

CONNECTING THE DOTS

**ARMS CONTROL, DISARMAMENT
AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND
SECURITY AGENDA**

HENRI MYRTTINEN



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Notes

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The Gender and Disarmament programme seeks to contribute to the strategic goals of achieving gender equality in disarmament forums and effectively applying gender perspectives in disarmament processes. It encompasses original research, outreach activities and resource tools to support disarmament stakeholders in translating gender awareness into practical action.

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Table of contents

List of Abbreviations	2
Executive Summary	3
Main Findings	4
Recommendations	5
1. Introduction	7
Methodology and Structure	9
2. Connecting the Dots Between the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and Arms Control and Disarmament	10
2.1. Women, Peace and Security, Arms Control and Disarmament	16
2.2. The Pillars of Women, Peace and Security	18
Participation	18
Prevention and Protection	19
Relief and Recovery	20
2.3. National Action Plans on Resolution 1325	21
3. “Participation” in Arms Control and Disarmament	28
3.1 Best Practices	31
3.2 Areas for Further Action	33
4. “Prevention” and “Protection” in Arms Control and Disarmament	34
4.1. Best Practices	37
4.2. Areas for Further Action	40
5. “Relief and Recovery” in Arms Control and Disarmament	42
5.1. Best Practices	44
5.2. Areas for Further Action	46
6. Conclusions: Extending the reach of Women, Peace and Security Agenda	48
Appendix A. National Action Plans on Security Resolution 1325 that Incorporate Arms Control and Disarmament	52
Appendix B. Overview of Interviews	56

List of Abbreviations

ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
BTWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GGE	Group of Governmental Experts
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
PSHEA	Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UAV	Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



UN officer supervises the collection of weapons in Côte d'Ivoire.

UN photo | Basile Zoma

As the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda enters its third decade, States and civil society actors are looking for ways to strengthen its implementation, both in terms of policy frameworks and “on-the-ground” programming. This report contributes to these efforts by examining the normative and practical overlaps and connections of the WPS agenda with the field of arms control and disarmament. Using an original approach to gender-responsive arms control and disarmament measures that is structured around the four WPS pillars of participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery, this report identifies both current best practices and areas for further action. Connecting the dots between these policy areas can bring benefits for both fields: the WPS pillars can structure gender-responsive arms control measures which, in its turn, can operationalize the WPS agenda.

Main Findings

- Despite the centrality of weapons to armed conflict, the WPS agenda has been slow to engage with the field of disarmament and arms control, particularly at the multilateral level. The 11 Security Council resolutions on WPS contain few references to arms control and disarmament, and multilateral meetings on WPS have rarely addressed the governance of weapons.
- National implementation of the WPS agenda presents a more encouraging picture, as numerous WPS National Action Plans (NAPs) have included arms control and disarmament, in particular regarding small arms and light weapons (SALW) and, to a lesser degree, mine action. This trend has become increasingly noticeable since 2015, indicating a new momentum for integrating arms control and disarmament into WPS policies and implementation.
- Initiatives in the field of arms control and disarmament to improve women's participation and tackle gendered impacts of weapons have not been framed explicitly in connection with the WPS agenda. This has been a missed opportunity to strengthen convergences between these policy areas.
- A number of concrete steps have been taken in recent years in arms control and disarmament to increase the participation of women in disarmament diplomacy, including the creation of informal gender working groups in landmine and cluster munition review conferences; the establishment of

a fellowship to sponsor women diplomats participating in cybersecurity negotiations; and the provision of a sexual harassment helpline and email address during the 2019 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

- All arms control and disarmament efforts share the broader goal of preventing and reducing armed violence. The synergies between such efforts and the prevention and protection pillars of WPS are most evident in three areas. First is the inclusion of Article 7(4) in the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which mandates States parties to conduct a risk assessment on the possibility that exported material could be used to facilitate gender-based violence (GBV). The second area is national legislation to deny gun licences to those either convicted of domestic violence, GBV, violent intimidation or stalking or are seen as being at a high risk of committing these crimes. Thirdly, guidelines on prevention of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse (PSHEA) in mine action are also relevant to the prevention and protection pillars.
- Measures agreed as part of arms control and disarmament agreements can also contribute to relief and recovery, the fourth pillar of WPS. Clearance and handover of land previously contaminated by explosives can be done in a way that redresses gender imbalances and empowers women in the community. The same applies to gender-sensitive assistance of victims, which is carried out as part of the cluster munitions and landmine disarmament processes.



Risk educator explains the threat of explosive hazards in Afghanistan.

UNMAS

Recommendations

- In order to realize the full potential of the WPS agenda, two main misconceptions need to be overcome: that gender relates primarily or even exclusively to women and girls; and that the WPS resolutions only apply to conflict or post-conflict situations. In this regard, it is crucial to enact gender-responsive measures that take into account the full spectrum of gender and also to understand

the relevance of WPS frameworks to societies considered to be at peace.

- To promote a better integration of the WPS agenda and arms control and disarmament and, thus, maximize efforts to improve human security and gender equality, States can follow examples highlighted in this report of integrating arms control and disarmament measures into WPS National Action Plans and, conversely, integrating gender

perspectives into instruments such as SALW control plans or mine clearance strategies.

- Efforts should also be made to find common ground between WPS and disarmament actors, for example by creating joint commissions or bringing WPS experts into arms control delegations and vice versa.
- Across the board, data that is disaggregated by sex, age and in other ways needs to be collected, and further qualitative research is required into the gendered impacts of weapons as well as the various gendered aspects of arms control and disarmament. This should be augmented by better measures to monitor and evaluate the impacts of integrating gender into arms control and disarmament measures.
- When it comes to participation, national governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and treaty bodies should undertake targeted efforts to ensure that women, men and people of other gender identities affected by armed violence, including survivors and their representative organizations, can meaningfully participate in arms control and disarmament programmes, including multi-lateral processes.
- The goals of prevention and protection should go beyond SALW and their misuse in acts of GBV to inform initiatives in other areas of arms control and disarmament. These could include efforts to combat online harassment and GBV and to protect civilians from the use of explosive weapons in

populated areas (EWIPA), as well as a broader discussion on the effects of militarization.

- Measures related to prevention and protection should take into account potential effects of climate change in increasing armed violence and localized precarity. To date, this has mostly focused on reducing the risk of GBV in disaster relief, but additional research efforts are needed to comprehensively understand the multiple gendered impacts of the nexus of climate change and armed violence, and to develop policy and programming responses.
- In terms of relief and recovery, the experience with gender-sensitive victim assistance in mine action could be expanded to protocols and agreements dealing with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.
- Policy actors and practitioners should act to improve and adequately fund mechanisms for disaggregated age- and gender-specific data collection related to the needs of survivors. This would support a better integration of gender and disabilities perspectives into victim assistance.

1.

INTRODUCTION

In October 2020, United Nations Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) celebrates its 20th anniversary.¹ This resolution is often referred to as a “landmark”, as it was the first time that the Security Council explicitly acknowledged the different needs, possibilities and vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict-affected situations. Together with the 10 subsequent WPS resolutions, it forms the basis for what is often called the WPS agenda.² These resolutions seek to ensure women’s meaningful participation in all aspects of conflict resolution and peace-building processes; the prevention of and protection from all forms of violence against women and girls and any abrogation of their rights; and the consideration of the needs of women and girls in relief and recovery.



Participant attends global conference in New York.

UN photo | Manuel Elías

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1. Security Council, S/RES/1325, 2000, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000)).
 2. At the time of writing, these 10 are SCRs 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), 2493 (2019) and 2538 (2020).

While the WPS resolutions have informed significant actions in the broader field of peace and security, their normative and practical convergences with arms control and disarmament remain underexplored.³

The 20th anniversary of SCR 1325 coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action on women's rights and the fifth anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), both of which also highlight issues of gender and conflict. It also comes at a time of increased global public debate on issues of gender, violence and arms. These issues range from efforts to combat conflict-related sexual violence, via campaigns against femicide and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) such as Ni Una Menos in Latin America, to long-overdue debates on toxic masculinities in the context of the #MeToo movement or armed attacks by so-called incels.⁴ The Black Lives Matter movement has also highlighted the role of racial and gender-based biases in policing and in other institutions of power – and the racialized and gendered dynamics of armed violence. These movements and processes

have all contributed to a new sense of urgency in taking the WPS agenda forward, and to do so in a manner that engages with gender broadly and intersectionally.

In the field of arms control and disarmament, there have been important advances and initiatives in recent years towards a better inclusion of gender perspectives. These include the United Nations Secretary-General's commitment to achieving gender parity on disarmament bodies established under his auspices; the decision taken by the Latvian presidency of the 2019 Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to make gender the main focus of the conference; the comprehensive integration of gender perspectives into the 2019 Oslo Action Plan of the Mine Ban Convention; and the impulses given to gender mainstreaming in arms control and disarmament diplomacy through the work of the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group.⁵

While the broader process of incorporating gender perspectives into arms control and disarmament measures makes these efforts

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3. Arms control refers here to measures restricting the development, production, stockpiling, proliferation and use of weapons; disarmament refers to reducing or limiting the number and types of weapons, or eliminating them.
 4. Incels, or "involuntarily celibates", are part of a virulently misogynist, racist and male supremacist subculture that exists mostly online. Nonetheless, self-proclaimed incels have committed individual and mass acts of violence, mostly shootings, including the killing of 3 people in Pittsburgh (USA) in 2009, 6 in Isla Vista (USA) in 2014, 9 in Roseburg (USA) in 2015, 2 in Aztec (USA) in 2017, 17 in Parkland (USA) in 2018 and 10 in Toronto (Canada) in 2018. For more, see M. Follman, "Armed and Misogynistic: How Toxic Masculinity Fuels Mass Shootings," Mother Jones, May/June 2019 Issue, <https://www.motherjones.com/crime-justice/2019/06/domestic-violence-misogyny-incels-mass-shootings/>.
 5. R. Dwan, "Women in Arms Control: Time for a Gender Turn?", Arms Control Today, October 2019, pp. 6–11, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2019-10/features/women-arms-control-time-gender-turn>.

more effective and relevant, a closer integration with the WPS agenda would give them structure, guidance and depth and would help ensure that they are comprehensive. Conversely, arms control and disarmament are essential to achieving the over-arching goals of the WPS agenda, and integrating them helps to operationalize the agenda, giving concrete substance to each of the four WPS pillars – participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery.

To help connect the dots between these policy areas, this report proposes an original approach to gender-responsive arms control and disarmament measures, structured around the four pillars of WPS: participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery. Focusing mostly on conventional weapons – in particular, small arms and light weapons (SALW), landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) – it identifies current best practices, as well as areas for further action. In so doing, this report intends to help to extend the reach and impact of the WPS agenda and further dialogue and collaboration between different parts of a siloed multilateral system, including the symbiotic fields of disarmament, peace and security, gender equality, development, and human rights.

The focus on SALW, mines, cluster munitions and ERW is due to the fact that it is these weapons that the WPS agenda has most explicitly engaged with, be it in the relevant SCRs or their national-level implementation plans. However, all weapons have gendered

aspects and impacts and, where possible, other weapons, weapon systems and forms of warfare – such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), weapons of mass destruction (WMD), lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS), uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAV) and cyberwarfare – are also covered.

Methodology and Structure

This report is based on a desk review of relevant documents and 45 anonymized, remote interviews. The respondents included policy makers, practitioners and researchers from national governments, international organizations, think tanks and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all continents working on arms control and disarmament issues.⁶

This report continues in chapter 2 with an overview of the WPS agenda, its priority themes and how they relate to arms control and disarmament. Chapters 3–5 then use the four pillars of WPS as a frame for discussing the successes and challenges of integrating gender perspectives into arms control and disarmament policy and practice. The report concludes in chapter 6 with a discussion of the findings and recommendations of this study. Appendix A lists all national action plans (NAPs) on SCR 1325 that mention weapons and arms control agreements, while Appendix B gives an overview of the interviews conducted as part of this research.

6. For an overview of the interviews, see Appendix B.

2.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

BETWEEN THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA AND ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT



Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security in 2000.

UN Photo | Milton Grant

The passing of SCR 1325 represented a culmination of decades of work by women's rights organizations and peace activists. It was also a point of departure for future efforts in those areas. The political moment in which it was passed in the United Nations Security Council was also overshadowed by the then-recent gendered atrocities of the Rwandan Genocide and the wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the former Yugoslavia. This explains the emphasis placed by SCR 1325

on particular themes, such as the reintegration of women ex-combatants and conflict-related sexual violence.

SCR 1325 has so far been followed by 10 further Women, Peace and Security resolutions, which collectively form the basis for what is often referred to as the WPS agenda. The term "agenda" can be misleading, however, as the resolutions do not add up to a coherent, comprehensive set of agreed norms or goals based on these norms or activities to be undertaken to achieve them.

Rather, they are a set of political documents that reflect what was discussed and where consensus was possible at a given time in the Security Council. This means that there are ambiguities, gaps and inconsistencies, as well as differing interpretations of key terms.

Two common misconceptions continue to persist in both the WPS and arms control and disarmament spheres: that gender relates primarily or even exclusively to women and girls; and that the WPS resolutions pertain mainly or only to conflict-affected situations.

Regarding the first of these misconceptions, it should be noted that gender is a broad construct that refers to the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate or a “norm” for women and men, for girls and boys, and for non-binary or gender-fluid people. Gender norms are socially constructed differences – as opposed to biological differences (sex) – and they function as social rules of behaviour, setting out what is desirable and possible to do as a man or a woman in a given context.⁷

Whether one is a woman or a man or has another gender identity has a major bearing on the likelihood of being involved in producing, owning, carrying, using or being targeted by a weapon (see Figure 1). Gender is also often a determining factor in terms of whether and how one might engage with different arms control processes, from village councils to international treaty negotiations.⁸

This does not mean that all men or all women will be equally affected by or engaged with weapons, arms control or disarmament. Gender interacts with age, location, social class, ethnicity, disability, family status, sexual orientation and other factors to create particular expectations, risks and possibilities for agency. Through this interaction, gender amplifies the privileges of some and the vulnerabilities of others.⁹

Often, particular subsets of the population are far more exposed to particular risks than others. For example, lower income men may be at a higher risk of becoming targets of armed violence; rural populations may be at higher risk of exposure to explosive remnants of war; and people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expres-

7. UNIDIR, “What is Gender?”, Gender & Disarmament Hub, <https://unidir.org/gender-perspective>.

8. For statistics and analysis on gender balance in arms control and disarmament, see R. H. Dalaqua, K. Egeland and T. G. Hugo, *Still Behind the Curve: Gender Balance in Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Diplomacy*, UNIDIR, 2019, <https://unidir.org/publication/still-behind-curve>.

9. See also *Control Arms, ATT Monitor 2019*, 2019, https://attmonitor.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/EN_ATT_Monitor-Report-2019_Online.pdf.



UN peacekeeper interacts with the community in North Darfur.

UNAMID | Albert González Farran

sions may face a higher risk of homo-, bi- or transphobic hate crimes involving weapons.

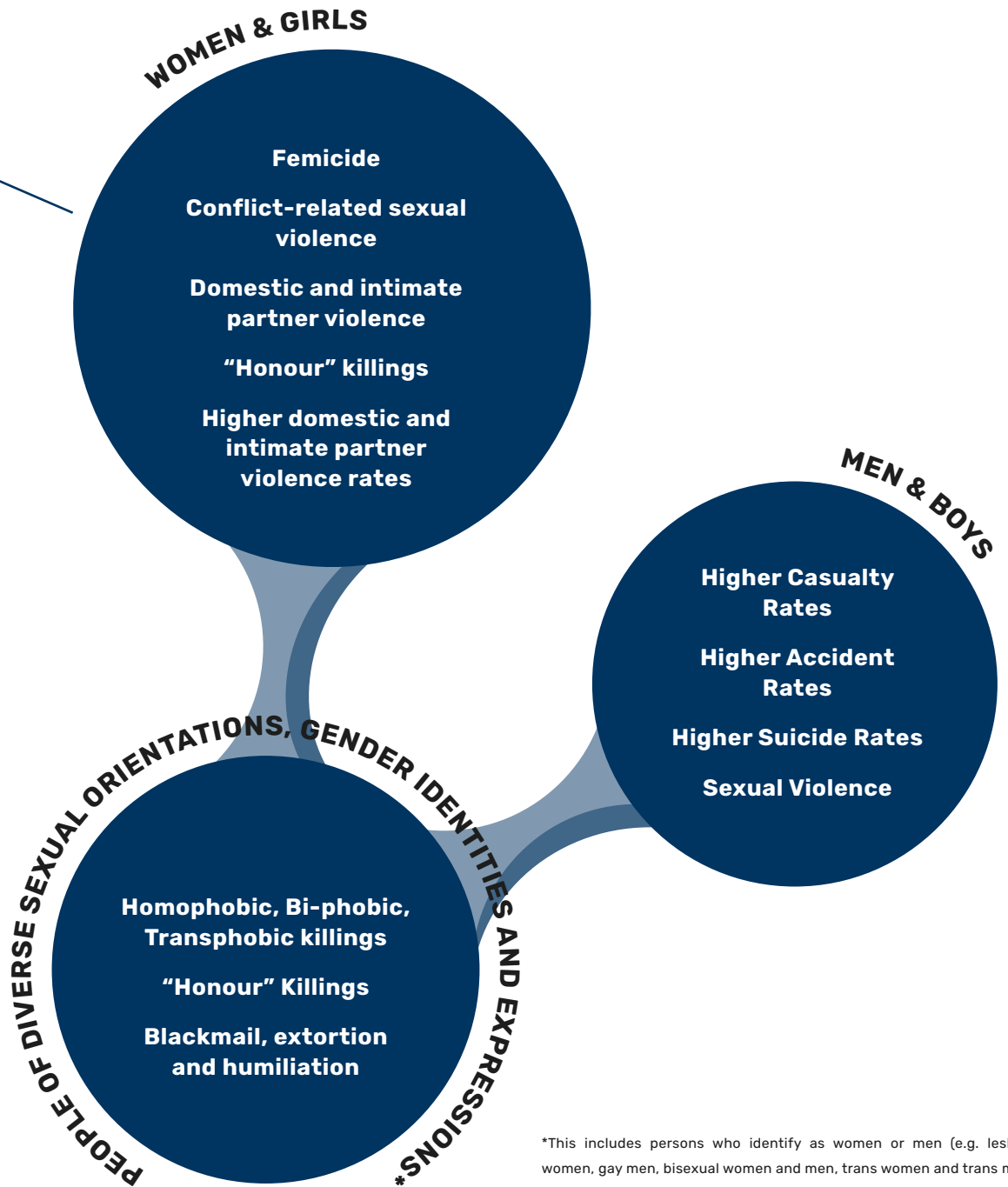
Regarding the second common misconception – that WPS resolutions would only apply to conflict-affected situations – it should be noted that many of the related activities are by necessity peacetime activities.¹⁰ This applies especially to those that deal with prevention of violence in general and of vio-

lence against women and girls in particular. As discussed further below, violence against women and girls became a key area of concern of the WPS resolutions, but the focus on conflict-related sexual violence has rendered invisible the other, non-conflict related forms of gender-based violence in which weapons are used, such as domestic violence.

10. See also A. Stavrianakis, “Towards a Postcolonial, Anti-Racist, Anti-Militarist Feminist Mode of Weapons Control” in S. Basu, P. Kirby and L. J. Shepherd (eds.), *New Directions in Women, Peace and Security*, Bristol University Press, 2020.

FIGURE 1. GENDERED IMPACTS OF ARMED VIOLENCE AND EXPOSURE TO WEAPONS

DIRECT IMPACTS



*This includes persons who identify as women or men (e.g. lesbian women, gay men, bisexual women and men, trans women and trans men) but also those identifying beyond or across the gender binary. They often face the same risks as other women/men as well as additional risks due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression

INDIRECT IMPACTS

WOMEN & GIRLS



MEN & BOYS



PEOPLE OF DIVERSE SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS, GENDER IDENTITIES AND EXPRESSIONS*



*This includes persons who identify as women or men (e.g. lesbian women, gay men, bisexual women and men, trans women and trans men) but also those identifying beyond or across the gender binary. They often face the same risks as other women/men as well as additional risks due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression

2.1. Women, Peace and Security, Arms Control and Disarmament

Despite the centrality of weapons to conflict, the SCRs on WPS do not in fact contain much on disarmament or arms control (see Table 1).¹¹ The term “arms control” is not mentioned at all, while the word “disarmament” appears only as part of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes of former combatants. Even in the DDR context, however, the focus of the SCRs is not on disarmament per se, but on taking the needs of women ex-combatants into account, ensuring the participation of women and their protection from violence, especially sexual violence, in these processes.¹²

Mine action is mentioned only once in SCR 1325, while the gendered impacts of small arms and light weapons and women’s role in SALW control are mentioned in three of the newer resolutions. These call both for women’s participation in all aspects of the control of SALW and for the prevention of

women’s participation in the diversion and trafficking of weapons. The Arms Trade Treaty is mentioned in three of the resolutions passed since the treaty’s adoption in 2013. There are no other mentions of “weapons” or “arms”.

It is worth noting that two resolutions that address SALW – SCRs 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015) – make reference to the WPS agenda in significant ways, demonstrating the synergies between these areas. Both highlight the role of SALW in GBV, call for the integration of gender perspectives into DDR, and call for “women’s full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes” related to SALW control, including with women’s organizations, “as appropriate”.¹³ SCR 2220 further calls for the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data on SALW as well as better analysis of the gendered impacts of SALW. It further requests the Secretary-General to include in his country-specific reports analysis of the SALW situation and the particular needs of women and children.

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11. See also C. Chinkin, Arms Control, “Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda”, UNIDIR, 21 October 2019, <https://unidir.org/commentary/arms-control-disarmament-and-women-peace-and-security-agenda>; and R. Dwan, “The Road Less Travelled: Women and Disarmament”, The Strategist, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), 2 July 2020, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-road-less-travelled-women-and-disarmament/>.
 12. There is a rich body of research on the experiences of women ex-combatants of DDR processes across the globe. For the United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) on gender and DDR, see United Nations DDR Resource Centre, “IDDRS Framework”, <https://unddr.com/the-iddrs/level-5/>.
 13. Security Council, S/RES/2117, 2013, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2117\(2013\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2117(2013)); and Security Council, S/RES/2220, 2015, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2220\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2220(2015)).

Table 1. Arms control and Disarmament in United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION (YEAR)	RELEVANT MENTIONS
1325 (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for different needs of men and women ex-combatants to be taken into account in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes • Calls for mine-clearance and mine-awareness programmes to take into account the special needs of women and girls
1820 (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for consultations with women in and protection of women from (sexual) violence in DDR processes
1888 (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasizes the need for the protection of women from violence, including from sexual violence in DDR processes
1889 (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for the particular needs of women, girls and children to be taken into account in DDR processes
1960 (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mentions
2106 (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests the participation of women in planning of DDR processes in order to prevent sexual violence and provide trauma support and reintegration support to women and children associated with fighting forces • Notes the provisions of Article 7.4 of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on gender-based violence (GBV)
2122 (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for the full and effective participation and protection of women in DDR processes • Urges the full and meaningful participation of women in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW) • Acknowledges the adoption of the ATT, notes its provisions on GBV (Article 7.4), and looks forward to the important contribution of these to reducing GBV in armed conflict and post-conflict situations
2242 (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages the empowering of women to participate in the design and implementation of SALW control efforts • Calls for the mitigation of the risk of women becoming involved in the illicit transfer of SALW
2467 (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls for the full and effective participation and protection of women in DDR processes • Notes the impact of SALW on civilians in armed conflict, including GBV against women and girls in conflict • Acknowledges the adoption of the ATT and notes its provisions on GBV (Article 7.4)
2493 (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests the Secretary-General to report on the full and effective participation and protection of women in DDR processes
2538 (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mentions

In addition, SCR 2151 (2014) on security sector reform (SSR) makes reference to the WPS resolutions.¹⁴ It highlights the need for gender perspectives in SSR, “[u]nderscores the importance of women’s equal and effective participation and full involvement in all stages of the security sector reform process”, and calls for more women in the security sector and for measures to prevent sexual violence. SCR 2365 (2017) on mine action does not explicitly mention WPS, but it does stress the need for gender- and age-specific considerations to be integrated across all areas of mine action.¹⁵

2.2. The Pillars of Women, Peace and Security

The WPS agenda is commonly defined as having four interconnected and partially overlapping pillars:

- Meaningful Participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels and in all aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding
- Prevention of violence against women and girls and of any abrogation of their rights

- Protection of women and girls from all forms of violence and from any abrogation of their rights
- Relief and Recovery, that is, ensuring that the voices and concerns of women and girls are accounted for when creating the structural conditions necessary for sustainable peace.

Participation

The participation pillar of the WPS agenda seeks to achieve the effective participation of women across the whole spectrum of peacebuilding and conflict-prevention efforts. It is mostly used in conjunction with terms such as “full and equal” or “meaningful”.¹⁶ These qualifiers underscore that women’s participation should not be tokenistic – it is not enough to have women in the room for peace negotiations, for women to be able to join a security sector institution or for women to be given a few minutes of speaking time during a multi-day conference; they have to be able to make meaningful contributions in their own right and to participate in decision-making as much as men.¹⁷ Apart from addressing gendered barriers, this also requires tackling explicit and implicit exclusion from decision-making.

14. Security Council, S/RES/2151, 2014, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2151\(2014\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2151(2014)).

15. Security Council, S/RES/2365, 2017, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2365\(2017\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2365(2017)).

16. Similar language is used in arms control and disarmament frameworks, such as the 2019 Oslo Declaration of the Mine Ban Convention and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

17. For an example of a good guide to improving women’s meaningful engagement, see Women for Women International, “Beyond Consultations”, <https://beyondconsultations.org/>.

ing processes based on age, social class, ethno-religious background, location and disability.

Of the four pillars, participation is the one that is more explicitly addressed in relation to arms control and disarmament. For instance, SCR 2122 (2013) on WPS urges “Member States and United Nations entities, to ensure women’s full and meaningful participation in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons”.¹⁸ SCR 2242 (2015) on WPS encourages “empowering women, including through capacity building efforts, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of efforts related to the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit transfer, and the destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons”.¹⁹ The WPS resolutions have also repeatedly raised the need for women ex-combatants and other women and children associated with fighting forces to be able to participate fully and safely in DDR processes.

While full and meaningful participation is a key precondition for achieving gender equality and the aims of the WPS agenda, its prominence in the SCRs has had the drawback of crowding out less visible gendered

dynamics of power, exclusion and violence. Increasing the number of women participating is a comparatively easy first step to take, but it is by necessity only the first step.

Prevention and Protection²⁰

Prevention is mentioned three times in SCR 1325 – always in the context of the prevention of conflict more broadly. Protection is mentioned seven times, four times in the context of the protection of women and girls in general, once with a specific mention of protection from all forms GBV and in particular sexual violence, and twice as protection of women’s human rights. The reason why a narrow focus on conflict-related sexual violence has become the dominant one lies in part with the dynamics of the WPS agenda itself. SCRs 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013) stress the issue of conflict-related sexual violence, given a lack of progress at the time and a push from both civil society and particular Member States for concrete action on this issue following well-documented cases in conflicts such as in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.²¹

As important as the work on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence is,

18. Security Council, S/RES/2122, 2013, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2122\(2013\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2122(2013)).

19. Security Council, S/RES/2242, 2015, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2242\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2242(2015)).

20. Given the close relationship in practice between prevention and protection work, the two pillars are discussed jointly here.

21. Security Council, S/RES/1888, 2009, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1888\(2009\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1888(2009)); Security Council, S/RES/1960, 2010, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1960\(2010\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1960(2010)); and Security Council, S/RES/2106, 2013, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2106\(2013\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2106(2013)).

this narrow focus has led to a side-lining of broader discussions on the prevention of and protection from all forms of violence that affect women and girls as well as the abrogation of their rights. While the focus has often been on the role that arms, especially SALW, play in conflict-related sexual violence, they are also used in domestic violence, intimate partner violence, misogynistic hate crimes and so-called honour killings.

The various forms of GBV faced by people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, which often involve the use of weapons, are either not mentioned at all in the SCRs on WPS or, in the case of lesbian, bisexual and trans women, are subsumed under the more general rubric of violence against women and girls. This renders invisible the often particular and heightened vulnerabilities that people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions face. Conflict-related sexual violence is, however, the one area where there has been a broadening of the understanding of gender in the WPS agenda over the years, with men victims explicitly recognized in SCR 2467 (2019).²²

Relief and Recovery

The relief and recovery pillar refers to the need to ensure that post-conflict, post-dis-

aster and other humanitarian support allows for the active participation of diverse women and girls and that their rights, needs and possible vulnerabilities are taken into account. According to the WPS resolutions, the following activities fall under this pillar: repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; support for women in the implementation of peace agreements; improving services for survivors of sexual violence; ensuring women and girls' livelihoods, land and property rights; enhancing women's socioeconomic conditions through education, income-generating activities, employment, and women's participation in decision-making and post-conflict planning throughout the recovery process; women's empowerment; and women's participation in DDR, electoral, SSR and judicial reform processes.

As with the other pillars, there are both broad and narrow interpretations of relief and recovery. The narrow understanding focuses only on direct post-conflict or post-disaster humanitarian aid, with again a particular focus on GBV. In contrast, the broader approaches look at using post-conflict periods as an opportunity to make sustainable change in terms of increasing gender equality and bringing about fundamental socioeconomic changes.²³

22. Security Council, S/RES/2467, 2019, [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467(2019)).

23. J. True and S. Hewitt, "What Works in Relief and Recovery", in S. E. Davies and J. True (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security*, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 178–192, <http://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190638276.013.19>.

2.3. National Action Plans on Resolution 1325

The WPS framework has been given substance through National Action Plans developed by States to implement this agenda at the national level. While these are not mandatory instruments, they are strongly recommended by the SCRs on WPS. These plans can have an inward focus, outlining a course of action to translate the WPS objectives into activities within the country. In the case of donor countries, NAPs often have an outward focus on activities to be carried out elsewhere, for example as part of peace operations or overseas development aid, as well as addressing WPS-relevant issues domestically.

At the time of writing, 84 States have a NAP in place, and some of those countries are already in the third or fourth iteration of their NAP. In addition, 11 Regional Action Plans have been enacted by regional organizations such as the African Union and the European Union. Local Action Plans that focus on sub-national implementation, for example at the provincial or municipal level, have also been developed.

While the WPS agenda at the multilateral level has been slow to engage with arms control and disarmament, the NAPs have made more progress. Of the 143 NAPs that have been passed to date (as many countries have had more than one), 56 (39%) include at least one mention of the following terms: SALW, the ATT, landmines, cluster munitions or other ERW, WMD, or cyberwarfare (see Figure 2).²⁴ Of these, 31 (55%) have been developed since 2015, which suggests that there is a new momentum for integrating these issues into implementation of the WPS agenda. SALW received the most mentions, featuring in 45 NAPs, followed by mines, cluster munitions and ERW. Other weapons are seldom mentioned in NAPs, with some notable exceptions, such as Ireland's third NAP (for 2019–2024), which highlights gender, in particular masculinities, in the context of nuclear weapons and disarmament policy.²⁵

Mentions of different weapons are partly only in the background sections, but at times also as cross-references to other policy documents. This is the case in the NAPs of Cameroon²⁶ and Kenya²⁷ for SALW control strategies. Some NAPs also make explicit the integration of WPS into the State's

24. For the complete list of 1325 NAPs that mention weapons and arms control agreements, see Appendix A.

25. Government of Ireland, Women, Peace and Security: Ireland's Third National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions 2019–2024, 2019, <https://dfa.ie/media/dfa/ourrolepolicies/womenpeaceandsecurity/Third-National-Action-Plan.pdf>.

26. Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family of Cameroon, Republic of Cameroon: National Action Plan for the 1325 Resolution and Companion Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council on Women, Peace and Security (2018–2020), 2017, https://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Cameroon_UNSCR-1325-NAP_ENG_Aug-2017.pdf.

27. Government of Kenya, National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and Related Resolutions 2016–2018, 2016, <https://www.peace-women.org/sites/default/files/Kenya%20NAP-with-cover-final.pdf>.

broader support for arms control diplomacy, such as the Mine Ban Convention, the ATT, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA). This is the case for Belgium's three NAPs.²⁸

Countries with "outward-focused" NAPs mostly mention weapons to highlight their support for gender perspectives in SALW control measures (e.g. Japan²⁹ and New Zealand³⁰) or mine action (e.g. Ireland³¹ and Spain³²). Countries with "inward-focused" NAPs – such as Bosnia and Herzegovina³³, the Philippines³⁴, and Serbia³⁵ – have included

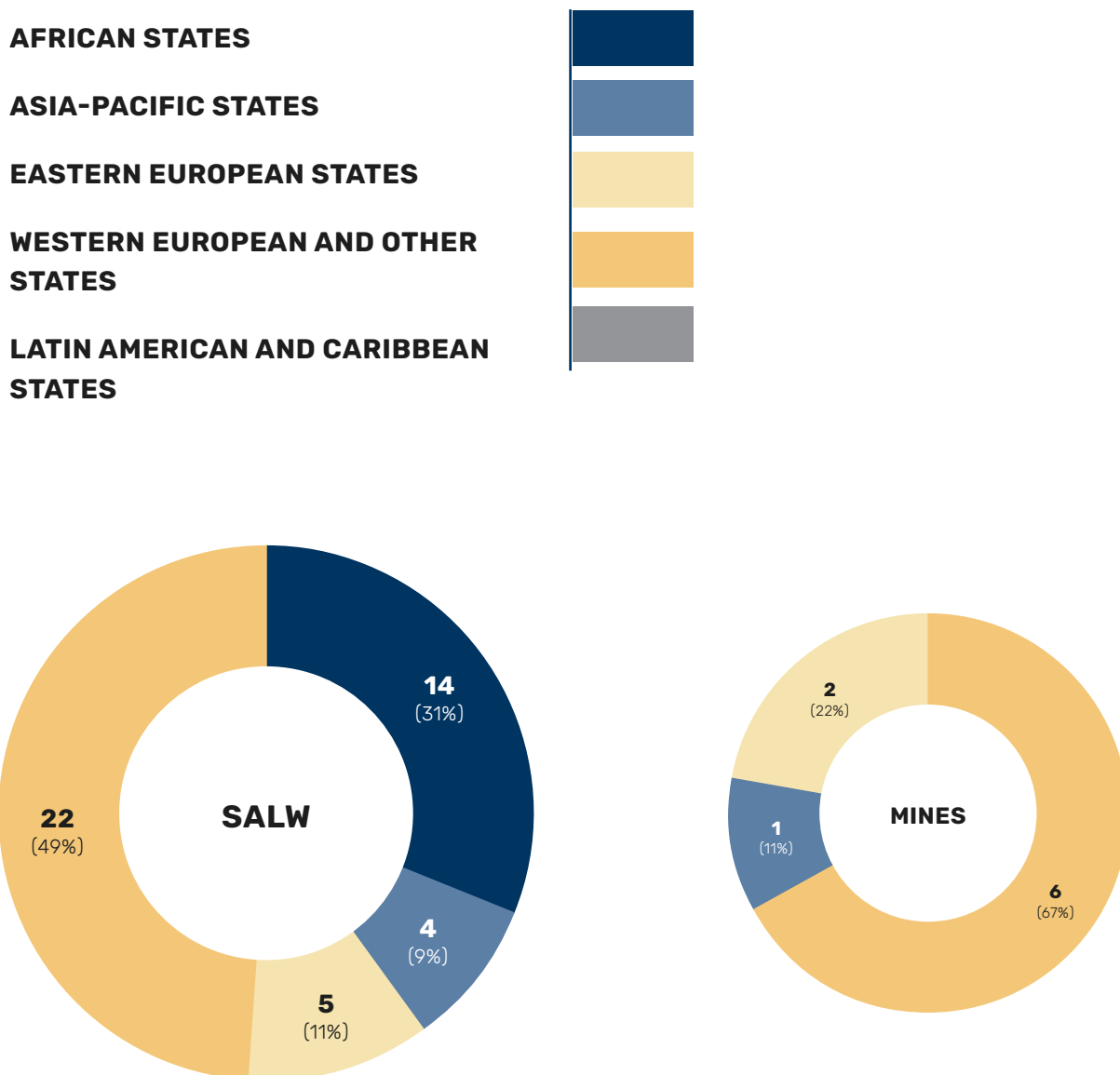
-
28. Government of Belgium, Women, Peace and Security: The Belgian National Action Plan on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 2009, https://diplomatie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/women_peace_security.pdf; Kingdom of Belgium, Second National Action Plan "Women, Peace, Security" (2013–2016), Implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Unofficial translation, 2013, <https://www.wpsnaps.org/app/uploads/2019/09/Belgium-NAP-2-2013-2016.pdf>; and Kingdom of Belgium, Third National Action Plan: "Women, Peace, Security" (2017–2021), Unofficial translation, 2017, <https://www.wpsnaps.org/app/uploads/2019/09/Belgium-NAP-3-2017-2021-English-translation-DP160100212.pdf>.
 29. Government of Japan, National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, Provisional translation, 25 September 2015, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000101798.pdf>.
 30. Government of New Zealand, New Zealand National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions, Including 1325, on Women, Peace & Security 2015–2019, 2015, <https://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/women-peace-security-booklet-2015-2019.pdf>.
 31. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, Ireland's National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325, 2011–2014, 2011, <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsite-media/ourrolesandpolicies/int-priorities/National-Action-Plan-UNSCR-1325.pdf>.
 32. Government of Spain, Action Plan of the Government of Spain for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 of the Security Council of the United Nations (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, 2007, https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/spain_nap_2007_english.pdf.
 33. Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2018–2022, August 2018, <https://arsbih.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Akcioni-plan-ENG-KB-14.01..pdf>
 34. Government of the Philippines, The Philippine National Action Plan on UNSCRs 1325 & 1820: 2010–2016, 2009, http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/NationalActionPlans/philippines_nap.pdf; and Government of the Philippines, National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2017–2022, 2017, https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Philippines_20172022NAP.pdf.
 35. Government of Serbia, National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2017–2020), 2017, http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Serbia_NAP.pdf.

SALW control in the context of protection and prevention, often with a stress on the need for localized solutions. In the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, this has led to the integration of SALW control (and also mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina) into municipality-level WPS Local Action Plans as well.³⁶

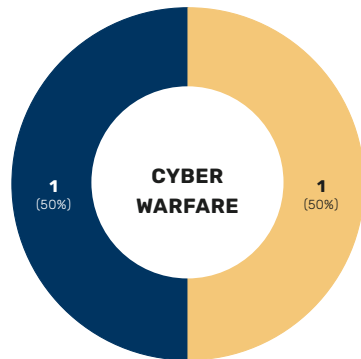
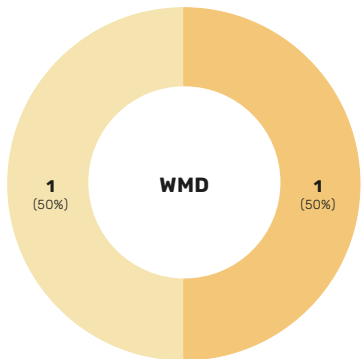
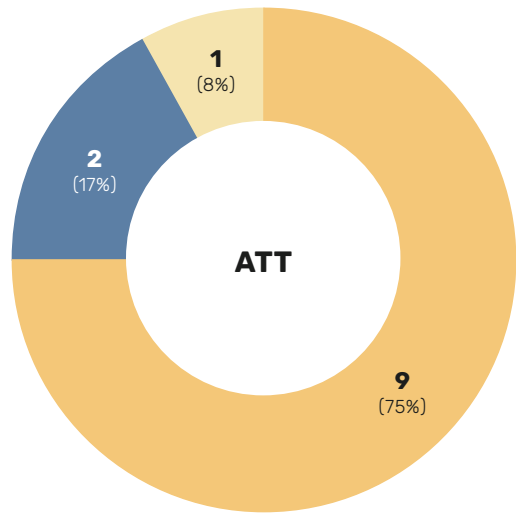
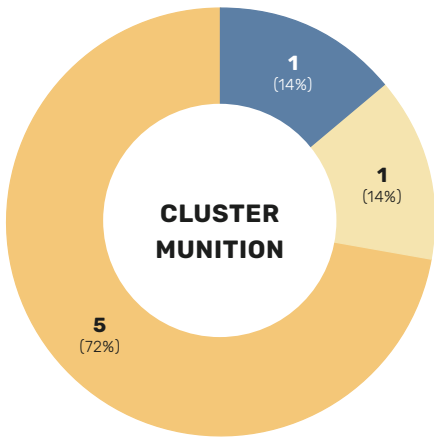
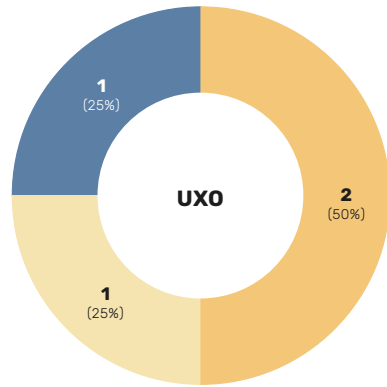
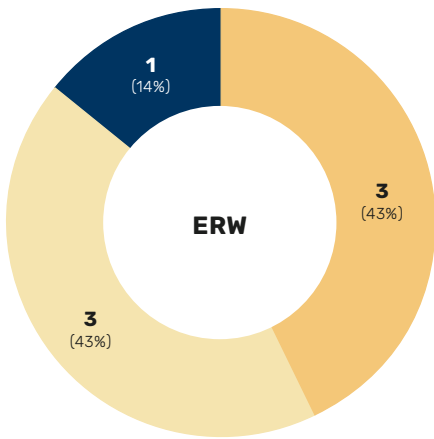
There are clear geographical divisions when it comes to including SALW and mines in NAPs on WPS. Apart from mentions in donor NAPs, SALW are mentioned in the “inward-focused” NAPs of the Philippines and States in South Eastern Europe and sub-Saharan Africa, in part thanks to regional SALW control dynamics. However, none of the NAPs of Latin American countries that are heavily affected by small arms violence mention the issue. Mine- and ERW-affected countries in Asia, such as Cambodia, Myanmar and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, currently do not have NAPs on WPS, while Asian countries with both NAPs and mine or ERW problems – such as Afghanistan and Iraq – do not mention the issue, with the exception of the Philippines.

36. For more on localization of the WPS agenda, see e.g. K. Babic-Svetlin, M. Jacevic and M. Mansury, *Localization of Women, Peace, and Security Agenda: Case Study of Six Local Governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Inclusive Security/Agency for Gender Equality, 2016, <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Localization-of-Women-Peace-and-Security-Agenda.pdf>; and H. Myrntinen, L. J. Shepherd and H. Wright, *Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the OSCE Region*, Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, 2020, <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/4/444577.pdf>.

FIGURE 2. WEAPONS AND ARMS CONTROL ISSUES IN 1325 NAPS



*Figure 2 is based on UN regional groups. Although they do not officially belong to any UN regional group, Palestine was coded as "Asia-Pacific States" and the United States was coded as "Western Europe and other States".



The Role of Civil Society Organizations

Women's rights organizations have a long history of campaigning locally, nationally and internationally for arms control and disarmament. Much of this campaigning has been and continues to be through civil society organizations (CSOs). They played a key role in pushing for United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and have taken a leading role in the mobilizations that led to important arms control and disarmament treaties, such as the 1999 Mine Ban Convention, the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions and the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty. In such instances, CSOs worked in collaboration with national delegations, providing background information necessary for furthering gender perspectives in arms control and disarmament policies but also the Women, Peace and Security agenda, at both the international and the national levels.

CSOs, academia and think tanks can contribute four key strengths with which national governments often struggle. First, CSOs have access to both subnational (e.g. grassroots) and international debates and information on arms. Second, they are also a repository of institutional knowledge. Respondents from national governments highlighted their struggle with a high turnover rate of staff dedicated to working on these issues, while the staff of CSOs and think tanks are able to work on them for a

longer term. Third, CSOs are often able to take more vocal positions on issues related to gender, disarmament or demilitarization than national governments. Fourth, CSOs have been able to facilitate the participation of a more diverse array of people of all gender identities affected by armed violence in arms control and disarmament debates than States, including survivors of armed violence and people with disabilities.

However, members of CSOs interviewed for this study recounted that they often struggle with a lack of sustained and adequate funding, shrinking political space in many countries, and the need to build up a high level of technical expertise – and to be acknowledged as experts – before being able to participate in negotiations. All of these factors can lead to the CSO field being dominated by less political, more technical, better equipped and better connected organizations that crowd out smaller, more grassroots organizations, in particular from the Global South.



Women march against gender-based violence in Sudan.

UN Photo | Albert González Farran

3.

PARTICIPATION IN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT



Demining expert in Lao PDR.

UNDP Lao PDR/Lou Sensouphone

The Women, Peace and Security agenda has consistently called for “full and equal” and “meaningful” participation of women in issues of peace and security. This has also been echoed in several arms control and disarmament frameworks. While there has been some visible progress, these issues remain mainly a male domain at all levels, from consultations with village elders to parliamentary oversight committees and global arms control negotiations, and from mine clearance teams to the guarding of ammunition stockpiles. However, a lack of sex-disaggregated data means that the extent of

women’s participation at different levels in these diverse arms control and disarmament activities cannot be fully quantified.

Nonetheless, a UNIDIR study examining women’s participation in disarmament diplomacy has found that:

- The proportion of women in disarmament diplomacy has grown steadily over the past four decades, but women remain underrepresented. (In the forums examined, women’s participation ranged from 0 to a maximum of 37 per cent.)

- The smaller a meeting, the lower the proportion of women participating.
- The proportion of women tends to decline as the importance of the position increases.³⁷

While the gender imbalance is in part a reflection of broader trends within foreign policy institutions, it also partly reflects what are considered “male” and “female” domains. As noted elsewhere, arms control has “tended to reward characteristics, expertise, and experience that are more commonly associated with men (e.g. toughness, seriousness, risk-taking, and military training)”, whereas work on social issues or gender continues to be seen and treated as a female domain.³⁸

This was echoed by many respondents for this study, who highlighted how, especially at the beginning of their careers, there were few women in arms control forums, and how even now it was often a struggle to find women speakers for panels. The opposite was found to be true for meetings on WPS issues, where “it is almost always a room full of women” as one respondent put it.

Much of the practical work of arms control

and disarmament – such as mine clearance, disposal of unexploded ordnance, or collection, stockpiling and disposal of small arms and light weapons and ammunition – remains a predominantly male domain. In part, this is due to the institutions tasked with these measures – such as State militaries, the police or private security companies – being male dominated. NGOs working on these issues, for example in mine clearance, have also long recruited staff from these male-dominated institutions. Furthermore, some aspects of the work may be seen as “too dangerous” for women, or social mores may act as barriers. For example, women mine clearers in many countries feel pressure to retire once they marry and establish a family. Apart from promoting equal job opportunities, the benefits of the inclusion of women and women’s organizations in practical arms control and disarmament measures has long been recognized. These include:

- Women in socially conservative areas are able to do outreach and data collection with women on SALW and explosive remnants of war, resulting in better data.³⁹
- Women ex-combatants and ex-gang members can, as much as their male peers,

37. R. H. Dalaqua, K. Egeland and T. G. Hugo, *Still Behind the Curve: Gender Balance in Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Diplomacy*, UNIDIR, 2019, <https://unidir.org/publication/still-behind-curve>.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

39. Interviews; and S. Koyama, “Just a Matter of Practicality: Mapping the Role of Women in Weapons for Development Projects in Albania, Cambodia and Mali”, in V. Farr, H. Myrntinen and A. Schnabel (eds.), *Sexed Pistols: The Gendered Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, United Nations University Press, 2009, pp. 356–89, <https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:2537/ebary9789280811759.pdf>.

act as advocates for arms control and non-violence and give information on SALW and ERW.

- Women and women's organizations are able to act as advocates for disarmament in families and communities.⁴⁰
- Women can act as key multipliers of messages on arms control, SALW and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) in their households and communities, and they can provide more accessible communication on these issues.⁴¹

While no global figures are available on the number of women in these different activities, it can be assumed that the number has been steadily growing as more women enter security sector institutions tasked with various aspects of arms control, and as mine clearance organizations make targeted efforts to hire women, even in socially conservative societies. This recruitment of women into mine clearance and other disarmament-related activities can be both an important way of creating employment opportunities in neglected and conflict-affected

regions and of promoting gender equality. However, it needs to be done in culturally sensitive ways that minimize the risk of backlash. Even in less socially conservative settings, integration of women into male dominated sectors – such as those related to arms control and disarmament – often requires shifts in institutional cultures.

In some cases, women mine-clearance teams can also serve broader purposes of re-integrating former combatants and contributing to broader post-conflict reconciliation, such as in the case of the Humanicemos mine clearance teams in Colombia, which include women who are former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo, FARC-EP).

3.1. Best Practices

While civil society organizations (CSOs) play a key role across all the WPS pillars, their cooperation with States can help in broadening

40. On the use of traditional oral poetry in Somalia see e.g. K. Kinzelbach and Z. M. Hassan, "Poems against Bullets? The Role of Somali Women in Social Gun Control", in V. Farr, H. Myrntinen and A. Schnabel (eds.), *Sexed Pistols: The Gendered Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, United Nations University Press, 2009, pp. 356–89, <https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:2537/ebrary9789280811759.pdf>; and on innovative outreach methods in Rio de Janeiro see e.g. P. Dreyfus et al., *Small Arms in Rio de Janeiro: The Guns, the Buyback, and the Victims*, Small Arms Survey, Viva Rio and ISER, December 2008, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/C-Special-reports/SAS-SR09-Rio.pdf>.

41. E. LeBrun (ed.), *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide*, Small Arms Survey, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Q-Handbooks/HB-07-Gender/SAS-GLASS-Gender-HB.pdf>; and A. Jones, A. Calza Bini and S. Salvagni Varó, "How to Improve Demining Activities Through Gender-sensitive Mine Risk Education", *Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, vol. 17, no. 1, April 2013, <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol17/iss1/7/>.

the base of participation in the arms control field. This would bring different perspectives into debates and deepen the degree to which gender perspectives are integrated into this work. A good example of such cooperation is the Informal Gender Working Group set up for the 2019 Oslo Review Conference of the Mine Ban Convention. It played a key role in the successful development of the Oslo Action Plan and is continuing its work in the lead-up to the 2020 Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Lausanne.

The group was initially set up at the behest of Norway to advise it on gender in mine action in preparation for the Oslo Review Conference. It originally consisted of representatives of mine clearance operators and think tanks such as the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), but it was later expanded to include more advocacy-focused representatives and representatives of the Global South, such as the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines (Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas). The group supported the Norwegian presidency of the review conference in developing the Oslo Action Plan and developed a working paper with the Government of Finland on practical recommendations on integrating gender into mine action. In addition, it has continued its work by supporting the four Gender Focal Points of the Mine Ban Convention. It also decided to continue its

work and transfer the lessons learned from the Oslo Review Conference to support the integration of gender perspectives into the up-coming Lausanne Action Plan of the CCM.

The Secretary-General's 2018 Agenda for Disarmament prioritizes efforts to address the gender imbalance in arms control and disarmament diplomacy forums, referring to it as "a moral duty and an operational necessity".⁴² The Agenda reiterates the need for "full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security" and that the "Secretary-General will work to achieve gender parity on all panels, boards, expert groups and other bodies established under his auspices in the field of disarmament".⁴³ This has led to a proactive encouragement of gender parity in the groups of governmental experts (GGEs) on disarmament established by the United Nations General Assembly – and parity has now been achieved in the GGEs for conventional ammunition and cybersecurity.

At the fifth Conference of State Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty, in 2019, under the presidency of Latvia and with expert support from CSOs, the parties undertook concrete measures to ensure increased women's participation. Beyond commitments to strive for gender parity in delegations and panels, States parties decided that the ATT

42. United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, 2018, p. 66.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Secretariat should report on overall progress among delegations in achieving gender balance.⁴⁴

Also in 2019, the Governments of Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland launched the “Women and International Security in Cyberspace Fellowship”. As part of this initiative, 35 mid-career women working on cybersecurity in various countries participated in a training course and had access to mentorship opportunities in the margins of the second substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, in February 2020.

Another relevant practice took place in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT). The information package prepared by the Secretariat for delegates attending the 2019 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference included a helpline and email address to support delegates attending the meeting who “have been a victim of, or a witness to, sexual harassment at United Nations Headquarters”.⁴⁵ This could be a practice that could be easily adopted in the context of other treaties as well.

3.2. Areas for Further Action

Meaningful participation in arms control and disarmament requires a rethinking of the practicalities and modalities of decision-making and of consultation processes. These need to be made more accessible to a greater diversity of people, in particular those who have historically not been able to engage and those directly affected by weapons, including survivors of armed violence and their representative organizations. This is an area where arms control and disarmament can learn from the WPS agenda. More efforts should thus be undertaken to ensure the meaningful participation of women, men and people of other gender identities affected by armed violence, including as survivors, in arms control and disarmament programmes, including multi-lateral processes.

To increase synergies between arms control and disarmament and WPS, efforts should also be made to find more common ground through, for example, creating joint commissions, bringing WPS experts into arms control delegations and vice versa.

44. Arms Trade Treaty, Fifth Conference of States Parties, Final Report, ATT/CSP5/2019/SEC/536/Conf.FinRep.Rev1, 30 Aug. 2019, [https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/CSP5%20Final%20Report%20\(ATT.CSP5.2019.SEC.536.Con.FinRep.Rev1\)%20-%2030%20August%202019%20\(final\)/CSP5%20Final%20Report%20\(ATT.CSP5.2019.SEC.536.Con.FinRep.Rev1\)%20-%2030%20August%202019%20\(final\).pdf](https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/CSP5%20Final%20Report%20(ATT.CSP5.2019.SEC.536.Con.FinRep.Rev1)%20-%2030%20August%202019%20(final)/CSP5%20Final%20Report%20(ATT.CSP5.2019.SEC.536.Con.FinRep.Rev1)%20-%2030%20August%202019%20(final).pdf)

45. Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Information for States Parties, Observer States and Intergovernmental Organizations, NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/INF/1, 3 January 2019, <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/INF/1>.

4.

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION IN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT



Weapons collection in Colombia.

UN Photo/Renata Ruiz

All arms control and disarmament efforts share the broader goal of preventing, or at a minimum reducing, armed violence. Thus, it can be argued that, theoretically, all such efforts should fall indirectly under the two Women, Peace and Security pillars of prevention and protection, assuming that they take the particular needs and rights of women and girls into account.

Gender is a critical factor affecting the likelihood of people engaging with weapons.

For example, men are the perpetrators of most weapon-related incidents. They also account for the majority of victims. At the global level, an estimated 84% of firearms victims are men, but this proportion can be higher in certain regions of the world, for example South America, Central America and Southern Africa.⁴⁶ In conflict, men and boys are more likely to be killed and wounded by direct violence by all weapon systems as they make up the majority of combatants or suspected or potential combatants. They

46. G. Hideg and A. Alvazzi del Frate, *Darkening Horizons: Global Violent Deaths Scenarios, 2018–30*, Briefing paper, Small Arms Survey, May 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Violent-Deaths-Scenarios.pdf>.

may be directly targeted as men – for example, in “signature strikes” by UAVs⁴⁷ or selected mass killings – or they may be more likely to undertake activities that put them at risk of exposure to mines or other explosive remnants of war – for example, farming and using heavier farming equipment such as tractors.⁴⁸ Men and boys are also more likely to be injured in arms-related accidents and to use weapons to commit suicide.⁴⁹

Women own only a minor share of firearms, but they are disproportionately represented among victims of sexual and gender-based violence in which arms play a role, whether in conflict or in peacetime. Women are also targeted in gender-based killings, femicides. These have become a distinct form of violence that is particularly visible in certain areas or countries, including some with very high levels of small arms violence (e.g.

Mexico and northern Central America), but also disproportionately in countries that are otherwise relatively peaceful.⁵⁰ In countries with the highest rates of femicide, more than half of these killings are perpetrated with small arms.⁵¹ Most perpetrators of femicide, domestic violence and intimate partner violence involving weapons are men and are frequently known to the victim – often their current or former intimate partners, family members or friends. The presence of a gun greatly increases the risk of death or serious injury in the domestic context.⁵²

People of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions are often specifically targeted by armed violence by State and non-State actors (including guerrillas, paramilitaries, militias and gangs), as well as other civilians. This type of violence includes so-called honour killings, targeted killing in

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47. R. Acheson, R. Moyes and T. Nash, *Sex and Drone Strikes: Gender and Identity in Targeting and Casualty Analysis*, Article 36/Reaching Critical Will, October 2014.
 48. J. Durham, “Gender Issue: An Example from Lao PDR”, *Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2008, pp. 32–35, <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol12/iss2/10/>.
 49. World Health Organization (WHO), *Guns, Knives, and Pesticides: Reducing Access to Lethal Means*, 2009, https://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/vip_pesticides.pdf.
 50. A. Alvazzi del Frate, G. Hideg and E. LeBrun, *Gender Counts: Assessing Global Armed Violence Datasets for Gender Relevance*, Briefing paper, Small Arm Survey, March 2020, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Gender-Counts.pdf>, p. 8.
 51. United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, *Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC)*, “Women, Men and the Gendered Nature of Small Arms and Light Weapons”, 2018, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/MOSAIC-06.10-2017EV1.0.pdf>.
 52. South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), *Gender and SALW: Gender Aspects of SALW and How to Address Them in Practice*, 2018, <http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Gender-and-Security/Gender-Aspects-of-SALW---ENG-28-09-2018.pdf>, p. 10.

homo-, bi- or transphobic hate crimes, and sexual violence and extortion perpetrated with the aid of weapons.⁵³

4.1. Best Practices

Arms control and disarmament can serve the broad goals of prevention of and protection from armed violence, including prevention of and protection from GBV. The Arms Trade Treaty is a good example of an arms control mechanism aligned with the goals of prevention of and protection from GBV.⁵⁴ It is the first ever legally binding regime that recognizes the link between GBV and the international arms trade.⁵⁵ Under Article 7.4 of the ATT, it is illegal to transfer weapons if there is a risk that the weapons will be “used to commit or facilitate serious acts of GBV or serious acts of violence against women and children”. This means that authorities conducting risk assessment processes for the export and import of weapons are obliged

to take into account reports of human rights abuses, prevalence of all forms of GBV (whether conflict-related or not), and legislative and normative factors around GBV in the recipient countries.

Implementation is key to making treaties effective. In the case of the ATT, civil society organizations have produced relevant resources to guide countries implementing the GBV risk assessment.⁵⁶ They also have partnered with governments to deliver training aimed at mid-level staff of national export licensing agencies. One such training workshop was organized in Riga, Latvia, in 2019 by Control Arms, an NGO network, and included participants from Central and Eastern European countries. Based on interview with participants, the workshop had positive impacts in a number of countries in the region, where State administrative officials built on the training to better integrate gender perspectives into national policies and guidelines.

53. Interviews; and M. Daigle and H. Myrtilinen, “Bringing diverse sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) into peacebuilding policy and practice”, *Gender & Development*, 26:1, 103-120, 2018.

54. It is worth noting that both the ATT itself and the SCRs on WPS that reference it refer to GBV, rather than the narrower term “sexual violence”. GBV is an umbrella term and includes, for example, hate crimes, femicide, domestic violence and intimate partner violence. It can be perpetrated against a person of any gender, even if it is sometimes narrowly conflated with violence against women. See also Control Arms, *ATT Monitor 2019*, 2019, https://attmonitor.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/EN_ATT_Monitor-Report-2019_Online.pdf, p. 20.

55. Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), *Gender-based Violence and the Arms Trade Treaty*, 2nd edn, Reaching Critical Will, 2019, https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/GBV_ATT-brief.pdf, p. 4.

56. Control Arms, *How to Use the Arms Trade Treaty to Address Gender-Based Violence: A Practical Guide for Risk Assessment*, August 2018, https://controlarms.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GBV-practical-guide_ONLINE.pdf.

At the national level, one practical, legal tool that is increasingly being used in an attempt to reduce the use of privately held small arms and light weapons in cases of GBV, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, violent intimidation and stalking is the denial of gun licences or legal gun acquisition to those who have either been convicted of such acts or are seen as being at a high risk of committing them, or have had restraining orders placed on them. Several studies spanning more than 10 countries indicate correlations between laws restricting the purchase of firearms (e.g. background check requirements) and lower rates of intimate partner homicides, and between laws restricting access to firearms (e.g. safer storage requirements) and lower rates of unintentional firearm deaths in children.⁵⁷

This approach has been implemented, in various forms, in Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Kenya, New Zealand, the Philippines, Samoa, South Africa, Spain, Ukraine, the United States of America and Uruguay, among other places. For instance, the acquisition of a weapon in Samoa involves a background interview with the applicant's partner, and in parts of Australia and Canada also with ex-partners. Argentina meanwhile makes all applications public, and anyone objecting is able to make a statement to that effect to the authorities.⁵⁸

Some countries have also mainstreamed gender considerations in their national action plans on SALW control, including the need to work with men and masculinities on gun ownership and (mis-)use issues. The national SALW control plans of Albania and Montenegro provide a good illustration of this, as they include:

- Developing gender-responsive goals and indicators
- Ensuring collection of sex- and age- disaggregated data
- Increasing participation of women in SALW control
- Increasing awareness among young men of the dangers of misuse of SALW and other firearms and address harmful gender norms
- Improving institutional knowledge on, prevention of and response to SALW use in GBV as well as public and media awareness raising
- Improving prevention of and response to SALW use in suicide
- Improving gender-sensitive communication
- Ensuring active involvement of “non-security” ministries and agencies such as those for youth, social welfare, health and gender equality

57. J. Santaella-Tenorio, M. Cerdá, A. Villaveces and S. Galea, What Do We Know About the Association Between Firearm Legislation and Firearm-Related Injuries?, *Epidemiologic Reviews*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1 January 2016, pp. 140–157, <https://doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxv012>.

58. E. LeBrun (ed.), *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide*, Small Arms Survey, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Q-Handbooks/HB-07-Gender/SAS-GLASS-Gender-HB.pdf>.

- Ensuring policy coherence across different action plans
- Working together with civil society and media organizations.⁵⁹

Humanitarian mine action, whether through clearance of mines and ERW or risk education, can also contribute to the prevention and protection pillars of WPS, especially when these take gender into account. For example, Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkey and Zimbabwe have all developed national gender and mine action strategies. Meanwhile, countries such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic have been ensuring that their national strategies on ERW removal are harmonized with their strategies on gender equality and the SDGs. In Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for example, this entails:

- Ensuring gender diversity and equitable participation are embedded as core principles
- Actively promoting gender equality and the promotion of women into leadership positions in all spheres of mine action

- Developing gender action plans, guidelines and manuals for gender mainstreaming across the sector
- Improving the gender expertise of all relevant actors
- Ensure risk education is gender- and age-appropriate
- Ensuring gender- and age-sensitive victim assistance
- Ensuring collection of sex- and age- disaggregated data throughout
- Aligning mine action and ERW strategies with plans for the SDGs, national gender equality, poverty reduction and socio-economic development
- Promoting equitable participation
- Ensuring relevant actors with gender expertise and who work with women affected by mines or ERW (e.g. the Ministry of Women Affairs in Cambodia or the Lao Women's Union in the Lao People's Democratic Republic) are part of coordination, advisory and implementation bodies.⁶⁰

59. Based on Government of Albania, Action Plan 2019–2021 of the Strategy on Small Arms, Light Weapons and Explosives Control 2019–2024, 2018; and Government of Montenegro, Strategy for Combating Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Their Ammunition from 2019 to 2025, 2018.

60. Based on Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA), Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan 2018–2022, 2018; Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, National Strategic Plan for the UXO Sector in the Lao People's Democratic Republic 2011–2020: "The Safe Path Forward II", 22 June 2012, <http://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Annex-2.-National-Strategic-Plan-Safe-Path-Forward-II.pdf>; Royal Government of Cambodia, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, 12 December 2017, http://www.cmaa.gov.kh/images/contents/NMAS/NMAS_in_English.pdf; and Mine Action Review, Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019, 2019, http://www.mineactionreview.org/assets/downloads/10799_NPA_Cluster_Munition_Remnants_2019_WEB.pdf, pp. 58–73.

Prevention of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse (PSHEA) by staff involved in arms control and disarmament measures against other staff members or community members, including children, can also be seen as falling under these two WPS pillars. PSHEA has been identified as a problem since the 1990s, and re-gained new prominence after the 2018 Oxfam scandal.⁶¹ Although PSHEA has not been a major issue of discussion in global disarmament diplomacy forums, it has been addressed through national legislation and sector-specific guidance, especially in humanitarian mine action. In recent years, a broad conversation on measures against sexual exploitation and abuse in mine action has taken place, including contributions in the form of guidelines from United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), as well as the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).⁶²

4.2. Areas for Further Action

To date, efforts related to prevention and protection have mainly focused on improving SALW control as a means to tackle GBV, in particular conflict-related sexual violence. As important as this work is, prevention and protection measures need to inform action in other areas of arms control, including WMD. Research has already demonstrated gendered impacts of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.⁶³ States started to raise this issue in multilateral discussions on nuclear weapons, but more could be done to

61. This refers to the re-emergence of allegations, proven afterwards, that staff of Oxfam, an international NGO, had engaged in sexual exploitation and abuse, including of under-age girls, in Haiti in 2011.

62. See e.g. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Mine Action: Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience and Aiding Recovery*, 2015, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2015-iasc-gender-based-violence-guidelines_lo-res.pdf; United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), *United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes*, 3rd edn, 2019, https://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf; and M. Provencher and L. Biscaglia, *Guidance on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), 2019, https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/PSEA_Guidance_2019_web.pdf.

63. J. Borrie et al., *Gender, Development and Nuclear Weapons: Shared Goals, Shared Concerns*, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and International Law and Policy Institute (ILPI), October 2016, <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/gender-development-and-nuclear-weapons-en-659.pdf>; R. H. Dalaqua et al., *Missing Links: Understanding Sex- and Gender-Related Impacts of Chemical and Biological Weapons*, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), 2019, <https://unidir.org/publication/missing-links-understanding-sex-and-gender-related-impacts-chemical-and-biological>; and M. Olsen, "Human Consequences of Radiation: A Gender Factor in Atomic Harm", In *Civil Society Engagement in the Disarmament Processes: The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Ban*, United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, 2016, pp. 26–34, <https://doi.org/10.18356/84966efa-en>.

ensure that gender-responsive approaches can inform action within not only the NPT, but also the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

Likewise, discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS) should also take account of potential gendered and other risks embedded in artificial intelligence and facial recognition systems, as these may include conscious or unconscious gendered or racialized biases and may put people with physical disabilities at a heightened risk. Furthermore, as mentioned above, new initiatives have been undertaken in the domain of gender and cybersecurity, where online harassment and GBV also occur and at times mutate into armed violence, such as in the case of online radicalization of “incels”.

Another area of arms control and disarmament that has the potential to embrace the WPS pillars of prevention and protection refers to the protection of civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). After a 2019 conference host-

ed by Austria, Ireland organized a round of consultations with States seeking to adopt a political declaration on the topic.⁶⁴ It is important that such declarations and any further action in this area take into account the gender and disabilities perspectives.

Measures related to prevention and protection should also take into account potential effects of climate change in increasing armed violence and localized precarity.⁶⁵ To date, this has mostly focused on reducing the risk of GBV in disaster relief, but additional research efforts are needed to comprehensively understand the multiple gendered impacts of the nexus of climate change and armed violence, and to develop policy and programming responses.

Finally, achieving the more fundamental WPS aspirations of prevention of and protection from all forms of violence, would require more than arms control measures: they would demand ambitious discussions about militarization, military spending and patriarchal power.⁶⁶

64. Government of Ireland, “Draft Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from Humanitarian Harm Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas”, March 2020, <https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/ewipa/declaration/documents/draft-political-declaration.pdf>.

65. The links between climate change and conflict are not linear and differ between various contexts. On this see e.g. M. Brzoska and C. Fröhlich, “Climate Change, Migration and Violent Conflict: Vulnerabilities, Pathways and Adaptation Strategies”, *Migration and Development*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2016, pp. 190–210, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2015.1022973>; K. J. Mach et al., “Climate as a Risk Factor for Armed Conflict”, *Nature*, vol. 571, 11 July 2019, pp. 193–197, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1300-6>; and I. Salehyan, “Climate Change and Conflict: Making Sense of Disparate Findings”, *Political Geography*, vol. 43, November 2014, pp. 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2014.10.004>.

66. A. Stavrianakis, “Towards a Postcolonial, Anti-Racist, Anti-Militarist Feminist Mode of Weapons Control” in S. Basu, P. Kirby and L. J. Shepherd (eds.), *New Directions in Women, Peace and Security*, Bristol University Press, 2020.

5.

RELIEF AND RECOVERY IN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT



Farmers plant on land that has been cleared of landmines in Cambodia.

UNDP Cambodia

Among the Women, Peace and Security pillars, relief and recovery is the most ambiguous and under-researched.⁶⁷ The aim of the pillar is to ensure that the voices and concerns of women and girls are accounted for when creating the structural conditions necessary for sustainable peace. In terms of arms control and disarmament, this includes addressing the long-lasting impacts

of armed conflict and weapons on individuals, as well as societies. Arms control and disarmament are also central elements of DDR and SSR processes, for which there are already extensive bodies of research and policy frameworks as well as international guidance on the integration of gender perspectives.⁶⁸

67. J. True and S. Hewitt, "What Works in Relief and Recovery", in S. E. Davies and J. True (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security*, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 178–192, <http://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190638276.013.19>.

68. For DDR see e.g. United Nations DDR Resource Centre, "Women, Gender and DDR", Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) Module 5.10, 1 August 2006, <https://unddr.com/modules/IDDRS-5.10-Women-Gender-and-DDR.pdf>; and for SSR see e.g. H. Myrtilinen, *Security Sector Governance, Security Sector Reform and Gender*, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), 2019, <https://www.dcaf.ch/tool-1-security-sector-governance-security-sector-reform-and-gender>.

The after-effects of exposure to armed violence of any kind are often differently gendered for women, men and people of other gender identities. Mental and physical trauma as well as disability are mediated by gender expectations. The ability and likelihood of accessing medical care and psycho-social support, if these are available, differ by gender, and gender expectations also lead to potentially different kinds of stigma for survivors.⁶⁹ Caring for survivors of armed violence is also gendered, as this is overwhelmingly left to women, especially the unpaid work of caring within the family. Men and boys may be expected to contribute to the care of survivors financially, including feeling pressure to migrate for work and sending remittances. Adolescent children may also be taken out of school to help with care work and income generation.⁷⁰

5.1. Best Practices

One of the clearest examples of work that falls under the pillar of relief and recovery is humanitarian mine action. The latest action plans under the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions encourage States parties to mainstream gender considerations in all activities, spanning from risk education to victim assistance.⁷¹ Building on this guidance, mine action authorities from affected States and donor States can consider targeted actions to redress gender inequalities during clearance and the handover to returning populations of land previously contaminated by explosives.

Especially for rural communities, safe access to arable land is an essential part of post-conflict relief and recovery. Clearance

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69. C. Buchanan (ed.), *Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery*, Surviving Gun Violence Project, 2014; A.-S. Duprat and L. Pecak, "Masculinity: The Unseen Barrier in Survivor Assistance", *Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, vol. 17, no. 3, fall 2013, pp. 18–21, <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol17/iss3/6/>; J. Durham, "Gender Issue: An Example from Lao PDR", *Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2008, pp. 32–35, <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol12/iss2/10/>; E. LeBrun (ed.), *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide*, Small Arms Survey, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Q-Handbooks/HB-07-Gender/SAS-GLASS-Gender-HB.pdf>; United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), *United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes*, 3rd edn, 2019, https://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf; and M. Widmer, *Surviving Armed Violence*, Geneva Declaration Secretariat, Policy Paper no. 2, April 2014, <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/Policy-paper/GD-PolicyPaper2-Surviving-Armed-Violence-EN.pdf>.
70. C. Buchanan (ed.), *Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery*, Surviving Gun Violence Project, 2014; and M. Widmer, *Surviving Armed Violence*, Geneva Declaration Secretariat, Policy Paper no. 2, April 2014, <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/Policy-paper/GD-PolicyPaper2-Surviving-Armed-Violence-EN.pdf>.
71. Implementation Support Unit of the Cluster Convention Munitions, *Dubrovnik Action Plan*, 2016 <https://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/English.pdf>; and Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, *Oslo Action Plan*, APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1, 29 November 2019, <https://www.osloreview-conference.org/fileadmin/APMBC-RC4/Fourth-Review-Conference/Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf>.

of explosive remnants of war from land is a necessary first step to ensuring this. The process of land release must take place within the existing legal and normative framework of the country in which operations are being conducted. In contexts of prolonged conflict and multiple displacement, this is often a complex and highly contentious issue, in which gendered power dynamics may lead to women being excluded from land ownership. By integrating gender perspectives and ensuring the meaningful participation of women and others who have been historically marginalized, the process can become one that addresses the needs of vulnerable sections of society and promotes greater gender equality and inclusion – or, at a minimum, does not worsen existing conditions.⁷² Similarly, authorities can take practical steps to facilitate women’s ownership of land, including making provisions for particularly vulnerable people, such as women-headed households, people with disabilities (including victims/survivors of mines or cluster munitions) and widows.

Victim assistance is a further key area in which disarmament and arms control measures overlap with the relief and recovery

pillar. The 2008 CCM was a landmark in this respect as it was the first multilateral treaty to make the provision of assistance to victims of a specific weapon a legal obligation. The steps involved in victim assistance programmes can vary, but they usually include:

- Collection of relevant data and assessment of the needs of cluster munition victims
- Development of a national plan to ensure adequate, available and accessible assistance
- Provision of assistance that is gender- and age-sensitive as well as non-discriminatory⁷³
- Reporting on progress.⁷⁴

At all these stages, States should actively involve survivors and affected communities.

As an example of mutual cross-learning between the Mine Ban Convention and CCM spheres, the 2019 Oslo Action Plan of the Mine Ban Convention echoes many similar points. These include stressing the need for sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data and basing victim assistance on gender analyses, as well as supporting and including

72. For guidance and example case studies of land release and gender in mine action, see Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), *Handover of Released Land: Common Procedures and Good Practices*, April 2013, <https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/Handover-of-released-land-2013.pdf>.

73. This requires taking into account different needs that women and men survivors of different ages will have, which also vary from one socio-cultural context to another, including addressing issues of stigma.

74. Implementation Support Unit of the Cluster Convention Munitions, *Dubrovnik Action Plan*, 2016 <https://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/English.pdf>.

victims/survivors in advocacy.⁷⁵ Guidelines from the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) furthermore recommend the inclusion of women in victim assistance teams to ensure access to female victims in conservative contexts, although this is also good practice elsewhere.⁷⁶


5.2. Areas for Further Action

The experience with gender-sensitive victim assistance in mine action could be expanded to protocols and agreements dealing with chemical and biological weapons. In view of possible sex- and gender-specific effects of chemical and biological weapons, a gender-responsive approach to assistance under the BTWC and the CWC could help States and their populations to become more resilient to and recover more rapidly from chemical or biological incidents.⁷⁷ For nu-

clear weapons, a similar provision has been included in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which has yet to enter into force.⁷⁸

Although a number of arms control and disarmament policy frameworks explicitly call for data disaggregated by at least sex, if not also by age and disability, data collection continues to be a challenge, especially in fragile and conflict-affected settings.⁷⁹ Furthermore, even where data is disaggregated, it is often not used beyond noting that there are sex and age differences – that is, it is not used for more in-depth gender analyses. This means that victim assistance often lacks comprehensive and intersectional integration of gender and disabilities perspectives, and support continues to be based on somewhat simplistic understandings of who the victims are and what their needs are.

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75. Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Oslo Action Plan, APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1, 29 November 2019, <https://www.osloreview-conference.org/fileadmin/APMBC-RC4/Fourth-Review-Conference/Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf>.
76. United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, 3rd edn, 2019, https://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf
77. R. H. Dalaqua et al., Missing Links: Understanding Sex- and Gender-Related Impacts of Chemical and Biological Weapons, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), 2019, <https://unidir.org/publication/missing-links-understanding-sex-and-gender-related-impacts-chemical-and-biological>.
78. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, 2017, <https://undocs.org/A/CONF.229/2017/8>, Article 6.
79. See e.g. observations contained in the Draft Review Document of the Dubrovnik Action Plan. Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, First Preparatory Meeting, Draft Review Document of the Dubrovnik Action Plan, CCM/CONF/2020/PM.1/WP.3, 18 June 2020, <https://undocs.org/CCM/CONF/2020/PM.1/WP.3>.



In view of this, policy actors and practitioners should act to improve and adequately fund mechanisms for the collection of data disaggregated by age and gender and its analysis related to the needs of survivors. Studies on how effective victim assistance is in promoting broader gender equality and the WPS agenda should also be encouraged. In addition, more efforts are needed to integrate masculinities perspectives into victim assistance given the fact that the majority of casualties of ERW and small arms and light weapons are men and boys. Often, this requires helping men overcome gendered stigma around accessing healthcare support, in particular psychological help, which can also be crucial for issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anger management.⁸⁰

80. A.-S. Duprat and L. Pecak, "Masculinity: The Unseen Barrier in Survivor Assistance", *Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, vol. 17, no. 3, fall 2013, pp. 18–21, <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol17/iss3/6/>.

6.

CONCLUSIONS: EXTENDING THE REACH OF THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA



Ex-combatant holds up munitions in Côte d'Ivoire.

UN Photo/Patricia Esteve

The report shows the symbiotic relationship between arms control and disarmament on the one hand and the Women, Peace and Security agenda on the other, demonstrating that further integration can bring benefits for both fields. For the arms control and disarmament community, the WPS pillars give structure and guidance to the comprehensive integration of gender perspectives, which thus far has been a piecemeal effort. For WPS policy actors and practitioners, engaging with arms control and disarmament helps to operationalize the WPS agenda, giving concrete substance to each of its pillars.

As the WPS agenda enters its third decade, this research has identified several recommendations to strengthen the synergies between WPS and arms control and disarmament.

- In order to realize the full potential of the WPS agenda, two main misconceptions need to be overcome: that gender relates primarily or even exclusively to women and girls; and that the WPS resolutions only apply to conflict or post-conflict situations. In this regard, it is crucial to enact gender-responsive measures that take into account the full

spectrum of gender and also to understand the relevance of WPS frameworks to societies considered to be at peace.

- To promote a better integration of the WPS agenda and arms control and disarmament and, thus, maximize efforts to improve human security and gender equality, States can follow examples highlighted in this report of integrating arms control and disarmament measures into WPS National Action Plans and, conversely, integrating gender perspectives into instruments such as small arms and light weapons control plans or mine clearance strategies.
- Efforts should also be made to find common ground between WPS and disarmament actors, for example by creating joint commissions or bringing WPS experts into arms control delegations and vice versa.
- Across the board, data that is disaggregated by sex, age and in other ways needs to be collected, and further qualitative research is required into the gendered impacts of weapons as well as the various gendered aspects of arms control and disarmament. This should be augmented by better measures to monitor and evaluate the impacts of integrating gender into arms control and disarmament measures.
- When it comes to participation, national governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and treaty bodies should undertake targeted efforts to ensure that women, men and people of other gender identities affected by armed

violence, including survivors and their representative organizations, can meaningfully participate in arms control and disarmament programmes, including multilateral processes.

- The goals of prevention and protection should go beyond SALW and their misuse in acts of gender-based violence to inform initiatives in other areas of arms control and disarmament. These could include efforts to combat online harassment and GBV and to protect civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA), as well as broader discussions on the effects of militarization.
- Measures related to prevention and protection should take into account potential effects of climate change in increasing armed violence and localized precarity. To date, this has mostly focused on reducing the risk of GBV in disaster relief, but additional research efforts are needed to comprehensively understand the multiple gendered impacts of the nexus of climate change and armed violence, and to develop policy and programming responses.
- In terms of relief and recovery, the experience with gender-sensitive victim assistance in mine action could be expanded to protocols and agreements dealing with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.
- Policy actors and practitioners should act to improve and adequately fund mechanisms for disaggregated age- and gender-specific data collection related to the needs of survi-

vors. This would support a better integration of gender and disabilities perspectives into victim assistance.

In addition, a systematic integration of WPS and arms control and disarmament can provide an opportunity to overcome some of the conceptual gaps and fundamental silences in the WPS agenda. The WPS resolutions, for instance, in part conflate gender with women and girls only, and there is also little acknowledgement in their texts of the different needs of different women. However, gender-responsive arms control and disarmament requires intersectional approaches.

The WPS agenda has been largely silent on engaging with men and masculinities, mostly mentioning men and boys as potential victims of conflict-related sexual violence or as allies for gender equality.⁸¹ Given the intimate links between weapons, men and masculinities, critically engaging with and transformation of masculinities is essential for effective arms control and disarmament.

The United Nations Security Council resolutions on WPS also do not mention women, men and non-binary people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions in any way, and here again the practical necessities of gender-responsive work on arms control and disarmament open up possibilities for integrating these perspectives.⁸² A further challenge relates to how WPS, arms control and disarmament will engage with racial and postcolonial politics within and between States.⁸³

Lastly, grasping the overdue opportunity to bring together arms control and disarmament and the WPS agenda can be a crucial step towards reaching the core of what the WPS agenda set out to do: to enable free and equal participation regardless of gender or other social marker; to prevent armed violence in the first place; to protect the rights of all people regardless of gender identity; and to ensure that those affected by conflict and disaster can rebuild their lives in dignity and free from fear.

81. H. Myrntinen, "Locating Masculinities in WPS", in S. E. Davies and J. True (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security*, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 88–97, <http://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190638276.013.10>.

82. J. J. Hagen, "Queering Women, Peace and Security", *International Affairs*, vol. 92, no. 2, March 2016, 313–332, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12551>. NAPs on SCR 1325 are slightly more comprehensive than the WPS resolutions, offering a broader approach to gender, with seven States including persons of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions into consideration (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States of America).

83. A. Stavrianakis, "Towards a Postcolonial, Anti-Racist, Anti-Militarist Feminist Mode of Weapons Control" in S. Basu, P. Kirby and L. J. Shepherd (eds.), *New Directions in Women, Peace and Security*, Bristol University Press, 2020.

APPENDIX A.

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 THAT INCORPORATE ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

SALW = SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

CLUSTER = CLUSTER MUNITION

MINES

ATT = ARMS TRADE TREATY

ERW = EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

WMD = WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

UXO = UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

CYBER = CYBERWARFARE

COUNTRY	NAP	YEAR	NAP MAKES MENTION OF:							
			SALW	MINES	ERW	UXO	CLUSTER	ATT	WMD	CYBER
Australia	NAP I	2012	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Bangladesh	NAP I	2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Belgium	NAP I	2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	NAP II	2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	NAP III	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NAP I	2010				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
	NAP I	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Cameroon	NAP I	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	NAP II	2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
	NAP III	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Croatia	NAP I	2011			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Denmark	NAP III	2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finland	NAP III	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
France	NAP II	2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gambia	NAP I	2012	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Georgia	NAP II	2016			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
	NAP III	2018		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Germany	NAP I	2012	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
	NAP II	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Ghana	NAP I	2012	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Guinea-Bissau	NAP I	2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Ireland	NAP I	2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	NAP III	2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Italy	NAP I	2010		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
	NAP II	2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

COUNTRY	NAP	YEAR	NAP MAKES MENTION OF:							
			SALW	MINES	ERW	UXO	CLUSTER	ATT	WMD	CYBER
Japan	NAP I	2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Kenya	NAP I	2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Liberia	NAP I	2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Luxembourg	NAP I	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Montenegro	NAP I	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Namibia	NAP I	2019								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Zealand	NAP I	2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Nigeria	NAP II	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Norway	NAP II	2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
	NAP III	2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
	NAP IV	2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Palestine, State of	NAP II	2017				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Philippines	NAP I	2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	NAP II	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Poland	NAP I	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Portugal	NAP I	2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Senegal	NAP I	2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Serbia	NAP II	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Slovenia	NAP II	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
South Sudan	NAP I	2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Spain	NAP I	2007		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
	NAP II	2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Sweden	NAP III	2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Switzerland	NAP III	2013		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	NAP IV	2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Togo	NAP I	2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Uganda	NAP I	2008	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
	NAP II	2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					

COUNTRY	NAP	YEAR	NAP MAKES MENTION OF:							
			SALW	MINES	ERW	UXO	CLUSTER	ATT	WMD	CYBER
United Kingdom	NAP III	2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
	NAP IV	2018		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
United States of America	NAP II	2016				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Total	56		45	9	7	4	7	12	2	2

APPENDIX B.

OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWS

Between May and August 2020, the author conducted 45 anonymized, remote interviews with a view to understand differences in perspective among key actors in the Women, Peace and Security community, as well as in the arms control and disarmament field. Among the interviewees, 26 were members of civil society or academia, 11 were governmental representatives and 8

worked for international or regional organizations. The complete list of States and institutions that participated in the interviews follows.

Member States: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Latvia, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland.

International Organizations and Regional Organizations: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Mine Action Center, South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Serbia, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD).

Civil Society and Academia: Australian National University (ANU), Centre for Armed Violence Reduction (CAVR), Control Arms, Fundación Arias, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Humanicemos DH, International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Inclusive Security, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), MAG Iraq, MAG Mali, MenEngage Alliance, Mine Action Canada, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Small Arms Survey, Sou da Paz, Viva Rio, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), WILPF Cameroon, WILPF Democratic Republic of the Congo.





Connecting the Dots examines the normative and practical overlaps and connections of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda with the field of arms control and disarmament. Using an original approach to gender-responsive arms control and disarmament measures that is structured around the four WPS pillars of participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery, this report identifies current best practices and areas for further action.

The report shows that further integration can bring benefits for both fields. For the arms control and disarmament community, the WPS pillars give structure and guidance to the comprehensive integration of gender perspectives, which thus far has been a piecemeal effort. For WPS policy actors and practitioners, engaging with arms control and disarmament helps to operationalize the WPS agenda, giving concrete substance to each of its pillars.

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