

## Introduction & background

Nearly 20 years after the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Dutch civil society assesses the Dutch successes on implementing the Gender (Women), Peace and Security agenda<sup>1</sup> in the Netherlands. A key part of that assessment is analyzing whether the Netherlands is meeting the UN's Global Study's recommendations on financing Women, Peace and Security (WPS) work<sup>2</sup>. The conclusion is clear: the Netherlands is not meeting the standards we should be meeting.

In order to seriously implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda the Netherlands must consider the fundamental link between harmful gender norms (and roles) and conflict. Sustainable and inclusive peace cannot be achieved without the implementation of the WPS agenda. It is fundamental to fight gender inequality and work on women's rights and tackling harmful gender norms and roles in fragile countries. At the same time WPS work requires knowledge of the context due to the greater harms that can be done. The four pillars of the resolution underline this rationale. For sustainable and inclusive peace and security, it is thus crucial to look at:

- 1) The role of women in conflict prevention
- 2) Their participation in peacebuilding
- 3) The protection of their rights during and after conflict
- 4) Their specific needs during repatriation, resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

In sum, implementing WPS work does not only lay with the policy areas for development funding, but goes far beyond it. The fact that this agenda is overseen by the UN Security Council makes it even clearer. WPS implementing involves the broader security policy, for the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Justice and Security.

To have meaningful impact through Dutch funding on the WPS agenda the Netherlands must align its policies with its global responsibility and UNSC resolutions. Long-term impact is established by financing WPS standalone programming for durable periods and WPS mainstreaming in government policies at home and abroad. In this paper we'll provide recommendations for the Dutch Government to meet the UN standards. We'll focus on a) WPS mainstreaming and b) the NAP 1325 fund.

### A. WPS mainstreaming

#### **1. The Netherlands must finance and earmark WPS mainstreaming in all regular humanitarian, development and peace and security programs, in addition to funding WPS standalone programming.**

During every national, regional and international event on WPS – whether it is at Dutch level, in the EU, AU or various UN institutions – it has been made clear: effective and meaningful implementation of WPS work cannot solely lean on WPS standalone programming by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development. In order to make a meaningful, sustainable and lasting difference in humanitarian, development, peace and security work, WPS must also be mainstreamed in those fields. That includes integrating WPS impact indicators and trackers in all Dutch government's humanitarian, development, peace and security policies, programs and funds.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation has allocated a budget of approx. 16 million euros for four years of WPS standalone programming.<sup>3</sup> Besides this earmarked WPS budget, it is hard to track any (financing of) WPS work in any other policy, program or fund. Nor can we easily measure progress of the implementation of governmental or CSOs' WPS work in other humanitarian, development, peace and security

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<sup>1</sup> When talking about the global Women, Peace and Security agenda, we also refer to the broader Gender, Peace and Security agenda. WO=MEN members aim for gender equality and inclusive peace and security from a holistic perspective, engaging women, men, girls, boys and other gender identities.

<sup>2</sup> <http://wps.unwomen.org/financing/>

<sup>3</sup> The MoFA in 2016 has earmarked 15 million euros to 4 years WPS funding via [the policy framework 'Vrouwen, Vrede en Veiligheid'](#), an additional 450.000,- euro's for 2 years WPS funding via [the Peace and Security 4 All fund](#) and finances as the Spanish-Dutch Gender in Operations Course.

work. We know civil society organizations are engendering their work, but it is unclear how structural and thoroughly this is done, and what the impact is. There are no specific WPS indicators allocated. Nor is there any formal link made between the policy track on women's rights and gender equality and capacity building of civil society (article 3) on the one hand, and work on migration, humanitarian and security and rule of law (article 4) on the other<sup>4</sup>.

To measure progress and to better address and tackle the root causes of conflict and stability, the Dutch government needs a comprehensive set of WPS impact indicators. These indicators should account for every part of Dutch government that is affiliated with the implementation of the WPS agenda. Otherwise the Netherlands will be unable to change or adapt strategies on the implementation of the WPS agenda and on meaningful, sustainable and lasting humanitarian, development, peace and security as a whole. We therefore urge the Dutch government to earmark WPS impact indicators in relevant programs, such as in the follow up of FLOW, Dialogue and Dissent, Accountability Fund, Stability Fund, Human Rights Fund, Voice, Addressing Root Causes, funding of the Dutch Relief Alliance and throughout any other the relevant departments and ministries.

## **2. The Netherlands must meet the UN's minimal standards on WPS financing and allocate 15% of the Dutch aid flow to conflict affected contexts for gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding**

The Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2015, urged Member States to earmark 15% of their aid budget to WPS work.<sup>5</sup> This budget will allow States to sufficiently invest in and track progress on women's representation and meaningful participation in peace processes, better protection of women and girls in conflict and conflict prevention.

In 2019 the Dutch government earmarked 0,46% of the total Dutch aid budget (approx. 4 million euros<sup>6</sup> of approx. 3 billion euros) to WPS standalone funding. In 2019 the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation has allocated 1,7% of its total development aid budget on women's rights and gender equality (52.439.000 euros of approx. 3 billion euros).<sup>7</sup> Both budgets are far less than the 15% UN standard and do not comply with the needed WPS mainstreaming in other relevant policy fields.

The Dutch government needs to meet the UN standards and should increase its investment in WPS work and therefore earmark at least 15% of its aid funding to WPS work. This needs to exceed the current WPS standalone funding of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development. WPS funding should also be priority of the other Ministries that have committed themselves to the implementation of the WPS agenda. Such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Security, of Defense and of Education, Culture and Science.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, civil society organization that apply for funding for humanitarian, development, peace and security work should be challenged to show their commitment to the implementation of the WPS agenda in fragile contexts and dedicate 15% of their programs to WPS trajectories. Also, the relevant Ministries should dedicate funding and time within their own organization to track and monitor progress and document good practices.

## **B. WPS Standalone Programming: NAP1325 Fund**

There is a wealth of evidence highlighting the benefits of investing in women's organizations and organizations that work on WPS. As was recognized and emphasized by the UN Security Council when adopting UNSCR 2122<sup>9</sup>. The Netherlands as one the WPS friendly countries is making a serious effort to support that. Still, women's organizations and organizations that work on women, peace and security, remain underfunded, receive primarily short-term project support and spend a disproportionate amount of their time on donor-related activities such as preparing funding proposals and reporting results.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/begrotingen/2018/09/18/xvii-buitenlandse-handel-en-ontwikkelingssamenwerking-rijksbegroting-2019>

<sup>5</sup> <http://wps.unwomen.org/financing/>

<sup>6</sup> Assuming the 16 million euros WPS funding is equally divided over the 4 years of funding

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/begrotingen/2018/09/18/xvii-buitenlandse-handel-en-ontwikkelingssamenwerking-rijksbegroting-2019>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nap1325.nl/assets/00-FINAL-NAP-2016-2019.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2122>

Therefore, we endorse the NAP 1325's Mid Term Review's<sup>10</sup> recommendations to increase long-term, flexible and accessible funding for the diverse NAP civil society signatories: women's and diaspora organizations, peace organizations and development organizations that work with their local partners on women, peace and security. And that monitor the (impact of the) implementation of the global WPS agenda<sup>11</sup> by state and non-state actors. In addition, we recommend the following:

**1. Support the implementation of the global WPS agenda, framed by the eight UN Security Council WPS Resolutions<sup>12</sup>, CEDAW General Recommendation 30 and SDG's 5 and 16. Measure implementation with qualitative impact indicators, rather than with numbers and activities**

The NAP 1325 fund is one of the instruments the Dutch government has to support the implementation of the global WPS agenda, to which it has committed itself. To allow for better monitoring and evaluating the Dutch efforts and progress on this implementation, it makes sense to use the legal and international agreed frameworks that are already out there: the eight WPS UNSC resolutions, CEDAW GR 30 and SDGs 5 and 16. In addition, we recommend to monitor on qualitative impact indicators that can track transformational change, rather than on numbers and activities. Examples are patterns of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, or women's and youth's perception of physical security, or women's and youth's ability to participate in public life<sup>13</sup>. As this will allow for steering on long term WPS strategies that contribute to social transformation and normative change.

**2. The notion of partnership needs to be the basis of direct strategic and political engagement between the Ministry and the NAP 1325 fund recipient organizations, irrespective the choice of administrative management of the relationship, and with respect for the autonomy of the recipient organization**

Strategic partnership between the Dutch government and civil society (in the Netherlands and in conflict affected contexts) is beneficial for both sides of the partnership. It enables advocacy and for agenda setting on WPS related issues, such as disarmament missions in Libya, or the support of women's meaningful participation in track one processes in Yemen or Syria. It allows for exchange of knowledge and expertise on erupting conflict, support of local women's groups by embassies, etc. It also allows for better understanding of MoFA staff about the limitations of operational space women's groups and other civil society actors face while implementing programs in conflict affected countries. The notion of partnership includes engagement with diaspora (women) organizations. Their role is of importance because they can function as a bridge between WPS needs in their communities and countries of origin and the Netherlands. Obviously, any strategic partnership between CSOs and the MoFA should respect and allow for CSOs to function as a watchdog to Dutch policies and practices and their impact on WPS work in conflict settings.

**3. Structurally and meaningfully consult with local civil society while designing the NAP 1325 fund and while designing NAP funded programs**

Local women's groups and other relevant civil society needs to take part in a participatory gender, and conflict and risk analysis (including vulnerability analysis) to inform the design of the NAP 1325 fund, and equally to the design, costing and implementation of NAP funded programs. While this seems to be the obvious thing to do, often lack of time or capacity often restraint donors and international CSOs to do so. Local women's, men's and youth's ideas and voices should never be an afterthought or add on. But instead are a central building block in the process including the analysis and design phase. Therefore, we recommend to build in time and resources to adequately undertake these consultations with local actors.

**4. Provide long-term support on movement building and capacity building of CSO's to advocate and lobby their respective governments and regional and international state and non-state actors to implement the WPS agenda**

Local CSO's need to be enabled to build their capacity to identify the problems of women, men and youth in conflict contexts, to meaningfully engage in peace processes, and to address the structural inequalities they encounter. Dutch based CSOs need to be enabled to – in joint cooperation with local networks and CSOs -

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<sup>10</sup> Herwijer, R. (2019), *Mid Term Review: National Action Plan of Women Peace and Security 2016-2020*.

<sup>11</sup> Including related international agreements and treaties, such as the SDG's, CEDAW and the Arms Trade Treaty.

<sup>12</sup> Resolutions 1325 (2000); 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2010); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015)

<sup>13</sup> Find more examples via: <http://www.peacewomen.org/security-council/WPS-indicators-and-monitoring>.

monitor Dutch WPS policies and practices and to hold relevant state and non-state actors (f.e. the Dutch national government, EU, NATO and various UN institutions) accountable to implement the WPS agenda. That needs long-term investments, including organizational investments such as team building and psychosocial support of team members<sup>14</sup>. We therefore endorse the MTR recommendation to fund at least 5-year programs. In addition, we recommend that part of the NAP fund is allocated for existing and successful WPS programs of civil society that are currently funded via NAP 1325-III.

#### **5. Offer flexible funding and funding mechanisms, to enable CSO's to adapt today's programs to the problems of tomorrow**

WPS programming is context related and these contexts tend to change easily in conflict affected countries. History has taught us that focus on certain countries or themes can limit civil society extremely to adapt to the current situation. Look at the Arab Spring during the implementation of NAP 2. Or the crackdown on women's groups in 'peaceful' Burundi just recently. Or the transition of power in Sudan following the peaceful protest in Sudan initiated by the youth. We recommend to allow for flexible funding so that CSOs can re-allocate or temporarily hold on to their funds based on actual need. It may be relevant for enhanced flexibility of the fund to include a contingency fund (2-3 million) that organizations can apply for to quickly address unforeseen opportunities in the course of the 5 years of the NAP fund.

#### **6. Earmark 5 million euros a year, instead of 4 million a year for WPS programming**

To both realize long term support and allow for flexible funding, we recommend to allocate 5 million euros a year for 5 years for the NAP 1325 fund.

#### **7. Prioritize context- and gender analyses over country focus**

Almost none of the current problems' women, men and youth face in conflict affected countries are solely internal problems, related to internal conflicts. Think of the vibrant arms trade between Libya and its neighbor countries, the proxy war in Yemen, the Yezidi women coming from Syria and now living in Kurdistan, and the youth from Darfur being sent to fight in the war in Yemen. Limiting a program to one country is basically denying the root cause and solution of WPS related problems. We therefore recommend to focus on the context and within that context the gender dynamics which should be addressed, changed, supported, etc. Even when this results in organizations working regional instead of in one country.

#### **8. Allow for holistic programming, including in post-conflict contexts**

An important element of the WPS work has to do with conflict prevention and social transformation. There is a need of funding programs in post-conflict contexts, such as Colombia, where a peace agreement has been signed, but the actual work on social transformation has just started. There are also contexts such as in Syria and Iraq, where reconciliation work is much needed. And there are contexts such as in Syria, Sudan, Mali, Burundi and DR Congo where relief and recovery programming needs elements of psycho-social support and economic empowerment to support women, men and youth survivors of conflict. All these elements are crucial to WPS work and need adequate funding.

Finally, when talking about the Women, Peace and Security agenda, we should be aware of crucial linkages with the Youth, Peace and Security agenda (UNSCR 2250). Also, we should not limit the WPS agenda to working with and on women. In order to change social norms and conservative structures that prevent women's and girls' engagement in public life or adequate protection, we need to more structurally engage men and address negative masculinities. We thus recommend to allow for holistic programming, considering all four pillars of the WPS agenda and relating to other peace and security topics and networks.

#### **9. Offer accessibility to the variety of CSOs that are currently part of the Dutch NAP 1325 community and their local partner**

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<sup>14</sup> Find more background information and recommendation on integrating psychosocial support in development cooperation via GIZ Regional Programme 'Psychosocial Support for Syrian/ Iraqi Refugees and IDP' (in preparation): *Guiding Framework for Training and Capacity Development in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Development Cooperation. As exemplified in the Context of the Crises in Syria and Iraq*. Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. (2019)

All women's and diaspora organizations, peace organizations and development organizations that work with their local partners on women, peace and security are key partners in implementing the WPS agenda. The Dutch WPS work thrives by the diversity of their knowledge and experience in the field in many different ways. We therefore recommend a diversity of grant categories and re-granting mechanisms that consider the needs and financial capacities of the diverse organizations and movements. A future NAP could cater for different capacities by creating for instance three distinct windows with different annual minimum and maximum grant sizes.

**10. Strengthen individual organizations and value voluntary collaboration based on equality**

Collaborations between diaspora and women's rights organizations, peace and development organizations and working in alliances can have added value and deserve to be encouraged and strengthened. Consortia can bring wider range of knowledge, experiences, and skills to a project. It can also provide small or diaspora women's organizations with new opportunities to secure cooperation with (I)NGOs and governments which would not otherwise be available to them. However, collaboration should be voluntary and arise out of people's own initiatives. Former used models have sometimes led to unhealthy financial and programmatic power dynamics. Therefore, we recommend to allow for both individual and consortia funding, including for smaller organizations. Ensure that consortia integrate a power analyses and develop an MoU on equal decision-making processes. Finally, invest in transparent communication with all implementing partners, not allowing lead applicants to become gatekeepers to the Ministry.