



CONCEPT NOTE

Expert Group Meeting on Addressing the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape in National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security in Asia-Pacific

12th January 2017, in Bangkok, Thailand

1. Background

UN Security Council Resolution 1325, unanimously adopted in October 2000, stressed the importance of the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for maintaining and promoting peace and security. In the years since, seven further resolutions on women, peace and security (WPS) have been adopted, creating a robust framework for the implementation of the WPS agenda and reinforcing existing global commitments, treaties and conventions on women's rights including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

To deliver these commitments at the national level, the UN has encouraged member states to adopt National Action Plans on WPS (NAPs-WPS) as one of a range of mechanisms that implements the resolutions and monitors the progress of the WPS agenda. As of December 2016, 64 countries have adopted NAPs, including 9 in the Asia-Pacific region, with several currently in development.

In July 2016, UN Women and the Government of Japan convened an Asia-Pacific Regional Symposium on National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security in Bangkok, Thailand, gathering over 80 participants from 17 countries, representing government, civil society, independent institutions, academia and international organizations to examine the successes and challenges of these NAPs-WPS to date.¹

Among the Symposium conclusions, participants recognized that NAPs-WPS have yet to deliver the practical and strategic outcomes that are most needed by women and girls affected by conflict. It was agreed that there is a need to re-orient NAPs-WPS to the specific needs and rights of women and girls, putting their wellbeing and security at the center of these plans. This is particularly urgent for specific groups living in the most vulnerable situations such as

¹ Report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Symposium on National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security available at: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/nap-report>

survivors of sexual violence during conflict and children born out of rape. Targeted and evidence-based interventions are needed to address both their strategic needs such as discrimination and stigma, as well as their practical needs including access to health, psychosocial services, livelihoods and education.

To critically engage with these issues, UN Women and the Government of the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office will convene a joint **Expert Group Meeting - Addressing the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape in NAPs-WPS** that will take place in **January 2017 in Bangkok**. This discussion will bring together global and regional experts, civil society stakeholders, as well as representatives from UN entities, involved in the development of national action plans.

As part of this discussion, an expert research paper will be commissioned to promote critical analysis and engagement amongst participants of the extent to which NAPs-WPS have addressed the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape to date, and to evaluate how this can be strengthened in the future in contexts that are transitioning post-conflict.

2. Context

A number of NAPs-WPS in the Asia Pacific region identify the existence of survivors of sexual violence:

| NAP-WPS | Initiatives for survivors of SGBV and children born out of rape |
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| Nepal | Has a focus on the delivery of access to justice for SGBV. This includes establishing mechanisms for investigating and prosecuting incidents of SGBV; providing prompt and free legal service to women and girls affected by conflict; and ending impunity by addressing SGBV cases during the conflict and transition periods. There are also provisions in Nepal’s NAP for addressing the special needs of conflict-affected women and girls including providing prompt and free medical service and psycho-social and legal counselling to women and girls victims of SGBV during conflict; establishing temporary residential homes for women and girls at risk; and strengthening the Women and Girls Service Centers. |
| Timor-Leste | Attempts to address the discrimination that women experience due to sexual and gender-based violence inflicted upon them during conflict. It also aims to align its activities with the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence that is victim-centered and focuses on peace and development. |
| The Philippines | Responds to UNSCR 1325 (2000) and UNSCR 1820 (2008) on Addressing the Issue of Widespread or Systematic Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict, and 1888 (2009) on the Designation for a Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Ending Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict. The Philippines NAP-WPS provides for enhancing programs in providing legal, economic, educational, psycho-social support and spiritual services for women and girl survivors of armed conflict. Measures to enhance the criminal justice |

| NAP-WPS | Initiatives for survivors of SGBV and children born out of rape |
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| | system to address violence against women in armed conflict are also included. |
| Indonesia | Includes measures to strengthen Women and Children Care Service Units to protect women and children in conflict areas. Initiatives to improve access to services include facilitating complaint services to women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas; providing free health rehabilitation, reproductive health services, social reintegration and social rehabilitation services, and legal aid and assistance for women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas. Additional measures include providing basic needs to women and children victims of conflict in shelters, and providing educational, health care facilities, livelihood opportunities, and housing and shelters for women and children in conflict areas. |

While sexual violence is addressed amongst these NAPs, the primary focus of NAPs-WPS in the region is on the whole population of women affected by conflict. Furthermore, targeted interventions are not usually developed to address the needs of sexual violence survivors and many activities have failed to be implemented. In addition, provisions to address the needs of children born from rape in conflict are generally overlooked.

In anticipation of the Regional Symposium on NAPs-WPS in July 2016, UN Women and the Government of Japan commissioned the development of a discussion paper on emerging WPS issues in the Asia-Pacific region,² and a discussion paper assessing the impact of NAPs-WPS in addressing women's needs and priorities. This paper evaluating women's needs recognized that effective NAPs-WPS must deliver interventions that address both the practical needs such as access to essential services of conflict-affected women, and their strategic needs such as participation in leadership and decision-making mechanisms.³ It was highlighted that sexual violence survivors and their children must have these interventions tailored to their specific needs in order to ensure they receive real benefits from the NAP-WPS framework.

These findings also align with the key recommendations of the Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The Global Study found that States should support and invest in participatory processes, social accountability tools and localization initiatives to ensure the voices of the most affected and marginalized populations inform and shape relevant responses and monitoring of progress of NAPs-WPS. It also encouraged a number of approaches to improve the access and outcomes of conflict-affected women to practical and strategic needs including by prioritizing the design and implementation of gender-sensitive reparations programmes with transformative impact, including through implementation of the Guidance Note of the Secretary General on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.

² Jacqui True, *Women, Peace and Security in Asia-Pacific: Emerging issues in National Action Plans for Women, Peace and Security* available at: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/emerging-issues-in-naps-on-wps>.

³ Aisling Swaine, *Making women's and girls needs, well-being and rights central to NAPs in Asia-Pacific* available at: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/making-womens-and-girls-needs>.

3. Participants

The Expert Group Meeting will bring together 15-20 expert participants including government representatives, civil society actors and academics and experts that have been involved in the development, implementation or monitoring of NAPs-WPS in the region, or practitioners involved in addressing the needs of sexual violence survivors. Recognizing the expertise of British and Japanese experts in the development of their countries respective NAPs, participants will include those from the UK and Japan.

4. Objectives and expected outcomes.

Building on the key outcomes of the Regional Symposium on NAPs-WPS, including the discussion paper and recommendations on addressing the practical and strategic needs of SGBV survivors in NAPs-WPS, and the recommendations of UN Women's landmark 2015 Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the Expert Group Meeting will provide a forum to reflect on the extent to which NAPs-WPS in the region have addressed the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape, and how interventions may be strengthened. An expert research paper will be prepared for discussion by participants and recommendations will be developed for the production of a report on considerations to inform future policymaking and trainings on addressing the needs of SGBV survivors and their children in NAPs-WPS.

The Expert Group Meeting on addressing the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape in NAPs-WPS aims to:

- a) Identify the extent to which NAPs-WPS have incorporated the practical and strategic needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape, focusing on Nepal, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and the Philippines through consideration of a discussion paper. This paper will be developed as a follow up of the previous paper commissioned on "The potential for impact of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security in addressing women's needs and priorities";
- b) Explore the potential strategies and initiatives for policymakers to address the needs of sexual violence survivors and children born out of rape, including examples of Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste, as well as Sri Lanka and Myanmar (as countries with emerging needs in this area). Case examples on some of these contexts will be prepared to facilitate this discussion at the EGM;
- c) Develop a report on considerations of the needs of SGBV survivors and children born out of rape in NAPs-WPS in the Asia-Pacific region for the future use of policymakers and practitioners.