

CONFERENCE REPORT

Nairobi Symposium:

Maximizing Impact of Women, Peace, and Security Policies in Africa

July 22 - 25, 2014

Nairobi, Kenya



Inclusive Security is grateful to all of the participants at the Nairobi Symposium for bringing your expertise and knowledge of national strategies to realize the objectives of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Thank you to the Symposium co-hosts, partners, and volunteers for your commitment of time and resources to increase the impact of women, peace, and security policies in Africa.

THE NAIROBI SYMPOSIUM WAS PRESENTED BY



University of Nairobi



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I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Ambassador Swanee Hunt established the Institute for Inclusive Security in 1999 to change the way decisions are made about war and peace. She created a new kind of organization – one that takes a transformative approach to preventing violence, stopping war, and restoring communities after deadly conflicts. Inclusive Security works with governments and civil society to produce measurable results demonstrating the reality that women are a powerful force for peace.

On October 31, 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, the first Security Council resolution that required parties in conflict to support women’s participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. In 2004, the Security Council urged member states to implement Resolution 1325 by developing national strategies, called national action plans, to realize its goals. To-date less than a third of UN member states have adopted NAPs and very few of these have been fully implemented.

The gap between the promise of Resolution 1325 and the reality of its implementation led Inclusive Security to examine key components that might increase impact. In 2013, Inclusive Security consulted with government and civil society actors to identify obstacles that prevent countries from developing and implementing high-impact NAPs¹. Of all the gaps that emerged – the most prominent was the lack of evidence to demonstrate results of implementation.

Limited public resources require policymakers to show the results of their initiatives. Through research and consultations, Inclusive Security discovered that most national strategies lack an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that can be used to collect data consistently. This data is needed to build a body of evidence that showcases the impact of NAPs and that can be used to galvanize momentum for Resolution 1325 around the globe.

“The inclusive approach encourages change of mentality...each stakeholder seizes the opportunity to integrate [the NAP] into their daily actions.”

4 ¹ Inclusive Security defines a high-impact NAP as: One that is designed and implemented through an inclusive process, includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities, is accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation plan, and is adequately resourced.

II. MAXIMIZING IMPACT OF WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY POLICIES IN AFRICA

To address the gap in M&E, Inclusive Security joined with partners Cordaid and the University of Nairobi to explore the work underway on the African continent in the field of women, peace, and security and generate recommendations for increasing its impact.

With 12 African countries implementing NAPs and more plans being developed, the continent has a substantial body of experience. African countries, for example, led the way in post-conflict NAP development and implementation. Over three days in Kenya, the Nairobi Symposium brought together policymakers and implementers to discuss the value of effective M&E plans and to build participants' capacity to construct and implement them. The gathering also strengthened and expanded the African NAP community.

The Symposium was a platform for participants to showcase lessons learned and best practices for strategy design and implementation, as well as to navigate shared challenges. The three-day convening involved a series of plenary and small-group workshop sessions. More than 120 Symposium delegates represented 15 countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, including those currently and considering designing or implementing NAPs:

Burundi	Guinea	Rwanda
Cote D'Ivoire	Guinea-Bissau	Sierra Leone
Democratic Republic of Congo	Kenya	South Africa
Ethiopia	Liberia	Sudan
Ghana	Nigeria	Uganda

Country delegations were comprised of government and civil society representatives. Nearly 30 per cent of the delegates were men and all brought technical expertise in policy design or implementation – some at a normative level and some more specific to gender equality. The following sections outline themes that emerged across country NAP experiences. They also highlight best practices and innovative approaches that were discussed at the Symposium.

III. DESIGNING NAPs AND GENDER STRATEGIES

Bringing Everyone to the Table

Participants at the Nairobi Symposium emphasized the need for NAP design processes to include consultation with civil society and other relevant actors. Inclusivity at this stage promotes commitment to the strategy’s success and implementer ownership in subsequent phases.

In Nairobi, participants found that an inclusive design process often yields a final strategy that is accessible and relevant to a broad spectrum of actors. They stated that an inclusive strategy design helps to ensure that both government and civil society perspectives are reflected.

They emphasized that early buy-in from implementing actors strengthens broad commitment to the strategy. Symposium participants explained that it’s difficult to maintain buy-in from male supporters if they feel threatened by NAP priorities. A presenter from Liberia addressed this concern by noting the need to “demystify the gender agenda.” Men involved in the design process have the opportunity to see that UNSCR 1325 aims to benefit society as a whole and that empowerment of both genders need not be to the detriment of one or the other. It also gives men the opportunity to influence NAP objectives and language so that they are invested in strategy success.

Inclusive design processes also come with challenges. One participant expressed concern about how to facilitate consultative design in an efficient and timely manner. Representatives from Sudan are eager to move forward developing their plan, but are concerned about balancing the diverse needs of women across the country without getting overwhelmed by the challenges. Several noted that mechanisms for providing input must be clearly structured and follow agreed-upon deadlines. See the “Best Practice” for Sierra Leone’s approach to efficient inclusive NAP design.



Delegates from Burundi review their National Action Plan. Workshop sessions emphasized the importance that government and civil society representatives be well-versed on the content of their strategies.

Emerging Practice: **Sierra Leone**

Challenge

Cultivate NAP support from key actors throughout design and implementation.

Approach

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children's Affairs houses the Sierra Leone National Action Plan for the Full Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The year-long NAP design process began by establishing a Government-Civil Society Task Force titled WANMAR 1325 Task Force. It was chaired by MSWGCA and comprised 35 government, civil society, and local organizations. The Task Force met monthly throughout the design process, enabling representatives to consistently shape and influence the final document.

After the SiLNAP was launched in 2009, the WANMAR 1325 Task Force was transformed into steering committees to guide the implementation process. According to David Lahai, Executive Director, Organization for Inclusive Development, the diverse actors are committed to the plan's implementation. There is strong buy-in from local level governments to translate the SiLNAP's five pillars to their own context. Seven of the 19 subnational local councils are implementing SiLNAP activities.

i. Planning For Results

The Nairobi Symposium highlighted the importance of monitoring and evaluation and why they are central to high-impact NAPs. Participants reflected on their experience measuring implementation and assessing the impact of policies for women, peace, and security. Some brought success stories while others were eager to hear best practices from fellow participants.

A representative from the Democratic Republic of Congo highlighted the role that civil society plays in tracking NAP implementation. Monitoring reports published by civil society contain data that is used in advocacy to the DRC government about the importance of women, peace, and security.

An M&E expert from South Africa noted the important distinction between monitoring – asking whether we are doing what was planned and what progress we're making – and evaluation – a deeper analysis of “issues such as causality, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value for money and sustainability.” She stressed that M&E provides important feedback to implementers and their partners, strengthening evidence-based decision making, improving policy or program performance, and generating knowledge for learning.

Countries that are best able to measure and demonstrate results are those that prioritize M&E early on in their strategy design. In Rwanda, the Plan design process began with a baseline study to determine existing gaps and potential areas for success to empower women in the wake of their civil war.² Using baseline information, policymakers can determine their policy goals, which in turn help implementers identify appropriate policy priorities and pillars. However, not all government agencies have the capacity to track and measure changes produced by their policies. One speaker from Cote d’Ivoire stated that a results-based management approach was the “driving force” behind his country’s NAP. It “emphasizes achieving measurable results, which supports effective monitoring and evaluation.”

The first step toward demonstrating NAP progress and impact is to articulate what the strategy aims to achieve—what will success look like? A focus on results and long-term and mid-term outcomes allows implementers to align activities and clarify strategies in a logical way.

“Knowing why our policies, programs, or projects succeed or fail is as important as knowing what they do.”

At the Nairobi Symposium, Inclusive Security presented its NAP framework, which is one of multiple tools presented in their NAP M&E guide, “What Matters Most: Measuring Plans for Inclusive Security.” We built the framework in consultation with a range of partners to help decision makers define the results they are hoping for at the end of NAP implementation. It is a flexible tool that proposes three broad categories of long-term results (outcomes) that countries can consider when designing or revising their NAP structure. It then deconstructs the three outcomes to mid-term results, mapping out what needs to be achieved mid-way through implementation to reach the desired outcomes. Participants at the Nairobi Symposium worked with the framework in interactive sessions, beginning to map out the target results of their country’s plans.

In addition to creating a results-focused structure, the NAP design process should include measures of success. A speaker at the Symposium from Sierra Leone emphasized that indicators³ must be contextualized and aligned with other national policies to assure greater ownership. He pointed out that the Sierra Leone NAP originally had 59 indicators, which they streamlined to 35. Lowering the number of indicators made it possible to collect more meaningful data.

2 Republic of Rwanda National Action Plan 2009-2012 the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325/2000 on Women, Peace, and Security p.8

3 Indicator: Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

“The essential force behind our NAP: results-based management”

There was a wide array of indicators across the 15 countries represented in Nairobi. In Uganda, for instance, civil society is collecting data on 15 of more than 50 NAP indicators. Participants reflected that NAPs in Sierra Leone and Ghana use indicators that measure mid-term and long-term results instead of focusing on activities and immediate outputs (such as the number of participants or the number of capacity building events delivered). This enables implementers to report on progress toward the long-term results of the NAP. Baseline data for each indicator must also be collected at the beginning of NAP design or revision to provide a basis for comparison in the future. Well-designed indicators with associated baseline information are critical to accurately monitor and evaluate progress.

Inclusive Security also presented a list of indicators that we created to accompany the NAP Framework. The list includes quantitative and qualitative measures, recognizing that while qualitative indicators are less objective and sometimes require additional resources for data collection, they can yield more nuanced data.

The majority of NAPs represented at the Symposium include M&E plans with assigned responsibilities to implementing ministries. Some countries, like Senegal and Sierra Leone, have baseline and target values as well. To effectively implement M&E plans, countries created mechanisms such as an M&E Committee through the Ministry of Gender in the DRC or the future Monitoring Committee in Nigeria that will have representatives from the government, military, civil society, and other partner organizations. Such committees and plans are essential to ensure that data collection, analysis, and reporting take place on a continuous basis during the implementation of the NAP.



Government and civil society representatives discuss political commitment to gender strategies. Support during design and implementation from government officials is critical to success.

“Twenty percent of performance contract indicators for government ministries in our country are gender-related.”

ii. Cultivating Government Support

Successful NAPs must be supported by government representatives and governance systems. In Nairobi there was wide consensus that women, peace, and security should be viewed as addressing national rather than gender issues. The majority of countries participating in Nairobi house their NAPs in ministries of gender or women’s affairs. As a result, their political momentum often centers on women’s rights. Participants expressed their support for NAPs to be framed as national security strategies, thus making the plans relevant to a larger group of political actors.

Designers of the *Kenyan National Action Plan for Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820* desired wide political support for the strategy. The design process was initiated by a government delegation that visited Helsinki in 2009 to consult with Finnish officials about their experience. Before committing to the design and launch of the K-NAP, high-level consultations were conducted with security sector ministries. After the K-NAP was drafted, it was presented to the National Security Advisory Committee for approval. Throughout the design process there was emphasis on building political will for its success. Designers requested that implementation be led by the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Devolution (Planning). Many participants at the Nairobi Symposium felt that political will and momentum for NAPs would increase if implementation was spearheaded by a ministry outside of gender or women’s affairs.

iii. Identifying Resources

Conducting an inclusive design process, generating political will, and setting up systems to effectively monitor, evaluate, and communicate results are each key to a high-impact NAP. However, even with all of these elements in place, without designated funds for implementation the ability to deliver results is significantly hindered. The UN Security Council acknowledged this gap in Resolution 2122 (October 2013), urging member states to develop dedicated funding mechanisms for NAPs and to increase direct contributions to local civil society organizations.

At the Nairobi Symposium, presenters in a session on Multi-Stakeholder Financing Mechanisms presented ways to overcome this gap. Cordaid and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) conducted research in 2010-2011, which indicated that most countries lack earmarked funding or a budget to support implementation of the NAP. Instead activities were often “mainstreamed” into existing structures, activities, and budgets. When funding isn’t earmarked, it becomes difficult to track activity implementation and the lack of transparency can inhibit meaningful collaboration among civil society, government, and multilateral institutions.

Financing of NAPs, therefore, is not merely about fundraising – it’s about accountability, transparency, and local ownership. It’s also about strengthening capacity of local civil society organizations and improving their ability to access resources.

Many participants in Nairobi commented on their difficulties accessing funds. Donor requirements are often so rigorous that they effectively bar access for grassroots organizations. As one participant said, “our English may not be as good – but the work we do on the ground is better than what we write in our proposals.... we cannot cope with the conditions you give these are conditions for women that live in cities, have offices, and have accountants...come and see the work we do on the ground.”



Participants share their responsibilities in relation to the monitoring and evaluation cycle. Whether a policymaker, shaper, or influencer, everyone has a role to ensure its objectives are met.

Emerging Practice: **Burundi**

Challenge

Facilitate consistent communication among key actors during NAP implementation.

Approach

In Burundi they have established annual “Open Days” to facilitate coordination among implementers of the National Action Plan (NAP) on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Each year, civil society, relevant partners, and government representatives work together to gather security priorities and concerns directly from women in communities. The information that they gather is submitted to government

and United Nations representatives for consideration.

Civil society and key partners take the recommendations and develop a budget and action plan for their implementation. A monitoring committee is also established and meets regularly to track the progress that is made on Open Days priorities.

IV. IMPLEMENTING NAPs AND GENDER STRATEGIES

i. Maintaining Inclusivity

Inclusive NAP design results in a strategy that is more relevant and meaningful for key actors. When the design phase is sufficiently inclusive, it facilitates ownership during implementation.

Effective coordination between government and civil society is critical during implementation. It helps ensure that actions articulated during the design process are underway and unfold as anticipated. Civil society's direct interaction with NAP beneficiaries during implementation is a source of information for policymakers and coordinating actors. Likewise, government representatives oversee resource allocation for NAP implementation and are acutely aware of political contexts that might impact the strategy. Both parties are critical during implementation and clear communication of priorities should be facilitated throughout.

One result of an inclusive design process is more efficient implementation. The reason for this is two-fold. First, when relevant actors are involved in the planning process it helps to ensure that everyone's work is coordinated. There is less opportunity for overlap in interventions. Second, collaboration builds partnerships among NAP implementers. It strengthens the community of actors working on implementation and creates a sense of accountability among them. It facilitates dialogue between local, regional, and national actors so that the needs of men and women who are impacted by NAP implementation are consistently reflected.

“ We always begin each monitoring cycle with a reflection meeting. In this meeting we review what we have done as a coalition since the previous monitoring report was published, we request the Ministry of Gender to update us on activities that government has implemented during the same period, we discuss strategies that have worked in effectively disseminating the report, then we discuss the monitoring tool, which we review each year to accommodate progress that may have been made and new issues that have emerged”

Civil society representative, Uganda

ii. Operationalizing the M&E Plan

Throughout the Symposium, participants shared their expertise about how to make monitoring and evaluation systems work. Presenters in one of the final plenary sessions discussed elements that are required to sustain monitoring and evaluation during NAP implementation. One noted that M&E is built into the Nigerian NAP and that the Ministry of Women's Affairs has a lead role in making sure that it is well implemented. However, she noted that this is hindered by the lack of skilled personnel to collect basic data and to drive other M&E processes, a sentiment echoed by several other country representatives from the DRC and Côte d'Ivoire. Drafters of the Guinea-Bissau plan established a steering committee responsible for tracking implementation.⁴ The members of the committee ranged from government representatives, including parliament and the Ministry of National Defence, to civil society. This was a critical step toward putting the strategy in motion.

In Uganda, the Ministry of Gender and the Office of the Prime Minister monitor the implementation of their NAP. Ugandan civil society is also at the forefront of monitoring for results. They annually collect and disseminate monitoring data on NAP implementation. They provide annual trainings for their researchers, review their data collection tools every year, and implement a data validation process enabling them to report on and present rigorous findings to the public as well as to Ugandan government agencies. One presenter representing civil society in Uganda emphasized the importance of coordinating data collection with relevant government and international organizations.

“ In many of our countries in Africa, it is one thing having a policy in place, and another implementing it to achieve intended results. It is therefore important for CSOs to monitor the implementation of the NAP, to measure progress on each indicator, to document success, to identify gaps and challenges that need to be addressed, and to capture lessons learnt and good practices that can be shared and replicated.”

Participants from the DRC mentioned that their NAP was revised in 2013, taking into consideration the findings of their 2010-2013 evaluation. This highlights the importance of conducting mid-term and final assessments or reviews as they can provide crucial information on improving women, peace, and security policies and support evidence-based decision making. Evaluation is also a resource – and human capacity-intensive undertaking that can be outsourced to external,



Experts from Cordaid, the Burundi Ministry of Gender, and Burundi NGO NAP Steering Committee present about inclusive design and implementation. Coordination between government, civil society, and other relevant actors is a key component of a high-impact strategy.

independent experts or conducted internally. Some countries, such as Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa decided to create a specific department or office dedicated to monitoring and evaluation. In South Africa (which has not yet released a NAP), creating the Department of Policy Monitoring and Evaluation within the President’s office resulted in a common language and conceptual base across government agencies and clarified roles and responsibilities for policy M&E.

Applying evaluations and monitoring reports is crucial for supporting policies. Government agencies can use the available information to raise awareness about Resolution 1325 and the situation of women in the country or the community. They can also benefit from the findings by using them to inform their strategies and improve the decision-making processes. On the other hand, civil society organizations can use the data for advocacy purposes. As one Ugandan participant put it, the monitoring reports “enable us to point out gaps, bottlenecks, and challenges in implementation and enables us to demand explanation and action to address the gaps.” All actors involved in NAP implementation can use evaluation reports and data to make the case for women’s involvement in peace and security and to provide evidence to citizens, funders, and partners on the progress made.

iii. Sustaining Political Will

Political will is a key component to getting NAPs designed, approved, and underway—but this is only the beginning of the process. Political will must be maintained for effective NAP implementation as well. At a plenary session about generating and sustaining political will, Nairobi Symposium participants discussed their challenges maintaining long-term political support for NAPs.

In Liberia, the NAP received high-level government attention during its design phase. When the final document was approved, there was an information gap among implementing ministries who received their assigned responsibilities but did not know the context of the NAP or its importance. The strategy was de-prioritized by many due in part to government officials' lack of awareness about its objectives. A Liberian speaker in Nairobi noted that during the post-conflict transition process, there were many competing policies that ultimately took precedent. There was a similar decrease in government support when it came to localizing the LNAP. A high level of political investment diminished over time as momentum was lost. The civil society speaker emphasized the need to inform all three branches of government about their roles and specific responsibilities for implementation and to ensure that civil society also takes ownership in implementation.

One way to address the challenge of insufficient political will during implementation is by introducing incentive structures. Despite obstacles to formally launch the K-NAP, Kenyan county governments are committed to inclusion of women in their peace committees. Each committee has 15 members—291 total across the country—and one-third of them are women. They are charged with collecting information from the community to monitor stability and maintain open communication. To reinforce the importance of these structures and the role of women, there is a Peace Award that is given to recognize women's contribution to peace at the local level.

iv. Securing Funding

For many countries, resourcing the implementation of their own NAP is challenging – public resources are scarce and women's inclusion is not normally a top budget priority. For example, designers of the Sierra Leone NAP developed an extensive budget totaling \$21 million, yet they have received less than \$1 million in actual resources. This is but one illustration of the extent of this large gap. But reliance on external financing can be problematic, as well. Often such external financiers attach conditions that undermine local ownership – and when external resources dry up, it can become an excuse for governments to halt implementation.

Cordaid and GNWP advocate for establishing a multi-stakeholder financing mechanism as an alternate means for resourcing strategy implementation. Such a mechanism would not only address funding gaps, but also serve as a means for enhancing the institutional capacity of implementers. It would help reduce the amount of overlap and competition among implementers (particularly civil society actors) in accessing funds.

Along with Womankind UK, UN Women, UN Peacebuilding Support Office, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, Nepal, Sierra Leone, and South Sudan, Cordaid and GNWP formed a NAP Financing Discussion Group to identify and overcome barriers to adequate financing and advocate for the development of a global women, peace, and security acceleration fund (including a dedicated NAP financing mechanism). In developing such a mechanism, the objectives of the group are to:

1. Encourage transparency, coherence, coordination, collaboration, and accountability mechanisms around funding;
2. Improve civil society's, especially local women's groups, ability to access and administer funds (civil society is effectively barred from directly accessing most major multi-donor trust funds and fund administration is almost exclusively carried out by UN entities);
3. Engage non-traditional donors including the private sector; and
4. Promote country led administered trust funds.

The group will also provide space in which to share and solicit information on good practices and lessons learned in a meaningful way, and serve as a mechanism for encouraging other countries to develop and resource NAPs.



Kenyan civil society representatives and a Ghanaian government official examine the monitoring and evaluation components of their national strategies. A high-impact strategy should include a plan to track and report on its progress.

V. ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY STRUCTURES

i. Regional Action Plans

In addition to national plans, one session at the Symposium highlighted Regional Action Plans. RAPs have been explored on the continent as an alternative mechanism for realizing the objectives of UNSCR 1325 for several reasons.

First, regional neighbors across Africa often face similar, sometimes related, histories of conflict as well as a number of cross-cutting issues restricting women's meaningful inclusion in peace and security processes. These include, but are not limited to, a lack of basic services, restricted educational and economic opportunities, and gender-based violence.

Second, many countries already belong to a number of regional communities, such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Economic Community of West African States, which aims to bolster political stability and economic security among members states. Finally, the African Union provides a continental platform for advancing issues of peace and security.

There are several challenges to the regional approach, which were discussed during a plenary session about coordination. For example, cultural and linguistic diversity within the Great Lakes region has made it difficult to draft a plan that is inclusive of women's needs and priorities in all relevant countries. Additionally, regional organizations often lack the necessary financial resources to effectively develop, implement, and monitor such plans. One representative from Ethiopia noted that the AU's Directorate of Gender currently has the smallest budget of any of the organization's units, despite its broad scope of work.

ii. Local Action Plans

Local Action Plans have been used as a means to ensure NAP impact at the community level. Local strategies can be tailored to ensure that priorities and objectives directly address pressing community needs. This increases the prospects for impact and makes national policies relevant at the local level. Examples discussed at the Nairobi Symposium demonstrated that civil society is often heavily involved in a local plan's design, implementation, and evaluation. These organizations are in-touch with community needs and can create innovative ways to make the NAP relevant on a local level. For instance, in Guinea activists connected their strategy to traditional proverbs. This creative approach took the message that women's inclusion is vital to security and made it accessible to a broader group. Civil society's meaningful involvement in plan localization can lead to greater relevance to and support from the community.

However, successfully implementing local plans is often difficult. In Kenya, for example, local action plans differ widely from the country's draft NAP. Such a large disconnect makes it difficult to ensure government-civil society coordination, access to government funds for implementation, and meaningful monitoring and evaluation.

VI. CONCLUSION

Technical experts of national gender strategy design and implementation across Sub-Saharan Africa brought a wealth of knowledge to the Nairobi Symposium. The in-depth discussions and workshops were an opportunity for participants to see that many of their challenges are shared. From efficient inclusive design structures to data collection and dissemination, candid conversations led to valuable information sharing.

The Nairobi Symposium was a platform to strengthen the African and international NAP community and to build relationships that can be leveraged to advance women's influence on peace and security issues. Through expanded networks and strengthened capacity, Symposium participants are more equipped to increase the impact of their work toward realizing the promise of Resolution 1325.

VII. APPENDIX

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