

Finland

Sara Haapalainen (1325 Network Finland)

(February 2016)

Introduction

The first Finnish national action plan (NAP) for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was adopted in September 2008 and covered the period 2008–2011. The process of reviewing the first NAP started in January 2011 and a second NAP was adopted in June 2012 covering the period 2012–2016.

Both NAPs are focused on three thematic areas: (1) Conflict prevention, peace negotiations and peacebuilding; (2) Crisis management; and (3) Strengthening and protecting the human rights of women and girls. Each of these thematic areas includes three objectives, which have remained largely unchanged in both NAPs. However, the second version includes the following additional elements: (1) research on the impact of NAPs; (2) communication to promote the NAP;¹ and (3) monitoring and reporting mechanisms. The second NAP includes 42 indicators for monitoring implementation. These are divided into eight thematic areas and cross-refer to both the UN's and EU's indicators.² The key parties responsible for each objective and indicator are also listed in the NAP.³

There is no dedicated budget for NAP implementation but funding is available for UNSCR 1325-related activities. Tens of millions of euros from the Finnish development budget are spent annually on gender/UNSCR 1325-related activities and projects. However, no systematic data is collected on their impact on the achievement of the goals set out in either UNSCR 1325 or in the NAP.

The NAP should be guiding Finland's overall external affairs co-operation since 'the objectives of the NAP are promoted at the national level and in bilateral cooperation as well as in multilateral international organisations and within the EU. They are also promoted in regional and local crisis and conflict areas as well as in countries undergoing democratic transitions'.⁴ Priority countries are also mentioned, for example the 'twinning partners' Afghanistan, Kenya and Nepal. This type of twinning involves exchanges of ideas, experiences and mutual learning in the drafting and/or implementation of NAPs.⁵ In Finland's case, twinning partnerships have included support for the drafting and/or implementation of NAPs in Afghanistan, Kenya and Nepal. All three partnerships were initiated during the period covered by the first NAP and have been transformed into programmes and projects supported through UN Women country offices since the adoption of the second NAP. It is difficult to measure the degree of success of these partnerships as no specific evaluation has been conducted.

¹ Objective 10: Finland promotes studies, research and information on UNSCR 1325

Objective 11: Finland will report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325

² For example, the NAP includes two indicators, which include references to EU Indicator 11 (Proportion of women and men among heads of diplomatic missions and EC delegations, staff participating in UN peacekeeping operations and CSDP mission at all levels, including military and police staff). The two Finnish indicators are (1) Finnish personnel in civilian crisis management and election observation has a minimum share of 40 % of either gender; and (2) Increased share of women in Finnish military crisis management as well as monitoring of the development of the number and share of women.

³ The responsible parties are the Crisis Management Centre Finland, the Finnish Defence Forces and the ministries of education and culture, foreign affairs, defence, the interior, justice and social affairs and health.

⁴ Finnish NAP, available at

http://www.kopijyva.fi/ejulkaisut/ulkoasiainministerio/UM_05_2012/UM_05_2012.pdf

⁵ See http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/cso_advisory_group_naps_raps_and_twinning_0.pdf

During the period covered by the first NAP, Finland also supported the drafting and implementation of a UNSCR 1325 regional action plan for Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The second NAP is mostly outward-looking but it also contains a number of internal elements and components such as: (1) the ratification and implementation of international conventions (e.g. the Istanbul Convention or the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings); (2) requirements for the recruitment and training of Finnish crisis management personnel; and (3) the availability of gender-disaggregated statistics and other information on the different areas of implementation of UNSCR 1325.

The NAP makes reference to both men and women as well as sexual and gender minorities. It also includes recognition of 'the special needs of both women and girls as well as of men and boys and acknowledgment that 'sexual violence against both women and girls and men and boys are used as a method of warfare' and that 'the role of men and boys is central for the realisation of the human rights of women and girls'. Sexual and gender minorities are referred to as 'Finnish starting points' meaning that Finland 'emphasises the rights of persons belonging to sexual and gender minorities'.

At the EU level, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) 2014 implementation report, Finland has promoted the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda in the planning and implementation of the EU's crisis management missions, and it has deployed gender expertise in those missions. The report also refers to Finland's efforts in proposing UNSCR 1325-focused changes to the wording of CSDP operational tasks and other mission documents, as well as its statements (together with other Nordic countries) on UNSCR 1325-related issues in the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC). According to Finland's Permanent Representation to the EU, it has supported the appointment of women to vacancies in crisis management positions and prepared the candidates for the selection process.

Design

The process of drafting the second NAP included relevant ministry representatives and administrative branches, civil society and academia. The work that took place between January 2011 and May 2012 was based on two reports: an implementation study produced by the MFA and a civil society shadow report produced by the 1325 Network Finland.⁶

The process for reviewing the NAP included a series of seminars and workshops organised by the MFA, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Ministry of the Interior (Moi) and the 1325 Network Finland. Internal stocktaking efforts were undertaken in the MoD and Moi. The MFA gathered inputs from various departments and embassies and the twinning partners from Afghanistan and Kenya were given an opportunity to comment on Finland's priorities regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

A 'Follow-up Group', which was chaired by the MFA and included officials from other ministries and representatives from both academia and civil society, including the 1325 Network Finland, discussed and commented on several draft versions of the second NAP. A smaller working group of volunteers reviewed new versions. This smaller group included the Chair and the Secretary of the Follow-up Group (both from the MFA), other ministry officials and a civil society representative.

⁶ The 1325 Network Finland enhances the goals of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent related resolutions and consists of 18 Finnish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) plus a number of independent researchers and other experts.

The 1325 Network Finland established three informal thematic working groups that were aligned with the NAP's thematic areas. Each thematic group comprised four or five civil society representatives whose role was to coordinate civil society comments on the various drafts of the NAP. In addition, the 1325 Network Finland, a number of its member organisations and other Finnish NGOs also prepared their own statements. In its official statement, the Network made 13 concrete recommendations of which four were incorporated into the NAP's final version. Of the four recommendations, which were taken on board, one was a requirement for the presentation to parliament of an annual NAP implementation report. The Network also used its statement to make a number of criticisms of the NAP, including a lack of foreseen actions in Finland, policy coherence and concrete actions for achieving the stated goals.

The second NAP was published in June 2012. The signatories were the MFA, the MoD, the MoI and the Ministries of International Development,⁷ Justice, and Education and Culture. Civil society organisations (CSOs) did not sign the NAP since CSOs believe the NAP implementation is first and foremost a government responsibility. However, civil society is an important and active partner in the implementation.

Implementation

The Follow-up Group monitored NAP implementation. As stated above, the second NAP includes an annual implementation report to parliament. The MFA drafts these reports based on information and reporting from the parties, which are responsible for the implementation of the various activities included in the NAP. Of the two annual reports, which have been produced to date, only the second one included any reference to the indicators and even this was not undertaken systematically. The Foreign Affairs Committee discussed the first report in one of its meetings and members asked questions about the monitoring of the NAP and the lack of funding for the 1325 Network Finland. The Committee plans to discuss the second report together with the third report, which is due to be published in 2016.

The NAP provides for both a mid-term and final implementation evaluation. The mid-term evaluation did not take place but the MFA has commissioned the Institute for Inclusive Security to conduct an assessment of the NAP's implementation. While it was clearly important for the MFA to undertake an external evaluation of the NAP implementation, it is worth noting the procurement process for the evaluation was neither discussed in the Follow-up Group nor was the tendering published.

The 1325 Network Finland has not contributed to any of the annual reports as it takes the view that the responsible parties should report on the implementation of the NAP. However, in 2011, the Network commissioned a shadow report to complement the MFA's unofficial follow-up report on the first NAP and to support the drafting of the second NAP. The shadow report found horizontal and vertical challenges in the first NAP's implementation: 'horizontal challenges concern all the ministries and their offices and stem from a lack of budget for UNSCR 1325 NAP implementation and decreasing human resources in the governmental sector as a result of recent political decisions.'⁸ According to the report, the vertical challenges were linked to the structures of the various ministries involved: 'these include challenges in process management, in UNSCR 1325 training and operational functioning, in research and evaluation as well as in the monitoring of operations.'⁹

⁷ The Ministry of International Development had not been a signatory of the first NAP.

⁸ Terävä, Sirkku (2011): Varjoraportti Suomen kansallisen 1325 -toimintaohjelman "Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus" toteuttamisesta vuosina 2008–2011.

Available at: http://www.1325.fi/tiedostot/Kansalaisjärjestöjen_1325varjoraportti_2011.pdf

⁹ Ibid.

In addition to its 2011 shadow report, the 1325 Network Finland also commented on the first annual report in the Follow-up Group and produced an eight-page comment paper on the second annual report. It has also worked with other Finnish NGOs to produce the CEDAW and Beijing shadow reports, which include sections on UNSCR 1325. Finally, in 2014, the Network also published a comparative evaluation of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the Nordic countries and, in 2015 it published a report on Finnish NGOs' work on enhancing the goals of UNSCR 1325.

Monitoring and tracking NAP implementation has been a difficult task as no baseline study was produced and reporting has neither been systematic nor sufficient. A lack of resources and insufficient data collection methods in the various ministries are some of the reasons for the poor state of the reporting. In addition, many of the indicators are vague and although they are seemingly interlinked with the goals that are set out in the NAP, they are not necessarily relevant to the intended objectives (see *pg.1*). Since the two annual reports which have been produced to date are more summaries of actions and activities rather than assessments of results, it is difficult to evaluate whether or not the NAP has had any impact in the conflict-affected countries where Finland is present or providing support.

Furthermore, the Follow-up Group's activity has varied throughout the years and some of its members have only rarely participated in its meetings. Many of the ministries involved have scarce human resources allocated for work on UNSCR 1325 and some face challenges in retaining institutional memory due to high staff turnover.

However, some positive aspects and progress can be traced in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Finland. For example, the Crisis Management Centre Finland, which trains and recruits Finnish experts for international civilian crisis management missions, and the MoD have produced their own implementation plans which align with the NAP. Similarly, gender training for crisis management personnel has been improved and the 1325 Network Finland, in co-operation with the Crisis Management Centre Finland and the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre, have compiled gender checklists, which have been used regularly in the training of Finnish civilian and military crisis management personnel. In addition, the MFA has produced statements and taken initiatives on UNSCR 1325-related issues in different international arenas (e.g. partnering in the Nordic Women Mediators' Network) and several Finnish embassies have included specific UNSCR 1325 goals in their own action plans. Gender equality and women's and girls' rights are one of the priorities of Finland's development policy. In 2014, Finland had several women in leadership positions (e.g. Head or Deputy Head of Mission) and over 50% of the experts that were sent to participate in election observation missions were women. In addition, more than a third of the staff Finland deploys to civilian crisis management missions are women. This is particularly remarkable given that, overall, mission staff is predominantly male.

Conclusions

Civil society actors, including the 1325 Network Finland, play an important role in monitoring the implementation of the NAP (e.g. by implementing UNSCR 1325-related projects and programmes in fragile and conflict-affected areas). Civil society's views are valued in the Follow-up Group and NGOs are seen as partners in the UNSCR 1325 work. However, it is sometimes difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the advocacy work, which is undertaken by NGOs, including the 1325 Network Finland.

There are also limited opportunities for NGOs to secure funding for their UNSCR 1325-related work. This has become increasingly problematic since the funding which is available for Finnish development NGOs was reduced by approximately 40% in 2016. As a result, many projects have been cancelled, many employment contracts have been terminated and the overall space for civil society in Finland has shrunk.