Gender Equality:
A Foundation for Peace

CANADA'S
NATIONAL
ACTION PLAN
2017-2022

Gender Equality:
A Foundation for Peace

PROGRESS
REPORT
for
CANADA'S
NATIONAL
ACTION PLAN
2017-2022

MINE FREE WORLD

for the Implementation of the
United Nations Security Council
Resolutions on Women, Peace
and Security

Fiscal Year
2019-2020

Ge
A F

September 2021

Reporting on
Progress

Reflections on the Latest CNAP Report

Progress Report for
CANADA'S
NATIONAL
ACTION PLAN
2017-2022

for the Implementation of the
United Nations Security Council
Resolutions on Women, Peace
and Security

Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Progress Report for
CANADA'S
NATIONAL
ACTION PLAN
2017-2022

for the Implementation of the
United Nations Security Council
Resolutions on Women, Peace
and Security

Fiscal Year 2017-18

ISSN: 2563-1772 (Print)
2563-1780 (Online)

Women, Peace and Security Network - Canada

wpsn-canada.org

@WPSNCanada

Contact us at:
coordinator@wpsn-canada.org

Table of Contents

Acronyms

ATT   Arms Trade Treaty
CAF   Canadian Armed Forces
CCYPS   Canadian Coalition for Youth Peace and Security
CEDAW   Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFLI   Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
CIRNAC   Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
CNAP   Canadian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
CRC   Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO   Civil society organization
DND   Department of National Defence, Canada
DoJ   Department of Justice, Canada
FCAS   Fragile and conflict-affected states
FFP   Feminist foreign policy
FIAP   Feminist International Assistance Policy
FY   Fiscal year
GAC   Global Affairs Canada
GBV   Gender-Based Violence
GoC   Government of Canada
IRCC   Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
ISC   Indigenous Services Canada
LGBTIQ+   Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Plus[1]
MENA   Middle East and North Africa
NAP   National Action Plan
NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSESGY   Office of the Special Envoy for the Secretary-General on Yemen
PS   Public Safety
PSOPs   Peace and Stabilization Operations Program at Global Affairs Canada
PTI   Peace Track Initiative
RCMP   Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SDGs   Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV   Sexual and gender-based violence
TPNW   Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

1: We recognize that there are many different formulations of this acronym and term including 2SLGBTQQIA+ / 2-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual Plus. We have chosen to use the shorter form throughout this report.

TOC	Theory of change
UN	United Nations
UNMHA	United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement
UNOPs	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNVIM	United Nations Verification and Inspection Mission for Yemen
USD	United States dollars
WAGE	Women and Gender Equality Canada
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WPSN-C	Women, Peace and Security Network - Canada
WTAG	Women Technical Advisory Group (Yemen)
WVL	Women's Voice and Leadership program
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

Introduction

Beth Woroniuk, Kristine St-Pierre & Katrina Leclerc

As we write this introduction, headlines are dominated by events in Afghanistan. There are heartbreaking stories of people trying to leave the country and many fears for what will happen next. There are reports of violence and the Taliban targeting women leaders (and their supporters). Women have been told not to come to their government jobs and to leave universities. There are grave uncertainties regarding girls' education and women's mobility rights.

For almost two decades, the Government of Canada has had significant involvement in Afghanistan - politically, militarily, and providing development assistance. The military intervention was often justified by saying it supported the rights of women and girls (including girls' right to education). In 2019-2020, Afghanistan was the top recipient of Canadian international assistance. Canada's development programming has included investments in education, health care, training for the security forces, and support to women's organizations.

This current crisis provides a litmus test for Canada's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments. We will see how the Canadian response incorporates the WPS pillars of participation (will there be women in any negotiations aimed at influencing Afghanistan's future and how will Canada advocate for this?), protection (what concrete steps will Canada take – alone or with allies – to protect and promote the rights of women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people?), prevention (how will Canada's efforts look to find long-term solutions and resolve armed conflicts in Afghanistan and the region?), and humanitarian responses (how will our humanitarian interventions and investments incorporate a gender perspective and address gender inequalities?).

While media reports and official statements have mentioned the possibility of rolling back gains on women's rights and the threats to activists, the majority of the focus has been on supporting people who worked with Canada's military and the Canadian embassy. Will we start to hear more about what is happening to women and girls?

At the same time, Afghanistan is not the only crisis in our world today: Haiti, Lebanon, Tigray, Mali, Myanmar, Ukraine… As well, there is growing interest in the relevance of the WPS agenda inside Canada, especially as it relates to issues of reconciliation and security of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. Canada has a reputation for global leadership on WPS issues. There are many tests of that leadership right now.

2019-2020 CNAP Progress Report

In June 2021 the Government of Canada (GoC) released the progress report for fiscal year (FY) 2019-2020 on Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP). The report was nine months late, given the CNAP commitment to release a report each September following the end of the FY in March. The report includes an overview, summary, and an annex that includes progress reports from Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Department of Justice (DoJ), Public Safety Canada, Royal Canadian Mounted Policy (RCMP), and Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE).

Since the launch of the second NAP in November 2017, the Government has published three progress reports. The report for fiscal year 2017-2018 was issued in September 2018 which, for the most part, covered the first five months of implementation. The report for fiscal year 2018-2019 was not released until early 2020, given the federal election in the fall of 2019.

The latest progress report follows a similar pattern to the two earlier reports. The overview report is primarily a listing of specific initiatives that supported the five CNAP objectives. As well, there is some analysis of the context, a brief section on challenges, and welcome data on WPS investments.

The two previous reports provided a summary table noting that the Government was 'on track' or 'mostly on track' to achieve the CNAP results. This table is not updated in the current report.

Initial Commentary

The chapters in this publication reflect on this most recent progress report. In this introduction, we offer initial thoughts and questions.

First, it is frustrating to read a document that reports on events that seem so far in the distance. Although there are a few references in the overview report to recent events, the report's relevance is questionable when it is so far out of date. Issues that have dominated our attention in recent times (COVID-19; decolonizing as well as 'queering' the WPS agenda; feminist foreign policy; youth, peace and security; anti-racist and anti-oppression perspectives; WPS in non-conflict contexts; WPS and the climate crisis; etc.) all receive only scant attention. Given the timeframe under discussion the report feels slightly out of touch.

Second, despite the first observation, the breadth of Canadian activity and investment in WPS initiatives is impressive. It is clear that actions have been taken from small Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) projects to large investments (like the Elsie Initiative).

There are examples of policy advocacy on a wide range of issues including disarmament, peacebuilding, and NATO's sexual exploitation and abuse policy. The Government has used multiple levels including funding gender advisors, donor advisory groups, chairing global networks (like the WPS Focal Points), and 'friends of' groups. A key achievement of this reporting period was the naming of Canada's WPS Ambassador, a move that many Network members applauded. The current ambassador, Jacqueline O'Neill, has been a key advocate and actor in advancing Canada's WPS goals and working towards a clearer articulation of Canadian policy.

Third, information on CNAP resourcing remains complicated. Annex A of the overall report notes an overall increase in WPS funding from GAC sources ($679M in 2019-2020, compared to $497M in the previous year). As well, there do seem to be more examples of funding to women peacebuilders (a long-held priority of WPSN-C members). This is movement in a positive direction. However, there does not appear to be data on full-time staff working on WPS, investments in capacity building, and budget allocations from departments other than GAC. Nor are there indications of whether these internal investments have increased or decreased compared to earlier years.

Fourth, as mentioned in previous analyses, despite the considerable efforts that have gone into the preparation of the report, it is still difficult to understand what progress is actually being made. The report still focuses primarily on activities. There are glimpses of analysis and we are grateful for those insights. For example, the report acknowledges that there are still gaps in understanding the WPS agenda across implementing government partners and feminist analysis. But, overall, it is not clear what results are being achieved and what learning is happening. There seem to be few, if any, links to the two earlier reports and little assessment of where overall implementation is more than halfway through the CNAP implementation period.

The CNAP included plans for a mid-term review and this is now underway. It will focus on reporting and coordination. However, the CNAP is well-passed the mid-term of its implementation, and given the budget allocated, the current review is narrow in scope. We are hopeful that there will be insights from the mid-term review, but it will not provide an assessment of overall progress to date.

In addition to the annual progress reports, another accountability mechanism is the WPS Advisory Group. This joint government-civil society body has provided opportunities to exchange views and learn about CNAP implementation in a more topical manner. We are grateful to government officials for their engagement in this mechanism.

This document

As with previous publications (earlier this year, and in 2018, 2015, and 2014), we asked Network members for their thoughts and analysis. Again, the response was encouraging. The chapters in this report cover a range of issues and raise important questions about Canada's WPS efforts and the CNAP reporting process.

The opinions and views in each chapter are those of each author and do not necessarily represent the views of all Network members. Nor do they necessarily represent the views of the authors' organizations.

We hope that this analysis contributes to the strengthening of Canada's implementation of the WPS agenda in the years ahead – both the completion of this second CNAP and future versions of the national action plan. We are grateful for the spirit of open discussion that characterizes government-civil society relations on WPS issues in Canada.

The Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada

The WPSN-C is a volunteer network of over 90 Canadian organizations and individuals committed to:

1. promoting and monitoring the efforts of the Government of Canada to implement and support the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security; and,
2. providing a forum for exchange and action by Canadian civil society on issues related to women, peace and security.

The Network was formed in 2012 and was incorporated as a not-for-profit entity in 2019. We are grateful for funding from Global Affairs Canada this past year that has supported our contributions to the WPS Advisory Group and consultations linked to the WPS Focal Points Network. Our work is driven by volunteers and we are grateful for the ongoing support, energy and commitment of our members.

More information on the WPSN-C is available on our website: wpsn-canada.org.

Time to Rethink the Annual Progress Report?

*Beth Woroniuk &
Kristine St-Pierre*

In theory an annual, public report on the implementation of Canada's WPS National Action Plan (CNAP) is a logical piece of the overall reporting plan. The CNAP describes the annual progress report as a means for all partners to track and report their progress, and "to update their implementation plans based on the annual review." The CNAP also views these reports as a means of "[enhancing] the dialogue with civil society and parliamentarians on Canada's role in implementing the WPS agenda" (p. 16).

However, despite three reports on the current NAP and four reports on the previous NAP (2011 – 2016), the formula for a clear and useful progress report remains elusive.

It is evident that much effort is invested in producing the progress report every year. Each implementing government department prepares their own report, documenting actions taken, progress toward targets and data on indicators. There are many examples of ongoing or completed activities. The Global Affairs Canada (GAC) Report alone is 139 pages and reports on 96 indicators. However, not all departmental reports are that long or that detailed. The report from Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) is only seven pages and outlines four activity streams with no indicators.

Drawing on these departmental reports, the WPS team at GAC produces an overview report that – in theory – should 'roll up' the results achieved by each department and provide a summary of progress toward the achievement of each of the five objectives in the CNAP. This year's overview report provides information on the context, examples of initiatives undertaken during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, as well as analysis of challenges and a look ahead.

The ambition of the government on the WPS agenda is clear from the breadth of examples provided. The overview report details projects in various countries, flagship initiatives (such as the Elsie Initiative), diplomatic outreach on normative issues, engagement in multilateral organizations, and more. There are also initial glimpses as to how the Government sees the WPS agenda being applied inside Canada.

In addition, a section on 'challenges' is now included in the progress reports, possibly in response to questions raised in earlier WPSN-C publications. The challenges section in this latest progress report is much improved from previous years. In a refreshing change from many government reports, this section goes beyond outlining external challenges and names a number of internal challenges including uneven understanding of 'fundamental WPS concepts and feminist principles' and the 'perception of the Action Plan as being an annual reporting exercise rather than a guiding strategic framework' (p. 16).

This current progress report also looks professional and is well-produced, contrary to some of the earlier progress reports. This care in the 'look and feel' of the report helps reinforce the sense that WPS is a priority in Canada's foreign policy.

Questions Remain

Despite these positive elements, the 2019-2020 Progress Report leaves many questions unanswered. Even with all of the work that goes into the preparation of the Progress Report, it still falls short of delivering a compelling narrative or overview of Canada's WPS efforts, successes, and shortcomings.

What results have been achieved?

The 'results' section of the Progress Report primarily consists of lists of examples of initiatives and activities. There are few examples of how Canadian investments and projects have made a difference.

The report itself acknowledges this challenge: "Demonstrating change through the annual progress report remained difficult, despite efforts to improve the implementation plans and reporting process. While some of the measurable results during the report period… met the immediate or intermediate outcome levels in the Action Plan's theory of change…, most were mere outputs, such as "the number of persons" (p. 17).

We are now more than halfway through the implementation of the current CNAP, yet there is no analysis of cumulative progress. While it is often next to impossible to talk about 'results' in one year, there is an expectation that by the time three years have passed there would be some evidence of outcomes (even if the Canadian investments only have a contribution to these outcomes, rather than a direct attribution relationship).[2]

The previous two progress reports included a table that attempted to show overall progress toward the achievement of the CNAP's objectives. This has not been continued in this report. Perhaps there are doubts about its usefulness as it noted that all the Government was 'on track' or 'mostly on track' to achieve the objective without an explanation of what targets were being considered.[3]

How does this year differ from last year (or the year before)?

Each Progress Report focuses on a specific fiscal year and there is little analysis of how this year compared to the previous year or the one before that. Particularly at the level of the overview reports, each annual report seems to exist in isolation from reports in previous years.

There are some references to how something has 'increased' but there is little analysis of what is new, where energies have been ramped up, where an activity has been downgraded or stopped because it was found to be ineffective, etc. Linking up analysis with information in previous progress reports would strengthen this process.

There is little evidence in the Progress Report that learning on WPS issues is happening in each of the implementing partners or collectively in the government as a whole.

How are the departmental plans 'rolled up' into a comprehensive report?

The WPS agenda is very broad. It covers a wide range of goals, themes, and initiatives. This is very evident in both the overview report and the departmental reports. Similarly, there is a wide range of Canadian initiatives across partner departments. One of the strengths of the CNAP is the number of departments that have signed on to the national action plan. However, one of the challenges in the reporting process is how to take what is in the departmental reports and form a unified overall summary report.

The summary report organizes examples from the departmental reports around the five CNAP objectives, listing specific initiatives that correspond to each objective. The primary purpose of the departmental reports appears to be a source of examples. There seems to be a lack of reflection and analysis on what happens in each department and how that then contributes to an overall, linked-up Canadian approach to WPS issues.

What are useful targets and indicators?

Some of the departmental progress reports note completed activities and indicators.

2: The Progress Report mentions 'attribution' as a challenge (p. 17), however it is valid to talk about contributions to outcomes, outlining plausible links between Canadian investments and broader outcomes. It is unlikely that any reader of the Progress Report expects to see direct causation linkages to broad stability or security outcomes.
3: The GAC report provides data on targets achieved, noting that the number of targets that have been achieved or surpassed has increased from 5 in FY2017-2018, to 14 in FY2018-2019, to 20 in FY2019-2020 (out of 96 targets).

The use of baselines and indicators is often identified as a necessary component of a good NAP, but here, too, this customary wisdom does not deliver a worthwhile product. The use of indicators appears to be a mechanical exercise, often focusing on numbers ("percentage of courses that integrated gender policies, perspectives, and/or analytical tools" or "creation and upkeep of resource bank") without context or analysis.

There is little or no analysis in the report on whether the original targets continue to be valid or why targets have not been achieved.

Past analysis by our Network has noted the importance of qualitative indicators, in addition to the quantitative ones. Admittedly this is challenging but it is still worth pursuing.

What are relevant domestic WPS initiatives?

There have been consistent calls for the CNAP to look within Canada. It is a challenge to report on this element, as the CNAP is relatively silent in this domain. There have been signals that this will feature more prominently in the next CNAP, but for the current CNAP, this remains a challenge.

For example, there are a number of domestic initiatives listed in both the foreword and as contributing to Objective 2 of the CNAP, which focuses on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers and other international personnel. The highlighted initiatives relate to national SGBV initiatives (for example, the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking) and the response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. But there is no analysis of why or how these fit within the WPS agenda. Is every national SGBV initiative automatically part of Canada's WPS response? How has the global WPS agenda informed or contributed to Canada's national policies on security and violence? What are the links among conflict, insecurity, gender inequality, and peace that underpin policy analysis and response within Canada?

Where Next?

Most of the contributions in this publication reflect on how Canada is implementing its WPS commitments. This chapter takes a somewhat different approach. We are asking questions about the report itself, whether it provides us with a compelling narrative and if it gives us the information we need to understand progress and gaps. The latest progress report is full of information but it remains hard to digest and leaves the reader with many 'so what' questions.

The CNAP Mid-Term Review that is currently underway will look at two issues: reporting and coordination. This is an excellent opportunity to explore, in more detail, what makes a good progress report. It may be useful to locate the progress reports in a more detailed monitoring and evaluation plan.

Much time, substantial effort, and significant human resources are invested in the production of the annual progress reports. Yet it is not clear if and how the progress reports are being used by the implementing departments or if they are an effective vehicle from either public accountability or a communications perspective. Perhaps it is time for a rethink of how Canada reports on its WPS progress, achievements, investments, learning, and challenges.

Tracking Progress on the CNAP: Why We Need a Feminist Approach to Data Collection

*Rebecca Tiessen &
Kate Grantham*

Previous progress reports on Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 show the CNAP objectives are either "mostly on track" or "on track" to be achieved. The recently released 2019-2020 CNAP Progress Report also suggests that Canada remains on track in meeting its objectives, highlighting a long list of activities and strategies that are self-described as "considerable progress." These reports show Canada's progress on the CNAP in a positive light; they also raise important questions about how progress is tracked, as well as the tools and strategies employed in data collection. More broadly, Canada's commitments to feminist policy and a feminist approach demand greater attention to how data is collected, by whom, and for what purpose.

In this chapter, we argue for a feminist approach to data collection that includes tools and strategies that enrich our understanding of the impact (results) as well as the process (methods) of tracking change in WPS programming. A feminist approach to data collection examines structural barriers and enabling factors for gender equality, as well as individual and collective experiences of empowerment. Feminist methodology hinges on four interdependent characteristics: it is 1) locally-led and context-specific, 2) participatory and inclusive, 3) intersectional, and 4) flexible and adaptive. In this chapter, we explain these characteristics and their significance to data collection on WPS. A feminist methodology offers new opportunities and approaches for filling some of the gaps in data collection stemming from the 2019-2020 CNAP Progress Report.

Tracking Impacts of the CNAP

As a measure of impact and success, the 2019-2020 CNAP Progress Report highlights growing funding disbursements, noting an overall increase in Global Affairs Canada (GAC) disbursed funding to WPS projects in 2019-2020 of approximately $679 million, up from $497 million in 2018-2019. The 2019-2020 report also outlines how impacts are captured, including GAC's commitment to tracking the intended gender equality outcomes of its WPS programming investments using its gender equality coding or marker system. The figures provided in the 2019-2020 report include 261 GAC-funded WPS projects that fully integrated gender considerations (GE-02) and 127 projects that aimed to advance gender equality (GE-03).[4]

Tracking program considerations and outcomes using these measures is a valuable start to data collection. However, a feminist methodology explores more deeply the nature of program impacts (both successes and limitations), the structural barriers and enabling factors for gender equality, and individuals' diverse experiences of empowerment as they relate to WPS initiatives.

The 2019-2020 CNAP Progress Report itself notes that measuring and reporting on results continue to be a challenge. A report published by the Women, Peace and Security Network - Canada (WPSN-C) reaffirms this challenge, noting, among other issues, that evidence provided in the progress report lacks independent evaluation or external assessment (p. 5).

4: Canada defines GE-02 (gender equality is fully integrated) as an initiative that will result in observable changes in behaviour, practice or performance that contribute to gender equality, and GE-03 (gender equality is targeted) as an initiative whose principal objective is gender equality.

In order for Canada to more effectively measure the impact of its CNAP objectives, there needs to be a greater commitment to a feminist approach to data collection by employing a feminist methodology.

An Introduction to Feminist Methodology

A feminist methodology is an approach to research and data collection that prioritizes gender relations as a category of analysis and seeks to challenge inequality and transform power relations.[5] This requires going beyond tracking funding disbursements and gender considerations, or counting the number of women who participate in projects. Instead, feminist methodology adopts a more comprehensive and intersectional approach to understanding the structural barriers and enabling factors for gender equality and empowerment. At its core, feminist methodology is about understanding power dynamics, including in the process of conducting research. It puts power-related questions at the centre of the research process, informing everything from design, to data collection, to analysis, to using the research findings.

Below we outline four core considerations for adopting a feminist methodology for research on gender equality and women's empowerment in CNAP programs: locally-based knowledge and expertise, participatory and inclusive processes for data collection, emphasis on intersectional realities, and flexible and adaptive tools and strategies.

Locally-led and context-specific

Gender equality and women's empowerment are contested concepts, in part because they are unique to individuals' specific circumstances and experiences. A feminist approach to data collection on gender equality and empowerment begins by having participants define these concepts for themselves, in relation to their own contexts, perspectives and experiences.

Feminist data collection thus begins from the culturally-specific context in which information is being collected, and with the ability of community members, project participants or beneficiaries to define their experiences by and for themselves.

Locally-based feminist researchers are crucial facilitators of feminist data collection because of their positionality, knowledge and understanding of the local context. Local experts can encourage safe, inclusive and context-appropriate discussions about women's experiences with issues related to peace, conflict and security. They are best placed to ask probing questions in order to uncover underlying power dimensions in program activities, using their knowledge of the local culture and norms to prepare contextualized questions and examples. Moreover, because of their 'insider' status or position, participants might be more comfortable and willing to share their experiences with researchers who are locally-based.

Participatory and inclusive

Feminist methodology recognizes that women and other marginalized groups have different experiences based on their position and status in society, and those differences need to be better captured in research. Traditionally, these perspectives have not been privileged, heard or acted upon in evaluations of peace and security initiatives. In contrast, feminist methodology prioritizes these groups and seeks to understand the impacts of initiatives from their perspectives, rather than obtaining information only from local leaders or authorities (typically powerful men in their communities). It also seeks to recognize and mitigate the power imbalance between researcher and participant through locally-led, participatory and inclusive data collection methods. This requires researchers to be reflexive about their own positionality and how it impacts every aspect of the research process, and to be thoughtful and intentional in making decisions.

5: For more information on feminist research methodology, visit: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13552070701391086

Feminist methodology also ensures a highly participatory and inclusive data collection process, whereby research participants play a role in designing the research parameters and defining the concepts used. The researcher also actively engages participants using participatory tools and strategies that encourage all individuals to share their experiences. This may require the use of different methods such as creating small discussion groups, conducting some one-on-one interviews, or using techniques such as 'pass the talking stick,' etc. so that everyone has a turn to contribute, and no single voice dominates the discussion.

Intersectional

Feminist methodology is intersectional. It recognizes the ways that interlocking aspects of identity (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, class, ethnicity, and religion, among others) shape individuals' experiences of oppression and privilege, including in the context of WPS initiatives. More than simply committing to diversity and inclusion in selecting research participants, feminist methodology seeks to understand the interplay of identities and social positions and how these shape participants' access to power, resources and opportunities. For example, some groups or individuals may face discrimination in society on the basis of one or more identity factors, and their ability to participate in, and benefit from, WPS initiatives may be limited as a result. An intersectional lens helps uncover individuals' lived realities which are shaped by overlapping forms of privilege and oppression based on multiple identity factors.

Flexible and adaptive

Feminist methodology employs a wide range of methods, both qualitative and quantitative, in order to capture individuals' experiences and perspectives. The approach is flexible, allowing the local context and participants to guide the questions asked and the conversations facilitated.

Ultimately, feminist data collection is about capturing the rich details of participants' self-defined experiences of gender equality and empowerment, and tracking the barriers and opportunities that contribute to a particular result. Flexibility in the data collection process means that facilitators can use mixed-methods to capture detailed stories and examples that bring a deeper understanding of the barriers and opportunities that individuals encounter with respect to gender equality and empowerment, as well as peace and security.

Flexibility in data collection can also extend to the format of data collection. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the switch to online platforms for data collection created new ways of reaching people and collecting information from community partners and project participants. Alternative strategies for remote data collection using cell phones (e.g. phone interviews, SMS-based surveys, etc.) remains an important consideration for research on women, peace and security and for accessing communities in conflict-affected areas.

Applying a Feminist Methodology to Research and Data Collection for the CNAP

The four characteristics of feminist methodology explained here are interrelated and interdependent. Data collection that is locally-led and context-specific, participatory and inclusive, intersectional, and flexible and adaptive requires well-trained facilitators who are knowledgeable of the local contexts and capable of asking probing questions to uncover structural barriers to, and/or opportunities for, empowerment. Locally-based knowledge is therefore central to feminist research in terms of the research design, data collection, and analysis process. Hiring locally-based researchers to conduct data collection for WPS initiatives is an important first step in a feminist approach to tracking progress in the CNAP.

Without this vital information, programming targeting gender equality outcomes as part of the CNAP can miss important opportunities for tackling persistent structural inequalities, or uncovering strategies for success.

A feminist methodology is, therefore, in line with meeting the first objective of the CNAP – to "increase the meaningful participation of women, women's organizations and networks in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict state-building" (n.p.) – specifically, the meaningful participation of locally-based feminist researchers. Meeting the additional objectives of the CNAP also hinges on an inclusive and well-designed feminist approach to data collection that can more substantively shed light on the level and nature of progress that is achieved.

The Case for Intersectionality+ in Canada's Women, Peace, and Security Programming

Erin Campeau, Hilary Clauson & Remie Abi-Farrage

AzMina is a digital, community-led organization driven by LBTQ[6] people and women of colour based in Brazil. Through the creative use of digital platforms, they advocate for women's rights while advancing a critical understanding of race and ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation. AzMina develops far-reaching, awareness-raising digital campaigns that mobilize readers, influencers, social networks and the national and international press.

United Sisterhood Alliance is a network of four Cambodian women's rights organizations—representing sex workers, artivists,[7] garment workers, rural workers, youth, and farmers—that work together to advance labour rights and justice and build feminist movements for socio-economic and political change. Through their united movement, they multiply the collective power of their organizations, simultaneously strengthening their shared efforts to defend the rights of rural and marginalized workers.

Women Now for Development is led by Syrian women and operates within Syria as well as in neighbouring countries. The organization is dedicated to addressing sexual and gender-based violence as well as strengthening women's political, social, and economic rights. Their holistic approach to supporting women, youth, and girls includes protection and psychosocial support, training and skills building, and participation in decision-making processes. Through it all, they are building collective power at the grassroots level and growing an intergenerational feminist movement for transformative change.

These organizations offer a quick glimpse of the vital work being undertaken by women's rights organizations and feminist movements worldwide. They are at the forefront of change, actively reimagining and recreating a more gender-equal world. As a partner to feminist movements operating in some of the most complex environments in the world, the Equality Fund has a unique vantage point with respect to the power and promise of intersectional feminist movements. What follows is a brief overview of lessons learned through the Equality Fund's grantee partners and, in light of these learnings, reflections on the 2019-2020 Progress Report on Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP), with a focus on the summary and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) chapters.

The Equality Fund's partners work at the intersections of workers' solidarity and Indigenous rights, LGBTIQ+ rights and racial justice. Led by women, youth, and non-binary people in all their diversity and embedded in the communities they serve, they have the ability to work across issues to advance peace that is deep and lasting. Peace, in this sense, includes but also extends beyond open, armed conflict to regions experiencing fragility, instability, and precarious human rights.

Today, definitions of intersectionality–a term first coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s–tend to centre around the analysis of how people experience discrimination differently depending on their overlapping identities. While this analysis is crucial to addressing systems of oppression, the Equality Fund's partners' efforts offer an additional perspective.

6: This is the acronym used by AzMina.
7: "Artivists" use art in their activism.

Through them, we see that intersectionality is not just a lens through which to view oppression but an active tool for social justice, including conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict recovery. Let us call it "Intersectionality+." It is with such women's rights organizations in mind that we reflect on the CNAP's progress report.

Throughout the 2019-2020 Progress Report, intersectionality refers to the Government of Canada's utilization of gender-based analysis plus (GBA+). According to the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), GBA+ is a process that ensures that all aspects of diversity (gender, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, mental or physical disability, etc.) are considered when an initiative is analyzed. Following from this understanding, the progress report's glossary entry for "multiple and intersecting discrimination" is: "Individuals have layered identities based on intersecting factors [….] The discrimination they face is multidimensional and its various components cannot be addressed separately" (p. 43).

Too often, intersectionality is reduced to a list of diverse groups. As in the progress report, it is framed almost exclusively in terms of the discrimination and other challenges individuals with certain identity factors confront. As a result, the agency of these individuals is often reduced, especially with respect to collective action. Our concept of intersectionality+ recognizes that intersectionality can also be a tool for social justice when wielded by women's rights organizations and feminist movements. There are a number of areas where CNAP implementation and reporting would be strengthened by using this more expansive definition of intersectionality.

Develop WPS-specific GBA+ training, with case studies

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) staff working on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, including the Partnerships for Development Branch and the Peace Stabilization Operations Program, have the CNAP goal of completing WAGE GBA+ training.

While this training is a good starting point, the course is primarily for domestic policymaking and program delivery, drawing on limited examples of individuals residing in Canada. It does not speak to the complexities of individuals living in conflict zones and insecurity, nor does it speak to a government official's challenge as an outsider striving to understand these contexts and the most effective interventions to help diverse communities. GAC could develop and deliver WPS-specific GBA+ training that draws upon case studies of women's rights organizations (like the examples above) in conflict settings. This WPS/GBA+ training could be developed in consultation with activists from global South women's rights organizations and feminist movements.

Seek out the many perspectives women's rights organizations offer

The CNAP progress report and GAC chapter refer a number of times (53 to be exact) to integrating "gender perspectives" in myriad WPS initiatives, including projects, policy documents, strategies, action plans, training, bilateral programming, organizational development, and UN Resolutions. While this breadth of effort is impressive, details on its depth are notably absent from the report. Namely, how do government officials glean these perspectives, and do they actively seek out diverse viewpoints? There is a significant difference between a government official putting on a "gender hat" versus hearing directly from individuals who live at the intersections of multiple identities. A gender perspective alone is incomplete. Women's rights organizations can offer the perspectives of women, youth, and non-binary people in all their diversity who lead them, constitute them, and are served by them.

Partner with women's rights organizations and movements to advance shared priorities

At the crux of embracing intersectionality as a tool for social justice is partnering with and adequately resourcing women's rights organizations and feminist movements.

Too often intersectionality efforts begin and end with consulting diverse populations.

Take the progress report's example of access to justice with regard to sexual and gender-based violence in Guatemala (p. 15-16). In 2016, Guatemala delivered the first sentence in a national court for sexual violence and domestic slavery during an internal armed conflict. The report then notes that maintaining access to justice for this type of crime has been challenging (for example, in 2019 a court dismissed the case of sexual violence committed against Achí women in the 1980s). In response, Canada, in partnership with the United States Embassy, created an Indigenous women's platform, a dialogue space for 25 Indigenous women leaders and government representatives.

The CNAP progress report does not speculate on the initial success in terms of access to justice, nor on subsequent set-backs. And there is inadequate analysis of how being a woman and being Indigenous, among other identities that may be at play, factored into them. Additionally, details on the roles, if any, of Guatemalan women's rights organizations and movements in Canada's intervention are not provided. Well-resourced, they could offer an informed, effective, ongoing means for Indigenous women leaders to continue their advocacy, as well as a constellation of related supports, akin to Women Now for Development in Syria (example above).

Strengthen the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives to better meet the needs of women's rights organizations and feminist movements

The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) provides modest (on average $28,000), short-term funding for small-scale projects in more than 120 countries eligible for official development assistance. The CNAP progress report notes that 38 local women's rights organizations in fragile and conflict-affected states received CFLI funding (p.18). Beyond listing the CFLI's 2018-2019 thematic priorities, the report does not speak to the kinds of organizations that are prioritized for funding.

Women's rights organizations and feminist movements have a comparative advantage in intervening at the intersections of issues—work that is both needed and under-resourced. Those that are led by and represent individuals and groups who have been historically marginalized and discriminated against should be prioritized. And given the complexity of working at these intersections, especially in conflict and insecure settings, funding should be core (as opposed to project-specific), flexible, and multi-year. This kind of funding helps grantees be responsive to multi-issue and changing needs, as expressed by the communities they serve. The CFLI could adjust its funding practices to better meet the needs of women's rights organizations and feminist movements.

The groundwork for taking an Intersectionality+ approach in WPS already exists. Canada is both a catalytic member of the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action and a leader of the Generation Equality Forum Action Coalition on feminist movements and leadership. But more consistent dialogues and discussions are needed–ones that meaningfully engage the women whose lived experiences can inform pathways to peace. Further recognizing and supporting the work of intersectional feminist movements as a tool for social justice will advance the WPS agenda for women, youth, and non-binary people in all their diversity.

"Women and Youth": Creating Real Space for Young Women in Canada's Implementation of the WPS agenda

Alexandria Bohémier & Shayne Wong

A young woman is both young and a woman at the same time which is why there is significant underline synergy between the Women Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda. Because of this nexus, Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) is relevant to Youth, Peace and YPS actors, specifically young women, because they are impacted by the implementation of both agendas simultaneously. The 2019-2020 Progress Report demonstrates a dedicated and vast approach by the government to further the implementation of the WPS agenda. However, the report also highlights that there is a great deal of work that still needs to be done to ensure the WPS agenda is implemented domestically and globally in a full and meaningful way. In order to do this, the approach to the agenda must be from an intersectional perspective to ensure no one is left behind.

Intersectionality, a term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, is the understanding that each identity an individual has holds its own level of inequality, and that when someone holds overlapping identities, the inequalities they experience overlap and intensify as well. Within the context of the WPS agenda, a key example of this is the overlapping of identities between age and gender - this is especially true in terms of the inclusion of young women. To ensure that young women are participating in full and meaningful ways, recognition that young women have unique experiences, skills, expertise, and needs that differ from those of older women and children is needed. This is important in practice because when multiple age groups are treated as one and the same, the specific needs and experiences associated with different age categories will not be properly addressed or included in peace and security work.

In order to ensure the continued progress of the CNAP and of Canada's overall work in WPS, recognizing young women as a unique group, and ensuring their full and meaningful participation, is key.

The 2019-2020 Progress Report makes reference to various groups such as children, adolescents, youth, and young people. However, despite the specific naming of such groups, youth are commonly referenced as "women and youth" or are often used in connection with children and young teenagers. Additionally, it is not clear what age groups are being referenced by these terms. Adolescents and young people have different needs and experiences from other groups and cannot be lumped under the same categories. The Progress Report and future work to implement the WPS agenda would benefit immensely from the inclusion of age-disaggregated data to show success as well as areas for improvement within specific age groups of women rather than lumping them together and not creating sustainable peace for all age groups.

UN Security Council Resolution 2250 defined youth as being between the ages of 18 and 29, recognizing that there are varying age brackets used to define youth around the world. However, there is no consensus within the UN in terms of the definitions of children and youth, however, the Convention and the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines children as anyone under the age of 18. Organizations as well lack consensus in the definition of youth as some recognize youth being up to the age of 29 while others go as high as 35. For example, the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security (CCYPS) defines youth as anyone between the ages of 18 and 30. Statistics Canada defines youth as individuals aged 15 to 34.

Because of this lack of clarity surrounding age groups, in addition to reports such as this Progress Report using terms such as adolescent and youth interchangeably, the experiences of young women are either left out or data surrounding their engagement and contributions are unclear or improperly recorded. It is essential that the unique experiences, expertise, and skills that young people bring to the WPS agenda be recognized because they make up a substantial amount of the population affected by this agenda and are the generation who will carry on this work in the future.

The perspective of young women is unique because they experience double marginalization as both a young person and a woman. In 2020, around 13 percent of the Canadian population were between the ages of 18 and 30. This number may seem low in comparison to children who made up around 21 percent of the population. However, considering the fact that 13 percent of the population fell within a twelve-year age range, the number is hardly insignificant. Additionally, at a global level, youth are currently the world's largest population with over 1.85 billion young people. This percentage of the population falls somewhere in between children and adults and have needs and experiences separate from those of other age groups. Therefore, the work of young people within the field of peace and security should be recognized.

There seems to be no shortage of unpaid internships or volunteer experiences available for young people to build and expand upon their skills and experience. The GAC report references internships and volunteer opportunities that had been made available for young people under the Partnerships for Development Innovation Branch (p. 42). These opportunities can be integral for the development of young people by gaining real-world experience and expanding the skills and knowledge that they may have already acquired in life, such as in school. However, problems can arise is in terms of finding similar opportunities for pay. Recent years have seen many new graduates struggling to find jobs, leading to a youth unemployment crisis.

This crisis has seen one in four new graduates between the ages of 25 and 29 under-employed; this is an issue in which young people are over-represented. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the rates of unemployment among young people have been further exacerbated. The consequences of unemployment among young people can have negative effects well into the future leaving them at a further disadvantage. Additionally, because many young people engage in peace and security work as volunteers outside of other jobs and school, they are not always provided with the same opportunities as those who are able to work in the field full time causing another barrier for their meaningful engagement.

It is important that young people be included at all levels, however, this inclusion should be implemented in a manner that challenges tokenization of young people, ensuring real tangible representation and collaboration. The participation of young people is not "just for show," or as an afterthought. Young people should be included in a full and meaningful way at all levels and throughout processes, from development to implementation to monitoring. Additionally, attention needs to be paid to ensure that the voices of the most marginalized communities are being heard and included in these processes. Advocacy around the inclusion of young people, particularly in a detokenizing manner, has been a part of the work for networks, such as the CCYPS, who push not for a seat at the table but for the table to be rebuilt in collaboration and partnership with young people. Young people, and young women in particular, do not need to be told what they need. Rather, they should be listened to on how the WPS agenda can be further implemented within their communities. All too often, the contributions and recommendations of young people are overlooked or are only considered in "youth-specific" conversations. Additionally, consultation sessions with young people are more of a check-box exercise rather than spaces where their voices are actually heard and taken seriously.

The current CNAP has a largely international focus and the work that Canada has been doing with WPS abroad is commendable. The 2019-2020 Progress Report reflected this with the majority of the report discussing international work with minimal reference to domestic issues. However, there is a great deal of work in terms of peace and security domestically that should be prioritized as well. The work that the Canadian government has started in terms of the recognition and inclusion of, and collaboration with, young people needs to continue both internationally and domestically. The Government should continue to work with youth-led networks and groups, such as the CCYPS, to ensure that the voices and perspectives of young people are being included at all levels and all stages of peace and security domestically.

Young people and YPS perspectives need to be built into the CNAP, and the synergies between peace and security agendas recognized. Young people are essential in achieving successful peace and security in domestic and international contexts. In order for Canada to further its progress in the implementation of the CNAP and the WPS agenda at large, young people must be partners in peace.

The WPS Agenda and the Rule of Law: Gaps in Implementation

Urooj Mian

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda demands the equal participation of women in peace processes, protections for girls and women, and guarantees of justice. As the agenda has progressed since UNSCR 1325, it has promoted practical actions to be a part of its road to success. This includes acknowledgment that the effective institutionalization of the rule of law is essential in ensuring durable peace.

It is generally recognized that the effective enactment of the rule of law is a stepping stone to sustainable development, to peace, and to empowerment. The very purpose of the law is to publicly establish acceptable behaviour in society. In situations of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS), equitable access to justice and credible judicial systems are integral for reshaping a society's social norms and practices. Functioning judicial systems are essential in establishing and maintaining orderly societies free from violence. They promote healing, reconciliation and prevent impunity for criminal offences. Re-establishing systems present opportunities to increase the representation of women in security and judicial practice and explicitly criminalize offences such as sexual and gender-based violence.

In October 2013, UNSCR 2122 reaffirmed the links between the rule of law, gender, and peace, emphasizing the need to use multisectoral approaches in implementing the Framework. It provided that:

sustainable peace requires an integrated approach based on coherence between political, security, development, human rights, including gender equality, and rule of law and justice activities. (UNSCR 2122)

As Canada is commendably on its second iteration of a National Action Plan (CNAP), there remains a need for concerted consideration on how to be more effective in its operationalization. Although the rule of law is mentioned in the CNAP, and its Theory of Change (TOC), the accompanying action is missing. This omission needs to be translated into action. The following will briefly reference the WPS agenda, rule of law, and international development nexus of global obligations. It will then review Justice Canada's 2019-2020 progress report in aligning the WPS agenda with the rule of law. Finally, it will provide recommendations to effectively action rule of law considerations for a robust implementation of the CNAP.

The WPS Agenda is Binding

An often-under-emphasized element of the WPS agenda is that as it is comprised entirely of United Nations Security Council Resolutions, as such it has a binding effect on all UN Members.[8]

8: Under the UN Charter (a multilateral treaty), the mandate of the Security Council is to maintain peace and security and all its resolutions and functions are related to this role. The UN official information page perfectly sums up this power: "While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter." <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council>
This is in specific reference to Article 25 of the UN Charter. In a practical guide to IHL, Medecins Sans Frontieres further provides that "Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII (which regulates actions undertaken with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression) are binding." <https://guide-humanitarian-law.org/content/article/3/soft-law/> Security Council Resolutions can thus be considered soft international law.

Another under-emphasized feature is that the agenda itself does not comprise as a stand-alone global commitment to gender equality, it is in fact tied to existing international laws and norms specifically referenced throughout the resolutions in relation to women's rights. These include international human rights, humanitarian, and criminal law.[9]

The resolutions specifically reference international laws, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979 and its Optional Protocol of 1999. As international treaties, these legally commit signatory states to adopt practical measures to ending discrimination of all forms against women with legal force and global accountability processes.

Additionally, global commitments to equality with expectations for concrete actions are outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are considered a global blueprint for 'peace and prosperity.' Amongst the goals, SDG 5 focuses on the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls and SDG 16 advocates for the promotion of "peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."

Canada in Focus

> *The Department of Justice will seek to identify various ways of contributing as fully as possible to the implementation of the WPS agenda. This could include, among other things, developing programs for women in fragile states.*
>
> *(DoJ CNAP Implementation Plan CNAP 2017-2022)*

Although the WPS agenda is binding, it does not function as a 'one size fits all' action plan.

Operationalizing the contents can be challenging, as not all states are in a situation of armed conflict. Herein lie some opportunities for non-warring member states, such as Canada, to interpret the agenda according to their domestic contexts, and varying priorities.

Upon review, the CNAP has not completely dismissed the importance of the rule of law and justice recourse mechanisms, as included in the collaborative of implementing departments is Justice Canada. Additionally, the theory of change for the CNAP specifically commits to "improve women's access to justice in FCAS and provide gender-responsive legal technical assistance and support for justice sector reform" as an action item under the programming pillar.

Correspondingly, the intermediate outcome on the CNAP's TOC explicitly aims to achieve:

> *Positive changes in behaviour, social norms, institutionalized practices and legal systems, including customary and religious laws, in relation to gender equality, sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers and other international personnel.*

This confirms an appreciation that the law is important in the successful implementation of the CNAP. However, upon review of Justice Canada's progress report, the contribution and realization of the intended outcomes fall flat.

In its 2019-2020 progress report, Justice Canada outlines that it did not "conduct any evaluations of assistance needs or develop any projects or project proposals in the context of fragile or conflict-affected states." Although the Department has participated in general initiatives promoting relevant SDGs, it has the potential to do more.

Upon examination of Justice Canada's individual implementation plan, the language is non-committal and aspirational, but lacks concrete action.

9: Specific references to treaties within the resolutions include: the Geneva Conventions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Refugee Convention and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

There is no indication that targeted action in relation to the overall TOC is even under development. The plan and progress report continues to emphasize that other Federal departments are clients and it will be available to assist when requested. This is not demonstrative of proactive action, rather a very real miss.

Recommendations

Justice Canada reported achievements in relation to domestic gendered legal issues in its report and connected these to its CNAP commitments. Whether these activities truly align with the obligations of the WPS agenda is questionable. It is important for it, and other implementing partners, to take stock of how each can maximize its thematic expertise and resources in directly achieving the goals of the WPS agenda rather than attempt to present work not driven by the WPS agenda obligations as such.

Justice Canada should conduct an internal exploratory exercise on how it can maximize its input in aligning with the goals of the WPS agenda. These can include the following:

- Partner with GAC and conduct a research exercise on FCAS contexts to identify capacity-building needs and potential areas to support the rule of law in these contexts, including in already existing engagements.

- Partner with GAC to develop funding streams and programming that specifically support access to justice, transitional justice and judicial reforms in fragile contexts. This can include developing funding streams specifying the rule of law, post-conflict peacebuilding and gender equality as thematic priorities.

- Identify and support strategic or impact litigation cases[10] abroad where feasible.

- Support the building of independent human rights commissions with funding, resources and capacity building training in partnership with other donors or governments.

- Many states are in draft processes for legislation in relation to gender and sexual and gender-based violence. Justice Canada can provide technical expertise and help promote draft bills.

- Create information briefs and toolkits on gender dimensions of judicial reform and train adjudicators.

- Develop language for the Canadian government to globally advocate for judicial gender balance and access to justice in FCAS contexts.

Canada has the platform to empower and promote cultures of justice at home and abroad. The law is a critical if not the critical tool in promoting durable peace and gender equality. Justice Canada's involvement as one of the nine implementing partners of the CNAP is not unusual, it is imperative, and it is about time it steps up and makes its contribution count.

10: These consist of lawsuits and legal cases intended to promote broader societal change.

Slowly but Surely: Successes and Shortcomings of the DND/CAF Implementation Plan

Sandra Biskupski-Mujanovic

The Department of National Defence (DND) and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) implementation plan of Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is organized around five themes: governance, training and education, accountability, recruitment and retention, and integration of women into operations. These themes support DND/CAF's objectives, which are mostly centered around the idea that women's participation "is vital to achieving and sustaining peace, and has a tangible impact on the operational effectiveness of our forces." They emphasize that embedding gender perspectives are "moral and operational imperatives," both in internal policies and operations abroad that increase DND/CAF effectiveness.

According to the 2019-2020 Progress Report, many of the CNAP targets have been met or are mostly on track to being met, while four targets continue to require attention. There has been a lot of emphasis on the integration and institutionalization of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), increasing the number of Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points, greater consultations with Defence Advisory Groups surrounding Employment Equity and increasing gender training as well as improved reporting and data collection, among other initiatives. While it is clear that CAF and DND are prioritizing gender mainstreaming efforts, challenges remain, especially as they pertain to increasing the number of women in the CAF.

For example, when focusing on the priority area of recruitment and retention, CAF's goal is to increase the number of women in the Canadian military by 1% per year to achieve a desired goal of 25% by the end of 2026.

The goal, however, requires serious attention. In 2015-2016, the percentage of women in the CAF was 14.9 % and in 2019-2020 it reached 15.9%. At this rate, it is difficult to envision how this goal could be achieved. However, that does not mean that there are no notable successes in the most recent progress report. These are twofold: in terms of aiming for wider inclusivity and diversity and by prioritizing culture change.

Firstly, the language of the 2019-2020 Progress Report is a great departure from the initial implementation plan and earlier progress reports. It states "CAF is prioritizing the respect and value for each and every member and what they contribute to our organization: skills, knowledge, perspectives and every element of a person's identity that makes them unique." This is our first hint that the progress report is taking intersectionality more seriously and prioritizing inclusivity more than before. The report mentions Transgender Guidance and the Defence Team Pride Network for LGBTIQ+ communities (in policies and programs put in place to identify and reduce barriers in the CAF) as well as the establishment of an Anti-Racism Secretariat and, for the first time, mentions Indigenous peoples and cultural diversity. However, using language of diversity and inclusion is only a first step. Meaningful structural change requires committed application of intersectionality, whereas current "diversity initiatives in the CAF tend to be siloed or focused on singular markers of identity (i.e. race or gender or sexuality or Indigeneity)." Likewise, if intersectionality is to be taken more seriously, we should know more about the unique experiences of diverse members.

Not all women identify gender as their nexus of oppression and women of colour, especially, often suggest that their race has presented them with more disadvantage and marginalization than their gender. Recognizing that marginalization is multi-faceted, layered, and complex is critical.

Secondly, while the activities and indicators remain consistent, with the 2019-2020 Progress Report comes an acknowledgement of the necessity for cultural change in the institution. The new Culture Change Initiative, The Path to Dignity and Respect, is a turn in the right direction. The plan acknowledges that sexual misconduct is a complex issue that requires work beyond what was achieved by, and gaps remaining from, Operation Honour alone. It acknowledges a permissive climate, gender stereotypes and gender integration as some of the key factors that require attention. However, a focus on cultural change for the sole purpose of eliminating sexual misconduct is not enough. Culture change in the armed forces, where militarized masculinity, the valuing of hyper-masculine and hegemonic traits, is a core element, is a huge undertaking. It will require delicate work so that pushback against women and LGBTIQ+ folks does not undo the difficult work that culture change entails, including challenging privilege in favour of equality. The recent allegations of sexual misconduct against CAF leadership prove that this is an imperative undertaking.

Recommendations for the DND/CAF to improve its implementation of the WPS agenda and the reporting on the CNAP include:

1. More disaggregated data: CAF should provide data that is further disaggregated, beyond gender, to track how folks with intersecting identities fare. It would also be helpful for the progress report to, a minimum, provide data for both men and women so that we can better understand, by comparing and contrasting, differences. For example, when DND/CAF report that 8.9% of women who have applied to the regular forces have been enrolled, it would be helpful to know this same statistic for men.

Understanding that there are many reasons why an individual would not be selected or eligible to serve and knowing more detailed information of the reasons why so few women who apply are selected and how this is similar or different to that of men, can offer insight into gaps and opportunities for recruitment. Likewise, consistent reporting from year to year would demonstrate transparency and commitment. For instance, only the first progress report, from 2017-2018, tells us that the percentage of women in combat arms was 2.7% for the Regular Force and 6.2% for Reserves. In the current report this statistic is not reported in a consistent manner and stated that "around 5%" of women are in combat arms. Yet, increasing women's participation in non-traditional occupations within the infantry, artillery and related combat arms is continually stressed as a priority area.

2. More attention to the lived experiences of all women: It is a great success that the number of women in CAF leadership is growing (for example, the percentage of officers promoted to the ranks of Lieutenant-Colonel or Commander and higher has risen from 11.8% in March 2016 to 18.4% in March 2020) but rank is a protective factor for women in the military as it can often shelter them from the cultural issues that require attention. It is equally important to know and understand what women in lower ranks are experiencing. Further, many women in leadership are in traditional occupations (as seen in the example that RCAF continues to have approximately 20% women in commanding positions even though the proportion of women in the two largest occupations remains very low, 5% for pilots and 8.2% for air maintenance technicians). The 2018-2019 Progress Report mentioned that the highest percentage of women promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and Commander or higher was in support occupations, such as chaplaincy, dental and medical occupations (over 30% for each group). However, this is not unlike the civilian world, where most women are employed in traditionally female occupations such as teaching, nursing and related health occupations, social work, clerical or other administrative positions, where women have been concentrated historically.

Concrete examples of how and where women are successful can prove to be inspiring, such as the example in the 2018-2019 progress report, of a female officer team leader deployed to Malaysia that mentored a Malaysian armed forces woman who challenged gender norms in her country. Yet, we need not only highlight exceptional instances of women working but also those that occur everyday by women in lower ranks. People from the military sexual trauma community remind decision-makers of their responsibility to learn from and be accountable to those most impacted by their decisions with the motto "Nothing About Us Without Us." This motto should be extended to all the work CAF is doing on increasing diversity, including gender diversity, in its ranks.

It is great that CAF has committed to undertaking the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) Barrier Assessment and is deploying senior women leaders on missions abroad. Yet, the total number of women deployed on all operations remains low, at 13.7%. In addition, while CAF has exceeded the 15% UN Gender Parity target for uniformed contingents that it committed to as it deployed five out of twenty-three military staff on UN Peace Operations as of April 30, 2021, the numbers are incredibly low to begin with and we do not know what capacities these women served in. For the Canadian Armed Forces to reflect the Canadians they serve, more work has to be done on incorporating gender considerations into all aspects of operations. Doing so does indeed require 'muscle memory' like the progress report states, but by ingraining these factors as equal amongst many when planning operations and training, CAF will keep moving forward, slowly but surely.

Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Moving towards Humanitarian Disarmament

Erin Hunt & Bénédicte Santoire

Humanitarian disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda are two of Canada's most significant contributions to the international community in the past 25 years. The Canadian-led 1996-1997 Ottawa Process to ban anti-personnel landmines is the origin of the humanitarian disarmament concept. Humanitarian disarmament is a people-centered approach to disarmament focusing on preventing and remediating human suffering and environmental harm rather than advancing national security. It is spearheaded by civil society campaigns, operating in partnership with states and international organizations. Humanitarian disarmament has resulted in four international treaties and two Nobel Peace Prizes, with work continuing.

Following the Ottawa Process with its ground-breaking levels of participation from women and civil society, Canada used its position on the UN Security Council to support the adoption of Resolution 1325 on WPS in 2000. That first resolution explicitly mentioned the importance of mine clearance programs considering the needs of women and girls, and the WPS agenda has been closely linked to humanitarian disarmament ever since. However, the siloed nature of foreign affairs policy and programming has often hidden the links between these two areas of work. While the 2019-2020 Progress Report of Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) on WPS does mention some humanitarian disarmament policies and programs, much work needs to be done to highlight the interconnections between these two fields of work.

Analysis of Progress Report: Between Achievements and Inconsistencies

Upon close reading of the recent 2019-2020 Progress Report on the implementation of the second CNAP, it is clear that there is a gap between Canada's rhetoric and symbolic image on the international scene (for example, as a humanitarian nation), and its actions.

Indeed, despite Canada's good intentions and accomplishments (notably its whole-of-government approach and its support for women human rights defenders), there was an overall neglect of disarmament issues in the progress report. This may be due to three factors.

First, the lack of substantial monitoring and evaluation criteria beyond superficial measures makes it sometimes difficult to track genuine progress in the report, both on general and specific issues. For example, in the dedicated section on Policy and Programming on Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament (p. 40-42), some of the indicators used to evaluate two of the government's priorities in that area (gender mainstreaming in Weapons Threat Reduction Program and into disarmament diplomacy) are percentage of officers who completed an online gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) course and numbers of UN General Assembly's First Committee proposed or considered by Canada where "gender language" was employed. Even if both of these targets have been achieved, the report does not indicate how these efforts will lead to transformative change in disarmament.

Second, not only is there weak and conceptually vague policy language in the progress report (for example, what does Canada mean by "feminist"? Is it understood equally across ministries?), there is also no clear discussion or explanation of how Canada's NAP, its Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) and other documents which make up the feminist foreign policy, are linked in terms of policy and implementation. Without more precise definitions, it is hard to assess progress and hold the government accountable regarding its commitments.

Finally, the neglect of disarmament issues may be due to contradictions between Canada's actions in foreign policy and defence matters, and the objectives and purposes of the documents guiding foreign policy. These actions include, among others, the sale and export of weapons to regimes that violate international human rights law, such as Saudi Arabia and Israel, since these exports violate the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). In April 2021, Canada cancelled defence exports to Turkey after evidence showing Canadian high-tech drones were diverted to Azerbaijan and used during the Nagorno-Karabakh war last fall. This example shows that arms control is often a matter of political will and diplomacy. Canada could do the same with Saudi Arabia ($1,311 billion), considering this country's violent involvement in Yemen, and with Israel ($18,948 million), bearing in mind this country's severe bombing of populated areas in Gaza.

Another contradictory action is the refusal to renounce nuclear weapons by failing to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which entered into force on January 22, 2021. The TPNW is the first nuclear disarmament treaty to recognize the gendered impact of weapons and the impact on Indigenous peoples and rights. Canada's support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a great start, but it is not enough. The refusal to ratify the new TPNW is at odds with its historical leadership in disarmament matters, like the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines.

These inconsistencies undermine Canada's credibility abroad and at home.

Canada must prioritize and tackle humanitarian disarmament as a structural issue, both in its third CNAP and its FIAP. Including humanitarian disarmament in the future CNAP will help achieve the aims of a feminist foreign policy, such as combatting global colonialism, imperialism, racism, and militarized patriarchy. Actions must match Canada's words.

Filling the Gap: Opportunities in the Future

The upcoming third CNAP offers the chance to address the existing gap between image and action regarding Canada's disarmament work and the WPS agenda by explicitly embracing Canada's history as a pioneer in humanitarian disarmament. The current CNAP has a small number of targets in Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) implementation plan which are directly related to humanitarian disarmament. There are some references to disarmament work in the theory of change, but there is little mention of disarmament in the Plan's text. Without explicit mention of disarmament in the language, it is easy to see how government officials implementing the plan may not consider disarmament work as crucial to achieving the goals of the CNAP.

Canada could start to fill the gap between verbal support for disarmament and concrete actions in two ways. First, by adding disarmament to CNAP objectives related to increasing the meaningful participation of women and civil society organizations in all stages of conflict, from conflict prevention to post-conflict statebuilding. Second, by creating a new objective especially on protecting people of all genders from indiscriminate and inhumane weapons like landmines, nuclear weapons, and cluster munitions. Such an objective would acknowledge the long-term impact of conflict more broadly in order to cover post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction, environmental impact, and trauma support for civilian populations. Humanitarian disarmament targets should also be included in the new CNAP's implementation plan for GAC and the Department of National Defence.

GAC sets policy and funds international disarmament projects while National Defence can influence other militaries and has extensive expertise on explosive ordnance disposal.

With a strong focus on humanitarian disarmament, the third CNAP can be a tool towards a safer, more peaceful world for us all.

Time for Leadership and Action

The WPS agenda is facing a number of challenges globally including lack of international consensus, its increasing militarization and push-back (by anti-feminist actors, state coalitions, and some Security Council members), as well as its expected setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of these challenges, Canada must double its efforts to play a leadership role on WPS, especially regarding humanitarian disarmament.

Leadership requires consistency between rhetoric commitments and action. There is a need to fill the gap between Canada's actions and words. To conclude, we draw two main points. First, policy coherence requires special attention to clear definitions to ensure a consistent comprehension of WPS-related words across ministries and federal partners. A first step could be to promote a more transformative, and structural understanding of "feminism" oriented toward humanitarian disarmament. This would also improve the creation of better qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Second, Canada must take advantage of its image as a peacekeeping leader, based on its history of supporting disarmament-related causes, to advance synergies between the WPS agenda and humanitarian disarmament worldwide. To end arms exports to countries that do not respect international law or the ATT and ratify the TPNW are two urgent priorities. Doing so will enhance Canada's credibility and the relevance of its third NAP.

As we know already, women, girls, and other marginalized populations (including but not limited to, LGBTIQ+ individuals and persons with disabilities) disproportionately bear the costs of violence and conflict. If Canada is committed to fostering a safer and more inclusive world for all, it must prioritize humanitarian disarmament as a cornerstone for the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Keeping Women Connected & Safe: Integrating Mobile Technology into Canada's WPS National Action Plan

Laura O'Connor

Canada's most recent report on the implementation of Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) highlights ongoing commitments to supporting stability in fragile states and/or conflict zones, with particular attention paid to protecting women and girls. The Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) "engages in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (FCAS) leveraging resources of, and partnerships with, multilateral institutions, NGOs, implementing partners, and like-minded nations" (p. 7). While the report currently entails a host of capacity-building measures, gender-sensitive trainings, and supporting women-oriented organizations and businesses, there is a void when it comes to any technology-related support measures for women in FCAS, including no mention of mobile technology or internet provisions being a possible harm reduction measure. The closest thing to the integration of technology into Canada's WPS Action Plan is the creation of a support line for victims of gender-based violence (GBV) in 2019-2020, and a similar hotline being created to prevent human trafficking (p. 34). While these action items are commendable and important preventative measures, I argue that Canada must further implement digital and mobile technology into its WPS action plan, both providing the materials (i.e. cellphones, security add-ons, and ideally, internet) and the trainings to give women in FCAS access to mobile communication technology.

Mobile technology and security is a fairly novel issue within the Women, Peace and Security space. That being said, there is evidence that suggests supporting the widening provision of cellphones to women in fragile states, conflict and in post-conflict zones can be a beneficial security measure.

Data on women's access to mobile phones and the internet around the globe is oddly sparse. From available data, there is a clear gap in accessibility between men and women. Data from the World Bank, for instance, shows that 74% of women in developing countries own cellphones, compared to 84% of men, with the percentages being concentrated towards wealthier populations of these countries. Moreover, just 37% of women in developing countries have access to a phone with internet, compared to 43 percent of men. This chapter thus principally addresses the issue of accessibility.

A Tool for Personal Security

Mobile technology allows for greater connectivity amongst women and girls in FCAS. Not only is this useful for community-building, which can be vital to personal security as community contacts can be used for crisis-planning in cases of violence and/or emergency, it also allows for women to remain in contact with emergency support services. Examples such as panic buttons on phones in India for women at risk of sexual violence are instances of mobile technology being used to prevent and/or address gendered issues in FCAS and middle- and low-income countries. Beyond WPS, mobile technology has proven to be an important tool in general crisis planning and development efforts. In cases of acute crises, such as natural disasters, mobile technology allows residents to keep connected quickly and alert both emergency workers and community members of imminent danger and/or crisis responses.

USAID has integrated mobile technology into its development toolkit, noting this connection to disaster response. The key issue with programs like this, however, is again the issue of access, which must be addressed.

Ensuring the provision of mobile technology to women in FCAS also allows women to alert peacekeeping authorities of conflict flare-ups or threats to personal security. Dorn, in their 2016 article, calls this "participatory peacekeeping," describing this as "crowd-sourced" security information that would benefit UN security forces in both staying informed on regional outbreaks, and in planning out quick remedies to these outbreaks. Similarly, as cited above, USAID has integrated mobile technology into their development efforts and noted that in the case of Afghanistan, for example, mobile communication allows field workers to "monitor the success of the intervention and receive feedback from citizens directly." Through a gender lens, this direct communication could be a major breakthrough in GBV prevention, allowing for women in FCAS to report violence and/or be kept "in the loop" of ongoing WPS efforts in their community.

Cellphones also offer a psychological benefit in the form of a greater sense of security. Tennakoon & Taras, for example, document the emotional benefits of cellphones for women in both Canada and Sri Lanka. Research from both countries found that women felt a sense of security in carrying a cellphone. Moreover, men felt a sense of security in being able to connect to their loved ones, particularly their wives and female loved ones, in the situations of danger. While "personal safety" may look different from country to country, there is an almost unanimous consensus among current research that supports the theory of cellphones giving women a higher sense of security and connectivity, should an emergency arise.

Beyond human security and the psycho-social benefits of mobile technology, it also provides opportunities to women in FCAS to build lucrative technology skills, potentially translatable to the workforce, particularly in the form of entrepreneurialism.

Yadav recently noted this in her article on civil action in Yemen, describing a woman beginning work as a cellphone repair person. Other possible tech-based skills, such as mobile application development, cybersecurity know-how, coding, and software development are also capable of being learned via cellphones and could equip women and girls with the opportunity for self-employment. Current literature suggests that self-employment and successful entrepreneurialism often gives women, particularly in FCAS, a degree of independence and a sense of personal satisfaction that translates into a better standard of living and emotional well-being, especially in the context of post-conflict reconstruction. Beyond tech-related careers, there is the internet-contingent possibility of learning other skills and languages with a cellphone that would likely further benefit women and girls in FCAS.

Where do we go from here?

The CNAP currently provides somewhat of a "blank slate" in terms of incorporating digital communications and mobile technology into its provisions. This opportunity must be seized, but carefully and through a well-informed approach.

I argue that Canada should route a portion of the CNAP funding to the provision of mobile technology to women in FCAS, along with necessary training and security add-ons (Virtual Private Networks, for example). More specifically, I would propose that this programming be incorporated into Canada's Peace and Stabilization Operations Program, and into the broader Gender-based Violence (GBV) Prevention Program. While training programs can help to ensure a degree of community-based self-sufficiency, in terms of tech maintenance and repairs, there must also be additional provisions put forth to prepare for periodical check-ins and maintenance funding.

For comparative reference, we may also turn to the example of <u>USAID</u>'s work, as cited above, and their findings of mobile communication allowing their community partners to better report violence, ensure local participation in peacebuilding, kickstart entrepreneurialism and connect community-based healthcare and development professionals. Understanding these broader impacts could hopefully incentivize Canadian WPS policymakers to use mobile technology not just as a general development tool, but also as a WPS tool.

At the very least, the provision of cellphones to women and girls can help to ensure personal safety and a sense of security. That being said, add-ons such as VPNs and trainings can also encourage and enable women and girls in FCAS to engage in "participatory peacekeeping," as explained above, and stay connected with peacekeeping operations within their region.

Avoiding Pitfalls

There should, however, be attention paid to the possible pitfalls of wider technology usage. While women who are victims of domestic violence and abusive relationships, whether this be from a spouse or family member, can benefit from mobile technology, that same technology can put women at greater risks of stalking, privacy invasions, and higher levels of control. <u>Rosenwald</u>, for example, talks about how women are disproportionately victim to stalking via global positioning systems (GPS) in their cellphones. There may be similar concerns surrounding privacy and tracking between family members, should a woman share a device with other members of her household.

Moreover, there is ongoing concern about the ethical production of cellphones, or lack thereof. In addition to the environmental concerns about the manufacturing of cellphone parts, there are also humanitarian concerns.

In the late 2000s and early 2010s, for example, many mobile technology companies famously <u>purchased unethically-mined minerals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo</u>, fuelling ongoing civil conflict and skyrocketing gender-based violence levels.

While the issue of corporate accountability by cellphone manufacturers is a significant issue in and of itself, necessary precautions must be taken by the Canadian government to ensure the technology purchased for women in FCAS is ethically sourced. Regarding stalking and women's security, there is a two-fold approach that Canada could take. Firstly, Canada can ensure thorough training and safety-planning for women who receive cellphones, including crisis planning in the case of stalking and violence. That being said, a possibly more effective approach would be exercising discretion when providing women with cellphones, ensuring that it is the women themselves who decide whether or not others in their lives know of their cellphones.

It is worth reiterating that, in echoing the findings of USAID, while the possible pitfalls of providing women with cellphones must be addressed and precautions must be taken, they must not be taken as evidence for depriving women of cellphones. <u>Both current data and survey reporting</u> from women in FCAS show a clear desire and need for cellphones as both a crisis and GBV-prevention measure.

How can Canada Support Feminist Peace in Yemen?

Rasha Jarhum & Charlotte Côté

In Yemen, the so-called "forgotten war" has been tearing the country apart since 2014. Women are disproportionately affected by the conflict, bearing the existing discriminative social norms, laws, and institutions, and dealing with multidimensional insecurities exacerbated by the now raging COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, women are the ones leading the peacebuilding work on the ground, and if their contributions are indisputable, the international community's unwillingness to recognize their expertise represents a missed opportunity towards reaching inclusive and sustainable peace in Yemen.

For decades, Canada has taken a leadership role in advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda at home and abroad. As a women-led international NGO that works closely with women in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and implements projects in Yemen, The Peace Track Initiative (PTI) believes that Canada has the potential to do more to live up to its image as a feminist world leader, especially in Yemen. Based on the last four years of consultations and involvement with Yemeni women groups, this chapter shares reflections and recommendations following the publication of the latest CNAP Progress Report Fiscal Year 2019–2020, and contributes to the planning of the next CNAP.

A colossal gap between funding and progress

As of 2021, Yemen is the third country receiving most Canadian humanitarian funding, after Syria and Afghanistan.[11]

However, the country is not one of the 13 "focus countries" of Global Affairs Canada (GAC) when it comes to implementing the CNAP. Canada supports the peace process in Yemen through its direct support to the work of the Office of the Special Envoy for the Secretary-General on Yemen (OSESGY), the UN Verification and Inspection Mission for Yemen (UNVIM), and the UN Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA). While the peace missions in Yemen are well supported and well-funded[12] by the international community, there is a general lack of progress and performance.

In terms of funding, the OSESGY's budget grew from 13 million USD in 2016 to 18.4 million in 2020, exceeding the budget allocations for Syria in 2019 (16.2 million USD). Apart from the operational core budget, the OSESGY is also supported by UNOPS with a budget allocation for years 2015-2022 of almost 9 million USD, mainly assigned for peace negotiations. The UNMHA, established to support the implementation of the Stockholm agreement with the deployment of 75 peace monitors, had core budget allocations of 56 million USD in 2019, spending on average between 2.4 and 4.6 million USD a month. At times this budget includes questionable expenses: for a few months in 2019-20, the UNMHA rented a vessel for 810,000 USD a month, ignoring advice from the UN Advisory Committee to terminate the contract. In 2020, the UNMHA budget for accommodation of its personnel (rent, services, petrol, security, construction, maintenance and acquisitions) was raised from 5 to over 6 million USD.

11: According to UNOCHA's Financial Tracking Service as of August 2021, 7.8% of Canada's USD 671.5m funding for the year 2021 (which amounts to USD50.7m) was allocated to Yemen. UNOCHA (2021). Canada, Government of 2021 - Donor Snapshot, https://fts.unocha.org/donors/2928/summary/2021
12: UN General Assembly (May 2020). Proposed programme budget for 2021, "A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add. 2", pp.73-81; UN General Assembly (June 2019). Proposed programme budget for 2020 "A/74/6 (Sect. 3)/ Add 1", p.28.

These operational costs of UN peace missions contrast with the limited progress and performance they produce, particularly in implementing signed peace agreements. (Of note, these agreements systematically exclude women.) The Stockholm Peace Agreement, signed in 2018, outlined confidence-building measures (CBMs) related to humanitarian aspects, but it has fallen short of its promise. The OSESGY's noticeable achievement was the recent release of 1081 prisoners out of 15,000, which took 3 years of long negotiations. It was not able to convene the Taiz Committee assigned to lift the siege and open humanitarian corridors, nor was it able to revive an inclusive peace negotiation process. Similarly, while UNMHA was not able to support ceasefire observation in Hudaydah, nor convene the Yemeni parties to continue coordinating redeployment since March 2020, its mandate was renewed in July 2021, without a clear plan to operationalize the mission. This instance and the several highlighted above flag concerns about effective use of resources for peacebuilding in Yemen.

Women's current exclusion from the UN peace process

Canada supports OSESGY in covering the costs of initiatives related to gender equality. The Canadian NAP 2019-2020 Progress Report notes the country's reiterated calls for increased participation of women in Yemen's peace talks, observing that the lack of women participation may be due to the absence of a formal peace process. However, although the official UN-led talks are not currently taking place, the OSESGY is actively engaged in back-channel meetings with national and regional actors, predominantly men. UN efforts to include women, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, are largely perceived by women to be symbolic and lack meaning. For instance, the OSESGY organized two-hour virtual consultations with 500 participants in June 2020, but the women who participated indicated that the methodology used to collect their feedback and opinions was weak.

Critical self-determination questions were asked, but they were linked to a timer which meant the women were not able to completely and adequately express their views. Apart from meeting occasionally with women's groups, one of the strategies adopted by the OSESGY to include women is the establishment of Women Technical Advisory Group (WTAG) in 2017. Although extended from eight to twelve members in 2021, the WTAG faced challenges in supporting the OSESGY, with members reporting that they were not consulted on the peace drafts or agendas, and that meetings with the UN Envoy remained a courtesy rather than a truly consultative exercise. One WTAG member interviewed online in 2021 shared: "We did not receive the Yemen Joint Declaration Draft[13] from the UN Envoy's office. We had a meeting with Mr Griffiths [the UN Special Envoy to Yemen], which felt more like a courtesy meeting: he gave us the main headlines, the main topics, but not the meat. We received it [the Joint Declaration Draft] from the Peace Track Initiative. We reviewed it and provided feedback and developed the joint Feminist Peace Roadmap."

The UN recently appointed its fourth male Envoy to Yemen, and the position of the Deputy Envoy has always been reserved for a man as well. It is worth noting that the UNMHA rarely consults with women and civil society, while UNVIM, for its part, does not engage at all with women and civil society and is not held accountable for these failures. Additionally, there is a continuous narrative found in internal UN and international NGO reports that Yemeni women lack qualifications and capacities to engage in the peace process (often implied with terms such as "capacity building", "training", etc). This language often aims to justify the need for funding, but it contributes further to women's exclusion, feeding into the existing patriarchal views. While women peacebuilders indeed benefit from technical support, there should be a clear recognition of their expertise and experience without undermining their role or capabilities. The PTI has addressed the misconception about Yemeni women by creating a database of more than 100

13: The Joint Declaration (JD) is the UN Ceasefire plan between the Houthi rebels and the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG), drafted in June 2020

women experts and introducing the Feminist Leadership Fellowship that supports women experts and peacebuilders to write and publish OpEds. Yemeni women leaders representing civil society organisations and government institutions laid out a road map of priorities and recommendations to advance the WPS Agenda in Yemen and particularly called for the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) as early as 2016. In May 2020, Yemen launched its NAP. Although civil society organisations have expressed concerns regarding the exclusionary dynamics of the drafting process and the lack of implementation and accountability mechanisms, they consider this step an achievement, as Yemen became the fifth country in the MENA region to adopt a NAP. The Yemeni NAP clearly states the goal of no less than 30% participation by women in peace process negotiations, a commitment already stated in the National Dialogue Outcomes (2014), a landmark document to the peace and political process in Yemen. However, the systematic exclusion of women continues. For example, women are excluded from the UN-led formal peace consultations regarding prisoner exchange, taking place in Amman and in Geneva as recently as September 2020. Among those whose voices are silenced at the table, the women's led Mothers of Abductees Association, a major force for the release of arbitrarily detained persons in Yemen since 2016.

Supporting women's agency and ensuring their protection

Through its Feminist Foreign Policy, Canada's funding to Yemen is heavily focused on multilateral and international civil society organizations,[14] a welcomed, but incomplete step in empowering grassroots forces of peace. More funds should be channeled towards Yemeni women-led organisations, inside and outside the country (including Yemeni migrant and refugee-led organisations). Canada as such would show it has faith and respect for the work of Yemeni women peacebuilders and human rights defenders (HRDs).

Yemeni women are leading efforts on facilitating ceasefires, mediating armed conflicts over resources, addressing child recruitment, sending humanitarian convoys to besieged areas, and negotiating the release of arbitrarily detained persons. The PTI works with the Women Solidarity Network, a network of 300 women inside and outside the country who volunteer to promote women's rights, protect women, and contribute to peacebuilding. The PTI also worked with Yemeni women to develop a Feminist Peace Roadmap that was launched as a draft in June 2021 through a High-Level Convening welcomed by Canada's WPS Ambassador, Jacqueline O'Neill.

Since 2017, Canada has been one of the main countries to support the establishment and the mandate renewal of the Group of Eminent Experts (GEE) along with Yemeni civil society including the PTI, to investigate the human rights violations and abuses in Yemen. Through its support to UN Women, Canada deployed sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) investigators to various Commissions of Inquiry including the GEE working on Yemen, to support survivors in documenting crimes and help them access justice. Canada's support in this area is crucial and it can further deploy SGBV experts to the Panel of Experts supporting the UNSC Sanction Committee. The PTI, along with Yemeni women HRDs, supported the process to include SGBV and child recruitment crimes into Yemen's sanction list, leading to UNSC Resolution 2511 (2020) affirming that: "sexual violence in armed conflict, or the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law, could constitute an act, as specified in paragraph 18 (c) of resolution 2140 (2014), and therefore a sanctionable act of engaging in or providing support for acts that threaten the peace, security or stability of Yemen, as described in paragraph 17 of that resolution;". Earlier in 2021, the UNSC named the first SGBV perpetrator. Canada should thus update its sanctions list related to Yemen to include sanctions against perpetrators of SGBV and child recruitment crimes.

14: For projects currently underway in late 2020, Canada has allocated a little under 5 million CAD to Search for Common Ground's project on Promoting Women's Inclusion in Peace and Stabilization [CA-3-P008185001, CA-3-P008185002] and CAD 350,000 to ICAN's project Strengthening WPS in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States [CA-3-P008170001]. Government of Canada (2020). International, "Project Browser", https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets

The PTI documented the cases of 30 women human rights defenders who were targeted due to their political activism, peacebuilding or humanitarian work. The majority of these women were targeted in Houthi-controlled areas and were subjected to arbitrary detention, torture including rape, and accusations of immoral acts. The PTI supported many of them to relocate to countries in the region and assisted them in the process to register with UNHCR. However, the PTI notes that since 2016, some women HRDs who are registered with the UNHCR have not yet been resettled. The PTI welcomes Canada's dedicated refugee stream to human rights defenders and hopes Yemeni refugee women HRDs and their families will be given priority. Canada's Voices at Risk guidelines to protect HRDs should be augmented with a clear standard of operation for these guidelines and programs to be put into action, and GAC staff should be appropriately trained on them. Additionally, Canada should request that the UNHCR and ProtectDefenders.eu share those guidelines so that refugee women HRDs understand how to qualify, access, and use the service.

Ensuring coherent & gender responsive humanitarian interventions

Since 2011, a little short of 15 billion USD have been spent on the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP). To date, Canada has contributed 245.6M USD.[15] The PTI held consultations with women humanitarian workers and found that the YHRP suffers from a number of issues. The YHRP fails to address the protracted nature of the humanitarian crisis that is now derived by conflict. It does not allocate adequate funds on areas the displaced women prioritised. Yemeni women who met with the PTI voiced that income generation activities, disbursing civil servants' salaries, and ensuring access to basic social services including health, education, water and electricity, are among their top priorities.

The YHRP needs to place more emphasis on ensuring it is designed, developed, and implemented in an inclusive way and that its criteria make its humanitarian funding accessible to women-led organizations (i.e. currently there is a prerequisite of having a quarter of million dollars annual budget to apply for funding). Additionally, as the SGBV protection programs are merged with the overall protection program that targets people in displacement, this makes it hard to track how much is allocated for SGBV response services. It also limits the accessibility of protection services, for example, shelter services offered to women survivors of violence are limited to women survivors of domestic violence, while conditions to access these services do not allow for example former women prisoners, as such many women human rights defenders and political activists who were arbitrary detained and released can't access these services. Moreover, reports of corruption and humanitarian diversion of YHRP funds spurred the "Where is the money?" campaign in 2019, and a general mistrust in resource allocation.

Canada's gender-responsive and feminist approach must be reflected in all foreign policy decisions, including in its bilateral economic deals. Canada has been denounced by the GEE for its "continued support of parties to the conflict, including through arms transfers, thereby helping to perpetuate the conflict." Amnesty International and Project Ploughshares recently published a report highlighting that Canada's arms transfers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fuel the war in Yemen, increasing Yemeni women and girls' vulnerability, and going against Canada's international obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty. There are also legitimate concerns that arms sold to state actors end up in the hands of armed groups, as they continue to seize new locations or due to corrupt practices among government-affiliated forces. This was also an unfortunate outcome in Afghanistan. These practices contradict Canada's feminist foreign policy and Women, Peace and Security principles.

Rising to the occasion: Recommendation from the Peace Track Initiative

To conclude, we present a set of recommendations for Canada, with the aim of supporting the implementation of the current CNAP and contributing to the development of the next CNAP:

- Add Yemen as a focus country in the new CNAP and include Yemen as a target country for the Women's Voice and Leadership Program, ensuring that Yemeni women-led organizations inside and outside the country can access it.

- Develop a standard of operations for the Voices at Risk Guidelines and the newly developed dedicated refugee stream for HRDs, and prioritize Yemeni women HRDs and their families for resettlement opportunities, ensuring that Canada partners (UNCHR and ProtectDefenders.eu) transparently share information about how to access the resettlement service.

- Provide technical and financial support to the Yemeni government to support the implementation of its NAP, conditional to advancing gender justice in Yemen. Prioritize the equal participation of women in government, as well as, the inclusion of civil society women-led organizations in the revision and implementation processes of the YNAP.

- Create direct funding opportunities and allocate core and flexible funding for Yemeni women-led organizations inside and outside the country to advance the WPS agenda. Additionally, ensure that funding through multilateral and international organizations is channeled fairly to Yemeni right holders and not spent unreasonably on project operational costs.

- Impose conditions to ensure that an inclusive and accountable peace process takes place, such as advocating the meaningful and equal participation of women in all tracks and all meetings including back-channel meetings; demanding that information about peace draft agreements and the peace process is shared with women groups; ensuring that all staff including high-level seniors and leadership of the OSESGY, UNVIM, and UNMHA are trained in gender analysis and GBA+. Additionally, Canada could support recruiting women in leadership of UN peace missions in Yemen, starting with the UN Envoy Deputy position.

- Commit to long-term and sustainable protection programs for Yemeni women and girls including specific programs for women human rights defenders (HRDs) and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including state-led initiatives to strengthen and build Yemen's public institutions.

- Request comprehensive and intersectional gender analysis from the humanitarian programs Canada is funding and support programs that address the needs and priorities of various women groups, ensuring that the abuses women are facing (including those raised in the GEE's reports) are effectively addressed in the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP), ensuring its activities also advances the WPS agenda and interlinks with Yemen's NAP. Additionally, consider funding sustainable long term humanitarian (and development) goals that have been prioritized by Yemeni women, including income and livelihoods programs, electricity infrastructure, water and sanitation, health and education, as well as supporting accountable disbursement of civil servants' salaries and social protection aid, and ensuring reforms of payroll systems.

- Continue supporting the mandate of the GEE with a view to support accountability and reparation and continue to support the deployment of an SGBV Monitoring Expert post in the GEE, and consider deploying an SGBV expert to the Panel of Experts on UNSC Sanctions. Moreover, ensure that sanctions against perpetrators of SGBV and child recruitment are also included in Canada's sanctions related to Yemen.

- Halt arms transfer to countries and parties involved in the war in Yemen and support Yemen's demining efforts.

Conclusion

*Beth Woroniuk, Kristine St-Pierre
& Katrina Leclerc*

Canada's second WPS national action plan is now more than halfway through its implementation period. We are at the point where we would hope to see an analysis of progress, reflections on strategies, what is being learned, and consideration of what new challenges have emerged.

This publication provides analysis from WPSN-C members on the latest CNAP progress report. The Network includes a wide range of perspectives and expertise when it comes to women, peace and security. This array of experience facilitates multi-faceted analyses from activists, funders, academics, students, and others.

Overview

This publication includes nine chapters by WPSN-C members, each looking at a different aspect of the 2019-2020 Progress Report. Below is a brief overview of each chapter.

Beth Woroniuk and Kristine St-Pierre reflect on what makes an effective or 'good' progress report. The authors discuss the report's efficacy and relevance, raising important questions on purposeful accountability mechanisms and the role of the progress report as a 'learning process' inside the government.

Rebecca Tiessen and Kate Grantham argue that while Canada's three progress reports on the CNAP point to "considerable progress" overall, questions remain about how progress is tracked as well as the tools and strategies used to collect data. The authors discuss the requirements for how a feminist methodology is in line with meeting the objectives of the CNAP.

Erin Campeau, Hilary Clauson, and Remie Abi-Farrage look at the framing and use of 'intersectionality' in the Progress Report, arguing that the current approach is too restrictive. They propose a newer formulation: Intersectionality+ that goes beyond a form of analysis. Their chapter outlines how CNAP implementation and reporting would be strengthened by this more expansive definition.

Alexandria Bohémier and Shayne Wong also take up the issue of an intersectional approach to the implementation of the CNAP and its reporting, looking more specifically at the synergies between the WPS and YPS agendas. They call for the use of age-disaggregated data and the inclusion of young people, and young women in particular, in a meaningful and tangible way.

Urooj Mian considers the role of the rule of law within the WPS agenda by looking specifically at Justice Canada's commitments and current departmental progress report. Her chapter provides specific recommendations for the Department to more strongly align its inputs with the goals of the WPS agenda.

Sandra Biskupski-Mujanovic focuses on the DND/CAF departmental progress report, looking specifically at recent efforts to address intersectionality, inclusivity, diversity, as well as culture change. The author provides recommendations including disaggregated data that go beyond gender and the need to listen to and consider the lived experiences of all women within the CAF.

In their chapter, Erin Hunt and Bénédicte Santoire argue that much work remains to be done to ensure humanitarian disarmament is a priority within Canada's efforts to implement the WPS agenda. In their view, the 2019-2020 Progress Report neglects disarmament issues. They argue this undermines Canada's credibility in advancing its feminist foreign policy.

Laura O'Connor looks at the specific issue of digital and mobile technology and what greater access to mobile technology could mean for women in fragile and conflict-affected states. She outlines how the CNAP can be expanded to incorporate digital communication and mobile technology.

In the final chapter, Rasha Jarhum and Charlotte Côté take a more in-depth look at Canada's engagement in Yemen. They note the disconnect between Canada's stated WPS commitments - including repeated calls for increased participation of women in Yemen's peace talks - and the gaps when it comes to actual contributions to advance concrete WPS outcomes and resolve this conflict.

What next?

Asking 'what comes next' has been a recurring theme in WPSN-C publications, in part because we believe being clear on next steps is crucial to Canada's implementation of the WPS agenda. It is evident from the Progress Report that Canada is making significant and important investments in WPS issues. Canada is seen globally as a leader. However, there is also a strong sense among our membership that more needs to be done and that there is a need for clearer reporting processes.

Reflecting on the chapters in this publication and on recent discussions on Canada's WPS efforts, a number of points emerge.

- As noted in the Introduction and throughout this publication, there are many positive elements outlined in the latest progress report: extensive listing of a wide range of initiatives across all five CNAP objectives, the work of the

WPS Ambassador, increased WPS project investments, the willingness to identify challenges as well as advances, engagement from nine government departments, ongoing collaboration with and championing of civil society (including the WPS Advisory Group), and areas where Canada has stepped into global leadership roles (such as cochairing the WPS Focal Points Network). These are key advances.

- During last year's consultations on Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP), Global Affairs Canada noted the central role of the CNAP.[16] These FFP discussions reflected the great interest in feminist approaches to foreign policy in general and WPS issues in particular. Yet, the Progress Report is remarkably silent on how/if Canada's feminist foreign policy brings new energy, insights, emphases to the CNAP. If, as often stated, the CNAP is a key pillar in Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy, we would hope to see more elaboration in the Progress Report (including the departmental reports) on feminist analysis, objectives, principles as well as tracking, evaluation and reporting.

- Challenges on what an intersectional approach means to the CNAP remain. This is very much linked to efforts to bring an anti-racism and decolonial approach to WPS issues, as well as the questions raised by important efforts to 'queer the WPS agenda' and bring the YPS and WPS closer together. We are pleased to see a commitment in the Progress Report to address these issues: "In its continued efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Action Plan, the government will in particular seek to achieve a broader recognition of the impact of patriarchy, positive and harmful masculinities and the legacy of colonialism, and how these can be addressed through the Action Plan and a feminist approach" (p. 39). We will follow with great interest what this means in practice (and resourcing).

16: Global Affairs Canada (2020). Scene Setter: Feminist Foreign Policy Dialogue.

- Linked to the previous two points is the ongoing need to clarify and ensure coherence of what the WPS agenda means throughout Canada's CNAP implementation. This challenge is acknowledged in the overview report: "attention is still required to develop an enhanced, common understanding among implementing government partners of gender, fundamental WPS principles and a feminist approach in the context of implementing the Action Plan" (p. 38). Early in 2020, the WPS Advisory Group (co-chaired by the WPSN-C) held a special meeting to explore GBA+ in the context of Canada's WPS work. The vibrant discussions in that workshop demonstrated both the need for and the interest in developing stronger, clearer, and practical analytical understandings.

- One of the key advances in the current CNAP compared to the first CNAP is the increased focus on the links among gender equality, the security of women and girls, and global peace. As global advocates continue to stress, the WPS agenda is not just about increasing the number of women in security structures, institutions, and processes. It is about building a more peaceful and just world for all. As discussed in several contributions to this publication, this dimension could be more explicit in the Progress Report and in Canada's ongoing efforts.

- Finally, the reflections in this report illustrate the need for critical questions on CNAP accountability and monitoring mechanisms, including of the progress reports themselves. Do the progress reports play a role commensurate with the time and effort required to produce them? Is it possible to produce more timely and relevant updates?[17] Who uses the progress reports? Does the reporting process facilitate learning and useful feedback mechanisms?

Given that the current CNAP is scheduled to expire at the end of next year, discussions have already begun on what Canada's third CNAP could look like and possible priority issues.

Hopefully there will be scope to engage in meaningful reflections on what has been learned over more than ten years of Canadian NAPs. We understand that GAC has scheduled a formal evaluation of the CNAP as part of the departmental evaluation plan. However, it is important that we not wait for this evaluation to start this analysis. As well, meaningful consultations in Canada and around the world are key. These could include WPS experts, Indigenous women, women human rights defenders and peacebuilders, people with different identities and lived experiences (from the Global South, LGBTIQ+, racialized people, people living with disabilities) to others who are affected by Canada's WPS actions and investments at home and abroad.

We began this publication with reflections on the numerous conflicts around the world and on security issues inside Canada. If the CNAP is a relevant framework, perhaps one question is whether or not it provides guidance as GAC and other government departments move to take action to address these conflicts. How do WPS principles and concerns influence Canada's position in Afghanistan and the government's response to the ongoing crisis? How will Canada respond to violations of the rights of women, young women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people? Will humanitarian aid meet the needs of all Afghans? Will Canada invest boldly in peaceful solutions? And bringing these big questions back to the annual progress reporting process, when and how will these questions be answered in a timely, public, useful, annual progress report? Given the current reporting timeline, it will be unfortunate if we have to wait another two or three years to receive public reporting on this crisis.

The remaining period in this CNAP (and the corresponding progress reports), as well as the consultations on the new CNAP, provide many opportunities to explore creative and constructive answers to these questions.

17: The current CNAP mandates tabling annual reports in Parliament each September for the fiscal year that ends in March of the same year. This has proved difficult, due to election campaigns and the difficulties GAC has encountered in pulling together a report six months after the reporting period has ended.

Contributors

Remie Abi-Farrage is a Senior Program Officer in the Global Programs at the Equality Fund, supporting the organizations' grant making and partner accompaniment strategies with their global partners. Remie is deeply connected to feminist and youth movements globally, with valuable local and international experience on human rights philanthropy, advocacy, programming and social justice organizing.

Sandra Biskupski-Mujanovic is a PhD Candidate at Western University in the Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Department with a specialization in Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.

Alexandria Bohémier is a Master's student at the University for Peace, co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security (CCYPS), and researcher focused on experiences of LGBTQ+ young people. Follow her on Twitter @a_bohemier.

Erin Campeau is the Development Coordinator - Major Gifts at the Equality Fund. Through her work, she explores how to shift power through movement-informed, feminist philanthropy.

Hilary Clauson is Policy Associate at the Equality Fund. Follow her on Twitter @hilaryclauson.

Charlotte Côté is Peacebuilding Policy Advisor at the Peace Track Initiative and the Head of Operations of a Canadian organization in the field of Dialogue and Track II diplomacy. She also founded and leads "Oser s'en parler", an initiative encouraging collective introspection and action on the issues of colonialism, white privilege and settler unease in Canada.

Kate Grantham is founder of FemDev, a global development consulting firm passionate about feminist approaches to research, evaluation and analysis. Follow her on Twitter @KateGrantham and @Feminist_Dev.

Erin Hunt is the Program Manager at Mines Action Canada. Follow her on Twitter @erinlynnhunt.

Katrina Leclerc is a PhD student at Saint-Paul University, co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security (CCYPS), and a Steering Committee member of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @leclerc_katrina.

Rasha Jarhum is a Human Rights defender from South Yemen. She is co-founder and Director of Peace Track Initiative and member of the Human Rights Research and Education Center, at Ottawa University. She was named by Apolitical as one of the Top 100 Influencing People on gender policy. Follow her on Twitter @RashaJarhum

Laura O'Connor is a Senior Project Officer at Ottawa Dialogue, a Track Two dialogue organization working across South Asia and the Middle East; and a Junior Fellow at the Delhi-based think tank, the Council for Strategic and Defense Research. She is also a freelance writer, having been published in Our Times Magazine, ACTION Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, and Ms. Magazine.

Urooj Mian holds a Master of Social Science (M.Sc.) in Peace and Conflict Research and a Master of Law (LL.M) specializing in International Criminal Law and Justice. She is the founder and principal consultant at Sustainable Human Empowerment (SHE) Associates Inc. (sheassociatesinc.com). Follow her on Twitter @UroojM.

Bénédicte Santoire is a PhD student at the University of Ottawa and researcher focused on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Follow her on Twitter @b_santoire.

Kristine St-Pierre is the Director of The WPS Group (thewpsgroup.com) and a Steering Committee member of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @Kristine_StP.

Rebecca Tiessen is Full Professor in the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa. Her areas of research cover gender, security, development, and feminist foreign policy. One of her most recent publications (open access) is "Whose feminism(s)? Overseas partner organizations' perceptions of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy?" with Sheila Rao (2020), International Journal.

Shayne Wong is a Master's candidate at the University of Manitoba, a co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security (CCYPS), and Youth Engagement Program Coordinator for ISOKO Partners for Peace and Gender Equality. Follow her on Twitter @ShayneW95.

Beth Woroniuk is the Policy Lead at the Equality Fund and the chair of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @bethottawa.

wpsn-canada.org
@WPSNCanada