

REPORT ON UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 1325
AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION
IN KYRGYZSTAN



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UN Women Country Office in Kyrgyzstan

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ACRONYMS

| | |
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| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| GEWE | Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment |
| GESI | Gender-Sensitive and Socially Inclusive (approach) |
| HRBA | Human Rights-Based Approach |
| LNOB | Leave No One Behind |
| LSG | Local Self-Government |
| NAP | National Action Plan (on 1325) |
| PVE | Preventing Violent Extremism |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| UNCT | United Nations Country Team |
| UNSCR | UN Security Council Resolution |
| WPS | Women, Peace and Security |
| 7PAP | Seven-Point Action Plan (on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding) |

INTRODUCTION

Peace and conflict affect people differently, depending on their social status, gender, age, disability and other social markers, as well as the economic, physical, and social opportunities available to them. When it comes to understanding the context, gender is one of the factors to consider when explaining the political, socio-economic, and cultural dimensions of the context. Researchers, practitioners, and decision-makers recognize the important role of women's involvement in achieving lasting peace and the need to ensure adequate response to women's priorities and protection needs. Yet, generally women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes and have limited access and space for meaningful engagement in decision making. As a response, international organizations, national governments, and civil society around the world jointly put the efforts to establish what is known today as Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda.

In 2000, the United Nations Security Council passed landmark Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325 on WPS).¹ This resolution has helped create greater awareness of the relevance of gender to the field of peace and security and has placed women's rights firmly on the peacebuilding agenda. The document addresses how girls and women are impacted by conflict and war and recognizes the equal and important role that they play in forging a lasting peace. Since the adoption of the resolution, many countries have adopted National Action Plans (NAP) to implement UNSCR 1325 and development actors have continued advocating for a gender perspective in peacebuilding through various programmes.

In 2010, during the 10-year commemoration of the UNSCR 1325, the UN Secretary-General was requested to develop a report on women's participation in peacebuilding. PBSO worked with UNIFEM to develop the report and the Seven-Point Action Plan (7PAP) on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding.² UN system committed to improving its accountability to women and girls by adopting 7PAP. This detailed blueprint includes concrete "commitments" relating to (1) conflict resolution, (2) post-conflict planning, (3) peacebuilding funding, (4) civilian capacity, (5) governance, (6) the rule of law, and (7) economic recovery.

Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, Kyrgyzstan has developed three NAPs on UNSCR 1325: NAP 2012-2014 (extended to 2015) and NAP 2016-2017 were implemented and NAP 2018-2020 is being

implemented now. The Government plans to develop another new NAP for 2021-2023.

This report aims to produce an analysis of UNSCR 1325 and its implementation in Kyrgyzstan. More specifically, the paper provides an overview of all NAPs 1325 in Kyrgyzstan, consolidates analysis on the progress made and gaps identified, and summarizes recommendations to inform the next NAP on UNSCR 1325 in Kyrgyzstan. The analysis is mainly made based on available monitoring reports on NAP implementation and supported by other available resources and practices around the WPS agenda.

1 Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement (2000). *UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/#resolution>

2 United Nations (2010). Report of the Secretary-General: Women's participation in peacebuilding. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/466

1. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS

UN strategic results framework on WPS

In 2010, the Secretary-General proposed a strategic framework to guide the UN's implementation of the resolution over a period of ten years. This UN Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security: 2011-2020³ provides a joint vision for actions to advance implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions on WPS. In general, UN entities are responsible to take concrete actions under the main four goal areas to support NAP localization efforts in the Member States.

- **Prevention:** Prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.
- **Participation:** Women participate equally with men and gender equality is promoted in peace and security decision-making processes at national, local, regional, and international levels.
- **Protection:** Women's and girls' rights are protected and promoted in conflict-affected situations.
- **Relief and Recovery:** Women's and girls' specific relief needs are met and women's capacities to act as agents in relief and recovery are reinforced in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Each goal or pillar has its' set of outcomes, outputs, targets – assigned to recommended lead UN entity. Also, this results framework has a set of indicators per each goal and member States are encouraged to take into account indicators to track the progress on implementing NAP 1325.

In principle and if a new UN strategic results framework on WPS is developed for the next years after 2020, it is highly advisable to use this framework as a guide on key priorities for UNCT in Kyrgyzstan on the WPS agenda and key concrete actions by lead UN entities. UNCT should rely on this guidance document to encourage national state partners in Kyrgyzstan to take into account WPS priorities across all phases of NAP activity – designing, implementing, monitoring, and reporting.

³ UN Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security: 2011-2020 (2010). Available at: https://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/taskforces/wps/Strategic_Framework_2011-2020.pdf

Sustainable Development Goals

Global SDGs have significant importance to the WPS agenda. Both SDG 5 (“Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls”) and SDG 16 (“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”) connect to issues of NAP 1325. Formulations of these SDGs and their targets do not necessarily reflect WPS specific language, however, the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and the principle of leaving no one behind are at the core of seeing women and girls and issues of peace and security through the human rights paradigm.

NAP 1325 and gender equality, peacebuilding and development agenda

Women, Peace and Security agenda is an independent framework. Yet, it is an integral part of a complex system of other key policy frameworks on gender equality, peacebuilding and development. While NAPs 1325 set out specific and focused action plan on prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery goal areas, it is vital to link these action plans into the existing other key conceptual and policy frameworks on gender equality, peacebuilding and development at the national level – such as national strategies on gender equality and women empowerment, national programs on development, strategies on inter-ethnic relations and peacebuilding and other. In the process of NAP localization, the plan can deliver more sustainable results and achieve greater coherency when it is tailored to national and sub-national contexts, processes, and frameworks. The governments should capitalize on the opportunity to link development and implementation of NAP 1325 to other national strategic guidance on matters of peace and security, development and gender equality.

UN Women globally

UN Women advances peace and inclusion by backing the engagement of women in all aspects of peace processes. In all country contexts, UN Women globally supports women to lead, participate in, and benefit

equally from governance systems. Programmes assist with the gender-responsive reform of justice and security institutions, the introduction and implementation of laws against violence against women, and the provision of public services that fully meet women's needs.

UN Women has a dedicated flagship programme on Women's Engagement in Peace, Security and Recovery.⁴ Guiding normative frameworks include primarily Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security: S/RES/1325 (2000), S/RES/1820 (2008), S/RES/1888 (2009), S/RES/1889 (2009), S/RES/1960 (2010), S/RES/2106 (2013), and S/RES/2122 (2013); and the international human rights. According to this flagship programme, UN Women distinguishes five outcomes to achieve more peaceful and gender-equal societies:

1. An enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments is created
2. Conflict Prevention: Women participate in and inform decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention
3. Conflict Resolution: Representation and leadership of women is increased in formal and informal peace negotiations
4. Protection: Women and girls' safety, physical and mental health and security are assured and their human rights respected
5. Peacebuilding and Recovery: The socio-economic recovery and political participation of women and girls are promoted in post-conflict situations

UN Women CO Kyrgyzstan

The WPS portfolio of UN Women CO Kyrgyzstan had several projects in support of women's role in peacebuilding. In the past, the office focused mainly on enhancing the role of women and youth in peacebuilding both at the national and local levels, natural resource management, including efficient use of water, research on gender attitudes and peacebuilding, cross-border and women's economic empowerment. Currently, the office is concluding implementing the UN-joint Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) programme with the focus on gender-sensitive planning and budgeting for LSGs, media, and gender-sensitive and conflict-sensitive journalism, civic education and tolerance, and empowerment of

vulnerable groups of women and girls. Besides, the office recently launched a new UN-joint programme on women and migration in the nexus of peacebuilding and development.

With the NAP implementation specifically, UN Women CO Kyrgyzstan has provided its technical and financial support. More specifically, the CO supported consultations on NAP implementation, development of the NAPs, financed some of the specific measures within NAPs, provided technical expertise to relevant state authorities on NAP implementation, supported CSOs in conducting monitoring assessments, and strengthened the capacity of state and non-state stakeholders on gender equality, WPS and UNSCR 1325.

⁴ UN Women, Flagship Programme on Women's Engagement in Peace, Security and Recovery, p. 29. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/un-women-flagship-programmes-booklet-en.pdf?la=en&vs=357>



From top:

Head of State Administration of Batken province, Mr. Khalmurzaev welcomes Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the UNRCCA, Ms. Gherman during Open Day for Peace in Kyrgyzstan on 21 September 2018. Photo: UN Women

Women observers from Ferghana Valley at the workshop on monitoring UN SCR 1325 implementation in Kyrgyzstan on 14 November 2012. Photo: UN Women

2. NATIONAL ACTION PLANS 1325 IN KYRGYZSTAN

Initiating first NAP 1325

In the aftermath of inter-ethnic violence in June 2010 in the south of Kyrgyzstan, members of the Women Peacebuilders Network conducted national consultations in 2011 with parliamentarians, representatives of state structures, civil society, and media on discussing the impact of the conflict on the situation around women in Kyrgyzstan. In 2012, UN Women Kyrgyzstan Country Office successfully lobbied members of the Parliament on commissioning the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to draft a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. As a result, the government showed the political will and the Committee on Defense and Security of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic signed a decree in April 2012 to adopt the resolution and localize it in Kyrgyzstan. The inter-agency Working Group was created and consisted of representatives of several line ministries and agencies under the leadership of a deputy minister of the interior. Members of the group convened repeatedly and received technical and logistical support to produce a draft NAP by late October 2012. The government adopted NAP 1325 for 2013-2014 in February 2013 and signed the Decree No.78 On Approval of the Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.⁵

In April 2013, UN Women provided support to the Government of Kyrgyzstan to develop indicators for NAP 1325, cost it, and plan its' implementation.⁶ UN Women Headquarters staff visited Kyrgyzstan to facilitate the related workshops, which were attended by personnel from different state bodies. A national expert was sourced to assist with costing the NAP on resolution 1325. While a funding gap of USD 1 million was identified, most activities did not require funding beyond what the Government had committed to financing.

At the request of the Government, UN Women convened the donor community and United Nations

agencies to discuss and secure the budget for some of the activities in the NAP 1325 which did not have funding. As a result, UN Women, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) subsequently supported selected activities, mostly through funding by the United Nations PBF. In addition, the Organization for Co-operation and Security in Europe (OSCE) reserved funds for the implementation of the NAP on resolution 1325 in 2014. Later this NAP was extended to 2015.

Key state and non-state stakeholders on NAP 1325⁷

Kyrgyzstan uses the following set-up to coordinate the development and implementation of the NAPs. The lead agency on NAP implementation control and coordination is the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Department of Defense, Law Enforcement and Emergency Situations of the Office of Prime Minister. Main supporting agencies include the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the State Committee for Defence Affairs as well as the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES), State Agency for Local Self-Governance and Interethnic Relations. Other state agencies and ministries involved to support the WPS agenda are State Committee on National Security and State Committee on Religious Affairs.

Given the political context of the country it is recommended to work closely with the Government to advance the WPS agenda and to give it a higher political weight. For example, the Government has Secretariats on Coordination Council on Human Rights⁸ and the National Council on Women's Issues and Gender Equality.⁹ Both bodies can be linked to the work on NAP implementation. Besides, the role of the

5 Government Decree No.78 On Approval of the Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, 18 February 2013. Available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/94172?cl=ru-ru>

6 Supporting the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) in Kyrgyzstan, Final report to the Government of Austria, January – December 2013

7 The overview is provided based on results of the analysis of mapping exercises of stakeholders on WPS, conducted by UN Women (2020) and the OSCE report on NAP 1325 implementation (2020) available at: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/444577>

8 Decree No.630 on Coordination Council on Human Rights under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, 18 November 2013, available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/94823?cl=ru-ru>

9 Order No.268 on National Council on Women Issues and Gender Equality under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2 May 2012, available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93602>

Parliament can be also important to establish control functions of NAP implementation. It is encouraged to especially engage and work through the members of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. Some ministries do not participate in NAP implementation but could potentially contribute to the WPS agenda. The Ministry of Culture, Information, and Tourism could lead the needed work on informational policies on NAP implementation and the State Agency of Youth Policy, Physical Culture and Sports could engage the younger generation to WPS issues.

From CSOs, Women's Peace Network (WPN) and Women Initiative Groups played an important role in linking the local, national and international levels on NAP design and implementation. These networks were set up in the aftermath of the June 2010 inter-ethnic violence and expanded to 35 groups with more than 800 members across the country as a WPS network. Besides, Kyrgyzstan established professional associations of women in security and justice sector institutions – Kyrgyz Association of Women in the Security Sector and Association of Women Judges. These stakeholders have been critical in informing NAPs with specific needs and challenges women face in the security sector and in providing their expertise during NAP implementation. Another NGO Women's Support Center supports both NAP development and implementation – especially when it comes to localization of the NAP. Other CSOs who work on WPS include: Innovate Solutions, Research Center on Democratic processes, Roza Otunbaeva Initiative, Foundation for Tolerance International, Insan Diamond, Iret, and others.

Development partners actively engage in supporting the country to develop and implement NAPs. These include UN entities and international organizations and aid agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, IOM, WHO, UNICEF, OSCE and EU, AKF, NDI, USAID, WB, and other.

It is highly encouraged to establish cooperation with academia and media stakeholders to advance the WPS agenda in Kyrgyzstan and particularly academic, research, and informational work in support of NAP implementation.

Overview of NAP 1325 for 2013-2015

The first NAP was an ambitious plan for the government for 2013-2014. A total of five goals were put forward:

- Goal 1. Create the institutional framework for the implementation and protection of the rights of women and girls in conflict prevention

- Goal 2. Strengthening the role of women in the security, defense, law and during emergencies, including at the decision-making level
- Goal 3. Zero tolerance for violence against women and girls in conflict situations
- Goal 4. Create and maintain a safe environment for women and girls
- Goal 5. Strengthening the capacities of duty bearers who provide a response, taking into consideration the protection of women and girls in conflict

According to the monitoring report, overall the first NAP was partially implemented. More specifically, progress on NAP implementation had the following results: almost full completion for goal 2, partial completion for goals 1, 4, and 5, and goal 3 was not completed. For goals 3 and 4, the government reported on issues that are not from the NAP. For both goals the report focused on activities in support of ending domestic/family violence but not the planned activities and measures as per NAP 1325. For example, relevant government departments conducted training on family violence but not on peacebuilding and security issues in the context of 1325 or representatives of LSGs integrated issues of family violence into their local development plans but specific measures in support of the resolution were not reflected.

Since not all planned activities were completed on time, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic decided to extend the first NAP until the end of 2015. Even after extension, according to the express assessment conducted in 2015 by the "Center for Support of Women", the Government implemented only an estimated 60% of the NAP activities and measures for "subjective and objective reasons". It is unknown what are those reasons.

Overview of NAP 1325 for 2016-2017

In the second quarter of 2015 members of the inter-agency Working Group and other relevant stakeholders continued the work started in the framework of the first NAP and launched the process of developing a new NAP for the years of 2016 and 2017 (with support mainly from UNDP). Consultations were organized with a presentation on the results over the first NAP implementation to discuss recommendations and inform the NAP 2016-2017. On the 17 November 2015, the Government issued an Order No.560 on the implementation of

developed NAP 1325 for 2016-2017,¹⁰ signed by the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the KR was assigned as a responsible state structure for monitoring and reporting on the results of NAP implementation. The plan set three goals, nine tasks (long-term measures) and 34 activities (short-term measures):

- Goal 1: Strengthening participation of women, including at the decision-making level, in peacebuilding and security
- Goal 2: Prevention of conflicts and its' consequences for women and girls
- Goal 3: Preparing duty bearers who protect the population, including women and girls, in conflict and crises

According to the monitoring of results on the implementation of the NAP, 32 out of the 34 measures were fully implemented. The two pending measures were not implemented due to a lack of funding.

Overview of NAP 1325 for 2018-2020

NAP for 2018-2020 was developed by the inter-agency working group with the support of UN Women and in collaboration with UNODC, UNDP, and UNFPA. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic adopted NAP 1325 for 2018-2020 and signed the Government Order No.334 on implementing NAP as of 21 September 2018.¹¹ Consultations and monitoring reports with recommendations informed about the development of NAP 2018-2020. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms were jointly reviewed and strengthened for the implementation of the NAP. This year is a concluding year for NAP implementation. It has three goals, seven tasks (long-term measures), and 18 activities (short-term measures):

- Goal 1: Strengthened role and participation of women in activity aimed at preserving peace and security, including at the decision-making level
 - 1.1. Increased representation of women in local administration and self-government
 - 1.2. Increasing the participation of women and supporting women's initiatives, including those at the local level, to reduce the risks of religious radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism

- Goal 2: Strengthened interaction of state agencies, LSGs and the civil society for the prevention of conflicts and risks of violence towards women and girls
 - 2.1. Increased capacity and preparedness of authorized state agencies to prevent conflicts and risks of violence against women and girls
 - 2.2. Strengthened interaction of state bodies, LSGs and the civil society in ensuring peace and security
 - 2.3. Increasing the capacity of girls and boys through training in the culture of non - violence, gender justice, and mutual respect
- Goal 3: Improvement of the system of protection and meeting the special needs of women and girls in emergencies
 - 3.1. Increase the readiness of authorized agencies, taking into account the tasks to ensure protection and take into account the special needs of women and girls in emergencies
 - 3.2. Improved quality of services delivered to the victims of emergencies, including women and children

The Ministry of Internal Affairs prepared implementation two progress reports against activities described in NAP 2018-2020 – for the last quarter of 2018 and the first and second quarters of 2019. Assessment and monitoring of results on the implementation of the NAP are yet to be conducted.

¹⁰ Order No. 560 on Implementation of NAP 1325 for 2016-2017, 17 November 2015, available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/215148?cl=ru-ru>

¹¹ Order No. 334 on Implementation of NAP 1325 for 2018-2020, 21 September 2018, available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/216600>

3. KEY CHALLENGES IN NAP IMPLEMENTATION

Micro-level challenges in NAP implementation

Key challenges identified during **NAP 2012-2014 (2015)** implementation:

- Lack of capacity and commitment of key stakeholders, involved in implementing measures of the NAP on preventing conflicts, peacebuilding negotiations and subsequent peace restoration efforts, on issues of women, peace and security.
- Lack of adequate resources allocated to the NAP implementation.

Key challenges identified during **NAP 2016-2017** implementation:

- Poor financing and lack of government support.
- Weak coordination, interaction, and synergy between relevant state structures at the local and national levels on NAP implementation.
- NAP indicators (including how they were formulated) do not allow providing accurate information on the implementation of activities by state bodies. Often, state representatives include in the report general activities on combatting domestic violence and promoting gender equality – without the specific focus on WPS.
- The loss of institutional memory and staff turnover at the state level adversely negatively affected the implementation of all the planned goals of the NAP.

Key challenges identified during **NAP 2018-2020** implementation so far:

- Continues replacement of members in the inter-agency Working Group. This has had negative effects on accumulating knowledge, experience, and skills among the group members to ensure productive work, sustainability, and continuity. The gender experts recommended that the relevant state agencies assign focal points and do not replace them throughout the NAP implementation process.

Macro-level challenges in NAP implementation

Since 2012 Kyrgyzstan has implemented two NAPs 1325, concluding this year its third NAP, and initiating the development of the fourth NAP for 2021-2023. Assessments made after each cycle of NAP provide a solid overview of key challenges identified during NAP implementation. The analysis highlights technical challenges at the micro-level faced in each cycle of NAP implementation. It is important, however, to also reflect and re-assess the progress achieved and the challenges faced in NAP implementation and the WPS agenda in general on the macro-level. This outer look perspective can unleash a broader understanding of the process, including the nexus between technical processes and value-driven processes in relation to the WPS agenda.

How far has Kyrgyzstan advanced in achieving greater women's participation in peacebuilding on a macro-level? The country recognized the importance of the gender dimension to peace and security issues and achieved some progress. Yet, this progress is rather limited when it comes to the actual women's participation in preventing, managing, or resolving conflicts. Women continue to be absent in peacebuilding processes or play a rather passive role. Some more active women often only organize cultural and sports events in their communities to promote tolerance and friendship. On the opposite, men continue playing a central role in managing and responding to conflicts.

On the example of border conflicts in cross-border areas in southern provinces of Kyrgyzstan, men lead and participate in conflict management processes – be those male representatives of the state central authorities, local authorities, members of the Committee or Working Group on Border Delimitation and Demarcation, religious leaders, or community members. Women, instead, are evacuated from the conflict zones and are absent at the negotiation table.

A complex set of patriarchal social norms continue to place women in a more disadvantageous position. Harmful gender norms assign household duties as primary duties for women and places men as key

decision-makers in the household.¹² On one hand the society and especially men impose and promote these discriminatory practices at the household, community, and national levels. On the other hand, women often themselves practice self-limiting behavior based on gender stereotypes and do not see their role in peacebuilding. This is further exacerbated by another common stereotype that security-related issues are traditionally men's issues.

One of the major challenges in NAP 1325 implementation on a macro-level is the recognition of WPS issues as a priority area on the political agenda. Often WPS issues are treated as secondary to national security policy. There needs to be a more meaningful understanding of the WPS agenda as a matter of broader frameworks of gender equality and human rights. It is not about only participation of women in peacebuilding per se but also about gender inequalities and unequal power relations between men and women. More gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches underline lasting peace and security for all people, ensuring the human rights of citizens, and women's human rights in particular.

12 Gender in Society Perception Study in Kyrgyz Republic, UN Women, UNFPA, IOM (2018), available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/gender-in-society-perception-study-kyrgyz-republic>



From top:

A student from Batken State University shares her views on the role of youth and women in peacebuilding during a lecture by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the UNRCCA, Ms. Gherman during Open Day for Peace in Kyrgyzstan on 21 September 2018. Photo: UN Women

Group photo of women activists from cross-border communities in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and the delegation members during Open Day for Peace in Kyrgyzstan on 21 September 2018. Photo: UN Women

4. BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Despite the challenges faced in implementing the NAPs, there is progress in learning from these processes. Below is the set of several examples on lessons learned and best practices from implementing NAPs in Kyrgyzstan:

- **Recognizing continuously the need to develop and implement NAPs 1325:** Since 2012 Kyrgyzstan has recognized the need to promote the WPS agenda through UNSCR 1325 and localization of NAP 1325. This year the country is concluding implementing its' third NAP and plans to develop and adopt the next NAP. This continued recognition in support of the WPS agenda provides opportunities for more transformative progress and change in increasing women's role in preventing, managing or resolving conflicts.
- **Monitoring and assessments of NAP implementation:** civil society and gender and peacebuilding experts, under the support of development partners, continue conducting independent assessments of NAP implementation – with the aim to collect lessons learned, key challenges, and recommendations and use this evidence base to inform the next NAP.
- **Conducting consultation meetings among key stakeholders:** it is important to continue using participating approaches and conducting wide consultations with relevant stakeholders, such as state stakeholders, development partners, civil society, and expert community on NAP 1325 to discuss and inform NAPs.
- **Providing technical expertise in implementing NAP:** development partners have been providing technical support to the government in NAP implementation. Several gender equality and peacebuilding experts are being engaged to support this process.
- **Conducting Open Days for Peace:** these open day events and consultations provide a platform where women's voices can be heard and offer an opportunity to review the implementation of UNSRC 1325. Several Open Days for Peace were conducted on an annual basis in Kyrgyzstan. This global practice allowed women, youth, civil society in Kyrgyzstan to highlight issues of the WPS agenda, initiate dialogue with national and local authorities, and advocate for women's role in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, management, and resolution.
- **Engaging women organizations in implementing NAP:** Kyrgyzstan has several active women organizations that work in support of NAP 1325 implementation. These women organizations and women at the local level engage in prevention work. It is an instrument to continue this practice to support local-level women activism and strengthen their capacities on promoting the WPS agenda.
- **Collaborating with development partners:** UN, international organizations, NGOs, and experts work with the government at the national and local levels to implement programmes on WPS issues and support the process on NAP development, implementation, monitoring, and reporting. This has shown progress in promoting the WPS agenda in the country.
- **Strengthening capacities of relevant stakeholders on NAP 1325:** it has been instrumental to strengthen capacities of state and municipal servants, civil society, the general public, including women and others, on NAP 1325 to promote the WPS agenda. It is through increasing knowledge, skills, and practices on NAP 1325 one can raise awareness on UNSCR 1325, change in attitudes and result in behavior change in support of women's role in preventing, managing, or resolving conflicts and taking a more active stance on peacebuilding.
- **Strengthening capacities of local authorities on gender-responsive planning:** when it comes to NAP localization, an important role is given to the Local Self-Governments to promote the WPS agenda on the local level and support grassroots activities that promote women's role in peacebuilding. UN Women Country Office in Kyrgyzstan has worked with LSGs on the use of gender-sensitive and socially inclusive (GESI) approaches in local development plans and NAP localization. This has facilitated strengthening the capacities of local authorities in considering GEWE issues and women's needs and interests

when planning and budgeting for Local Action Plans.

- **Improving reporting templates on NAP implementation:** the conclusion of the second NAP signified a need to improve reporting mechanisms on NAP implementation. Relevant state agencies had different reporting templates and incoherent practices on reporting. The new

reporting template has been piloted to facilitate accountability mechanisms in the current NAP implementation. The results of improved reporting practices will be assessed towards the end of the NAP implementation period. It is important to continue supporting and improving reporting mechanisms and processes to facilitate NAP implementation.



From top:

Women activists and women groups from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan discuss the role of women in cross-border peacebuilding at the round table in Batken during Open Day for Peace in Kyrgyzstan on 21 September 2018. Photo: UN Women

Members of the Working Group on the implementation of the NAP UN Security Council Resolution 1325 at the capacity building seminar on the role of women in peace and security in Kyrgyzstan on 14 December 2018. Photo: UN Women

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

A set of recommendations were collected since the implementation of the first and subsequent NAPs through monitoring reports by civil society organizations, rapid needs assessments, and consultation meetings between relevant state and non-state stakeholders. Below are the key recommendations from these reviews and additional recommendations from special reports on peacebuilding and security matters and WPS practice in general across three phases of the NAP activity.

Phase 1: Planning and budgeting NAP 1325

- Promote political will and ownership among the key state and non-state stakeholders in support of WPS agenda:** identify ways to promote and incentivize senior leadership at the national and local level of the government, civil society, donor community, UNCT on recognizing issues of women, peace and security as one of the priority issues for security and sustainable development. Senior leadership should take a commitment, ownership, and understanding towards addressing WPS and gender issues. Consider engaging key state stakeholders in advancing the WPS agenda, such as the President's Office, the Parliament, Prime Minister's Office, and others.
- Identify key priority issues on NAP 1325, using evidence-based and cross-sectorial analysis:** the government is recommended to undertake comprehensive gender conflict analysis in the country to identify up-to-date key challenges, factors, and risks in the security situation. Collected evidence and analysis should inform the upcoming NAP 1325. Besides, while identifying key priority issues, it is important to identify synergies across relevant key state programmes, documents or policies on security, peacebuilding, gender equality and sustainable development (inter alia, Gender Equality Strategy, Peacebuilding Priority Plan, NAP on PVE, State Policy on Religious Affairs, state program on digital transformation, National Strategy for Sustainable Development and related Programme "Unity. Trust. Creation", Concept on Strengthening the Unity of the People and Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Kyrgyz Republic, and other). Also, there is a need to leverage NAP to build connections between thematic sectors - such as economics, rule of law and justice, and other - for intersectionality and gaps. Besides, states are encouraged to rely on international guidance and policies on WPS and UNSCR 1325, including on UN results framework on WPS and other key documents by development stakeholders. Finally, the state should continue conducting consultation meetings among state stakeholders, development partners, civil society, and expert community on NAP 1325 to discuss and inform NAPs.
- Focus NAP on suggested key priority thematic issues:** key government stakeholders, civil society, donor community, and experts suggest various key priorities for NAP – mainly in the prevention and participation pillars. From the collected feedback through consultations and monitoring reports the following issues were highlighted:
 - Radicalization; religious extremism; preventing violent extremism, recruitment of women and girls into violent extremism, repatriation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of women and girls associated with suspected Kyrgyz FTFs, female terrorism, and extremism offenders/returnees from conflict zones/those who are released from prisons.
 - Cross-border incidents and conflicts in border communities of southern regions, including on natural resource management.
 - Inter-ethnic relations and tolerance.
 - Political participation and decision making by women; lack of female staff in the security sector.
 - Behavior and social attitude and norm change in support of gender equality, women's role in peacebuilding, and women's participation and decision-making.
 - Lack of knowledge and capacities among women and girls on human rights, gender equality, and peacebuilding and access to quality education.
 - Labor migration and related cases of violence towards women and girls.

In addition to the above suggested key priority areas, it is also important to consider adaptive approaches in implementing NAP to be responsive to the emerging new needs and changes in the context during the

implementation cycle. COVID-19 has highlighted the need for adaptive approaches in the current NAP1325 to respond to the country-wide increase in domestic violence by 65% during this pandemic. Other emergency or humanitarian crises may include disaster risk reduction efforts around landslides or border conflicts and incidents over natural resource management (water and land).

- 4. Budget and allocate financial resources for NAP implementation:** budgeting by the government is the key to mainstreaming the NAPs as part of the development priorities of the country. The state often addresses financial matters to implement NAP during the implementation period in an ad-hoc manner. As a result, the state cannot implement some of the activities when there is a lack of funding. The government should calculate the required budget for the implementation of the NAP at the planning stage and with the involvement of the Ministry of Finance. Then the state should allocate financial resources from the state budget, with possible contributions from the donor community. Donor stakeholders provided financial support to the government to implement several measures across all NAPs. Besides, under the law on the principles of the budget law, the state should consider providing categorical and stimulating grants to the LSGs on WPS issues.

Phase 2: Implementing and operationalizing NAP 1325

- 5. Improve coordination on NAP 1325 among relevant state and non-state stakeholders at the national and local levels, civil society, development partners, activists, media and other key stakeholders:** coordination is important on the operational level across numerous initiatives and activities led by different stakeholders and when it comes to alignment and coherence between strategies and programmes. Once all the key stakeholders are identified and mapped out, it is important to find synergies – operational and normative – and link those efforts in support of implementing NAP.
- 6. Strengthen capacities among relevant state stakeholders and civil society actors on WPS issues and UNSCR 1325:** there is a continuous need to strengthen capacities of relevant state and non-state stakeholders on the WPS agenda to facilitate effective implementation of the NAP and achieve progressive outcomes for women's rights in peacebuilding. Where possible, the state is encouraged to introduce

capacity building programs at the institutional level, facilitating this way systematic solutions to continuous learning for relevant stakeholders on the WPS agenda in the context of UNSCR 1325. It is also recommended to engage civil society actors, including women led CSOs, specialized in women's role in peacebuilding, in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the NAPs. Besides, it is encouraged to build the capacity of the state lead agency assigned for coordination of the NAP to effectively lead this process.

- 7. Engage LSGs on NAP implementation:** representatives of local governments may play a crucial role in NAP implementation at the grassroots level. It is recommended to engage and work with LSGs on improving awareness-raising on NAP 1325, women's rights, gender-based violence, access to state services among the population. Also, LSGs are recommended to integrate activities and measures from NAP 1325 and NAP on gender equality to their local development plans. The focus should be made on gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches when it comes to planning and budgeting programmes.
- 8. Strengthen capacities among women and girls on participation in decision making, NAP 1325, human rights, and gender equality:** often people see the women as victims, which in itself can be a harmful attitude. We need to recognize women as agents of change and give them a platform for participation, decision making, and access to education. One of the key empowering tools for women is to strengthen their capacities, providing mentorship support. This is all to increase the role of women in peacebuilding and engage women as decision-makers and mediators in formal and informal early-warning, conflict prevention, peace negotiations, or conflict resolution. Special attention should be given to women leaders who have the potential to effectively promote the WPS agenda.
- 9. Conduct behavior and social norm change awareness-raising and communication activities and campaigns on UNSCR 1325:** the government should include awareness-raising and communication activities in the NAP to promote behavior and norm change in support of the WPS agenda. There is limited awareness among the general population, relevant state stakeholders at the national and local levels, and civil society on NAP 1325 and its critical role in achieving peace and security for all. UN should continue using Open Days for Peace as

an opportunity to follow up systematically on suggestions made during past events towards accelerating the implementation of WPS commitments. Women and peace activists were able to highlight their experiences and challenges they faced, and contributions made to promote the WPS agenda through platforms of Open Day for Peace consultations. All communication materials should be developed in different languages, including in the Kyrgyz language, for more effective outreach to diverse groups of the population. The media should be supported to be able to enhance public awareness and recognition of the WPS agenda, promote a language of peace, and address discriminations against vulnerable groups of women and girls. Religious stakeholders are encouraged to be engaged in the dissemination of information on the important role of women's participation in peacebuilding and public life and development.

- 10. Apply gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches and leave-no-one-behind:** the state is encouraged to utilize approaches based on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and the principle of LNOB throughout the NAP cycle: starting from the design of NAP, consultations, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and communication. GESI approach suggests to capture different perspectives and needs of men and women and boys and girls and focus on delivering equal rights and opportunities for all, also ensuring that socially excluded people have equal opportunities for realizing their human rights and potential to contribute to the development and equally benefit from the results. Special focus on achieving SDG goals is put on LNOB, which means prioritizing human beings' dignity and placing the progress of the most marginalized communities first and women and girls being often at the top of the list. It is recommended to pay special attention to vulnerable groups of women and girls or those facing multiple forms of discrimination, such as religious women, ethnic minorities, women from cross-border communities, women with disabilities, family members of returned foreign terrorist fighters, young rural women, and women-migrants.

Phase 3: Monitoring, assessment, reporting, and knowledge management

- 11. Establish effective monitoring and assessment system NAP implementation:** the government needs to adopt effective monitoring, assessment, and reporting mechanisms for greater accountability. NAPs should have realistic goals and targets. The state should develop indicators to plan NAP results and assess those at the end of the NAP implementation period. Indicators should be SMART, quantitative and qualitative, with age and sex distribution where possible. Indicators should also be linked to national SDG indicators. The recent assessment of gender statistics conducted in the Kyrgyz Republic¹³ indicated data gaps in statistical systems to produce gender statistics. NAP should establish a monitoring framework that requires a set of gender-specific indicators and gender-relevant indicators across SDGs to monitor and report on WPS results. The indicator matrix ideally should also have progress and/or annual indicators. This way, the government or civil society can monitor, track, and report on the progress made towards the final indicators. Depending on arrangements, the state is encouraged to introduce the required mid-term assessment of NAP implementation.
- 12. Adopt reporting templates:** it is important to develop unified reporting templates for the use across relevant state agencies and ministries for improved data collection, sharing and analysis, and subsequent reporting. Reporting mechanisms are being tested in the current NAP implementation. The state is encouraged to collect lessons learned from the current practice and continue improving the reporting practices. Special attention should be given to collect, monitor, and report sex-disaggregated data. The lack of reliable, disaggregated gender-sensitive data is one of the challenges to track the progress on women's state representation in law enforcement, defense sector, local councils, and other state structures.
- 13. Establish accountability mechanisms and monitoring practices:** Accountability and oversight mechanisms should be in place to support governmental and civil society in the implementation of these commitments. Annual reports should be made accessible to the public and regular mid-term and/or final assessments properly planned. This public monitoring of the implementation by the civil

¹³ Assessment report of gender statistics in Kyrgyz Republic (2020), PARIS21 and UN Women

society organizations, especially those specialized in promoting the role of women in peace and security, and/or independent external evaluators, and/or respective experts will strengthen monitoring the progress of NAP implementation and establish accountability practices. Some experts encourage strengthening accountability mechanisms through parliamentary oversight through scrutinizing government reports on the progress of the NAP implementation. Also, some experts recommend including tasks relevant to NAP implementation to the job descriptions for greater accountability.

- 14. Strengthen institutionalization and knowledge management practices:** one of the weaknesses and challenges identified while assessing the implementation of previous NAPs was staff turnover or replacement of members of the inter-agency Working Group and related loss of institutional memory. The state body responsible for monitoring and reporting on NAP implementation should organize a process to ensure that relevant ministries and state agencies each assign at least two focal points for the duration of the NAP. To support the process of enrooting institutionalization, it is important to introduce knowledge management practices. Members of the inter-agency Working Group should lead the work around institutional knowledge building and more specifically, to reflect, learn and document challenges and successes, lessons learned and recommendations, manage accumulated knowledge and practices, and share this experience with others.

CONCLUSION

The year 2000 marked the global consensus on the important role of women and the relevance of gender to the field of peace and security. Ten years after in 2010, Kyrgyzstan faced inter-ethnic violence in the south of the country. The crisis had a tremendous effect on a large portion of the population, and women and girls were especially affected during the conflict and in its' aftermath. This has had increased attention within the country to the situation around women in the conflict.

Although discussions around adopting UNSCR 1325 in Kyrgyzstan were more in support of women's protection during and after the conflict, the NAPs in fact expanded and highlighted the role of women in peacebuilding in general. Kyrgyzstan has shown the political will to adherence to the WPS agenda by adopting already three NAPs since 2012. The government achieved some progress and impact on including the gender dimensions to peace and security issues. The results achieved in the last decade show little progress on changing and increasing the actual role of women's participation in preventing, managing, or resolving conflicts. The recent border conflicts in cross-border areas in 2019 and 2020 between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan show the absence of women at the negotiation table. Women and children are often evacuated to safer zones during border incidents and conflicts.

Researchers and practitioners build a consensus that women's participation and inclusion in peace and security processes lead to more sustainable peace. Assessment reports from previous NAPs implementation highlight that the absolute majority of the focus group discussions agree that "women play a very important role in conflict resolution, that women can be a mediator to bridge peace between conflicting sides".¹⁴

This year the current NAP is coming to its end and Kyrgyzstan should continue utilizing NAP in the coming years as an effective and strategic tool for advancing women's role in peacebuilding – be that across Track I or Track II diplomacy. The state is encouraged to improve and strengthen multiple practices on NAP activity during planning, implementation, and reporting and monitoring stages. The cross-cutting approach

may focus on capacity and resources, attitudes and beliefs, and coordination and accountability practices.

WPS agenda should not be treated as a technical and ticking the box exercise. Key state and non-state stakeholders need to internalize the value-driven principles and understanding in support of promoting gender equality and the WPS agenda in the broader context of security and development. The value of UNSCR 1325 should be recognized as a stand-alone framework but also as an integral part of other key policy frameworks and processes on gender equality, peacebuilding, and development. There is a need for new innovative and adaptive approaches and solutions to reconsider how WPS issues are advanced and how to transform from technical to more value-driven principles in promoting GEWE and WPS agenda. The ultimate aim is to work towards sustainable peace and security for everyone and by everyone – men and women.

¹⁴ Assessment report on NAP 2016-2017 implementation and needs assessment of local communities and national state security structures on WPS in Kyrgyzstan (2017). Innovation Solutions, UN Women, UNODC.

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