 Bahrain: Bahrain National Dialogue Proposals Executive Summary, National Action Charter of Bahrain; Iraq: Constitution of Iraq, Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period; Israel/Palestine: Annex II, Protocol Concerning Elections, Israeli Palestinian Interim Agreement on The West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II); Libya: Libyan Political Agreement (Sukhairat Agreement); Syria: UN Security Council Resolution 2254, Final Communiqué of the Action Group for Syria (Geneva Communiqué); Tunisia: "Charte d'Honneur des Partis Politiques, des Coalitions et des Candidats Indépendants pour les élections et les référendums de la République Tunisienne"; Yemen: The Peace and National Partnership Agreement, National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document, Agreement on the Implementation Mechanism for the Transition Process in Yemen in Accordance with the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC Implementation Mechanism).
- 112 Libya: Libyan Political Agreement (Sukhairat Agreement); Palestine: The National Conciliation Document of the Prisoners (The Prisoner's Document) (2nd Version), The National Conciliation Document of the Prisoners (The Prisoner's Document) (1st Version); and Yemen: National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document, Agreement on the Implementation Mechanism for the Transition Process in Yemen in Accordance with the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC Implementation Mechanism).
- 113 Coomaraswamy (2015a)
- 114 Khattab and Myrntinen (2014)
- 115 Osman and Kassis (2014)
- 116 <http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/presscenter/articles/2017/12/06/women-municipal-police-strength-and-hope-to-accomplish-equality-in-the-society-.html>
- 117 ISWAW (2016)
- 118 Jarhum (2018)
- 119 <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/improving-peace-and-security-iraqi-communities-strengthening-role-women-policing>
- 120 Ramzi, nd
- 121 Kawar (2017)
- 122 Kawar, J. (2017)
- 123 Ghanem-Yazbeck (2015)
- 124 Montenegro (nd)
- 125 Dalton (2018)
- 126 <http://www.dcaf-tunisie.org/En/actives-partenaires/la-ligue-nationale-tunisienne-de-la-femme-policier-Intfp-et-le-dcaf-clotent-une-serie-dateliers-visant-a-renforcer-les-capacites-de-cette-association/77/10278>
- 127 Ali Ayad (2013)
- 128 Marroushi (2015: 14)
- 129 ESCWA (2017)
- 130 Jordanian National Commission for Women and UN Women (2017)
- 131 Khattab and Myrntinen (2014)
- 132 Ghazzaoui (2016: 7)
- 133 <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/womeninpk.shtml>
- 134 Coomaraswamy (2015b)
- 135 Hussein (2016)
- 136 <http://www.peacewomen.org/node/97297>
- 137 <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender>
- 138 Schomerus and El Taraboulsi-McCarthy (2017)

- 139 Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development - RASED and Search for Common Ground (2016)
- 140 Möller-Loswick (2017)
- 141 Ni Aolain (2016)
- 142 Möller-Loswick (2017)
- 143 <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/02/the-female-quran-experts-fighting-radical-islam-in-morocco/551996/>
- 144 <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/middle-east-and-north-africa.html>
- 145 World Bank (2018)
- 146 GBV IMS Steering Committee comprised of global GBV experts from the International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR, who produced Inter-Agency GBV guidelines on case management and survivor care (2017)
- 147 <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/overview/2018>
- 148 Anderson (2017: 69)
- 149 Khattab (2018)
- 150 GBV AoR (2017)
- 151 Nobel Women's Initiative and the Match International Women's Fund (2017)
- 152 Anderson (2017: 11)
- 153 Ibid.
- 154 Anderson and Myrntinen (2017: 11)
- 155 Mollet (2017)
- 156 Tabbara, and Rubin, (2018)
- 157 Heinze and Babbaad (2017); Farr and Boukhary (2017); Heinze and Stevens (2018)
- 158 Mollett (2017: 15)
- 159 Rayman et al (2016)
- 160 Muhareb (2017)
- 161 See: Richter-Devroe (2010)
- 162 Discussed by O'Rourke and Swaine (2018); Labonte and Curry (2016)
- 163 Coomaraswamy (2015a); Swaine and O'Rourke (2015)
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