

Annual report 2020

Implementing Norway's National Action Plan 2019-2022 Women, peace and security



Norwegian Ministries

INTRODUCTION

This is the second yearly report on women, peace and security that is being finalised in the midst of an ongoing pandemic. A pandemic that has had a major impact on the work with women, peace and security, just as it has across the board on the broader foreign policy and development agenda.

The pandemic has a profound impact on women advocating for human rights and peace around the world. In particular in countries affected by ongoing conflicts. Governments around the world have effectively limited the possibility for people to move, to gather and to communicate. Often for good reasons, but occasionally also using the pandemic as an excuse to clamp down on activities they do not welcome and that is seen as a challenge to their leadership.

Hence, the pandemic interrupted or halted a number of peacemaking efforts and peace processes. In some cases, limited talks continued, but it proved challenging to take forward broader inclusion efforts. In some contexts, actors were innovative in developing digital platforms and alternative means of communication. We are conscious that these come with access constraints, security concerns and also translation barriers. New experience and innovations have been gained and should be brought forward to strengthen peace processes and efforts, but these cannot fully make up for regular meetings and inclusion mechanisms.

Overall, we see both positive and negative trends on the global situation on women, peace and security. On the positive side, the 1325 agenda and its reach is continuously increasing. Countries that are doing well are doing better and better. And there are clear signs that there is agreement across the international community on most parts of the 1325 agenda and its language.

However, on the negative side, this relative consensus does not necessarily translate into commitments, and too often it remains as language only, without impacting events on the ground. Often referred to as the implementation gap. We also see that the countries that are doing worse on this agenda is doing continuously worse. Hence, widening the gap between those who deliver results, and those who don't.

This dynamic also effects our work on the UN Security Council. Through 2020 we have been focusing as much as possible on efforts that can have an operational effect on the ground in specific country situations. Likewise, we have paid particular attention to the relationship between women's participation and protection. In the understanding that for women to be fully able to participate, they must be able to do so without the risk of reprisals, including targeted killings. And to be fully protected, women must participate politically. So that they take part in shaping society, peace and security, giving protection systems and cultures a clear gendered approach.

This report gives a picture of Norway's efforts to improve on women, peace and security. And it is the second time that we report along the new guidelines developed for the Foreign Service. We have set ambitious goals, and we strive to achieve them in partnership with the UN, regional organisations, other countries, civil society and academia. We are pleased to note improvements in a number of areas, but also recognize that we do not always succeed in getting where we want to go.

In late 2019, Norway entered into a partnership with UN Women to support the Women, Peace and Security work within the Beijing + process, and dedicated 10 mill NOK to; a) enable the UN and member states to bridge implementation gaps as identified by the UN Secretary General in his report on Women, Peace and Security to the Security Council in 2019 and b) ensure that the Beijing +25 process includes young peacebuilders and enables intergenerational dialogue. In 2020, we supported the launch of the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action during the 2020 Generation Equality Forum. Norway currently serves as a board member of the Compact, where we aim to actively work on the implementation and operationalisation of the commitments made.

Another important example is our preparations for Norway's membership in the UN Security Council. The Women, Peace and Security agenda is one of Norway's priorities in the Council and in our preparation for the membership, we promoted the agenda in all aspects of our work and strengthened important triangulation of communication between the embassies, the capital and our mission in New York. In 2020, we stayed in close contact with civil society and our embassies kept an ongoing dialogue with relevant partners on the ground. Because of our longstanding commitment and thorough preparation, we were well prepared for promoting this agenda in the UN Security Council.

In 2020 Norway has strengthened the gender perspective in international operations and missions and increased our efforts for women and girls in our humanitarian work. In June UN's first handbook for prevention and combat of CRSV was launched with strong support from Norway. This is the first handbook for UN peace operations that sees all the various actors' areas of responsibility in context, and will ensure a more comprehensive, coordinated and targeted effort in all peace operations that currently have a CRSV mandate.

In 2019, Norway supported the Mukwege foundation to establish the Global Survivors Fund for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. Despite Covid-19, the fund has during 2020 set up a board, started recruitment and the development of programs.

Norway is also a long-term supporter of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. This fund supports local women's peace and humanitarian efforts in a growing number of countries all over the world. In 2020, Norway also continued its annual funding to the fund and other funding to important women's organizations. We also initiated new partnerships, for example with NGO Working Group on WPS, in order to strengthen the work on women, peace and security among the members of the Security Council.

As this is the 2020 report, it does not cover developments throughout 2021, which have been significant, particularly in regards to certain country situations. In Myanmar, the military seized power after detaining Aung San Suu Kyi and other democratically elected leaders 1st of February 2021. And in Afghanistan, Taliban took control over Kabul 15th of August 2021. These events have had a major impact on people, politics and the humanitarian situation in general, and even more so for women. In Afghanistan for example, Afghan women find themselves fighting for rights they previously often enjoyed, such as access to education, access to labour, and access to political participation. These developments will, however, be covered in the report for 2021.

Likewise, Norway's first yearly report ever on women, peace and security covering a year where Norway has been an elected member of the Security Council will be the report on 2021. Norway's previous seat on the Security Council started in 2001, just months after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325, but it was years later that this resolution reached the attention and impact it has today.

Women, peace and security is a system-wide effort in the Norwegian government. Hence, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Culture and Norad, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation are central to this work. As well as several embassies across the world that deliver results on this agenda under difficult circumstances. Thanks to this system-wide efforts, Norway continues to be a global leader on women, peace and security.

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This is the second annual report on the implementation of Norway's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019–2023. The basis for the report is the new results framework, which presents our expected results relating to a) the extent to which Norway enables women's participation in peace and security efforts, and b) the extent to which Norway helps to ensure that women's rights, needs and priorities are respected and addressed in peace and security work. The indicators in the results framework are not meant to give a complete picture of Norway's contributions in this field, but they give some indication of the progress made and where more efforts are needed on our part.

The first part of this report presents the 2020 results, reviewing **each indicator in the results framework**. The full results framework can be found in the National Action Plan. The guidelines to the foreign service's work on women, peace and security also include baseline data and targets. In this report, we have divided the results framework into five parts, reflecting the different chapters of the plan. For easy reference, explanatory notes and comments referencing baseline data and targets are included after each part. The notes are worth reading because the numbers and percentages might reflect a change to the sample, as well as decisive political or strategic developments.

The results framework also includes operational indicators that measure the results of our own plans and procedures, training and resourcing. Reporting on these indicators is included under the relevant chapters, e.g. when we discuss women in the Norwegian police, this is included in the chapter on operations and missions.

Our efforts to promote the Women, Peace and Security agenda draw on a broad range of diplomatic, political and financial tools. We work at the local, national, regional and global levels in a range of arenas, with various partners and across regions. Not all of this work is reflected in the results measured by the indicators.

We make no attempt to describe and synthesise the results of all relevant programmes and initiatives in this report, but the results of our women, peace and security programmes are subject to the same reporting requirements as other programmes funded by Norway. More information about the various programmes and initiatives – and their results – can be obtained on request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Since the indicators are quantitative, we have included **country narratives** to illustrate what some of the results look like at country level. These narratives are found in part two of this report. The publication of the report was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the results and country narratives may not mirror the current situation on the ground in 2021.

During this plan period, Norway has ten priority countries for women, peace and security: Afghanistan, Colombia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, the Philippines, South Sudan and Syria. Our delegation to the African Union is part of the same follow-up system. As of 2019, our embassies and teams in these countries report annually on progress made in relation to the expected results set out in the women, peace and security plan. They report on the indicators that are most relevant to their work. While not all-encompassing, these narratives provide an account of our key focus and results achievement in ten of the countries where we work most systematically.

Reporting is also included on special grants for civil society organisations' work on ensuring women's participation and rights in peace and reconciliation efforts. While these special grants are only one of many different types of relevant grants, they are earmarked for work on WPS. Most of the efforts supported through these specific grants are in priority countries. This chapter is therefore included in the second part of this report, which presents country narratives.