

REFLECTIONS ON CANADA'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY

Relations with Canadian Civil Society Organizations (CSO).

TBA

Recommendation. That close coordination between the Government and WPSN-C and other interested civil society actors continue on the design and implementation of a renewed C-NAP, including with regular and formal consultation sessions.

Baseline, Targets, Actions and Indicators. In lay terms, in order to implement a program, one must know where one is starting from (the Baseline), know what one is trying to accomplish (the Target), know what is required to move from the Baseline to the Target (the Actions), and have a means of measuring progress (the Indicators). C-NAP has 28 Actions and 24 Indicators, but no Baseline or Targets. The absence of the latter two elements have had several consequences. First, real performance measurement was not possible. While the government could report on the actions it was taking in accordance with the indicators, it could not say where it was heading or whether it was getting there.

Second, the absence of a Baseline meant that Canada's already leading global role in implementing the WPS resolutions was not apparent - such activities as our chairing since 2000 of the UN-based WPS Group of Friends, the strong gender-based approach in the *Human Security Program*, leadership at the HRC on the elimination of VAW, the strong thrust for gender equality, women's empowerment, and response to sexual violence in the then-CIDA programs, the already full integration of women in Canadian police deployments, and the opening of all military occupations and foreign deployments to both women and men without discrimination by the Canadian Forces - the latter still ahead of most if not all allies. A description of this Baseline would have made for more realistic expectations as to what C-NAP was designed to accomplish.

Finally, without a Baseline to work from, and Targets to work towards, the 28 Actions, while good in and of themselves, were unfocused. There were too many of them on too broad an array of issues which meant that, while good work was accomplished, the transformative progress which some expected of C-NAP could not be demonstrated or realized.

Recommendation. The renewed C-NAP have a strong Baseline and realistic Targets with a limited number of Actions which are clearly focused on moving from one to the other and for which performance can be measured through appropriate Indicators.

C-NAP Structure for Implementation and Reporting. C-NAP calls for implementation to be undertaken on what has been termed "a distributed basis", that is, each partner department or agency is responsible for implementation within their respective mandates, authorities, resources and accountability frameworks. This worked well as it fully respects our Parliamentary structure of government. C-NAP also calls for partners to submit an annual report to GAC which, in turn, is to coordinate the preparation of a consolidated report for public release on an annual basis.

As is reflected in the above discussion, C-NAP also contained Government-wide Actions and Indicators and it was quickly found that it was difficult to capture the diverse activities of each partner in the common reporting template with which to provide readers with the

ability to track trends and performance from one year to the next, or across the government. The reporting of financial data which could reasonably be tracked from year to year also proved problematic. The Inter-Departmental WPS Working Group worked diligently to resolve the issue but concluded that it could not reasonably be done within available resources. The Working Group has discussed with civil society colleagues whether it might not be better for the next C-NAP to have each partner define its Baseline, Targets, Actions and Indicators in its own C-NAP annex, under an overarching high level government wide strategy. The annual report would be similarly annexed to give a realistic picture of implementation progress by each partner, and how that progress is contributing to achieving the overall government-wide strategic objectives.

Recommendation. The renewed C-NAP be bi-structural with an overarching strategic framework covering individual implementation plans for each partner department and/or program. The annual public C-NAP report be similarly bi-structural with narrative and data which reflects the progress being made by each C-NAP partner and how its work contributes to the realization of the overall strategic objective.

The Attribution of Activities as WPS. Common to many WPS and NAP implementing countries the government found that the four WPS pillars - Prevention, Protection, Participation, and Relief and Recover, while a useful conceptual construct, is not useful for organizing NAP reporting. For example, a post-conflict Recovery activity can often equally be considered as a Prevention activity with respect to the potential for renewed violence. And Participation and Protection activities can apply to Prevention and to Recovery. Further, while countries which are in violent conflict, as well as immediate post-conflict countries, are reasonably readily identifiable, defining fragile states, or states in potential conflict can be problematic from the perspective of the analysis itself, as well as from political and diplomatic concerns such as Canada indicating that a state is fragile which might not consider itself to be so. And some active conflicts are localized within otherwise reasonably stable states which raises issues of how much of a country-wide program can be attributed to WPS.

There is also the question of whether an activity is solely WPS, or only partly so. For example, a project to support the meaningful participation of women's organizations in a peace process is clearly WPS. But a project to facilitate inter-communal reconciliation might not be, but could be in part if a gender-based approach is taken which clearly addressed the needs and contributions of women and girls. Finally, the attribution of activities to WPS assumes a consistent and relatively high level of gender expertise across the government. The above-described issues proved to make consistent monitoring and reporting across the Government and from year to year very challenging, a challenge further compounded by the impact of a rotational workforce.

Recommendation. C-NAP partners devise a simple and focused approach to the issue of how to attribute activities as WPS including through enhancing gender-based analysis skills among officers through training, the establishment and staffing of gender expert positions where needed, harmonizing an approach to gender-marking, and fostering a gender-based culture in all work peace and security work.