

Looking Back,
Looking Forward:



women | peace | security

Consultations on Canada's
National Action Plan

Background Note #2 REFLECTIONS ON THE FIRST C-NAP AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO DATE FOR THE NEW C-NAP

In order to help ensure that the April 20th and 21st Consultation does not repeat the discussions held last year, this Background Note summarizes comments made by the Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada (WPSN-C) – both collectively and by members – as well as other civil society organizations.

Comments on the First C-NAP

The first C-NAP was welcomed as long-overdue by civil society. Despite several years of consultations and discussions, it was only launched in 2010.

The C-NAP included five relatively strong commitments relating to strengthening women's participation in peace processes and peace operations; improving the effectiveness of peace operations (including the protection and promotion of the rights and safety of women and girls); improving the capacity of Canadian personnel to work on conflict-related sexual violence; promoting relief and recovery efforts in a way that takes into account the differential experiences of women, girls, men and boys; and making the leadership of peace operations more accountable for the WPS agenda.

Yet [analysts](#) identified major flaws with the C-NAP. The gender analysis in the C-NAP was weak and the word 'gender' was not used in the Plan.

The C-NAP was structured around the four WPS 'pillars': protection, prevention, participation, and relief and recovery. It included 28 actions and 24 indicators (one of the first NAPs to do so). Unfortunately the inclusion of indicators was weakened by the lack of targets or context for these indicators.

The C-NAP was relatively shorter than many of the NAPs produced by other donor countries and its status was unclear. While it did include specific mention of the rights of girls (not just women), there were critiques that both women and girls were essentialized as primarily victims.

There was no dedicated budget for the C-NAP and staffing resources were also unclear.

Finally, there was a brief comment on the importance of civil society, but there was no structure or mechanism proposed for interactions and consultations.

Comments on the C-NAP reports

Civil society reports have noted with concern the ongoing delays in reporting. For example, the first progress report covering the 2011-2012 fiscal year was only released in January 2014. These delays have continued. As of early April 2017, we are still waiting on the report for FY 2015-2016.

The reports listed numerous initiatives, funded projects and even provided stories from specific situations.

The reports are public and were tabled in Parliament. As well, the Government released the full text of the independent mid-term review.

"Analysis of the data presented in the three progress reports published as of November 2015 shows little evidence that the adoption of the C-NAP has resulted in strengthened priorities on women, peace and security and better policy coherence among government departments."

- [Looking Back, Looking Forward](#) (2015)

Despite the significant amounts of information provided in the reports and the indicators annex, it was often difficult to assess progress. This transparency was appreciated, but overall it was difficult to see the results of all these initiatives and whether or not they were making an impact. There was little analysis of the indicators and whether or not progress was as expected.

Furthermore, data on funding was difficult to decipher. There was no way of tracking whether Government of Canada investments in WPS were increasing or decreasing.

Recommendations Made To Date

Throughout various consultation processes in 2016, Canadian civil society made numerous recommendations for both the structure and context of the new C-NAP.

Position the C-NAP as a key policy directive

Specific recommendations include:

- Affirm that women's rights and support for the WPS agenda is a **core** goal of Canadian foreign, defence and development policy.
- Address the full range of WPS issues/pillars and ensure strong gender analysis and gender equality results across diplomatic, security, defence and development initiatives in fragile/conflict affected states.
- Support greater understanding of and capacity to incorporate WPS issues/gender analysis into all policies and initiatives in C-NAP government partners, ensuring that they are 'fit for purpose' on this agenda.¹
- Improve the results framework/approach in the C-NAP, so that there are clear overarching objectives.
- Link the C-NAP to a comprehensive commitment to gender equality - including compulsory use of Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) across participating departments.
- For Department of National Defence (DND)/Canadian Armed Forces (CAF): Develop a comprehensive policy that defines commitments to WPS objectives, mainstreaming gender perspectives, and GBA+, as well as increased diversity (supported by a culture that is accountable, non-discriminatory and respectful of the human rights of all).
- Adopt a feminist approach to Canada's development assistance relating to peace and security.

Ensure financing of the C-NAP and related WPS initiatives

Specific recommendations include:

- Provide a dedicated budget for the C-NAP, including funds for staff, consultations and outreach to Canadians.
- Increase the percentage of development assistance in crisis context and humanitarian spending that directly addresses women's needs/targets gender equality as the **principal** objective (GE3) (adopting a target of 15%).
- Commit to tracking and reporting on financing for WPS initiatives and the inclusion/achievement of gender equality results through improved use of the gender equality marker (including consistent definitions) across all development assistance in

fragile states, humanitarian assistance and conflict-related funding.

- Generate new public and private financial resources for implementing the WPS agenda, including through the reduction of military expenditure and investment for arms production and acquisition.
- Fund research and advocacy on women's experiences in conflict and its aftermath.

Support women's organizations working for peace at multiple levels

Specific recommendations include:

- Provide core, predictable, flexible financing for women's organizations (grassroots and national) working on the WPS agenda and women's rights.
- Strengthen women's movements.
- Listen to women's organizations working to build peace in their communities.
- Mobilize political and diplomatic resources to support the inclusion of women's organizations in national, regional and international forums and discussions.
- Ensure the physical security of women's rights organizations.
- Support the involvement of women's organizations in emergency preparedness and humanitarian assessment.
- Organize consultations with women's organizations in fragile and conflict-affected states.

Support women's participation in peace processes and peace building at all levels, including financially and diplomatically

Specific recommendations include:

- Support the explicit inclusion of relevant references to women's participation in the formal mandates of mediators, negotiators, special envoys, etc.
- Provide training and skills-building to all mediators and negotiators on the importance of women's meaningful participation in peace processes.
- Support the participation of women in international disarmament forums.

Support women's increased participation in Canada's diplomatic, development and defence initiatives

Specific recommendations include:

- Support the existing targets to increase the participation of women (and overall diversity) in the CAF with timeframes and accountability structures.

¹ The new C-NAP offers the potential to clarify what WPS training should and does involve in specific situations. There is a clear need to better understand how training can actually support better understanding, improved operations and attitude change.

- Redouble efforts to eliminate sexist and homophobic attitudes and practices at home and abroad (within both the CAF and the RCMP).
- Support and report on targets for women's participation in Canada's contributions to peace support operations (military, police, civilian).

Address conflict-related sexual violence as a complex issue requiring a multi-sectoral response

Specific recommendations include:

- Increase investment in meeting the health needs of survivors of sexual violence and press governments to invest in comprehensive emergency health services.
- Support initiatives that address violence against women political candidates.
- Support initiatives that address impunity for sexual and gender-based violence crimes.
- Incorporate references to ATT Article 7.4 in a new NAP to highlight that this is a long-term contribution to eliminating gender-based violence, as well as preventing conflict, its escalation and the recurrence of violence.

Invest in the prevention of armed conflict

Specific recommendations include:

- Ratify and effectively implement the Arms Trade Treaty.
- Outline measures to facilitate women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning, and implementation processes related to disarmament and arms control, including the use, accumulation, and proliferation of weapons.
- Support programmes and projects of humanitarian disarmament and clearance of explosive remnants of war that address the specific needs/priorities of women and girls.
- Support the integration of a gender perspective in disarmament and security in multilateral policy.

Ensure new Peace Support Operations are consistent with and support the WPS Agenda

Specific recommendations include:

- Make gender equality perspectives and WPS commitments an explicit cornerstone of Canada's

involvement in international peace support operations.

- Set and report on the increased percentage of women deployed as part of any new Peace Support Operation.
- Continue Canada's strong position on sexual exploitation and abuse by military, police and civilian peacekeepers, ensuring zero tolerance for infractions by Canadians.

Ground the C-NAP in a rights-based approach

Specific recommendations include:

- Provide financial and diplomatic support to women's human rights defenders.
- Support access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services.

Include gender analysis and address WPS issues across the range of issues (including Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives and in understanding the conflict/extractive industries nexus)

Ensure accountability for WPS policy directives and commitments

Specific recommendations include:

- Ensure public, timely, regular, results-based reporting on the C-NAP.
- Use the annual reports as a moment of reflection to actually assess what is being achieved and why, and better understand problems in areas where progress is slow.
- Provide clear figures on investments in WPS across all participating departments.
- Improve data collection and analysis across programming areas (including humanitarian assistance and mine action). Make the provision of sex and age disaggregated data mandatory in programme planning and reporting.
- Include evaluation and monitoring initiatives.

Engage with Canadian civil society

Specific recommendations include:

- Consult regularly and meaningfully with Canadian civil society.
- Support capacity building and public awareness initiatives on WPS in Canada.