

## Civil Society Dialogue Network Meeting

### Expert level workshop on Monitoring the Implementation of the EU Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325

27 June 2013, Brussels

#### Flash Report

This flash report offers **key insights and recommendations** from the expert workshop to gather input for the second Report on the EU indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820, which is currently being developed. This should be read in conjunction with the discussion paper [Lessons learnt from monitoring the Implementation of Women, Peace and Security policy](#) which provided background for the meeting and was revised after it to include more detailed recommendations on the indicators themselves.

Including participation from civil society actors, monitoring and evaluation experts, Member States (MS) representatives and EU policy-makers, the workshop reviewed progress and challenges in implementation, including two country case studies (Afghanistan and Kosovo), and conducted a comparative analysis of the EU monitoring mechanism and the agreed indicators to explore how they can more effectively contribute to implementation.

The meeting was structured into four sessions:

**Session I** - Progress in the implementation of the EU Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and 1820

**Session II** - Civil society case studies on implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Kosovo and Afghanistan

**Session III** - Moving from measuring progress to showing impact: lessons learnt

**Session IV** - Key lessons and emerging trends in EU implementation of Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and 1820

This report captures the key points made and discussed by the participants in the meeting and was collated by the meeting rapporteur Lesley Abdela, Senior Partner, [Shevolution](#) and EPLO. In particular, the report highlights the key insights on monitoring and evaluating women, peace and security policies from the EU, Member State and civil society perspective. It also includes key challenges and learning identified by participants and summarises the most salient recommendations.

The Expert Level Workshop was organised by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) under the Civil Society Dialogue Network, a three-year project funded by the European Commission aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU policy makers. For more information about the project, please visit the [Civil Society Dialogue Network](#) page.

*“Today’s is an important opportunity for us all.”  
EU Participant*

## 1. Key insights on monitoring and evaluating women, peace and security performance

### a. EU perspective:

*“Indicators may not always work. You could bean-count 200 meetings and then it is a chance meeting in a corridor which causes something important to happen.”  
EU Participant*

The biennial compilation of reports on EU Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and 1820 is an accountability measure to track progress in implementation. The first monitoring report was published in 2011<sup>1</sup>. For the first time this year, the EU has opened up the opportunity to civil society representatives and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) experts to provide their input into the report before finalizing it, **setting a strong model** for other regional (and indeed national and international) organisations everywhere.

Tracking progress in implementation of EU commitments on Women, Peace and Security is a complex endeavour since it aims **to capture a composite and multi-faceted reality**. Some of the most trenchant existing challenges and progress in implementing EU WPS policy emerged from the discussion. The M&E process is difficult for the EU Task Force on Women Peace and Security<sup>2</sup> to administer, because of the **size and complexity** of the exercise. The number and type of actors involved (both EU actors and MS), the process design, the monitoring framework and the small amount of human and financial resources available for this specific task only add to its complexity.

Challenges were identified with regards to the process of collecting the data and with the analysis of the data itself. The **different sample of responses** gathered this year makes the first and the current draft report harder to compare meaningfully against each other. The response rate this year has shown a drop in MS’ reporting compared to the first iteration and a consistently low level of responses by EUSR teams while more EU Delegations<sup>3</sup> provided their answers. For this reason, data and figures, including financial ones, are hard to interpret (especially without baseline data or concrete targets).

Challenges in the interpretation of the qualitative and quantitate data are also linked to the formulation of some of the indicators which do not allow for easy compilation. **Refreshing and refining some of the indicators** to make them more user-friendly would facilitate the compilation of responses and consequently the analysis of the data collected in future iterations of the monitoring exercise.

The current report also shows **progress in some of the key areas** where challenges were identified in the first report<sup>4</sup>. There is considerably more information on EU’s targeted support to women’s participation in formal and informal peace processes which denotes increased efforts

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<sup>1</sup> [Report on the EU indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCR 1325 & 1820 on Women, Peace and Security](#) (2011).

<sup>2</sup> The EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security was set up after the adoption of the EU Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (2008) to increase EU inter-institutional coordination and promote a coherent approach to gender-related issues. The Task Force is composed of staff working on gender and security issues across the EU institutions and representatives of EU Member States. Other regional organisations and civil society representatives are also invited to the Task Force meetings. The Task Force developed and adopted the EU indicators in 2010 and compiled the first monitoring report in 2011.

<sup>3</sup> All EU delegations in third countries were asked to compile the questionnaire on the basis of the EU indicators this year. In 2011, only EU Delegations in fragile, conflict-affected and post-conflict countries were consulted.

<sup>4</sup> Page 3, Report on EU Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (2011).

to report on and document these activities. Progress was also registered in the number of NAPs adopted by EU Member States - although this says little about their quality - and in the inclusion of women, peace and security issues in CSDP planning documents.

Last but not least, there are few areas that are conspicuous for their absence, in particular **transitional justice** and **humanitarian aid** at their intersection with the women, peace and security agenda, and could be included in future reports.

**Key challenge:**

- ❖ How to extract qualitative and quantitative data that is meaningful and comparable without over-burdening reporting officers.

**Key learning:**

- ❖ There needs to be clarity on the methodology used, the monitoring framework should be user-friendly and the objective of the exercise should be clearly stated. A guidance note to illustrate the design, purpose and functioning of the monitoring process could be provided to support reporting officers.

**b. Member State perspective**

The MS have a wealth of experience to share at EU level on monitoring and evaluating their National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325. Although an increasing number of EU MS (17) have adopted a NAP, and a considerable number of these plans have undergone mid-term and full-scale reviews leading to new/revised versions, only in few instances are the monitoring reports public and accessible to the detriment of the regional-level exercise.

Specific experiences from the Irish and Dutch National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 processes were shared. In both cases the NAPs were developed with extensive input from and **cooperation with civil society**. In Ireland, the NAP was developed in consultation with a composite group of civil society, academics and government departments, as well as with women who had experienced conflict, including asylum seekers, migrant women and refugees and women in Northern Ireland. The Irish experience is in this respect unique, in that it includes **the politically sensitive issue of a conflict on its borders** (Northern Ireland) and also a domestic focus on migrant women.

The recent monitoring exercise on the Irish NAP, carried out by independent consultants, revealed some of the strengths and weaknesses of the document. If on the one hand, the ambition of the NAP (5 Pillars; 48 actions; 73 indicators) the complexity of the issues and the diversity of actors involved made the monitoring process challenging, its inclusiveness, openness and independence makes it a good model. One of the key findings was that the NAP provided the **political impetus** and a critical window to embed gender-sensitive approaches to link peace and security with domestic policies.

The Dutch experience also highlighted the value of the intense involvement of civil society (44 organisations are signatories of the Dutch NAP) for the array of expertise they bring to the table and direct access to partners in the regions interested by the NAP. Of critical importance was also the **strong parliamentary support** (85% Dutch MPs actively support the NAP) **and oversight**. While monitoring implementation of NAPs remains vital, often these mechanisms fail to capture the real change on the ground. During the monitoring phase, challenges linked to the activities and projects to be included in the monitoring exercise emerged. For instance, the extent to which gender mainstreamed projects contribute to and are relevant for the women, peace and security agenda was discussed.

In both cases it was highlighted that the **absence of baseline data** for evaluation purposes

was problematic and that future monitoring exercises would benefit from baseline data against which progress can be measured. In addition, both MS NAPs and EU policies on Women, Peace and Security and their respective monitoring mechanisms would benefit from greater inter-linkages.

Overall, it emerges that while EU MS have made great strides in pushing for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at national level and in fragile, conflict-affected and post-conflict countries where they are active, there is more that could be done **to better communicate** and share their experience at EU level.

Key challenges:

- ❖ NAPs that are too ambitious in scope and wide ranging in geographic coverage are hard to implement and to monitor;
- ❖ Weak links across objectives, actions and indicators frustrate implementation and monitoring exercises;
- ❖ MS level activities to implement UNSCR 1325 are not enough linked to EU-level implementation and vice-versa.

Key learning:

- ❖ There should be clarity on civil society's role in the developing, implementing and monitoring of women, peace and security policies, from the outset;
- ❖ A focus theme/objective in a selected range of countries could facilitate implementation and tracking of progress.

c. **Civil society perspective**

*"We need to make conflict analysis more gender sensitive. How do we get more reporting on gender in peace and security reports? At present we are not getting gender into peace and security, we are getting peace and security into gender."*

*Civil Society participant*

The effort to consult with civil society representatives at this stage in the process of compiling the monitoring report was recognised as a positive first step towards making the **EU accountability mechanisms on women, peace and security more inclusive**.

Experiences from civil society active in conflict affected and post-conflict countries where the EU and EU Member States are involved, in particular from Afghanistan and Kosovo, provided a snapshot of progress in the implementation of the EU Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325 and remaining challenges ahead. Participated noted that while policies are in place and efforts to ensure women's participation in peacebuilding by the EU and other regional and international actors are plenty, **missed opportunities to ensure women's participation to formal peace negotiations** and official *fora* are still conspicuous.

The draft monitoring report provides an extensive account of **EU and MS initiatives to support women's participation to formal and informal peace negotiations** including, for instance, training in negotiation and mediation skills. Ideally, the report should also include information on the how many of the trained women could actually participate to formal negotiations, what their participation brought to the table and how grass-root level reconciliation efforts link up to the formal-level negotiations.

The examples of Kosovo and Afghanistan reinforced the idea that while the EU's support to women's organisations in conflict-affected and fragile states is extensive, it should be fine-tuned. Key elements include:

- 1) the EU should take into account the cultural and religious context in which it operates in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach to UNSCR 1325,
- 2) the EU should direct a larger proportion of development and reconstruction funds to institutional support for women's organizations not just in capitals but in remote and rural areas;
- 3) The EU should use its leverage to ensure issues like missing persons and justice for rape victims during the conflicts are included in EU-facilitated/supported peace processes;
- 4) All peace and security data collected by CSDP missions should be gender-disaggregated;
- 5) Gender Advisors in CSDP missions should be strategically positioned close to the Head of Mission have access to decision-making structures and classified documents.

*“Little support from the EU has been evident in supporting women at higher political decision making levels, including their participation and influence in major international conferences and meetings on Afghanistan.”*  
*Civil society participant*

Civil society also shared insights from their experience in monitoring and evaluating WPS work and implementation drawing the attention to existing sources, like the in-country and global reports of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), and mechanisms utilized, such as online dialogues<sup>5</sup>. Civil society also felt that existing monitoring mechanisms and indicators are often **disproportionately focused on quantitative as opposed to qualitative data** and that they should be coupled with other analytical tools, such as short interviews, to assess **behavioural changes**.

The general assumption emerging from most existing monitoring reports both at national and EU level that these should be vehicles to share successes and progress in implementation, was considered problematic by civil society. If the purpose of these exercises is to contribute to collective learning and to prompt remedial action where necessary, **set-backs and challenges in implementation** should also be included in the reports.

As an element that rarely gets attention, it was noted that **intimidation and threats against women** advocating for peace and security and for their participation in these processes, should be monitored in EU and national mechanisms, given the prevalence of these in conflict and post conflict societies and especially where women are active on 1325 issues<sup>6</sup>.

Key challenges:

- ❖ Measuring change is a complex endeavour; monitoring mechanisms and indicators alone, if useful to collect data and measure progress, run the risk of becoming bureaucratic tools unable to capture real change;

Key learning:

- ❖ M&E processes should be embedded in thorough, gendered conflict analysis to be able to capture how gender roles have transformed before, during and after the conflict;
- ❖ Documenting challenges and regress in implementation of Women, Peace and Security

<sup>5</sup> [GPPAC, EPLO, WIIS Online dialogue on Civil Society Support to Monitoring the Implementation of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security](#) (2012).

<sup>6</sup> See also the findings of the Kvinna till Kvinna report on the effects of slander against women [Equal Power Lasting Peace](#) (2012)

policies is as important as sharing best practices.

## 2. Key Recommendations

The following is a selection of the most practicable and strategic recommendations tabled by participants in terms of improving the EU's monitoring process for its commitments to women, peace and security. In another model of good practice, the EU also invited civil society to submit specific written comments on the draft report.

### To the EU

- 1) Refresh the indicators to set clear short and long term targets with baselines and bench-marks, and to address quality and impact as well as quantitative issues;
- 2) Include options for collaborative reporting with civil society such as including CSOs in conflict-affected countries as respondents to specific questions;
- 3) Institute mechanisms to assess EU's support to women's participation in a peace and security in cooperation with local civil society organisations (including direct beneficiaries and others);
- 4) Include challenges and regress in monitoring reports on WPS as well as options for remedial action;
- 5) Consider a praise/blame list of respondents in terms of a) presence or absence of response; b) quality of response c) impacts demonstrated or challenges both analysed and/or overcome;
- 6) Provide guidance and support within EU institutions and Member State on the M&E process including how it helps implementation (e.g. a help-desk facility).
- 7) Consider options for tracking prioritized themes/issues over time (e.g. reducing intimidation against women; implementing transitional justice initiatives; humanitarian assistance as part of peace building and conflict prevention);

### To the Member States

- 1) Ensure the EU Task Force on WPS is adequately resourced and staffed to drive implementation of the WPS agenda including the M&E of the EU's work in this area;
- 2) Ensure that MS NAPs contain an implementable, clear monitoring mechanism including indicators which link to the EU indicators;
- 3) Provide full responses to information requested on the indicators by the EU including constraints and ideas for mitigation.

### To civil society

- 1) Support MS in revising or instituting effective monitoring mechanisms for the NAPs in a collaborative fashion;
- 2) Share experience on M&E in their own women, peace and security work, in particular for the development of user-friendly indicators/mechanisms;
- 3) Provide information for shadow reports and other mechanisms to feed into MS and EU reporting.