

DEPARTMENT FOR EVALUATION

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Evaluation of Norwegian efforts for women, peace and security



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This report is the product of the authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of data and its interpretation included in this report rests with the authors alone.

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Foreword

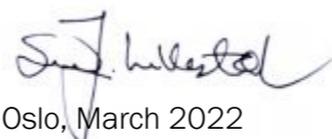
Women are key to enduring peace. The UN Security Council recognised this 22 years ago with the adoption of its landmark resolution 1325. Many more resolutions, studies and voices from conflict-affected countries have validated this since. Gender equality and women's leadership are interwoven with, and key to, peace processes, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and sustained peace.

Norway, a country with a reputation for peace facilitation, has had women, peace and security (WPS) national action plans since 2006, and has for many years committed to being a driving force in this agenda. But how far does it support women's participation in peace processes and negotiations? And what have been the effects of its long-term engagement in this area?

This evaluation assesses the coherence, effectiveness and evolution of WPS efforts supported by Norwegian development aid, from October 2000 to the end of 2020. Its scope covers one pillar of the WPS agenda, the participation of women in decision-making in peace processes and negotiations, and in wider peacebuilding.

There is intrinsic value in taking a long-term view. I believe this evaluation provides an important contribution to systematising knowledge from Norway's 20+ year engagement in the WPS field. I hope that its findings will inform strategic plans and future engagements in the area, especially this year with Norway's current national action plan coming to an end.

This evaluation was conducted and authored by a team from the Department for Evaluation in Norad, with contributions from external experts. I thank the team for a job well done.



Oslo, March 2022

Siv J. Lillestøl

Acting Director, Department for Evaluation



Executive Summary

In 2000, UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on WPS was ground-breaking in bringing to the fore women's roles and perspectives in conflict resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. Norway was among the first countries to develop a national action plan (NAP) on WPS (in 2006), and is now implementing its fourth (2019–22). During the current four-year period, Norway has 10 WPS priority countries.

The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effects of Norwegian women, peace and security (WPS) efforts supported with Norwegian development aid funds. The evaluation assesses whether those efforts have been internally and externally coherent and effective, and how they have evolved since 2000.

This evaluation considers Norwegian WPS efforts from the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000 up to the end of 2020. Its scope is limited to one pillar of the WPS agenda, the participation of women in decision-making in peace processes and negotiations, and in peacebuilding more generally.

Conclusions

IMPACT

Norway's promotion of women's participation in peace efforts has led to positive results in conflict-affected areas. This is true of both including a gender perspective in peace agreements, and strengthening women's (and men's) rights and meeting their needs and priorities.

Norway is a global leader in norm setting and normative adherence. Norway plays a symbolic 'driver' role for WPS, particularly in relation to peace efforts. Examples include forming one of the first networks of women mediators, and pushing for female appointments and gender parity in peace mediation and facilitation teams.

Norway's NAPs have arguably been more successful as frameworks for political mobilisation around the WPS agenda than as tools for managing development assistance. Norway's NAPs have made the Norwegian administration double down on WPS. Each NAP has to some extent built on its predecessor and, cumulatively, these plans have raised awareness and competence

relating to different aspects of the WPS agenda. They have also contributed to solidify understanding and commitments relating to the WPS agenda within the Norwegian administration.

EFFECTIVENESS AND COHERENCE

Despite these helpful roles and impacts, this evaluation finds that Norway's WPS initiatives are neither well defined nor strategically combined. Norway's NAPs have not been as successful as coordination and strategic planning tools for development aid. A theory of change approach to women's participation in peace efforts underpins the 2019–22 NAP, which comes with a results framework. Yet these are not paired with a strategy on how best to allocate resources and coordinate WPS efforts to achieve the expected results. The usefulness of a results framework lies in changing the course of action as interventions progress, based on monitoring and learning. This calls for cycles of reflection, planning and management – the very weaknesses in Norway's current WPS approach.



The concept of WPS priority countries as it has been implemented so far by Norway has very limited value as a tool to foster an integrated approach. Being a WPS priority country does not guarantee additional Norwegian financial or technical support. The latter is in part explained by limited staff numbers and competing priorities. There is limited overlap between the countries listed as Norway's development partners and its WPS priority countries. Norway funds significant WPS activity in some non-WPS priority countries, much of which is not reported in WPS annual reports.

Nothing indicates that a gender perspective in peace processes facilitated by Norway has been strengthened by the country being on the WPS priority list. Norwegian direct support to secure women's meaningful participation in a peace process has not been determined by whether the country is on this list. Norwegian diplomatic peace efforts in a country tend to translate into that country joining the WPS priority list. But the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, which is primarily responsible for Norwegian peace facilitation efforts in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), has its own WPS strategy that applies to all processes in which the section is involved. The section also has specific strategies for its engagements, irrespective of a country's status in Norway's WPS priority list.

Over the years, Norway has sharpened its women's participation focus, gradually increasing its emphasis on peace processes (pre-negotiations stages, formal talks and the implementation of peace agreements). In line with this, a neater division of labour has emerged between WPS NAPs and gender equality NAPs. This evaluation finds this a logical evolution that can enable transformative change on the ground when synergies are realised, especially with geographic concentration and long-term horizons. Meaningful participation in peace processes and subsequent engagement with formal institutions and actors (the realm of the WPS NAP) is intrinsically linked to the long-term processes of transforming informal institutions and harmful social norms.

Civil society strengthening is a critical factor in including gender references in peace agreements. This was the case in Colombia, where Norway partnered with civil society before, during and after the signing of the 2016 peace agreement.

But civil society strengthening does not happen overnight. It requires long-term efforts and support from partners like Norway, sometimes in 'capacity building' (around peace processes, but also organisational capacity), and often facilitating networking and connectivity

between grassroots organisations and local, regional and national institutions.

Women in the front line advocating for change on the ground in conflict-affected countries are exposed to multiple risks. Norway has not systematically required WPS implementers to produce either comprehensive risk assessments that are sensitive to these risks or action plans to avoid or mitigate them. Furthermore, there is a response gap in how to handle these risks as part of WPS partnerships.

KNOWLEDGE AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Norway does seek and use knowledge in its WPS interventions to promote women's participation in peace efforts, such as by commissioning research and evaluations and following up on some findings. The evolution of its NAPs also demonstrates an increase in, and application of, organisational learning over time.

Nevertheless, Norway does not systemise learning around existing knowledge exchange initiatives, and does not systematically use monitoring and reporting around indicators in the WPS results framework in its decision-making.

Recommendations

Based on its conclusions, this evaluation makes the following recommendations:

1. Phase out the WPS priority country list concept and focus on countries where Norway has already committed support. The small gains of having a WPS priority country list in terms of profiling do not offset its clear and severe limitations in concentrating efforts over time, galvanising the Norwegian administration and acting as a catalyst for change. This evaluation recommends building on Norway's existing list of development partner countries, strengthening WPS commitments to those countries and acknowledging that peace and development do not follow linear trajectories – today's development partner countries can become tomorrow's conflict-affected countries. In view of this, Norway's WPS efforts could be better served by being rooted in longstanding relationships and rich contextual understanding like those gained from working in, and with, partner countries over time.

All conflict-affected countries listed as Norway's development partner countries should automatically become WPS priority focus areas. This will ensure greater policy alignment and development aid concentration. Furthermore, it will

facilitate a more efficient use of existing competence within the Norwegian administration system – and the consolidation of expertise.

Discontinuing the WPS priority country list would not negatively affect peace efforts led by the MFA's Section for Peace and Reconciliation in other countries, which could continue to prioritise WPS based on section strategies. Neither would it affect Norway's humanitarian efforts, which are not geographically constrained by pre-existing country lists.

2. Adopt a strategic WPS portfolio approach to improve coordination and coherence, and enhance the likelihood of achieving sustainable results. Building on the seeds planted by its four WPS NAPs, Norway should aim to weave together its WPS efforts by:

- Identifying a sound way of measuring financial commitments to WPS, especially in relation to women's participation in peace. This will not only help Norway to report on (progress towards) results more accurately, but also to plan strategically to maximise its potential to achieve results.
- Carrying out periodic and systematic planning

processes around country portfolios, revisiting theories of change in formalised information exchanges. Sufficient resources should be set aside for these exchanges, which should involve all stakeholders who have relevant WPS responsibility, and consider all partners who receive support from Norway through trust funds and multilateral organisations. Such processes should precede specific interventions and new partnerships, and become reference points for them.

- Continuing to hold annual gatherings, bringing together those working on the WPS agenda and extending this practice to all conflict-affected countries in Norway's list of development partner countries (see recommendation 1), and inviting embassies from other relevant countries (e.g. those involved with conflicts and processes followed by the Section for Peace and Reconciliation). With the right timing, these meetings should facilitate knowledge sharing and inform strategic planning.
- Revising the results framework in the WPS NAP to make it fit for monitoring, strategic planning and systematic learning. This includes revisiting the women's participation in peace change pathway

underlying the results framework and making room for indicators on funding support funnelled through civil society organisations (CSOs).

- Matching ambitions and expectations with resources. This is especially true in the case of the Special Envoy position – which covers a wide range of critical tasks at many levels – and Norad.

3. Protect and safeguard women human rights

defenders. This calls for candid reflection on risk tolerance and protection capabilities, and taking into account the current mandates and delegation of responsibilities between the MFA in Oslo, Norwegian embassies and Norad. Meanwhile, existing practice can be improved by:

- Requesting assessments in funding applications to consider these risks from a multifaceted perspective (e.g. mental health and well-being, digital risks, physical risks, reputational risks), evaluating applications based on the quality of these assessments.
- Welcoming the inclusion of earmarked budget lines

in funding applications to cover the costs of risk assessments and mitigation measures.

- Making sure that risk assessment updates are always on the agenda for periodic meetings with grantees.
- Taking stock of, and distilling, lessons from positive practices and experiences within the Norwegian administration that support women peacebuilders.



Introducing this evaluation



PHOTO: RAUL ARBOLEDA / AFP



Context

In 2000, UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security (WPS) was groundbreaking in bringing to the fore women's roles and perspectives in conflict resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. Since 2000, the WPS agenda has become firmly entrenched in the international agenda and the formal UN discourse on security. Nine more UNSCRs on WPS have followed UNSCR 1325, two of them adopted in 2019.¹

Over this period Norway has been engaged in several peace processes² as a facilitator between parties in conflict. Norway has expressed its commitment towards inclusive peace processes, in which women participate at all levels, and gender perspectives are integrated by all parties.

Norway has championed the WPS agenda since its inception. Civil society organisations (CSOs) and researchers both in Norway and globally have played a role in this, including in initiating and securing the adoption of UNSCR 1325 by the UN Security Council. In

2006, Norway was among the first countries to adopt a WPS National Action Plan (NAP). As of 2021, it is implementing its fourth such plan (covering 2019–22).

Several ministries are involved in developing and implementing Norway's NAPs. Policies and implementation are cross-sectoral, covering domestic, international and partner country levels. Norwegian efforts to promote the WPS agenda draw on a broad range of diplomatic, political and financial tools at the local, national, regional and global levels, and with various partners. These include: multilateral fora; political dialogue with national governments; financial support; partnerships with civil society; and support for, and use of, academic research.³

Approach and methodology

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effects of Norwegian WPS efforts from 2000–20 that were supported with Norwegian development aid funds, considering whether those efforts have been internally and externally coherent and effective, and how they have evolved over time.

The evaluation findings should be relevant for the implementation of Norway's 2019–22 WPS NAP, and for the development of the next NAP.

¹These UNSCRs are: 1820 (2009); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2010); 1960 (2011); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013); 2242 (2015); 2467 (2019); and 2493 (2019).

²'Peace process' in the context of this evaluation is broadly understood as "an attempt to bring political and/or military elites involved in conflict (defined as having caused more than 25 conflict-related deaths in one calendar year), to some sort of mutual agreement as to how to end the conflict" – see Bell, C (2015). *Text and Context. Evaluating Peace Agreements for the Gender Perspective. Research paper.* UN Women, p.5. Unless otherwise specified, it covers all the distinct stages of such efforts, from informal talks or pre-negotiations to the implementation of a peace agreement.

³Adapted from Government of Norway (2019b). *Guidelines to the Foreign Service's Work on Women, Peace and Security (2019–2022)*, p.10.



Whether working directly or indirectly with the WPS agenda, intended users of this evaluation include public officials and policymakers in Norway's MFA, at its embassies in partner countries and other diplomatic missions, and also in Norad. This evaluation specifically targets those in Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Norad responsible for the design and implementation of Norway's WPS NAP as they can put its findings into practice. CSOs, the Norwegian Parliament and the general public are also intended users of this evaluation.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This evaluation's main objectives are to:

- Document and analyse Norwegian efforts to promote the WPS agenda.
- Assess whether Norwegian support to the WPS agenda has contributed (or is likely to contribute) to achieving positive change in women's participation, and women's and men's lives, in areas affected by armed conflict.
- Assess how coherent Norwegian WPS efforts are.
- Examine how far Norway harvests and uses knowledge in shaping and implementing its WPS actions.
- Formulate lessons and recommendations for Norway.

This evaluation considers Norwegian WPS efforts from the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000 up to the

end of 2020. Its scope is limited to one pillar of the WPS agenda, the participation of women in decision-making in peace processes, and in peacebuilding more generally. This corresponds with the 'Peace and reconciliation processes' and 'Implementation of peace agreements' focus areas in Norway's 2019–22 WPS NAP. This evaluation reflects on WPS efforts at global, regional and partner country levels, and how these are interconnected.

These overall objectives translate into 10 evaluation questions (EQs) outlined in Table 1.

⁴ EQs 7 and 8 spring from the impact formulation in the results framework of Norway's 2019–22 WPS NAP: "Women's participation in peace and security work has increased, and women's and men's rights, needs and priorities are strengthened in areas affected by armed conflict".

Table 1: Evaluation questions

Coherence	EQ 1: To what extent (and eventually how) have Norway's WPS efforts been coordinated with those of other actors (other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) countries, multilateral organisations, etc.)?
	EQ2: To what extent has Norway's engagement been consistent with policy priorities at country level, and local ownership?
	EQ3: To what degree (and eventually how) are Norway's WPS efforts in the normative, policy and programmatic realms aligned, coordinated and harmonised?
	EQ4: To what extent did other Norwegian engagements have a bearing on Norway's WPS efforts at country level?
Effectiveness	EQ5: To what extent (and eventually how) have Norway's WPS efforts at country level been effective?
	EQ6: To what extent (and eventually how) have Norway's WPS efforts at global (normative) level been effective?
Impact ⁴	EQ7: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway contributed to increasing women's participation in peace work?
	EQ8: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway contributed to strengthening women's and men's rights, and meeting their needs and priorities, in areas affected by armed conflict?
	EQ9: How has the WPS agenda affected the Norwegian aid administration, if at all?
Knowledge and organisational learning	EQ10: To what extent did Norway's approach to WPS demonstrate learning from practice, analyses and external knowledge, and through which means did this learning take place?



CONCEPTUAL AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The macro framework for this theory-based evaluation connects EQs and expected results. A literature review informed the development of the analytical frameworks used to answer specific EQs, including judgement criteria and a set of indicators of change.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Mixed methods approach

This evaluation applies a mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods, mainly:

- Qualitative: semi-structured interviews with selected key informants (86 in total, see Annex 3); a desk review of primary sources (project documents, reports, etc.) and secondary sources (peer-reviewed articles, evaluations, etc.); and expert assessment.
- Quantitative: descriptive and correlational analyses; supervised classification with machine learning; named entity recognition; and social network analyses.

These methods have been combined in diverse ways. In some cases, they have been used sequentially, with quantitative analyses preceding qualitative ones. For instance, key informants were selected for interviews following a social network analysis of case officers within

the Norwegian administration who had the most diverse experience of projects promoting women's participation in peace efforts in Norway's WPS priority countries. In other cases, qualitative analyses of narrative reports were augmented by using natural language processing techniques, identifying patterns that would otherwise be hard to detect.

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

The evaluation comprises three analyses conducted by external research teams:

- A **portfolio analysis** mapping the total amount of, and trends in, Norwegian aid disbursements to further the WPS agenda from 2000–19.⁵
- An analysis of Norway's WPS NAPs (**NAP analysis**), analysing how the themes, approaches and format of Norway's four action plans evolved over time.⁶
- A cross-case analysis (**case study**) of two country case studies (Afghanistan and Colombia) and a global case study (Nordic Women Mediators Network, NWM).⁷

These analyses varied in scope. While the overall evaluation focuses on women's participation in peace efforts, the portfolio analysis and NAP analysis covered

all WPS pillars (participation, prevention, protection and reconstruction). The case study, on the other hand, solely explored the participation aspect of WPS, nevertheless drawing connections with other WPS pillars when needed, such as addressing questions of coherence.

These initial analyses were later complemented by **supplementary analyses** conducted by Norad's Department for Evaluation, which applied different methods to the datasets (such as machine learning and social network analyses for the portfolio analysis) and gathered additional data.

These supplementary analyses were largely sequential, where e.g. preliminary findings from the portfolio analysis helped shape specific questions for the NAP analysis.

⁵ The analysis was carried out by Arne Disch (team leader), Scanteam; Stephanie Crasto, Scanteam; Syra Khan, Scanteam; Kirsten Sandberg Natvig, Scanteam; Torun Reite, Scanteam;

⁶ The analysis was carried out by Torunn Wimpelmann (team leader), CMI; Elling Tjønneland, CMI; Pilar Domingo, ODI; Espen Villanger, CMI.

⁷ The analysis was carried out by Kirsten Sandberg Natvig (team leader), Scanteam; Arne Disch, Scanteam; Robert Forster, CMI; Martha Inés Romero, Independent consultant; Mirwais Wardak, PTRO; Torunn Wimpelmann, CMI.



In order to address the EQs, several tailored analyses (such as of partners, funding schemes and a literature review of country-specific cases) were also conducted to drill deeper into findings of potential interest. Detailed methodological notes are in Annex 2.

Case study criteria

The case study has been a key source of information to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of Norwegian support to the WPS agenda. Findings from the case study also fed into the assessment of Norway's WPS coherence and its application of organisational knowledge.

The **global level case study** focuses on how Norway has worked to promote women's participation in peace initiatives that are not country-specific, and with what results. To ensure this covered the variety of methods Norway can employ in its WPS efforts and reflected a significant part of Norway's WPS agenda (in terms of allocated financial or reputational resources), and its potential relevance to in-country experiences, **the Nordic Women Mediators network (NWM)** was chosen as a case study. Conceived by the Norwegian MFA in 2013 and formally launched in 2015,⁸ the NWM is a hybrid state-civil society initiative complementing other

peace mediation networks by involving (often senior) civil servants and diplomats, thereby offering alternative pathways of influence. The network's funding and set-up are different in each of the five Nordic countries.

Criteria for selecting the two countries for the case study included:

- Being a Norwegian WPS priority country and the size of the WPS budget in each country.
- The type of in-country Norwegian partnerships, and the importance of the UN Organization for Women's Rights and Gender Equality (UN Women) as a potential partner.
- The internal and external contexts (notably the existence/absence of: a national WPS NAP; Norwegian country-specific strategies; the signing of peace agreements and peace effort phases in 2000–19).
- How long Norway has supported peace efforts in the country.
- The perceived interest among this evaluation's main intended users (gauged via meetings with stakeholders and written feedback on the evaluation's proposed terms of reference).

The case study in **Colombia**⁹ focuses on the

implementation of the 2016 peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army, FARC-EP). A chronology of this process was used to select six initiatives that promoted women's active participation in the implementation of the agreement.

One of these initiatives was chosen as a representative sub-case study to review in more depth. This relates to one of several UN Women WPS programmes under a CSO fund called *Mujeres Constructoras de Paz* (Women Peacebuilders).

The other initiatives are:

- Activities to promote women's participation in implementing the peace agreement as part of the large UN Development Programme (UNDP)-administered Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for sustaining peace in Colombia.

⁸ Lund, K & Mitchell, L (n.d.) 'Preventing Crisis and Conflict: Women's Role in Ongoing Peace Processes', UN Chronicle.

⁹ See Annex 4 for further details.

- The Norwegian organisation Forum for Kvinner og Utviklingsspørsmål (Forum for Women and Development, FOKUS)'s UNSCR 1325 programme working with 10 national women's organisations to enhance women's leadership and participation.
- The Swedish-Norwegian Fondo para la Sociedad Civil Colombiana por la Paz, los Derechos Humanos y la Democracia (Fund for Cooperation with Colombian Civil Society, FOS).
- The Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF) providing grants to human rights defenders.
- A leadership programme of the Colombian women's organisation Casa de la Mujer (Women's House).

All of these initiatives and actors, except NHRF, are mentioned in Norway's 2019 WPS annual report on Colombia.

The case study on **Afghanistan**¹⁰ focuses on the **UN Women WPS programme**. In addition, the study team reviewed the 2017 Norwegian-supported symposium on peace arranged in Kabul. The focus was based on an analysis of the WPS portfolio in Afghanistan, a chronology and a risk analysis. The methodological approach had to adapt to developments in Afghanistan in 2021, reducing it to a desk review of secondary sources (see constraints and limitations, below).

Two sub-case studies relating to the NWM network¹¹ were selected, with a focus on activities carried out by the network's Norwegian branch (NWM-N). These are NWM-N's support in establishing the Global Alliance, and NWM-N/NWM efforts to support women's increased participation in peace negotiations in locations where its members work, including Colombia and Afghanistan.

FEEDBACK LOOPS AND VALIDATION POINTS

The evaluation process included various meetings with stakeholders. The main feedback loop was in April 2021, with representatives from the MFA, Norad and Norwegian CSOs (Forum Norge 1325). The draft NAP analysis and the case study reports were circulated for feedback in August and November 2021, respectively. Finally, a workshop with stakeholders in the MFA and Norad with direct responsibility for implementing the WPS agenda was held in November 2021 to discuss evaluation findings and their potential use.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Evaluation team members assessed ethical challenges and discussed overarching ethical principles at critical junctures of this evaluation, applying several ethical safeguards throughout. Prior consent was requested from interviewees, who were informed of the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the rationale for their

specific interview, and how their responses would be used and handled.

To respect confidentiality and protect the informants, this report does not contain source attributions and identifiers. The organisations granted funds in 2017 from Norad's Civil Society Department grant scheme allocations for efforts supporting WPS and women's rights and gender equality have been anonymised, and this report does not make explicit the links between organisations and countries of operation.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

In the absence of a "WPS" overarching code for statistical classification purposes, it is challenging to mark the limits of the WPS portfolio. The approach currently used involves screening against the OECD DAC gender equality policy marker in conflict-affected countries. However, this poses a few challenges. These are elaborated further in Chapter 3.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.



Whereas it would be unnatural and one-sided not to consider the Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, this evaluation does not delve into that plan as such as it is outside of its scope. This evaluation covers that plan in limited detail, based on the nature and depth of existing or expected linkages between that plan and the contemporaneous WPS NAP.

The Norwegian stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation are limited in number. At the same time, these actors were those most central to the development and implementation of Norway's WPS NAPs as well as WPS efforts in Colombia and NWM network activities. Moreover, the steps taken to collect feedback as part of the evaluation process facilitated the inclusion of a broader range of perspectives.

Fieldwork in Afghanistan was due to take place in the second half of August 2021. Given the challenging situation for people working in, and with, Afghanistan immediately after the Taliban takeover, the Afghanistan case study was converted into a desk study without primary data collection. Documents for review were identified through an online portal for Norwegian government documents (elnnsyn) and obtained through the central archives of the MFA.

This shift brought some limitations. There was a need

to exclude some analysis questions and reformulate others, and some validity constraints became evident. Moreover, the team did not have an opportunity to verify whether the received documents were final versions. As a result, the Afghanistan case study has less weight in this evaluation's overall analytical framework than originally intended.

Due to the prevailing insecurity in Colombia at the time of data gathering, the planned visit to communities was cancelled shortly before it was due to take place. The analysis of community ownership could not be completed in full as planned as it lacks primary source data.

The structure of this report

This report comprises 10 chapters, including this introduction (Chapter 1).

Chapter 2 describes Norway's evolving WPS efforts through its four NAPs, accompanied by an analysis of coherence (EQs 1–4) and knowledge and organisational learning (EQ 10).

The definitional approach attached to Norway's WPS funding and the evolution and distribution of funds is

covered in Chapter 3. Findings from this chapter help address the coherence criteria (especially EQs 1 and 3) and inform subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4 investigates which countries have been a priority for Norway's WPS efforts and whether this approach is internally coherent (EQ 3), building on findings from previous chapters.

Norway's WPS partners are identified and assessed in Chapter 5, which also considers the advocacy effort links between country and global levels (EQ 3).

Chapter 6 focuses on harmonisation, coordination and local ownership of Norway's WPS efforts (EQs 1–4), while Chapter 7 assesses their effectiveness (EQs 5 and 6).

Chapter 8 analyses the effects of Norway's WPS efforts along a triple axis: Norwegian aid administration (EQ 9); gender in peace agreements (EQ 7); and contribution to strengthening rights (EQ 8).

Chapter 9 focuses on knowledge and organisational learning (EQ 10). And finally, Chapter 10 lays out this evaluation's conclusions and recommends some actions that stakeholders might consider.



Norway's women, peace and security priorities and plans over time



PHOTO: UN WOMEN / RYAN BROWN



An overview of Norway's women, peace and security national action plans¹²

As outlined in Chapter 1, UNSCR 1325 was ground-breaking. Passed in 2000, it set the WPS agenda that has since become mainstream within the UN system and internationally. A 2002 UN Security Council presidential statement encouraged member states and other entities to develop strategies and action plans to implement UNSCR 1325.¹³ As of December 2020, 95 countries had adopted a WPS NAP.¹⁴ In 2006, Norway was among the first to do this. Since then, it has developed three further NAPs, the latest covering 2019–22.

THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SECURITY RESOLUTION 1325 (2000) ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (2006)

Compared to the declaratory words in the world's first WPS NAP (Denmark, 2005), Norway's 2006 NAP was significantly more substantive. The plan was largely written by two researchers at the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), who were commissioned by MFA officials. It was based on limited consultation with civil society and the aid

administration, although relevant ministers and leaders were consulted.

Norway's 2006 NAP was short and provided little contextual information, but it comprehensively identified the measures to be carried out. The plan was deliberately not structured around the four pillars of the international WPS agenda (participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery) but on areas where it was believed Norway could make a difference. Much of the plan focused on achieving a better gender balance in Norway's national armed forces, for instance.

This NAP had no results framework and did not specify who was responsible for delivering the measures it outlined. As far as this evaluation could establish, only one annual report was produced relating to this NAP (2006), and the plan had largely ceased to function as a reference framework for active implementation by the time preparations started for Norway's subsequent 2011–13 NAP.

WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY: NORWAY'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2011–13

Rather than being a new NAP, this was initially conceived as an implementation plan setting out

how the commitments in the 2006 plan would be followed up in 2011–13, and providing a reporting and accountability framework. However, for all practical purposes, it became a standalone NAP replacing the 2006 version.

The 2011–13 plan built on its predecessor's structure and broadly set the template for subsequent NAPs. This resulted in four thematic chapters (see Table 2). The 2011–13 plan is the only Norwegian NAP to feature conflict-related sexual violence as a thematic chapter – since then it has been a cross-cutting theme. This NAP states that Norway's WPS efforts will have a particular focus on countries, "including Afghanistan, Sudan, Nepal, the Philippines, Israel and the Palestinian Territory, Haiti, Liberia and Colombia". It also includes a results framework with goals, activities and indicators.

¹² See also Wimpelmann, T and Tjønneland, E (2022). *Analysis of Norway's Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security*. Norad Department for Evaluation. Report 4/2022.

¹³ Statement by the President of the UN Security Council. 31 October 2002. S/PRST/2002/32

¹⁴ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) (2021). *1325 National Action Plans (NAPs) WILPF Monitoring and Analysis of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security*.



NATIONAL ACTION PLAN: WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY 2015–18

This plan continued the thematic chapter structure of the 2011–13 NAP, although humanitarian efforts replaced conflict-related sexual violence as a separate chapter (see Table 2). The 2015–18 plan formally introduced the concept of WPS priority countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, Myanmar, Palestine and South Sudan, with Nigeria added in 2016 (see Chapter 4).

The 2015–18 NAP contains a results framework with objectives, activities and outcomes (indicators were developed later), which are presented and reported on in annual reports. The plan also refers to forthcoming implementation guidelines, which followed in late 2016 and present concrete measures for each of the three priority areas of relevance to the MFA; peace processes and peace negotiations, peacebuilding; and humanitarian efforts.

THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION PLAN: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY, 2019–22

In many ways, this plan represents a break from Norway's previous NAPs. In line with international trends, it covers a broader range of themes and is somewhat inward-looking, referring to themes such as

seeking asylum and gender-based violence in Norway, even if these themes are not part of the main text.

A review of WPS NAPs from multiple countries found that early plans lacked clearly stated goal(s) and purposes, but that there has been a significant improvement in those adopted after 2010.¹⁵ Reflecting this, Norway's 2019–22 NAP explicitly formulates an overarching theory of change for its WPS agenda, and provides a results framework with a baseline, targets and much more comprehensive indicators than its predecessors. This plan refers to other Norwegian government strategies throughout, notably the Humanitarian Strategy and the Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality. It also incorporates a greater number of themes, yet it narrows down the WPS agenda, focusing on the implementation of peace agreements rather than peacebuilding in its four main thematic chapters (see Table 2).

Consultation for this plan was broader, including efforts to secure input from partners in priority countries, and the plan contains extensive references to research. The accompanying guidelines contain more detailed instructions than the 2016 guidelines, and also cover international operations.¹⁶

Comparing Norway's NAPs over time

The NAP chapter structure outlined in Table 2 only shows some of the themes in each NAP. For instance, while sexual violence appears in each NAP, it has its own separate chapter only in the 2011–13 plan. Likewise, humanitarian efforts are mentioned in Norway's first two NAPs despite not having a dedicated chapter. However, Norway's NAPs do vary in how much emphasis they give to different themes.

¹⁵ Trojanowska, B, Lee-Koo, K & Johnson, L (2018). *National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus*. Monash University.

¹⁶ Government of Norway (2019b). *Guidelines*.

Table 2: NAP thematic chapters

NAP	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
2006 19 pages	International efforts and peace operations	Conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding	Protection and human rights		
2011–13 23 pages	Peace processes and negotiations	International operations	Post-conflict situations and peacebuilding	Sexual violence in conflict	
2015–18 44 pages, plus guidelines	Peace processes and peace negotiations	International operations	Peacebuilding	Humanitarian efforts	
2019–22 71 pages, plus guidelines	Peace and reconciliation processes	Implementation of peace agreements	Operations and missions	Humanitarian efforts	Sustaining peace*

* This chapter is not included in the NAP focus areas.



The evolution of key themes and modes of thinking about Norway's WPS agenda is also apparent from an analysis of speeches at the launches of the 2006 and 2019–22 NAPs.¹⁷ Predictably, there is a degree of change between these two speeches, which were delivered 13 years apart. On a thematic level, considering the four basic pillars of the WPS agenda, protection has more visibility in 2019 than in 2006. Conflict-related sexual violence and humanitarian crises also feature prominently in the 2019 Minister of Foreign Affairs' speech.

The 2019 speech sets the tone by alluding to participation and inclusive peace processes. This topic is more clearly focused in 2019 than in 2006, moving from informality and undefined terms to the formal sphere (peace talks, peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements). UNSCR 1889 from 2009 had reiterated the need for full, equal and effective participation of women in all stages of peace processes, including formal roles in mediation processes. Women mediators take centre stage in the 2019 speech, which refers to their number and the importance of their networks.

Reviewing the Norwegian NAPs systematically highlights that their core themes have remained fairly consistent over time, as shown in tables 2 and 3.

Table 3: Themes in Norway's NAPs and their weighting - 1 (lowest) – 4 (highest)¹⁸

Themes	2006	2011–13	2015–18	2019–22
Peace processes – women's participation	2	3	4	3
Peace processes – gender perspective	3	3	3	3
Peace operations/missions – women's participation	2	2	3	2
Gender balance in national armed forces and police	3	1	1	2
Peace operations/missions – gender perspective	3	3	4	3
Conflict-related sexual violence	2	4	3	3
Gender perspective in peacebuilding/peace agreement implementation (general)	2	2		2
Humanitarian/aid efforts – gender perspective	2	2	3	3
Security sector reform	1		2	1
Gender-based violence	2		2	3
Judicial reform/access to justice	2	2	2	1
Transitional justice	1		1	2
Trafficking	3			1
Sexual exploitation and abuse	2			2
Disarmament, weapons control, reintegration processes	2	2	2	1
Political participation	2		3	1
Economic rights/job creation for women	1	2	2	1
Violent extremism				3
Women asylum seekers				2
Sexual and reproductive health rights				1
Women human rights defenders				2
Climate change				1
Conflict prevention	2		1	2
Total number of themes	18	11	15	23

¹⁷ Speech by Jonas Gahr Støre (10 March 2006). 'The launching of the Government's plan of action for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security'; Speech by Ine Eriksen Søreide (11 January 2019) 'Lansering av handlingsplan for kvinner, fred og sikkerhet' [Launching of the action plan for women, peace and security].

¹⁸ The following weighting criteria was used, based on how far each theme is addressed in the text: 1 Mentioned in passing; 2 Mentioned repeatedly; 3 Dedicated section; 4 Dedicated chapter.

The main themes – women’s participation and the incorporation of a gender perspective in peace processes, operations and missions, conflict-related sexual violence, and gender perspectives in humanitarian efforts – feature in all four NAPs. Their weighting has also remained quite stable, at the upper end of the scale. This leaves no doubt that these themes represent the main focus of Norway’s WPS work over time.

A broader but important change in the 2019–22 plan is that it applies a narrower understanding of peacebuilding relevant to the NAP – the implementation of peace agreements. Broader peacebuilding is referred to but is presented primarily as a concern of the Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality. The 2019–22 NAP also introduces ‘early dialogue’ as a distinct phase of peace processes that merits a dedicated focus.

Together, these changes signal Norway’s increasing emphasis and tighter focus on peace processes in its WPS efforts. The weighting of sexual violence and humanitarian efforts in Norway’s NAPs have also increased somewhat since 2006.

Beyond these core themes, Norway’s NAPs contain significant variation. Only four other themes (judicial reform/access to justice, disarmament/weapons control/reintegration processes, economic rights/job creation for women and the gender balance in national armed forces and police) appear in all four plans, although with less weighting than the core themes.

In general, Norway’s 2006 and 2019–22 NAPs are much more comprehensive, with the latter particularly broad in its thematic approach. However, the long list of new or resurrected themes in the 2019–22 NAP cannot – perhaps except for violent extremism – be taken to represent an expansion of the Norwegian WPS agenda. Many of the new themes in the 2019–22 plan are not integrated into the results framework or even mentioned in the main text (themes such as women asylum seekers, women human rights defenders and women refugees appear in text boxes).

Other themes, such as sexual and reproductive health rights, conflict prevention and economic/political participation appear in the main text but are mainly or fully placed under the remit of the Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality.¹⁹ Beyond cross-referencing between this action plan and the 2019–22 NAP, efforts were made to unpack the linkages between

them and to reinforce the synergies between gender equality and WPS. In broad terms, the Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality concentrates on societal, underlying causes of gender inequality, whereas the 2019–22 WPS plan is more concerned with the manifestations of such inequality that permeate society.

At the conceptual level, this evaluation finds that the approach to gender in Norway’s NAPs has changed significantly since 2006. While earlier NAPs tend to equate gender with women (and sometimes girls), more recent NAPs pay much more attention to men and boys as gendered beings. This is also exemplified in the 2019 speech by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs at the launch of the 2019–22 NAP, recognising men as champions for “the cause of women’s participation and rights”, and that men and boys can also be affected by conflict-related sexual violence.²⁰ Later that year, the UN Security Council also recognised men and boys as victims of sexual violence in conflict in UNSCR 2467, emphasising the sociocultural stigma attached to this.

¹⁹ Government of Norway (2016b). *Freedom, empowerment and opportunities Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in Foreign and Development Policy 2016-2020*.

²⁰ Ine Eriksen Sørreide (2019).



This evaluation also finds changes over time in the NAPs' understanding of security. The 2019–22 NAP's notion of security is broader than before, including issues such as migration and climate change. There is also a tendency to treat women's rights as a way to achieve other security objectives, notably combating violent extremism.²¹

Generally, Norway's later NAPs are much more specific about practical approaches (e.g. financial support, technical assistance and training). The 2006 NAP contains few specifics on the instruments to achieve a certain objective. Often, it simply states that Norway "will seek to ensure" something, such as women's representation in the monitoring mechanisms of peace agreement implementation or integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of the UN Peacebuilding Commission's work.²² In contrast, later NAPs – particularly the 2019–22 plan – specify and combine instruments to a much larger degree.

At the same time, approaches to issues outside of Norway's direct authority have become more indirect over time. For instance, while the 2006 NAP simply states that "Norway will put gender issues on the agenda when peace agreements are being drawn up"²³, the 2019–22 plan says that Norway "will endeavour to ensure that the gender perspective is included in peace agreements and peace processes. We will strategically

promote the gender perspective [...] with the goal of ensuring that more facilitators [...] actively support women's rights and integrate the gender perspective in their work."²⁴

Theories of change in Norway's national action plans

A theory of change typically refers to the results chain and the explicit or implicit assumptions of causality that should facilitate this. How far theories of change are understood and elaborated is also useful when assessing how plans are intended, and able, to effect changes.

While Norway's earlier NAPs contain no explicit theory of change either at the macro level or for specific themes, the 2019–22 NAP contains an explicit, overall theory of change that encompasses several themes and interventions.

The prominent themes in Norway's four NAPs to date are:

- Peace processes – women's participation and including a gender perspective.
- Humanitarian efforts.
- Conflict-related sexual violence.

This evaluation finds that all four NAPs explicitly state a

causal connection between inclusive peace processes and sustainable peace, even if only the 2019–22 plan applies the term 'theory of change' in relation to this. It also finds that Norway's 2015–18 and 2019–22 NAPs contain more emphasis on the causal link between women's inclusion/a gender perspective and lasting peace – earlier NAPs feature gender inclusivity, gender equal frameworks and lasting peace as two independent goals. In terms of humanitarian efforts and conflict-related sexual violence, causal claims are less explicit and can only be extrapolated.

The coherence, efficiency and effects of the peace processes change pathway are analysed in chapters 6, 7 and 8, respectively.

²¹ While the 2019–22 NAP argues that a gender perspective countering violent extremism is important to address women's vulnerabilities and risks, it also states that a gender perspective can make peace efforts more effective by understanding men's and women's different roles, and that mobilisation around human rights can be an ideological weapon against violent extremism.

²² Government of Norway (2006). *The Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security*, p.13.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Government of Norway (2019). *The Norwegian Government's Action Plan: Women, Peace and Security, 2019–22*, p.18.



Key findings

- Over time, the core thematic areas of Norway's NAPs have remained fairly constant, but their emphasis on women's participation in peace processes, humanitarian efforts and conflict-related sexual violence has increased.
 - An important change in the 2019–22 NAP is more emphasis on, and a more focused approach towards, peace agreement implementation. This plan also features a number of new and relatively minor themes (e.g. women asylum seekers).
 - The NAPs' approach to the concepts of gender and security have evolved. In recent NAPs, 'gender' incorporates the gendered experiences of men and boys and the category of 'women' appears less homogenous. The 2019–22 NAP also has a more expansive approach to security.
 - The NAPs have become more comprehensive and practical over time, with a greater focus on implementation (including guidelines) and results frameworks.
- The development of Norway's NAPs has involved increasingly broad and deep consultation over time.



Women, peace and security funding



PHOTO: UN WOMEN / CHRISTOPHER HERWIG



Classifying the portfolio

In the absence of a “WPS” overarching code for statistical classification purposes,²⁵ OECD countries’ financial monitoring and reporting on WPS involves screening against the OECD DAC gender equality policy marker²⁶ in conflict-affected countries.²⁷ This approach poses a few challenges when interpreting the portfolio presented here and, more broadly, Norway’s reporting on its WPS aid. These challenges are rooted in the nature of the WPS agenda, which rests on four pillars with a high degree of overlapping, limitations in the methodology and potentially incorrect application.

For instance, a gender policy marked project may not necessarily fulfil the criteria for gender policy marking.²⁸ This is a well-documented problem both in Norwegian development aid²⁹ and among other donors.³⁰ A spot check of 16 randomly selected projects starting in 2013–18³¹ conducted as part of this evaluation revealed that:

- 5 out of 16 projects fulfilled 60% or more of the criteria. Only 2 fulfilled 100% of the criteria.
- If a less stringent approach is applied (ie accepting signs of implicit fulfilment), 10 out of 16 projects

fulfilled 60% or more of the criteria.

- 12 projects clearly belonged to the WPS agenda.

Consequently:

- The quality of gender scoring varies considerably across projects.
- No project implementer is better at applying the gender marker than another.³²
- Scoring does not seem to have improved since the publication of the 2016 OECD handbook designed to support his process.
- Projects that are explicitly WPS-focused do not consistently score better on gender marking.

Even when the gender marker is applied correctly, caution needs to be exercised and choices made on how to use and interpret the OECD DAC codes. In the absence of a WPS code, combining the gender marker with a list of conflict-affected countries results in various intervention types considering their purpose (DAC sector codes). When reviewing Norwegian WPS 2000–19 aid using this approach, 34 OECD DAC three-digit sector codes had been applied at least once.

But matching DAC codes with the main WPS pillars is not straightforward. Humanitarian action is largely covered by sector code 720 (Emergency response) but it also includes 730 (Reconstruction relief and rehabilitation) and 740 (Disaster prevention and preparedness).

²⁵ See: OECD (n.d.) ‘DAC and CRS code lists’.

²⁶ The OECD gender policy marker is a qualitative statistical tool to track development activities targeting gender equality as a policy objective. It follows a three-point scoring system. See: OECD (n.d.) ‘DAC gender equality policy marker’.

²⁷ While OECD reports use a list of fragile contexts based on OECD fragility framework classifications, Norway’s definition of conflict-affected countries is based on the Uppsala/PRIO conflict dataset. For definitions, see OECD (n.d.) ‘Conflict & Fragility’; and Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research ‘Definitions’.

²⁸ The criteria are specified in OECD (2016). *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker*.

²⁹ See e.g. Jones, N I, Tvedten, A Arbulú et al. (2015). *Evaluation of Norway’s support to women’s rights and gender equality in development cooperation*. Norad Department for Evaluation. Report 2/2015; Norad Gender Equality Team (2011). *Lessons Learned from Gender Reviews of Norwegian Embassies*. Norad. Report 24/2011.

³⁰ Essick, P & Grabowski, A (2020). *Are They Really Gender Equality Projects? An examination of donors’ gender-mainstreamed and gender-equality focused projects to assess the quality of gender-marked projects*. Oxford: Oxfam.

³¹ See Annex 2, note 1 for further details.

³² ‘Implementer’ is understood as the institution responsible for carrying out the agreement. See Norad (2021). *Statistical Classification Manual*.



Conflict-related sexual violence finds its home in DAC classifier 15180 (Ending violence against women and girls). This code only appeared in 2014, even though this thematic area had been on the Norwegian agenda since at least 2008.

Identifying the women's participation in peace efforts pillar of the WPS agenda is even trickier using this approach as it does not relate to a specific OECD DAC sector code. The starting hypothesis for this evaluation was that the sector code 152, with its subcodes and 15170, could serve as proxies for women's participation in peace projects. Analysis using machine learning³³ confirmed that, while not perfect, the best fit is sector code 152 (which accounts for 56.8% of the automatically classified projects in the dataset), especially 15220 (Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution), which makes up 93.6% of those projects. This is followed by 151 (which applies to

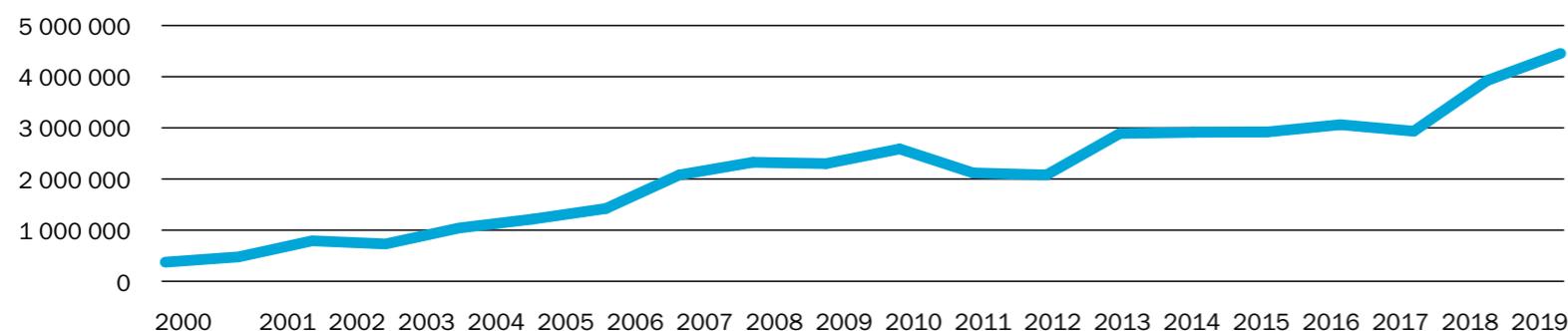
34.2% of the projects), and especially 15170 (Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions), which relates to 64% of those sector code 151 projects. This evaluation thus uses codes 15220 and 15170 together as a proxy for projects relating to women in peace efforts.³⁴

Another limitation linked to this way of defining Norway's portfolio is that some Norwegian support for the WPS agenda happens through multilateral channels, such as core funding to UN agencies, UN peacekeeping operations or UN or World Bank-administered MPTFs. These resource flows are not gender-marked, even if they contain a significant gender component and are overlooked across all analysis of Norway's aid development statistics. Some of these organisations (notably UN Women) and funds (e.g. the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund) clearly have the promotion of WPS at their core. This evaluation accounts for such multilateral channels.

Norway's women, peace and security portfolio

Norway's financial commitment to the WPS agenda has increased substantially since 2000 – both in terms of direct bilateral assistance to conflict-affected states, and support to the UN bodies with mandates to address this agenda (UN Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM/UN Women). Its WPS aid to conflict-affected states (Figure 1)³⁵ increased significantly and steadily over the period under review, from just over NOK500 million in 2000 to over NOK4.3 billion in 2019, except for halts in 2002 and 2017, and a decrease in 2011–12.³⁶ The represents an almost nine-fold increase in 20 years.

Figure 1 Norway's gender-marked aid to conflict-affected countries, 2000–19, in NOK 1,000



³³ See Annex 2, note 2 for further details.

³⁴ These projects have been funded over 32 Norwegian budget chapters and 66 posts in 2000–19 (the budget structure changed in 2019)

³⁵ All gender-marked development assistance in conflict-affected countries.

³⁶ The reductions in those years mainly (but not exclusively) occurred in humanitarian assistance sector codes.

Some WPS thematic funding areas have been more stable than others over the years. Funding to mitigate conflict-related sexual violence has experienced increases every year since it acquired its own OECD code in 2014. Humanitarian funding wavered between positive and negative annual changes during the period, which is unsurprising considering the changing nature of humanitarian crises and funding. Funding to support women's participation in peace efforts varied the most in 2001–09, with both moderate drops (-24% in 2001 and -6% in 2005) and sharp increases (+100% and +133% in 2006 and 2007, respectively). This funding area remained relatively stable in 2010–17, with a positive annual change (5%)³⁷ even though it experienced two drops, in 2015 (-6%) and in 2016 (-9%).

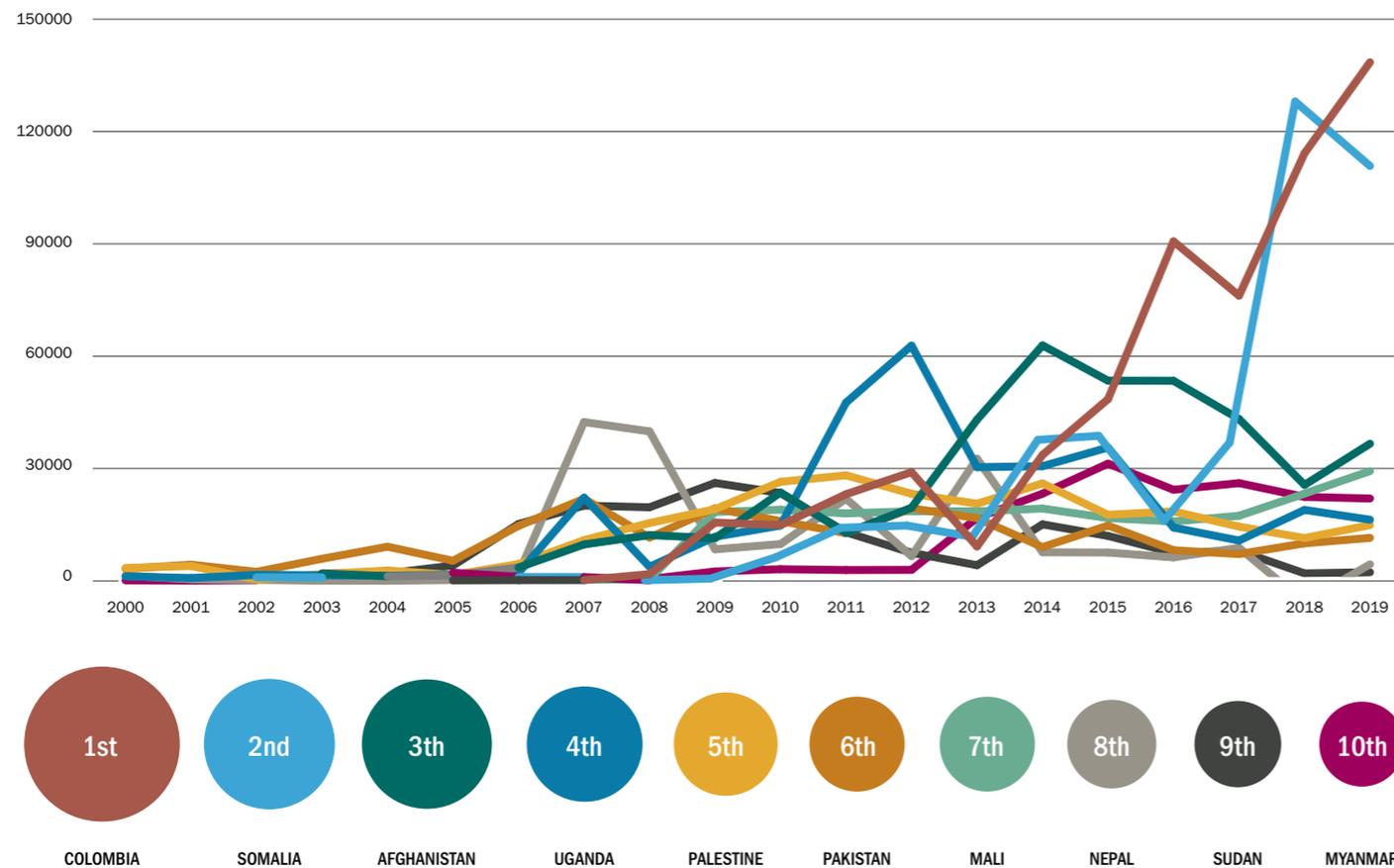
³⁷ For comparison, the total development assistance (all OECD DAC codes, gender-marked or not) in 2001–09 experienced on average an annual 10% increase; in 2010–17, the average annual increase was 4%.

³⁸ Gender-marked project allocations as a percentage of Norway's total aid to each country and its allocation for country-level initiatives promoting women's participation in peace efforts, relative to the country's share of gender-marked aid.

Table 4: Top 20 countries by Norwegian gender-marked aid and women's participation in peace funding, 2000–19³⁸

	Country	Gender-marked aid as % total country aid	Country	Women's participation in peace as % of country's gender-marked aid
1	Mali	65.4	Colombia	61.2
2	Bangladesh	63.1	Georgia	59.2
3	Nigeria	60.7	Cote D'Ivoire	42.9
4	Nepal	59.5	Tajikistan	38.9
5	Niger	55.9	The Philippines	34.8
6	DRC	51.4	Burundi	31.3
7	Angola	48.5	Somalia	28.4
8	India	47.5	Niger	25.5
9	Haiti	46.1	Rwanda	22.7
10	Egypt	44.4	Myanmar	21.8
11	Jordan	42.2	Ukraine	20.4
12	Kenya	41.2	Pakistan	17.9
13	Afghanistan	41.0	Uganda	15.6
14	Liberia	40.5	Mali	15.4
15	Ethiopia	39.1	South Sudan	14.9
16	Pakistan	38.8	Sierra Leone	14.7
17	Eritrea	38.0	Palestine	14.6
18	Rwanda	37.8	Sri Lanka	14.0
19	Burundi	33.7	Haiti	13.7
20	Uganda	32.0	Peru	12.9

Figure 2 The top 10 recipient countries of Norwegian development assistance to promote women’s participation in peace efforts, 2000–19, in NOK 1,000



While Norway’s disbursements to these countries to strengthen women’s participation in peace efforts have varied over time, the overarching trend is towards increased overall financing. As Figure 2 shows, funding to Colombia and Somalia has risen dramatically in

recent years, as a result of Norway’s commitment to support the peace process in Colombia, and stabilisation and development efforts in Somalia. Funding trends in other countries also follow the evolution of situations on the ground. As the conflict in

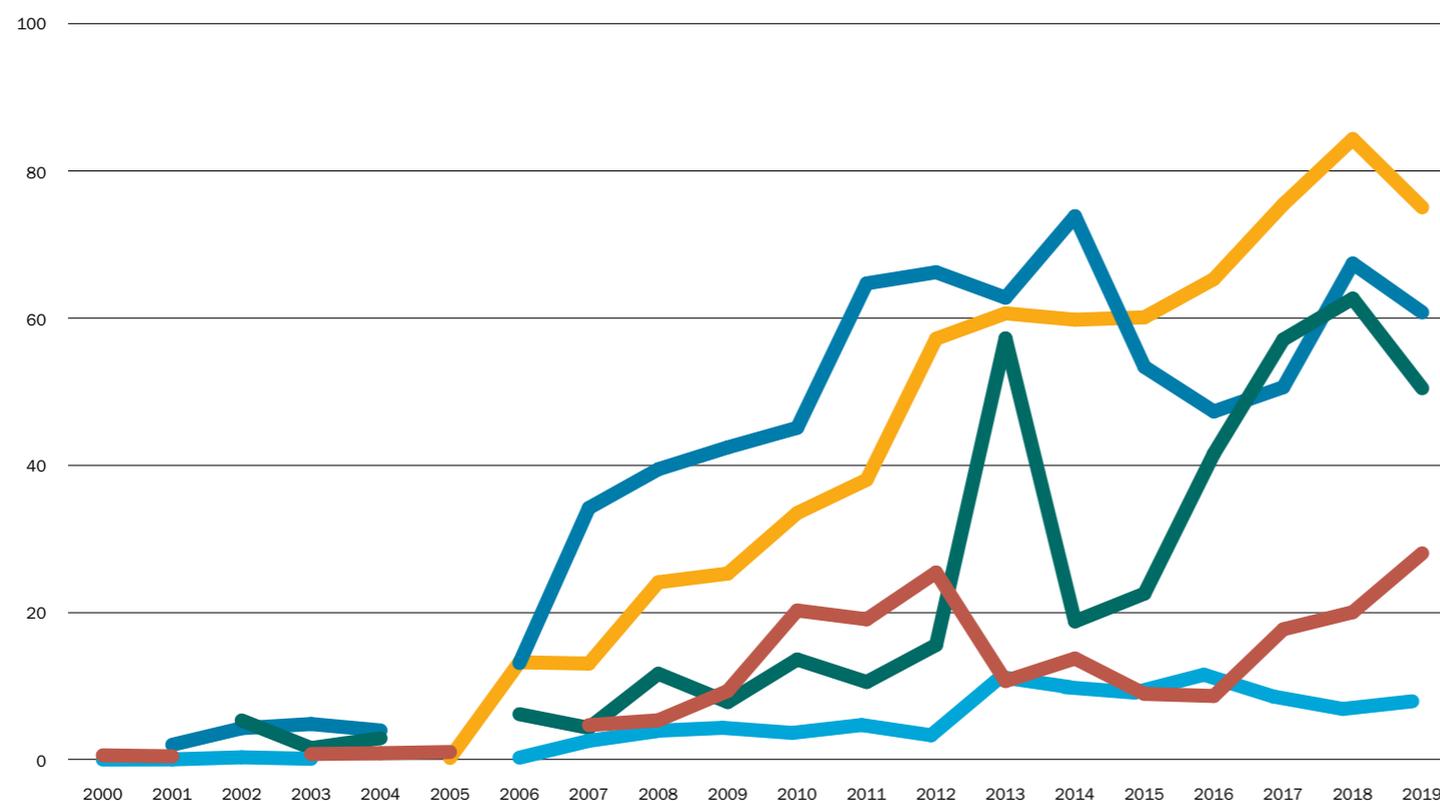
Nepal abated, Norway’s financing to support women’s participation in peace efforts decreased. The 2015–18 NAP formalised Norway’s country focus by providing a list of WPS priority countries, an approach that continued with the 2019–22 NAP. Uganda, Somalia and Pakistan have never been in any of these lists yet are among the largest recipients of funding assistance to promote women’s participation in peace efforts.

From 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Plan³⁹ set a UN target of a minimum of 15% of all peacebuilding funds targeting gender equality as a principal objective, recommending that donors adopt this target within their own aid flows to conflict-affected contexts.⁴⁰ Norway’s funding for women’s participation in peace efforts has been well above this target in all but one of its 10 main recipient countries: Somalia (7.5%). Significant Norwegian funding in Somalia has been directed to stabilisation programmes and MPTFs that do not have gender equality as principal objective.

³⁹ UN Women (2015) Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.

⁴⁰ UN Women (2015b). *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.*

Figure 3 Women's participation in peace funding to all conflict-affected countries, 2000–19, in USD millions⁴¹



Comparing trends in Norway with other countries

The positive trend in funding support to promote women's participation in peace efforts is not unique to Norway. The overall direction of development assistance among a selected group of countries has been upwards. Each of these OECD donor countries has prioritised countries differently but there are some commonalities.⁴² Norway's largest recipient countries of development assistance to promote women participation in peace efforts have been prioritised to varying degrees by Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden in 2010–19. Table 5⁴³ shows the OECD countries from this group that have above average financial contribution to promote women's participation in peace efforts in the given country. Norway was the largest contributor in absolute terms in all but four cases (Mali, Pakistan, Somalia and South Sudan).

⁴¹ There are data gaps in the dataset for 2004–06.

⁴² There is a 42.5% overlap between Norway's largest 10 recipients of funding to promote women's participation in peace efforts and the combined lists of Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden. This is unsurprising considering pulling (the number and nature of conflicts) and pushing (each country's development and foreign policies) forces.

⁴³ Above average development partner relative to their total 'women's participation in peace efforts' budgets, 2010–19. Norway not listed. See Annex 2, note 3 for further details.

Table 5: Selected OECD countries' priority countries for promoting women's participation in peace efforts, based on relative budget allocations, 2010–19

Priority countries	OECD countries
Afghanistan	Denmark, the Netherlands
Colombia	Sweden
Mali	Denmark
Myanmar	Finland
Nepal	Denmark, Finland
Pakistan	Denmark
Palestine	Finland, Sweden
Somalia	Sweden
Sudan	the Netherlands
South Sudan ⁴⁴	Denmark, the Netherlands
Uganda	Sweden

⁴⁴ 2011–19.

Key findings

- There are significant flaws in defining WPS by screening against the OECD gender marker. The gender policy marker is often wrongly applied, resulting in 'false positives' and over-reporting. Moreover, Norwegian support for the WPS agenda through multilateral channels is not gender-marked, which can have the opposite effect – under-reporting.
- The best fit to identify women's participation in peace initiatives in Norway's larger portfolio using the OECD DAC sector code system is found in codes 15220 (Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution) and 15170 (Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions). However, a portion of the women's participation in peace portfolio goes under the radar when this approach is used.
- There was an almost nine-fold increase in Norway's gender-marked disbursements to conflict-affected countries in 20 years. Financial support to support women's participation in peace efforts got off to a bumpy start, with both moderate drops and sharp increases in 2001–09.
- Being a Norwegian WPS priority country does not necessarily lead to more funding to promote women's participation in peace efforts. Non-WPS priority countries (most notably Somalia) receive as much, or more, funding for this purpose than some WPS priority countries.
- Norway's funding for women's participation in peace efforts has been well above the UN-set target in all but one of its 10 main recipient countries.



Which countries has
Norway prioritised?



PHOTO: UN WOMEN / RYAN BROWN



The 2015–18 WPS NAP introduced the term ‘priority country’, whereas the 2011–13 NAP had simply named some countries that Norway might focus on (see Chapter 2). The idea behind the concept of priority countries was to provide a concentrated effort in those countries, enabling more focus on implementation and results. This followed findings that Norway’s influence was more visible in normative, multilateral forums⁴⁵ than in actual conflict settings. The 2015–18 NAP incorporated five WPS priority countries, but this has gradually been expanded to 10 countries⁴⁶ and the Norwegian mission to the African Union.

Meanwhile, a 2016 government White Paper on development assistance emphasised the need to concentrate Norwegian aid on a select, smaller group of countries. In 2017 the MFA identified 16 ‘development partner’ countries where Norway would apply an integrated approach to achieve better results⁴⁷ (Table 6 compares these and WPS priority countries). At the time, MFA officials preferred WPS priority countries to also be development partner countries.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ See Scanteam (unpublished n.d.). *Review of ‘Women, Peace and Security: Norway’s Strategic Plan 2011–13’*, particularly part 7, ‘Evidence and Learning for more discussion of the NAP’.

⁴⁶ Afghanistan, Colombia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, The Philippines, South Sudan and Syria.

⁴⁷ See Meld. St. 17 (2017–18). *Partnerland i utviklingspolitikken*.

⁴⁸ Interview with former 1325 Coordinator, June 2021.

Table 6: Norway’s development aid partner countries and WPS priority countries, 2014–19

Country	Aid partner country 2014	WPS priority country 2015	Aid partner country 2018	WPS priority country 2019
Afghanistan	x	x	x	x
Colombia		x	x	x
Ethiopia	x		x	
Ghana			x	
Haiti	x			
Indonesia			x	
Malawi	x		x	
Mali			x	x
Mozambique	x		x	x
Myanmar	x	x	x	x
Nepal	x		x	
Niger			x	
Nigeria				x
Palestine	x	x	x	x
The Philippines				x
Somalia	x		x	
Syria				x
South Sudan	x	x	x	x
Tanzania	x		x	
Uganda			x	
African Union				x



Several observations emerge from comparing these two lists. The most striking is the weak coherence between them: only four of the six conflict-affected development partner countries in 2018 (Afghanistan, Mali, Niger, Palestine, Somalia and South Sudan) are on the 2019 list of WPS priority countries (Niger and Somalia are not) while a number of WPS priority countries are not among the development partner countries (Nigeria, the Philippines and Syria). It is also worth noting that Norad has limited in-house expertise on some WPS countries as they are not traditional recipients of development assistance.⁴⁹ However there are links between these groups. For instance, Colombia became a partner country as a result of Norway's role in the peace process between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP.

⁴⁹ Archival document (9 March 2021) *Notat om alternativer for Kvinner, fred og sikkerhet sivilsamfunnsporteføljen*. This is confirmed by the cross-analysis of current (August 2021) and the past list of country contact people in Norad.

⁵⁰ See Bryld, E, C Bonnet, C Kamau et al (2020). *Evaluation of Norway's Engagement in Somalia 2012–2018*. Norad Department for Evaluation, Report 7/2020.

⁵¹ At least four such requests were received in 2015–20. Overview elaborated by the evaluation team based on annual requests made by Norwegian embassies for technical assistance from Norad. See Annex 2, note 4; e.g. Norad (2019). *Annual Report 2018*, p.16.

Box 1. [Somalia – a WPS priority country in disguise](#)

Somalia is a special case. While it is not a WPS priority country, it has all the features of one. A conflict-affected country, Somalia is a major recipient of Norwegian development aid. Major funds are disbursed bilaterally from the Norwegian Embassy, through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and multilaterally, addressing many of the priorities in Norway's NAPs.⁵⁰ Somalia's WPS funding in 2000–19 was on a par with Mali and substantially above WPS priority countries like South Sudan, Nigeria and Colombia.

In 2000–19, Somalia received Norway's third highest funding for women's participation in peace efforts, almost equal to that to Afghanistan. Norway is strongly involved in peace processes in Somalia (there is a Somalia Special Envoy in the MFA's Peace and Reconciliation Section), and Somalia is frequently mentioned in Norway's budget propositions for 2000–20 in association with the WPS agenda as much as countries like Nepal or Syria. More than one-third of these mentions relate to the budget for peace and reconciliation.

In recent years, technical support on aspects of the WPS agenda has also been requested by the Embassy in Nairobi – which handles diplomatic relations and development aid to Somalia – and provided by Norad.⁵¹



The 2019–22 WPS NAP explains the selection of priority countries on two grounds: being a country where Norway had a “special role”, with which come “a special responsibility and opportunity to contribute” (Colombia, the Philippines, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Palestine and Myanmar), or countries where Norway saw “potential for new learning and new types of cooperation” (Nigeria, Syria and Mali).⁵² In spite of this, several interviewees, including central actors in the MFA and Norad, stated that they did not know the criteria for becoming a priority country. Others believed that countries where Norway was involved in peace initiatives would normally become WPS priority countries. This explains all 2021 priority countries except Nigeria.⁵³

Norway’s 2019–22 WPS NAP expects all Norwegian embassies in countries affected by armed conflict “to follow up on the WPS in both political dialogues and development cooperation, [with] a special effort and reporting [...] expected of the embassies in the countries selected as priority countries.”⁵⁴ It is logical to expect a priority country to receive more attention in terms of funding, technical support, diplomacy and policy. However, not all WPS priority countries have received equal technical support. Norad has prioritised giving technical advice to some of the WPS priority

countries that are also development partner countries, because of its long-term development cooperation mandate and experience with these countries.

Financially, looking at WPS total allocations per country in 2000–19, Afghanistan (NOK4,921,880)⁵⁵ tops the list. The other countries in the upper quartile are Nepal, Ethiopia, Uganda and Mozambique. Policy and funding importance can also be gauged by a review of Norway’s budget proposals, which include multiple country-specific references. This evaluation hypothesised that there would be some level of consistency between WPS actions (budget allocations) and words (prominence of a given country in the narrative budget proposal). Figure 4 compares these.⁵⁶

⁵² Government of Norway (2019). *Action Plan*, p.60.

⁵³ The selection of Nigeria was linked to ongoing efforts to counter violent extremism. The section on Syria (pp. 67–70) in the 2019 NAP *Annual Report* describes how Norway’s support to women’s participation in the peace process there is based on using the Constitutional Committee as a door-opener to the wider process, “given the current circumstances”.

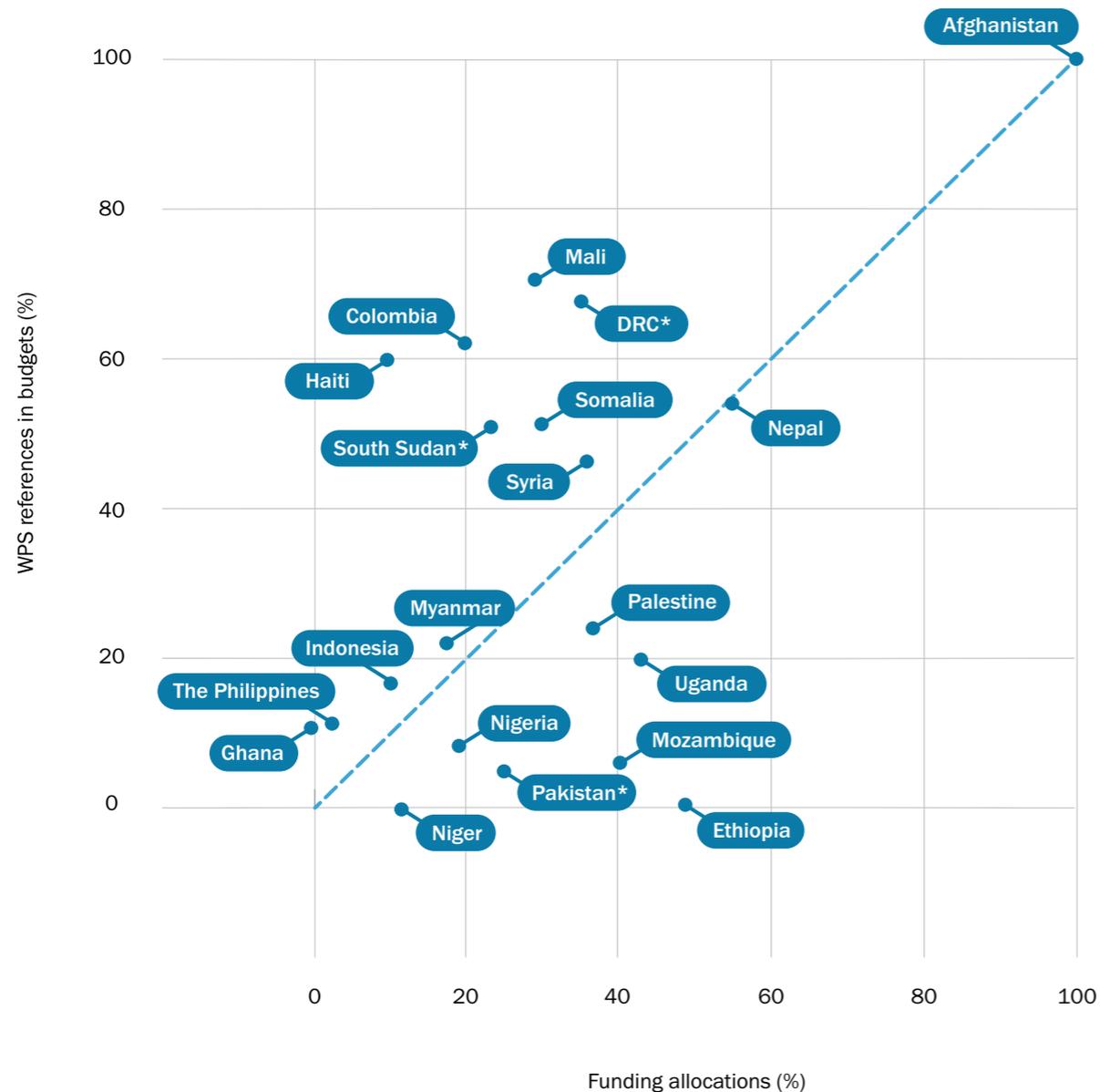
⁵⁴ Government of Norway (2019b). *Guidelines*, pp.34–35.

⁵⁵ NOK in thousands

⁵⁶ See Annex 2, note 5 for further details.



Figure 4: Comparing Norway's WPS funding allocations and WPS references in budget proposals, 2000–19⁵⁷



Afghanistan also appears most frequently in budget references. A handful of countries (e.g. Myanmar and Nepal) have almost symmetrical positions on both lists, but several countries are skewed, with relatively high visibility but low(er) funding or vice versa. Mali and Colombia are prominent as WPS countries in the budget narratives (second and fourth in importance, respectively, relative to Afghanistan) yet received less relative funding than other countries (their rankings are 10 and 13, respectively, compared to Afghanistan). Other countries rank much higher in the list of recipient countries than expected, considering their (relatively) modest portrayals as WPS countries in budget proposals.

The relative position of a country in one or both lists can be taken as an indicator of importance – just as a short gap between their position on both lists is an indicator of policy consistency. Another twin importance-consistency indicator is found by measuring funding allocations against reporting references.

⁵⁷ It ranges Norway's development and WPS priority countries relative to the main recipient (Afghanistan). It also features Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Pakistan as significant recipients of WPS funds.

While it would be mistaken to expect direct proportionality between countries' budget allocation and their reporting in Norway's WPS annual reports (format issues and presentational choices also play a part in the balance of content, and diplomatic efforts form part of Norway's WPS support and should be reported on accordingly), there should be some correlation between these factors. This is especially the case as reports have an accountability function, looking

beyond high-level results to examine lower-level results and activities.⁵⁸

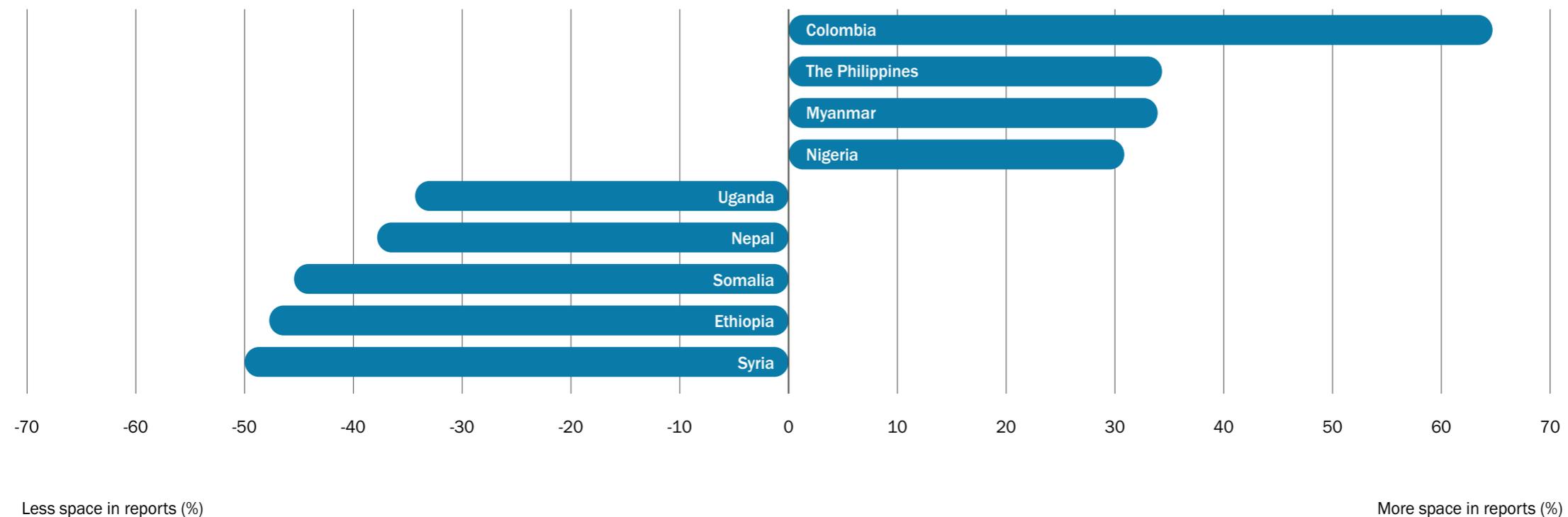
The analysis⁵⁹ shows lower than expected coverage of several non-WPS priority countries (Uganda, Nepal, Somalia and Ethiopia) in WPS annual reports (-41% on average), considering the level of WPS funding they received.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Unfortunately, higher level results are unlikely to be achieved annually across the board. Moreover, more funding does not automatically translate into results, and small aid investments can lead to substantial results, at least theoretically.

⁵⁹ See Annex 2, note 6 for further details.

⁶⁰ Syria was by far the largest recipient country of Norwegian WPS funding in 2015–19. The relatively low coverage of Syria in these annual reports can be explained by the need to strike a balance between countries in reporting.

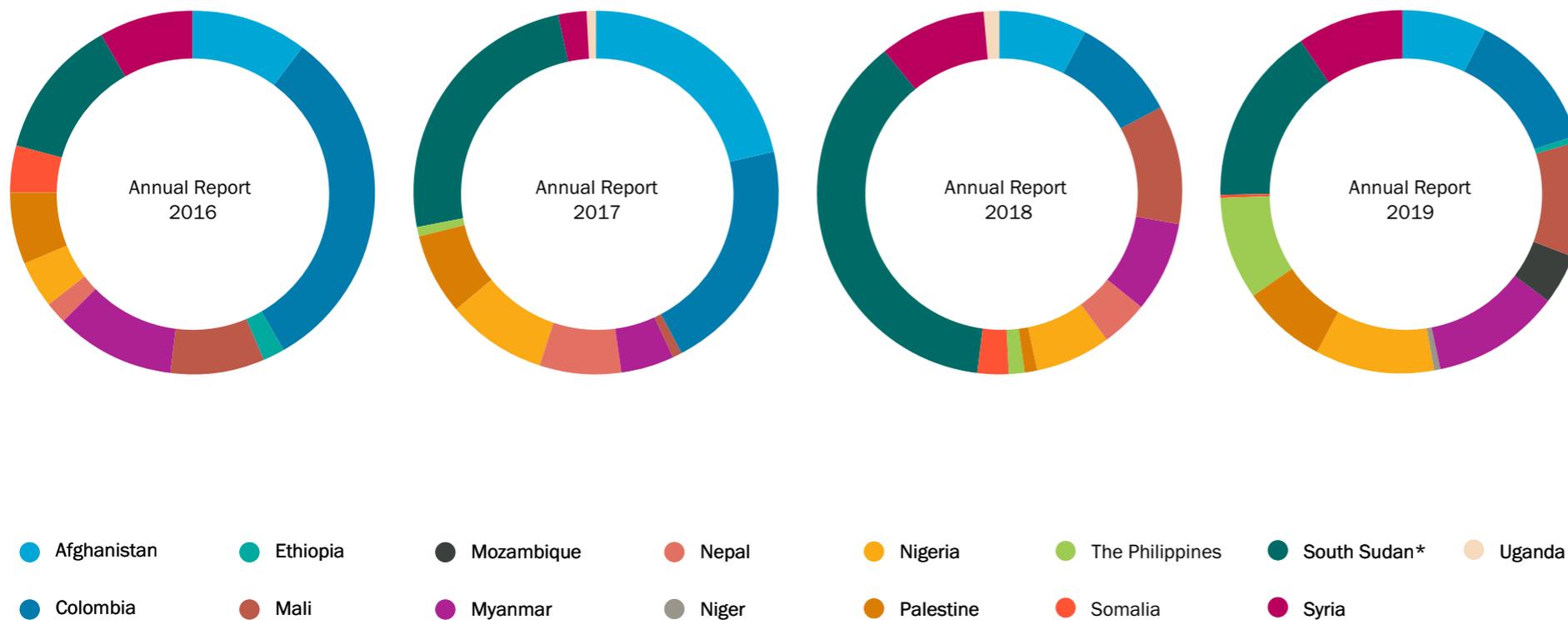
Figure 5. Countries' mentions in NAP annual reports, relative to their WPS funding allocations, 2015/16–19



The number of Norway's development partner and/or WPS priority countries included in the 2016–19 WPS annual reports has increased slowly, from 11 to 13. A more marked change in this period is the relative coverage that each country received (this was

much more balanced in 2019 than in 2016) and the increased space given to country reports (see Figure 6). In this period, the relative space given to the non-WPS priority countries Uganda, Nepal, Somalia and Ethiopia halved.

Figure 6 Space given to country references in 2016–19 WPS annual reports



Key findings

- There is not a perfect overlap between Norway's country priority lists. Some fragile and conflict-affected countries in Norway's development partner lists are not WPS-priority countries, and Nigeria and Syria are WPS priority countries even though they are not Norwegian development partner countries.
- The WPS priority country criteria remain largely unknown within the Norwegian administration. With one exception, being a WPS priority country correlates with some form of Norwegian involvement in a peace process.
- Being on the WPS priority country list does not have major implications in terms of financial or technical support. Norad has prioritised providing technical support to some of the WPS priority countries that are also Norwegian partner countries, based on its long-term development cooperation mandate and in-country experience.
- NAP annual reports give a distorted picture of its WPS efforts. WPS priority countries are over-represented in WPS reporting considering their

levels of WPS funding compared to non-WPS priority countries. This means that a significant portion of WPS interventions are not presented in NAP annual reports. In addition, some WPS priority countries (notably Colombia) feature in reporting far more than WPS priority countries that receive more funds.



Partners in promoting women's participation in peace



PHOTO: REUTERS/ NAVESH CHITRAKAR



Implementers

Analysis of development aid statistics shows that three types of institutions channel 79.3% of Norway's funding for women's participation in peace efforts in conflict-affected countries. These are local NGOs (52.5%), multilateral institutions (12.8%) and Norwegian NGOs (14.0%). More than half (50.8%) of the funding to local NGOs goes through Norad (amounting to 26.7% of overall Norwegian funding for women's participation in peace efforts), with embassies administering 20.5% of this overall funding. NGOs – Norwegian, local, international or from other donor countries – received over 75% of this financing. The public sector in partner countries handles on average slightly less than 2% of Norway's WPS funds, though in 2007–15 there were

years where they managed around 2%.

This evaluation defines the relative importance of partners to promote women's participation in peace efforts in terms of both funding importance and network importance (see Table 8).⁶² Two UN agencies are both main funding recipients and key partners from a network perspective.⁶³ On the Norwegian civil society side, Norwegian People's Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, Care International and the Norwegian Refugee Council are in the top 20 most important partners in both rankings.⁶⁴ Other Norwegian organisations are significant funding partners but are less significant in terms of network connections because of their localised, country-specific presence in a particular period (such as the Nordic International Support

Foundation, a partner largely linked to Somalia, and the Norwegian Football Association, mostly linked to the Balkans) or their non-country specific, global focus (e.g. PRIO).

⁶¹ Based on budget allocations – the top 10 country recipients of Norwegian funding to promote women's participation in peace efforts.

⁶² See Annex 2, note 7 for further details.

⁶³ When combined with its predecessor agency, UNIFEM, UN Women's funding levels far outstrip those of other partners. Table 8 refers to UNIFEM and UN Women as separate entities to better show their distinctive weight in the whole 20-year period.

⁶⁴ FOKUS ranks 21 on the list.

Table 7: Country breakdown of primary 'women's participation in peace efforts' by selected implementing institutions, 2000 – 19, as %

Type of institution	Afghanistan	Colombia	DRC	Mali	Nepal	Pakistan	Palestine	Somalia	Sudan	Uganda
Multilateral institutions	14.6	18.4	9.09	4.94	8.8	17.5	25.3	15.8	27.6	15.5
Local NGOs	46.2	26.4	50.65	88.89	48.0	59.0	57.1	19.3	25.0	39.2
Norwegian NGOs	26.9	28.8	9.09	0.00	0.7	3.0	8.4	35.1	18.4	11.5

Table 8. Relative importance of Norway's partners in promoting women's participation in peace efforts, 2000–19

FUNDING IMPORTANCE		NETWORK IMPORTANCE	
1	UN Women	UN Women	1
2	UNDP	UNDP	2
3	CARE International (local office) ⁶⁵	Norwegian Church Aid	3
4	Norwegian Refugee Council	UNIFEM	4
5	UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	Norwegian Refugee Council	5
6	UNIFEM	Norwegian People's Aid	6
7	FOKUS	Norwegian Church Aid – local office	7
8	African Union	CARE Norway	8
9	CARE Norway	UNFPA	9
10	Norwegian Church Aid (local office) ⁶⁶	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	10
11	Nordic International Support Foundation (NIS)	Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, NIBR	11
12	Institute for Security Studies (ISS)	Nordic Consulting Group (NCG)	12
13	Norwegian People's Aid	KFUK-KFUM Global	13
14	Norwegian Church Aid	International Alert	14
15	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	International Labour Organisation (ILO)	15
16	Norwegian Football Association	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)	16
17	Nepali Ministry of Finance	Danish Refugee Council	17
18	PRIO	World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)	18
19	UNICEF	Right to Play	19
20	Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	CARE International (local office)	20

⁶⁵ Multiple local offices.⁶⁶ Multiple local offices.

Norway has partnered with UN Women to promote women's participation in peace at country level (in 27 countries), regionally, and globally. It has been a partner in 12 Norwegian WPS priority countries since 2011. The partnership in some of these countries (such as Colombia, in different ways) has been more in-depth and stable than others. Its role in Sudan, South Sudan and Syria, for instance, has taken the form of specific projects or interventions.

In Colombia, there is a strong alliance between UN Women and Norway – they complement and support each other's roles in promoting the WPS agenda and women's participation as an integral part of this. They have worked together on the WPS agenda since long before the country's peace negotiations, when UN Women was still UNIFEM.

Beyond Colombia, the existing evidence suggests that Norwegian funding for women's participation in peace channelled through UN Women is put to good use. Still, UN Women has a weak standing and lack of political teeth in peace negotiations. Moreover, the agency appears to struggle to build trusted relations with national institutions and key stakeholders beyond those directly responsible for implementing the WPS NAP in each country, and has limited capacity to reach grassroots levels and follow up with local partners.⁶⁷

Norway is praised by evaluation informants for its flexible funding to UN Women but the same informants suggest that Norway should demand stronger accountability on how these funds are used.⁶⁸

Advocacy at country level

While some of Norway's WPS partners have a clear-cut single mandate, others operate in the realms of development aid, peacebuilding and peace processes, and humanitarian aid. In addition, some organisations focus on advocacy work, either alone or in combination with other types of work, at sub-national, national, regional and/or transnational levels.

This evaluation maps Norway's WPS partners in its WPS priority countries since 2011 against organisations known to engage in some form of WPS advocacy in those countries.⁶⁹ Of the resulting 157 possible partners, Norway has provided funding support to 11 organisations in eight countries (Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Nigeria, Palestine, the Philippines and South Sudan).⁷⁰

Global advocacy and transnational networks

This evaluation finds that Norway has, over the years, partnered with a significant number of CSOs that advocate globally for the WPS agenda. This is supported by the analysis of two indirect indicators of being representative of WPS global advocacy groups. A quarter of all signatories to an open letter to UN member states in 2020⁷¹ with a global reach have been supported financially by Norway at least once since

⁶⁷ UN Women (2021). *Corporate thematic evaluation of UN Women's support to National Action Plans on women, peace, and security*. UN Women Independent Evaluation Service; key informant interviews and review of archival documents.

⁶⁸ Moreover, this evaluation finds instances of limited information sharing, with parts of the Norwegian system with WPS funding responsibility not being fully aware of which partners are being supported by UN Women. The issue of coordination within the Norwegian administration is further explored in Chapter 6. For details on Norway's partnerships with UN Women in Colombia and Afghanistan, see Annex 4.

⁶⁹ See Annex 2, note 8 for further details.

⁷⁰ Some of these organisations might still be local implementing partners that have received Norwegian financial support through another (international) agreement. Or they might have received non-financial support from Norway. This list is by no means exhaustive, and it would be presumptuous to assume that there are no other WPS in-country partners who are willing and able to advocate for WPS.

⁷¹ Various (1 October 2020) '2020 Open Letter to Permanent Representatives to the United Nations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325'. 24.4% of total signatories were marked as 'global'. Local branches of the same organisation (e.g. CARE Afghanistan and CARE Burundi) were counted as one.



2000. And almost half of the 18 members of the NGO Working Group on WPS received some form of financial support from Norway in 2000–19, several of them on a very regular basis.⁷²

Norway's collaboration with transnational CSOs and networks flows smoothly from funding to other realms, including diplomatic support for advocacy in UN fora. Norway's strong global leadership on WPS is perceived by key informants from global and transnational civil society networks as connected with what Norway supports at regional and local levels, from UN resolutions in New York to communities on the ground, and from grassroots voices to the corridors of power.

Key findings

- Norway has a diversified portfolio of partners in promoting women's participation in peace efforts. Civil society is a key partner across the board.
- UN Women emerges as Norway's main partner in this thematic field, with a cooperation that has extended over 27 countries, several regions and the global level. The depth of this partnership at

the country level has been uneven, most likely as a result of the capacity and standing of the organisation on the ground.

- At the global level, Norway has strong links to CSOs that advocate for the WPS agenda. For these organisations, Norway is a trusted partner and a well-informed WPS champion.

⁷² CARE Norway (all 20 years), Oxfam International (17 years), Nobel Women's Initiative (13 years), International Alert (12 years) and WILPF (10 years).



Harmonisation, coordination and local ownership



PHOTO: AP PHOTO / AARON FAVILA



Internal alignment and coordination

Norway's process of improving its internal coordination identified in 2013⁷³ has continued with its 2015–18 and 2019–22 NAPs. This process has been facilitated by the WPS Coordinator/Special Envoy. It has been supported by government and MFA political commitment to these NAPs, the development of related tools and the WPS results framework.

A series of largely informal mechanisms have also underpinned this improved coordination, including regular and significant interactions between the Special Envoy and relevant sections in the MFA, and interactions between the Special Envoy and important global and regional missions, embassies in WPS priority countries and Norad.

A key initiative in this respect was the 2015 introduction of an annual retreat bringing together UNSCR 1325 focal points from priority countries' embassies, the Special Envoy and Norad staff. The meeting location has rotated among priority countries and the MFA in Oslo.⁷⁴ A 2018 internal MFA exercise with embassies in six priority countries (Afghanistan, Colombia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine and South Sudan)

highlighted appreciation for these meetings.⁷⁵ Other, ad-hoc, initiatives include a regional WPS gathering of Norwegian embassies in the Middle East in 2019 with a focus on women's inclusion in peace processes.

Norad and embassy staff interviewed for this evaluation spoke highly of the annual gatherings. Some argued that the meetings have enabled a degree of thematic coordination and learning exchange across embassies that was unique to the WPS field. A particularly useful aspect was Norad learning about embassies' in-country activities and understanding local needs, and being able to adjust support accordingly. The opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and different country contexts featured prominently in the feedback, evaluation and concluding sections of reports relating to these gatherings. However, some informants called for the subsequent systematisation of such learning and a system to ensure that it informs future practice. It appears that, to date, this has largely been left to the Special Envoy's personal initiative.

Coordination of Norway's WPS global initiatives and diplomatic work has apparently been working well, especially in relation to the UN. Coordination around long-term development, peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts has been less successful. The

challenge of linking the WPS initiatives of different partners in Norway's country-level engagement became apparent in the consolidated feedback from embassy consultations in 2018.⁷⁶ There is little to indicate that the challenge has been overcome since then. In fact, several people interviewed for this evaluation, especially but not limited to Norad staff, outlined the need for more substantial coordination of WPS-related efforts in development. Concrete examples of a lack of coordinated action include ignorance of which other parts of the Norwegian aid administration were providing WPS financial support through the multilateral system.

⁷³ Scanteam (unpublished n.d.).

⁷⁴ Meetings have been hosted by the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority (2015), the MFA in Oslo (2016), and the embassies to Colombia (2017), Myanmar (2018) and Nigeria (2018). Four virtual sessions replaced the physical retreat in 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

⁷⁵ Archival document. Case document: 1800431-3

⁷⁶ Ibid.



Similarly, the development of workplans for embassies to WPS priority countries, introduced in Norway's 2019–22 WPS NAP, has not yielded the expected results. The process of developing such plans – which also included technical support from Norad – turned out to be resource-intensive. In many cases, the plans are no longer updated or in use. Developing these plans is not mandatory if the embassy has not found this helpful or a good use of their time.

At the embassy level, this evaluation finds that efforts to ensure women's participation in the implementation of the 2016 peace agreement in **Colombia** appear to have been internally aligned. Embassy staff with different responsibilities within diplomatic, policy and programmatic areas of work appeared to be well informed about each other's engagements. The Embassy held internal meetings where staff discussed their portfolios and made efforts for coordination and cross-learning purposes.

This evaluation finds the WPS portfolio in Colombia to be coherent, in part due to the peace process and the peace agreement, in which Norway has clear priorities on what to support and how to promote women's participation. Thus, in Colombia, Norway's efforts to promote women's participation seem to be well aligned

with other parts of the WPS agenda.

Both the Colombia and the **Nordic Women Mediators network (NWM)** case studies indicate that other Norwegian engagements not directly related to the peace process (for example, forestry management and business development in the Colombian case) do not appear to have had a negative bearing on Norway's efforts to promote women's participation in peace initiatives at country level.

Coordination with other women, peace and security actors

An analysis of Norway's 2016–19 WPS annual reports portrays Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands and Denmark as Norway's most significant OECD partners on WPS.⁷⁷ According to these reports, Norway's collaboration with Sweden has revolved around peacekeeping, peace mediation, and Afghanistan and South Sudan. Both Norway and Sweden have prioritised Colombia more than other countries (see Chapter 3), and they were for many years co-donors to the civil society fund FOS in Colombia. Norway's partnership with Finland has centred on peace mediation, especially

high-level mediation training in connection to Syria via multilateral fora. The Netherlands and Norway collaborated at country level in South Sudan and Syria (with Finland). The specifics of Norway's partnership with Denmark are less evident from the WPS annual reports.

Norway participates in meetings of the National Focal Points for Women, Peace and Security Network⁷⁸ as well as the Nordic and Nordic-Baltic annual coordination meetings. The latter two have been characterised within the MFA as an especially important forum for sharing information and experiences, for forming strategic alliances and as a safe space to ask for input around policy development and specific initiatives.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Aggregate of the relative frequency of the term (per 10 million words) in each 2016–19 WPS annual report, filtered by OECD country members. Sweden is the only partner cited in all four reports.

⁷⁸ See WPS Focal Points Network (n.d.).

⁷⁹ Archival document (email): 17 October 2020.



The **NWM** mission statement is sufficiently broad to allow for diverging state approaches to peacebuilding and WPS, which results in minimal issues for coordination. Practical coordination between Norway and the other Nordic countries takes place through quarterly meetings between representatives from their foreign affairs ministries. Each branch organises multiple activities each year, but at the Nordic level there are fewer joint initiatives. This is largely due to differences in funding, and in the relationship of country branches to their respective foreign affairs ministries.

At country level, Norway has actively supported WPS pooled funding mechanisms, some of which have been presented as good practice (such as the Pooled Funding Mechanism for Implementation of NAP 1325 in Jordan and the former Nepal Peace Trust Fund – see Chapter 8).⁸⁰ In **Colombia**, the UNDP-administered MPTF for sustaining peace (see Chapter 7) is a major coordination arena that was established in 2016 to assist the implementation of the peace agreement. Norway was instrumental in its establishment, was central to its design and is its largest financial contributor.⁸¹ All initiatives are approved by donors and responsible line ministers, and the fund requires a gender perspective in all of its activities. Norway is party to the sub-group that prepares projects for

approval, where everything is scrutinised for its effects on women.

Harmonisation with country priorities and local ownership

Norway's continuous support for women's participation in peace efforts in both Afghanistan and Colombia has been in line with formal policy and legislation in both countries. In **Colombia**, the peace agreement and all its gender provisions have become part of the legislation that the Government must follow. In **Afghanistan**, Norway had expressed a higher goal for women's participation than Afghan policy.

There is no evidence of formal resistance among policy makers against Norwegian efforts to promote women's participation in peace efforts. In both countries, external pressure from the international community and civil society has been a significant factor in shaping government priorities for women's participation, and Norway's consistent insistence over many years has contributed to this.

In **Colombia**, the Norwegian-supported UN Women

programme has enabled some women to take on political roles in their communities. The fact that many projects continue, despite only short-term support from UN Women and the existence of adversary groups, is a sign that these projects have managed to build some level of community ownership over time. In **Afghanistan**, there is little evidence to indicate significant community ownership of women's participation in peace initiatives in the UN Women programme, despite various consultations.

Key findings

- Norway has steadily improved internal coordination around WPS thanks to both informal mechanisms (i.e. interaction between the Special Envoy and relevant sections in the MFA and embassies and Norad) and formal ones (e.g. the WPS annual gatherings).
- Norway's WPS coordination at the global policy level has worked well, especially in relation to the UN.

⁸⁰ UN Women (2021).

⁸¹ Norway's contributions in 2016–20 amounted to USD36.5 million.



- In the cases of Colombia and the NWM, Norway has assumed a role of initiating and supporting the coordination of women's participation in peace initiatives, and has partnered with like-minded countries on this.
- Norway's efforts to promote women's participation in the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement in Colombia appear to be highly aligned and coordinated in the normative, policy and programmatic realms.



Effectiveness



PHOTO: JUAN BARRETO / AFP



The evaluation case study assessed how far Norway's efforts to promote women's participation in peace initiatives in Afghanistan, Colombia and through the Nordic Women Mediators network (NWM) have been effective.⁸²

In **Afghanistan**, the UN Women country programme did not achieve its intended outcome of ensuring women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding, partly because it trained new women's groups instead of connecting existing groups to the ongoing formal and informal negotiation processes as originally planned. These new networks were less likely to be sustainable once financial support ended, but the programme's sustainability was weak in other ways too. UN Women's approach to sustainability was based on broad assumptions, such as a belief that women's inclusion in peacebuilding would make society more gender equal and therefore more stable. UN Women also struggled to develop the political clout and connections needed to achieve its intended outcomes.

In **Colombia**, the UN Women's Women Peace-builders programme was designed for women in conflict-affected areas to participate in implementing the Peace Agreement at local level. While some results were achieved, its design was not fully fit for reaching

ambitious goals in a complex context.

In both **Afghanistan** and **Colombia**, UN Women acted flexibly and deviated from its original programme design during programme implementation. While this did not yield results in Afghanistan, it appears to have strengthened the programme in Colombia. Both cases indicate the difficulty of WPS programming in complex situations, and how important it is for donors and partners to understand the context fully.

In **Colombia**, Norway played a crucial role in setting up the Sub-Commission for Gender Issues during the peace negotiations.⁸³ After its role as peace negotiation facilitator, Norway became a 'guarantor country' with a seat on the Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Final Agreement.⁸⁴ Norway has defined its role as protecting the peace agreement infrastructure established in 2016, such as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace⁸⁵ and the Truth Commission, which have both been threatened with closure. While implementation of the peace agreement, and its gender provisions in particular, have not progressed as far as hoped, Norway has most likely contributed to the survival of the fragile peace infrastructure via its central role in both covert and overt diplomacy.

By financing WPS and gender capacity and competence among the implementing parties, Norway has contributed to implementing the peace agreement's gender provisions. Interviewees believe that this knowledge will become more fully owned by the Colombian governance system over time.

Norway initiated, and was vital in, establishing the MPTF, in which gender is mainstreamed and at least 30% of all initiatives are intended to benefit women. This fund is the most important aid instrument to support the implementation of Colombia's Peace Agreement, and has achieved women's participation at different levels. The MPTF has succeeded in getting Colombian government buy-in – nothing is implemented without the approval of the responsible line minister. This means that the fund's results may be more sustainable than those of other development programmes.

⁸² See Annex 4 for further details.

⁸³ See also Fabra-Mata, J & Wilhelmsen, A (2018). *A Trusted Facilitator: An Evaluation of Norwegian Engagement in the Peace Process between the Colombian Government and the FARC, 2010–2016*. Norad Department for Evaluation. Report 10/2018.

⁸⁴ *Comisión de Seguimiento, Impulso y Verificación a la Implementación*.

⁸⁵ *Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz*.



In Colombia, civil society has been an enduring force that insists on full implementation of the peace agreement. Norway provides direct financial support to Colombian CSOs but – overall – its support for civil society has been largely indirect, through international multilateral organisations.⁸⁶ Where Norway has provided civil society support over a longer period, it has achieved sustainable results.

Since 2020, different projects and organisations involved in peacebuilding in Colombia have adapted their programmes to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic to varying degrees. Some travel funds were redirected towards improving CSOs' connectivity (via laptops and technological training). The Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá showed a willingness to listen to requests from CSOs receiving support through UN Women and the MPTF, and made some positive programmatic adjustments.

NWM focuses on global-level processes where the UN is involved. This evaluation finds that the NWM has fulfilled all sub-aims set out in its 2017 mission statement⁸⁷ – particularly around advocacy and activities that strengthen the connections between, and capacity among, Nordic women mediators. The Norwegian-initiated Global Alliance of Women Mediator

Networks has received top-level attention in the UN and contributed to an increased awareness of the importance of women mediators. There are fewer examples of these groups engaging with women in conflict-affected areas, especially outside of high-level UN fora.

The NWM mission statement is open to interpretation on how to operationalise strengthening women's participation in peace processes. 'Strengthening' does not preclude facilitating the direct participation of women from conflict-affected areas in peace processes, but the NWM's current structure does not arrange such engagements. As highlighted by the 2018 Palermo Conference, the most tangible example of NWM increasing women's participation in peace processes,⁸⁸ NWM involvement can serve as a legitimating factor in facilitating engagement in peace talks, as well as providing mediation.

The **network's Norwegian branch, NWM-N**, is not linked to a concrete timeframe as it is envisaged as a long-term initiative. This differentiates the network from other foreign policy initiatives that are attached to project proposals, funding and specific outcomes. NWM-N occasionally achieves results on the ground, and members note that this is something to aspire to.

However, without a clear funding perspective, NWM-N's sustainability remains unclear. The greatest risks relate to two factors. Firstly, a potential lack of NWM-N upkeep could damage Norway's image of being politically committed to women's participation in peace processes – particularly as the Norwegian Government has promoted the network at high-level events. The second risk relates to over-selling the network's capabilities and whether it is perceived to achieve its intended goals. In its current operations, NWM-N acts as a capacity-building mechanism, knowledge-sharing platform, advocacy body and professional association, among other roles. Addressing these risks will likely influence the sustainability of Norwegian WPS efforts, though NWM-N's resilience is also heavily bolstered by the Global Alliance of Women Mediator Networks and high-level UN support for WPS initiatives.

⁸⁶ Another indirect path of support is through Norwegian NGOs, since many have local partners.

⁸⁷ See: Nordic Women Mediators Network (2017). Mission statement.; Hansen, JM & Lorentzen, J (2017). *Empowering Survivors of Sexual Violence in DR Congo*. PRIO Gender, Peace and Security Update: PRIO., p. 5

⁸⁸ This occurred in collaboration with the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, UN Women and the Italian Government during Libyan peace process talks held in Palermo, Italy in November 2018.



Supporting the protection of women human rights defenders

The 2013 UN General Assembly resolution ‘Protecting Women Human Rights Defenders’ urges states to adopt programmes that provide women with “Adequate access to comprehensive support services for those women human rights defenders who experience violence, including shelters, psychosocial services, counselling, medical care and legal and social services”. Both Norway’s Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and its current WPS NAP (2019–22) refer to this resolution, defining it as “sponsored by Norway” and “Norwegian-led”, respectively.⁸⁹

After the adoption of the resolution, Norway committed to supporting organisations engaged in protecting human rights defenders, including women.⁹⁰ Directly or indirectly and financially or otherwise, Norway has supported organisations and initiatives (e.g. the International Civil Society Action Network ICAN’s She Builds Peace Frameworks for Action) that aim to protect women peacebuilders and human rights defenders.⁹¹

Protecting women human rights defenders was first recognised as a theme in Norway’s Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality 2016–2020

and the 2019–22 WPS NAP. The former explicitly recognises attacks on women human rights defenders as an increasing trend in certain countries,⁹² and the NAP 2019 Annual Report refers in its introductory note to women peacebuilders and human rights defenders reporting experiencing increasing threats and violence. This worrying trend was echoed in interviews conducted for this evaluation.

In 2020, 28% of human rights defenders who were killed were working on women’s rights. The highest number of killings of human rights defenders in Norway’s WPS priority countries were registered in Colombia, the Philippines and Afghanistan.⁹³ However, Norway’s NAP 2019 Annual Report only specifically mentions having taking action to protect women peacebuilders in Colombia.

In 2017, Norad’s Civil Society Department announced two grant scheme allocations for efforts supporting WPS and women’s rights and gender equality. Project assessments do not always acknowledge the risks associated with defending these rights, and direct or indirect protective measures for women peacebuilders and human rights defenders are rare among grantee activities.

An analysis of the projects granted funds through these schemes in WPS priority countries⁹⁴ shows that most were based on a limited assessment of risks to women peacebuilders and human rights defenders. Six grantee organisations acknowledge such risks in their assessments but mostly in vague ways, limited to physical safety and largely focused on their own staff. Two of them present a more detailed assessment of the risks, one considering digital security, but with an emphasis on the organisation’s own systems.

⁸⁹ Government of Norway (2016b); Government of Norway (2019).

⁹⁰ International Service for Human Rights (2013). ‘Interview: Geir Sjøberg, Lead Negotiator for Norway on General Assembly resolution on Protecting Women Human Rights Defenders’. 2 December 2013; Brattskar, H. (2014). Remarks at the event ‘Protect Women Human Rights Defenders: From Resolution to Implementation’, New York, 10 March 2014.

⁹¹ The recommendations laid out by ICAN’s She Builds Peace Frameworks for Action covered four areas: building political and legal safety nets; prevention, mitigation and response to threats to women peacebuilders on the ground; security for women peacebuilders at the peace table and in international spaces; and providing emergency assistance to, and relocating, women peacebuilders. Holmes, M. (2020). *Protecting Women Peacebuilders. The Front Lines of Sustainable Peace*. ICAN.

⁹² Government of Norway (2016b), p.8

⁹³ Front Line Defenders (2021). *Global Analysis 2020*.

⁹⁴ 10 projects received funding under the WPS scheme and one from the Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Grant Scheme. The evaluation team could not retrieve document information for one project under the WPS scheme in time for the analysis.



Only one organisation is found to have a more comprehensive assessment of the risks faced by women peacebuilders and human rights defenders. Of the six organisations explicitly acknowledging risks faced by women peacebuilders in their risk assessments, only two include psychosocial support measures in their plans.

At country level, the acknowledgement of risks and explicit protective measures in project documents for Norad-funded WPS projects in Colombia, the Philippines and Afghanistan is either absent (in the case of Afghanistan and the Philippines) or weak (Colombia).

As informants to this evaluation confirmed, these risks to women peacebuilders and human rights defenders become apparent in projects' implementation phases, requiring updated assessments and concrete measures. Neither Norad's mandate nor its organisational architecture are geared towards providing this type of support to partners. Key informants interviewed for this evaluation volunteered examples of enquiries made by local organisations in high-risk countries about protections and safety nets available to them. Both those who raised and received those enquiries felt that the response has been suboptimal. Norad's ability to respond to security and

protection requests is limited and significantly more constrained than the MFA, which has a different set of operational capabilities and greater contextual proximity through diplomatic missions – and its own guidelines for safeguarding human rights defenders.⁹⁵

These shortcomings in risk assessments and protection related to women peacebuilders and human rights defenders transcend the specific projects funded through Norad's WPS civil society grant scheme. Even though there may have been discussions on individual cases in more secure communication channels, the safety and security of partners and women human rights defenders in **Afghanistan** is absent from documents and communication around Norwegian-supported UN Women peace initiatives in that country.

In **Colombia**, civil society has worked on protection and safety for a long time, and in recent years donors have come to realise their necessity. The recurring challenge is that the duty bearers, the many responsible government institutions at local, regional and national level, do not live up to their responsibilities of guaranteeing protection for Colombian citizens. Unlike in Afghanistan, UN Women in Colombia and Norway put security and protection for women human rights defenders on the agenda in 2019. Together, they have

also influenced the MPTF to put self-protection on the agenda.

The **NWM and NWM-N** have been able to provide protection to some individuals in need, including members of other women mediator networks and those involved in NWM activities, as well as advocating on behalf of others at risk. This has been an unintended positive effect of the network.

⁹⁵ Government of Norway (2010). *Norges innsats for menneskerettighetsforkjempere. Veiledning for utenriksdepartementet og utenriksstasjonene.*



Key findings

- WPS programme design is central to effectiveness and sustainability, as documented in both Afghanistan and Colombia. It is important for partners to fully understand the complexity and dynamism of local conflict-affected contexts and their own position in relation to other actors.
- Norway's contributions have been important in the survival of Colombia's 2016 Peace Agreement and its gender provisions. Norway used its formal role in the peace process to apply a blend of financial, political, diplomatic, normative and programmatic support to women's participation and rights.
- Norway has helped to put the protection of women peacebuilders and human rights defenders on the international agenda. It has also supported organisations providing safety and security to these groups, and initiatives outlining concrete strategies for people at the frontline of peacebuilding efforts and their allies.
- There is no mainstreamed support system for women peacebuilders and human rights defenders

in WPS projects funded by Norway, and the support that exists is fundamentally reactive. At the project planning and design phase, risks assessments are generally weak, and funded projects include few (if any) protective measures for these groups. When risks to women peacebuilders and human rights defenders arise or increase during project implementation, Norad struggles to offer them protection.



Impact of Norway's women, peace and security efforts



PHOTO: UN PHOTO / MAURA AJAK



This evaluation of the impact of Norway's WPS efforts from 2000–20 considers three interconnected workstreams linked to EQs 7–9:

1. Norwegian aid administration and foreign service (low-level effects in the hierarchy of results; inward-looking perspective, i.e. effects on the system itself)
2. Women's participation in peace efforts (mid-level effects; outward-looking)
3. Women's and men's rights, needs and priorities (high-level effects; outward-looking)

Norwegian development aid administration

NAPs are essentially bureaucratic tools for strategic planning and accountability. In its first NAP in 2006, Norway set a goal to increase coordination and systematisation of its WPS efforts. Since then, Norway's NAPs have been presented as a framework to steer and strengthen reporting and accountability.⁹⁶ This evaluation assesses whether these plans have had a positive effect on the Norwegian development administration in six key areas mainly devised from the

literature on NAPs and portfolio management. Norway's WPS progress in these six areas is outlined below, and summarised in Table 9.

⁹⁶ Miller, B, Pournik, M & Swaine, A (2014). *Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation*. The George Washington University.

Table 9: Overall impact of NAPs on Norway's WPS efforts, 2006–19

Area	Achievement level
Focused portfolio	Low
Adequate funding	Middle–high
Assigned staff	Low–middle
Increased internal coordination	Middle
Enhanced technical capacity	Low–middle
Normative adherence	High



FOCUSED PORTFOLIO

As shown in Chapter 4, there is limited overlap between Norway's development partner countries and its WPS priority countries. The proliferation of WPS priority countries during the period under evaluation seems at odds with their original purpose – to enhance attention to on-the-ground results.

Almost no evaluation informants knew the selection criteria for WPS priority countries. This confusion extended to the purpose of having WPS priority countries and the impact of that status for a country – beyond annual gatherings, reporting to the NAP and having (largely redundant) WPS embassy plans.

Several informants called for a greater focus on Norway's WPS portfolios in priority countries, and on how the entire portfolio could be best coordinated and designed to produce results related to NAP priorities.

ADEQUATE FUNDING

As outlined in Chapter 3, there was an almost nine-fold increase in Norway's gender-marked disbursements to conflict-affected countries from 2000–19. The prevalent MFA approach around WPS funding over this period has been to mainstream it, increasing the

proportion of all peace and security aid that features women's rights or gender equality as primary or significant objectives.

Norway's NAPs set aside a specific WPS allocation for CSOs, which is seen internationally as good practice. But MFA and Norad diverge in their approaches to this. While the MFA might assess potential projects in relation to their contribution to broader political processes under the NAP, Norad tends to focus more narrowly on partner's contribution to outcomes and change as per project objectives.

Recipients of WPS funding see Norway as a flexible and accommodating donor. That said, there is a clear request from CSOs active within the WPS field for both core and flexible funding, to facilitate organisational development and adaptations to contextual changes.

ASSIGNED STAFF

The Norwegian government human resource infrastructure has not grown in line with the WPS workload.

In 2017 the position of WPS Coordinator was upgraded to a Special Envoy (an ambassador-level position in

some respects). Located at the Section for the UN in the MFA, this role is at the centre of Norway's WPS set-up. The Special Envoy's tasks have increased significantly over the years. The post-holder facilitates and supervises the implementation of Norway's WPS support based on the NAP and provides technical support to relevant sections in the MFA and missions abroad. They also follow up relevant work in multilateral fora (e.g. the UN Security Council, UN Peacebuilding Commission, NATO, African Union, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and UN organisations). Furthermore, they have overall responsibility for coordinating and developing new NAPs, and often author large sections of them in cooperation with colleagues from relevant sections and departments. They also prepare NAP annual reports, often with drafting assistance from Norad and based on information collected from Norad, sections, delegations and missions.

Based on inputs from relevant sections, embassies and delegations at the MFA, as well as the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Defence, the Special Envoy develops a short internal year plan, as called for in the 2013 review of Norway's 2011–13



NAP commissioned by the MFA via Norad.⁹⁷ These plans give an overview of political, institutional and diplomatic processes that various units are undertaking or supporting. Each year, the Special Envoy produces a status update on these processes. This plan and reporting contain little to nothing on aid cooperation and the Special Envoy is not directly engaged in allocating funds for specific interventions or projects. However, they have a consultative role in reviewing workplans from embassies in WPS priority countries and beyond.

The Special Envoy maintains a large network, both within the MFA and globally, to help them pursue Norwegian global WPS priorities, and help relevant MFA sections and missions to mainstream WPS support in their work.

Norway's WPS set-up also includes WPS focal points in relevant sections of the MFA and two-person WPS teams in WPS priority countries (one diplomat and a locally recruited position). These focal points are responsible for planning and reporting against the WPS results framework. Some embassies have a gender advisor, who is generally the same as the WPS focal point.

Norad used to have a WPS focal point until its

organisational restructure in 2019. Since then, WPS has been addressed in different departments, such as the Civil Society department and the Section for Gender Equality, which currently manages the special WPS grant.⁹⁸ Given Norad's increasing aid portfolios, including in conflicted-affected countries, evaluation informants repeatedly raised the need for a Norad-wide WPS focal point or coordinator and a clearer WPS mandate. In order to fully coordinate with the MFA, anyone performing this role would need security clearance.

INCREASED INTERNAL COORDINATION

As detailed in Chapter 6, Norway's NAPs have led to improved internal coordination of its WPS support. There are several forces driving this positive change, mainly the role of the WPS Coordinator/Special Envoy, political commitment, the WPS results framework, internal guidance and annual meetings. However, this coordination is not as systematic as it could be, and it does not extend to strategic planning. Norway has no holistic portfolio approach to WPS priority countries (or to other countries for that matter) that involves all the various actors with relevant funding responsibilities and technical expertise. It is worth noting in this regard the large proportion of funds to local NGOs managed by Norad from Oslo, which at a

minimum call for good information flows and dialogue with embassies due to their closer proximity to those actors.

ENHANCED TECHNICAL CAPACITY

People interviewed for this evaluation noted that MFA and Norad staff are knowledgeable about the WPS agenda and the available tools for implementing it. Several attributed this to the dedication and efforts of the WPS Coordinator/Special Envoy in recent years, through on-the-job support, seminars and interactions targeting staff in WPS priority courses, relevant MFA sections and beyond.

There are limited formal WPS training opportunities for MFA and Norad employees. The main initiative appears to be through the MFA's Diplomatic Academy, which includes one session on WPS in the regular Foreign Service Trainee Programme. There is also a module on WPS in Norad's regular course on Gender Equality. Outside the MFA, there is ad hoc training for members of facilitation

⁹⁷ Scanteam (n.d.)

⁹⁸ The Section for Gender Equality responsible for the WPS grant in the new structure came into effect on 1 September 2021.



teams delivered by the Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution, as well as various international seminars and training exercises.⁹⁹

Some underlying competence challenges remain, in both the overall Norwegian aid administration and within Norway's peace facilitation teams. Despite a reported increase in training opportunities, only 18% of members of Norway's facilitation teams for formal peace processes reported having received training or having enhanced their competence in relation to WPS in 2019. This is worrying, as this indicator is very broadly defined.¹⁰⁰

Within the Norwegian aid administration, faults in applying the gender marker (see Chapter 3) have been addressed by the Special Envoy and others through informal engagement with relevant MFA sections and embassy staff in WPS priority countries. Correct application of the gender marker has also been covered by Norad's regular courses on gender equality. But most interviewees for this evaluation were unsure what, if any, training had been provided on the gender marker and could not recall having received any, except for the initial training given to get access to the grant management system. This evaluation finds that the overall developments during the period under

review have not led to any observable improvement in technical capacity in relation to the WPS agenda.

NORMATIVE ADHERENCE

To be seen as a credible player in peace mediation, Norway must 'walk the talk' and uphold the normative commitments attached to the WPS agenda, e.g. by having a gender balance in its own mediation teams.

The 2019–22 NAP set gender parity annual targets in the Norwegian peace and reconciliation teams (at least 40% women and 40% men). Self-reported data for 2019 shows an increase from the baseline and achievements not far from the target. Moreover, according to Norway's 2019 NAP Annual Report, all Norwegian peace and reconciliation teams had appointed one person with responsibility for following up WPS issues. That year, Norway had eight Special Envoys involved in peace processes in different capacities – three women and five men.¹⁰¹

Norwegian development aid administration: key findings

- The increasing WPS impetus since Norway's first

NAP in 2006 has had positive effects on both Norway's aid administration and its foreign service but has fallen short of the national vision of systemised Norwegian WPS efforts.

- There is little doubt that Norway's WPS NAPs and the set-up that arose from them has had positive internal effects. There is also little doubt that the full potential of portfolio-level strategic planning of WPS has not yet been realised.
- Norway's NAPs have arguably been more successful as a framework for political mobilisation around the WPS agenda than as tools for managing development assistance.

⁹⁹ In 2019, Norway reported an annual increase in training of its peace and reconciliation teams, from 23% in the previous year to 34%. see Government of Norway (2020). *Implementing Norway's National Action Plan 2019-2022 Women, peace and security. Annual report 2019.*

¹⁰⁰ The indicator includes internal seminars organised by the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, sessions with experts to increase awareness and competence, and more formalised training courses. This latitude helps explained why the set target for the indicator is 100%. For further analysis of the WPS results framework, see Chapter 9.

¹⁰¹ Government of Norway (2020).



Peace agreements with a gender perspective

A 'gender perspective' in a peace process and agreement, as required by UNSCR 1325, involves both involving women in negotiations, and a focus on material gains for women's equality in the agreement. One simple way to assess how far gender has been specifically discussed and included is to examine gender-specific references in peace agreements – specific provisions for women based on an assessment of their treatment during conflicts, and their particular post-conflict needs. While gender references are not sufficient evidence of a 'gender perspective', it is difficult to imagine a gender perspective being adopted in the absence of specific references to the situation of women or girls.

Between 1 January 1990 and 1 June 2021, 1,915 peace agreements were reached in 159 peace processes.¹⁰² In total, 20% of these agreements in 54% of the peace processes contained any reference to women, girls, gender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people, or sexual or gender-based violence (see Table 10).

Of the 1,915 peace agreements in this period, 802 were reached before UNSCR 1325 came into force and 1,113 after that date. Some 12% of the peace agreements brokered before the resolution came into force included a reference to women or gender.¹⁰³ This percentage increased to 26% in the two decades after UNSCR 1325.¹⁰⁴

Examining the specific texts of agreements referencing women highlights that relatively few peace agreements in a small number of conflicts are in any way comprehensive in providing for women and the treatment of gender issues. Using PA-X to eliminate agreements containing only one clause or very rhetorical references to women leaves only a small number of post-UNSCR 1325 agreements that come close to a gender perspective by including multiple references to women in core areas (see Table 11).¹⁰⁶

Table 10: Signed peace agreements containing references to women or gender, before and after UNSCR 1325

	Peace agreements referring to women or gender	Percentage of all peace agreements including references to women or gender	Number of processes producing peace agreements that mention women or gender
Before 1325 (1990 to 30 Oct 2000)	99/802	12%	40
After 1325 (31 Oct 2000 to 1 Jun 2021)	288/1,113	26%	64
Total	387/1,915	20%	86 (18 overlapping processes)¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Data used in this chapter comes from the PA-X Peace Agreement Database hosted by the University of Edinburgh. This counts different conflict occurrences between two actors (conflict dyads) in the same country (e.g. Sudan), but there is some dispute over what constitutes distinct dyads.

¹⁰³ This figure is very similar to that in Bell & O'Rourke (2010), on a smaller cross-section of agreements. Bell, C & O'Rourke, C. (2010). 'Peace Agreements or 'Pieces of Paper'? The Impact of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Peace Processes and their Agreements', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, vol. 59, no. 4, pp. 941-80.

¹⁰⁴ Up to June 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Processes that started before 30 October 2000 but were not concluded until after that date.

¹⁰⁶ Gender references to women in other processes and agreements often comprise anti-discrimination provisions that reference discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender, other vague references to participation, or one-off measures for women. While these are all potentially important, they fall far short of a 'gender perspective'.

Table 11: Post-2000 peace agreements containing a gender perspective

Country	Gender provisions in peace agreement/s	Year/s	Norwegian involvement ¹⁰⁷
Burundi	The Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement: extensive references to women and other forms of equality, and human rights more broadly, throughout ¹⁰⁸	2000	No
Colombia	The most extensive references to women and gender equality in any peace agreement ¹⁰⁹	2016	Yes
DRC	Fairly extensive measures for women ¹¹⁰	2003, 2009	No
Sudan	Agreements following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), notably those in Darfur and Eastern Sudan, which cover women at length ¹¹¹	2006, 2011	Yes
South Sudan	The post-secession Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, and Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan: extensive provisions on women and gender	2015, 2018	Yes

¹⁰⁷ List of conflicts with Norwegian engagement in peace talks and peace processes publicly recognised by Norway. See: Government of Norway (n.d.) 'Norway's engagement in peace processes since 1993'.

¹⁰⁸ *Declaration du Directoire Politique du processus de paix au Burundi sur le processus de mise en oeuvre des décisions conjointes prises à Pretoria* (8 April 2009); Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL (7 September 2006); Dar-es Salaam Agreement on Principles Towards lasting Peace, Security and Stability in Burundi (19 June 2006); *Accord de Partage de Pouvoir au Burundi* (6 August 2004); Ceasefire Agreement between the Transitional Government of Burundi and the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (2 December 2002); Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi (28 August 2000).

¹⁰⁹ *Participación política: Apertura democrática para construir la paz* (6 August 2013); *Solución al Problema de las Drogas Ilícitas* (15 May 2014); *Hacia un Nuevo Campo Colombiano: Reforma Rural Integral* (6 June 2014).

¹¹⁰ In particular, Inter-Congolese Negotiations: The Final Act (The Sun City Agreement) (2 April 2003).

¹¹¹ In particular, Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (31 May 2011); Darfur Peace Agreement (5 May 2006); and Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (19 June 2006).

Research has shown that the official involvement of third-party states or regional organisations in peace negotiations is linked with a 12-percentage point increase in peace agreements including gender provisions.¹¹² **Norway was involved as facilitator in three of the five post-2000 peace agreements that deal most comprehensively with the particular needs and status of women.**

Several other post-2000 intra-state agreements persistently included references to women in key signed agreements, while falling short of a comprehensive treatment of women. Norway had a tangible involvement in two of the five countries in question, Nepal and the Philippines (see Table 12).

¹¹² Christien, A & Mukhtarova, T (2020). *Explaining trends in the frequency of gender provisions in peace agreements, 1990–2019*. Washington, DC: Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.

Table 12: [Post-2000 peace agreements containing references to women/gender](#)

Country	Gender references in peace agreement/s	Year(s)	Norwegian involvement
Nepal	Peace agreements based on “progressive restructuring of the state to resolve existing class-based, ethnic, regional and gender problems”, which also addresses matters such as sexual violence. The Interim Constitution (a form of peace agreement) also contained references to women.	2005–07	Yes
the Philippines/Mindanao and the Philippines-NDF	Peace agreements fairly consistently consider women in the peace process in Mindanao. Agreements with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) include gender in relation to human rights.	1998–2014	Yes
Somalia	Agreements providing for new power-sharing institutions often also specified the number of women to be involved in political institutions, but have few other provisions relating to women.	1993–2014	No
Zimbabwe	Agreements including the ‘peace agreement constitution’ address women’s and gender issues in detail, although their implementation was flawed.	2008 with constitution in 2013	No
Yemen	Civic processes such as Yemen’s National Dialogue address gender as part of the peace process.	2014	No



References to gender in peace agreements are much less common at the early (ceasefire or pre-negotiation) stages and implementation stages of a peace process than in final peace agreements. Although this is in part due to the nature of the issues being agreed, it is also significant as early-stage agreements can set precedents for later discussions.¹¹³

The 2019 Peace Accord in Mozambique,¹¹⁴ which included Norwegian involvement, is no exception. Comprising fairly straightforward ceasefire provisions between Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, (Mozambican National Resistance, RENAMO) and the Republic of Mozambique, it does not contain gender references, despite the existence of UN guidance¹¹⁵ at the time that illustrates how gender is relevant to ceasefire agreements. Whether and how more consideration of women would have been possible and useful in this agreement would need further research.

Similarly, short ceasefire agreements with the National Democratic Front (NDF) in the Philippines (2018 and 2019)¹¹⁶ did not include references to women, although the 2018 Interim Peace Agreement¹¹⁷ incorporates, and therefore re-emphasises, the importance of the much earlier Comprehensive Agreement between the Government of the Philippines and the NDF, which

made clear provision for women's rights.

Myanmar's 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement¹¹⁸ does not follow this general pattern of excluding a gender perspective from ceasefires, as it includes a few significant references to women's inclusion and addressing women's issues. Norway was an international witness to this agreement and supported the peace process.

In sum, the **evidence strongly suggests that Norwegian facilitation has contributed to improving the quality of peace agreements by including a gender perspective and gender provisions.** However, this is based on a small dataset, without examining confounding variables, contextual factors or the specific extent and methods of Norwegian facilitation as would be necessary to show a clear causal link.

From inclusive talks and agreements to societal change

Norway's WPS efforts (as defined in its NAPs) are underpinned by an assumed causal link between including women in peace processes and the

sustainability of peace. Research affirms this assumption, showing a correlation between the quality of peace agreements and tangible positive change on the ground, in terms of the durability of peace and improvements in women's lives. When women are parties to a peace agreement, that agreement is more likely to contain gender provisions,¹¹⁹ and a higher number of provisions relating to political, social and economic reform.¹²⁰

¹¹³ See further analysis in Bell, C & McNicholl, K (2019). 'Principled Pragmatism and the "Inclusion Project": Implementing a Gender Perspective in Peace Agreements'. *Feminists @ Law*, 9(1); Forster, R & Bell, C (2019). *Gender Mainstreaming in Ceasefires: Comparative Data and Examples*; Christien, A & Mukhtarova, T (2020)

¹¹⁴ Maputo Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation (6 August 2019).

¹¹⁵ United Nations (2012). *Guidance for Mediators: Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements*. See also United Nations (2017). *Guidance on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies*.

¹¹⁶ 'Context and premises of the CPP declaration of ceasefire (December 23, 2019 to January 7, 2020)', and 'Agreement on a Stand down for the Resumption of the Formal Peace Talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines' (8 June 2018).

¹¹⁷ 'GRP-NDFP Interim Peace Agreement' (2018).

¹¹⁸ Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Ethnic Armed Organizations (2015).

¹¹⁹ Christien, A (2020). *What has happened to gender provisions in peace agreements?* Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.

¹²⁰ Krause, J, Krause, W & Bränfors, P (2018). 'Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace.' *International Interactions*, 44:6, 985–1016.



Three factors are critical to the inclusion of gender references in peace agreements:

- Women's representation in peace negotiations.
- Women's representation in legislatures.
- The strength of women's CSOs in conflict-affected areas.¹²¹

Peace agreements have a higher chance of being implemented when women's groups have a relatively strong influence on the process.¹²² And quantitative analysis shows a robust relationship between peace agreements with women signatories and the durability of resulting peace.¹²³

GETTING WOMEN TO THE TABLE AND GENDER INTO AGREEMENTS – THE COLOMBIAN CASE

Norway's contribution to the peace process in Colombia that led to the 2016 peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the guerrilla group FARC-EP provides solid evidence that external actors like Norway can support women's inclusion, and gender perspectives, in a peace agreement.

In Colombia, the inclusion of a gender perspective

occurred incrementally, through a multi-sited political bargaining process. This took place not only within the negotiating parties and at the formal peace negotiation table, but also within civil society and by raising civil society demands and perspectives at the negotiation table.¹²⁴

As documented in another evaluation,¹²⁵ women were included in the Colombian peace process – and the gender dimension was considered – in multiple ways. Norway's support was instrumental in this, notably by:

- Encouraging the negotiating parties to include women in their delegations and to 'own' the gender perspective as an integral part of the peace process.
- Providing direct technical support on a gender perspective to the negotiating parties.
- Supporting civil society mobilisation, networks and forums for women that contributed to the peace process.
- Supporting the establishment and work of a Gender Sub-Commission.

- Supporting delegations of women's groups and LGBTI representatives.
- Partnering with UN Women, devising strategic approaches to raise awareness of the importance of the WPS agenda.

The unique nature of this approach may not have been any single mechanism, but rather how they were all used together and how this input was harmonised with successful negotiations, considering sequencing, timing and the division of tasks among those involved in the facilitation process.

¹²¹ True, J & Riveros-Morales, Y (2019). 'Towards inclusive peace: Analysing gender-sensitive peace agreements 2000–2016'. *International Political Science Review*. 2019;40(1):23–40; Lee-Koo, K & True, J (2018). *Toward Inclusive Peace: Mapping Gender-Sensitive Peace Agreements 2000–2016*. Monash University. Report.

¹²² Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (2016). *Making Women Count in Peace Processes*. Briefing Note. Geneva: Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative.

¹²³ Krause, J, Krause, W & Bränfors, P (2018).

¹²⁴ Phelan, A & True, J (2021). 'Navigating gender in elite bargains: Women's movements and the quest for inclusive peace in Colombia'. *Review of International Studies*, 1–24.

¹²⁵ Fabra-Mata, J & Wilhelmsen, A (2018).



Nepal and Sudan and South Sudan – two tales of support and results

Table 13: Analysis of gender outcomes from Nepal's and Sudan's CPAs

	Does the peace agreement adopt a gender perspective?			Were women's rights provisions in the peace agreement implemented?	Did the peace agreement have a positive impact on respect for women's political rights up to 2011?
Source	PA-X ¹²⁶	PAM (2015) ¹²⁷	Reid (2021)	PAM (2015)	Reid (2021)
CPA in Nepal, 2006	Yes (Holistic)	Yes	Yes	Partially ¹²⁸	Yes
CPA in Sudan, 2005	Yes (Partial)	Yes	Yes	Fully ¹²⁹	No

THE CONSIDERABLE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF NORWAY'S SUPPORT IN NEPAL

Different studies of provisions in Nepal's 2006 CPA have agreed that it adopts a gender perspective (see Table 13). Norway actively contributed to this positive change. It was among the major external actors supporting the peace process,¹³⁰ and was in regular contact with both the Maoists and the central government authorities to help them reach a peace agreement.¹³¹

From 2000–19, Norway disbursed NOK4.5 billion

in earmarked funds to Nepal. Close to 60% of these funds were gender-marked and, overall, 7.2% of all Norway's gender-marked development assistance to Nepal supported promoting women's participation in peace efforts. This percentage reached its highest point (almost 28.7%) in 2007, a year after the CPA was signed, and averaged around 12% until 2015, when a new constitution was passed. Compared to other Nordic countries,

¹²⁶ Analysis by the evaluation team using PA-X data.

¹²⁷ Madhav, J, Quinn, JM & Regan, PM (2015). 'Annualized Implementation Data on Intrastate Comprehensive Peace Accords, 1989–2012'. *Journal of Peace Research* 52(4): 551–562.

¹²⁸ Intermediary label in the PAM.

¹²⁹ "Full Implementation of Women's Rights Provision Observed: This coding indicates that the changes as described by the accord are almost in place, or are fully in place." *Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset (PAM_ID) Codebook* (Version 1.5, updated 29 July 2015).

¹³⁰ Upreti, BR & Sapkota, B (2017). 'Observations and Reflections on the Peace and Constitution-Making Process: Case Study on Nepal'. *National Dialogue Handbook: Case Studies*. SwissPeace.

¹³¹ Government of Norway (2012). *Fredsprosess Nepal*.

Norway's financial support for women's participation in peace efforts in Nepal during this period was substantial.¹³²

Nepali government institutions and local NGOs were Norway's preferred partners in working on women's participation in peace in Nepal in 2000–19. In 2007, Norway's financial support was geared towards supporting the Government of Nepal's implementation of the CPA through the Nepal Peace Trust Fund.¹³³ At the same time, Norway was the leading donor to the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN), which was created in 2007 to mobilise resources to support the peace process.¹³⁴

In terms of local civil society, Norway provided funding to the Women's Alliance for Power, Peace, Democracy and the Constituent Assembly (WAPPDCA), which later became Sankalpa.¹³⁵ Comprising 10 NGOs working for women's rights, the alliance aimed to enable women's meaningful participation in peace- and nation-building processes. Norway's support was instrumental in facilitating the formation of WAPPDCA, including a grant to establish its secretariat and steering committee.¹³⁶

In Nepal, WAPPDCA and other women's organisations/networks played a crucial role in promoting women's

participation in the constitution-making process,¹³⁷ raising awareness around gender equality, and being a driving force behind new laws and regulations to protect women's rights.¹³⁸ A 2015 evaluation commissioned by Norad's Department for Evaluation noted that Norway contributed to systemic change on women rights and gender equality in Nepal after the signing of the CPA. It found that Norway did this by providing key political and civil society stakeholders with the necessary knowledge, tools and platforms. That evaluation also observed that Norway's support helped to strengthen cohesion among diverse women, aligning their priorities and boosting their voice locally and nationally.¹³⁹

While the CPA contained broad commitments to participation and inclusion, the gender dimensions of the interim and final constitutions were significant, indicating the influence of support for WPS.

THE EFFECTS OF NORWAY'S SUPPORT IN SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

The 2005 CPA between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) bears some similarity with Nepal's CPA in terms of taking a gender perspective. Although the provisions of Sudan's CPA were implemented in full (unlike in Nepal), by 2011 this had not resulted in any

positive impact on respect for women's political rights in the country.¹⁴⁰

¹³² In 2006–19, Norway's development aid to women's participation in peace amounted to USD2 million more than Denmark, Finland and Sweden's 'women and peace' aid combined. Data retrieved from OECD.

¹³³ Nepal Peace Trust Fund activities related to reintegrating internally displaced persons, constitutional development, elections, strengthening the law, and improving government institutions' coordination, monitoring and follow-up of the CPA's provisions.

¹³⁴ Data retrieved from UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Gateway.

¹³⁵ Asian Development Bank (2013.) *The Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Nepal*; Shrestha, AD & Perera, S (2014). *Review of Sankalpa – Women's Alliance for Peace, Justice and Democracy & Mid-Term Review of SANKALPA Project: Rights-based Advocacy to Empower Women for Political and Social Justice*.

¹³⁶ Agreement number NPL-06/021.

¹³⁷ Upreti, BR & Kolås, Å (2016). *Women in Nepal's Transition*. PRIO Policy Brief 11. Oslo: PRIO.

¹³⁸ Falch, Å (2010). *Women's Political Participation and Influence in Post-Conflict Burundi and Nepal*. PRIO Paper. Oslo: PRIO.

¹³⁹ Arbulú, A, S Sigdel & S Rana (2015). *Evaluation of Norway's support to women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation. Nepal case study report*. Norad Department for Evaluation. Report 2/2015.

¹⁴⁰ Reid, L (2021). 'Peace agreements and women's political rights following civil war'. *Journal of Peace Research*. 58(6):1224–1238.



Norway has been a major contributor of development and humanitarian aid to Sudan and South Sudan, providing NOK11.2 billion from 2000–19.¹⁴¹ Norway's funding to Sudan increased after the signing of the Machakos Protocol in 2002, the precursor to the CPA. In 2005, the Government of Sudan and SPLM/A signed the CPA, with Norway as a co-signatory. Norway played a key role in supporting the CPA politically, which influenced its support for South Sudan in the following decade or so.¹⁴²

Tracing the impact of Sudan's CPA in general, and of Norway's support specifically, on women's rights is complicated due to the secession of South Sudan in 2011 and the subsequent conflict there. However, there is evidence of women's growing influence. In South Sudan, the agreements that have attempted to move towards peace have a clear gender dimension. Despite little formal progress in Sudan on respect for women's political rights up to 2011, women were at the vanguard of the country's recent transition from authoritarianism¹⁴³ and, as of June 2021, its Constitutional Charter provides for 40% political representation of women,¹⁴⁴ although in practice the transitional process faces challenges on all fronts.

Overall, 12.7% of all of Norway's gender-marked aid

to Sudan and South Sudan¹⁴⁵ in 2000–19 went to promoting women's participation in peace efforts. The relative weight of gender-marked aid in the first five years (2.5% on average) contrasts sharply with the last five (2015–19), when it averaged 20.1%.¹⁴⁶

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NORWAY'S SUPPORT IN NEPAL, SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

As in Nepal, there was a spike in the proportion of aid spent on women's participation projects in Sudan and South Sudan one year after the CPA signing (23.3% in 2006). But while in Nepal this support remained at a similar level for one more year, in Sudan and South Sudan women's participation in peace funding halved a year later (to 11.35% in 2007).

Not only the relative weight of Norway's gender-marked aid but also its absolute funding levels separate the Nepali and (South) Sudanese cases. In 2007–09, after the signing of Nepal's CPA, Norway disbursed more than NOK90 million to promote women's participation in peace efforts in the country.¹⁴⁷ By contrast, almost NOK55 million was funnelled to efforts with the same goal in Sudan and South Sudan from 2006–08.¹⁴⁸

Another difference between Nepal and (South) Sudan is the funding channels used by Norway. In Sudan and

South Sudan, local NGOs in the post-CPA period only became Norwegian partners in 2008. Unlike in Nepal, this evaluation finds no obvious effort to fund coalitions around the Sudanese CPA and networks of women peacebuilders in the years immediately after its signing.

¹⁴¹ Sum of Norwegian funding to Sudan in 2000–19, and South Sudan in 2011–19.

¹⁴² See Bryld, E M, M Schomerus, E Tjønnelandet al. (2020) *Blind Sides and Soft Spots: An Evaluation of Norway's Aid Engagement in South Sudan*. Norad Department for Evaluation. Report 3/2020.

¹⁴³ UN News (21 March 2021). 'Face of Sudan's democratic transition "is female and it is young", says UN agency chief'.

¹⁴⁴ See e.g. Chatham House (2021). 'Advancing the role of women in Sudan's transition', event description. Available at: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/events/all/research-event/advancing-role-women-sudans-transition> Last accessed: 12 December 2021.

¹⁴⁵ The statistics cover Sudan only for 2000–10, and both Sudan and South Sudan from 2011–19. Source: Norad.

¹⁴⁶ For both Sudan and South Sudan. 10% on average for South Sudan only.

¹⁴⁷ Source: Norad.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.



COLOMBIA – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2016 PEACE AGREEMENT¹⁴⁹

Without the diplomatic dialogue with, and programmatic support from, Norway, informants to this evaluation agree that the Government of Colombia could not have implemented certain steps to advance the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement.

Norway's support to increase women's participation in **Colombia's** post-2016 peace implementation built on strong rhetoric and action during the 2012–16 negotiation period. There has been a gradual and significant increase in women's participation in Colombia's peace efforts over the years, and Norway has contributed significantly to this. Overall, 61.1% of Norway's gender-marked aid to Colombia in 2000–19 went to promoting women's participation in peace efforts. Five years before the start of the public, formal negotiations between the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP in 2012, this share already averaged 41.1%. In the three years after the signing of the peace agreement (2017–19), Norway's support to women's participation in peace efforts averaged 75% of all gender-marked aid to Colombia.

Norway's contribution to the WPS agenda in Colombia has been sustained and diversified, and the Sub-

Commission for Gender Issues set up during the peace negotiations, strongly influenced by Norway, was crucial in defining the gender provisions in the final Peace Agreement. In fact, many people see that agreement as a tool to promote gender equality in general Colombian society.

In the Colombian political sphere, there is a trend of promoting legislative bills to create parity between women and men. In local communities, women now have more central positions than they did before 2016. Despite ongoing scepticism in large segments of Colombian society, research informants talked about political parties' tendencies to openly promote a gender equality agenda.

Norway's input to sustainable peace in Colombia has involved strengthening civil society. Norway pushes this agenda at a high level, and Norwegian officials have repeatedly expressed Norway's commitment to a peaceful Colombia, and the importance of CSOs and social movements in achieving this. To implement the WPS agenda as part of the Peace Agreement, Norway has been an important contributor to the MPTF, has strengthened its partnership with UN Women, and has partnered with Colombian civil society to strengthen the role of women in peacebuilding.

The *Mujeres Constructoras de Paz* programme was audacious in supporting local peace processes in areas as remote as south Cauca. A Gender Committee was created (still in existence in mid 2021), which foregrounded women's rights in community councils, including in their implementation of the Peace Agreement and on issues relating to gender-based violence.

The UN Verification Mission has confirmed that women's participation in the implementation of Colombia's Peace Agreement was active and very strong between 2018 and early 2019. Various bodies and organisations heard women's statements, making women's presence felt in the architecture created for implementing the peace agreement.

While there is increased acknowledgment of the importance of gender equality in Colombia, and an apparent gradual positive trend towards including women in national, regional and local decision-making,

¹⁴⁹ For an assessment of Norway's facilitation role during the peace negotiations leading to the 2016 Peace Agreement, see Fabra-Mata, J & Wilhelmsen, A (2018), especially section 4.2 'Focus area: Gender approach and women's participation', pp. 26–31.



increased violence and insecurity in the country, and the Covid-19 pandemic, have silenced many women's voices. Women may continue to follow peacebuilding processes, but with increasing caution. In addition, there is a risk that peace itself may cause setbacks to gender inclusion. During the conflict, women had to take up men's traditional roles as men were away fighting. For some, peace may entail a return to traditional gender roles. The FARC-EP converting into the political party Comunes has revealed a tendency to direct political power to men, with women once again being marginalised.

Women's participation in peace efforts: key findings

- Sustained and multifaceted support to civil society appears to be a defining feature of Norwegian efforts to promote women's participation in peace efforts and societal change – in Colombia and elsewhere. Strengthening networks and their capacities for peace- and coalition-building was more of a focus in the Colombian and Nepali peace processes than in Sudan and South Sudan.
- Firstly as a facilitator of the peace negotiations in

Colombia, and later as a guarantor country to the implementation of the Peace Agreement, Norway has contributed to strengthening women's and men's rights in the country, and largely meeting their needs and priorities.

- Norway has acted faithfully as a guarantor country to the Peace Agreement implementation in Colombia. It has developed strategies to support women's participation in implementation processes, combining overseeing the function of bodies and institutions established by the Peace Agreement, strengthening WPS and gender capacity and competence among the implementing parties, supporting the MDTF and providing direct support to CSOs.



Organisational knowledge and learning



PHOTO: DEBBIE HILL/UPI/SHUTTERSTOCK



Women, peace and security plans informed by knowledge

Via Norad, the MFA commissioned a review of Norway's 2011–13 NAP in 2013.¹⁵⁰ This review made several findings and recommendations related to evidence and learning. Several efforts were made to address some of these findings and recommendations in Norway's 2015–18 NAP.

Norway's main approach for incorporating lessons in preparation for the 2019–22 NAP appears to have been holding regular and frequent meetings and consultations with various internal and external stakeholders. The 2019–2022 NAP built on written input and previous lessons, such as by introducing a comprehensive results framework that sought to address some recommendations from the 2013 review and lessons learned from the implementation of the 2015–18 NAP.

National action plans as a platform to facilitate knowledge generation – the results framework

Norway's WPS results framework was developed by the MFA with technical assistance from Norad. Individuals involved in the process interviewed for this evaluation described it as a lengthy but productive process, which included extensive discussions about how to define outcomes and the role of indicators. A senior Norad official interviewed for this evaluation considered the framework's attempts to monitor interventions across several fields – aid, diplomacy and security – and through a range of channels and different levels, including the global level, as an innovation. While this evaluation has not been able to undertake a comprehensive global comparison, the Norwegian framework is certainly the most substantial one among Nordic countries.

Results frameworks are important tools for learning, something that is explicitly recognised in Norway's WPS NAPs.¹⁵¹ Whether such learning occurs is determined by both internal and external factors, and is also contingent on the quality of the results framework. The evaluation team expected the WPS results framework

to meet two conditions to serve as an effective tool for reflection on progress and adjustments: 1) coherence, both horizontal (correspondence between expected results and indicators) and vertical (between levels in the results chain); and 2) aggregation of indicators.

This evaluation finds the women's participation in peace change pathway in Norway's 2019–22 NAP coherent in its articulation of links between levels of results. The careful design of the results framework and its 'measuring machinery' (defining roles, describing tools and sources, frequencies, etc.) is commendable. However, it still has some shortcomings (see box 2).

¹⁵⁰ See: Scanteam (n.d.) and a memo on recommendations from this review from Norad to MFA's Section for UN policy dated 24 April 2014.

¹⁵¹ See e.g. Government of Norway (2019b). *Guidelines*.



Box 2. Deficiencies in the 2019–22 NAP results framework in relation to women's participation in peace efforts

- **Impact level:** The results framework merged two distinctive results into one result formulation: women's participation in peace increased and women's and men's rights strengthened. This two-dimensionality was already present in the 2015–19 NAP and constitutes a deviation from good practice in formulating a result.
- **Logical connections:** There is a weak link between indicators 1.1.1 d)/1.2.1 b) relating to the percentage of Norwegian peace and reconciliation funds earmarked 'women's rights and gender equality' and the corresponding output ("Norway helps to ensure that parties to negotiations and mediators have sufficient capacity to integrate the gender perspective"). The funding stream does not target parties to negotiations and mediators exclusively, and an increase/decrease in the funding stream would not necessarily result in an increased/decreased capacity of negotiators and mediators.
- **Indicators:** The focus of Indicator 3 ("Percentage of members of Norwegian facilitation teams who have been given training or have further developed their competence in relation to WPS during the year") appears to be competence development opportunities (what has been done) yet it drags with it the actual achievement following such opportunities.
- **Targets:** Targets are not included in the 2019–22 NAP results framework, only in the accompanying guidelines.

One significant issue remains unsolved – the reporting on results from support provided to CSOs. As covered in previous chapters from different perspectives, there is little question about the objective value of supporting civil society groups promoting women's participation in peace processes, and Norway cultivates such partnerships. But the WPS results framework is not geared towards capturing the results from those efforts. Two twin indicators (1.1.2a and 2.1.1 b)/2.2.1.b) aim to do that but fall short – the indicator's information value is low as it is easy to report a high degree of achievement; it is silent on results achieved through that support. This makes it hard to apply the WPS results framework in the 2019–22 NAP to projects and programmes implemented by CSOs.

Norad has developed its own set of lower-level outputs under relevant indicators "in order to concretise and make it easier for partners to see where their contributions fit into the overall NAP framework, and thus ease reporting on the NAP".¹⁵² Norad approaches

¹⁵² Written comment provided by Norad official, August 2021.

partners who have substantial gender-marked projects and who work in conflict-affected countries to report on these lower-level outputs. But obtaining information in this way is considered time-consuming by those responsible in Norad, not least because it is based on reporting from organisations outside Norad's ordinary reporting cycle.

Learning from practice

As outlined in Chapter 6, the annual gatherings of Norwegian embassies in WPS priority countries are valuable platforms for sharing information and learning. This is a worth initiative, considering the multiplicity of actors within the Norwegian administration who are directly or indirectly linked to the WPS portfolio, and the lack of formalised spaces for interaction. Some evaluation informants called for the systematisation of learning from these exchanges and a follow-up system to enable learning to solidify and trickle down to practice.

Representatives from CSOs reported that they found the presentation of annual reports in the 1325 cooperation body from 2016 onwards a useful entry point, both for learning about and providing feedback on NAP implementation.

This evaluation does not find evidence that monitoring and reporting linked to indicators in the WPS results framework is systematically used in decision-making processes. In interviews, informants could only recall one concrete example of the reporting producing reactions from their seniors, leading to clear instructions that improvement was needed. This was when the data collection for the 2018 baseline revealed that the percentage of women who participated in Norwegian delegations was unexpectedly low at 34%. At the unit level, however, staff reported discussion about performance in relation to the indicators and how to address any unmet targets. This was particularly the case in MFA's Section for Peace and Reconciliation – indicators on this theme are also particularly comprehensive.

At the level of specific initiatives, this evaluation finds proof of Norwegian efforts to facilitate learning and to use lessons from implementation. In Afghanistan, learning was based on external evaluations of the UN Women country programmes that Norway diligently followed up. In Colombia, a recognition of an inadequate programme design spurred UN Women to innovate, and the new follow-up tools and systems were found to be useful for a new WPS programme. Within the NWM, learning was mostly informal, but shared across the membership.

Key findings

- Norway has an appetite for knowledge to inform its efforts to promote women's participation in peace. This takes the form of commissioning research and reviews of past and current efforts, among other activities.
- Norway demonstrates a willingness to follow up on specific findings from some learning exercises (e.g. evaluations and reviews). There is, however, a need for systematised learning around existing knowledge exchange platforms (i.e. annual meetings).
- This evaluation does not find evidence that the WPS results framework is used to its full learning potential.



Conclusions and recommendations



PHOTO: UN PHOTO/HEBA NAJI



Conclusions

IMPACT

Norway's promotion of women's participation in peace efforts has led to positive results in conflict-affected areas. This is true of both including a gender perspective in peace agreements, and strengthening women's (and men's) rights and meeting their needs and priorities.

Norway is a global leader in norm setting and normative adherence. It plays a symbolic 'driver' role for WPS, particularly in relation to peace efforts. Examples include forming one of the first networks of women mediators, and pushing for female appointments and gender parity in peace mediation and facilitation teams.

Norway's NAPs have arguably been more successful as frameworks for political mobilisation around the WPS agenda than as tools for managing development assistance. These NAPs have made the Norwegian administration double down on WPS. Each NAP has to some extent built on its predecessor and, cumulatively, these plans have raised awareness and competence relating to different aspects of the WPS agenda. They have also helped to solidify understanding and commitments relating to the WPS agenda within the

Norwegian administration.

EFFECTIVENESS AND COHERENCE

Despite these helpful roles and impacts, this evaluation finds that Norway's WPS initiatives are neither well defined nor strategically combined. Norway's NAPs have not been as successful as coordination and strategic planning tools for development aid. A theory of change approach to women's participation in peace efforts underpins the 2019–22 NAP, which comes with a results framework. Yet these are not paired with a strategy on how best to allocate resources and coordinate WPS efforts to achieve the expected results. The usefulness of a results framework lies in changing the course of action as interventions progress, based on monitoring and learning. This calls for cycles of reflection, planning and management – the very weaknesses in Norway's current WPS approach.

The concept of WPS priority countries as it has been implemented so far by Norway has very limited value as a tool to foster an integrated approach. Being a WPS priority country does not guarantee additional Norwegian financial or technical support. The latter is in part explained by limited staff numbers and competing priorities. There is limited overlap between the countries listed as Norway's development partners

and its WPS priority countries. Norway funds significant WPS activity in some non-WPS priority countries, much of which is not reported in WPS annual reports.

Nothing indicates that a gender perspective in peace processes facilitated by Norway has been strengthened by the country being on the WPS priority list. Norwegian direct support to secure women's meaningful participation in a peace process has not been determined by whether the country is on this list. Norwegian diplomatic peace efforts in a country tend to translate into that country joining the WPS priority list. But the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, which is primarily responsible for Norwegian peace facilitation efforts in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), has its own WPS strategy that applies to all processes in which the section is involved. The section also has specific strategies for its engagements, irrespective of a country's status in Norway's WPS priority list.

Over the years, Norway has sharpened its women's participation focus, gradually increasing its emphasis on peace processes (pre-negotiations stages, formal talks and the implementation of peace agreements). In line with this, a neater division of labour has emerged between WPS NAPs and gender equality NAPs.



This evaluation finds this a logical evolution that can enable transformative change on the ground when synergies are realised, especially with geographic concentration and long-term horizons. Meaningful participation in peace processes and subsequent engagement with formal institutions and actors (the realm of the WPS NAP) is intrinsically linked to the long-term processes of transforming informal institutions and harmful social norms.

Civil society strengthening is a critical factor in including gender references in peace agreements. This was the case in Colombia, where Norway partnered with civil society before, during and after the signing of the 2016 peace agreement.

But civil society strengthening does not happen overnight. It requires long-term efforts and support from partners like Norway, sometimes in ‘capacity building’ (around peace processes, but also organisational capacity), and often facilitating networking and connectivity between grassroots organisations and local, regional and national institutions.

Women in the front line advocating for change on the ground in conflict-affected countries are exposed to multiple risks. Norway has not systematically required

WPS implementers to produce either comprehensive risk assessments that are sensitive to these risks or action plans to avoid or mitigate them. Furthermore, there is a response gap in how to handle these risks as part of WPS partnerships.

KNOWLEDGE AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Norway does seek and use knowledge in its WPS interventions to promote women’s participation in peace efforts, such as by commissioning research and evaluations and following up on some findings. The evolution of its NAPs also demonstrates an increase in, and application of, organisational learning over time.

Nevertheless, Norway does not systemise learning around existing knowledge exchange initiatives, and does not systematically use monitoring and reporting around indicators in the WPS results framework in its decision-making.

Recommendations

Based on its conclusions, this evaluation makes the following recommendations:

1. **Phase out the WPS priority country list concept and focus on countries where Norway has already**

committed support. The small gains of having a WPS priority country list in terms of profiling do not offset its clear and severe limitations in concentrating efforts over time, galvanising the Norwegian administration and acting as a catalyst for change. This evaluation recommends building on Norway’s existing list of development partner countries, strengthening WPS commitments to those countries and acknowledging that peace and development do not follow linear trajectories – today’s development partner countries can become tomorrow’s conflict-affected countries. In view of this, Norway’s WPS efforts could be better served by being rooted in longstanding relationships and rich contextual understanding like those gained from working in, and with, partner countries over time.

All conflict-affected countries in Norway’s list of development partner countries should automatically become WPS priority focus areas. This will ensure greater policy alignment and development aid concentration. Furthermore, it will facilitate a more efficient use of existing competence within the Norwegian administration system – and the consolidation of expertise.



Discontinuing the WPS priority country list would not negatively affect peace efforts led by the MFA's Section for Peace and Reconciliation in other countries, which could continue to prioritise WPS based on section strategies. Neither would it affect Norway's humanitarian efforts, which are not geographically constrained by pre-existing country lists.

2. **Adopt a strategic WPS portfolio approach to improve coordination and coherence, and enhance the likelihood of achieving sustainable results.**

Building on the seeds planted by its four WPS NAPs, Norway should aim to weave together its WPS efforts by:

- a. Identifying a sound way of measuring financial commitments to WPS, especially in relation to women's participation in peace. This will not only help Norway to report on (progress towards) results more accurately, but also to plan strategically to maximise its potential to achieve results.
- b. Carrying out periodic and systematic planning processes around country portfolios, revisiting theories of change in formalised information

exchanges. Sufficient resources should be set aside for these exchanges, which should involve all stakeholders who have relevant WPS responsibility, and consider all partners who receive support from Norway through trust funds and multilateral organisations. Such processes should precede specific interventions and new partnerships, and become reference points for them.

- c. Continuing to hold annual gatherings, bringing together those working on the WPS agenda and extending this practice to all conflict-affected countries in Norway's list of development partner countries (see recommendation 1), and inviting embassies from other relevant countries (e.g. those involved with conflicts and processes followed by the Section for Peace and Reconciliation). With the right timing, these meetings should facilitate knowledge sharing and inform strategic planning.
- d. Revising the results framework in the WPS NAP to make it fit for monitoring, strategic planning and systematic learning. This includes revisiting the women's participation in peace change pathway underlying the results framework and making

room for indicators on funding support funnelled through civil society organisations (CSOs).

- e. Matching ambitions and expectations with resources. This is especially true in the case of the Special Envoy position – which covers a wide range of critical tasks at many levels – and Norad.

3. **Protect and safeguard women human rights defenders.**

This calls for candid reflection on risk tolerance and protection capabilities, and taking into account the current mandates and delegation of responsibilities between the MFA in Oslo, Norwegian embassies and Norad. Meanwhile, existing practice can be improved by:

- a. Requesting assessments in funding applications to consider these risks from a multifaceted perspective (e.g. mental health and well-being, digital risks, physical risks, reputational risks), evaluating applications based on the quality of these assessments.
- b. Welcoming the inclusion of earmarked budget lines in funding applications to cover the costs of risk assessments and mitigation measures.



- c. Making sure that risk assessment updates are always on the agenda for periodic meetings with grantees.
- d. Taking stock of, and distilling, lessons from positive practices and experiences within the Norwegian administration that support women peacebuilders.



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Annex 1



PHOTO: JANE HAHN/THE NEW YORK TIMES



Evaluation of Norwegian efforts for women, peace and security terms of reference

1. Background

UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security (WPS) was groundbreaking in bringing to the fore women's roles and perspectives in conflict resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. It's structured around four pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery. Since the passage of UNSCR 1325 nine more UN Security Council resolutions on WPS have followed, two of them adopted in 2019¹⁵³. The WPS agenda has become firmly entrenched on the international agenda as a normative issue and part of the formal UN discourse on security.

Over the last decades Norway has been engaged

in several peace processes as a facilitator between parties to the conflict. Norway is committed to working towards inclusive peace processes, where more women participate at all levels of peace and reconciliation efforts and parties to the conflict¹⁵⁴ know how to integrate the gender perspective into their work.¹⁵⁵

Norway has been a strong proponent of the WPS agenda since its inception and is committed to continuing this focus as a member of the UN Security Council (2021–2022).¹⁵⁶ Civil society organisations, both in Norway and globally played a key role, including the civil society in initiating and securing the adoption of UNSCR 1325 by the Security Council. Norway was among the first countries to adopt a National Action Plan (NAP) in support of UNSCR 1325, in 2006, and it is now implementing its fourth one (2019 – 2022).

Several ministries¹⁵⁷ are involved in the development and implementation of Norway's WPS NAPs. Policies and implementation are thus cross-sectoral, concerning the domestic, international and partner-country levels. The Norwegian effort to promote the WPS agenda draws on a broad range of diplomatic, political and financial tools, at the local, national, regional and global levels, and with various partners, mainly through the following self-identified five instruments:¹⁵⁸

- a. Normative work in multilateral fora
- b. Political dialogue with governments in different countries
- c. Financial support, with a certain earmarking for WPS. A gender perspective is mandatory to include in all efforts in fragile countries and countries affected by armed conflict
- d. Civil society
- e. Support and use of academic research to secure a knowledge/evidence-based approach.

¹⁵³ 1325 (2000); 1820 (2009); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2010); 1960 (2011); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013); 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019).

¹⁵⁴ Government of Norway. *Norway's engagement in peace processes since 1993*. Article. Last updated: 02/12/2019. Last visited: 27/10/2020.

¹⁵⁵ Government of Norway. *Women's participation in peace processes*. Article. Last updated: 02/12/2019. Last visited: 27/10/2020.

¹⁵⁶ Government of Norway. *The Security Council: Norway's priorities*. Article. Last updated: 10/09/2020. Last visited: 21/09/2020.

¹⁵⁷ Five ministers are co-signatories of the Norwegian Government's Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019 – 2022: the Minister of Children and Equality, the Minister of International Development, Minister of Justice, Public Security and Immigration, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

¹⁵⁸ Government of Norway. *Guidelines to the Foreign Service's Work on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2022)*, p.10.

The current NAP includes a results framework in which the impact level is formulated as follows: *Women's participation in peace and security efforts has increased, and women's and men's rights, needs and participation are strengthened in areas affected by armed conflict.* Norwegian efforts are structured around four areas:

- Peace and reconciliation processes
- The implementation of peace agreements
- Operations and missions
- Humanitarian efforts.

There are now ten priority countries for the Norwegian action plan for WPS 2019 - 2022. In the previous action plan (2015-18) the following six countries were prioritized: *Afghanistan, Colombia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine and South Sudan. The Philippines, Syria and Mali* were included in the fourth action plan. Mozambique was added to the WPS priority list after the finalization of the fourth action plan, following developments in the country. The Norwegian delegation to the African Union is also included as a WPS priority.

Existing evidence from the WPS portfolio

A case study on Norway's advocacy work on WPS from 2016¹⁵⁹ found that Norway utilises a variety of different approaches, channels and tactics, and is focused on a variety of targets. The study showed that Norway's advocacy efforts are built on a sound evidence base, and that Norway has contributed to important achievements in the area of WPS, not least by elevation of WPS within the UN. However, the case study pointed out that the potential for actual improvements in the lives of marginalized groups, including women, is yet to be realised. The study also underscored how difficult it is to obtain a complete overview of what constitutes the WPS portfolio.

Funding supporting WPS is covered by different budget chapters and administered by different parts of the Norwegian administration within and outside of the development aid budget. There are several chapters in the development aid budget of relevance for the WPS agenda. Norway also supports several multilateral partners through core funding and unearmarked grants, which indirectly contribute to its WPS priorities. In its WPS Annual Report 2019, Norway reports an increase in its bilateral assistance to countries affected by war and conflict that is marked 'women's rights and gender equality': from 40% (NOK 3 819 million) in 2018 to

41% (NOK 4 323 million) in 2019.¹⁶⁰

An evaluation of support to women's rights and gender equality from 2015¹⁶¹ have some findings likely relevant for this evaluation. These included, inter alia, the need for more strategic use of "the gender aid" in areas where Norway has a comparative advantage and can play a catalytic role, and the need to strengthen the capacity and thematic competence in the Norwegian aid administration.

The need for training and awareness-raising on gender issues in general and on the women, peace and security agenda specifically also emerged from a Norad-commissioned review of Norway's WPS NAP 2011-13. The review also found recognizable Norwegian footprints at the normative and multilateral level, but those traces were less visible at local and grassroots level. It recommended the new NAP to be more focused on support to and guidance on actual implementation, based on

¹⁵⁹ Evaluation Department at Norad (2016). Report 5/2016 Annex 5: *Case Study on Norway's Engagement in Women, Peace and Security*

¹⁶⁰ Government of Norway (2020). *Implementing Norway's National Action Plan 2019-2022 Women, peace and security. Annual report 2019, p.25.*

¹⁶¹ Evaluation Department at Norad (2015).

experience and good practice. It also suggested a narrower scope in order to achieve a more focused, strategic and coherent effort, and stronger linkages between the normative effort at the UN level and elsewhere and concrete efforts to create results on the ground.

Based on Norway's priority of the WPS agenda over such a long period, the Evaluation Department is planning to conduct an evaluation examining Norwegian aid support to the WPS agenda. There has been no previous thematic evaluation of Norwegian aid to the WPS agenda since its inception.

2. Overall purpose and users of the evaluation

The main purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effects of Norwegian efforts for women, peace and security supported with development aid funds, considering whether those efforts have been internally and externally coherent and effective and how they have evolved over time.

The evaluation findings should be relevant for the implementation of Norway's current National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2022) as well as inform the development of the next action plan.

Intended users of the evaluation include public officials and policy makers in the MFA, at embassies in partner countries and other diplomatic missions, as well as Norad and the Norwegian Parliament, NGOs and the general public. The evaluation might also be of interest for other OECD DAC countries and aid recipient countries with WPS NAPs, the UN and regional organisations, civil society organisations and others active in WPS agenda setting, policy implementation and on-the-ground programming.

3. Objective and scope of the evaluation

The main objectives of this evaluation are as follows:

- Document and analyse Norwegian efforts to promote the women, peace and security agenda.
- Assess whether Norwegian support to the women, peace and security agenda has contributed, or is likely to contribute to achieving positive change in women's participation and women's and men's lives in areas affected by armed conflict.
- Assess how coherent Norwegian women, peace and security efforts are.

- Examine to what extent Norway harvests and utilises knowledge in shaping and implementing its WPS actions.
- Formulate lessons and recommendations for Norway.

The evaluation will consider Norwegian efforts for women, peace and security supported with Norwegian aid funds since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 (October 2000) up to the end of the year 2020. Its scope will be limited to the participation of women at decision-making levels in peace processes and negotiations, and in peacebuilding more generally. This corresponds with the 'Peace and reconciliation processes' and 'Implementation of peace agreements' focus areas in Norway's 2019 - 2022 action plan. The other two focus areas in the current NAP (international operations and humanitarian efforts) are thus outside the scope of the evaluation. The evaluation will consider all

working modalities described in the Guidelines to the Foreign Service's Work on Women, Peace and Security 2019 - 2022. The evaluation will focus on the global, regional and partner country level and how these are interconnected.

4. Evaluation questions

The following questions shall guide the evaluation:

Coherence:

- EQ1: To what extent (and eventually how) have Norway's WPS efforts been coordinated with those of other actors (e.g. other OECD_DAC countries, multi-lateral organisations, etc.)?
- EQ2: To what extent has Norway's engagement been consistent with policy priorities at country level and local ownership?
- EQ3: To what degree (and eventually how) are Norway's WPS efforts in the normative, policy and programmatic realms aligned, coordinated and harmonised?
- EQ4: To what extent did other Norwegian engagements have a bearing on Norway's WPS efforts at country level?

Effectiveness:

- EQ5: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway's WPS efforts at country level been effective?

- EQ6: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway's WPS efforts at global (normative) level been effective?

Impact:

- EQ7: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway contributed to increasing women's participation in peace work?
- EQ8: To what extent (and eventually how) has Norway contributed to strengthening women's and men's rights and meet their needs and priorities in areas affected by armed conflict?
- EQ9: How has the WPS agenda impacted on the Norwegian aid administration, if at all?
- Knowledge and organisational learning:
- EQ10: To what extent did Norway demonstrate learning, from practice, analyses and external knowledge, and through which means did this learning take place?

5. Approach and methodology

The evaluation questions will be responded to in an evaluation report that builds on the following elements:

A portfolio analysis of Norway's financial contribution to the WPS agenda. The main objective of the portfolio analysis is to map the total amount of and trends in Norwegian aid disbursements to the WPS agenda in the period 2000 – 2020. This analysis will be instrumental in the decision-making process around the country case selection, key informants' identification and shaping of specific questions for the NAP analysis.

A Norway's WPS National Action Plans analysis (hereinafter "NAP analysis"). This desk review will analyse how Norwegian action plans have evolved over time and incorporated best evidence available at the time. It will also situate each NAP in relation to WPS action plans by other countries. Together with the different action plans, the NAP analysis will consider guiding documents, reports and other relevant documentation. The consultants are expected

to draw methodological inspiration from relevant country-specific and cross-country studies.¹⁶²

- A cross-case analysis of two country case studies and a global case study. The portfolio analysis will be key in country case study selection, considering budget size, partnerships and funding sources. The sample criteria will also include:
 - Internal and external context (e.g. existence/absence of a national NAP; existence/absence of Norwegian country-specific strategies; signing of peace agreements in the evaluation period; phases in a peace effort; etc.)
 - Time perspective i.e. for how long Norway has supported peace efforts in the country.
 - Interest among main intended users, as a precondition for use (utilisation focus).

A preliminary inspection of the universe of cases pending the portfolio analysis leaves Afghanistan, Colombia, the Philippines and South Sudan as possible cases. The selected cases will necessarily be distinctive yet share some common characteristics

(condition, mechanism or outcome) enabling cross-case comparison.

The global case study would focus on how Norway has worked to promote women's participation in peace initiatives that are not country specific and the results of such efforts. It is important that the case speaks to the variety of methods Norway can employ, its significance (financial or reputational resources allocated to it) in Norway's WPS agenda, and its potential to relate to in-country experiences. An initial screening of documents and consultations points to the Nordic Women Mediators (NWM) as a suitable case. Launched in 2015, the NWM works to strengthen women's participation in peace processes at all levels¹⁶³ It is part of a Global Alliance of Regional Networks of Women Mediators, a consultative process supported by Norway since 2017.¹⁶⁴ The NWM has been consistently portrayed in all Norwegian WPS NAP annual implementation reports since its establishment. The final decision, however, will be made upon completion of the portfolio analysis.

These evaluation components have been chosen to match specific evaluation questions and feed into the overall analytical framework (macro-framework) that will guide the process of synthesising evidence.

Data collection methods (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, etc.) will be selected to meet the specific objectives of each evaluation component, complementing each other and enabling between-methods triangulation.

The evaluation will actively seek input and promote participation of women in conflict-affected countries applying intersectional lenses, considering their place of residence (urban-rural divide) and social categories such as ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and age. All evaluation deliverables will be shared with key stakeholders and made publicly available at Norad's website.

¹⁶² For example, Hamilton, C., N. Naam and L. J. Shepherd (2020). *Twenty Years of Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans: Analysis and Lessons Learned*. The University of Sydney; Trojanowska, B., K. Lee-Koo and L. Johnson (2018). *National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus*. Monash University; Miller, B. M. Pournik, and A. Swaine (2014). *Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation*. The George Washington University.

¹⁶³ Noref. Nordic Women Mediators. <https://noref.no/Work-areas/Gender-and-inclusivity/Nordic-Women-Mediators> Last access: 24.09.2020.

¹⁶⁴ Government of Norway. Implementing Norway's National Action Plan 2015-2018 on Women, Peace and Security. Annual Report 2018. P. 6

There are three formal feedback loops embedded in the evaluation design, two of them early in the process: (1) after completion of the portfolio analysis; and (2) after completion of the NAP analysis. These will mark reflection and decision points, providing insights of potential value to tweak the macro-framework, decide on case studies and unveil issues of evaluative interest not previously thought of. The final formal feedback loop (3) will occur at the start of the synthesis phase, in revising the evidence gathered through case studies against the macro-evaluation framework and overall evaluation questions. The Evaluation Department will make room for supplementary (and limited) data collection if confronted with important evidence gaps, significant oversights or divergent results.

All parts of the evaluation shall adhere to recognised evaluation principles and the OECD DAC's quality standards for development evaluation in addition to their guidelines for evaluations in settings of conflict and fragility, as well as relevant guidelines from the Evaluation Department. The evaluation shall be utilization-focused, laying out a process that secures engagement of the primary intended users and increases the likelihood of the findings being used.

6. Organisation of the evaluation

The Evaluation Department in Norad is responsible for the overall management of the evaluation. In addition to managing the evaluation, the Evaluation Department is also responsible for the development of the overall evaluation framework. Finally, the Evaluation Department will synthesise the evidence stemming from the various parts of the evaluation, to answer the evaluation questions. The evaluation will include two workshops, one with the external teams who have been involved in producing the evaluation deliverables, and another one with key stakeholders before the final report is completed. This phase might include supplementary methods to fill unanticipated methodological gaps or investigate further preliminary findings, if necessary.

External experts will be sought and be responsible for carrying out the key evaluation deliveries i.e. the portfolio analysis, the NAP analysis and case-specific assessments. The consultants/teams are expected to propose an outline of a methodological approach that optimizes the possibility of generating high-quality evidence. The proposed outline will be in accordance with the delivery-specific terms of reference and predefined guidelines from the Evaluation Department.



Acronyms and abbreviations

CMI	Chr. Michelsen Institute	NHRF	The Norwegian Human Rights Fund
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement	NIBR	Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research
CSO	Civil society organisation	NIS	Nordic International Support Foundation
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	NUPI	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
FARC-EP	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army)	NWM	Nordic Women Mediators network
EQ	Evaluation question	NWM-N	Norwegian branch of the Nordic Women Mediators network
FOKUS	Forum for Kvinner og Utviklingsspørsmål (Forum for Women and Development)	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
FOS	Fondo para la Sociedad Civil Colombiana por la Paz, los Derechos Humanos y la Democracia (Fund for Cooperation with Colombian Civil Society)	OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	PRIO	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank	SPLM/A	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNDP UN	Development Programme
ISS	Institute for Security Studies	UNFPA	UN Population Fund
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	UNIFEM	UN Development Fund for Women (predecessor to UN Women)
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund	UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
NAP	(Norwegian Women, Peace and Security) National Action Plan	UN Women	UN Organization for Women's Rights and Gender Equality
NCG	Nordic Consulting Group	WAPPDCA	Women's Alliance for Power, Peace, Democracy and the Constituent Assembly (Nepal)
NDF	National Democratic Front of the Philippines	WILPF	Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
NGO	Non-governmental organisation	WPS	Women, peace and security



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