

12.03.2018



# Women, Peace and Security

Finland's National Action Plan  
2018-2021

Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland



The Ministry for Foreign Affairs Publication Series 3/2018

# Women, Peace and Security

Finland's National Action Plan 2018–2021

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Helsinki 2018



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

ISBN printed: 978-52-281-326-8

ISBN PDF: 978-952-281-327-5

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Layout: Government Administration Unit, Publications  
Helsinki 2018



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## **FOREWORD**

**O**n 31 October 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security to be implemented by all Member States. In compliance with the principles and objectives enshrined in the UN Charter, the main aim of the Resolution is to enhance women's role and decision-making capability with regard to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding, and to significantly improve the security of women and the factors influencing it.

Resolution 1325, the seven subsequent resolutions within the framework of Women, Peace and Security and the other complementing resolutions highlight the fact that in conflict situations all population groups must be considered. In addition to the requirements specific to women and girls, the needs of men and boys should also be taken into account. The Women, Peace and Security agenda highlights the areas where there has been less attention on the role played by women and girls and their protection in conflicts, and where more efforts are required. The resolutions on Women, Peace and Security cover a vast area of action and are fundamental to the implementation of all three pillars of the United Nations — Peace and Security, Development and Human Rights.

In 2008, Finland presented its National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In order to ensure a more effective implementation of the Resolution, a new result-oriented Action Plan was prepared for the period 2012–2016. This Action Plan

is the third in the series and an update on the previous plans. It provides the basis for a more active and practically oriented implementation.

Finland is strongly committed to the implementation of Resolution 1325 and the seven resolutions following it.<sup>1</sup> At the national level, the 1325 agenda has been incorporated in the Government Programme. At an international level (in international organisations) and at a local level (in regions affected by crises and conflicts), the objectives are pursued through crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, expert assistance, training and diplomacy. According to the Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2016), Finland advocates more extensive participation of women in establishing peace and security.

Promoting the rights of women and girls is one of the priority areas in Finland's human rights policy. Finland is committed to the full implementation of the international treaties on the rights of women and is actively working in the EU, the UN, the UN specialised agencies, international conferences and in other international organisations to strengthen the rights of women. Special consideration is given to the women and girls belonging to the most vulnerable groups who are often facing multiple discrimination.

Like the first Action Plan, this Action Plan was prepared jointly by ministries, parties engaged in crisis management (Crisis Management Centre

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1 Women, Peace and Security/ 1325 –agenda in the text refers to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), other related resolutions, as well as the commitments and actions by Member States to implement the resolutions. Colloquially Resolution 1325 is often used when referring to the entire agenda.

Finland, CMC Finland, and the Finnish Defence Forces), civil society organisations and experts working in research institutions. The same actors are also represented in the follow-up group monitoring implementation of the Action Plan. The Action Plan covers the period 2018–2021, after which it will be updated.

In 2017, Finland celebrated the centenary of its independence. Since Finns have experienced wars and conflicts, they have an understanding of the long-term impact that conflicts can have both on individuals and entire nations, including the profound impact on the structures of society and the way in which it functions. The work on Women, Peace and Security is also important in the context of reconciliation because achieving sustainable peace requires the commitment of all members of society.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since the adoption of Finland's second Women, Peace and Security Action Plan, the world has undergone a great deal of change that has implications for the global implementation of the 1325 agenda. There were significant changes in the international security situation during the period covered by the Action Plan. The humanitarian catastrophe in Syria and the refugee crisis affecting Europe have made the themes discussed within the framework of Women, Peace and Security topical issues for European countries, including Finland. In addition to being relevant to humanitarian work, development cooperation projects and crisis management operations in conflict regions, the priorities of the Action Plan also increasingly impact sectors where domestic actors operate.

At the international level, a great deal of attention has been given to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, especially in 2015, which marked the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Resolution. That year saw the publication of a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Resolution at global, regional and national levels.<sup>2</sup> The Global Study Report mentions such issues as the rise in the number of references to women in peace agreements and improvements in the normative framework concerning sexual violence as positive developments. Numerous challenges

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2 A Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace, 2015

remain and the report contains several recommendations. For example, it emphasises the importance of conflict prevention, the participation of women in peace processes, strengthening of the gender perspective in humanitarian assistance and the allocation of more funding for the agenda (including the development of instruments for supporting the work of women's organisations). In 2015, the UN also carried out extensive reviews of its peace operations and the peacebuilding architecture. All three review reports emphasise the importance of conflict prevention and the need for concrete measures to more extensively engage women in the area of peace and security. The recommendations laid out in the reports have been taken into account in the preparation of this Action Plan and they will also be used in the work on Women, Peace and Security in the future.

During the period covered by the second Action Plan, the UN Security Council adopted three additional resolutions within the framework of Women, Peace and Security (Resolutions 2106 and 2122 in 2013 and Resolution 2242 in 2015). All three resolutions emphasise a comprehensive approach to peace and security, recommend integrated services for women affected by conflicts and underline the importance of assessing the effectiveness of implementation strategies. Violent extremism is highlighted in the most recent Resolution (2242).

In 2016, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council adopted identical resolutions on the basis of the report on the peacebuilding architecture. The Agenda for Sustainable Peace, as presented in General Assembly Resolution A/70/262 and Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development complement each other. Sustainable development makes it easier to achieve sustainable peace, while peaceful and inclusive societies create an environment con-

ducive to sustainable development. In its resolutions, the United Nations defines the concept 'sustainable peace' and emphasises its importance throughout the conflict continuum. Because of the recurring nature of violent conflicts, efforts to ensure sustainable peace, conflict prevention and the development of early warning mechanisms often take place simultaneously. Sustainable peace is a cross-cutting theme across all three pillars of the United Nations.

With conflict prevention as a priority, the new Secretary-General has emphasised that peacebuilding should no longer be seen as a post-conflict activity but that the challenge of ensuring sustainable peace should extend over the whole period during which the UN is committed to the resolution of the conflict and the transition stage. This means that conflict prevention and sustaining peace are not only more closely interlinked, but are more closely connected with identifying and tackling the root causes of conflicts. There is more emphasis on women's leadership and participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and on their roles in peacebuilding.

The establishment of the position of Principal Adviser on Gender and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 within the EU External Action Service in the summer of 2015 was an important achievement during the period covered by the second Action Plan. Finland played a role in the establishment of the position. The *EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015–2019* and the *EU Gender Action Plan: Gender equality and women's empowerment: transforming the lives of girls and women through EU external relations 2016–2020*, which were also adopted in 2015, are a clear demonstration of the strong EU commitment to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The *Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on*

*women, peace and security*, which is currently under review, supports this work. In the EU and in the discussions taking place in other European forums, Finland has emphasised the importance of gender equality, the participation of women and high-quality education to democracy.

Because of the changing nature of security, new perspectives are needed for the protection of women and girls, and the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the field of human security so that challenges related to, for example, migration (including human trafficking), violent extremism and arms trade can be tackled. These themes are included in the Action Plan.

### Implementation of Finland's second National Action Plan 2012–2016

Finland's National 1325 Action Plan for the period 2012–2016 was presented in June 2012. It was drafted through cross-administrative cooperation involving ministries, representatives of civil society organisations and research institutions. The follow-up group reviewing the realisation of the plan and the implementation of its objectives has met on a regular basis. The reports on the Action Plan submitted to Parliament have been based on the indicators outlined in the document.

During the period covered by the Action plan, Finland maintained a high international profile, with Presidents Tarja Halonen and Sauli Niinistö, as well as Ministers for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja and Timo Soini, raising 1325 topics in different forums. Minister Elisabeth Rehn was a member of the High Level Consultative Group appointed by the Secretary-General of the UN in the preparations for the 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325 in 2015. Member of Parliament Pekka Haavisto, as the Foreign Minister's Special Representative on Mediation advanced the agenda in 2015–2017.

In international cooperation, Finland has consistently attached great importance to the inclusion of the 1325 theme in joint statements and documents and has also worked to engage new countries in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Through EU coordination and Nordic cooperation, Finland has actively aimed to ensure that the 1325 perspective is considered in the work of the UN Security Council. The fact that a record number of speakers addressed the review of the 1325 agenda in the Security Council in October 2015 is an encouraging sign. Finland has also continued cooperation with its partner countries in the preparation of National Action Plans on 1325. The National Action Plans for Afghanistan (2015) and Kenya (2016) were adopted, and implementation of the National Action Plan for Nepal (2011–2016) was supported during the period. New collaborative efforts were undertaken in 2016 through the support of UN Women, for National Action Plans in Jordan and Tunisia and to implement the National Action Plan in Iraq.

Promotion of the status of women in fragile situations has been a cross-cutting theme in Finnish development cooperation.

Finland supported the establishment of UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, in 2010 and was one of its most important providers of funding between 2012 and 2016.

Finland has continued to play an active role in the work against impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious international crimes and has provided financial support for the Trust Fund for Victims operating in conjunction with the International Criminal Court. Minister Elisabeth Rehn served as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund until November 2015. Finland has also provided funding for the team of experts on the rule of law established to support the work of the Special Repre-

The UN Security Council annual open debate on Women Peace and Security attracts a high number of speakers.



sentative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and has chaired the Management Team of the Justice Rapid Response Mechanism since September 2014.

In the promotion of international mediation, Finland has particularly addressed the role of women in peace processes. Under the guidance of the Group of Friends of Mediation, led by Finland and Turkey, the UN General Assembly has unanimously adopted four resolutions on mediation emphasising the importance of women's participation. Finland also actively contributed to the establishment of the Nordic Women Mediators' Network in late 2015.

Finland has made substantial inputs to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in crisis management. Women accounted for about 40 per cent of the experts sent by Finland to civilian crisis management tasks in 2016, while the average for EU Member States was about 20 per cent. In election monitoring operations, Finland has achieved parity between women and men. Efforts have been made to increase the number of women in military crisis management with the help of recruitment campaigns carried out by the Finnish Defence Forces. At the end of 2016, Finland had a total of 366 persons serving in military crisis management tasks and 21 (5.7%) of these persons were women. Finland has sent human rights and gender advisers to both civilian and military operations. Since spring 2014, a seconded Finnish expert has been serving in the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate of the EU External Action Service. The tasks of the expert include the promotion of human rights and gender equality issues (including the 1325 agenda) in the crisis management activities of the Union. The Finnish Defence Administration has drafted its own guidelines on the implementation of the Action Plan. The Women, Peace and Security theme has been addressed in all crisis management training.

Challenges have also been encountered in the implementation of the second Action Plan. An external evaluation report on the implementation of the plan was prepared in spring 2016. Chaired by Professor Helena Ranta, the 1325 Network Finland of civil society organisations produced its own shadow report in 2016. Even though substantial progress has been made in the implementation of many of the objectives, the results achieved to date are inadequate. In the coming years, the emphasis must be on ensuring a clearer focus, coordinating the measures and defining the responsibilities. Finland must be able to maintain an active approach as consistently as possible. The normative aspects of the 1325 agenda have been constantly reinforced at the international level. However, even though progress has been made, implementation has proceeded too slowly. The long-term development and impacts of the activities supported by Finland must be monitored.

### Basis of the National Action Plan

As outlined in the 2015 Government Programme, “Finland will bear global responsibility and strengthen its security by promoting — in cooperation with international partners — sustainable development, peacebuilding and the status of women and girls in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325”. Finland emphasises the international normative and political framework in the implementation of Resolution 1325 covering conflict prevention, the participation of women and the protection of women.

The implementation of the Resolution on Women, Peace and Security is included in the UN strategy and the Human Rights Strategy of the Finnish Foreign Service as part of the promotion of gender equality. Based on the sustainable development goals of the United Nations (the 2030 Agenda)

One of the main statements at the UN Security Council open debate on Women Peace and Security is delivered by civil society (2017).



and the Government Report on Development Policy, the aim is to ensure that on topics pertaining to Women, Peace and Security, Finland is able to offer specific added value and also to meet its own obligations in the field of global responsibility. Work on the 1325 agenda is guided by the principles of the human rights-based approach, consistency, openness and good governance.

The opportunities for building sustainable peace, sustainable development and well-functioning societies are better if all people are included on an equal basis. As programmes and reforms prompted by the need to promote gender equality are founded on democracy, they also contribute to the stability of society at large. Thus, the implementation of Resolution 1325 also supports fragile regions in their development efforts.

Finland's gender equality work and the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda are based on the Act on Equality between Women and Men, the Non-Discrimination Act, the Government's Gender Equality Programme and the National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights. The purpose of the Act on Equality between Women and Men is to promote equality between genders and to prevent discrimination based on gender, gender identity and gender expression. According to the concept of intersectionality, women, men, girls and boys are not homogenous groups and their identities and needs arising from their origin, class, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation are shaped by circumstances and impact the way in which they experience persecution and discrimination.

Under Article 2(3) of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention), shall apply in times of peace and in situations of

armed conflict. According to the Preamble to the Convention, the Parties are aware of “ongoing human rights violations during armed conflicts that affect the civilian population, especially women in the form of widespread or systematic rape and sexual violence and the potential for increased gender-based violence both during and after conflicts”. Finland ratified the Convention in 2015.

### Means of implementation of the National Action Plan

The objectives of the National Action Plan are promoted at a national level, in bilateral cooperation, multilaterally in the EU and in international organisations. Diverse partnerships are strengths typical of Finland: in its advocacy work in the United Nations, Finland has focused on the role of women in peace processes, strengthening of the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations, work against impunity, the Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes training intended for UN peace mediators (Special Representatives of the Secretary-General) and other high-level mediators as well as focusing on supporting UN Women, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, established in 2010. Finland is a major supporter of UN Women as it has supported the organisation from the start and is one of its largest funding providers.

In addition to the cooperation taking place with the UN and especially with UN Women, Finland is also actively promoting the objectives of the Action Plan within the framework of Nordic cooperation, in the EU, in the Council of Europe, in the OSCE, as a NATO partner country and as a partner of the African Union. Finland aims to ensure that the Women, Peace and Security agenda will continue to be jointly promoted by all Nordic countries in the future. An example of this cooperation is the Nordic Women Mediators’ Network established by the Nordic countries

in November 2015. The Network is intended for Nordic women with experience in mediation and peace negotiations. Within the Network, there are discussions on how women can be trained, mentored and recruited for mediation tasks, and how they can be actively encouraged to develop their skills in this field. Finland is working to ensure that the 1325 agenda is extensively included in the activities of the EU, and will take part in the process of updating and implementing the document setting out a comprehensive approach to the agenda. When conflict prevention and crisis management are discussed in the Council of Europe, Finland will ensure that the 1325 dimension is considered in this work, including as part of the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Finland has emphasised the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the work of the OSCE (especially the strengthening of gender work in the organisation's field missions) and has been responsible for drafting EU statements on Resolution 1325 and gender equality as part of OSCE–EU coordination. As part of the NATO partnership, Finland is actively involved in the development and strengthening of 1325 work. In its cooperation with the African Union, Finland emphasises strengthening the role of women in peace processes and the capacity of women mediators.

In its current partnerships, Finland is supporting the implementation and follow-up of the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans in Afghanistan, Kenya and Nepal. In North Africa and the Middle East, the aim is to make the Women, Peace and Security agenda more widely known, increase commitment to its objectives and promote women's leadership through UN Women. Together with partnership countries, we are developing our National Action Plans and their implementation. Supporting local activities carried out as part of the Action Plans and strengthening ownership play an important role in this process.

The objectives set out in the Action Plan are promoted at regional and local levels in areas affected by crises and conflicts as well as in countries in transition to democracy. Civil society actors in both Finland and crisis regions play a key role in the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Action Plan. The expertise of civil society actors, the information that they produce and the other resources they provide are used in peace processes, humanitarian operating environments and in development projects during the reconstruction stage of peacebuilding. In many countries, women's organisations play a key role in the efforts to create a normative framework for gender equality, as defenders of human rights and as actors demanding accountability and adherence to international human rights obligations from the authorities. In many countries, civil society actors and especially women play an important role as a counterforce to extremist movements. Both local and Finnish companies can play a role in promoting the Women, Peace and Security theme at national and international levels and in ensuring that it is taken into account in often challenging operating environments. Finland requires the companies that it supports or cooperates with to adhere to the highest possible corporate social responsibility standards. The objectives of the Action Plan will also be promoted through new technology and innovations.

Various administrative branches are extensively involved in the implementation of the Action Plan and a large number of civil society organisations also support the process through their own work. One or more responsible ministries have been designated for each objective of the Action Plan and these are primarily responsible for implementation in accordance with the listed priorities and outputs.

## Priority areas and objectives of the National Action Plan

In its 1325 work during the period covered by the Action Plan, Finland aims to ensure the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding (including peace processes). The aim is also to mainstream the gender perspective in the security sector and crisis management, to strengthen the protection of women and girls and to better safeguard their rights and to ensure that their needs can be met in crisis situations. A large number of Finnish civil society organisations and actors are contributing to meet these objectives through development cooperation projects, by working with refugees and by carrying out advocacy work. Finland is aware that civil society actors (especially women's organisations operating in conflict regions) have a great deal of expertise in the building of sustainable peace and can play a central role in the process. Finland supports these actors, listens to their views, and works to engage them in all priority areas in a cross-cutting manner in order to strengthen their opportunities to advance implementation of the Action Plan.

Preventing and combating sexual and gender-based violence in conflict is part of the objectives in all four priority areas. Sexual and gender-based violence in conflict must be tackled more efficiently and the work must emphasise the status and rights of the victims. Measures to combat and prevent sexual violence must be more closely integrated into the operational part of work in peace processes, international crisis management operations and humanitarian aid. More efforts must be made to combat impunity for perpetrators of the most serious international crimes.

In this Action Plan, as in the previous one, the objectives are formulated on the basis of the Women, Peace and Security resolutions. The emphasis is on themes that are important to Finland and that can create opportu-

nities for women to become more actively involved in the resolution of crises and conflicts and in peace processes and that help to strengthen their rights in such situations. These include mediation, mainstreaming of the gender perspective in crisis management and the issues pertaining to the protection and inclusion of refugee women. There is increased emphasis on conflict prevention. In crises and humanitarian catastrophes, the emphasis is on the continuum ensuring the protection and rights of women, which starts from crisis management and proceeds to peace processes and political participation. In this context, consideration is given to the impacts that are also being felt in Finland as a result of immigration.

The Action Plan provides a comprehensive approach to peace and security and an approach in which the planning and launching of activities promoting peace and security are based on the gender perspective. This means that existing practices should be assessed and improved so that the gender perspective and the promotion of gender equality can be incorporated into all 1325 work. The status of women or gender-based power relationships in crises and conflicts should be analysed to improve the understanding of the operating environment as well as its challenges and opportunities.

Finland has five focus areas in the Women, Peace and Security work. The main objectives are reached through diplomacy, crisis management, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, and other expert work and training. In Finland and the EU, domestic policy measures and EU policy measures are used to reach the objectives.

## ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. Women play a more meaningful role and there is more emphasis on mainstreaming the gender perspective in mediation, peace processes and transition processes
2. Women play a more meaningful role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding
3. Mainstreaming of the gender perspective is more integrated into the security sector and crisis management
4. Women and girls receive better protection, their rights are better safeguarded and their needs are better met during crises
5. Finland promotes the objectives 1–4 in the policies, strategies and work of international and regional organisations and by encouraging the development of National Action Plans

## 1 PEACE PROCESSES

Peace processes and mediation are at the core of Finland's 1325 work. As part of conflict prevention, Finland is actively working to develop mediation. It also aims to increase, both in conflict-affected countries and in international forums, the understanding of how important women's participation is at all levels and in all stages of peace processes, from the planning of the negotiation process to the implementation and follow-up. An inclusive approach is a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Finland provides political and economic support as well as expertise for civil society actors in conflict and conflict-prone regions, with the aim of providing women with a more active role as mediators and peace negotiators. Finland takes part in the efforts to create practices strengthening and facilitating the participation of women, to identify obstacles to the participation of women more systematically and to ensure that good practices collected in the field can be better used in mediation and in the planning of its development. Particular attention is paid to the participation of women in the implementation of agreements.

A great deal of consideration has been given at the international level to the different roles of women in mediation and in peace processes. Various studies have shown conclusively that the participation of women im-

proves the chances of reaching a peace agreement as well as the chances that the parties will adhere to the agreement and, consequently, that sustainable peace can be ensured. It is essential to strengthen the role of women in official peace negotiations and high-level decision-making forums. In fact, more women are needed as principal negotiators, mediation experts and representatives of the parties to the conflicts. At the same time, it is extremely important that women are also involved in unofficial dialogues and peace processes. Having women's representation in the unofficial processes preceding official peace negotiations is important in itself and studies have shown that it also facilitates women's access to official negotiations. Women's organisations should be included in peace processes. Colombia and the Philippines are two recent examples of how the participation of women in peace processes has helped to make these processes more successful.

Providing women and girls with a stronger voice during peace negotiations and highlighting the Women, Peace and Security agenda in mediation are part of the respect for human rights and gender equality. However, the empowerment of women also supports efforts to achieve sustainable peace and security. Civil society actors and women's organisations in particular must be given a stronger role in peace negotiations. This is because women's organisations can highlight the root causes of conflicts and help to make early warning mechanisms more effective during the implementation of peace agreements. In mediation, the UN, the EU and other regional organisations, as well as their member states, should lead by example. Ensuring a gender-balanced composition of mission personnel is an important element in this work. Parties supporting peace processes and mediation should encourage processes providing different groups in society with participatory opportunities. UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security adopted in 2015 is an important instrument in addition to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

## OBJECTIVE 1

### Women play a more meaningful role and there is greater emphasis on mainstreaming of the gender perspective in mediation, peace processes and transition processes

**OUTCOME 1.1** Challenges/obstacles to women's meaningful participation and gender mainstreaming in mediation, peace processes and transition processes have been identified

- Finland strengthens the link between practical work in the field and research-based conflict analysis on women's participation in mediation, peace processes and transition processes. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finn Church Aid (FCA), The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)
- Finland promotes high-level experience sharing, collection of lessons learned and mentoring. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI
- Finland raises awareness at international and regional forums of women's participation in mediation, peace and transition processes (at all levels). *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI*

**OUTCOME 1.2** Recommendations have been implemented to increase women's meaningful participation and gender mainstreaming in mediation, peace and transition processes

- Finland promotes the inclusion of the gender perspective in mediation, peace and transition processes. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI

- Finland supports women's participation before and during peace, dialogue and transition processes, formal or informal. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI*
- Finland promotes high-level experience sharing, collection of lessons learned and mentoring. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI*
- Finland provides public authorities and other relevant actors with training on the inclusion of the gender perspective at various stages of peace processes. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Women are increasingly present at the post-agreement implementation and monitoring phases in which Finland is involved. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, FCA, FELM, CMI*



## PEACE PROCESSES AND 1325

Official and unofficial national dialogues are an important instrument for citizen participation in peace processes as they expand the political space, open up opportunities for conciliatory discussions and assist in making processes more successful. Active participation of women enhances national ownership and provides the national dialogue process with added legitimacy. Studies have shown that women's participation helps to expand the agenda and encourages those involved to bring new issues to the table. However, giving women a seat in the negotiations is only the first step. Women can promote lasting peace by strengthening their influence through political support, clear objectives, coalitions and process-related training.

Even though there has been some debate on the inclusion and participation of women at normative level over the past few years, there are still few concrete examples of women's participation, especially in official national dialogues. International, regional and civil society organisations can create support structures for women participants and in this way strengthen women's roles and provide them with more opportunities to influence developments. National ownership is, however, the most important instrument for achieving sustainable peace in national dialogues. The Conferences on National Dialogue held in Helsinki between 2014 and 2017 emphasised the following: listening to the views of women participants, sharing experiences and analysing the challenges of participation.

## 2 CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING

When efforts are made to achieve sustainable peace and security, it is important to consider the broad social and economic context on the one hand and the differing needs of diverse groups in society on the other. The ten-year review of the UN peacebuilding architecture, published in 2015, points out that peace agreements provide a basis for comprehensive efforts to ensure peace and security, but that concrete long-term peacebuilding must involve the entire population, including communities at the local level. The participation of women and support for men in conflict prevention are essential for ensuring sustainable peace and transition processes. Promoting gender equality in fragile contexts is key to achieving the goals of sustainable development.

As outlined in the Finnish Government Report on Development Policy (2016), providing women with a more prominent position and more opportunities for participation are cross-cutting objectives in all development cooperation. According to the Development Policy Action Plan, *“the objectives based on Resolution 1325 are taken into account in the political dialogues and consultations with long-standing development partners, inter alia, by including the topic in Finland’s own negotiation mandate”*. Women’s rights and/or gender equality are country-level priorities in Finland’s development cooperation in Afghanistan, Kenya, Nepal, the Palestinian Territories and Somalia.



Small café in Kabul, Afghanistan. Women are an important resource in all sectors and at all levels of economic life.

Finland supports the political participation of women in post-conflict situations and in fragile regions. The purpose of these activities is to help women to play a more prominent role in the building and establishment of a peaceful society and a democratic system. Economic empowerment is essential to equality and the active participation of women in society. Women are provided with better opportunities for employment, for example opportunities to work as entrepreneurs, to participate in economic life and to make use of their property rights. Finland works to establish the connection between gender, climate change, natural resources and peacebuilding. Finland enhances the opportunities for women to play a more influential role in legislative reforms and aims to ensure that the public administration and the legal system will produce better public services that are also more extensively available to women and girls.

The Arms Trade Treaty adopted by the UN in 2013 contains a criterion on gender-based violence that should be taken into account when defence materiel is exported. There are references to the Arms Trade Treaty in UN Security Council Resolution 2122, in which the link between disarmament and the activities

against gender-based violence is recognised. Finland played an active role in the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty, particularly in issues concerning gender-based violence.

Terrorism and violent extremism are two of the most important security threats of our time. The need to have a comprehensive approach to counter these threats is emphasised in the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism presented by the UN Secretary-General and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Drafting of successful strategies requires the inclusion of the gender perspective in the analysis, especially research-based information on the different roles of women and girls with regard to violent extremism and information on the structural factors that influence the roles of women and girls. It is essential to hear the views of civil society actors, local women and women's organisations when international and national strategies and plans are drafted and implemented.

The purpose of Finland's National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism is to coordinate preventive work, share good practices and enhance expertise. The Action Plan also provides a basis for flexible adjustment to the changes taking place in the operating environment. Structures and procedures have been created for PVE-work. The aim has been to ensure that preparedness arrangements and permanent structures are in place throughout Finland to the extent required by the local context. The gender perspective is taken into account in the implementation of the Action Plan. The coherence between this Action Plan and the Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism enhances the effectiveness of combating and preventing violent extremism. Studies show that it is important to include in the PVE work many of the themes on the 1325 agenda, such as the participation of civil society actors and increasing the number of women in the security sector (in such jobs as police officers).

## OBJECTIVE 2

### Women play a more meaningful role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding

**OUTCOME 2.1** Women's economic and political empowerment has gained strength

- Finland promotes women's role and meaningful participation in local/national political decision-making. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland improves the economic opportunities of women in fragile contexts. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland explores specific challenges and/or opportunities presented to women by climate change, and access to, use and control of land and other natural resources. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

**OUTCOME 2.2** Women's access to justice has improved

- The access of women and girls, including those facing multiple forms of discrimination, to legal services and legal aid is enhanced by Finland's support, with due consideration for the principle of equality. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

**OUTCOME 2.3** The gender perspective has been incorporated into arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation at national and international levels

- Finland supports implementation of Article 7(4) of the Arms Trade Treaty, on preventing gender-based violence, by all State Parties. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

- Finland includes the gender perspective in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation at national and international levels. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland promotes and supports the meaningful participation of women and women's rights organisations in policy discussions and negotiations on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

**OUTCOME 2.4** The gender perspective is incorporated in combating and preventing violent extremism

- The gender perspective is included in Finland's National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism. *Ministry of the Interior*
- Finland facilitates exchange of information on the inclusion of prevention of violent extremism in National Action Plans, which contain relevant gender-sensitive components and/or activities. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior*
- Finland supports gender-sensitive initiatives relating to the prevention and research of violent extremism. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior*

## VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND 1325

The key role of women in the prevention and combating of violent extremist movements has been emphasised in recent years, for example in UN Security Council Resolution 2242. The multitude of roles played by women in the context of violent extremism has been highlighted in the debate. Women have acted as combatants and supporters of extremist movements, they have been targeted by these movements, there have been women among their victims, and women have also taken part in the work to counter violent radicalisation and extremism (CVE) and in the efforts to prevent them (PVE). Women are often the first to notice violent extremism and to demand action against it. The initiatives on the prevention of violent extremism can only be successful if all these roles of women are taken into account.

The manipulation of the status and rights of women by extremist movements makes it particularly important to deal with violent extremism from the gender perspective. Extremist movements restrict women's freedom of movement, participation in education and access to health services and commit acts of sexual violence. Consequently, many local women leaders and women's organisations have taken systematic action against radicalisation and developed alternative approaches to enhance respect for women's rights, to support pluralism and to help to rehabilitate former combatants. They are doing this despite the fact that their own communities and the extremist movements often expect them to adhere to

more traditional gender roles. Information campaigns against radicalisation are promoted to enhance the crisis resilience of societies. Consideration is also given to the risks arising from the negative side effects of the prevention and combating of terrorism. Women's organisations often understand the causes behind extremist action and the reasons why such movements are attractive in the eyes of young men and women. Decision-makers and researchers should acquire a broader understanding of the historic, cultural and gender-based contexts that provide a breeding ground for extremist movements and organisations. Strong links with local actors enhance contextual understanding that prevents the instrumentalisation of women's rights. Rights of women and girls should not be used as a tool in the combating of violent extremism since the work should be examined from the perspective of human rights.

### **3 THE SECURITY SECTOR AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

Participation in international crisis management is part of Finland's active foreign and security policy. Finland participates in international crisis management activities within the framework of the UN, the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, and NATO partnership cooperation.

Crisis management has evolved from monitoring tasks into increasingly extensive operations, which often include significant peacebuilding elements. In accordance with the Comprehensive Crisis Management Strategy (2009), Finland promotes the integration of cross-cutting themes such as human rights, gender equality and the principle of the rule of law into crisis management, and emphasises the status of women, the combating of sexual violence, and the protection of children in armed conflicts. The operations support humanitarian action and long-term social and economic development. Finland makes military personnel, experts in the police force, the Finnish Border Guard and Finnish Customs as well as legal sector personnel available for international crisis management operations.

Finnish personnel serving in military and civilian crisis management tasks observe the codes of conduct approved by both the organisation leading the crisis management operations and the Finnish authorities. Finland stresses that sexual exploitation in all its forms is a criminal act. All suspected cases of sexual exploitation are investigated in accordance with Finnish law. It is particularly important to Finland that the codes of conduct of international organisations prevent gender-based discrimination and sexual exploitation, that the officials in charge of the operations fully adhere to the codes of conduct and that all suspected cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are investigated without delay.

Finland emphasises the inclusion of the gender perspective in operational planning, competence development, recruitment and leadership training. There should be more practical and theoretical training on the Women, Peace and Security agenda to mainstream the gender perspective in all areas of international operations. Finland takes part in integration of the gender perspective into international crisis management training and capability development in the UN, the EU, the OSCE and in partnership with the African Union.

Finland is working to increase the proportion of women in international operations, especially in operational tasks and in leading positions. In mid-2017, a total of 132 Finnish experts were working in civilian crisis management. They were deployed in 26 international operations and in eight different secretariats. Women account for about 36 per cent of all experts, which is a high figure internationally. It is particularly noteworthy that all three of the Finnish officials in charge of operations are women. In April 2017, there were 544 Finnish military personnel serving in military crisis management operations and 29 (5.3%) of these were



Peacekeepers being trained by the UN, Nairobi, Kenya.

women. It is important that Finland actively and systematically promotes the recruitment of women in conflict regions.

The number of Finnish women in civilian crisis management will only remain high if they can be recruited to a broad range of different tasks. Women should be consistently encouraged to pursue a career in the security sector. For example, only about 15 per cent of all Finnish police officers are women. Border control authorities in different countries only employ a small number of women. Finland has supported the work carried out by the OSCE to mainstream the gender perspective and to encourage border control authorities to recruit more women. Finland will continue to provide experts working in the police force, the Finnish Border Guard, Finnish Customs and the legal sector for international crisis management and to keep the number of women in these tasks high. With regard to election observers, Finland will maintain gender parity.



The UN Military Experts on Mission Course (UNMEM) in Niinisalo, Finland in August 2017 had 47 participants from 21 countries, 27 of them female officers.

The long-term aim is to recruit more women to military crisis management operations. The individuals recruited are reservists who have completed their military service and professional soldiers. This means that the number of women in these tasks can only be increased if more women can be encouraged to volunteer for military service and pursue a career in the Finnish Defence Forces as professional soldiers. The Finnish Defence Forces are doing this with the help of recruitment campaigns, in which women are given a great deal of visibility. Since the 1990s, about 600 women have taken part in military crisis management tasks and their proportion has varied each year between three and five per cent of all military crisis management staff. Increasing the number of women in military crisis management operations is a long-term process and requires consistent efforts over a period of many years. The long-term aim of the Finnish Defence Forces is to increase the proportion of women to at least seven per cent.



For civilian crises management personnel deployed by Finland the number of women has at times reached 40%. Participants at the EU Concept Core Course (EUCCC) in 2017.



## OBJECTIVE 3

### More effective mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the security sector and crisis management

- OUTCOME 3.1** A more equal gender balance has been achieved in the security sector and crisis management
- Finland increases the number of women serving in the security sector and takes measures to ensure equal career opportunities for all. *Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces*
  - Finland increases the number of women serving in civilian and military crisis management tasks and takes measures to ensure equal career opportunities for all. *Ministry of the Interior, Crises Management Centre (CMC) Finland, Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
  - Finland increases the overall number of experts working as gender advisers and focal points and especially the number of men working in these positions. *Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
  - Finland identifies any possible gaps in the support for family members of deployed crisis management staff and prepares recommendations for improvements. *Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces*

**OUTCOME 3.2** The gender perspective has been mainstreamed into the security sector and crisis management planning, implementation and evaluation

- Finland promotes the inclusion of gender analysis in the planning of mandates for crisis management operations and missions at international forums. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland integrates the gender perspective into implementation of operation mandates at all levels (strategic, operational and tactical levels), with special attention to the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland applies zero tolerance to sexual exploitation and abuse. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland improves the use of information obtained from operations so that the gender perspective can be better taken into account. *Finnish Defence Forces, CMC Finland*
- The gender perspective and analysis are included in all basic and postgraduate degrees and in continuing education and training provided for Finnish security sector personnel. The effectiveness of education and training will be assessed. *Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland*
- The gender perspective and analysis are included in the training of senior leadership and experts. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

- Finland takes the gender perspective into account in international military exercises and the main military exercises at the national level. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces*

**OUTCOME 3.3** The gender perspective is integrated into crisis management training and exercises

- Finland integrates the gender perspective into crisis management training and exercises. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland*
- Finland makes training modules and courses integrating the Women, Peace and Security theme internationally available. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland continuously develops the competence of its gender advisers and focal points. *Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC Finland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland includes the Women, Peace and Security agenda in training-related discussions in international forums. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Finnish Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior*

## CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND 1325

Finland emphasises the positive impacts of the implementation of Resolution 1325 in ensuring the operational effectiveness of crisis management. Mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the security sector and crisis management allows Finland to respond to the differing security needs of women and men during conflicts and in post-conflict situations. Dialogue with women and men helps to provide a more comprehensive picture of local security challenges and provides a basis for more effective protection of the population as a whole. The role of women in crisis management is particularly important in societies where there is little interaction between women and men outside families. Special consideration given to women's security enhances the trust of the local population in international operations. When mainstreamed into crisis management, the gender perspective provides women with more influence in decision-making and encourages them to take part in peacebuilding.

The presence of female crisis management personnel helps to make crisis management operations more effective because it is easier for female personnel to approach former women combatants and review the requirements specific to them. The presence of appropriately trained female crisis management personnel means that there is a broader range of skills available for a crisis management operation and it also makes it easier to interview victims of gender-based violence (women and men). Women working in a crisis management operation can also gain a more comprehensive picture of the concerns and needs of local women and they can serve as role models. The presence of female crisis management personnel may also have an important symbolic impact in the host country.

## **4 PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS AND SAFEGUARDING THEIR RIGHTS IN CRISES**

Finland promotes the full realisation of the rights of women and girls. Finland emphasises the realisation of the human rights of women, both nationally and internationally, giving particular consideration to multiple discrimination and to the status of persons with disabilities (including those injured in wars), indigenous peoples and persons belonging to sexual minorities. Finland has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention).

Armed conflicts are often accompanied by a dramatic increase in gender-based violence (including sexual violence). Finland actively works towards eliminating violence and emphasises the importance of justice and accountability for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) occurring in conflict situations. Finland supports the International Criminal Court (ICC) in its work in the fight against impunity for crimes under its jurisdiction. Finland will work to strengthen the status of victims and provide funds for the ICC Trust Fund for Victims so that the victims of SGBV crimes can receive assistance. Finland is committed to supporting the Justice Rapid Response Mechanism, which trains experts in investi-

gating, for example, SGBV crimes and maintains a list of experts that are prepared, at short notice, to assist countries and international organisations by their request in the investigation of these crimes.

Finland is committed to the full implementation of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law applied in armed conflicts protects civilians against armed activities. Civilians must be respected, protected and humanely treated. There are special provisions for women and children. In the protection of the rights of women, international humanitarian law specifically emphasises the need for special protection, health care and assistance. Integration of the gender perspective into humanitarian work will strengthen the situation analysis and allow assistance to be provided more effectively.

Finland emphasises the need to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda so that women can be protected, their special needs considered and their participation ensured in their countries of origin, in refugee camps, in-transit and as asylum seekers in their countries of destination. Refugees and people who are forced to leave their homes are particularly susceptible to violence and discrimination. Women and girls run a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases or HIV, having unplanned pregnancies and dying in childbirth in crisis situations.

Finland takes measures to enhance the gender equality content and gender perspective in reception services for individuals seeking international protection and in the services and support measures promoting the integration of individuals granted international protection and other immigrants. Many of the women and girls arriving in Finland as refugees or asylum seekers have experienced sexual violence in their country of origin or during their flight. For this reason, reception centres should pro-

vide women and girls with a comprehensive range of services intended for victims of sexual violence. In this context, consideration should be given to their background and any cultural obstacles that impact their willingness to seek help. This prevents them from becoming victims again.

In reception centres, services for refugees and asylum seekers are developed so as to give consideration is given to the security of women and girls (accommodation arrangements, security training), efforts are made to ensure that the special needs of asylum-seeking women and girls can be better identified and considered, especially during the early stages of reception services (such as initial health checks and guidelines on how to deal with victims of human trafficking). At the same time, refugee women and female asylum seekers are provided with more opportunities for empowerment, active engagement and influencing decisions concerning their lives. All shelters are open to immigrants who have experienced intimate partner violence and the residents have the right to use interpreters.

The integration process includes taking measures to ensure that the special needs of women and girls are considered in the fields of education, training, civic participation, employment and the promotion of health. The Government Integration Programme contains a range of measures that aim to provide immigrant women with better education and training paths to working life.

The changing nature of conflicts also means that they last longer and may change in character. In a fragile situation where violence becomes a part of daily life and where there are no rules governing economic activities, criminal phenomena such as human trafficking, drugs trade and cor-



Basketball in Garowe Somalia 2017.

ruption, will become more common. International coordination against human trafficking and projects funded by Finland promote the rights of women and girls. At national level, Finland is implementing the Government Action Plan against Human Trafficking 2016–2017. In accordance with the Action Plan, Finland is developing measures aimed at identifying and assisting victims of human trafficking.

Global awareness of the work carried out by human rights defenders has increased over the past few decades. Despite this, human rights defenders still risk their own safety or lives in many countries. Women working as human rights defenders are often in a particularly difficult situation. For this reason, their work should be actively supported. Human rights defenders also play an important role in conflict prevention. They report on inequality, discrimination and serious violations of human rights, which are often the reasons behind conflicts. Human rights defenders may also face multiple challenges when addressing matters that are considered sensitive, such as violence against women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as the rights of sexual and gender minorities. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has prepared public guidelines for the Finnish Foreign Service for the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

## OBJECTIVE 4

### Women and girls receive better protection, their rights are better safeguarded and their needs are better met during crises

**OUTCOME 4.1** International community efforts to fight impunity for the most serious international crimes, especially sexual and gender-based violence, have strengthened

- Finland promotes the fight against impunity and bringing perpetrators to justice. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Victims of sexual and gender-based violence receive support from the ICC Trust Fund for Victims and participate in the activities financed by the fund. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland will work to support the capacity of national authorities to investigate crimes of sexual and gender-based violence and to bring perpetrators to justice. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

**OUTCOME 4.2** The gender perspective in humanitarian assistance is strengthened

- Finland's policy and guidelines for humanitarian assistance and financing include the gender perspective and support the rights of women and girls during crises. Finland contributes to the efforts by UN specialised agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and civil society organisations to further strengthen gender equality and the principle of equality in their operating policies and strategies. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

- Finland supports measures that will strengthen the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, assistance given to the victims of such violence, including the protection of women and girls, and access to sexual and reproductive health care and other services. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- In humanitarian forums, Finland actively highlights the needs of women and girls (including the rights of persons with disabilities and sexual and gender minorities) and works to remove obstacles to assistance. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland promotes implementation of guidelines and policies aimed at preventing discrimination of women employees working in humanitarian crises. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Finland works to strengthen coordination on gender equality issues and the role of UN Women in humanitarian crises. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

**OUTCOME 4.3** The measures taken by Finland to address migration strengthen the protection of women and girls

- In international and regional organisations, Finland supports the inclusion of the gender perspective in responding to crisis. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture*

- Finland supports the rights of migrant women and girls in transit through humanitarian aid and development cooperation by helping them to access services and to become self-sufficient. This can be done by instruments such as targeted income and training support and by highlighting the views of women and girls in forums where migration and refugee issues are discussed. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- The capacity of Finnish service providers taking part in the reception of asylum seekers to consider the special needs of women and girls is enhanced by strengthening national measures. Women and girls arriving in Finland as refugees or asylum seekers are provided with victim support services in accordance with the EU Crime Victims' Directive. Particular consideration should be given to the special support required by victims of sexual and hate crimes. The aim is to reduce the risk of revictimisation. *Ministry of the Interior/Finnish Immigration Service*
- In the integration measures taken at national level, efforts are made to strengthen gender equality and to encourage women and girls to take part in integration activities on the basis of the needs of individual immigrants. In this context, particular consideration should be given to the availability of education, training and the improvement of the labour market status of women. *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture*

- International coordination against human trafficking and projects funded by Finland promote the rights of women and girls. In national action against human trafficking, measures are taken to strengthen gender mainstreaming and the consideration of gender impacts. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior*

**OUTCOME 4.4** Women human rights defenders are protected and their opportunities to act and participate on an equal basis have been supported

- Finland provides information on the work and rights of women human rights defenders and their need for protection and arranges training for the authorities and other parties. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- Women human rights defenders regularly attend meetings and seminars arranged by international organisations, the EU and the Nordic countries to discuss themes relevant to them. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

## MIGRATION AND 1325

Violent conflicts, a poor state of human rights, widening gaps in living standards, population growth and climate change, individually or together, cause people to become refugees and they are also factors behind migration in general. Women and girls account for about half of all refugees in the world. Between 1960 and 2015, the number of women migrants doubled, and women currently account for about half of the world's migrants. However, there is considerable variation in the proportion of women between regions and cultures. In the EU, women and girls account for nearly one third of all asylum seekers. Most of the women refugees and migrants arriving in Europe give insecurity (threat of violence and conflicts) as the main reason for becoming a refugee or leaving their homes.

Refugees and migrants are susceptible to violence and discrimination. Many women refugees and migrants are at risk already in their countries of origin where they often face threats such as gender-based persecution and discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and human trafficking. Most of the refugees' countries of origin and destination are developing nations and the time that these people spend as refugees is often longer than expected. In prolonged refugee situations, ensuring the implementation of fundamental rights, such as the right to education and livelihood, access to services and an increased level of inclusion are essential for the empowerment of women. These measures can substantially improve

the living conditions of women during the time that they spend as refugees. Better lives for mothers will also mean better lives for their families (especially girls). This will not only support their preparedness and functional capacity for return or resettlement but will also contribute to reducing the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The risk for different types of exploitation will decrease as women and girls gain more opportunities and capabilities to manage their own lives.

Women become economically empowered by, for example, improving economic literacy and by benefiting from support measures, such as savings groups and training for enhanced income-earning skills (cultivation, etc.). This will provide women and their families with opportunities for improving their life situations and for a stable livelihood. Basic skills, such as literacy and calculation skills, and the enhanced self-esteem and status resulting from them, allow women to take part in decision-making, which may include positions of trust at refugee camps.

## **5 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES IN THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY WORK**

Finland plays an active role in international and regional organisations, working to ensure the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the policies, strategies and activities of these organisations.

National Action Plans have served as an important tool in the efforts to achieve the Women, Peace and Security objectives in many countries. In 2017, there were more than 60 Action Plans adopted at a national level. The number of Action Plans is growing as more and more countries have pledged to prepare such plans. Finland supports several countries engaged in conflicts and transition in the preparation, development and implementation of their National Action Plans. It also supports the localisation and follow-up of these Action Plans.

The need for conflict analysis and early warning arrangements is growing as the emphasis in the international community is increasingly on conflict prevention. Understanding of the structural features and special characteristics of the conflict context is enhanced by incorporating the different roles of women and men in conflict and the assessment of gender impact into conflict analysis and the development and use of early warning mechanisms.

As part of the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, Finland is working to strengthen research exploring opportunities for women to participate and act as leaders in fragile regions in particular. The research topics are expected to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries and to address such management of change that specifically benefits the poor and promotes gender equality in the poorest and the most fragile contexts.

### CROSS-CUTTING OUTCOME 1

Finland works to influence the preparation, development and implementation of international and regional policies related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda

- The proposals, initiatives and statements made by Finland ensure that the Women, Peace and Security agenda is integrated into international and regional policies, strategies and activities. *All*
- At international forums, Finland works to promote the development and use of early warning systems. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

### CROSS-CUTTING OUTCOME 2

Finland works to promote the development and implementation of National Action Plans

- The preparation and implementation of National Action Plans are supported by strengthening country-level coordination and national ownership. *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- The link between the implementation of and the research on the Women, Peace and Security agenda is strengthened. *All*

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Governments are responsible for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The responsible parties in central government mentioned in the National Action Plan undertake to implement the Action Plan for their own part and to regularly follow-up on it, as well as to reserve adequate resources and funding for the purpose. Civil society actors have valuable knowledge, which brings added value to the implementation of the Action Plan. Central government must provide financial support for civil society organisations' 1325 work. The 1325 Network of civil society organisations has an important role in monitoring and evaluating the Action Plan.

Implementation of the National Action Plan is systematically monitored. Overall monitoring of the Action Plan will continue in the national follow-up group led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Representatives of different ministries and their agencies, civil society organisations and the research community participate in the work of the follow-up group.

Implementation is monitored on the basis of the outcomes and outputs set out in the Action Plan and separately prepared indicators. The parties responsible for implementation submit progress reports to the national



Developing and sharing experiences on the localization of UNSCR 1325, Kathmandu, Nepal 2018.



  
 Government of Nepal  
 Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction  
 Singdurbar, Nepal  
  
 UN Women  
 25  
 Group  
 al  
**Swagatam!!**  
**Welcome Participants**  
**of the Localization of**  
**UNSCR 1325**  
**Conference!**  
 Kathmandu, Nepal  
 February 8-10, 2015

follow-up group. To strengthen implementation of the Action Plan, technical working groups for the different themes of the Action Plan will be established as necessary. The purpose is to ensure and facilitate cooperation, communications and reporting between the parties responsible for implementing the Action Plan. The preparation of more detailed plans with possible indicators by individual administrative branches promotes the effective and concrete implementation of the National Action Plan.

The parties responsible for implementation of the Action Plan undertake to a) identify and supply details of the main measures and activities planned for the following year; and b) submit annual reports on their implementation and the realisation of the outcomes and outputs of the Action Plan to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the national follow-up group. Based on the reporting of the parties responsible for implementation of the Action Plan and the work of the follow-up group, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will prepare an annual report to Parliament (the Foreign Affairs Committee) on implementation of the Action Plan.

More detailed mid-term and final evaluation reports will also be prepared. The focus in the final evaluation report will be on reviewing the effectiveness of the Action Plan from the perspective of implementing the objectives laid out in the Action Plan and the goals set out in the 1325 resolutions.

Finland will respond to the reporting requests submitted by international organisations concerning the implementation of Resolution 1325. Information on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda will also be included in the reports on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), especially in accordance with the general recommendation on women in conflict situations.





## The Ministry for Foreign Affairs Publication Series

3 / 2018

ISSN 2489-7248 (printed)

ISSN 2489-7574 (pdf)

ISBN 978-952-281-326-8 (printed)

ISBN 978-952-281-327-5 (pdf)