



# MONASH University

## **Prospects for Gender Equality in Peace and Security Policymaking: The Potential of the United Nations' Women, Peace and Security Agenda**

**Barbara K. Trojanowska**

MA Gender Studies, University of Oslo

MA Philosophy, University of Wrocław

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Supervisors:

Associate Professor Katrina Lee-Koo

Professor Jacqui True

Professor JaneMaree Maher



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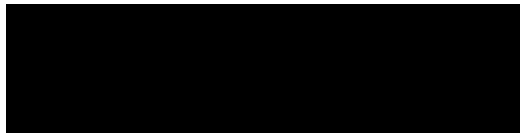
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Barbara K. Trojanowska

23 June 2018

## **Publications during enrolment**

### **Journal articles**

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## Acronyms

<b>7PAP</b>	UN Secretary General’s Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-responsive Peacebuilding
<b>ACMC</b>	Australian Civil-Military Centre
<b>ADF</b>	Australian Defence Force
<b>AFP</b>	Armed Forces of the Philippines
<b>AFP</b>	Australian Federal Police
<b>AGD</b>	Attorney General’s Department (Australia)
<b>ARMM</b>	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BPA</b>	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CHR</b>	Commission on Human Rights (Philippines)
<b>CPP</b>	Communist Party of the Philippines
<b>CSW</b>	UN Commission on the Status of Women
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>Defence</b>	Department of Defence (Australia)
<b>DFA</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs (Philippines)
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
<b>DHA</b>	Department of Home Affairs (Australia)
<b>DIBP</b>	Department of Immigration and Border Protection (Australia)
<b>DILG</b>	Department of Interior and Local Government (Philippines)
<b>DIP</b>	Defence Implementation Plan on Women, Peace and Security
<b>DND</b>	Department of National Defense (Philippines)
<b>DOJ</b>	Department of Justice (Philippines)
<b>DSWD</b>	Department of Social Welfare and Development (Philippines)
<b>Global Study</b>	A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
<b>GNWP</b>	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
<b>GR</b>	CEDAW General Recommendation
<b>IDC</b>	Inter-Departmental Committee on Women, Peace and Security (Australia)
<b>IDG</b>	International Deployment Group (Australia)
<b>High-level Review</b>	2015 High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security
<b>LAP</b>	Local Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
<b>LGU</b>	Local Government Unit (Philippines)
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MILF</b>	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines)

<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
<b>NCIP</b>	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (Philippines)
<b>NCMF</b>	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (Philippines)
<b>NGOWG</b>	NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security
<b>NSC-WPS</b>	National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security (Philippines)
<b>NSP</b>	National Security Policy of the Philippines
<b>OfW</b>	Office for Women (Australia)
<b>OPAPP</b>	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (Philippines)
<b>PAMANA</b>	Peaceful and Resilient Communities Programme (Philippines)
<b>PCW</b>	Philippine Commission on Women
<b>PIF</b>	Pacific Islands Forum
<b>PM&amp;C</b>	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Australia)
<b>R2P</b>	Responsibility to Protect
<b>RAP</b>	Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
<b>ROK</b>	Republic of Korea
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SVIC</b>	Sexual Violence in Conflict
<b>TWG-WPS</b>	Technical Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (Philippines)
<b>UCDP</b>	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDPA</b>	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
<b>UNDPKO</b>	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
<b>UNSCR</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution
<b>UN Women</b>	UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WE Act 1325</b>	Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (Philippines)
<b>WILPF</b>	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
<b>WPS</b>	Women, Peace and Security
<b>WPS Coalition</b>	Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security

## **Abstract**

Guided by feminist, grounded methodologies, this thesis asks: ‘How far and in what ways has the concept of gender equality diffused within the United Nations’ (UN) Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and in regional and national-level politics?’ This question reflects my long-standing goal to understand the potential for the WPS agenda to deliver transformative change for conflict-affected women. Using constructivist frameworks of norm diffusion and critical theories of norm translation, I trace the concept of gender equality from the global level of the UN policymaking, through the regional security politics of the Asia Pacific, to national-level implementation strategies in the two nested case studies of Australia and the Philippines. This investigation draws from interviews with 66 WPS experts from the UN, civil society and government agencies, and a detailed policy analysis of prime WPS documents (such as resolutions and regional and national action plans).

I argue that gender equality is a fluid concept in the WPS agenda. This fluidity facilitates its diffusion but can simultaneously constrain its impact. The thesis identifies three broad approaches to gender equality that draw from the three pillars of the UN system (i.e. peace and security, human rights and development). The security, human rights and development approaches to gender equality have subsequently influenced the policy development, institutionalization and implementation of UNSCR 1325. I further establish that these approaches are shaped by international, regional and national priorities, alongside institutional identities and the personal interests of individuals. This in turn has a direct impact upon the lives of conflict-affected women.

## Introduction

In 2018 gender equality – along with global peace and security – remains among the most undelivered promises of the United Nations (UN). Women in conflict and post-conflict zones experience this acutely. Despite the proven positive impact of women’s inclusion in peace negotiations (Reilly, Súilleabháin and Paffenholz 2015), the most recent report of the UN Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security finds that women continue to be underrepresented in UN-led or co-led peace processes, and 2016 in fact saw a decrease in numbers from previous years (S/2017/861, para. 11-12). UN Women statistics show that since 2011, only between 15-25 percent of UN field missions were headed by women. At the everyday level, girls in war zones are at the highest risk of not obtaining even primary education, and of being prematurely married. Moreover, only two percent of stories in the media on peace and security-related themes emphasize gender equality issues (see UN Women 2015, UN Women 2016). Clearly, the absence of gender equality impacts the lived realities of women and girls affected by conflict.

This thesis has arisen from my long-standing interest in the potential for the United Nations’ Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda to advance gender equality. The UN Security Council established the agenda in 2000 with a view to address the gender-specific impact of armed conflict. As a researcher and a practitioner engaged in WPS work since 2010, I have developed a particular interest in the agenda’s prospects for delivering a transformative change to conflict-affected women. To this end, my research began with the following question: ‘How far and in what ways can the UN’s Women Peace and Security agenda bring about greater gender equality?’ The question emerged from having observed over many years that gender equality remained a marginalized or only rhetorical objective in this context, while other goals continued to be prioritized: be it global stability, peace, or sustainable development.

Fortunately, this started to change since the 2015 UN Security Council High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security and the publication of *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (Coomaraswamy 2015). In the Foreword to this *Global Study*, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted that “[a]ny reforms must include gender equality and women’s leadership as central ingredients” (Commaraswamy 2015:4). But while gender equality is nowadays more often – even commonly – brought up in political discussions around peace and security, I found throughout my interviews and policy analysis that it remains ill-defined. Ultimately, this growing support for gender equality is

often followed by poor or depoliticized understanding of what gender equality is – or should be – whether empirically or normatively.

And yet, definitions do matter and have real life implications. Lee-Koo (2016:337, emphasis original) has made this argument most explicit in the WPS context, demonstrating that:

How we *read* UNSCR 1325 determines priorities (such as the protection of women versus the participation of women), foci (such as sexual and gender-based violence versus structural violence) and understanding of political actors (such as the UN as masculinist protector and the universal woman as victim).

Despite the real-life impact of certain understandings pertaining to UNSCR 1325, the meaning of gender equality continues to be taken for granted in this context, often without scrutiny. This seems to be true for many peace and security policymakers and some International Relations (IR) scholars too. But it is in fact a very complex and multidimensional concept – one that I have continuously struggled with throughout the entire research process.

However, my empirical data points to the conclusion that this unstable and unfixed meaning of gender equality in the WPS agenda has had paradoxical consequences. In this sense, the absence of a precise definition of gender equality has created opportunities alongside challenges and risks for the implementation of the agenda, and for gender equality advancement itself (see also Krook & True 2012). This is because the concept is flexible enough to accommodate broad interests, and can resonate with the institutional mandates (and sometimes personal ambitions) of a range of stakeholders beyond the ‘usual suspects’ (i.e. gender equality advocates). Yet, this has also pushed the WPS agenda in a number of directions, resulting in inconsistent implementation practices and uneven gains for long-term gender equality. This vagueness has put UNSCR 1325 at a very high risk of co-optation by more powerful agendas that serve goals unconnected to gender equality.

My field research has therefore led me to refocus my research question towards the understanding(s) of the concept of gender equality, how it relates to the very purpose of the WPS agenda, and how it has translated into implementation strategies. Subsequently, this thesis explores the question:

**How far and in what ways has the concept of gender equality diffused within the UN’s Women, Peace and Security agenda and in regional and national-level politics?**

This study serves both a theoretical and empirical purpose. Through the *empirical* analysis of interests, actors, identities and institutions involved in the development and implementation of WPS policies, my research specifically seeks to contribute towards *theorizing* gender equality in peace and security policymaking.

### **Thesis overview**

In the process of interviewing my research participants, I quickly became aware that no fixed understanding of gender equality exists in the WPS agenda. Therefore, if the goal of this thesis is to understand the potential of the WPS agenda to promote gender equality, I realized that I needed to take this investigation all the way from the global level of UN policymaking down to national processes. For UNSCR 1325 to improve women's lives, it needs to translate from global to local contexts. Only in this way, my research participants emphasized, will it produce tangible outcomes for women affected by armed conflict. It is precisely for this reason that I investigate how the concept of gender equality operates at three levels: global, regional and national.

Following this **Introduction**, **Chapter 1** sets the stage for my primary research question. To this end, the theoretical and analytical frameworks used in this thesis are described in detail. The chapter traces the movement of the concept of gender equality from the private sphere of family matters, through domestic affairs, to global politics. I defend the suitability of international norm diffusion and translation frameworks as well as feminist grounded methodologies to support my investigation of gender equality in the context of the WPS agenda. I also introduce my primary data and describe the process in which this data was collected and analyzed. Chapter 1 ends with the outline of how this research seeks to fill an existing knowledge gap.

**Chapters 2 and 3** take this interrogation to the global level, which is precisely where gender equality was set on the peace and security agenda with the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000. The peace and security sector is considered the most masculinist field where policymaking takes place. The coupling of violent conflict with male-dominated security institutions makes the peace and security sector the epicenter of powermaking. The big political decisions usually taken by elite men, however, produce tangible outcomes with material implications for women and men alike. It is for these reasons that I chose peace and security as the arena to explore the movement of gender equality. The WPS agenda was the expression of



international acknowledgement of the gender-differentiated experiences of armed conflict, and as such pledged to address the gendering effects of peace and security policymaking.

**Chapter 2** traces the emergence and evolution of the WPS agenda as a new international norm that addresses gender equality across peace and security policymaking. This chapter examines the institutionalization of the agenda within the UN system, and the relationships between its global implementers. In doing so, this chapter demonstrates that the global WPS trajectory has not been linear. On the contrary, the agenda has created a dynamic process between the involved actors, partly due to the relatively vague and unfixed meaning of UNSCR 1325's core goals, gender equality among them. Yet, perhaps paradoxically, I argue, it is this vagueness that has enabled the global diffusion of the WPS agenda.

This unstable meaning of UNSCR 1325 then becomes the major theme of **Chapter 3**. Here I question the place given to gender equality within this normative framework. As a product of tireless feminist peace movements' advocacy that has eventually found its way to 'high politics', gender equality has been at the heart of the WPS agenda for many of its advocates. At the same time, it has suffered from depoliticization of its more radical and change-oriented meaning and to some extent from co-optation by other, more powerful agendas. Although my field research indicates that more and more global actors agree on the centrality of gender equality to the realization of the goals of UNSCR 1325, the concept has been understood in vastly different ways depending on the interests or institutional identities of these stakeholders. The chapter singles out three distinct frameworks for understanding gender equality in operation with the WPS agenda: security, human rights and development. This chapter reflects on the opportunities and risks that each of them has created for long-term change through relevant policy development.

For the global WPS agenda to improve gender equality for women affected by conflict, it needs to reach out beyond international politics and connect with regional and national levels. Using the concept of norm diffusion and translation, **Chapter 4** looks at how global ideas about WPS and gender equality have traveled through regional and national implementation frameworks developed across the Asia Pacific. The focal point of my investigation is the engagement of two regional organizations (i.e. the Pacific Islands Forum and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and nine national governments (i.e. the Philippines, Nepal, Australia, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Japan, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands) with UNSCR 1325. Chapter 4 traces the institutionalization of the agenda in accordance with the three approaches to gender equality established in earlier chapters (i.e.

with focus on security, human rights and development). Through the adoption of relatively robust policy and implementation frameworks, I argue, these stakeholders have demonstrated a genuine commitment to pursuing gender equality for conflict-affected women. These developments should in turn inform the global practice on the WPS agenda, in which the Asia Pacific often remains invisible.

The adoption of regional and national action plans on WPS alone does not secure long-term gender equality. These frameworks need to be implemented – and implementation has been found globally to be the greatest challenge in progressing UNSCR 1325. Therefore, **Chapters 5 and 6** present in-depth case studies of WPS trajectories in Australia and the Philippines, taking the notion of norm translation one step further: from policy into implementation strategies. Being among the first countries in the Asia Pacific to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) on Women, Peace and Security, Australia and the Philippines are self-proclaimed WPS leaders in the region and to some extent globally. But even though both countries' NAPs centered their understanding of gender equality goals on women's human rights, the Philippines and Australia present vastly different instances of WPS implementation. Chapters 5 and 6 utilize interview data to explore the potential of these different approaches for the advancement of gender equality.

**Chapter 5** traces the diffusion of gender equality across WPS implementation in the Australian case study. Despite promising discourse on human rights, the Australian NAP fails to translate it into a robust framework for implementation, ultimately leaving the potential impact of UNSCR 1325 in the hands of the implementers. While I identified a genuine commitment to gender equality among the majority of the actors involved in NAP implementation, they often push the agenda in a number of directions to make it fit with their institutional priorities. This makes WPS implementation in Australia far-reaching in terms of the whole-of-government engagement, yet largely inconsistent and untargeted.

By contrast, the Philippines adopted a coherent approach to WPS implementation across the text and implementation practice around the NAPs (to date, the Philippines adopted two plans). In **Chapter 6**, I find that this is a consequence of placing the Philippine WPS policy under the human rights mandate stipulated in pre-existing gender equality laws. Overall, this has resulted in a more accountable implementation process grounded in bureaucratic and legal processes. At the same time, however, the consistent human rights approach has proven to be incongruent with the dominant security discourse, having limited impact on the upper echelons of the security sector.

In the **Conclusion**, I bring together the findings from the previous chapters, with a view to assess the potential of the UN's Women, Peace and Security agenda to deliver gender equality for women affected by conflict, through these policy frameworks. To this end, I address the opportunities, challenges and risks around the fluidity of the concept of gender equality identified at the global, regional and national levels and how they might interplay. Gender equality is found to be a process rather than an outcome that requires – from WPS researchers and policymakers alike – an ongoing commitment to its continuous assessment in various contexts in the ever-changing political climate.

At the start of my research process in October 2014, gender equality was unexplored and presented a major theoretical and conceptual gap in the existing research on WPS. With this thesis, I aim to provide empirical data and contribute to theoretical discussions that will further theory construction around gender equality in peace and security policymaking. It is also my hope that I have managed to give voice to my research participants especially from the marginalized region of the Asia Pacific, the study of which involves a whole list of challenges and, yet, has been a rewarding pursuit.

## **Chapter 1. Theoretical and analytical frameworks: Gender equality in international peace and security policymaking**

This chapter introduces the theoretical and analytical frameworks that support my investigation into gender equality in the context of the UN's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. To start with, I grapple with the very concept of gender equality and how it has moved from a family matter through state-level political affairs to global security politics (Enloe 2014). While it has been long studied in the context of the family and in domestic law, that has not been the case with International Relations (IR). The latter has been most resistant to the concept along with its nuances (Joachim & Schneiker 2012), despite it being the scholarly discipline preoccupied with the state, security and global policymaking. Even though gender equality eventually reached the international peace and security arena with the UN Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in 2000 (Willett 2010), it still remains unexplored in research on the WPS agenda. In this sense, gender equality represents a major theoretical and conceptual gap in WPS scholarship.

For WPS policies to have real-life implications for conflict-affected women, gender equality needs to travel from international affairs through regional security politics to national-level processes so that it can eventually impact these women's lives. It is for this reason that the frameworks of international norm diffusion and translation proved to be particularly suitable for my interrogation. Following the discussion on gender equality, I outline the constructivist and critical models that examine the influence of international norms on state-level politics. Finally, this chapter details my research methodology and the methods utilized in this thesis. To this end, feminist grounded methodologies ensure the robustness of gender analysis that emphasizes the problem of unequal gender power relations in peace and security policymaking yet place conflict-affected women at the center of this interrogation. Gathered and analyzed in a grounded research process, inductive data additionally assists theorizing gender equality in a manner that connects the concept with the lived experiences of my research participants (Charmaz 2014).

### **The concept of gender equality**

A traditional separation can be identified in how gender inequalities have been tackled across peace and conflict efforts, with gender equality being typically absent from the latter (Gierycz 2001; Cockburn 2007). In non-conflict settings, developments in gender equality policymaking have been undeniable since mid-last century. Between the early 1960s and the

late 1990s gender equality emerged as an important issue across different societal areas both at the national level (most strongly with regards to education and employment), and on the international arena (first, in human rights, and later in development pillars of the UN) (Squires 2007). International instruments, with the primacy of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), manifest and amplify these developments (Kardam 2004).

Peace and security has been the last pillar of the UN system to engage with gender equality. Joachim and Schneiker (2012:530) explicitly claim that international peace and security “has thus far been most resistant to the incorporation of gender”. Somewhat delayed, gender equality was set as a principle on the peace and security agenda in 2000 with the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325). This resolution established the so-called Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda that has been elaborated in seven subsequent resolutions adopted to date (i.e. UNSCR 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2242). Resting on four pillars of *prevention, participation, protection* and *relief and recovery*, the WPS agenda encourages translating the provisions of UNSCR 1325 into implementation practice at international, regional and national levels (Olonisakin, Barnes & Ikpe 2010). At the time of writing, the agenda has reached beyond UN Headquarters and diffused across over 70 national governments and more than a dozen regional organizations (PeaceWomen 2018). Before looking at gender equality in the WPS context, the following section briefly introduces the existing research theorizing gender equality and how it can be applied to global politics and IR.

### ***Research on gender equality***

Gender equality is perhaps the most important principle of feminism(s). At the same time, it is one of the most problematic ideas in feminist research. Approaches to the existing gender inequalities and how to tackle them are multiple and vary from emphasizing sameness (i.e. women and men are essentially the same and should enjoy the same rights and access), through highlighting difference (i.e. women and men are inherently different due to their distinct socio-reproductive roles and this difference should be accounted for in equality strategies) to underscoring relations (i.e. it is current power imbalances between women and men are the major sources of inequalities) (see for more Lombardo, Meier & Verloo 2009; Walby 2005; Verloo 2005; Squires 2007; Rees 1998). As much as these approaches have certain strengths and add important insight to understanding gender inequality, they sometimes call for

contradictory strategies. Therefore, I find it useful to start the discussion of gender equality with the exploration of the two concepts it contains: that of ‘gender’ and ‘equality’. Feminist scholars agree on the importance of gender, claiming that it is one of “the most central social institution[s] in the life of humans” (Kronsell & Svedberg 2012:1). Argued to be a performative act, it permeates all areas of lived experience, whether at the individual or the structural level, in the context of peace or armed conflict (Butler 1990; Bacchi & Eveline 2010). Making gender involves “subjectivities like men and women, masculinities and femininities as well as gender power relations, norms and principles” (Kronsell & Svedberg 2012:2). By the late 1980s, Scott suggested a definition that ties these different components together and is arguably the most comprehensive conceptualization of gender to date:

[G]ender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.  
(Scott 1986:1067)

This two-folded definition of gender, linking the empirical and normative aspects, has important implications for studying the WPS agenda. Although the first part (i.e. gender as “a constitutive element of social relationships”) focuses on people as gendered individuals and how the relationships between them are socially constructed, Scott (1986) refers to *perceived* differences, avoiding the risk of essentialism. In other words, Scott claims that gender is (re)produced through and as an effect of social relationships and interactions, rather than being pre-existent to them. In the field of peace and security this entails, for example, the stereotyping of women as victims of conflict or as peacemakers (“beautiful souls”) versus conceptualizations of men as perpetrators of violence or “just warriors” (Elshtain 1982; Pierson 1989; see also Cockburn 2012). These beliefs about women/femininity are intrinsically linked with the ideas around men/masculinity, and exist only in relationship to one another. Most, if not all, feminist researchers argue that these ideas about female peacefulness and male violence are socially constructed – and deeply problematic (Cockburn 2012; Pierson 1989; Enloe 2014).

The second part of Scott’s definition (i.e. gender as “a primary way of signifying the relationships of power”) extrapolates gender to the fields of study that were not traditionally considered as having to do with gendered identities, such as History or precisely International Relations (IR). Highlighting the issue of power, Scott depicts how gender conveys dominance that cannot be reduced to what individual women and men do or experience (see also Cockburn 2012). It, nonetheless, evokes gendered power relations. In peace and security,

at the very fundamental level, this involves feminine connotations of peace on the one hand, and masculine associations with security on the other. This is not limited to gendered and gendering discourses but produces tangible, often material, outcomes, such as governments' over-involvement in masculinized 'hard' security-driven military spending as opposed to under-resourcing feminized peacemaking initiatives or peacebuilding programs.

In all of this, gender is imperative to war making, both in a theoretical and empirical sense. Cockburn (2012:32, emphasis original) demonstrates that "it is a masculinity (and a complementary femininity) that not only serves militarism very well indeed, but *seeks and needs militarization and war for its fulfillment*". As a matter of fact, it is difficult to even begin to imagine war making without the imposition of gender power relations and without the division of labour between women and men (see also Enloe 2014).

When it comes to equality, feminist political theory traditionally divides between liberal and radical approaches (see for instance, Cockburn 1989; Phillips 1999; Benschop & Verloo 2006; Skjeie & Teigen 2006). Liberal approaches are concerned with *equal opportunities* or equal treatment before the law and typically pursue policies targeted at removing discriminatory barriers for women (or sometimes men). Radical approaches, by contrast, are interventions focused on *equal outcomes* to ensure a fair distribution of rewards, and as such might entail the adoption of positive discrimination policies in the form of gender or minority quota (Squires 2007; Cockburn 1989). In the field of peace and security, both equal opportunities and outcomes are commonly discussed, for instance, in relation to the participation of women (or other marginalized groups such as sexual or ethnic minorities) in the security sector. Equal opportunities, an approach adopted by armies far more commonly, are usually captured in terms of removing any laws or policies that obstruct employment opportunities for women to serve in the military. The debate around lifting the ban on combat has gained significant traction in countries such as Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and the United States, all of them eventually 'allowing' women to serve in these roles. Equal outcomes is a more radical approach that, by contrast, refers to the actual number of enlisted women in the armed forces, in relation to the number of men. It might involve the introduction of gender quota (such as in the Philippines) or even the extension of the compulsory military service to women (such as in Israel).

The theory and practice of equal opportunities and equal outcomes and the relationship between them has long been a subject of academic dispute in feminist research (see for instance, Phillips 1999, 2004 or Skjeie & Teigen 2006). Some scholars claim, however, that

these two are not only intertwined but also inseparable. For instance, Phillips (1999:50) specifically argues that:

There is no significant space to be inserted between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome when it comes to sexual or racial equality. If the outcomes turn out to be statistically related to sex, the opportunities were almost certainly unequal.

Furthermore, the framework of equal opportunities and outcomes might unwittingly promote and reinforce ‘the male norm’, since men remain the point of reference in both cases. Therefore, the distinction between equal opportunities and outcomes might prove theoretically and empirically unfruitful. Cockburn (1989:215) goes on to call them a “dichotomous schema [that] is a straight-jacket we need to escape”. Firstly, Cockburn (1989:217) specifically shows how policies driven by equal opportunities or outcomes seek to “give disadvantaged groups a boost up the ladder, while leaving the structure of that ladder and the disadvantage it entails just as before”. In the context of peace and security and in the aforementioned example of women’s participation in the armed forces, neither equal opportunities nor equal outcomes deal with the military as a fundamentally masculinist institution. But in fact, equality policies that fail to address the root causes of discrimination often reinforce structural biases instead of preventing the injustice from occurring (Bacchi & Eveline 2010). For instance, the increased participation of women in the military – without challenging its masculinist structures – puts women at a high risk of sexual harassment (Duncanson & Woodward 2016).

Secondly, both equal opportunities and equal outcomes underemphasize the heterogeneity of unprivileged group(s) and do not pay enough attention to “the diverse faces of disadvantage” (Cockburn 1989:216). This critique is particularly identified in literature on intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991; McCall 2005; McKinnon 2013). In the military context, these equality policies rarely take into account that some women (and some men) are more vulnerable than others to sexual harassment (e.g. sexual or ethnic minorities) due to their multiple disadvantaged identities. Consequently, Cockburn criticizes both equal opportunities and equal outcomes for failing to challenge the existing status quo based on structural dominance and discrimination, and dismisses them as *the short agenda* for (gender) equality. Even though this short agenda might be a first and sometimes necessary step for achieving greater equality (Benschop & Verloo 2006) and, as such, might be desirable in some cases (Cockburn 1989), only *the long agenda* that attends to the deeper structures of inequality, involves “a project of transformation” (Cockburn 1989:218). This transformative element of



the long agenda is precisely that it “tackles power itself” and “brings into view the nature and purpose of institutions and the processes by which the power of some groups over others in institutions is built and renewed” (Cockburn 1989:218-219). This ultimately takes the discussion right back to the account of Scott (1986), in which gender as a primary signifier of power relations overlaps with gender as a constituent of social relationships. Recent scholarship on gender equality has built on these early accounts bringing to the fore the issue of gender power relations and the necessity to challenge the status quo – as opposed to simply ‘adding women and stirring’ (see for instance, Lombardo, Meier & Verloo 2009; Walby 2005; Verloo 2005; Squires 2007; Bacchi & Eveline 2010).

### ***Gender equality in international politics***

Feminist scholarship on gender equality has ultimately made significant progress in recent decades, giving researchers a more advanced understanding of the complexities involved in this major concept. This literature has finally begun to impact the way we study international politics. Even though in the past two or three decades, a growing body of IR literature has taken as a task gendering global politics (see especially Tickner 1992, 1997, 2006, 2010), Tickner and True (2018:1) aptly pointed out that “international relations came late to feminism”. The problem of gender inequality or discrimination was traditionally considered a private matter, limited to the personal experiences of women (and sometimes men). It has taken decades of feminist advocacy to move gender equality-related issues from family affairs into national law and policy, and further to international politics.

The emergence and spread of the slogan ‘the personal is political’ in the 1960s can be seen as the beginning of the explicit politicizing of gender equality at the state-level. Through this slogan, feminist advocates underscored that personal (and inevitably gendered) experience is intrinsically linked to larger societal structures and infused with power (Hanisch 1969). This resulted in the introduction of national jurisdictions to support the gender equality of women. Scandinavian countries, for instance, announced a number of ‘women-friendly’ provisions which were described by Hernes (1987) under the term ‘state feminism’. Yet, researchers such as Brown (1995) demonstrated that state-level policies often reproduce gender power relations and the division of labour between women and men. Later post-colonial scholars also pointed out that such policies support certain groups of women, usually the elite women who are already privileged in their belonging to ethnic/racial or (hetero)sexual majority (see for instance, Yuval-Davis 2006). But while the attitudes towards women differ across states,

there has been a growing recognition of the links between the personal experiences of women and policymaking processes across all political spheres at the domestic level.

International politics, however, both as a scholarly discipline and policy-oriented praxis, is perhaps the most resistant field to acknowledging the relevance of personal experience and gender equality-related matters (Enloe 2014; Joachim & Schneiker 2012). In her groundbreaking book *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, Cynthia Enloe (2014[1989]:350) demonstrates that just like the personal is political, ‘the personal is also international’. This is because gender relations “have been shaped by colonizing policies, international trade strategies, and military doctrines” (Enloe 2014:350). By the same token, personal experience is entrenched in political processes taking place at the international level. Moreover, power, like a ‘palindrome’, needs to be read backwards and forwards, and Enloe (2014:351) further argues that “the international is personal” because “governments depend on certain kinds of allegedly private relationships to conduct their foreign affairs”. The operation of formal and informal political structures as well as foreign policies is contingent on certain gendered roles fulfilled by women: be it as military or diplomatic wives, domestic workers or servants, or sex workers or slaves (Enloe 2014).

Somewhat similarly, a conceptual separation traditionally existed between gender issues in the context of conflict and peace, with the problem of women affected by war being commonly underemphasized on gender equality agendas. With the exception of a short passage in its Preamble, CEDAW ignored the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict settings altogether (UNGA 1979).<sup>1</sup> A more comprehensive language on gender equality and war was included in the BPA which dedicated Platform E to “Women and Armed Conflict” (UN 1995). This important discussion on the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict settings was continued during the 42nd UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 1998 and incorporated in its Agreed Conclusions (ECOSOC 1998). At the same time, the 42nd CSW saw a shift in tackling gender inequalities at the intersection of armed conflict. In the words of Cockburn (2007:140), during this conference “the emphasis of the activists shifted subtly from getting armed conflict on to the UN’s ‘woman agenda’ to getting ‘women and armed conflict’ on to the main [peace and security] agenda”. This advocacy work resulted in the most powerful UN body, the Security Council, adopting a first

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<sup>1</sup> However, General Recommendation no. 30 adopted in 2013 included the enforcement mechanism to support the implementation of UNSCR 1325 within CEDAW institutional structures (CEDAW/C/GC/30). For more, see the next chapter.

resolution on gender-specific impact of armed conflict that eventually inaugurated the UN's WPS agenda.

### ***UN Security Council Resolution 1325***

On October 31, 2000, the five permanent and ten elected members of the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1325 on Women and Peace and Security.<sup>2</sup> In doing so, they demonstrated the willingness to take into consideration the status of women affected by conflict and post-conflict situations. UNSCR 1325 is the first resolution of the Security Council that explicitly addressed the principle of gender equality (even though the term 'gender equality' will be for the first time mentioned in an operational paragraph only in 2009 in UNSCR 1889; see the next chapter for further discussion). Thus, the resolution is often considered "a major milestone in the struggle for gender equality in all aspects of peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery" (Willett 2010:142; see also Anderlini 2011; Tryggestad 2009; Barnes 2011; Olsson & Gizelis 2015; Swaine 2009; Oudraat 2013; Cohn, Kinsella & Gibbings 2004). In Anderlini's words (2007:7), "this [r]esolution marked a watershed". Although formally not binding, UNSCR 1325 inaugurated a normative framework to advance gender equality in peace and security governance and policymaking – and through these processes to improve gender equality outcomes for women in conflict zones (see Chapter 2 for the discussion on the legal status of the resolution; see also Anderlini 2011; Barnes & Olonisakin 2011; Barrow 2016).

UNSCR 1325 brought new elements to the traditional discussion on the situation of women in peace and security policymaking. To begin with, women's voices had been previously silenced in peace processes. UNSCR 1325 was the first acknowledgement from the Security Council of the importance of women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. Further, bodily integrity, bodily harm and women's (and men's) vulnerability to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations had tended not to be considered a security matter. However, UNSCR 1325 placed protection from sexual violence under the Security Council's mandate demonstrating its tangible impact on global peace and security (Jansson & Eduards 2012). Lastly, a gender perspective had traditionally been considered irrelevant in the context of peacekeeping or peacebuilding, and had been therefore absent from post-conflict analysis and delegated to the development pillar

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<sup>2</sup> The permanent members states of the UN Security Council are: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. The elected member states at the time of the adoption of UNSCR 1325 were: Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, the Netherlands, Tunisia and Ukraine (UNSC n.d.-b).

of the UN system. By showing the gender-specific impact of conflict and post-conflict experiences on women, UNSCR 1325 called for the inclusion of a gender perspective in all peace and security programs and planning (Jansson & Eduards 2012).

### **International norm diffusion and translation**

Initiated with UNSCR 1325, the WPS agenda has over the years set a common (albeit vague) standard in relation to gender equality in peace and security policymaking. Even though this standard has not been precisely defined – as will be discussed in the next chapters – it has nevertheless contributed to establishing gender equality architecture within the UN system and beyond it through the enactment of regional and national policies on WPS. The constructivist theories of international norm diffusion and critical accounts of norm translation therefore support the understanding of how the objective of gender equality has moved from the global WPS agenda to connect with local realities.

The impact of international norms on states' behaviour is a central theme of IR scholarship. International norms can be broadly defined as:

[I]deas of varying degrees of abstraction and specification with respect to fundamental values, organizing principles or standardized procedures that resonate across many states and global actors, having gained support in multiple forums including official policies, laws, treaties and agreements. (Krook & True 2012:104)

In short, international norms stipulate standards of appropriate behaviour of actors with a given identity, most commonly – but not only – states (Katzenstein 1996; Florini 1996; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998; Keck & Sikkink 1998). Other stakeholders of relevance for IR scholarship are, for instance, regional organizations or civil society groups (Keck & Sikkink 1998; Risse & Sikkink 1999; True & Mintrom 2001). Regardless of the type of actor, international norms “by definition embody a quality of ‘oughtness’” relating to specific political objectives (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998:892). IR researchers designed different models to explain how international norms, such as the WPS agenda, can spread transnationally, translating from global discourse into national policies and down to the implementation practice.

### ***Constructivist models***

Early constructivist IR researchers challenged the (neo)realist and (neo)liberal accounts of state compliance with international standards. While pointing out the limitations in explanations exclusively pertaining to the material relevance of international norms vis-à-vis

states' self-interests, these early researchers of norm diffusion underscored the need to complicate rational choice theories with constructivist arguments (Florini 1996; Sikkink 1998; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998; Keck & Sikkink 1998; Risse & Sikkink 1999). For instance, Florini (1996), Finnemore (1996) and many others demonstrated the importance of ideas, identities and state reputation. This early scholarship has become relatively influential and a decade later, Krook and True (2012) identified as many as four dominant constructivist models of international norm diffusion: world polity, norm cascade, boomerang effects and spiral pattern. According to *the world polity model*, norm diffusion is driven by international prominence and can be explained in terms of institutional isomorphism of states. Put simply, states comply with an international norm to increase or maintain their reputation as modern states (Meyer et al. 1997; see also Towns 2012). *The norm cascade model* moves the emphasis towards peer-states learning and suggests that the acceptance of a given norm by a critical mass of states triggers the process of imitation. The imitation trajectory might lead to a global diffusion and norm internalization by a large number of states (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). The remaining two models – the boomerang effects and the spiral pattern – both showcase the importance of transnational advocacy networks or civil society organizations in the process of norm diffusion. *The boomerang effects model* points to the role of civil society organizations in reaching out to international allies for support in bringing international pressure on states that previously attempted to ignore a given norm or standard (Keck & Sikkink 1998). *The spiral pattern model* builds on the boomerang effects, outlining the role of non-state actors in norm diffusion throughout the unfolding steps of state socialization, that is, state repression, activation of advocacy networks, denial of the problem, tactical concessions, acceptance of the norm and finally rule-consistent behaviour (Risse & Sikkink 1999). While highly influential, these early constructivist models of norm diffusion have faced significant criticisms both from critical IR researchers and anthropologists studying the impact of global norms on local contexts, as will be explicated in the following.

### ***Critical approaches***

Early constructivist models fundamentally conceptualized norms as static ideas. For instance, despite their recognition of the fact that “international norms must always work their influence through the filter of domestic structures and domestic norms, which can produce important variations and interpretation of these norms”, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998:916) clearly concentrate on “how the ‘ought’ becomes the ‘is’”. However, in line with critically-oriented research, I identified three interrelated problems with these early models. First, the

role of local actors is understated, especially in the process of norm appropriation to domestic settings (Acharya 2004; Levitt & Merry 2009). Secondly, these theories left out the exploration of how the meaning of the norm in question changes along this process (Krook & True 2012; Joachim & Schneiker 2012; Elgstrom 2000). Finally, the early accounts consider norm diffusion as a ‘one-way street’ in which global ideas are simply planted into local contexts, while overlooking the local influences on the shape of the global discourses (Zwingel 2012; Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014; Levitt & Merry 2009). Recent critical-constructivist research attempted to address these gaps and will be crucial for understanding the WPS trajectory in the next chapters.

In response to the first criticism, Acharya (2004:239) introduced a dynamic explanatory model of norm diffusion which draws on the agency of local actors. Through the term *norm localization*, Acharya (2004) describes the process of domestic appropriation of global ideas. Norm localization rejects the assumption of local actors being passive recipients of international discourses. Instead, norm localization is envisioned as “a complex process and outcome by which norm-takers build congruence between transnational norms [...] and local beliefs and practices” (Acharya 2004:241). Although this account pays attention to how local actors modify the meaning of international norms to make them fit with domestic policies and laws, the concept of norm localization is sometimes criticized for understating the importance of interactions between different stakeholders, for instance between local and international groups (see Joachim & Schneiker 2012; see also McLeod 2015).

Perhaps a more interactive model is the one presented by Elgstrom (2000), combining constructivist theories with a negotiation perspective under the term *norm negotiation*. Elgstrom (2000:461) criticized the early models of diffusion for picturing norm appropriation as “a relatively simple learning process, characterized by imitation and hastened by persuasion and information sharing”. Using the example of the gender and development norm in the foreign policy of the European Union, Elgstrom (2000) traces the process of how the initial ideas change throughout four main stages of norm negotiation: norm emergence, norm definition (i.e. negotiations within an advocacy network), norm decision-making (i.e. text negotiations), and implementation negotiations. The importance of defining and redefining the norm is emphasized, both in text and in implementation practice, as well as the potential resistance towards its original content or even meaning. Elgstrom (2000:461) ultimately conceptualizes norm negotiation as a complex process involving unstable meanings,

identities and interests, rather than being a “problem-free and non-conflictual” learning experience.

Finally, in response to all three criticisms but perhaps most strongly the last one, recent feminist IR scholars and anthropologists advocate the understanding of norms as not simply transmitted from global to local but rather as generated on various sites (Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014; Zwingel 2012; Levitt & Merry 2009). They recommend studying international norms as a process (Krook & True 2012) and “a principally unfinished discourse rather than a fixed set of ideas to be domestically implemented” (Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014:184). Feminist scholars contributed most to this literature through their exploration of how global gender norms impact the status of women worldwide and how “the local talks back” (Levitt & Merry 2009:443; see also Zwingel 2012; Zwingel 2013; Levitt & Merry 2009; Merry 2006, Gray, Kittilson & Sandholtz 2006; Krook 2006; Krook & True 2012; Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014; Htun & Weldon 2010). Levitt and Merry (2009), for instance, borrow the term *vernacularization* from anthropology to grasp “the process of appropriation and local adoption of globally generated ideas and strategies” (Levitt and Merry 2009:441). Vernacularization reflects their assumption that norms are generated on various sites and “do not simply move from global to local places” (Levitt and Merry 2009:442). Instead, they “heavily depend on the context” and have to fit into policy frames already in place or at the very least resonate with pre-existing domestic ideologies (Zwingel 2012:125). While similar in its origins to *norm localization*, this account goes a step further in suggesting that norm appropriation is a both-ways process: while governments and local civil society organizations (often in interaction with global actors) translate international norms into domestic policies and practices, they also ‘talk back’ and may enrich or transform the global understandings in response (Levitt & Merry 2009:443).

Indeed, translating global ideas about gender equality into national policies is an ambiguous and often conflictual process (Thomas 2007; Østebø 2015; Levitt & Merry 2009; Merry 2006). Anthropologists point to the importance of scrutinizing how gender equality is interpreted and applied to different socio-economic and political contexts that exist at the regional and national levels (Østebø 2015, Thomas 2007). For instance, Østebø’s research in Ethiopia (2015) shows that local understandings of gender equality differed significantly from the global gender equality discourse adopted by the Ethiopian government. Thomas (2007) further demonstrates with the example of Namibia that when the global understandings of gender equality are incompatible with the local traditions and customary

laws, they may exacerbate – not combat – gender inequalities on the ground. This leads to the conclusion that a successful translation of global gender norms, such as UNSCR 1325, depends on the awareness of how gendered power relations operate at the regional, national and local levels. Otherwise, global discourses are at a high risk of producing unintended outcomes, oftentimes reinforcing pre-existing inequalities or creating new forms of oppression.

The constructivist and critical frameworks as well as explorative models of the impact of international norms discussed so far will support the understanding of the WPS agenda and how the concept of gender equality moves within it. Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, the notion of WPS – and with it, the concept of gender equality in peace and security – has been increasingly normalized through implementation frameworks at the regional but especially national levels. This has been particularly manifested through the text and implementation practice of action plans adopted by over 70 UN member states and a dozen regional organizations (PeaceWomen 2018). The constructivist frameworks of *norm diffusion* are particularly useful for capturing how the international ‘idea’ of UNSCR 1325 has become the ‘practice’ that has engaged various actors. Critical theories of *norm translation* further move the interrogation towards understanding how the meaning and content of the WPS agenda has changed throughout this process, producing sometimes intended but also unintended outcomes for gender equality. In this context, feminist accounts of other global gender norms additionally demonstrate the complexity of the translation process.

Specifically, they highlight the risk of exacerbating inequalities when global ideas about gender equality are enforced at local levels without sensitivity to pre-existing socio-political structures or without the involvement of local women and civil society groups. Gender awareness is ultimately necessary to trace the diffusion of gender equality through the WPS agenda as well as the potential impact of this process. This consideration has further guided my methodological choices.

### **Feminist methodologies**

Grounded feminist methodologies have driven my investigation into the concept of gender equality. It is important to note that there is no single feminist methodology or method but rather the practices of feminist research are multiple and diverse (Hesse-Biber 2012; Ackerly & True 2008, 2010; Lee-Koo 2017b). The great majority of feminist scholarship adopts a qualitative orientation to delve into understanding(s) of gendered experiences and gendering processes and so does my research (Ackerly, Stern & True 2006). However, quantitative



studies may also fit within the scope of feminist methodologies, and quantitative data is sometimes utilized in this research to strengthen the overall argument (Ackerly, Stern & True 2006). More important than the qualitative-quantitative divide is, however, a set of principles that help formulate feminist research questions and guide the process of knowledge production. The principles that proved to be crucial for this thesis are the following: *preoccupation with gender power imbalances, the centeredness of women's experience* (with a view to include other underprivileged, intersecting identity categories), and finally, *reflexive and grounded research process*.

'Feminist curiosity' in the form of *preoccupation with gender power dynamics centered on women's experiences* is particularly important for feminist scholars of IR – and for this study alike (Lee-Koo 2017b; Tickner 2006; Enloe 2014). This is because gender as a category of analysis has been traditionally sidelined in studies of global politics despite the latter's focus on power (Tickner & Sjoberg 2011). Bringing the aspects of gender power relations and women's experiences to the study of IR has enabled and shaped new inquiries, starting with Enloe's (2014 [1989]) crucial investigation into the question of "Where are the women?". Locating women in international politics has further allowed exposing unequal power relations relating to gender identity, and show that they are neither materially essential nor inevitable. They do nevertheless, produce material outcomes and affect 'real' people's lives (Enloe 2014).

Feminist IR researchers ultimately focus on exposing the invisibility of global gender inequality. But by doing so they further complicate the relationships between "global and local, social, political, and economic values, practices and norms" (Ackerly & Attanasi 2009:543). To provide a more robust picture of how the global and the local are interrelated in the context of gender inequality, critical feminist researchers started to grapple with how inequalities occur at their intersection (Ackerly & Attanasi 2009; Levitt & Merry 2009). Disentangling this interrelatedness and the power dynamics that it entails is crucial in the attempt to understand the potential of UNSCR 1325 for greater gender equality. The policies inspired by the WPS agenda, adopted at the regional or national levels, often are a result of complex processes of negotiations between global and local actors, discourses and practices. By challenging the hierarchies of power, this thesis aims not only to understand how gender inequalities occur at the intersection of the global and the local but also to contribute to the promotion of more equal relations in the context of peace and security politics, precisely through the exposure of global gender injustice.

*Reflexive and grounded research process* concentrates on how gender power relations and women's experiences can be accounted for with credibility. As such, reflexivity involves an ongoing reflection on factors such as one's epistemology, relationships and positionality (Ackerly & True 2008, 2010; see also Wibben 2016; Enloe 2016). The validity of feminist research relies on questioning the assumptions involved in the researcher's very identity including but not limited to her gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, ability and so forth. This is even more important in the context of studying the Global South where a researcher's privileged position might inadvertently contribute to the marginalization of groups who already suffer from different forms of oppression and invisibility in the global arena (D'Costa & Lee-Koo 2009). After all, as much as feminist IR has remained on the peripheries of the discipline, feminist researchers still find themselves speaking from a relatively privileged position of academia (Cohn 2011:583).

Yet, with this privilege comes responsibility as well as accountability – whether to research participants or potential readers (Enloe 2016). Sylvester coined a very useful term *world-traveling* to capture a post-colonially aware feminist approach that can be employed “for studying ‘the other’ as a familiar resonance, an echo of oneself” (Sylvester 1995:948). This approach “relies on empathy to enter into the spirit of difference” (Sylvester 1995:946). It therefore calls for attending to difference: embracing the difference and looking for interconnections (Sylvester 1995, 2014). But at the same time, it requires the researcher to pay attention to the ambiguity of ‘speaking for others’ and the power relations this act might (re)produce (Spivak 1988; Hesse-Biber 2012). Hence, dedicating oneself to a truly feminist research process is not an easy task (Enloe 2016). A grounded approach that acknowledges research participants as experts on gender equality in their complex realities is adopted in this research with a view to overcome these difficulties and the very real danger of imposing the researcher's categories upon the participants.

With this in mind, grounded theory has inspired this thesis. In its original form, it is a structured inquiry providing systematic guidelines for collecting and analyzing the data (Ackerly & True 2010). In grounded theory the meaning of analytical concepts is not *a priori* fixed but instead developed in the process of collecting and analyzing data:

Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis. (Charmaz 2014:1)

This back and forth process between the data and emerging analysis offers a unique opportunity to construct theory ‘grounded’ in the data (Charmaz 2014:1). The major aim of a grounded theory approach is to “avoid forcing data into categories” (Ackerly & True 2010:207), a risk so profound with respect to researching gender equality, especially in a foreign context. Hence, grounded theory proved particularly useful for studying the empirical dimensions of complex problems, with the aim of theory construction (Charmaz 2014; Ackerly & True 2010).

It needs to be noted that grounded theory has been more commonly used in social sciences other than IR (Charmaz 2014), as IR scholarship has been preoccupied with top-down and state-centered processes. While studying the WPS agenda, its diffusion, translation and impact cannot completely avoid a top-down approach, grounded theory assists this undertaking with concrete tools to engage more closely with the inductive data and research participants. In doing so, it provides for a more balanced approach built on the advantages of both top-down and bottom-up research orientations. This thesis is, therefore, also an exploration of what grounded theory can offer to research of high-level policymaking processes that shape and are shaped by the lived experiences of women.

### ***Data gathering and analysis***

Inspired by grounded theory, documents and interviews are the primary sources of data for this thesis. As policy documents, UN Security Council resolutions as well as national and regional action plans on WPS are produced within given socio-political and institutional contexts, serving specific purposes, which might or might not be related to gender equality. Therefore, these documents need to be studied as discourses and accounts that “follow certain conventions and assume embedded meanings” and “tell something of intent and have intended – and perhaps unintended – audiences” (Charmaz 2014:46-47). Each chapter provides a textual and content analysis of policy documents that have driven the WPS agenda: whether at global, regional or national levels. This textual data serves to gather evidence for initial hunches around the conceptualizations of gender equality. However, this is then juxtaposed with even more important source of data: interviews with 66 WPS experts (i.e. UN, government and civil society actors working to further the agenda in their respective realities and institutions). Similar to documents, I approach the interviews not as objective artefacts but rather as “social event[s] based on the interactions between interviewer and interviewee” (Blakeley 2013:168). Intensive semi-structured interviewing is the major method of data collection in grounded theory. In this thesis, it offered me a guided focus on

the concept of gender equality, yet without fixed assumptions around its meaning. This provided my research participants with an opportunity to deliver answers that did not necessarily conform to my pre-existing ideas.

The following figure summarizes the *primary sources of data* for this research: semi-structured interviews with WPS experts and over 1,000 pages of prime WPS policy documents such as resolutions and treaties; regional and national action plans; implementation strategies, and so forth. The 66 interviewees (55 women and 11 men) were selected according to their expertise and institutional belonging (see the Appendix 1). As this is not an impact study but a policy analysis into the potential of the WPS agenda, I interviewed officials who work on WPS policy development and implementation in their respective realities – rather than women in conflict zones who are directly affected by these policies. My interviewees are ultimately the people who have real impact on the shape and implementation of WPS policies at international, regional or national levels. They very kindly dedicated on average one to two hours of their time to an interview for the purpose of this thesis. Given their high-level status, the research participants are anonymized throughout to protect their identity.

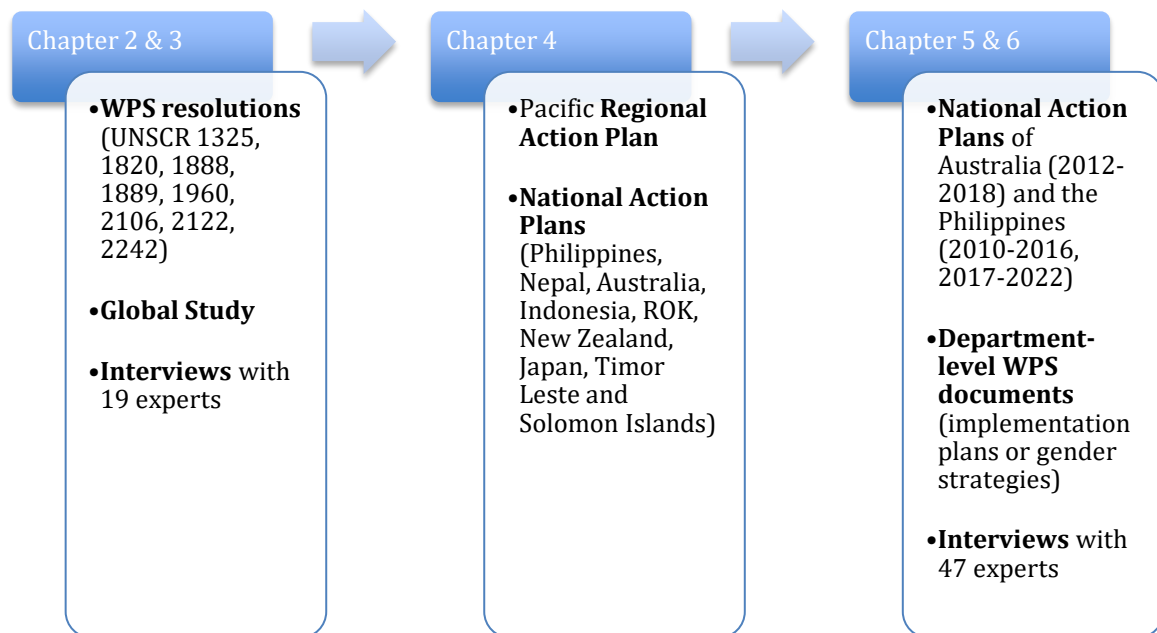


Figure 1: The primary data

At the global level, 19 research participants of this study included representatives from the UN entities or international civil society organizations and independent experts. The following agencies were interviewed: the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), the UN Security Council (UNSC), the UN Department of Political Affairs (UN DPA), the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO), the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGOWG), Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Inclusive Security. The majority of the research participants have been high-level officials, and all of them had professional experience of working directly on the WPS agenda, either at the time of the interview or previously.

In Australia and the Philippines, the interviewees are government and civil society representatives working on WPS policies in these two countries. In Australia, all government departments involved in the NAP were interviewed: the Office for Women (OfW), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Australian Defence Force (ADF), the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Attorney-General's Department (AGD). The civil society actors include representatives from the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security (WPS Coalition), WILPF Australia, International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), Justice Equality Rights Access (JERA) International, academia and independent experts. All interviewees have had ongoing involvement in the Australian WPS policy.

In the Philippines, the key government agencies under the WPS policy were interviewed: the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), Department of National Defence (DND), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Peaceful and Resilient Communities Programme (PAMANA), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Local Government Units (LGUs), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). The interviewed civil society actors include representatives from the major WPS organizations: Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (WE Act 1325), Center for Peace Education (CPE), International Women's Tribune Center (IWTC), PILIPINA, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZO) and Women and Gender Institute (WAGI). Additionally, international partners were interviewed for the Philippine case study due to their important involvement in the WPS policy in this country. These stakeholders include representatives

from the Philippine offices of UN Women, the UNDP, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Oxfam.

The analysis of prime WPS policy documents and interviews with the aforementioned actors has been supported by the *secondary data* in the form of UN, government and civil society reports and other policy documents dedicated to WPS implementation. These documents are not included in the Figure 1 due to the large volume, but they are listed in the bibliography. Data was further gleaned from extensive field research and participant observations: at UN Headquarters (12-26 October 2015, New York), in Australia (over 2016, Melbourne and Canberra) and in the Philippines (27 May-24 June 2017, Manila). This involved data collection in complex settings. For instance, I entered the Philippines after Martial Law was declared in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Due to safety precautions for the research participants and the researcher, I needed to limit my stay to Manila and refrain from posing sensitive questions.

In all of this, my interviewees provided the most important data for this thesis. Even though many of them found it difficult to define gender equality or provide a proxy for gender equality that could be applied to this research directly, they had a sense of gender equality principles and a great awareness of how those principles interplay with peace and security objectives in their complex realities. Therefore, I see them as gender equality experts in the respective contexts.

This research has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (CF15/3166-2015001351). The full list of interviewees is attached in Appendix 1. The consent form, the explanatory statement and the interview questions are also included as Appendices.

## **Conclusions**

Despite the growing literature on UNSCR 1325, the concept of gender equality has not been problematized in-depth in the context of the WPS agenda. Scholarship on gender equality has made significant progress in recent decades, as discussed in this introductory chapter, however this research is typically preoccupied with family affairs and domestic laws and policies, whereas the point of departure for studying the WPS agenda is global politics. The body of IR literature that does look explicitly at global gender equality norms has thus far covered CEDAW and the BPA. Anthropologists also add important insights on the localization of global norms but as they traditionally explore single case studies, further work

is needed to comprehend gender equality in the UN's WPS agenda. Working across these disciplines but from the disciplinary field of IR, the purpose of my research is to disentangle the more dominant co-existing approaches to gender equality within the WPS normative framework. I further probe their "potential impact" with a view to understand whether these approaches "trigger concrete change toward legal, political, and socio-economic equality for women" (see Zwingel 2012:115).

At the outset, I define gender equality as a normative and empirical concept, manifested through policy objectives and in lived experiences, that questions and seeks to challenge unequal gender power relations to deliver a positive transformative change for women. This seemingly unspecific or unfocused definition is a strategic choice. In line with feminist grounded methodologies, I aimed to open the space to learn from the participants of this study, as opposed to imposing my own ideas upon them. After all, my research participants are the experts on gender equality in their complex realities because inequality is the lived experience for many of them. Lastly, a question posed by Østebø (2015:443) has accompanied my entire research process for this thesis. This scholar asked: "Is it at all possible to talk about gender equality as a universal norm, unconditionally fixed, independent of historical and cultural context?" My answer to this question is: Probably not. But while I refrain from providing a final definition that would hold true for every single contextual location, my research nonetheless extricates gender equality approaches – identified through empirical analysis – that have driven the WPS agenda.

## **Chapter 2. The legacy of the UN's Women, Peace and Security agenda**

The aim of this chapter is to trace the emergence of UNSCR 1325 and the evolution of the UN's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. UNSCR 1325 was the first global acknowledgement of the importance of gender equality for peace and security. Over the past 18 years, the Security Council has developed the agenda in seven subsequent resolutions. The values associated with UNSCR 1325 have further spread across other segments of the UN system and beyond it, influencing the behaviour of different stakeholders including UN entities, national governments and international civil society organizations (Tryggestad 2009). The WPS agenda has been also institutionalized through legal and bureaucratic process within and beyond the UN system. In consequence, the agenda is nowadays more commonly conceptualized in terms of a new international norm (Tryggestad 2014; Joachim & Schneiker 2012; Olsson & Gizelis 2015; True 2016).

Tracing the diffusion of UNSCR 1325 through a policy analysis of prime WPS documents and interviews with key global stakeholders<sup>3</sup> pointed me to the conclusion that this process is not linear, as constructivist theories would suggest. The bureaucratic structure supporting the WPS agenda lacks a solid enforcement mechanism that would make the implementation of UNSCR 1325 a coherent and iterated practice for the relevant stakeholders. Whilst the agenda has by all means created unique opportunities for formal and informal interaction between UN entities, UN member states and civil society organizations in progressing WPS objectives, it has also complicated these relationships and resulted in a dynamic process. As a consequence, the policy development around UNSCR 1325 has been driven by a range of institutional identities and interests, and pulled in a number of directions, not always retaining its gender equality goal. To this end, I use critical theories to draw a more dynamic and interactive picture of the current state of WPS diffusion – and how this process might impact the conceptualization of gender equality.

### **Global evolution of the Women, Peace and Security agenda**

A gender perspective was traditionally excluded from conflict analysis (Jansson & Eduards 2012). As demonstrated in the last chapter, until the late 1980s it was perceived as irrelevant

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<sup>3</sup> The global research participants will be referred to according to their institutional belonging as follows: UNSC – UN Security Council; UNDPKO – UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations; UNFPA – UN Department of Political Affairs; UNDP – United Nations Development Program; UNW – UN Women; UNHRC – UN Human Rights Council; UNPCB – UN Peacebuilding Commission; and G-CSO – international civil society organization. Several participants could be identified both as civil society representative and UN consultants and I refer to those interviewees as G-UN/CSO. For more details about the interviewees, see Appendix 1.



to international politics. Women's experiences of and contribution to war or peacemaking were rarely taken into account in policymaking processes (Gierycz 2001). The past two decades, however, have seen enormous developments around understanding gender equality and a gender perspective in terms of a critically important variable for global security.

### ***Pre-UNSCR 1325 phase***

The concentrated interest of the international community in gender-related issues in armed conflict began in the mid-1990s with the horrific stories of sexual violence. The 1994 Rwandan Genocide and the 1992-1995 Bosnian Genocide brought the issue of conflict-related sexual violence to the attention of the international actors (Engle 2005). It is estimated that half a million women were raped during the Rwandan Civil War and between 20,000-60,000 in the Bosnian War (Willet 2010). Despite smaller numbers, the latter had a particularly strong impact on global stakeholders because it happened on European soil while sexual violence was earlier perceived "an African problem" (Cohen, Green & Wood 2013). The scale of sexual violence perpetrated against civilian women and girls (and men and boys) challenged the earlier view of rape as an opportunistic crime, bringing to light the systematic character of conflict-related sexual violence (Cohen 2013; Wood 2014). The 42<sup>nd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 1998 explicitly addressed this issue in its Agreed Conclusions, which included Part II "Women and Armed Conflict". Recalling the Platform E of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA) under the same title, the Agreed Conclusions brought forth issues relating to gender-sensitive transitional justice, the gender-specific needs of women and girls affected by armed conflict, and women's participation in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict-related decision-making (E/1998/INF/3/Add.2). Yet, the first breakthrough in addressing conflict-related sexual violence was the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Sivakumaran 2007). It explicitly provided that rape and other forms of sexual violence might be considered a crime against humanity and a war crime (A/CONF.183/9).

This growing attention to the situation of women and girls affected by armed conflict created a momentum in the international policymaking arena (Tryggestad 2009). International organizations took advantage of this momentum. Most importantly, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF International) established a group of international civil society organizations called the Women and Armed Conflict Caucus that played a leading role in drafting the aforementioned Agreed Conclusions of the 42<sup>nd</sup> CSW. The Women and Armed Conflict Caucus, comprised at that time of WILPF International,

Amnesty International, International Alert, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, and The Hague Appeal for Peace, was later turned into the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGOWG) (Shepherd 2008). The NGOWG lobbied the UN Security Council for the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and up to now has acted as a watchdog of the Council's implementation of the resolution (NGOWG n.d.). Furthermore, in 1999, International Alert led the campaign "Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table" (Anderlini 2011). Advocating for better protection of women from conflict-related violence and for their increased participation in peace processes, this campaign targeted international government organizations, primarily the Security Council, the European Parliament and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Anderlini 2011).

The pressure also came from 'inside' the UN Security Council, in particular from three elected members: Bangladesh, Namibia and Jamaica (Basu 2016). In March 2000, the president of the Security Council, Bangladeshi Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, released the press statement on Women's Rights and International Peace (SC/6816), highlighting the importance of women's participation in peace processes to the maintenance of international peace and security. In May the same year, Namibia in cooperation with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) hosted a workshop that resulted in the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693). Both documents laid the conceptual foundations for UNSCR 1325 that was adopted in October 2000, under the presidency of Namibia.

This pre-UNSCR 1325 phase leading to the adoption of this resolution is conceived by Tryggestad (2014) as the *emergence* of a new international norm, in line with the norm life cycle theory of Finnemore and Sikkink (1998). In her systematic study, Tryggestad (2014) traces the development of the WPS agenda with particular interest in the interplay between UN agencies, UN member states and international civil society organizations. Tryggestad (2014) argues that in this stage of emergence, international women's networks, such as the ones discussed in this section, acted as *norm entrepreneurs*. Using advocacy as a form of a 'soft pressure' on the Security Council and its member states, these non-state actors managed to build a strong momentum around the gender-specific impact of armed conflict (see also Anderlini 2011). This resulted in the passage of the first resolution in the history of the

Security Council that recognized the importance of gender equality for the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security.

### ***UNSCR 1325 and diffusion of Women, Peace and Security***

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1325 at the Open Debate held on 31 October 2000. This was the beginning of a new distinct thematic agenda for the Security Council, one on WPS, next to established earlier thematic agendas such as on Maintenance of International Peace and Security; Peacebuilding; Peacekeeping; Protection of Civilians; Children and Armed Conflict; and Countering Terrorism (UNSC n.d.-b). The WPS agenda has over time become part of the Security Council's programme of work. In practical terms, since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, each year – usually in the month of October – the Security Council has held an annual Open Debate on WPS at which the Council's members discuss gender issues pertaining to international peace and security (Tryggestad 2009). In 2002, the Secretary-General presented the first progress report on WPS, which, since 2004, has become an annual practice.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, the influence of the WPS agenda on the Security Council and its member states was limited in the early years of UNSCR 1325. Even though in 2005 the Secretary-General submitted with his annual report on WPS a "System-wide Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)" (S/2005/636), the impact of this plan appears to be rather negligible.<sup>5</sup> Most scholars do not even seem to be vaguely aware of it: with the exception of Otto (2009) or Shepherd (2015), to my knowledge, it has not been covered by academic studies. In these early years, the Security Council's presidents also adopted a number of statements on WPS.<sup>6</sup> The presidential statements, however, only express the Council's recognition of WPS issues without providing an implementation strategy or enforcement mechanism. It ultimately took nearly another decade from the passage of UNSCR 1325 before further developments occurred.

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<sup>4</sup> See: S/2002/1154; S/2004/814; S/2005/636; S/2006/770; S/2007/567; S/2008/622; S/2009/465; S/2010/173; A/65/354–S/2010/466; S/2010/498; S/2011/598; S/2012/732; S/2013/525; S/2014/693; S/2015/716; S/2016/822 and S/2017/861.

<sup>5</sup> The UN Action Plan assigned responsibilities to multiple entities within the UN system, including UN Department of Political Affairs, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN Women (at that time operating as UNIFEM), UN Development Fund, the Office for the UN Commissioner for Human Rights, and the World Bank (for more, see S/2005/636). The 2006 and 2007 annual reports address the progress in implementing the UN Action Plan (see S/2006/770 and S/2007/567).

<sup>6</sup> See: S/PRST/2001/31; S/PRST/2002/32; S/PRST/2004/40; S/PRST/2005/52; S/PRST/2006/42; S/PRST/2007/5; S/PRST/2007/40; S/PRST/2008/39; S/PRST/2010/8; S/PRST/2010/22; S/PRST/2011/20; S/PRST/2012/3; S/PRST/2012/23; S/PRST/2014/21; S/PRST/2016/9.

Starting from 2008, the process of diffusion accelerated. It was in that year that the Security Council convened its first Open Debate specifically dedicated to Sexual Violence in Conflict (SVIC),<sup>7</sup> thereafter held annually. During the 2008 debate the Council members also unanimously adopted UNSCR 1820. The resolution recognized the slow progress in the implementation of the WPS agenda, expressing “deep concern” about the acts of sexual violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict (S/RES/1820, Preamble). Since 2012, the Secretary-General also presents to the Security Council an annual report on SVIC.<sup>8</sup> After 2008, the Security Council adopted six further resolutions under the WPS banner, that is, UNSCR 1888 (2009), UNSCR 1889 (2009), UNSCR 1960 (2010), UNSCR 2106 (2013), UNSCR 2122 (2013) and UNSCR 2242 (2015). UNSCR 1888 (2009) deserves particular attention as it mandated the creation of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, which to date is the most significant infrastructure associated with the WPS agenda within the UN system. In 2011, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality further established the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security<sup>9</sup> and published the “UN Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security: 2011-2020”.

According to Tryggestad (2014), these developments signify the transition of WPS into the second phase of norm diffusion in the life cycle theory: that of *norm cascade*. Tryggestad (2014) argues that the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2010 marked the *tipping point*. This commemoration served as an important mobilizing event which encouraged the Security Council’s member states as well as other UN member states and UN entities to report on the global progress with respect to the implementation of the WPS agenda and renew their commitments to gender equality in peace and security. UN member states have subsequently become the primary *norm followers* and to demonstrate this, Tryggestad (2014) points to the adoption of action plans on WPS by 26 national governments by the end of 2010. The WPS agenda has since diffused rapidly across the UN system and national governments. At the

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<sup>7</sup> It was later renamed to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). SVIC and CRSV are used interchangeably in this thesis.

<sup>8</sup> Since 2012, the Secretary-General also presents to the Security Council his annual report on CRSV. See: A/66/657-S/2012/33; A/67/792-S/2013/149; S/2014/181; S/2015/203; S/2016/361/Rev.1; S/2017/249.

<sup>9</sup> The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality established an Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security in 2001 to support the production of the first Secretary-General’s report on WPS, released in 2002. The Task Force engaged in some activities in the years 2002-2008 but the scope of its work was relatively limited. In 2011, it was converted into the aforementioned Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security (UN 2011).

time of writing, 74 countries have developed action plans, accounting to nearly 40 percent of 193 UN member states (for more details see Chapter 4).

Despite these development, in 2014 Tryggestad (2014:62) maintained that “[t]he WPS norm has still a long way to go to reach the final phase of the norm life cycle”. That final stage of *internalization* requires the norm to be institutionalized through legal or bureaucratic processes to the point it gains “taken-for-granted quality” (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998:895). Even though a number of institutional mechanisms pertinent to WPS implementation can be identified, as will be described later in this chapter, Tryggestad (2014) concluded that WPS has not become a taken-for-granted, coherent and iterated practice for relevant stakeholders, primarily UN member states.

Nevertheless, the process of *institutionalization* has undeniably begun for the WPS agenda (Tryggestad 2014). The eight resolutions collectively established a bureaucratic architecture for WPS implementation within and beyond the Security Council and UN peacekeeping missions. In doing so, the resolutions outlined a set of normative values for relevant stakeholders. For instance, UNSCR 1820 (2008) laid out the rule of zero tolerance of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the personnel of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO). Pursuant to UNSCR 1888 (2009), the Secretary-General established the aforementioned Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. UNSCR 1888 also called on the Secretary-General to appoint, where appropriate, Women Protection Advisors to UN peacekeeping missions, and to identify the Team of Experts on situations of concern with respect to sexual violence. UNSCR 1889 (2009) requested the creation of global indicators to track the implementation of the WPS agenda worldwide. UNSCR 1960 (2010) established the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence. While UNSCR 2106 (2013) operationalized the accountability for sexual crimes in conflict, UNSCR 2122 (2013) called for the “whole-of-UN accountability” for the implementation of all components of the agenda, not only its protection pillar (see also Shepherd 2014). Finally, the most recent resolution, UNSCR 2242 (2015), established the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action (later renamed to the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund), a pooled financing mechanism to support women-led organizations promoting peace and security. This resolution also created the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security to facilitate the information flow between the Security Council and other stakeholders (for more, see Coomaraswamy 2015). This non-exhaustive list of arrangements put in place since the

adoption of UNSCR 1325 demonstrates the growing bureaucratization of the agenda within the Security Council.

In parallel to the development of the WPS agenda as a stand-alone agenda, its values have spread across other areas of the Security Council's work and the UN system. There are evident intersections between WPS and other Security Council's agendas such as Protection of Civilians and Children and Armed Conflict. These overlaps resonate with the protective nature of the UN's mandate, where the safety of civilian populations is the central theme. Similarly, UNSCR 2250 (2015), the first resolution adopted by the Council under the banner of Youth, Peace and Security, most recently reiterated in UNSCR 2419 (2018), is to a large extent inspired by the WPS agenda and dedicates a number of operational paragraphs to gender-related issues. UNSCR 1325 has also influenced other thematic resolutions of the Security Council traditionally associated with 'hard security'. For example, UNSCR 2117 (2013) on Small Arms and Light Weapons urged member states and UN actors to "facilitate women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer [of weapons]" (S/RES/2117, OP 12). UNSCR 2151 (2014) adopted under the Maintenance of International Peace and Security agenda, recognizes the links between the security sector and gender equality, highlighting "the importance of women's equal and effective participation and full involvement in all stages of the security sector reform process" (S/RES/2151, OP 19). Furthermore, in 2015 the WPS agenda influenced the Security Council's milestone reviews into peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding architecture (see S/2015/682 and S/2015/490).

Where the impact of WPS has been more limited is in country-specific resolutions of the Security Council. This is important to note because country-specific resolutions are of a coercive nature, that is, they typically establish or renew a peacekeeping mission or stipulate sanctions on countries of concern to the Council (Tryggestad 2009). However, UNSCR 2242 recognized this shortcoming and decided "to integrate women, peace and security concerns across all country-specific situations on the Security Council's agenda" (S/RES/2242, OP 5b). To carry out this decision, some of the recent country-specific resolutions adopted appropriate provisions related to WPS, for example, UNSCR 2351 (2017) on Western Sahara, UNSCR 2352 (2017) on Sudan and South Sudan or UNSCR 2358 (2017) on Somalia.

At the time of writing, there is strong evidence suggesting that the principles of the WPS agenda have spread beyond the Security Council, perhaps culminating in UNSCR 2122's

request for an integrated ‘whole-of-UN’ approach (see also Shepherd 2014). UNSCR 2122 recognized, in an operative paragraph, the need for a better cooperation between the traditional UN bodies mandated with the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, such as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) or the Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) (S/RES/2122, OP 2). All UN entities were encouraged to integrate the objectives of the agenda into their mandates or develop relevant guidelines. UNSCR 1325 was ultimately deemed relevant to the entire UN system.

Outside the Security Council, UNSCR 1325 has reached, for instance, the UN Human Rights Council. In October 2013, the CEDAW Committee adopted the General Recommendation no. 30 (GR 30) on Women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30). GR 30 clarified state and non-state actors’ obligations related to CEDAW in conflict, post-conflict as well as the state of emergency (Swaine & O’Rourke 2015). In doing so, it established clear links between UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW, and opened for reporting on the agenda through human rights mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review. The interconnections between the situation of women in conflict and non-conflict situations were furthermore strengthened in the General Recommendation no. 35 (GR 35) on Gender-based Violence against Women, adopted by the CEDAW Committee in July 2017 (CEDAW/C/GC/35; see also Swaine 2017). GR 35 specifically pointed out that gender inequalities occur across peace and conflict, and gender-based violence “manifests in a continuum of multiple, interrelated and recurring forms, in a range of settings” (CEDAW/C/GC/35, art. 6).

Another example that bears the marks of engagement with the WPS agenda is the Arms Trade Treaty (A/RES/67/234 B). Adopted by the UN General Assembly in April 2013, the Arms Trade Treaty included a gender criterion enforcing the prohibition of arms transfer to areas where they might provoke outbreak of violence against women. The Arms Trade Treaty states that in making their assessments regarding arms export, state parties “shall take into account the risk of the conventional arms [...] being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children” (A/CONF.217/2013/L.3, art. 7). Moreover, in June 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that also recognized the relevance of gender issues. More specifically, in its Preamble, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapon underscored the importance of “supporting and strengthening the effective

participation of women in nuclear disarmament” (A/CONF.229/2017/L.3/Rev.1, Preamble), in line with UNSCR 1325.

In addition to the diffusion of the WPS agenda within the UN system, this process has created a unique opportunity for interactions between UN actors and international civil society organizations. Originating from non-state actors’ advocacy in the late 1990s, the role of international civil society organizations in progressing the agenda has been increasingly important. The significance of civil society for gender equality advancement is documented in scholarly literature (Htun & Weldon 2010). For instance, True and Mintrom (2001) found that transnational feminist networks have been the crucial factor enabling diffusion of gender mainstreaming machineries. International women’s organizations have been identified as even more critical with regards to the WPS agenda (Anderlini 2011; Tryggestad 2009; Barnes 2011; Cohn 2008; True 2016). For instance, Cockburn (2007:141) stated that UNSCR 1325 “may well be the only Security Council resolution for which the groundwork, the diplomacy and lobbying, the drafting and redrafting, was almost entirely the work of civil society”. But while women’s and peace organizations contributed to the emergence of UNSCR 1325, in turn the WPS agenda expanded their influence. As an established practice, the Security Council’s debates on WPS and SVIC now start with a briefing by at least one civil society representative, usually a women’s human rights defender nominated by the NGOWG. Only then the Council’s members proceed to the debate and the vote on a resolution. Further, civil society has been built into the WPS resolutions. For instance, UNSCR 2122 recognized in an operative paragraph:

[T]he importance of interactions of civil society, including women’s organizations, with members of the Council at headquarters and during Council field missions and commits to ensuring that its periodic field visits to conflict areas include interactive meetings with local women and women’s organizations in the field. (S/RES/2122, OP 6)

UNSCR 2122 encouraged UN member states to increase funding to local civil society organizations in efforts to strengthen their capabilities in supporting women on the ground (S/RES/2122, OP 7b). In consequence, civil society organizations are now conceived as the ones with profound knowledge on women’s needs and priorities. In addition to the Security Council’s debates, they are consulted at informal meetings called Arria Formula.<sup>10</sup> In line

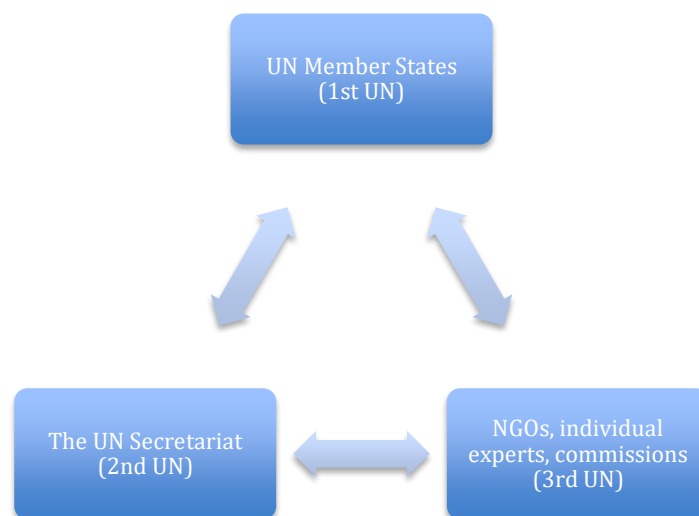
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<sup>10</sup> Arria Formula refers to meetings of the Security Council member states with civil society organizations outside the Council’s Chamber. These meetings are confidential and serve as informal consultations, usually



with these developments, the most recent resolution, UNSCR 2242, decided to convene an Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security to ensure information flows between relevant UN agencies, UN member states and civil society (S/RES/2242, OP 5a). The creation of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security manifests the growing bureaucratization of relationships between these actors, which are no longer confined to informal interactions.

Given the growing interrelations between WPS stakeholders, a question for researchers is whether this process might present “the ideal type model of tripartite collaborative governance” (Tryggestad 2014; see Figure 2). Tryggestad (2014:17-18) demonstrates that just like in the model described by Weiss et al. (2009) and Risse (2002), the WPS agenda involves collaborations between UN member states (the first UN), the UN Secretariat (the second UN),<sup>11</sup> and international civil society organizations (the third UN). It is precisely the collaboration of the first, the second and the third UN, Tryggestad argued in 2014, that has enabled the unprecedented traction of UNSCR 1325.



*Figure 2: Tripartite global governance*

*Source: Tryggestad (2014)*

### ***2015 milestone: High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security***

The WPS milestone in the form of the UN Security Council High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security capitalized the increasingly important interactions between the UN, member states and civil society organizations in progressing UNSCR 1325. Convened

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hosted at the request of civil society organizations (see also Tryggestad 2014). For more on the function and format of Arria Formula meetings, see UNSC (n.d.-a).

<sup>11</sup> That is, the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and other UN entities under the head of the Secretary-General.

pursuant to UNSCR 2122, it was held on 13-14 October 2015. The High-level Review brought together the relevant stakeholders in order to assess global developments related to the WPS agenda since its inception (S/RES/2122, OP 15-16). Furthermore, the then Secretary-General commissioned for this occasion a global study to outline “good practice examples, implementation gaps and challenges, as well as emerging trends and priorities for action” (S/RES/2122, OP 16). October 2015 ultimately marked the major step forward for the WPS agenda globally. I used this opportunity to conduct my field research and interview global WPS experts at the UN Headquarters in New York between 12-26 October 2015.

The 2015 Open Debate on 13 October served as the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security. In the concept note circulated prior to the Open Debate, the President of the Security Council (Spain) requested the Council’s members as well as other relevant stakeholders to report on the progression of the WPS agenda over the 15-year life span of UNSCR 1325 (S/2015/749). This event saw an unprecedented number of 113 statements (S/PV.7533). The then Secretary-General (Ban Ki-moon), the Executive Director of UN Women (Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka) and three civil society representatives (Yanar Mohammed from Iraq, Julienne Lusenge from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Alaa Murabit from Libya) briefed the Council. In addition to the lengthy list of UN member states who spoke, representatives of regional organizations also delivered statements, including the African Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. As a matter of fact, the long list of speakers required the Council to resume the meeting on 14 October, which is a highly unusual procedure in this space. Furthermore, UNSCR 2242, unanimously adopted during the Open Debate, was co-sponsored by a record-breaking number of 75 states (PeaceWomen 2015a).

As part of the High-level Review, on 14 October 2015, UN Women and the Group of Friends of the *Global Study* hosted a closed donor conference in which the global report on the WPS agenda was officially launched under the title *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (Coomaraswamy 2015). The luncheon welcomed speeches by selected UN and member states’ officials, prompting financial pledges. Drafted by the High

Level Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security,<sup>12</sup> under the lead of Radhika Coomaraswamy,<sup>13</sup> the *Global Study* evaluated the 15-year progress in the implementation of the WPS agenda, compiling data from national, regional and international levels, across the globe. According to Coomaraswamy, the study was conducted independently and the data collection involved a series of country visits and regional field consultations (UN Women 2015a). Civil society organizations contributed to this 417-page volume through submissions, published in the form of *Global Report: Civil Society Organization Survey for the Global Study on Women, Peace and Security* (Global Network of Women Peacebuilders 2015).

The *Global Study* covered a range of WPS issues, old and new, including women's participation in political processes, transformative gender justice, the protection of women's human rights, demilitarization and conflict prevention, and women's roles in violent extremism. Technical concerns around WPS implementation were also addressed, for instance, the *Global Study* noted commonplace shortcomings with regards to financing, monitoring and evaluation as well as overall accountability around UNSCR 1325. The content of the *Global Study* – in relation to gender equality – will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Here, however, it is important to note the collaborative nature of this report that brought together significant input from a range of stakeholders.

The growing interactions between UN entities, national governments and civil society organizations were further evident during side-events hosted on the margins of the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security. The great majority of these events were organized collaboratively, again providing an opportunity to strengthen these relationships. Nearly 50 side-events spread across the whole month of October 2015 and like the *Global Study* covered a range of issues within in the ambit of UNSCR 1325, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

In short, the past 18 years have marked unprecedented developments with regards to addressing gender equality as part of international peace and security agenda. These global events culminated in the 2015 High-level Review of the Women, Peace and Security. During my field research at that time, I observed the enthusiasm of the stakeholders involved in the WPS agenda. The numerous statements delivered by high-level UN officials, the financial

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<sup>12</sup> The High Level Advisory Group, appointed by the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, was comprised of 16 experts (including three men) from diverse geographical regions.

<sup>13</sup> Radhika Coomaraswamy formerly served as the Under-Secretary-General Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

pledges made by national governments, the record-breaking number of states who co-sponsored UNSCR 2242, the support from regional organizations and nearly 50 side-events organized collaboratively by these actors are by all means exceptional, when the operation of the Security Council is considered. To date, no other Security Council's resolution or debate received such overwhelming applause. The diffusion of the values associated with the WPS agenda across UN entities, UN member states and international civil society organizations is still evident in 2018. These developments not only demonstrate the global traction of UNSCR 1325 but also point to the growing significance of gender equality objectives for the international peace and security politics. The following table offers a snapshot of the most important global events related to UNSCR 1325 since the late 1990s.

*Table 1: Timeline of global WPS-related developments*

Date	Event
1995	The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action included Platform E "Women and Armed Conflict."
1998	The Agreed Conclusions of the 42nd Commission on the Status of Women included Part II "Women and armed conflict" (E/1998/INF/3/Add.2).
1998	The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provided that sexual violence might be considered a war crime or crime against humanity (A/CONF.183/9)
2000	UN Security Council President, Bangladeshi Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, released the press statement on Women's Rights and International Peace (SC/6815).
	Namibia in cooperation with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) hosted a workshop which resulted in the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693).
	The UN Security Council held its first open debate on Women, Peace and Security and unanimously adopted UNSCR 1325 (S/RES/1325).
2002	The UN Secretary-General presented the first progress report on Women, Peace and Security (S/2002/1154) (released annually since 2004).
2005	The Secretary-General submitted with his annual progress report on Women, Peace and Security (S/2005/636) the system-wide action plan on implementation of UNSCR 1325 (UN Action Plan).
2008	The Security Council held its first debate on conflict-related sexual violence (thereafter held annually) and unanimously adopted UNSCR 1820 (S/RES/1820).
2009	The UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1888 (S/RES/1888) and UNSCR 1889 (S/RES/1889) on the same day.
2010	The UN Secretary General report on Women's Participation (A/65/354-S/2010/466) presented "Seven Point Action Plan on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding."
	The 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 was commemorated (Tryggestad 2014).
	The UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1960 (S/RES/1960).
2011	The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality established the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security and published the UN Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security: 2011-2020.

<b>2013</b>	The UN General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (A/RES/67/234 B), which includes a gender criterion.  The UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 2106 (S/RES/2106).
	The UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 2122 (S/RES/2122) and commissioned the <i>Global Study</i> on UNSCR 1325.  The CEDAW Committee adopted the General Recommendation no. 30 on Women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30).
<b>2015</b>	The UN Security Council held the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security and unanimously adopted UNSCR 2242 (S/RES/2242).  The Secretary-General Report on the Future of Peace Operations (S/2015/682) and the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the Review on UN Peacebuilding Architecture (S/2015/490) integrated the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
<b>2016</b>	The Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security started operating (see S/2016/1106, part III and VII).
<b>2017</b>	The CEDAW Committee adopted the General Recommendation no. 35 (GR 35) on Gender-based violence against women (CEDAW/C/GC/35).

### **Establishing an international norm**

As welcome as this global traction to the WPS agenda is, it is not yet a synonymous with UNSCR 1325 becoming an international norm. Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998:888) suggest that a new international norm can be identified through its institutionalization in international law, UN organizational structure and UN member states' foreign and bilateral policies (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). Tryggestad (2014) adopts this framework to similarly argue that the passage of the subsequent Security Council's resolutions on WPS, the establishment of the Office of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the adoption of National Action Plans by members states, are the three forms of institutionalization that point to the emergence of an international norms associated with the WPS agenda. However, all three aspects singled out by constructivist researchers are to some extent problematic.

To start with, there is a great deal of discussion regarding to what extent the thematic resolutions of the Security Council, including the WPS resolutions, constitute international law (Tryggestad 2009; Barrow 2016; Swaine 2009). It is commonly agreed that the WPS resolutions "communicate evident normative weight" (Ní Aoláin 2013:59). This is manifested, for instance, in the development of WPS architecture, pursuant to the resolutions that ultimately call on the relevant actors to undertake appropriate implementation steps. In line with the Security Council Chapter of the UN Charter, as a general rule all member states of the UN (not only the members of the Security Council) are obliged to follow the Council's decisions. Art. 25 specifically stipulates that "The Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present

Charter” (Charter of the United Nations, Chapter V: Security Council, Art. 25, UN 1945). As such, the WPS resolutions provide a soft law instrument to advance gender equality in international peace and security (Barrow 2016). However, as opposed to country-specific resolutions of the Security Council passed under coercive Chapter VII, thematic resolutions adopted under Chapter VI come with much weaker enforcement mechanism typically limited to non-coercive measures (see also Tryggstad 2009). The WPS resolutions similarly exhibit much less institutional power than country-focused resolutions. Unless specified otherwise, sanctions do not apply in cases of non-compliance in this sense.

Questions are also raised with regards to the institutionalization of the WPS agenda in UN organizational structure. The 2010 establishment of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict can by all means be associated with such institutionalization. However, the mandate of this office focuses only on a single aspect of the WPS agenda: one related to the protection pillar in its narrowest definition. This contrasts, for instance, with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict, which grapples with all aspects outlined under that agenda (see Lee-Koo 2018). Confining the WPS agenda to protection from sexual violence is criticized by a number of WPS scholars (for instance Shepherd 2016; Cook 2009; Ruby 2014). Some argued that this not only limits the WPS agenda’s potential for gender equality but goes against the very aim of UNSCR 1325. Cook (2009:126-127), for instance, explicitly raises this concern saying that:

Resolution 1325 was affirmatively not about ‘making war safe for women’ [...]  
Resolution 1325 was about ensuring women’s full and effective participation in  
decision-making, including in the arenas of so-called hard security.

Similarly, one of the drafters of UNSCR 1325 highlighted in an interview: “We don’t want to make war safe for women. It’s my favorite phrase” (G-CSO 7, interview). The creation of the Informal Group on Women, Peace and Security pursuant to UNSCR 2242, might be an attempt to overcome this narrow understanding of the WPS agenda, however, its mandate is limited to briefing the Security Council. As such, it does not have any enforcement power attached to its work – neither over the Council nor UN member states. The institutionalization of UNSCR 1325 within the UN system continues to be overwhelmingly preoccupied with protection from conflict-related sexual violence.

Finally, while National Action Plans (NAPs) have provided a mechanism for governments to comply with the provisions of UNSCR 1325 through foreign or bilateral policies (Tryggestad 2014; Swaine 2009), a number of difficulties were identified. The fact that by June 2018 nearly 40 percent of UN member states developed such policies is certainly significant. However, the *Global Study* pointed out to the common failure of the existing NAPs to design robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms that would allow progress to be measured (Coomaraswamy 2015:241). Some of the UN and civil society experts interviewed for this study in 2015 claimed that the impact of NAPs had been mostly unknown. More importantly, my research participants argued that WPS plans had been sometimes used to bypass countries' obligations around UNSCR 1325 or gender equality more broadly. Member states were claimed to have adopted WPS policies in line with their national interests that were not necessarily related to gender equality at all. Conflict, post-conflict and non-conflict countries with NAPs were all suspected of using UNSCR 1325 to strengthen their international reputation as modern states (True 2016; see also Shepherd 2016). Finally, even well-intentioned NAPs are often perceived as 'the end product' rather than only a tool to achieve iterated practice on WPS (Swaine 2013). Chapter 4 will discuss these problems in more depth.

As it turns out, efforts to institutionalize the WPS agenda remain largely skin-deep. Advancing gender equality through the WPS agenda is ultimately overwhelmingly reliant on the informed leadership, political will and concerted effort of all actors involved in this process. While the collaboration between the UN, government and civil society stakeholders has enabled the process of diffusion, as Tryggestad (2014) demonstrated, it has also created a dynamic process that has resulted in unintended consequences, positive and negative.

### **Dynamic and non-linear processes of diffusion**

Growing evidence points to the WPS agenda becoming a globally accepted standard. While undertaking my field research during the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security, I noted the tone of celebration at the UN Headquarters around the achievements detailed in the previous section. UN, government and civil society actors showcased their dedication to progressing the WPS agenda through collaborative efforts. In personal interviews, however, my research participants reported difficulties around the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Their testimonies pointed me to the conclusion that the diffusion of UNSCR 1325 is far from progressing along a linear course, as constructivist theories would suggest. Not only the political will but also the capability of different stakeholders was questioned. There remains

disagreement on their understanding of the very purpose that should drive the WPS agenda forward. In the following, I use more critically-oriented frameworks to capture this dynamic. This assists in revealing the complex relationships between the implementing actors and how they produce ambiguous outcomes for the agenda.

To begin with, the commitment of UN member states to UNSCR 1325 was not necessarily perceived as genuine, both by civil society representatives and some UN officials. The following statement made by a civil society actor illustrates this skepticism toward governments' growing interest in the WPS agenda:

We have seen at the Security Council that 111 states wanted to have their national state voices on record for the Open Debate [on 13-14 October 2015]. That shows that there is certainly some kind of traction and there is a conversation that these states feel they somehow need to be part of.

But I think there are some very serious concerns about *why that is and how much of it is a performance* to be part of 'the WPS club' that seems to be setting up. (G-CSO 8, interview; emphasis added)

The pressure for conformity is one of the most important mechanisms for international norms to regulate or prescript states' behaviour. It plays a significant role in the stage of *norm cascade* (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). Early constructivist researchers viewed conformity as part of relatively non-conflictual 'socialization' of states (Risse & Sikkink 1999) or of a process of learning between 'peer-states' (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). Moreover, it was often presumed that less 'liberal' states can learn from those who appear 'modern' (Meyer et al. 1997). In the context of the WPS agenda, states from the Global North that typically are seen as 'liberal' have, somewhat inadequately, claimed the ownership of UNSCR 1325 (see Basu 2016). And yet, it was troubling for a number of my interviewees that these very states "might not hold themselves to the same commitment" they impose on 'non-liberal' countries from the Global South (G-CSO 8, personal interview, see also Shepherd 2016). Many saw governments' enthusiasm during the Open Debate as 'performance' rather than part of a 'learning experience'. The UK, the US, Australia and Canada were specifically indicated as 'WPS penholders' that might be using WPS for realizing their national interests, not necessarily related to gender equality. Earlier, some critical WPS researchers raised similar concerns, arguing that the WPS process is "evocative of the political economy of imperialism" (Pratt 2013:772; see also Gibbings 2011).



Not only the Open Debate, but also the Global Study luncheon on 14 October 2015 received mixed reviews. This high-level, by-invitation-only event prompted a number of financial pledges by governments officials. However, one of the interviewees called it “ridiculous”. As she explained, “They pledged a million, someone pledged USD 50,000, USD 100,000. Like *nothing* compared to other expenses” (G-CSO 6, interview, emphasis original). Interestingly, the *Global Study* launched on that very day found “a consistent, striking disparity between policy commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment, and the financial allocations to achieve them” (Coomaraswamy 2015:372). To some research participants this luncheon indicated the interest of UN member states in continuing the implementation of the WPS agenda beyond 2015. Others, however, clearly received it with reservations. The latter, mostly civil society actors, complained about the co-optation of UNSCR 1325 in accordance to national interests of governments and as part of the mentioned ‘performance’ – as opposed to a genuine political will to advance gender equality for women in conflict zones. The disparity between the verbal and financial commitment is just as clear in 2018. The Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund established as part of the commemoration of UNSCR 1325 has collected USD 8,198,938 in total between 2016 and 2018 (UNDP 2018). By contrast, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that government’s military spending amounted to USD 1,739,000,000,000 in 2017 alone (SIPRI 2018).

While governments were accused of instrumentalizing women’s rights for other ends, many also question the commitment of the UN system in advancing the agenda. UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions sit within the Security Council’s mandate. But as a matter of fact, several civil society actors are cynical towards UN-driven processes around the WPS agenda. This is evident in the following statement by an interviewee who claimed, “The UN system is now using our discourse, but they are not acting the way that we think you should act if you speak that way” (G-CSO 6, interview). This statement demonstrates both skepticism and also a certain level of hopelessness in a situation in which the UN is perceived to have hijacked, rather than progressed, the WPS agenda. This research participant was particularly critical of the UN’s lack of support to civil society organizations who are at the forefront of gender equality work when she claimed: “I don’t really see that there is a *true* interest [...] to *really* support civil society” (G-CSO 6, personal interview, emphasis original). Furthermore, this issue was a central topic of the closed “Strategy Session on Feminist Peace Activism,” hosted by WILPF International on the margins of the High-level Review. Since this meeting was only open to invited civil society organizations, the discussion was more honest than at the

Open Debate or at the Global Study luncheon. In contrast to the festive atmosphere of the latter, the participants of this closed session did not hold back in articulating growing frustration with the UN and the perceived absence of a tangible strategy to follow-up on the High-level Review. The political will of the UN was again questioned. The relationship between UN Women and civil society organizations appeared particularly problematic and deserves more attention.

Despite being traditionally depicted as an ally of women's organizations and a key actor for gender equality advancement globally, UN Women was accused by civil society actors of not acting for or on behalf of women. The summary of the aforementioned closed session "brought attention to the need for the feminist movement to *retain its independence* and leadership in raising the bar, and *not to rely on any entity (even UN Women)* to fulfill this leadership role" (PeaceWomen 2015b; emphasis added). The discontent with UN Women emerged in my interviews too. For instance, a research participant complained about the *Global Study* which was a major UN Women-led WPS initiatives, asking ironically:

Who needs 400 pages to come to the conclusion that women don't have equality in this world? Two million dollars and 400 pages. I mean ... and people are expected to read it? I can't even lift it! (G-CSO 7, interview)

The interviewee questioned, moreover, UN Women's understanding of UNSCR 1325 and the agency's role in progressing the WPS agenda, in the following words: "I am very troubled by the position of UN Women; UN Women has not been a promoter of [UNSCR] 1325" (G-CSO 7, interview). This comment was specifically directed at the UN Women Chief of the Peace and Security Unit, Paivi Kannisto, who spoke at one of the side-events, entitled "Prelude to the Peace Forum: Voices from the Field". Kannisto highlighted during her speech that "UNSCR 1325 is the agenda for peace; it is not so much a gender equality agenda". At that very moment, the tensions around this statement and the role of UN Women in progressing UNSCR 1325 were apparent in the room. Interestingly, it was not only civil society actors who were visibly upset but also a representative from the UNDPKO – the agency that is not traditionally perceived as concerned with gender equality. Later this UNDPKO representative stated in an interview, in response to Kannisto's comment, "[t]he equality conversation is *really* important [in the context of UNSCR 1325]" (UNDPKO, interview, emphasis original).

UN Women representatives in turn pointed to the complex role of the agency within the UN system and the power relationships between UN entities. Already in 2006, similar concerns were raised by Goetz and Sandler (2006:164-165) in relation to the UN Women's predecessor, the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Speaking from 'within', Goetz and Sandler (2006:164) highlighted:

One of the ills that afflicts UNIFEM and other gender equality entities – whether women's ministries or women's networks operating in the larger mainstream environment – is that we are often excluded from the decision-making venues that we were set up to influence.

The problem of sidelining women's concerns within the UN system and understating the expertise of UN Women was emphasized on a number of occasions in October 2015. It was apparent, for instance, at the side-event "Breaking Barriers: Promoting Gender Equality in Peacekeeping Operations", hosted by the UNDPKO and the Department of Field Support. UN Women was not represented on the panel of eight speakers; however, a UN Women employee present in the room pointed out to the panel the difficulty of mainstreaming a gender perspective in various contexts. As she stated: "Gender people are always asked for ready recipes, but it is not that easy. It is a rocket science" (Sarah Douglas, UN Women Policy Specialist, Peace and Security Section). Ultimately, the issue is that other UN entities and the leadership might not appreciate the complexity around gender equality. UN Women still remains one of the most under-resourced UN bodies and this limits the capabilities and scope of work of the agency, including in the context of the WPS agenda (UN Women 2017).

Lastly, during my field research, I could also identify certain tensions around the role of civil society in progressing the global WPS agenda. These tensions concerned both external relationships with the UN or governments, some of which have already been discussed in this section, and internal partnerships within and across women's organizations. Starting with the former, civil society played a crucial role in lobbying the Security Council to pass UNSCR 1325 (Cockburn 2007). Nearly two decades later the acknowledgement of civil society contributions in this space is evident. Both UN member states and UN officials highlighted the critical role of women's organizations. At the Open Debate, the Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka stated that "women leaders and front-line activists [...] are the true unsung [s]heroes" (Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, S/PV.7533). In an interview, a senior UNDP representative also emphasized the expertise and groundwork of civil society in the following statement:

The importance of the women's movements is still clear to all of us [at the UN]. It was very interesting that the Security Council resolution [2242] mentioned so much civil society. That this is the way to engage [in WPS work] and to create the ownership and that international community needs to help those civil society organizations. (UNDP, interview)

Such remarks were common during the High-level Review. Women's organizations were overwhelmingly applauded during the Open Debate, the Global Study luncheon and by nearly all of my interviewees. Civil society representatives, however, often saw these grand statements as tokenistic. Some complained explicitly about the lack of clarity around civil society's role in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, and especially the absence of funding that would allow these organizations to continue their work for gender equality. Furthermore, Aho and Grinde (2017) found that the space for civil society had shrunk in 2015 in at least 109 countries. This has not improved with a recent study finding that the operation of civil society organizations continues to be restricted globally (CIVICUS 2018).

Further, the non-homogeneity of civil society stood out. Even though the perception of civil society as a united front was relatively common in the statements made by UN and government actors, and to some extent by international women's organizations, the interactions that I could observe during side-events in October 2015 demonstrated more complex relationships within and between women's organizations. The workshop on "Mobilizing Women, Localizing Peace" organized with the participation of women human rights defenders from Cameroon, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, and Nigeria, highlighted these tensions within women's peace organizations explicitly. For instance, most international organizations supported the passing of UNSCR 2242. As I learned from my research participants and in unofficial conversations, the language of this resolution was strongly influenced by months of advocacy by the NGOWG and, therefore, to some extent represented their interests. The creation of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security was particularly welcomed as it provides a new venue for increased interaction between the UN Security Council, its member states and civil society organizations. Grassroots activists were, however, more reserved, doubting whether another resolution will produce any impact on their lives. As a matter of fact, some delegates from conflict and post-conflict countries reacted with a giggle to the news about the adoption of the eighth resolution. One of them suggested: "Let's make a pledge: No more resolutions on Women, Peace and Security", ultimately expressing frustration with growing

bureaucratization around the WPS agenda at the global level and yet only elusive impact in conflict zones. Such interactions point to the conclusion that priorities identified by international women's organizations at the global level might not be entirely adequate for local organizations operating in conflict areas (see also Cook 2009).

While constructivist theories of international norms often perceive diffusion as a linear, non-conflictual process, my empirical data gathered during the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security challenges this account. The participant observations of the interactions between the different actors, but especially the testimonies that were confidentially shared during interviews revealed a number of profound disagreements with respect to UNSCR 1325. This empirical data encouraged me to draw a more complex picture of the current state of the WPS agenda, resonating with the critical scholarship and its portrayal of the ambiguity of norm diffusion. Krook and True (2012:104), for instance, argued that “co-optation, drift, accretion and reversal of a norm – including disputes over whether it is a norm at all – are all constant possibilities”. The WPS agenda is an apt example of this. Despite the seemingly collaborative nature of WPS implementation, this process is clearly dynamic and involves a range of identities, institutional interests and personal ambitions which do not necessarily overlap. These tensions were identified both across and within the different type of actors and were not limited to their external relationships. Internal tensions were just as strong, for instance between national governments from the Global North and the Global South, between UN Women and other UN agencies or even between international and local civil society organizations. Finally, in some contexts the sharp divisions between UN, government and civil society actors was challenged, including the common belief that governments pursue their national interests – either directly or through the UN – while civil society is (or should be) intrinsically interest-free.

## **Conclusions**

The aim of this chapter was to map the emergence and evolution of the WPS agenda and outline its current state in the global policymaking arena. Tracing this process has led to the conclusion that whilst UNSCR 1325 has been overwhelmingly influential, its development has fluctuated rather than followed a linear course. The remarkable developments related to the institutionalization of WPS within international law, UN organizational structure and foreign or bilateral policies of UN member states initially suggests that it has become an international norm in line with constructivist theories. However, it is clear that the successful implementation of WPS continues to be reliant on the commitment, capability and expertise

of the relevant stakeholders. This is because WPS obligations – in the way they have been set out thus far – can be easily bypassed or misconstrued. And yet, their relationships are increasingly complex and develop dynamically, as the final part of the chapter demonstrated. Even though all these stakeholders work on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at the global level, they do not necessarily head towards a common or universally agreed upon goal.

In 2014, Tryggestad's (2014:62) study concluded that the agenda has not yet reached the final stage of *norm internalization* because it "still seems to be dependent on the advocacy efforts of the transnational advocacy network on WPS for this process of diffusion to continue".

Constructivist theorists argued that when international norms reach this final stage, they result in iterated and habitual behaviour that leads to a lasting change (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). However, the experience with earlier gender equality frameworks begs a question regarding whether the WPS agenda will ever get to the point of iterated practice by the UN stakeholders and national governments – without the support of civil society. After all, critical scholars note that when it comes to gender equality norms, "it has become clear that despite the difficulties of agenda *setting*, agenda *keeping* is the real challenge for feminist advocates" (Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014:182). This is because any norm, but historically gender norms in particular, are at risk of being instrumentalized and co-opted for other institutional goals sometimes only indirectly related to gender equality (True & Parisi 2013). Then, the relationships between UN and government actors on the one hand and civil society on the other are also increasingly complex in the WPS context. With the changing position of civil society vis-à-vis the UN system, comes further ambiguity around what civil society is and what its purpose should be. UNSCR 1325 might have inadvertently contributed to the disparity between the international and local civil society organizations.

Finally, even though UNSCR 1325 has not translated into coherent implementation practice, it has nevertheless brought the attention of the international community to the situation of women and girls affected by conflict. In doing so, it has created significant opportunities to advance gender equality that previously had not been there. Perhaps the enormous traction to the WPS agenda can be explained by the vagueness of its meaning. Critical researchers argued that lack of specificity is indeed an important factor enabling global diffusion of certain norms. For instance, Krook and True (2012:105) claim that "norms diffuse precisely because – rather than despite the fact that – they may encompass different meanings, fit in with a variety of contexts, and be subject to framing by diverse actors". Although this flexibility of the WPS agenda to adapt to institutional mandates of different stakeholders has

enabled its rapid diffusion, it has also produced certain risks. Some of them were named in this chapter. But the lack of conceptual clarity of what the WPS agenda means and what it aims to achieve in relation to gender equality further exposes it to a myriad of interpretations. Not all of them retain the original intent of UNSCR 1325: that of improving the status of women in the efforts to address the root causes of armed conflict and gender-based violence. These issues will be discussed in Chapter 3 dedicated to the purpose of WPS, with focus upon different approaches to gender equality that have driven the global implementation of the agenda.

### **Chapter 3. Gender equality and the purpose of the Women, Peace and Security agenda**

The passage of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions demonstrates the willingness of the UN Security Council, and the broader international community, to link gender equality with global security. The UN's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda appears nowadays not only to be endorsed by global stakeholders but even celebrated. Yet, my empirical data suggests that it remains unclear who supports what exactly and how this might serve long-term gender equality. Through laying out a normative framework, the WPS agenda emphasizes gender-specific experiences of armed conflict and women's contributions to international peace and security (Willett 2010; Olsson & Gizelis 2015; Otto & Heathcote 2014; Anderlini 2011). It further calls for a gender-aware approach to conflict prevention, conflict transformation and post-conflict peacebuilding. Beyond this, however, the parameters or exact goals of UNSCR 1325 are vague and the agenda has proven to be flexible enough to accommodate a broad range of issues and approaches. The cross-cutting nature of gender equality as a policy objective makes the WPS agenda additionally vulnerable to political winds and the ever-changing political climate.

This chapter is dedicated to understanding the conceptualization(s) of gender equality within the UN's WPS agenda. My empirical analysis found that gender equality is perceived to be an integral part of the WPS agenda, especially since the 2015 High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security and the publication of the *Global Study* (Coomaraswamy 2015). But the meaning of gender equality is often taken for granted by global stakeholders. Neither the WPS resolutions nor the scholarly literature on UNSCR 1325 offered a precise definition. Based on the analysis of prime WPS documents and interview data, I singled out three distinct approaches to gender equality that draw from the pillars of the UN system and connect with earlier gender equality frameworks. These approaches essentially look at gender equality through a security, human rights or development lens. While not always clear-cut, they do nevertheless drive the policy development and implementation of UNSCR 1325, producing real-life implications for women, including those in conflict zones.

I argue throughout this chapter that the understanding of these different approaches – with a view to assess how far and in what ways each of them could bring about greater gender equality – needs to be a continuous exercise for feminist advocates. Each produces unique opportunities for gender equality but is at the same time embedded in structural and



institutional processes as well as attitudinal challenges. The result is that each approach might lead to unintended, sometimes harmful consequences for conflict-affected women. However, I conclude this chapter with the conviction that the meaning of gender equality and how it relates to the purpose of the UN's WPS agenda does not necessarily need to be stabilized or reduced to one approach. It is this vagueness of the agenda – and gender equality within it – that enhances the global diffusion. The WPS process is clearly dynamic and UNSCR 1325 needs to be flexible to address emerging issues. Nonetheless, it should be subject to ongoing scrutiny to maximize gender equality outcomes.

### **The elusive goals of Women, Peace and Security**

That gender equality is (or should be) a part of the UN's WPS agenda is evident in the first Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security. It explicitly mapped challenges to the achievement of “the goal of gender equality in relation to peace and security” (S/2002/1154, Para. 4). The report discusses, for example, the unequal gender relations between women and men prior to, during and in the aftermath of conflict, across the globe, stating that:

Women do not enjoy equal status with men in any society. Where cultures of violence and discrimination against women and girls exist prior to conflict, they will be exacerbated during conflict. If women do not participate in the decision-making structures of a society, they are unlikely to become involved in decisions about the conflict or the peace process that follows. (S/2002/1154, Para. 5)

Yet, explicit mentions of “gender equality” are uncommon in the WPS resolutions. It was only with UNSCR 1889, passed in 2009, that the term was used in an operative paragraph for the first time. Even though the principles of gender equality are present throughout the text of all eight resolutions, neither UNSCR 1325 nor UNSCR 1820 or 1960 reference the term itself, while UNSCR 1888 and 2106 mention it in passing only. UNSCR 1889, finally, expresses the intention to integrate gender equality provisions in the mandates of UN peacekeeping missions as well as to mobilize resources for gender equality advancement through the UN Peacebuilding Commission (S/RES/1889, OP 7 and 14). The gender equality language of the most recent resolutions, i.e. UNSCR 2122 and 2242, is slightly more extensive. UNSCR 2122 highlights the centrality of gender equality to the WPS agenda in its Preamble, “[r]eaffirming that women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality are critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security” (S/RES/2122, Preamble). The

resolution also reiterates the UNSCR 1889's call on UN missions to include provisions for gender equality in their structures (S/RES/2122, OP 4), while UNSCR 2242 further encourages UN member states to provide funding to gender equality projects on the ground (S/RES/2242, OP 3). Nonetheless, in no place in any of the eight WPS resolutions is gender equality conceptualized, defined or problematized.

The rather scattered mentions of the term in the WPS resolutions are indicative of early debates regarding whether gender equality is an objective of UNSCR 1325. After all, the *modus operandi* of the Security Council relies on militaristic approaches to security and neoliberal approaches to peace (Duncanson 2016). Neither is traditionally known for improving gender equality outcomes. The male-dominated UN agencies associated with 'hard security' as well as member states of the Security Council perceived to be 'less-progressive', such as Russia and China, have been more resistant to agree that gender equality might be a goal of UNSCR 1325 (see also Simic 2010; Swaine 2017). These actors pointed to the relevance of gender equality elsewhere – and often within the remit of the domestic politics of UN member states – but not within the mandate of the Security Council. As the Council's vote on any resolution is typically preceded by highly political negotiations between the members, using progressive or controversial language (including on gender equality) puts a resolution at the risk of failure to pass.

Over time however, voices contesting gender equality have become more isolated and less influential. In 2015, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized in his briefing to the Open Debate that “[f]ifteen years ago, resolution 1325 (2000) underscored the pivotal link between gender equality and international peace and security” (S/PV.7533). A number of national governments and UN stakeholders similarly underscored in their statements the centrality of gender equality to the successful realization of UNSCR 1325's ambitions. They said (see S/PV.7533; emphasis added):

This high-level meeting on the issue of women and peace and security does not only mark the anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) 15 years ago, nor is it a simple review of the progress made since 2000. It represents a new start for the women and peace and security agenda — *a new start for more equality*. (France)

We urge all the members present to take advantage of this important opportunity to move forward towards *a stronger and more substantial commitment to gender equality*

and to ensure that the empowerment of women and girls is one of the cornerstones of peacebuilding. (Guatemala)

[L]et me reiterate that Brazil will remain *strongly engaged in the advancement of gender equality* and women[']s empowerment issues at all levels and areas of work at the United Nations. (Brazil)

*Enhancing gender equality* and women's contributions to peace and security are *top priorities* for the Swedish Government. (Sweden)

Trinidad and Tobago is *fully committed to the goal of gender equality*. For us, the empowerment of women is an integral part of national development, as well as an essential pillar in the maintenance of sustainable peace. (Trinidad and Tobago)

[W]ith a view to further advancing the women and peace and security agenda, Croatia *commits to further promote gender equality* and gender mainstreaming in the context of its foreign, security and defense policies at all levels. (Croatia)

Alongside other United Nations Member States, Georgia once again reiterates *its commitment to further promoting gender equality* and the enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by all women. (Georgia)

*Promoting gender equality* and tackling violence against women, both at home and internationally, *is a priority* of the Montenegrin Government. We believe that where women live free of violence, have equal access to education, health care and political and economic opportunities, societies are healthier, more prosperous and more peaceful. This is our goal. (Montenegro)

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, *gender equality and the empowerment of women remain a priority*, both at the national and international levels. We have created a solid legal and institutional framework for the advancement of gender equality, in which the State requires affirmative measures aimed at realizing gender equality. (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Japan, as a peace-loving nation, has consistently supported conflict resolution and peacebuilding and *maintains the perspective of gender equality in its basic principles* of official development assistance. (Japan)

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was highly significant because it gave impetus to South Africa's international *commitments to gender equality*. (South Africa)

These extracts were intentionally selected from countries from each continent to demonstrate that this overwhelming support for gender equality is not specific to any region or particular group of states. As discussed in the previous chapter, ‘liberal’ states from the Global North are often perceived to be strong advocates for gender equality as opposed to countries from the Global South. In this case, member states representing all geographical regions were eager to have their support for the WPS agenda on record.

Not only did the speakers highlight the importance of gender equality to the WPS agenda but they also indicated 2015 as a particularly important year, explicitly calling it “a landmark year for gender equality” or “a pivotal year for gender equality” (S/PV.7533). Indeed, 2015 marked the milestone anniversary of UNSCR 1325, next to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA) and the launch of the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development, with its stand-alone Goal 5 on “Gender Equality” (A/RES/71). These statements commonly referred to the interconnections between these frameworks, showing how they reinforce one another.

Again, this is not to say that the gender equality objective of the WPS agenda is endorsed by *all* UN member states. For instance, Russia explicitly stated during the 2015 Open Debate that “gender equality and the advancement of women [...] should be carried out based on the appropriate mandates” and “national plans of action on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be used as an instrument to assess national policies aimed at enhancing the status of women” (S/PV.7533). In doing so, Russia opposed the idea of gender equality being a goal of the WPS agenda and located it, once again, outside the Security Council’s ambit (see also Swaine 2017). It appears, however, that such voices currently belong to a minority of UN member states. Even though this minority might be powerful considering Russia’s (or China’s for that matter) right to veto Security Council resolutions, at this point of time it does not necessarily halt the progression of policy development around the WPS agenda. Neither Russia nor China vetoed or abstained when the resolution was passed – in spite of UNSCR 2242 including substantive references to gender equality.

That gender equality is essential to the WPS agenda was even clearer for my research participants. Almost all 19 interviewees, whether UN or international civil society actors, unanimously highlighted its critical importance. This is evident in the following statements:

Gender equality is very important. It’s a fundamental part of the WPS agenda.  
(UNDPA, interview)

I don't see how WPS reaches implementation without gender equality. (G-CSO 9, interview)

I know some people say that WPS is not about gender. I don't agree with that at all. Of course, it's about gender, of course it's about gender equality. (G-CSO 10, interview)

That's the kind of end goal to me. That if we succeed with the implementation of the WPS agenda as it is laid out in the [WPS] resolutions, the end goal will be gender equality. (UNPCB, interview)

To me the [WPS] agenda is absolutely about gender equality! (UN/CSO, interview)

The research participants used strong and expressive language such as “of course”, “certainly”, “absolutely”, claiming that gender equality is “fundamental” to WPS or even that it is “the end goal” of the agenda. As it turned out, however, they were at the same time troubled by the question regarding what gender equality is or should be in the context of UNSCR 1325, whether empirically or normatively. Most of the interviewees seemed confused, one explicitly admitting “I haven't really given it that much of a thought” (UNPBC, interview). Their confusion pointed me to the conclusion that while gender equality is nowadays commonly brought up in the context of the WPS agenda, the concept itself appears to be taken for granted or simply understood in terms of women's protection from sexual violence or, far more commonly, women's participation in peace and security-related processes. Even though the interviewees had a great sense of how gender inequalities interplay with and are produced by international peace and security efforts, rarely were they able to provide me with a proxy.

### **The conceptualization of gender equality in Women, Peace and Security**

When I turned to scholarly literature on WPS, which has indeed been growing rapidly since around 2010, I found that gender equality as a concept has not been studied. For the great majority of WPS scholars, gender equality does form the foundation of UNSCR 1325. For instance, for Otto and Heathcote (2014:7), UNSCR 1325 is “a call for gender equality”. Willett (2010:142) similarly claims that the resolution “marked a milestone in the struggle for gender equality in all aspects of peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery”. According to Swaine (2009:420), “actions taken under [UN]SCR 1325 should concern themselves with promoting gender equality as an analytical tool for rethinking key policy initiatives, goals, actions and ideas”. Yet, this research is typically preoccupied with the forms of operationalizing the WPS agenda and issues such as women's contributions to peace

processes, peacekeeping operations or, more recently, countering violent extremism programs (see for instance Tryggestad 2014; Barnes & Olonisakin 2011; Oudraat 2013). Not many studies reflect upon structural processes and societal norms around gender in the context of WPS implementation. While research by Bjarnegård and Melander (2015) or Davies and True (2015a, 2015b) is perhaps an exception, neither examines gender equality per se. The concept ultimately presents a theoretical gap in international WPS research.

Gender equality has however been addressed more explicitly with regards to earlier frameworks such as CEDAW and the BPA. The former conceptualized gender equality in terms of human rights, subsequently becoming “the most authoritative and steady piece of the international women’s rights discourse” (Zwingel 2012:115; see also Hellum & Sinding Aasen 2013; Kardam 2004). The BPA extended the applicability of gender equality to socio-economic developmental issues, including some (albeit limited) reflection on armed conflict (Gierycz 2001; True & Mintrom 2001). Through outlining twelve critical areas for action, the BPA called for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs, analysis and planning (see also Krook & True 2012). Not only have CEDAW and the BPA brought forth these central themes for comprehending gender equality in global politics, but they have also called on UN member states (and other relevant stakeholders) for the institutionalization of an associated enforcement mechanism: through ratification of non-discrimination in national law and through establishment of national machineries for the advancement of women (Kardam 2004).

With CEDAW and the BPA, gender equality ultimately diffused across the human rights and development segments of the UN system. These instruments have further affected the understanding of gender equality as a policy objective of the WPS agenda. At the same time, UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions introduced new ideas around gender equality and how it applies distinctly to global security. Therefore, throughout my empirical analysis I came to single out these three distinct conceptualizations of gender equality that align with and draw from the pillars of the UN system (see UN Charter, Chapter I: Purposes and Principles, Art. 1, see also UNW/2017/6/Rev.1). I argue that the security, human rights, and development approaches have driven the policy development, institutionalization and implementation of the UNSCR 1325 agenda. While this was often subtle, the interviewed global stakeholders had preferences for a particular lens through which they saw gender equality, as demonstrated in their personal views and in how they operationalized the concept through their work. Moreover, their approaches were often enabled and supported, but

sometimes also restricted, by the institutional mandates of their organizations, in addition to their interests, experiences or ambitions. As I shall demonstrate in the following, these distinct conceptualizations have produced certain opportunities alongside risks for long-term gender equality. Even though the security, human rights and development approaches are seemingly overlapping, they have pushed the WPS agenda into different directions, producing a number of tensions as well as some unintended outcomes.

### ***The security approach***

The security approach is the traditional way of framing gender equality by the Security Council. The politics of the Council has been monopolized by elite men representing the national interests of powerful states, often through an appeal to militarism (Duncanson 2016). The recognition of gender equality as an issue that might have a significant impact upon international peace and security has opened up the masculinist space of the Council to include women and their concerns. Yet, the security approach to gender equality uses gender politics and women's rights as a tool to achieve the Council's ends. In this sense, it instrumentalizes gender equality as a means of achieving peace and security. While sometimes genuine gender equality advances are made, the concern is that it does not fundamentally challenge the masculinist identity of the Council.

The term *securitization* is used to describe this framing of non-traditional security issues, such as environmental degradation, health pandemics or gender equality, as security matters (see for instance, Hudson 2009). This gender equality approach is premised on the fact that the WPS resolutions are documents originally adopted by the Security Council – a body with a given role, functions and history (see UNSC n.d.-b). A research participant emphasized the origins of the Security Council's resolutions:

It is important to recognize that the WPS resolutions are documents created for a particular purpose and with a particular mandate here at the level of the Security Council. And yes, they have been incredibly important outside this particular space here at the UN Headquarters. But that is at the core of what they are: they are documents within the Security Council and for the Security Council. (G-CSO 8, interview)

The WPS agenda is as such delimited by the mandate of the Security Council and enforced primarily by the UNDPKO in the context of peacekeeping operations. The resolutions serve

the purpose of fulfilling this mandate, and the meaning of gender equality must fit into the scope of the Council's work.

The security approach to gender equality has grown from earlier thematic frameworks of the Security Council, most notably Protection of Civilians and Children and Armed Conflict (see Lee-Koo 2017). Both agendas have a strong focus on the protection of civilians in times of armed conflict and were established only slightly earlier than WPS.<sup>14</sup> UNSCR 1325, specifically refers to those two agendas “*expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict*” (S/RES/1325, Preamble). While the systematic character of sexual violence in war was noted in the 1998 Rome Statute (A/CONF.183/9; see also Chapter 2), it was not until the passage of UNSCR 1820 in 2008 that the slogan “rape as a weapon of war” has become widespread in the arena of global politics. The resolution specifically recognizes in its opening operational paragraph that:

[S]exual violence, when used or commissioned as a tactic of war in order to deliberately target civilians or as a part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations, can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict and *may impede the restoration of international peace and security*. (S/RES/1820, OP 1; emphasis added)

Protection from conflict-related sexual violence, especially in contexts where it might be considered a tactic of warfare, has subsequently become the major issue addressed through UNSCR 1820, 1888, 1960 and 2106. While these resolutions mandate UN field operations with a responsibility to respond to sexual crimes against civilians, they tend to frame sexual violence as a security matter with relevance to international peace, rather than a human rights violation concerning bodily integrity.

With the growing criticism of the Security Council's preoccupation with protection, participation has over time become the second major theme of the WPS agenda. The low numbers of women in UN peacekeeping police and military roles and in the national security forces of UN member states have become a concern both for the Council and outside of it (see for instance Pruitt 2016). The WPS resolutions link women's inclusion in the security sector to the operational effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. For example, UNSCR 1888,

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<sup>14</sup> The first resolution on CAAC was adopted by the Security Council in August 1999 (S/RES/1261), while the first resolution on POC was passed only a month later (S/RES/1265).



1960 and 2106 emphasize the important role of female peacekeepers in responding to sexual violence in conflict. UNSCR 1960 recognizes that “the inclusion of women in peacekeeping missions in civil, military and police functions [...] may encourage women from local communities to report acts of sexual violence” (S/RES/1960, Preamble). UNSCR 1888 further maintains that the presence of female peacekeepers may promote the enlistment of local women in national armed and security forces, helping to build a responsive security sector at the national level (S/RES/1888, Preamble). Ultimately, these resolutions establish, albeit in most cases implicitly, the link between women’s participation in the military or police forces and enhanced global security.

The security approach has no doubt created significant opportunities for gender equality advancement. First of all, the focus on protection served as an opening for including gender equality-related concerns into the scope of the Security Council’s work. Ruby (2014:174) explicitly called UNSCR 1325 a “key” that “opens doors for women to get their issues onto the agenda”. It has ultimately placed gender equality on the Council’s agenda for the first time and allowed it to be taken seriously by the Council’s members as well as by other powerful actors. This might not – and quite possibly would not – have happened without securitizing gender equality. As such, it should not be underestimated. The limited traction to UNSCR 1325 in its early years when it was seen primarily through a human rights lens serves as evidence supporting this argument. The security approach to gender equality articulated in the later resolutions has by contrast relatively quickly gained overwhelming support from a broad variety of stakeholders, including less progressive members of the Security Council (such as Russia and China) and the male-dominated security institutions (such as the UNDPKO, or outside the UN system, NATO).

Secondly, the security approach has resulted in significant policy development and institutionalization of the protection of women within the UN system. UNSCR 1888 and 1960 set concrete protection mechanisms such as the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; Women Protection Advisors in UN missions; the Team of Experts on Sexual Violence in Conflict; and Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements. Furthermore, UNSCR 2106 calls on sanctions committees “to apply targeted sanctions against those who perpetrate and direct sexual violence in conflict” (S/RES/2106, OP 13). Next to the Office of the Special Representative, these sanctions present the strongest institutional mechanisms established as part of the UN’s WPS agenda, in terms of its enforcement mechanism (see also Huve 2018). According to the norm life

cycle theory, the bureaucratization of a given norm and the fact that it is not considered controversial any more are symptomatic to the final stage of norm diffusion, that is, internalization. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998:904) highlight that “internalized norms can be both extremely powerful (because behavior according to the norm is not questioned) and hard to discern (because actors do not seriously consider or discuss whether to conform)”. Some of these tendencies can be noted with regards to the security approach to gender equality too.

Thirdly, this paradigm has contributed to some quick gender equality advances such as the improvement of women’s access to the security sector, in particular to police and military roles. The discourse around women’s inclusion in the military helped remove the formal barriers for combat roles in several countries, including Australia (in 2011), the US and the UK (in 2016). Interestingly, it was not CEDAW that promoted the removal of these formal barriers – despite the fact that this is clearly in line with its rule of non-discrimination, especially in legalistic terms. The principles of UNSCR 1325 and later resolutions appear to have served as the primary argument in this debate (see for instance Trisko Darden 2015; Egnell 2016; Kidder et al. 2017).<sup>15</sup> Moreover, while women’s inclusion in the military and the police is often framed in terms of “equal labor rights” (see for instance MacKenzie 2012:33), some claim that it further offers a potential for a long-term and transformative change. This was pointed out by the following research participant:

To answer your question “What does gender equality mean in this context [of WPS]?” It also means having a higher percentage of women in the security sector, in the police and military. We believe that by increasing the number or percentage of women in the security sector, there will be a greater possibility of making the framework of security broader and more comprehensive, inclusive of human security. (G-CSO 1, interview)

This interviewee argued that women’s inclusion in the security sector is crucial for gender equality because it could transform the militaristic institutions from within. Through the insertion of women’s issues and, quite literally, women’s bodies, into the security sector, peace and security politics could become more inclusive of human security issues and less preoccupied with militaristic means. However, this conviction receives mixed reviews. For many, especially civil society organizations, the inclusion of women in the military sabotages gender equality both in the long and short term (see also Cohn, Kinsella & Gibbings 2004).

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<sup>15</sup> However, this might be due to the fact that the United States has not ratified CEDAW (see CEDAW 2018), and yet dominated the debate on lifting the ban on women in combat roles.

This is because it reinforces militarism and militarization and puts women at an increased risk of violence, as will be described in more detail in the following.

Indeed, the security approach creates a whole list of potential and actual risks for long-term gender equality. Starting with its focus on protection, the security approach emphasizes and perhaps essentializes women's vulnerability to sexual violence, similar to scholarship on rape in the 1970s (see Brownmiller 1975). The resolutions with strongest focus on conflict-related sexual violence (i.e. UNSCR 1820, 1888 and 1960) commonly refer to "women and children". Enloe (1990) specifically coined the term 'womenandchildren' to describe the commonplace representation of women as vulnerable victims of violence, in need of (masculinist) protection (see also Young 2003). This representation, however, contributes to the victimization of women, limiting their political agency as a result. It highlights the association of women with children and the family instead of considering them as political subjects and independent agents. These resolutions, furthermore, stereotype women and girls as the victims of sexual violence, for example when naming the role *Women Protection Advisors*. While a minor reference to men and boys being affected by sexual violence is mentioned in the Preamble to UNSCR 2106, overall, the WPS resolution minimize men's victimhood which has been increasingly recognized in IR scholarship (on conflict-related sexual violence against men, see for instance, Sivakumaran 2007 and Zarkov 2007).

Moreover, unlike UNSCR 1325, the later resolutions on conflict-related sexual violence do not emphasize bodily integrity as an issue falling under the protection pillar of the WPS agenda. Rather, they refer to sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security. Despite the benefits of securitization and in this case lifting sexual violence higher up on the Council's agenda, researchers argue that "[s]ecuritization is not merely a symbolic or linguistic act, but a political one with real world implications" (Hudson 2010:57). For instance, this security framework often reinforces state-based and militarized responses to insecurity, resonating with the logic of masculinist protection (Young 2003), in which the state acts as the primary provider of security and the protector of women. Even before the passage of UNSCR 1325, Brown (1995) demonstrated the historically precarious role of the state in protecting women, pointing out that this protection often involves simply moving women from one form of oppression to another. The 'war on terror' in Afghanistan and Iraq provides real-life examples of how the goal of gender equality is misconstrued to serve as a justification for military interventions, in fact motivated by national interests of the US and

allies (Lee-Koo 2011; see also Pratt 2013 on the imperialist premises of such military interventions).

Then, although the policy development on protection from conflict-related sexual violence has been undeniable since 2000, the impact of these policies might be questioned. Cohen, Green and Wood (2013) argue that there is no evidence to prove a decrease (or an increase, for that matter) in conflict-related sexual violence over time. Researching conflict-related sexual violence is difficult due to a number of factors (such as underreporting and difficulties in establishing links to conflict) and the lack of sufficient statistical data that could show the real impact of these policies on women and girls in conflict zones. And yet, the overall focus on conflict-related sexual violence has taken away the attention and material resources from a broader spectrum of gender-based violence faced by women on a daily basis and long after conflict.

Another problem is related to women's inclusion in the security sector, particularly, in the military. Research shows that without challenging masculinist structures of the military, the enlistment of women in fact puts them at a high risk of sexual abuse and harassment by their male colleagues (see True & Parisi 2013; this will be also evident in the Australian case study presented in Chapter 5). Moreover, many feminist WPS advocates and women's organizations (such as WILPF International) strongly oppose the inclusion of women in the military, arguing that this strategy misses the point of gender equality entirely because it militarizes it. Feminist scholarship has repeatedly argued that "militarism and armed conflict are completely at odds with the goals of gender equality and international peace and freedom" (Ruby 2014:174). Researchers such as Enloe (2000), and Duncanson and Woodward (2016) see women's enlistment in the military as an extension of militarism and militarization, contributing to the institutions of power that produce gender inequalities in the first place. Some of my interviewees similarly argued that the security approach uses women for military ends and exposes them to both perpetuating and experiencing violence.

In sum, the security approach offers the narrowest definition of gender equality within the WPS agenda, confined to women's protection from conflict-related sexual violence and women's inclusion in the military. While both issues are important and explicitly relevant to the goal of gender equality, this paradigm appears to be superficial, often leaving the deep structures of inequality untouched. It can result in quick advances, but it might be also harmful in the long run. Despite being a powerful and persuasive way of framing gender equality in the WPS agenda, the security approach ultimately remains highly contested.

### ***The human rights approach***

While the security approach has gained dominance over the years, human rights are at core of what gender equality was imagined to be by WPS advocates. The initial intent of women's civil society organizations pushing for UNSCR 1325 was precisely to advance women's human rights and improve women's participation in decision-making (see for instance Cook 2009). This legacy is highlighted in the following statement of a research participant:

One of the challenges we have is that we are forgetting that the WPS agenda came from a movement in the 1990s on human rights [...]. So, we need to keep that connection alive because then we are doing gender equality for all women, whether conflict is there or not. Do you know what I mean? Because one of my biggest concerns at the moment is that we are conflating down to this being about security and making security. (G-UN/CSO, interview)

It is clear from the statement that this research participant does not consider the security approach as being essentially about gender equality. Instead, she places the WPS agenda and its gender equality goal in the UN's human rights tradition, similar to the majority of feminist WPS advocates (Swaine 2009; Anderlini 2011). The WPS agenda has been envisioned as a bridge between the rights of women during peace, as advocated by CEDAW, and human rights during and after conflict, as stipulated by the International Human Rights Law (IHR) (see also SC/6816). At the roots of the human rights approach to gender equality is ultimately CEDAW with its underlying rule of non-discrimination on the basis of sex/gender.

Although the human rights paradigm initially gained little traction within the Security Council, in 2015, the *Global Study* has finally firmly placed the WPS agenda back in the human rights tradition, explicitly stating:

[I]t must not be forgotten that the initial Security Council Resolution [1325] was fully conceived as being part of the international tradition of human rights and that any interpretation of its provisions and any strategies for implementation must be done with that origin in mind. (Coomaraswamy 2015:34)

My informants affirmed this shift. One of them reported to me on the day of the Open Debate (on 13 October 2015), "we are moving in the right direction [because] today there is a consensus that we have to look at women and peace from a human rights lens" (UNHRC, interview). The *Global Study* reinstalled links between the WPS agenda and human rights (Coomaraswamy 2015).

The major theme in the human rights approach to gender equality is the meaningful participation of women in all decision-making processes related to peace and security and beyond. While the term *participation* (as well as *representation*) is ambiguous (see for instance O'Rourke 2014; see also Krook 2006), the focus in the human rights approach is essentially on women's leadership roles and their political participation, often at the highest levels – as opposed to women's inclusion in the security sector (typical for the security approach), or women's engagement in community projects (as will be the case for the development approach). This is backed-up by the rights-based argument – sometimes also called the justice argument or the human rights argument (see for more Hernes 1987; see also Pruitt 2016) – according to which women ought to have the right to participate in decision-making processes on equal footing with men, simply because they constitute half of society.

The strong preoccupation with participation is manifested through the first four operational paragraphs of UNSCR 1325. The UN, State Parties and civil society actors are urged to increase the representation of women: in national, regional and international decision-making bodies; in field operations (as military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel); and at the UN Headquarters (as special envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General) (S/RES/1325, OP 1-4). Even though the resolutions on conflict-related sexual violence underplay the importance of this issue, UNSCR 2122, passed in 2013, shifts the attention back to women's participation in decision-making, drawing clear links between equal participation and women's human rights. This prompted some researchers to call UNSCR 2122 “radically different” (see Shepherd 2014:2). The resolution is nearly completely dedicated to women's leadership, with a view to (gender) balance peace and security governance. Pointing out the deficits in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the resolution specifically highlights the scarcity of opportunities for women to exercise leadership roles. It further emphasizes that if the WPS agenda is to be meaningfully implemented, women's participation and rights must be prioritized:

[P]ersistent barriers to full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's empowerment, participation, and human rights, and through concentrated leadership, consistent information and action, and support to build women's engagement in all levels of decision-making.  
(S/RES/2122, Preamble)

UNSCR 2122, furthermore, calls in an operative paragraph for women's full participation in elections, political processes, security reform, the judiciary as well as in “wider post-conflict

reconstruction processes” (S/RES/2122, OP 4). By the same token, it extends the boundaries of participation from the security sector through peace and security governance to all political processes (see also Shepherd 2014). It offers a remedy to the much more limited security approach advocating for women’s inclusion merely within the ranks of the security sector.

Another major theme in the human rights approach to gender equality is the respect for women’s rights and protection from all forms of abuses. This paradigm sees gender-based violence – inclusive but not limited to sexual violence – on a continuum across conflict, post-conflict and non-conflict. UNSCR 1325 encourages national governments to adopt a gender perspective in peace agreements in order to ensure the respect for women’s human rights in the context of the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary (S/RES/1325, OP 8). The resolution also brings in a human rights lens to the Security Council’s work and the operation of UN missions, recognizing the importance of specialized gender training for peacekeeping personnel (S/RES/1325, OP 6). UNSCR 2122 similarly reaffirms the importance of women’s human rights understood broadly, highlighting ineffective protection of human rights as one of the major deficits in implementing the WPS agenda (S/RES/2122, Preamble). The most recent resolution, UNSCR 2242, takes note of the gender-differentiated impact of terrorism and violent extremism on the human rights of women. In particular, UNSCR 2242 expresses the concern about women’s rights being deliberately targeted by extremist groups, including women’s access to health, education, public and political life (S/RES/2242, Preamble and OP 13-15).

The human rights approach to gender equality has resulted in establishing some infrastructure as part of the WPS agenda. Perhaps most significant is the appointment of Gender Advisors, mandated by several resolutions (see for instance S/RES/1889, OP 7; S/RES/1960, OP 10; S/RES/2106, OP 8; S/RES/2122, OP 4; S/RES/2242, OP 7). As opposed to Women Protection Advisors, Gender Advisors have a broader mandate that explicitly refers to gender equality. For instance, UNSCR 2122

*Reiterates its intention* when establishing and renewing the mandates of United Nations missions, to include provisions on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in conflict and post-conflict situations, including through the appointment of gender advisers. (S/RES/2122, OP 4)

Hence, the role of Gender Advisors is clearly founded on human rights principles. The Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security presents a similar case. As opposed to

the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, which focuses exclusively on conflict-related sexual violence, the Informal Expert Group has an ambition to encompass the entire agenda (see S/2016/1106, part III and VII) and support the interactions between the Council's members and women's civil society organizations in addressing women's human rights.

The rights-based argument for gender equality was made long before the adoption of UNSCR 1325 (Hernes 1987). For WPS advocates, however, it provides a real opportunity for establishing sustained, structural and transformative change to the gendered power dynamics of peace and security. These advocates argue that where women's participation is meaningful – that is, women can affect transformative change – then long-term and sustained gender equality is a possibility. As one interviewee stated:

[Gender equality] is about the understanding that when we are talking about improving women's status and participation, we are talking about tackling *structural inequality*. Gender equality is *the longer-term, structural change* whereby the goal is not just to add women to the table; the goal is to have a conversation about *the right of women* to be part of decision-making. And the reason they are not there is structural inequalities that tell us to think that it's okay that they are not there.

So, for me gender equality is about *the transformational, structural changes* that need to happen in our societies. Because equality goes beyond getting people to the table. The opportunity to participate in the peace processes, that's great, thank you very much for the permission to come into your space [ironic]. *The outcome, my enjoyment, my fulfillment of the participation is my right to be there*. That's different, right? (G-UN/CSO, interview; emphasis added)

The human rights approach is firmly founded on the substantive model of gender equality, as stipulated in CEDAW and elaborated in GR 30 and GR 35 specifically with respect to conflict and post-conflict situations (for more see Chapter 2). The substantive model of gender equality focuses on outcomes, results and impact – rather than merely opportunities. According to UN Women (n.d.), it requires “using the actual conditions of women's lives [...] as the true measure of whether equality has been achieved”. The human rights approach is ultimately based on a complex gender analysis of the patterns of discrimination and the effects they produce in the real lives of conflict-affected women, often emphasizing gender relations as a root cause of inequality. It recognizes existing gender power dynamics as part of



the problem and part of the solution. With its nuanced understanding of discriminative societal structures and unequal gender norms, the human rights approach brings into surface the continuum of gender-based violence, across peace and conflict, in line with GR 35. It is a long-term transformative and incremental approach to gender equality that imagines power and security institutions in a radically different form to the status quo.

Yet, one of the most profound shortcomings of such a long-term approach might be its inability to be persuasive on some fora, especially those related to ‘hard security’ and dominated by (elite) men. A research participant agreed to share her experience with advocating for the human rights approach:

When you start having a conversation about equality and a more political, radical feminist agenda, and about structural inequality, that’s the piece they all start dropping off. So, the military is first gone. The big power diplomats are the second gone. (G-UN/CSO, interview)

As a consequence, the human rights approach has been less effective in generating material resources and finding institutional support in a short term, whether from the Security Council as a whole or from its powerful member states. In some instances, the human rights approach therefore fails to provide immediate advances for those most in need and most vulnerable in the situations of armed conflict. Instead, it relies on long-term and transformative work to produce social change, in line with gender equality goals.

The lack of a robust implementation strategy and an enforcement mechanism around the references to human rights in the WPS resolutions enables this absence of political will. While the appointment of Gender Advisors and the establishment of the Informal Expert Group present important developments in efforts to address the WPS agenda more holistically, the accountability around women’s leadership in peace and security has been weak. Neither UNSCR 1325 nor later resolutions establish concrete targets or benchmarks around this issue. The calls to increase the number of women in leadership roles typically have no concrete meaning. For instance, UNSCR 2242’s call on the Secretary-General to double the number of women in UN peacekeeping and to add gender targets as a performance indicator at the UN Headquarters and in the field missions (S/RES/2242, OP 8 and 4), fail to identify baseline data against which this progress could be measured. For many feminist advocates, the real testing ground for the influence of UNSCR 1325 on equal and full participation of women in the UN decision-making structures was the 2016 election of the

Secretary-General. Despite a number of highly qualified female candidates, António Guterres was elected and commenced the office in 2017. For feminist researchers this manifested “a stark illustration of how male-dominated decision-making means that female leadership is not just rare, but virtually inconceivable” (Goetz 2016).

Furthermore, the recent growing interest in women’s rights in the context of violent extremism has led to new forms of securitization of gender equality, crossing the boundaries between the security and human rights approaches both in policy and implementation practice. That women are affected by violent extremism in gender-specific ways became obvious for the international community in 2014, with Boko Haram’s abduction of nearly 300 Nigerian schoolgirls (see for instance Kirby 2015). However, the links between the protection of women’s human rights and countering terrorism made at the Security Council are highly problematic (Ní Aoláin 2016). Even though UNSCR 2122 and 2242 mark an important shift towards the human rights tradition, my informants were at the same time skeptical of connecting the WPS agenda to countering violent extremism (CVE) with the passing of the latter resolution. The interviewees were particularly worried about the co-optation of the WPS agenda by CVE programs underneath “the facade of women’s equality and women’s rights” (G-CSO 9, interview). Another research participant with hands on experience from Security Council-mandated operations similarly highlighted the risks associated with the instrumentalization of women’s rights:

We don’t usually associate women in devising the policy for counterterrorism and for violent extremism. And we all of the sudden remember how useful that action would be to help mitigate and prevent violent extremism. So, we should fight for women’s rights and promote women’s rights as human rights. We suddenly remember that women have rights only when we need them [ironic]. (UNSC 1, interview)

Apart from the co-optation of women’s rights for other institutional ends, sometimes in contradiction with the original intent of UNSCR 1325 and the equality goals, another problem is related to the very safety of women. Using women as a form of intelligence within CVE programs that are traditionally set by masculinist security institutions endangers gender security – and by extension gender equality – both in the long and short runs (Ní Aoláin 2016:276).

In short, the human rights approach offers a long-term path to the goal of gender equality that relies on women’s decision-making and rights across conflict and non-conflict situations. It

seeks to bring incremental, transformative change ultimately envisioning a radically different order with regards to gender, on the one hand, and global peace and security on the other. As such, it does not sacrifice, at least in theory, women's rights for any other institutional goals, although it might suffer from securitization too. An interviewee summarized the human rights approach most neatly when saying:

That's the piece that's political. That's the piece that's feminist. That's the piece that the Security Council doesn't want to have a conversation about. So, this is where we are getting to the problem of understanding, where academics may critique some of the resolutions for being instrumentalist and adding women as opposed to [talking about] equality. And people get confused and people go around in circles. Well, for me if we are going to talk about gender equality, then that's what we are talking about. (G-UN/CSO, interview)

Even though the progress with regards to the human rights approach has been rather slow, it continues to be supported especially by civil society organizations. For the majority of feminist advocates it appears to be an ideal approach to long-term gender equality.

### ***The development approach***

The Security Council's ownership of the WPS agenda often discourages a strong integration of developmental issues. The development approach to gender equality has nonetheless played an important role in shaping how many people, particularly in civil society and in the Global South, think about UNSCR 1325. These actors typically point to the nexus between development and peace and security, and the role of women in advancing both areas. A development lens is also a conventional way of addressing gender equality through the UN system where gender-related matters typically sit within the mandates of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or, primarily, UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The invisibility of the development approach in UNSCR 1325 is not accidental but rather it has to do with the traditional systematic silos that exist between security and development terrains of the UN system. As argued by my research participants, for gender equality to be set on the Security Council's agenda, WPS advocates have had to distinguish themselves from the field of development, demonstrating how gender equality applies in distinct ways to international peace and security.

The development approach to gender equality has its roots in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), next to the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/55/L.2)

and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/71). The BPA acclaimed all developmental issues as gender issues, identifying critical areas of action, such as poverty, health, education, economy, environment, media and so forth. “Platform E” is specifically dedicated to “Women and Armed Conflict” and calls for the increase in women’s participation in conflict resolution and the provision of assistance to women affected by conflict (A/CONF.177/20). The United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000 established eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), two of which explicitly related to gender equality – Goal 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women,” and Goal 5 “Improve maternal health”. In 2015, eight MDGs were replaced by seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/71). Of interest to WPS advocates have been especially the stand-alone “Gender equality” Goal 5 and Goal 16 that covers “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”. However, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development similarly failed to draw a meaningful (or any for that matter) link between Goals 5 and 16, again confirming the discrete terrains of security and development within the UN system.

The gender-specific needs of women and girls in the situations of conflict and post-conflict present a major concern addressed in the development approach. Already UNSCR 1325 recognizes the distinct priorities of women, calling on the relevant actors to integrate these in repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation and post-conflict reconstruction programs. The resolution specifically encourages gender sensitive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration planning, taking into account the special needs of female ex-combatants (S/RES/1325, OP 13). Later resolutions are more encompassing. For example, UNSCR 1889 lists the following needs of women in conflict and post-conflict settings:

[P]hysical security, health services including reproductive and mental health, ways to ensure their livelihoods, land and property rights, employment, as well as their participation in decision-making and post-conflict planning [...]. (S/RES/1889, Preamble)

The understanding of women’s needs is relatively comprehensive and inclusive of social, psychological, economic and physical issues. UNSCR 1889 encourages both member states and UN agencies to design appropriate strategies in support of women’s recovery and further request data “to improve system-wide response to those needs” (S/RES/1889, OP 6). With the growing specificity of women’s needs in later resolutions, however, comes a more confined focus on conflict-related sexual violence and related recovery needs. UNSCR 1960,

for example, mentions the need for victims of sexual violence to have access to “health care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and socio-economic reintegration services” (S/RES/1960, Preamble).

Women’s roles in post-conflict recovery processes and peacebuilding form the basis of the second major theme addressed under the development approach. Conversely to the human rights approach where women’s participation is seen in terms of gender justice, and to the security approach where women’s inclusion is a means to improve the operational effectiveness of the security sector, in the development approach women’s empowerment is a way of ensuring the well-being of families and communities. Both UNSCR 1889 and 2122 stress women’s contributions to peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding. The former specifically reaffirms “the key role women can play in re-establishing the fabric of recovering society” (S/RES/1889, Preamble); while the latter recognizes that “the economic empowerment of women greatly contributes to the stabilization of societies emerging from armed conflict” (S/RES/2122, Preamble).

In terms of a specific mechanism to support the development approach, perhaps most tangible is UNSCR 1889’s call on the Secretary-General to compile a report “on addressing women’s participation and inclusion in peacebuilding and planning in the aftermath of conflict” (S/RES/1889, OP 19). The 2010 Secretary-General Report on Women’s Participation in Peacebuilding (A/65/354–S/2010/466) outlined a Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding (7PAP). In addition to its strong emphasis on women’s participation in post-conflict reconstruction, the 7PAP requested (rather than required) a 15 percent funding commitment from UN entities. That is, one of the guiding principles specified that “at least 15 percent of United Nations-managed funds in support of peacebuilding are [to be] dedicated to projects whose principal objective, consistent with organizational mandates, is to address women’s specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women” (A/65/354–S/2010/466, para. 36; see also Douglas 2015). The 7PAP further encouraged adopting special measures in support of women’s participation, including gender quotas (A/65/354–S/2010/466, para. 6).

Similar to the security paradigm, the development approach to gender equality has opened up the masculinist space of the Security Council to address a new set of issues, this time incorporating socio-economic needs of women strictly (although at times indirectly) relevant to the overall goal of gender equality. Sexual and reproductive health is perhaps the most evident example. A research participant highlighted this aspect when saying: “Who would

ever think that the Security Council would be talking about the issues of sexual and reproductive healthcare? That was nowhere in anyone's imagination before" (G-CSO 1, interview). And yet UNSCR 2122 calls for women's access to "the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, including regarding pregnancies resulting from rape, without discrimination" (S/RES/2122, Preamble). For gender equality struggles it is no doubt significant that a Security Council resolution goes so far to implicitly mention post-rape abortions. Again, this is an example of expanding the boundaries of the masculinist space of the Security Council.

Secondly, the conviction that women's empowerment contributes to sustainable peace and development has been relatively powerful in discussions around women's involvement in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding. Douglas (2015:90) highlights this long-standing argument used by UN Women that "women's participation strengthens peacebuilding via improved family welfare, community security, and decision-making that is more responsive to a diverse set of needs". My interviewees also claimed that when women participate in peace processes, they bring to the discussion development-related issues. A UNDP representative explicitly stated that, "To bring women to [a] peace process is also to bring the development nexus. They are the ones who bring very important development topics to the conversation" (UNDP, interview). Women are often believed to have a distinct agenda, which is less military-oriented and more focused on societal issues such as health, education, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and economic growth of post-conflict nations (see also Castillo Diaz & Tordjman 2012). This has given women leverage to advocate for their inclusion and further influence peace processes, especially informally at the community or local levels, where they were previously excluded.

However, many worry that using this link between gender equality and sustainable development or peace can be harmful for long-term gender equality. Some interviewees were concerned about the ways in which women's empowerment or gender-specific needs have been thus far advocated at the Security Council. Essentializing the gender roles of women and putting extra burdens on the shoulders of conflict-affected women has been strongly criticized. One research participant specifically dismissed "a straight participation approach that brings in women only in a sort of gender-stereotyped role", claiming that "this is not about gender equality" (G-CSO 9, interview; see also Valenius 2007). The interviewee pointed to the commonplace gender differentiation made in this context that views women as peacemakers, mothers, and caretakers. The claim that such stereotyping reinforces traditional

gender hierarchies that are a source of structural inequalities is also supported by scholarly literature (e.g. Eveline & Bacchi 2010, Squires 2007). The call for women's participation in these gender-stereotyped roles does not challenge societal gender norms but, on the contrary, perpetuates them.

Secondly, the stated conviction around women's contributions to sustainable development or peace has been followed by weak policy development and limited institutional structures.

Within the Security Council, the focus on women's recovery needs remains largely rhetorical in nature and is often confined to preambulatory statements rather than operative paragraphs. These preambulatory clauses express the Council's concern with certain issues but are rarely followed by a call for actions or solutions to the outlined problems (unless specified in operative paragraphs). Similarly, the 7PAP's recommendation to ensure at least 15 percent funding quota for gender issues in peacebuilding has no accountability mechanism as such.

In sum, the traction to the development approach to gender equality within the UN's WPS agenda has been limited due to the persistent systematic divides between the security and development pillars of the UN system. Yet, it continues to be advocated more implicitly by some actors, including UN Women and women's civil society organizations. The arguments linking gender equality to sustainable development and peace have been relatively persuasive and the development approach has ultimately created some new opportunities to mobilize financial resources for local women's work and sometimes other actors, such as fragile post-conflict and post-disaster states of the Global South. However, this approach has thus far established only weak enforcement mechanism. Moreover, it has been slow in challenging gender norms. While women's participation in peace processes might offer a more nuanced approach to peacebuilding, such arguments might be counter-productive to long-term gender equality goals.

Table 2: Approaches to gender equality in operation within the UN's WPS agenda

Approach to Gender Equality	Security	Human Rights	Development
<b>Key documents</b>	Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court  UNSCR 1820, 1888, 1960 and 2106	CEDAW (especially GR 30 and GR 35); the <i>Global Study</i>  UNSCR 1325, 2122 and 2242	BPA; MDGs and SDGs  UNSCR 1889
<b>Central themes</b>	Protection of women from conflict-related sexual violence  Women's inclusion in the security sector	Meaningful participation of women in decision-making and leadership  Respect for women's right	Gender-specific needs of women in conflict and post-conflict  Women's contributions to peace processes and peacebuilding
<b>Major mechanisms</b>	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict  Women Protection Advisors in UN missions  Team of Experts on Sexual Violence in Conflict  Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements  Sanctions Committee	Gender Advisors  Informal Working Group on Women, Peace and security	Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding

## Conclusions

Gender equality is a complex and multi-faceted policy objective that might encompass a broad range of concerns within the remit of UNSCR 1325. This chapter elucidated the subtleties and tensions at the heart of this. I started with outlining gender equality's presence in the WPS agenda and proceeded to single out three distinct approaches that focus upon security, human rights and development respectively. Resonating with the traditional pillars of the UN system, these are the driving discourses on gender equality within the WPS agenda. Their impact goes far beyond the rhetoric as each of them has produced certain opportunities and risks for the long-term goal of gender equality, evident both in the policy development around the WPS agenda and in the implementation practice.



The security approach has organically dominated the agenda and resulted in the establishment of gender architecture within the UN system that supports protection from conflict-related sexual violence. Yet it has been increasingly criticized, especially by human rights advocates, who commonly accuse it of instrumentalizing gender equality. These actors often call for a more transformative approach founded on human rights principles such as equal participation and respect for women's rights. These two approaches focused on security and human rights are said to co-exist in a 'tug-of-war' (see Olsson & Gizelis 2015:2). The development paradigm has been the least visible in the WPS. It has nonetheless been advocated more implicitly within the Security Council, especially with regards to post-conflict recovery processes. All three paradigms are ultimately in operation with the WPS agenda.

Bringing the findings of this chapter together with the previous one, I argue that the diffusion of the agenda occurs because of – not in spite of – these oscillating meanings. That is, the flexible meaning of WPS has enabled the rapid diffusion of the agenda across different areas of the UN system, not limited to the Security Council, making gender equality an objective of growing importance. But the WPS process has also produced certain risks for the goal of gender equality. For instance, gender equality as a policy objective has suffered from depoliticization of its more transformative aspects. This lack of specificity has enhanced a myriad of interpretations of what the WPS agenda means and what its end goal is, ultimately putting it at the high risk of instrumentalization by powerful actors.

For these reasons, it is important to note that the distinction between the security, human rights and development approaches to gender equality is not merely an intellectual exercise but one with real-life implications. This is evident in the policy development around the WPS agenda usually favoring certain aspects, the institutional architecture established in accordance to these paradigms, as well as how UNSCR 1325 is implemented. While the development but especially the security approaches are by far more persuasive and have led to some quick advances for women, they are both easily co-opted by more powerful agendas where gender equality is no longer the primary objective – if it remains one at all. Instead, it is often sacrificed for the effectiveness of military operations or for national stability. Furthermore, both approaches do little to really challenge societal gender norms. Rather, they are often rooted in the premise of gender differentiation. That does not, however, mean that they should be rejected altogether. They may have value. For example, the security approach has resulted in significant infrastructure that has enabled the growing bureaucratization of

gender architecture, moving the agenda forward (and sometime backwards, too). Finally, the human rights approach, while the most transformative in its original formulation, has been resisted within the Security Council. As a long-term strategy, it is perhaps most desirable when it comes to the goal of gender equality because of its capacity to address the root causes of inequalities through the focus upon structural change.

Ultimately, the meaning of the WPS agenda does not necessarily need to be stabilized or limited to just one of these approaches, at least in the global policymaking arena. Its broad applicability enhances diffusion across a number of actors beyond ‘the usual suspects’ and in doing so generates opportunities that might lead to greater gender equality. It has allowed for the principle of gender equality to reach broader audiences. Yet, it is important for WPS advocates to be aware of these three approaches and continue to ensure that gender equality remains a priority and is not sacrificed for other institutional ends. The process of weighing advantages and disadvantages of any of these approaches needs to be an ongoing assessment of how far and in what ways it might make the distance to gender equality closer in a given context and at a given time. I believe that this knowledge might contribute to more impactful WPS strategies and improved gender equality outcomes. But a consequence of the unfixed meaning of gender equality is that there is no static advice to regional or national actors on how to implement WPS. The next chapter will, therefore, consider how tensions around different conceptualizations of gender equality are negotiated at the regional level, specifically in the Asia Pacific region.

## **Chapter 4. Diffusion of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda across the Asia Pacific**

In order to have a direct impact upon the lives of conflict-affected women, UNSCR 1325 must reach beyond the UN Headquarters. In the words of a research participant, “we need local, national and regional work to translate these international commitments into a local change” (G-CSO A, personal interview). Over time, there has been increasing awareness that it is at the local levels where the outcomes of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda are experienced particularly acutely. The Asia Pacific was, however, the last region to adhere to UNSCR 1325 (Barrow 2016; Basu 2016; George 2016). The first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP) in the region was launched by the Philippines in 2010, becoming only the 23<sup>rd</sup> plan globally (PeaceWomen 2018). Regional organizations too have had limited engagement with UNSCR 1325 until later years (Davis, Nackers & Teitt 2014). Nonetheless, since 2010 the WPS agenda has clearly gained traction in the Asia Pacific. Nine governments released their NAPs, while the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) launched a Regional Action Plan (RAP) and, most recently, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed a Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security. Each of these developments has the potential to advance gender equality.

This chapter traces the diffusion of gender equality within the WPS agenda across the Asia Pacific. After introducing the complexity and diversity of the Asia Pacific, I first examine the engagement of regional organizations with UNSCR 1325. Thereafter, I look more closely at the institutionalization of WPS in national governments’ policies and jurisdiction. Bringing it together, I argue that the ambiguous reception of the international WPS framework in the Asia Pacific has to do precisely with the *reading* of the agenda’s objectives. The three global approaches to gender equality described in the previous chapter help understand this process. The security paradigm that has dominated the international arena in the early years of UNSCR 1325 has been resisted in the region due to the incongruence with pre-existing norms. With the shift within the UN system towards a more holistic approach, explicitly inclusive of the human rights and development approaches, the WPS agenda has eventually diffused across the Asia Pacific too. Furthermore, it has led to the adoption of relatively robust frameworks that can inform global best practice in WPS implementation.

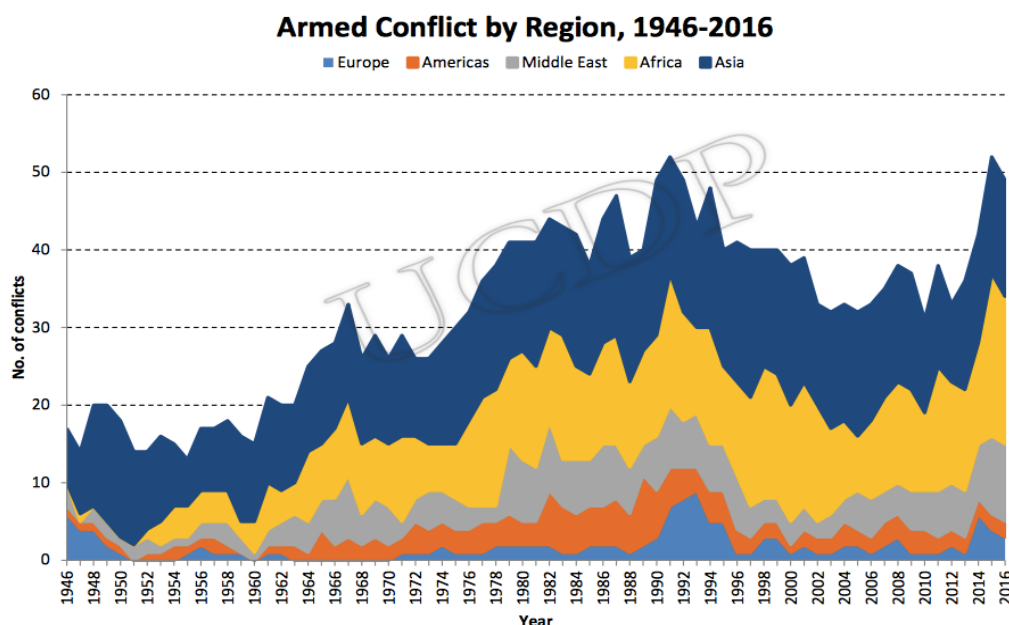
## **Studying the Asia Pacific**

The Asia Pacific is one of the most difficult regions to study. The heterogeneity of the states and the low level of regional integration have prevented the emergence of a “collective regional identity” (He and Inoguchi 2011:170). This socio-political, cultural and economic diversity was captured in the article with a telling title “Asia Is Not One”, in which Acharya (2010) brings forth several distinct conceptualizations of the region. Aptly summarized by D’Costa and Lee-Koo (2009:4), the Asia Pacific encompasses “the economically and politically volatile Southeast and Northeast Asia; the politically and militarily de-stabilized South and Central Asia; and the politically unstable Pacific Islands”. At the same time, this region has been of growing importance to global politics and the study of IR, both of which traditionally neglected it. In the following, I outline the historical and most recent security challenges across the region, their impact upon the gender equality of conflict-affected women as well as the pre-existing norms that have interplayed with WPS implementation.

### ***Global and regional security politics***

Critical researchers of security claim that the Asia Pacific presents “one of the most dynamic, challenging and [...] potentially threatening regions of the world” (D’Costa and Lee-Koo 2009:4; see also McDonald 2017). Plagued by armed conflicts, natural disasters, climate change and prolonged violence, the region is one of the most insecure for its inhabitants, whether women or men. Many states are politically unstable, continuing to emerge from conflict and post-conflict crises. As a matter of fact, the Republic of Korea remains the only country in the world under an active armistice agreement (Barrow 2016). Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste as well as the Pacific Islands have all suffered from recent armed violence (Barrow 2016; George 2014; Davis, Nackers & Teitt 2014). The colonial history of nuclear testing has resulted in the environmental degradation of the Pacific Islands, endangering not only regional but also global security (Bhagwan Rolls 2014). Furthermore, 2017 saw several events that have shaken the stability of the region and the world, that is, the military crisis and ethnic cleansing in Rakhine State, Myanmar; the nuclear threat posed by the precarious relationship between the United States and North Korea; the growing radicalization of foreign fighters in Indonesia; and the Martial Law and mass human rights abuses in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the Philippines (Human Rights Watch 2018).

Yet, the global security debates continue to be overwhelmingly preoccupied with African civil wars as well as the ongoing crisis in the Middle East and North Africa region in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. This is despite the fact that the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP 2018, see Figure 3 below) registered the highest number of armed conflicts between 1946 and 2016 in Asia. Moreover, out of 15 active peacekeeping missions led by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO), only one is located in Asia. That is, eight operations are ongoing in Africa (for Western Sahara, Central African Republic, Mali, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Darfur, Abyei, South Sudan and Liberia), three in the Middle East (for Middle East, Golan and Lebanon), two in Europe (for Kosovo and Cyprus), one in the Caribbean (for Haiti) and a single one in Asia (for India/Pakistan) (see Figure 4 below, UNDPKO 2018a). It is worth noting that the countries of the Asia Pacific have an engagement with these UN operations, being among the highest police and military troop contributors. As of February 2018, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Indonesia were ranked among the top ten countries providing peacekeepers (UNDPKO 2018b). Still, the Asia Pacific experiences of protracted conflicts and contributions to UN peacekeeping often remain invisible in the global policymaking processes.



*Figure 3: Armed conflicts by region*

*Source: UCDP (2018)*



*Figure 4: UN peacekeeping missions by region*

*Source: UNDPKO (2018a)*

The Asia Pacific has been marginalized also in IR scholarship. Mainstream theories of IR have historically favored studying the Global North and most regional studies similarly explore American or European concerns, ignoring those of the Asia Pacific (Acharya 2013). He and Inoguchi (2011:165) specifically point out to “a substantive lack of critical scholarship that focuses on the study of Asian ideas, proposals, and visions of regionalism”. This is despite the fact that the Asia Pacific is a region with rapidly growing economic powers and home to countries with the highest Gross Domestic Product value, such as China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan (World Bank 2018). Such critical omissions in turn result in major distortions in knowledge and an overall inadequacy of current IR scholarship. It is for the reason that Acharya (2007) suggests extending the boundaries of IR to include the exploration of Asian ideas. Those might be a source of critical insights for international politics:

Asia should be seen not merely as the testing ground for Western theory or theories derived primarily from the West, but also as an arena out of which one can develop original theoretical insights that can be exported and applied at the global level or to other regions of the world. (Acharya 2007:374)

Put simply, research into the Asia Pacific can offer new awareness to the field of global politics around security and gender equality. But if the north-western biases in IR forcibly move the Asia Pacific to the peripheries of the discipline, then local women experience double invisibility in global policymaking (D’Costa & Lee-Koo 2009). In the next section, I discuss the complex situation of women in the region.

### *Gender paradoxes*

If the complexity of the Asia Pacific as outlined is not challenging enough, the region is further characterized by significant gender paradoxes. That is, multiple sources of opportunity for women coexist alongside great gender disparities (D'Costa and Lee-Koo 2009). While some countries, such as the Philippines, have developed strong national jurisdiction in support for gender equality, others, such as Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia, have – for example – yet to criminalize marital rape (Human Rights Watch 2018). The Pacific Islands are among the nations with the lowest female political participation which has subsequently translated into weak domestic laws on reproductive health and violence against women (George 2016). By contrast, some of the East Asian countries (such as China, Laos, North Korea and Vietnam) exhibit comparatively high parliamentary representation of women (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018). But scholars also argue that those women tend to be represented in weak political bodies with limited decision-making capacity (Bjarnegård & Melander 2015). Ultimately, although the Asia Pacific has thus far produced the greatest number of female governmental leaders in the world, women continue to struggle with gender discrimination on many levels, including sexual and gender-based violence, limited access to resources, land and property rights, and lack of real influence on major political processes (D'Costa and Lee-Koo 2009).

This divergence is reflected in global reviews of gender equality performance. For example, the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report, which is the most influential global index designed to measure gender equality worldwide, listed in 2017 New Zealand and the Philippines among the top ten countries nearing closing the gender gap: as 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively, out of 144 countries covered by the study (WEF 2018). By contrast, countries such as Nepal, Republic of Korea and Fiji have lagged behind occupying 111<sup>th</sup>, 118<sup>th</sup> and 125<sup>st</sup> places respectively. With everything in between, Australia was placed as 35<sup>th</sup> and Indonesia as 84<sup>th</sup>. The report ranks countries across the globe according to four key areas impacting gender equality: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. The Asia Pacific appears to be unchangeably the most diverse region measured in the report (WEF n.d.).

Similar diversity was registered in the Women, Peace and Security Index (GIWPS 2017), launched for the first time in October 2017. Developed by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS), the index examined 153 countries across three dimensions of women's well-being: inclusion, justice

and security. The Women, Peace and Security Index ranked Singapore as 10<sup>th</sup>, Australia and New Zealand as 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> respectively, Japan as 29<sup>th</sup>, Laos as 54<sup>th</sup>, the Philippines as 68<sup>th</sup>, Nepal, China, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Sri Lanka between 85<sup>th</sup>-97<sup>th</sup>, and Myanmar, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan as 119<sup>th</sup>, 124<sup>th</sup>, 131<sup>st</sup> and 150<sup>th</sup> respectively.

The gender equality performance of the Asia Pacific is clearly uneven in and across the countries, and the status of women in this region is ambiguous. Both the Global Gender Gap Index and the Women, Peace and Security Index confirm this huge diversity among the countries in this region. Yet, significant variation should be also noted between these two reports. While the former ranked, for example, the Philippines and Australia as 10<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup>, in the Women Peace and Security Index their positions were almost flipped: 68<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> respectively. This further points to, firstly, unbalanced development of the Asia Pacific countries across the quantitatively measurable variables of gender equality; and secondly, to the need to complement quantitative data with qualitative and comparative studies on gender equality and the WPS agenda across the region. After all, these indexes provide only limited insight into the situation of conflict-affected women in the Asia Pacific.

### ***Pre-existing norms and historic resistance towards the UN***

While studying the WPS agenda, it is also important to note at the start that the Asia Pacific has a history of resistance towards the UN system and international norms (Nasu 2011; Rajan & Desai 2013). UN politics is often perceived to be a ‘threat’ to regional security rather than a solution to global insecurity (George 2014). For many states of the Asia Pacific, global frameworks originating from the UN echo imperialist tendencies of the Global North and more powerful member states of the Security Council. Those actors have been accused of using the cover of the well-being of women to expand their political influences or economic gains, with such tendencies being described also with regards to the WPS agenda (Pratt 2013; Shepherd 2016).

Secondly, IR research has found that the diffusion of international frameworks of any kind is contingent on their fit with pre-existing norms (see for instance Acharya 2005). The norms developed in the Asia Pacific, such as non-interference and avoidance of military pacts emphasize sovereignty most strongly. In consequence, national autonomy is valued over collective decision-making and this has resulted in commonplace resistance of the Asia Pacific states towards certain global frameworks (Acharya 2005). This is the case of earlier



security norms in particular. Acharya (2004), for instance, compared the diffusion of cooperative security versus humanitarian intervention frameworks across the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Both frameworks appeared in the Asia Pacific in the late 1990s. Humanitarian intervention, which calls for the use of military force to address gross human rights violations, has not gained wide acceptance. By contrast, cooperative security, which emphasizes multilateral cooperation in dealing with crises, relatively quickly became institutionalized within ASEAN structures. This is, Acharya (2004) claims, due to the congruence of cooperative security with pre-existing norms, in particular with the rule of non-interference. More recently, the norm of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) presented an analogous case to humanitarian intervention. R2P puts a responsibility on the international community to intervene by the means decided by the Security Council when states fail to protect their population from mass atrocities or genocide (see UN 2005). The R2P norm was strongly resisted by the countries of the Asia Pacific because it collides with the rule of non-interference (Bellamy & Beeson 2010; Bellamy & Davis 2009). Needless to say, this resistance towards international security norms and the UN system as a whole has affected the regional reception of UNSCR 1325 in the Asia Pacific, as will be explicated in the following.

### **The Women, Peace and Security agenda in the Asia Pacific vis-à-vis global developments**

UNSCR 1325 is highly relevant to regional politics across the Asia Pacific. Women and girls have been affected by the aforementioned armed conflicts and security challenges across the region in a number of ways: “whether as survivors of gender-based violence, through internal displacement and economic dislocation, as refugees or as combatants in insurgency movements” (Barrow 2016:24-25). The instability of the region has not only threatened women’s security and hindered their political participation but also mobilized them to take part in peacebuilding activities or to join armed struggles. Indeed, women have played an active role in all of these conflicts and civil wars in the Asia Pacific (Davies, Nackers & Teitt 2014; George 2014; Bhagwan Rolls 2014). Even though in many of ongoing peace processes across the region women have been excluded from formal roles, Filipino Miriam Coronel-Ferrer was the first woman chief negotiator in the world to sign a major peace agreement (Nobel Women’s Initiative 2014). In the context of the legacy of past and ongoing armed disputes and their gendered implications, UNSCR 1325 is not just theoretically useful but in fact its impact might be very tangible. For women of the conflict-ridden Asia Pacific, the

WPS agenda can open a whole spectrum of new opportunities for greater gender equality and strengthen pre-existing frameworks, whether through security, human rights or development approaches. Furthermore, the WPS agenda is not only relevant internally to the Asia Pacific states with ongoing armed violence or a threat of a conflict outbreak, but also externally through multilateral agreements. As mentioned earlier, countries from this region are among the highest troop and police contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. All eight WPS resolutions stipulated provisions that apply to peacekeeping operations (see also Basu 2016).

Yet, the Asia Pacific was relatively late in engaging with the implementation of the WPS agenda. Little traction can be registered in the region up until 2010. Barrow (2016:24) perceives the adoption of NAPs in Asia to have “lagged behind” in comparison with other parts of the world, while George (2016: 376) similarly argues that “states in the Pacific have been slower to recognize the importance of this [WPS] agenda”. The first NAP that appeared in the region was launched by the Philippines in 2010, becoming only the 23<sup>rd</sup> plan worldwide (PeaceWomen 2018). The involvement of regional organizations has been limited in the early years of UNSCR 1325 too. As such, the Asia Pacific has been the last geographical region to begin formal implementation of the WPS agenda.

Nevertheless, only over the past half-decade the Asia Pacific has seen significant developments in WPS policymaking that need to be accounted for in the international research on UNSCR 1325 (Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017). These include the publication of NAPs by the Philippines (2010), Nepal (2011), Australia (2012), the Republic of Korea (2014), Indonesia (2014), New Zealand (2015), Japan (2015), Timor Leste (2016) and Solomon Islands (2017); the adoption of national guidelines on WPS by Thailand (2016); as well as the development of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2012; now concluded). Furthermore, the Philippines launched a revised NAP in March 2017, again pioneering second-generation plans in the Asia Pacific, while Nepal and Australia are currently undertaking similar reviews, with a view to launch complementary NAPs in the near future. Moreover, in November 2017, ASEAN member states signed the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN (ASEAN 2017), which is the first meaningful engagement of this regional organization with UNSCR 1325. Clearly, the agenda has gained significant traction in the past half-decade. The following table provides a snapshot of these WPS policy frameworks launched in the Asia Pacific, and the rest of this chapter will be dedicated to their detailed analysis – starting from regional organizations through to national governments. I argue that this somewhat ambiguous WPS trajectory

across the Asia Pacific is intertwined with the understanding of UNSCR 1325's objectives in line with the three gender equality approaches singled out in earlier chapters.

*Table 3: Overview of NAPs and RAP in the Asia Pacific*

Year	2010	2011	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017
NAPs & RAP	Philippines (1)	Nepal	Australia Pacific Islands Forum	Republic of Korea Indonesia	New Zealand Japan	Timor Leste	Philippines (2) Solomon Islands

### ***Regional organizations and regional implementation frameworks***

The role of regional frameworks for progressing the WPS agenda has been increasingly deemed important. UNSCR 2242 specifically “welcomes the efforts of regional organizations to implement resolution 1325, including through the adoption of regional frameworks, and encourages them to pursue further implementation” (S/RES/2242, OP 2). Hudson (2013:11) argues that Regional Action Plans (RAPs) “are a critical tool in implementing the WPS resolutions given the cross-border impact of many contemporary armed conflicts today”. RAPs have a number of advantages, both operational (such as sharing expertise and lessons learned between the countries or mobilization of financial and human resources for UNSCR 1325) and normative (including applying a positive pressure on governments to engage in WPS implementations) (Davis, Nackers & Teitt 2014:346).

Starting with 2008, a dozen regional organizations around the world have taken leadership on WPS through releasing implementation strategies (see also Hudson 2013). They include: the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Pacific Islands Forum, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the League of Arab States, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (for more see also S/2016/822, para. 75). There is evidence suggesting that these regional frameworks have supported the implementation of the WPS agenda. In addition to providing a platform for sharing experiences between countries in the same region, they further served as an impetus for national implementation of UNSCR 1325. For example, the *Global Study* found such positive influence resulting from the Regional Action Plan of the Economic Community of West Africa (Coomaraswamy 2015:257). Out of 15 member states of the Economic Community of West Africa, 12 developed their National Action Plans within three years of the RAP.

The early engagement of regional organizations in the Asia Pacific has been much more limited, when compared to Europe, North America or Africa. The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) is the sole regional organization that adopted a RAP – albeit only in 2012. As I shall explain in more detail in the following, my empirical data suggests that this lack of WPS traction across regional organization in the Asia Pacific has to do with the overall resistance towards the security approach to gender equality. This approach has dominated the international WPS discourse (for more, see Chapter 3) and yet has been incompatible with the norms prevalent in the Asia Pacific described earlier in this chapter. This resistance towards the security approach can be noted not only in the example of PIF that opted out for the human rights approach but perhaps even more strongly in the case of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that has to yet develop a RAP.

#### *Association of Southeast Asian Nations*

ASEAN is the major security organization in the Asia Pacific (Acharya 2004; see also Davis 2017). Established in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, ASEAN was joined by Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar in the 1990s (see Figure 5). Given its important role in Asia Pacific regionalism, WPS researchers and activists alike suggest that “there is both a practical and normative need for ASEAN – through its member states – to give an express commitment to UNSC Resolution 1325” (Davis, Nackers & Teitt 2014:335; see also Sloane 2017; Nair 2018). In addition to the mobilization of multiple regional stakeholders, a regional plan would encourage the adoption of NAPs by its member states. As of June 2018, out of ASEAN’s ten member states, only the Philippines and Indonesia have released national plans, while Thailand has adopted national guidelines on WPS. Yet, ASEAN had very limited engagement with the WPS agenda until late 2017.



*Figure 5: Member states of ASEAN*

*Source: ASEAN (n.d.-a)*

This limited traction to UNSCR 1325 contrasts with important policy developments within ASEAN with regards to gender equality more broadly. All ten ASEAN members ratified CEDAW between 1981 and 2006 (for more see CEDAW 2018). A number of policies related to gender equality have been introduced by ASEAN since the late 1980s. The most important are the following: the Declaration of the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region (1988), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN Region (2004), the Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of the Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children (2010), the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (2012), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children 2013), and the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2015) (for more, see ASEAN n.d.-b). As early as 1988, the Declaration of the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region addressed – for the first time – women and conflict, stipulating that ASEAN shall endeavor:

To enable women in the region to undertake their important role as active agents and beneficiaries of national and regional development, particularly in promoting regional understanding and cooperation and in building more just and peaceful societies [...].  
(ASEAN 1988, OP 2)

But despite the fact that most of the ASEAN policies on gender equality were introduced after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, none of the aforementioned documents comprehensively addressed the WPS agenda. The most recent ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (2016-2025), which is the current implementation framework on the situation of women, also failed to meaningfully engage with WPS. It limits the recognition of UNSCR 1325 to a single preambulatory paragraph with no concrete meaning and no call for action (ASEAN 2015).

This lack of engagement with the WPS agenda is, according to Davis, Nackers and Teitt (2014:354-355), a consequence of ASEAN's institutional structure and how gender equality has been addressed thus far. ASEAN operates across three priority areas ('communities'): Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural. Gender equality themes have been traditionally covered under Economic and Socio-Cultural Communities. The Political-Security Community, which is perhaps the most important pillar of ASEAN's work, rarely engages with women's and/or equality issues. Research by Davis, Nackers and Teitt (2014) demonstrates that passing references to the WPS agenda under the Political-Security Community, if any, emphasize the individual character of violence against women in conflict.

This pointed me to a conclusion that there is no recognition of the structural character of gender inequalities that would link gender-based violence to regional and global security. Building on the research of Davis, Nackers and Teitt (2014), I further argue that this failure to address UNSCR 1325 by ASEAN has to do precisely with the strong resistance towards the security approach to gender equality. This has been explicit, for instance, in the WPS statement delivered by Vietnam on behalf of ASEAN during the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security in October 2015. It has been underscored that in addressing WPS issues:

Special emphasis must be placed on respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, on refraining from the threat of or use of force and on the settlement of disputes by peaceful means. (S/PV.7533, Resumption 1)

This declaration clearly discourages the engagement with the security approach described in earlier chapters. But with the opening of the international WPS framework towards more inclusive conceptualizations of gender equality, evident in later resolutions (such as UNSCR 1889 and 2122) and the *Global Study* (as discussed in Chapter 3), came WPS developments within ASEAN.

Most significantly, in November 2017 the member states signed the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN (ASEAN 2017). Even though it is merely a two-page long generic document, it should not be ignored. It was the first time for ASEAN members to collectively express their explicit commitment to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 through ASEAN structures. The understanding of the WPS agenda cannot be comprehensive in such a brief statement, yet gender equality is mentioned on two occasions, where the ASEAN member-states:

*Commit* to continue addressing the root causes of armed conflicts such as poverty, discrimination, gender inequality, social injustice, economic, and social exclusion of persons and communities vulnerable to and at risk of radicalisation, violent extremism, and terrorism.

*Pledge* to promote gender equality and reduce social inequalities between men and women in our societies as a way to contribute as well to longstanding peace and prosperity. (ASEAN 2017)

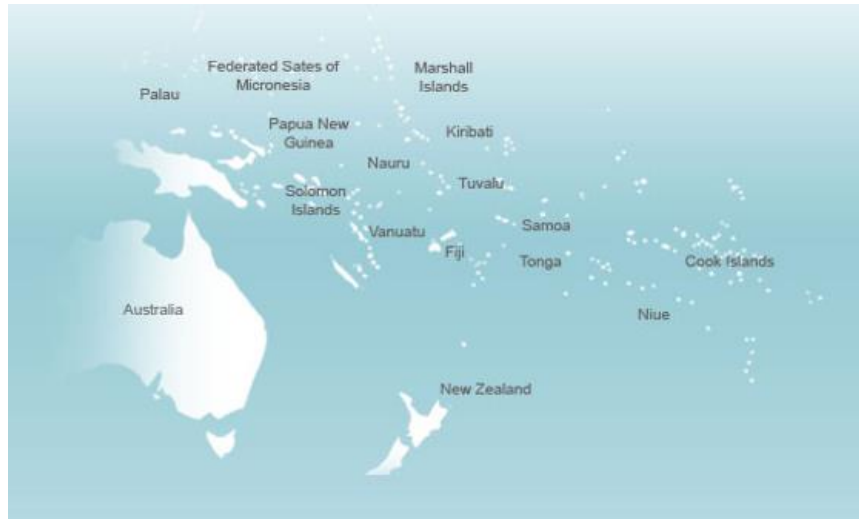
Even in such a brief document, gender equality appears to be perceived primarily through the human rights lens (the emphasis is on the rights of women in conflict situations and on the

structural character of discrimination) and the development lens (women's inclusion in peace processes to sustainable peace and development is highlighted). As such, the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN indicates certain (albeit weak) links with the human rights and development approaches, while there is no engagement with the security paradigm in its traditional form. The last one is perhaps considered a threat to national autonomy and regional security. Similar resistance towards the security approach to gender equality will be noted in the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security that I turn to now.

### *Pacific Islands Forum*

The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) is another important regional organization in the Asia Pacific, however, much less influential than ASEAN in regional and global security politics. But in contrast to the limited engagement with the WPS agenda from ASEAN's side, PIF demonstrated a commitment to UNSCR 1325 with the adoption of "Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security" (Pacific RAP) in 2012 (now concluded). For women peace activists from the Pacific Islands driving this work, the international WPS agenda created an opportunity to seek a corrective to the gender-blindness of pre-existing regional and national policy frameworks on peace and security. The RAP has been envisioned as a means to address this gap precisely through the human rights approach to gender equality.

The Pacific Islands have experienced several protracted conflicts, including the inter-tribal violence in the Solomon Islands, the rebel insurgency in Fiji, and the Bougainvillean struggle for autonomy from Papua New Guinea (George 2014). PIF was founded in 1971 by then newly independent Pacific states "to stimulate economic growth and enhance political governance and security for the region" (PIF n.d.). It consists of sovereign Pacific countries (i.e. Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), along with Australia and New Zealand (see Figure 6; see also George 2016).



*Figure 6: Pacific Islands Forum*

*Source: PIF (n.d.)*

Despite the gender impact of the internal conflicts, the prime peace and security policy document of PIF, the Biketawa Declaration (PIF 2000), is overwhelmingly gender-blind. With the exception of a single reference to gender, the Biketawa Declaration gives no recognition to the contributions and experiences of women across the Pacific Islands (PIF 2000; see also George 2016). For women peace activists mobilized under the banner of Pacific PeaceWomen, UNSCR 1325 provided an opportunity precisely to address this shortcoming. In the words of Bhagwan Rolls and Stone (2016:87), “[t]he resolution in a sense ‘licensed’ Pacific women peacebuilders to demonstrate the relevance of their needs to the male-dominated political establishment”. After a decade-long advocacy by these activists, PIF established the Pacific Regional Working Group on Women, Peace and Security in 2010. Comprised of members from the UN, Pacific Islands Forum, Council of Regional Organization in the Pacific and civil society organizations, the Pacific Regional Working Group was tasked with designing a regional framework for WPS implementation (Bhagwan Rolls 2014). Guided by the entrepreneurship of civil society members, under the lead of Sharon Bhagwan Rolls and founded by her FemLINKPACIFIC (for more see FemLINKPACIFIC n.d.), on 18 October 2012, PIF launched the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (see also Bhagwan Rolls & Stone 2016).

The 28-page long Pacific RAP presents a relatively solid framework on WPS, firmly founded on human rights principles. It starts with a comprehensive analysis of the regional conflicts as well as their gender implications, and ends with an implementation matrix with monitoring parameters and terms of reference for the Forum Reference Group on Women, Peace and Security. The focus areas of the plan are specified as follows:



1. Gender mainstreaming and *women's leadership* in conflict prevention and management, political decision-making and peacebuilding and peacekeeping;
2. Gender mainstreaming and *women's participation* in security sector oversight and accountability; and
3. Protection of *women's human rights* in transitional and post-conflict contexts.  
(Pacific RAP 2012:14; emphasis added)

In addition to the RAP's strong emphasis on the leadership and participation of women in peace and security governance (not limiting the focus to the security sector), the Pacific RAP has been praised for its holistic understanding of the WPS agenda (Bhagwan Rolls 2014). For instance, it addresses a spectrum of situations falling under the remit of UNSCR 1325: "conflict/post-conflict, transitional contexts and humanitarian settings" as well as "peacebuilding and conflict prevention" (Pacific RAP 2012:14). Furthermore, the writers of the Pacific RAP highlight its engagement with different forms of gender equality strategies, including but not limited to gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention and management, promoting women's leadership and political decision-making, upholding women's human rights, protection from sexual and gender-based violence, and engagement with civil society (Bhagwan Rolls 2014:124-126). Such a holistic understanding is again typical for the human rights approach (see Chapter 3).

Nonetheless, the Pacific RAP has been also criticized for not being holistic enough. This criticism concerns, in particular, the RAP's overwhelming focus on active conflicts and ongoing armed violence as opposed to more structural inequalities. George (2014:326), for instance, claims that the plan "does not open the way for critical analysis of broader phenomena – climate change, militarism or gendered political marginalization – that also compound women's insecurity, albeit in an accretive and slow-moving fashion" (George 2014:326). This, according to George (2014; see also George 2016), has limited the RAP's potential for a more transformative change – beyond women's participation in peace and security governance and protection from human rights abuses in conflict settings.

The lack of engagement with the structural issues outlined by George (2014) is certainly a shortcoming of the RAP, given the legacy of nuclear testing and the degradation of environment caused by it in the Pacific. These issues are inseparable from the region's liability to armed violence. A more acute problem is, however, weak or no implementation of this WPS policy. It appears that this promising discourse immersed in human rights and

inclusive of civil society has not been translated into the implementation practice. Despite desktop research and attempts to contact civil society actors from FemLINKPACIFIC, as of May 2018, I did not get hold of any monitoring report of the RAP's implementation between 2012-2015 (the plan was concluded in 2015) or manage to find out whether one has been produced at all. Hence, the impact of the plan is at best unknown. Moreover, Bhagwan Rolls and Stone (2016:91) more recently pointed to important changes in the leadership of PIF and new restrictions on civil society engagement with this forum that in their words "created an uncertain status regarding the implementation of the RAP".

The case of the Pacific RAP resonates with the findings from the global level. In particular, the human rights approach to gender equality – while often favored by civil society advocates who commonly praise it for a comprehensive gender analysis – is typically followed by weak enforcement mechanism. Despite presenting a relatively robust WPS framework, there is no account of the Pacific RAP being implemented. In the light of this, perhaps the most important outcome of the plan has been its support to establish an enabling environment for WPS implementation at national levels – as opposed to creating a direct regional mechanism for gender equality advancement. The *Global Study* maintains that the Pacific RAP "guided the development of national plans in the Solomon Islands and the Bougainville Autonomous Region of Papua New Guinea" (Coomaraswamy 2015:257). The process in Papua New Guinea appears to still be underway (i.e. a NAP has not been publicly released as of June 2018), but the Solomon Islands launched its plan of action on WPS in 2017. This and other Asia Pacific NAPs will be analyzed in detail in the following section.

### ***Governments and national implementation frameworks***

Even though regional organizations support the implementation of the WPS agenda, the primary responsibility lies with national governments. The *Global Study* reiterates this conviction about the crucial role of UN member states in progressing the agenda:

While the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is the duty of multiple stakeholders, *Member States have the primary responsibility* to ensure that global commitments and obligations on women, peace and security are integrated into domestic policies, laws, planning and budget processes. *Nation states remain the most influential actors* in the implementation of the WPS agenda. (Coomaraswamy 2015:240; emphasis added)

The most common form (albeit not the only one) of state compliance with UNSCR 1325 has been through the development of National Action Plans (NAPs).<sup>16</sup> In a nutshell, NAPs stipulate the domestic and/or foreign policy of a given country with respect to the WPS agenda (see also Miller, Pournik & Swaine 2014:10). My empirical analysis suggests that NAPs are typically two-part documents with a narrative report (outlining the country-specific situation and policy environment, concrete security challenges and their gender impact, as well as the relevance of UNSCR 1325 to that context) and an implementation matrix (with action points, division of responsibilities/governance mechanism and, ideally, monitoring parameters and reporting schema). Beyond this, the content and shape of NAPs released to date varies greatly across the globe, in part due to the lack of systematic or technical support from the UN to member states in designing their action plans.

NAPs have become the major vehicle for the institutionalization of the WPS agenda beyond the UN system. The examination of global and regional tendencies around NAPs is therefore crucial in tracing the diffusion of gender equality through the WPS agenda beyond the international level of UN policymaking processes. The importance of NAPs has been emphasized both in the growing body of literature on WPS (see for instance, Swaine 2009, 2017; Barrow 2016) and by nearly each of the research participants interviewed for this study. True (2016:309) considers NAPs to be “the major mechanism of policy diffusion for the WPS agenda”, while Anwarul K. Chowdhury, one of the initiators of UNSCR 1325, stated in an interview that “NAPs are the only documents that can make the governments accountable about their own countries, about their regional and their international obligations [on WPS]” (UNSC 2, interview). NAPs provide an important policy tool to translate the international WPS agenda into national policy and in doing so they have a potential to improve gender equality for women affected by conflict through direct and targeted action (Swaine 2009; Barrow 2016). Given the variations observed in NAPs across UN member states, it is necessary to contextualize the Asia Pacific NAPs in this global context. It is for this reason that significant attention will be paid to NAPs in the next section – starting from a brief overview of the global developments through to the interrogation of the Asia Pacific experiences, and lastly to the introduction of in-depth case studies that will be presented in Chapter 5 and 6.

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<sup>16</sup> Germany, for instance, initially opted for incorporation of WPS objectives into its existing security policy – as opposed to developing a separate, national-level action plan on WPS (for more see Joachim & Schneiker 2012). However, in 2012 Germany released a WPS NAP, followed by its second-iteration launched in 2017.

### *National Action Plans as the primary vehicle for norm institutionalization*

The encouragement towards the adoption of national-level policies on UNSCR 1325 came from the UN system as early as 2002 (S/PRST/2002/32). In 2004, the Secretary-General specifically requested that member states develop NAPs (S/2004/814, para. 4-5). As of June 2018, 74 states released their action plans globally. These efforts of UN member states were recognized in UNSCR 1889 and UNSCR 2122 (S/RES/1889, Preamble; S/RES/2122, Preamble). UNSCR 2242 encouraged further development of these frameworks for implementation, also significantly moving this issue from a preambulatory clause to an operative paragraph (S/RES/2242, OP 2).



Figure 7: The adoption of NAPs between 2005 and 2017

Source: PeaceWomen (2018)

As Figure 7 shows, European countries led the early adoption of NAPs, despite no recent history of armed conflict on their territories.<sup>17</sup> Denmark was the first to launch its NAP in 2005, followed by the UK, Sweden and Norway in 2006, and a dozen European countries shortly after. These first-generation NAPs were narrow in focus and commonly confined to international peacekeeping missions or peace support operations (Barrow 2016), perhaps implicitly aligning with the security approach to gender equality. European countries and other states from the Global North, including the US, integrated the WPS agenda in their foreign or defense policies, emphasizing their role as donor countries. They adopted the so-called *outward-looking* NAPs, supporting international rather than domestic implementation of UNSCR 1325 (see for instance Shepherd 2016).

Beginning in 2008 the plans were developed in conflict-affected countries of the Global South, starting with Africa – first in Cote d’Ivoire and Uganda, followed by Liberia in 2009. Chile was the first country in Latin America to release a NAP also in 2009, while in 2010 and 2011 respectively the Philippines and Nepal pioneered NAPs in Asia. Unlike the early European NAPs, these plans are typically *inward-looking* and context-specific. When addressing the WPS agenda through domestic policy, they often involve strategies to respond to ongoing conflict-related sexual violence or to increase women’s participation in active peace processes.

The 74 countries that developed their NAPs to date amount to nearly 40 percent of the totality of UN member states. Researchers of international norms pointed out that in the norm life cycle theory, one third constitutes as a critical mass of states that can create a *tipping point* after which norms have a much higher chance to become widespread and prominent (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998:901; see also Chapter 2). Reaching the tipping point often reinforces the process of imitation by peer states, constructivists argued, and can lead to a global diffusion. Tryggesstad (2014) described the mobilization around the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNSCR 1325 as such a tipping point for the WPS agenda, given the evident increase in the number of NAPs launched throughout that year (see also Figure 7).<sup>18</sup> Tryggestad (2014:67) further saw the growing number of NAPs as an “expression of norm

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<sup>17</sup> However, the European countries have experienced an influx of refugees and asylum seekers, fleeing the conflict zones especially in the Middle East. Potentially, NAPs could provide an important tool to integrate gender consideration in handling this refugee crisis, as the WPS resolutions call on member states for the protection of conflict-affected women. Unfortunately, with very few exceptions (such as Ireland or most recently Canada), this issue is rarely addressed in NAPs due to its high political sensitivity. For more, see also Lee-Koo (2018).

<sup>18</sup> Figure 7 mentions 74 states that adopted NAPs. However, it is inclusive of Palestine and Kosovo who do not have the full status of a UN member state.

institutionalization” (for more, see also Chapter 2), typical for the final stage of diffusion in the life cycle theory. The traction to UNSCR 1325 is further evident in the fact that a number of countries reviewed their policies and released supplementing, second and third generation plans (e.g. Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands). In January 2018, the UK published its fourth WPS action plan. While the divide between inward- and outward-facing NAPs is still persistent, the later generations often engage in lessons-learned processes and attempt to address these earlier gaps and challenges, including this limited focus.

Finally, not only have NAPs been seen as symptomatic of WPS institutionalization worldwide but they have also been acknowledged as the primary means for UN member states to implement UNSCR 1325. This ongoing traction and the development of complementary plans suggest that the WPS agenda has not been a short-lived trend. On the contrary, it has been increasingly supported by governments, civil society and the UN system. Importantly, after 2010 the emphasis has shifted from encouraging UN member states to adopt NAPs towards ensuring the quality of these frameworks, as evident in the annual reports on WPS released between 2010-2017.<sup>19</sup> A growing body of academic literature has also analyzed NAPs, with the studies by Fritz, Doering and Gumru (2011) and Miller, Pournik and Swaine (2014) offering comparative reviews of all plans existing at the time of writing, and the recent report looking into the lessons-learned processes of countries with more than one generation of NAP (Trojanowska, Lee-Koo & Johnson 2018).

#### *Asia Pacific NAPs’ potential for gender equality*

The Asia Pacific was the last global region to begin to develop NAPs. Nonetheless, the objectives of UNSCR 1325 have circulated in the region quite rapidly since 2010 with the adoption of such plans by the following countries: the Philippines (2010, 2017), Nepal (2011), Australia (2012), Indonesia (2014), the Republic of Korea (2014), New Zealand (2015), Japan (2015), Timor Leste (2016) and the Solomon Islands (2017) (see also Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017).<sup>20</sup> Given the diversity of the Asia Pacific, it is unsurprising that components of all three global approaches to gender equality singled out in earlier chapters can be observed in these WPS policies. A certain hybridity also characterizes the Asia Pacific

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<sup>19</sup> See especially: S/2010/173; S/2010/498; S/2011/598, Section III, para. 55-59; S/2012/732, para. 6; S/2013/525, para. 58; S/2014/693, para. 67; S/2015/716, Section H, para. 97-101, S/2016/822, para 68-76; S/2017/861, Section D, para. 68-75.

<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Thailand launched in 2017 a document with national guidelines. Yet, it does not effectively constitute a NAP and was for this reason excluded from my research sample. NAPs adopted in Central Asia or the Middle East, such as the ones of Republic of Kyrgyzstan (2013), Iraq (2014), Afghanistan (2015), Tajikistan (2015) or Jordan (2018), were also excluded from this thesis because these countries are not conventionally included in regional studies of the Asia Pacific.

NAPs as the security, human rights and development approaches are not always clear-cut. They do, nonetheless, help explain the ambiguous trajectory of WPS across the region and the diffusion of gender equality as a policy objective of UNSCR 1325. The WPS story of the Asia Pacific essentially started with a strong resistance towards the security approach to gender equality. These securitized notions were rejected nearly entirely by national governments – just as regional organizations had done. Instead, with the broadening of the global discourse around UNSCR 1325, the countries in the Asia Pacific have engaged meaningfully and seemingly genuinely with the human rights and development approaches. In the following, I analyze these nine NAPs and supporting documents, according to their dominant approach to gender equality.

### *Security-focused NAP*

The NAP of the Republic of Korea (ROK) is the only evident example of the security approach to gender equality in the Asia Pacific NAP research sample. While not in active conflict, the ROK has remained under the Armistice Agreement resulting from the Korean War (1950-53) (Barrow 2016). Despite ongoing animosity with North Korea, in addition to other political and military tensions (including the presence of United States Forces; see 1325 Network 2014), the ROK adopted an outward-looking NAP, emphasizing international contributions to UN peacekeeping, with only limited engagement with the country-specific context. The NAP had been developed at the time of ROK's bid for the Security Council's membership. The South Korean National Assembly passed in 2012 a resolution that inaugurated the NAP process, and "The National Action Plan of the Republic of Korea for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security" (ROK NAP 2014, 11 pp.) was launched two years later. As will be discussed, this international pressure has affected the shape of the NAP, its engagement with the security approach as well as its limited impact on gender equality.

The rather mediocre (11-page long only) policy document – which is effectively the ROK's NAP – starts with a brief introduction to the WPS agenda, in which the protective aspect is emphasized most strongly. Four objectives are established aligning with the pillars of UNSCR 1325 (i.e. prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery). In line with the security approach, the focus is primarily on conflict-related sexual violence and secondly, on integration of a gender perspective in peace, unification and foreign affairs. While women's participation is also one of the objectives, it is followed by fewer action points, most of which

are confined to the military context. The interest in women's leadership roles appears to be rhetorical.

A major weakness of this approach in the way it has been applied by the ROK's government is that the NAP is depleted of the socio-political context entirely and lacks any gender analysis. These shortcomings were pointed out also by ROK's civil society who complained in their collective statement that:

[T]here are no socio-economic analysis of gender and gender sensitive data in the fields of peace, reunification and diplomacy. This means that the content which could be reflected in the NAP is limited. (1325 Network 2014:2)

Indeed, no meaningful links are established between gender equality on the one hand, and peace and security on the other. Instead, the NAP simply relies on what the WPS resolutions say about the gender underpinnings of armed conflict but without applying this knowledge to the ROK's (or any other) context. Perhaps typically for the NAPs immersed in the security paradigm, the ROK's approach aims to 'add women and stir' without understanding or challenging how gender power relations operate in security politics. This policy essentially fails to make sense of the more transformative content of UNSCR 1325 or provide any reflection upon inequalities of a more structural character. This has resulted in the representation of women in gender-stereotyped roles, predominantly as victims of "sexual harassment, sexual assault, [and] commercial sexual exploitation" (ROK NAP 2014:2). Beyond this, the situation of women affected by conflict or in peace and security governance is not problematized in any depth.

Interestingly, however, the ROK's NAP designed a weak implementation framework. At the global level, the security approach is often followed by a stronger implementation strategy – due to its inherent argumentativeness and easiness in aligning with more powerful agendas or the dominant security institutions. Yet, in the Asia Pacific NAP sample, the ROK's implementation matrix is clearly the poorest one. Even though ten implementation strategies and 73-action points were designed, no monitoring parameters assist them. It is, therefore, unclear how the impact of this policy will be evaluated. Furthermore, the NAP fails to create any governance mechanism, whether to coordinate the work between the involved government agencies (which are many, i.e. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of National Defence, Ministry of Unification, Ministry of Security and Public Administration, Ministry of Education, and



Korea International Cooperation Agency) or facilitate the inclusion of civil society organizations in NAP implementation. The South Korean 1325 Network (2014) similarly stated that “[i]t is most regrettable that the issues of establishing a civil society-governmental consultation body for 1325 NAP implementation [...] were not included in the NAP”.

All of this points to the conclusion that the ROK’s government adopted its NAP under international pressure and with the aim to strengthen ROK’s international reputation – as opposed to having an ambition to deliver a transformative change to conflict-affected women. The security approach to gender equality was perhaps most suitable to achieve this goal, given its dominance in the international arena. At the time of the NAP development, the ROK served its term (2013-2014) on the Security Council. Barrow (2016:28) explicitly suggests that given the Security Council membership, “the ROK may have felt obligated to adopt a NAP”. Moreover, South Korean Ban Ki-moon held at that time the position of the UN Secretary-General and was outspoken on a number of occasions in his support to WPS (see Chapter 3). The ROK’s NAP ultimately presents a superficial approach focused on securitized notions of gender equality, and explicated though an ineffective implementation strategy. Its impact on gender equality has possibly been very limited but as the NAP failed to put in place any monitoring and evaluation schema, it is mostly unknown.

#### *Development-focused NAPs*

The development approach to gender equality has resonated somewhat better than the security one in the Asia Pacific context. While most the of the nine NAPs will refer to it in one way or another, it has been adopted explicitly by Indonesia and Nepal. Both are post-conflict countries that essentially focus their national politics on developmental issues and, unsurprisingly, this is how they frame gender equality too. Nepal has been emerging from a decade-long conflict between the Government and the Maoist Insurgency (1996-2006) and this is the primary concern of the WPS policy (see Abdela 2010). Nepal’s “National Action Plan on Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820” (Nepal NAP 2011, 74 pp.) was released in 2011, becoming the second WPS plan in the region (the first NAP was launched by the Philippines). Indonesia has also experienced internal conflict. Its occupation of Timor Leste (1975-1999) and three decade-long conflict with the Free Aceh Movement (1976-2005) were two focal points of conflict (Lee-Koo 2012). Yet, launched in 2014, Indonesia’s “National Action Plan for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children during Social Conflicts” (Indonesia NAP 2014, 39

pp.) is silent about the legacy of these politicized security challenges and instead is concerned with community violence. The two NAPs are inward-looking and highly specific.

In line with the development paradigm, the NAPs of Indonesia and Nepal emphasize two major issues identified at the global level: women's contributions to peacebuilding and sustainable development through community work, on the one hand, and gender-specific needs of women in fragile (post-conflict or post-disaster) contexts on the other. Starting with the latter, the evident strength of both NAPs is their specificity and immersion in women's lived realities. These two policies pay significant attention to detail when mapping women's post-conflict needs or priorities. Indonesia, for instance, thoroughly lists the recovery needs of women (and children) in the context of 'social conflicts', that are essentially understood in terms of community violence (as opposed to internationally recognized armed conflicts). Women's needs are divided into direct (such as food, clothing, shelter, needs related to menstruation, pregnancy, child delivery or breastfeeding) and indirect (including education and reproductive health). In some ways, this approach might resonate with the framework of practical versus strategic interests of women (Molyneux 1984), ultimately taking into account women's immediate and more long-term needs in post-conflict relief and recovery programs. The NAP of Nepal is highly specific too. In addition to its assessment of gender-specific needs, this policy takes note of as many as fourteen groups of conflict-affected women (for instance, internally displaced women, widows, women who are disabled as a consequence of armed violence, female combatants, women remaining in detention, women who were abducted, and female victims of sexual violence). It ultimately recognizes the complex, multilayered impact of conflict on diverse women and how this affects their gender-specific needs in post-conflict recovery. In sum, the NAPs of Indonesia and Nepal are embedded in the local context and engage with the lived realities of conflict-affected women.

However, this grounded approach to the gender-specific needs of women is followed by essentializing their roles in fragile contexts. This is most evident in case of Indonesia. The NAP supports women in undertaking strikingly gender stereotyped activities, such as "snack making, beauty/hair salon, bridal makeup, sewing, food stalls, handicrafts, ornamental plants and other" (Indonesia NAP 2014:12). In this conceptualization, the emphasis is on women's labour as well as women's contribution to the national economy rather than on their political empowerment. The latter is almost non-existent in this policy. As a consequence, the concept of gender equality is fully depoliticized. These findings overlap with feminist critiques of the Women in Development (WID) paradigm that emerged in the 1970s. It focused on women-

oriented projects or micro-economic activities, attempting to “harness women’s labour for top-down economic development”, most commonly in fragile countries of the Global South (Krook & True 2010:116). It has been criticized by researchers such as Krook and True (2010) as it essentially moves women into neoliberal market economies without challenging the deeply gendered inequalities that result from these very structures. Such approach typically fails to support transformative change that would lead to greater gender equality. Instead, it puts a double burden of paid and unpaid work on the shoulders of women, just like the WPS policy of Indonesia.

Even though Nepal similarly links women’s empowerment to sustainable development, it does so with a greater attempt to balance developmental issues with women’s rights, resonating also with the human rights approach. The major goal of the NAP is “[t]o achieve sustainable peace and just society” (Nepal NAP 2011:24), while it is argued that “protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls boosts the country’s peace, security and development” (Nepal NAP 2011:IX). The link between gender equality and peace and security is more meaningful (albeit still problematic) than in the case of Indonesia. The focus on women’s political participation and the gender analysis of their limited representation – not only in formal peace processes but also in national-level decision-making bodies, such as the House of Representatives – is also a positive. However, like the NAP of Indonesia, the majority of the implementation strategies concern women’s empowerment at the community level and their participation in peacebuilding initiatives – as opposed to women’s leadership in major political processes. Moreover, some action points focus on deeply problematic women’s specific projects such as micro-loans. These are, again, targeted at increasing the economic capabilities of women – and by extension, the country – rather than focusing upon women’s political power that would lead to greater gender equality in a long-term perspective.

While the development approach in the way it is explicated by Nepal and Indonesia might have an ambiguous impact on gender equality, both countries designed robust implementation frameworks. The NAPs of Nepal and Indonesia specify 59-action points/92 indicators for the former and 37-action points/35 indicators for the latter. Although some performance measures in the NAP of Indonesia are irrelevant (e.g. the indicator on the “percentage of cities with green open space”), in both cases, the action items are as specific as they get among the nine Asia Pacific NAPs. Furthermore, these activities are followed by result statements with timeframes. In addition to the robust action matrix and monitoring and

evaluation framework, both NAPs also designed a multi-level governance mechanism. That is, the implementation strategy outlined in these policies targets officials at national, district and provincial levels. This clearly supports the translation of NAPs from general policy into implementation practice. Rather than staying within government bureaucracy, the NAPs of Indonesia and Nepal ultimately have a higher chance to deliver some outcomes to women on the ground.

In sum, Indonesia and Nepal adopted the development approach to gender equality in their respective WPS policies. Both countries designed solid implementation structures comprised of a robust action matrix, result-oriented monitoring and evaluation framework, and multi-level governance mechanism. In doing so, Indonesia and Nepal demonstrate a genuine commitment to the WPS agenda and interest in the situation of conflict-affected women, contrasting with the security-oriented approach of the ROK that was driven by its international reputation. The NAPs of Nepal and Indonesia are highly specific and tailored to the local contexts, but they are also mostly short-sighted in addressing the needs and roles of women, as argued in this section. Therefore, their impact on long-term gender equality might be ambiguous.

Finally, while the development approach is perhaps most suitable for these post-conflict and post-disaster states, it further appears to be a strategic choice. In the case of Nepal, who hosted the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) between 2007-2011, the NAP was internationally sponsored by UN Women, the United Kingdom and Norwegian Embassy. It is clear that launching the NAP was motivated in part by potential economic gains. Referring to post-conflict developmental issues is perhaps the easiest way to achieve this goal without entering highly politicized debates immersed in the security approach. The NAP explicitly calls for foreign assistance in the following statement:

The actions proposed in the NAP for conflict-affected women and girls cannot be implemented effectively with the government resources alone. So, the success of this Action Plan will also depend on foreign assistance. (Nepal NAP 2011:61)

In Indonesia, the development approach was similarly chosen strategically but for very different reasons. It served to avoid any association with armed conflict, focusing on community violence ('social conflicts') instead. The NAP is peculiar in the fact that it might be the only WPS policy adopted globally that refrains from referencing UNSCR 1325 or the WPS agenda in any place. For this reason, some researchers do not even consider the

Indonesia's NAP as a WPS plan (see Barrow 2016:28). Yet, it clearly overlaps with UNSCR 1325 as it rests on the WPS pillars of protection/prevention, relief/recovery and participation. According to local activists, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared the WPS agenda irrelevant to the Indonesian contexts in order to, precisely, avoid armed conflict connotations (see for instance Kholifah 2014). Ultimately, both Indonesia and Nepal demonstrate a genuine commitment to gender equality through the development approach – yet is largely depoliticized and so will be its impact.

### *Human rights-focused NAPs*

The remaining six NAPs released across the Asia Pacific to date resonate most strongly with the human rights approach to gender equality. This is despite the vastly different political contexts of these countries and the policy orientation of their respective NAPs, perhaps confirming the encompassing nature of the human rights principles across conflict and peace. “The Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security” (Australia NAP 2012, 64 pp.), “New Zealand National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions, Including 1325, on Women, Peace and Security” (New Zealand NAP 2015, 36 pp.) and Japan's “National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security” (Japan NAP 2015, 30 pp.) are outward-facing plans. Their engagement with the WPS agenda is mediated predominantly through multilateral agreements or international aid programs. Even though these countries have a legacy of historical violence, none of them have experienced active conflict on their territory in the past few decades.<sup>21</sup>

By contrast, the Philippines, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands have all experienced recent armed conflicts. “The Philippine National Action Plan on UNSCRs 1325 & 1820” (Philippines NAP 2010, 23 pp.) addresses the intra-state conflicts that have plagued the country at least since the 1960s. The major two relate to the government's fights with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) (Hall & Hoare 2015). It is also worth noting that the Philippines has faced the biggest security crisis in decades since Martial Law was declared in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in May 2017 (ongoing; for more on the current political and security situation in the Philippines, see Chapter 6). Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands are

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<sup>21</sup> However, some researchers have pointed to the weakness of such outward-facing WPS policies in their ignorance of the situation of women affected by past conflicts; for instance, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Australia, the Maori women in New Zealand or ‘comfort women’ in Japan (see for instance Dunn 2014; see also Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017; Shepherd 2016). Such policies have been also criticized for the lack of engagement with conflict-affected refugees that are victims of forced displacement (Lee-Koo 2018).

emerging post-conflict nations. The former, previously known as East Timor, remained under Indonesian occupation (1975-1999) and only gained independence in 2002 (Nakaya 2010). Timor Leste is vulnerable to recurring clashes, including the violent political crisis of 2006. The Solomon Islands have been emerging from recent internal armed conflict (1998-2003), rooted in ethnic tensions between the Isatabu Freedom Movement and the Malaita Eagle Force (see also Westendorf 2013). Both Timor Leste's "National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security" (Timor Leste NAP 2016, 42 pp.) and "Solomon Islands Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan" (Solomon Islands NAP 2017, 47 pp.) are devoted to the gender impact of these recent conflicts and subsequent security challenges.

The Philippines, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands remain politically fragile and prone to protracted armed violence. Coupled with Australia, New Zealand and Japan, these six countries cover a whole spectrum of WPS-related issues. And yet, all of their NAPs are immersed in the human rights discourse. This is evident in their emphasis on the two major themes identified at the global level: sophisticated gender analysis around women's human rights and strong emphasis on women's political empowerment and participation. Moreover, the plans adopted after 2015 engage with the human rights approach more explicitly, perhaps in response to the recommendations that came out from the *Global Study* (see Chapter 3).

All six NAPs start with a relatively nuanced narrative report based on a comprehensive gender analysis of inequality and human rights abuses faced by the women: whether internally in the Philippines, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, or externally across the Asia Pacific in the policies of Australia, New Zealand and Japan. These NAPs continue to demonstrate a mature understanding of gender politics of conflict and peacebuilding, and how it affects women. The NAP of New Zealand, for instance, typically for the human rights approach addresses the continuum of gender-based violence in the following statement:

Women's experiences of violence and discrimination in conflict societies tend to reflect the attitudes and social norms of the communities in which they live during times of peace. Violence and inequalities that women face in crises do not exist in a vacuum. Therefore, educating the whole communities and achieving core attitudinal and societal norm change is an important preventative measure. Family violence is also a key concern that New Zealand is working to address. (New Zealand NAP 2015:6)

This excerpt presents the gender awareness of multiple forms of discrimination or exclusions that lead to conflict-related violations of women's human rights. Similar awareness can be noted in the Australian NAP that clearly recognizes gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in operation across conflict and peace. It is stated, for example, that "[g]ender equality is essential for ensuring that women and girls' needs are met and human rights are protected, in times of both peace and conflict" (Australia NAP 2012:7).

Furthermore, the six NAPs emphasize women's human rights but with particular interest in political participation and leadership roles, including in high-level decision-making fora such as the UN. The NAP of Japan is most explicit in underscoring the importance of women's participation, across the board. Participation is not only conceptualized as a stand-alone pillar but is further integrated across all other pillars. This is justified in the following way:

[W]omen's participation in processes of conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and reconstruction is the core of those pillars, and therefore comes first. Since the issue of participation relates to all other pillars (fields of conflict prevention, protection, and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance), the details for women's participation are classified within each of these fields. (Japan NAP 2015:6)

Clearly, participation is singled out as the most important objective of Japan's WPS policy. In the Philippine case, even though the protection pillar is initially emphasized most strongly through the action points, the NAP addresses the broad spectrum of violations and abuses against women's human rights, not exclusive to sexual violence. The NAP is, in its own words, "an articulation of women's human rights in armed conflict situations" (Philippines NAP 2017:10). Furthermore, the second-generation NAP of the Philippines, "National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security" (Philippines NAP 2017, 30 pp.) launched in 2017, offers a corrective – it reprioritizes the pillars with empowerment/participation subsequently becoming the most important objective of the current Philippine WPS policy (Philippines NAP 2017:25).

The NAPs of Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, in addition to making women's participation in peace and security decision-making a priority (for more evidence, see Solomon Islands NAP 2017:21 and Timor Leste NAP 2016:17), are both explicit in their support to the human rights' approach. The Solomon Islands NAP specifically "recognizes that women's experiences and priorities are essential to building inclusive security and sustainable peace grounded in human rights" (Solomon Islands NAP 2017:18). The WPS

policy of Timor Leste presents a slightly hybrid case with elements of the development approach as the NAP serves to reassure the country's "commitment to promote gender-responsive development and to achieve women's rights" (Timor Leste NAP 2016:4). Nonetheless, both NAPs are founded on the premises of CEDAW and dedicate considerable attention to mapping the intersections between the WPS agenda and CEDAW GR 30.

When it comes to the implementation strategy, all six NAPs have designed an action matrix along with a monitoring and evaluation framework. These implementation frameworks include the key elements of impactful policy, as suggested by global research on NAPs (see for instance, Coomaraswamy 2015:241; Miller, Pournik & Swaine 2014). These are: concrete activities; division of responsibilities between the implementing agencies; qualitative and quantitative indicators; timeframes; and sometime results' statements or high-level outcomes. This is a positive development and contrasts with the global experience with first-generation NAPs, which often failed to develop an implementation strategy (see Fritz, Doering & Gumru 2011 on the early NAPs). However, the strength and scope of these implementation frameworks varies considerably. For instance, while Japan developed 86 action items and 156 indicators, most of them are qualitative (though often vague); Australia designed only 24 activities and 16 indicators, the latter combining quantitative with weak descriptive measurements. The specificity of the activities and responsibilities ranges too. For instance, while the WPS policies of Australia and New Zealand are relatively similar in their focus on foreign policy and their engagement with the Asia Pacific region, the latter developed much more specific action points and stronger indicators – yet those are not nearly as specific as the 16 activities and 50 parameters in the NAP of the Philippines. Clearly, the orientation of WPS policies comes into play, with the inward-focused NAPs typically being more specific and grounded in women's lived realities. The outward-looking policies are more generic. Even though the NAPs of Japan, Australia and New Zealand presented an extensive gender analysis of conflict and peacebuilding, they commonly fail to translate it into highly-specific activities and tangible outcomes (see also Lee-Koo 2014). Ultimately, these six implementation frameworks are more difficult to juxtapose than the narrative reports that were relatively similar for these countries, despite their diversity.

To sum up, while linking gender equality to peace and security, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands carefully avoid the instrumentalization of UNSCR 1325. Instead, they ground their NAPs in the human rights tradition. These countries are committed to women's rights and participation, often



recognizing multiple forms of structural inequality that can manifest across conflict and peace. As such, the implementation of these policies *might* deliver incremental and transformative change to conflict-affected women, but the weakness of the evaluation frameworks makes it impossible to know. The Philippines, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands adopted NAPs that are firmly embedded in their country-specific challenges. By contrast, a shortcoming of the outward-facing policies of Australia, New Zealand and Japan is their significant lack of specificity, most evident through the implementation matrix. In addition to the policy orientation, this might also have to do with the context in which these policies were developed. Most notably, in all three outward-looking cases the adoption of NAPs coincided with Security Council membership as follows: Australia (2013-2014), New Zealand (2015-2016) and Japan (2016-2017). The international reputation of these countries ultimately interplayed with their engagement with WPS policies. This is most evident in the case of Australia that used the NAP in its international campaign for the Security Council seat (see Lee-Koo 2014; also Shepherd & True 2014). However, the Philippines, Timor Leste and Solomon Islands also attained potential gains around UNSCR 1325, as their NAPs were internationally sponsored with support from the UN and partner governments.

### **Introduction to case studies**

NAPs have been globally recognized as the major mechanism for the diffusion of the WPS agenda (True 2016) and the expression of norm institutionalization through national policy and law (Tryggestad 2014). As such, their potential impact for greater gender equality for conflict-affected women should not be underestimated. Yet, the growing body of scholarship on WPS finds that NAPs are not always implemented, many of them remaining merely tokenistic. Swaine (2013), for instance, highlighted the commonplace risk of NAPs becoming ‘an end product’ as opposed to a means to an end. One of my global research participants highlighted the risk of governments following the pattern “from NAP-ing to sleeping” (G-CSO 1, interview). It has been also found that worldwide “[t]he effective translation of the resolution [1325] into transformative policy and practice remains the greatest challenge” (Swaine 2009:421).

Australia and the Philippine are self-proclaimed gender equality and WPS leaders in the region as well as globally. While both NAPs resonate most strongly with the human rights approach, empirically they demonstrate vastly different instances of the implementation of UNSCR 1325. At the most fundamental level, the Philippines – as a country suffering from ongoing armed conflicts – adopted a domestic-level policy. The Philippine first and second-

generation NAPs address gender inequalities within the country, presenting perhaps the ideal type of *an inward-looking* case. By contrast, Australia engages with the WPS agenda through foreign and defence, development and aid policies, committing to combat gender inequalities through international operations or bilateral engagements. In doing so, Australia adopted a predominantly *outward-looking* NAP. The case studies of the Philippines and Australia will therefore demonstrate the breath of the WPS agenda and its applicability to a range of contexts – whether through domestic or foreign policies.

Secondly, but equally importantly, both Australia and the Philippines have established a strong WPS record, having introduced their NAPs early in comparison with other Asia Pacific countries. With the development of the first Philippine NAP in 2010, the country pioneered WPS policy framework in the entire region. Two years later Australia launched its policy, becoming the first outward-looking case in the Asia Pacific. The relatively early adoption of the two NAPs allowed me to discuss with my research participants policy outcomes and their potential for greater gender equality. This is because the implementation of the NAPs has been underway for at least six years in both case studies. The Philippines, moreover, has gone through the whole implementation cycle of the WPS plan, while the Australian NAP is nearing completion in 2019. Hence, there has been enough time for these plans to demonstrate some impact: both in terms of policy development and their real-life implications. Chapters 5 and 6 will scrutinize these issues to a great detail.

## **Conclusions**

The Asia Pacific is the most diverse region in terms of socio-political context, current security challenges and gender equality performance (D’Costa & Lee-Koo 2009; McDonald 2017). For this reason alone, the Asia Pacific is an extremely difficult region to study collectively. For the very same reason, the Asia Pacific presents an apt landscape for an exploration of how global frameworks translate into regional and national politics, leading to intended but sometimes also unintended outcomes. The study of the WPS trajectory across the Asia Pacific that was presented throughout this chapter will hopefully enrich the current international scholarship on UNSCR 1325 which until recently left this region out of the WPS story (Shepherd & True 2014; Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017). It will, moreover, provide new insights into nuanced gender equality politics around the implementation of the WPS agenda in complex, dynamically evolving settings.

The interrogation of the Asia Pacific points to a conclusion that this regional experience differs from the global WPS practice. It is evident that the region strongly opposed the security approach to gender equality. This paradigm has not resonated with pre-existing norms that emphasize sovereignty, national autonomy and the rule of non-interference (Acharya 2005). Given that the security approach dominated the international WPS discourse and institutions, it is unsurprising that WPS policies were developed in the region somewhat later, despite the engagement with other gender equality frameworks such as CEDAW, and despite the conspicuous relevance of UNSCR 1325 to the conflict-ridden Asia Pacific. The securitized approach was rejected throughout the region nearly entirely – both by regional organizations, such as ASEAN and PIF and, with the exception of the ROK, by all national governments that adopted NAPs to date.

Since 2010, however, the WPS agenda has diffused across the region and led to the development of regional and national implementation frameworks. Significantly, the countries of the Asia Pacific have released relatively solid WPS frameworks with focus upon, predominantly, human rights and to a more limited extent, development. As opposed to the early NAPs adopted in the Global North, which appeared to have been driven by the international reputation of those states, the Asia Pacific has seen more genuine engagement with these approaches, often with a view to improve the situation of conflict-affected women. This is a consequence of, among others, significant civil society involvement in WPS-related processes (see Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017). Barrow (2016:26) also emphasizes this aspect specifically arguing that the Asia Pacific experience “contrasts sharply with the adoption of first-generation NAPs in Europe and may be reflective of lessons learned from a failure to include civil society in the development of NAPs globally”. The Asia Pacific NAPs ultimately present a mixture of top-down approaches and bottom-up advocacy (see also Lee-Koo & Trojanowska 2017). While potential economic gains and international reputation have also played a role in the Asia Pacific’s engagement with UNSCR 1325, they are insufficient to understand the diffusion of the WPS agenda – and gender equality within it – across the region, as constructivist theories suggest. Instead, it appears that gender equality advocates, including from civil society, tailored their WPS policies to their country-specific contexts, while also taking strategic political advantage of the international events. This resulted in the adoption of relatively robust implementation frameworks, whether NAPs or the Pacific RAP. Nevertheless, implementation of these policies remains a challenge – and as noted before, ‘agenda setting’ is not enough for greater long-term gender equality (Zwingel, Prugl &

Caglar 2014). Chapters 5 and 6 will therefore take the notion of norm translation one step further, that is, from general policy at the NAP-level into national practice and implementation strategies.

## Chapter 5. Case Study: Australia

The following two chapters will explore the diffusion of gender equality through the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in two nested case studies from the Asia Pacific. In Australia and the Philippines, National Action Plans (NAPs) have laid the blueprint for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, yet they present vastly different instances of engagement with the agenda. Using these documents as a point of departure, I explore how the concept of gender equality has translated into the NAPs and down to implementation strategies. Stakeholders' narratives in conjunction with detailed policy analysis inform my investigation into the opportunities, challenges and risks that UNSCR 1325 produces for gender equality through national-level politics. It is outside the scope of this thesis to examine the impact of those strategies on the lives of conflict-affected women. However, an examination of the implementation strategies in NAPs enables an understanding of how gender equality has diffused at the policy level, and what potential this diffusion has to generate greater gender equality in the implementation practice.

This chapter is dedicated to the Australian case study.<sup>22</sup> Australia is considered one of the global WPS leaders. In the most recent monitoring report of the NAP, Michaelia Cash (Minister for Women, Minister for Employment, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service) stated that Australia is “one of the leading nations on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda” with “enduring and steadfast commitment to gender equality” (PM&C 2017:3-4). The *Global Study* as well as the Secretary-General's reports also named Australia as a good practice example in implementing UNSCR 1325 (see especially S/2014/693, para. 68; Coomaraswamy 2015:138, 248). Notably, Australia is the primary donor to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, and so far, has contributed USD 3,072,945 (UNDP 2018).<sup>23</sup> The Government launched the “Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security” (Australia NAP 2012; 64 pp.) in 2012, following nation-wide consultations. This plan is due to be complete in June 2019.

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<sup>22</sup> The Australian research participants will be referred to according to their institutional belonging, as follows: OfW – Office for Women; DFAT – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; ADF – Australian Defence Force; APMC – Australian civil-Military Centre; AFP – Australian Federal Police; AGD – Attorney-General's Department; A-CSO – Australian civil society participants. Some government interviewees are referred to as GOV – government, in cases where they requested further protection of their anonymity. For more details about the interviewees, see Appendix 1.

<sup>23</sup> The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund is the global financing mechanism for WPS implementation. It was previously known as the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action that was launched in 2015 (UNDP 2018).

The Australian WPS policy is an example of an outward-focused human rights approach to gender equality, yet one that has translated into inconsistent implementation strategies. The NAP begins with a nuanced narrative, however, is followed by a weak implementation framework and elusive accountability mechanism. The result has been an unfocused approach to NAP implementation. The realization of the NAP's objectives ultimately relies on the informed leadership and concerted effort of actors with implementing responsibilities. My empirical data suggests that given the weak enforcement mechanism of the NAP, the WPS agenda – together with its gender equality goal – has been re-shaped to reflect the institutional mandates of government departments and civil society organizations. The flexibility of WPS objectives has allowed some departments to integrate gender equality into their structures and sometimes even their practices. For others, however, it has enabled disengagement, often because of the highly sensitive nature of political issues that the WPS agenda would bring into the light. It is precisely due to this flexibility that those who disengaged were able to claim the irrelevance of UNSCR 1325 to their corporate priorities.

In sum, the unstable meaning of gender equality in relation to the WPS agenda has been a double-edged sword in the Australian case study. It has driven broad diffusion of the gender equality objective across government departments with WPS responsibilities, including the ones that historically had more limited involvement in gender issues. At the same time, the potential for gender equality gains has been limited and, in some cases, forestalled.

### **Conceptualizing gender equality in the Australian WPS policy**

The Australian NAP was developed in a deeply politicized and somewhat confused process that involved both government and civil society stakeholders. As a result, the NAP is a document inclusive of the views of multiple stakeholders and supports a holistic approach to gender equality, predominantly engaging with human rights principles. Yet, this nuanced discourse is followed by a reductionist implementation strategy, making the Australian WPS policy largely incoherent across the narrative and the implementation framework. Starting with a brief outline of the process in which the Australian WPS policy had been developed, I will juxtapose in this section the NAP's narrative report with the implementation matrix. The aim of this juxtaposition is precisely to understand how far and in what ways the document itself advocates long-term gender equality.

### ***Confused NAP development process***

The Australian case study resonates with Elgstrom's (2000) theory of norm negotiation (see Chapter 1). The NAP development involved a conflictual process embedded in larger political events. The official beginning of this process is dated for 2008 when WILPF Australia and UN Women Australia secured, with support from Tanya Plibersek (Minister for Housing and the Minister for the Status of Women), funding for community consultations, subsequently conducted in 2009 in every Australian capital city (Porter 2009). The impetus for the plan came strongly from civil society organizations who singled out gender equality among the central reasons for UNSCR 1325's relevance to the Australian context (see also Shaw, Mundkur & Cooper 2010). The summary report of the community consultations stated that:

Some asserted the moral imperative to foster gender equality as part of the process and believed that Australia has a moral duty to implement this resolution [1325] and the capacity and resources to do so. (Porter 2009:8)

The efforts of civil society towards the adoption of a NAP were supported by individual government members' entrepreneurship. Sally Moyle, formerly the Branch Manager in the Office for Women (OfW), deserves to be mentioned by name as a strong gender equality advocate who led this process within the government, and in the words of an interviewee, "took the NAP off the ground" (A-CSO 4, interview).

Despite this process being envisioned as a collaboration, government and civil society consultations on the prospect of a NAP were eventually confused. The change of Prime Minister in 2010 (from Kevin Rudd to Julia Gillard, both in the Australian Labor Party) led to a cabinet reshuffle. As the NAP development had been already underway, a bulk of this work needed to start over under new ministers. Consequently, the community consultations concluded over a year before the official government consultations began, the former ultimately having limited impact on the shape of the NAP. Moreover, in 2012 the publication of the NAP was hastened due to Australia's bid for the UN Security Council seat. The WPS agenda was used as a key argument in the successful campaign for this non-permanent membership for years 2013-2014 (Lee-Koo 2014; Shepherd & True 2014a). The launch of the NAP on the International Women's Day in March 2012 was met with skepticism from civil society who unanimously reported in interviews their disappointment with how this process had turned out. The following table offers a snapshot of the major milestones in the development of the NAP in Australia.

*Table 4: Timeline of the Australian NAP development*

Year	Event
2000	UNSCR 1325 was passed by the UN Security Council.
2006	Unofficial discussion on the prospect of an Australian NAP started in the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) due to the resistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to take on this work.
2008	WILPF Australia and UN Women Australia secured funding for community consultations, with support from Tanya Plibersek, the Minister for Housing and the Minister for the Status of Women.
2009	Civil society under the lead of WILPF Australia conducted community consultations in every Australian capital city (i.e. Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Sydney, Darwin, Perth, Melbourne and Hobart) and published a report with their findings (see Porter 2009) to support the Government's efforts.
2010	<p>The discussion moved from AusAID to the Office for Women (OfW), coinciding with the transition of Sally Moyle. Formerly Gender Advisor in AusAID, Moyle was promoted to the Branch Manager in the Office for Women (OfW) where she took this work off the ground.</p> <p>Subsequently, the Government convened the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (IDWG) and conducted inter-agency consultations, under the lead of Moyle.</p> <p>When this process was nearing completion, Australia underwent a change of Prime Minister. Kevin Rudd lost the support from the Australian Labor Party and was replaced by Julia Gillard, former Deputy Prime Minister in the same party. Much of the NAP work needed to be redone under new ministers.</p>
2011	<p>The Government released a draft NAP to civil society.</p> <p>In response to civil society's criticism, the Government invited public submissions and hosted a public roundtable discussion. Some 15 written contributions were received from non-government organizations, academics and individual experts, and 40 government and civil society representatives were selected for the roundtable discussion.</p>
2012	<p>The NAP was officially launched in March without further involvement of civil society, leading to more criticism.</p> <p>The launch coincided with Australia's bid for the non-permanent seat on the Security Council. The NAP was used in the successful campaign for the Security Council's seat in 2013-2014. According to critics, the publication of the NAP was hastened for the bid, thereby impacting the quality of the document.</p>

### ***Inconsistent and uneven document***

The confused NAP development process in Australia translated into an incoherent document across its narrative and implementation framework. The NAP starts with a nuanced, gender-aware narrative report that demonstrates a holistic comprehension of gender equality (see also Lee-Koo 2014, 2016). The following extract reflects this level of maturation of the WPS discourse adopted in the NAP, underscoring the centrality of gender equality:

The benefits of advancing gender equality are far reaching and operate on a number of levels. Gender equality is essential for ensuring that women and girls' needs are met and human rights are protected, in times of both peace and conflict. It enables men to break away from often limiting and rigid gender roles and expectations of masculinity,



which can be amplified in conflict-affected settings. It helps communities to raise healthier, better educated children and enhances countries' economic prosperity.

Notably, equality between women and men is also a pre-requisite for sustainable peace, security and development. (Australia NAP 2012:7)

This single extract is inclusive of elements of all three gender equality approaches, yet carefully avoids the weaknesses associated with them. In line with the security approach, a meaningful link is established between equality on the one hand, and sustainable peace and global stability on the other – but gender equality is not securitized. Women's contributions to the prosperity of post-conflict nations is highlighted – in accordance with the development approach – yet women's roles are not gender-stereotyped. The gender analysis is far-reaching, pointing to the cross-cutting nature of gender equality, but women's rights and participation are at the centre and there is a certain level of reflection upon how inequalities occur on a continuum. For instance, attention is paid to the impact of gender roles on men and violent masculinities across conflict and peace. Moreover, in other places the NAP notes the complexity of women's roles too, whether in conflict resolution or post-conflict recovery, stating that “women and girls are not only victims needing protection” but “also active agents in both perpetuating conflict and building peace” (Australia NAP 2012:7). It is recognized that “[w]omen and girls are not a homogenous group” but “conflict affects diverse groups of women and girls in very different ways” (Australia NAP 2012:6). Last but definitely not least, the NAP notes the potential of UNSCR 1325 for delivering long-lasting change, asserting that “[t]he implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda is a long-term and *transformative* piece of work” (Australia NAP 2012:15; emphasis added).

The narrative part of the NAP reportedly bears the marks of engagement with the 2009 community consultations most strongly. Two reports published by civil society organizations provided the Government with well-informed gender analysis of the Australian context along with the relevance of UNSCR 1325 to it (see Porter 2009, Shaw, Mundkur & Cooper 2010). As a consequence, this strong human rights discourse has been praised by civil society actors – who are usually more critical of government undertakings – and feminist researchers alike. Lee-Koo (2014:304) stated that “the NAP advocates a sophisticated understanding of the gender politics of armed conflict”, whereas one of the civil society actors involved in the NAP process in Australia argued that:

The NAP does embed the principles of gender equality or tries to embed the principles of gender equality. It recognizes that gender roles influence how women and men, girls

and boys experience conflict. It recognizes that gendered norms and stereotypes are responsible for high levels of gender-based violence during conflict. It recognizes that women's participation in decision-making is really important in order to ensure that peace negotiations take into account women's needs. It recognizes that we've got to engage men in advancing the gender equality agenda. So, it broadly adopts an understanding of gender equality. (A-CSO 6, interview)

This is clearly a holistic, uncompromised approach to gender equality, immersed in the human rights tradition. Sadly, however, the Australian NAP subsequently fails to translate this discourse into a robust framework for implementation (see also Lee-Koo 2014, 2016). The implementation strategy and the monitoring and evaluation framework – in their current shape – are insufficient to deliver a transformative change to conflict-affected women. Through five overarching strategies set out to guide the NAP, the Australian Government committed to:

1. Integrate a gender perspective into Australia's policies on peace and security.
2. Embed the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the Australian Government's approach to human resource management of Defence, Australian Federal Police and deployed personnel.
3. Support civil society organizations to promote equality and increase women's participation in conflict prevention, peace-building, conflict resolution, and relief and recovery.
4. Promote Women, Peace and Security implementation internationally.
5. Take a co-ordinated and holistic approach domestically and internationally to Women, Peace and Security. (Australia NAP 2012:19)

While there is nothing that would oppose the objective of gender equality, these strategies are generic and apparently driven by the goal of compliance with UNSCR 1325 rather than of improving the situation of conflict-affected women more directly. Furthermore, these five strategies are operationalized through even less specific activities. The suggested action points (24 in total) call, for example, for integrating WPS issues across existing policy documents on peace and security; developing missing guidelines on protection from sexual violence in conflict settings; improving the recruitment of the military and police personnel to ensure greater gender balance; improving the complaint mechanism within the uniformed forces to combat sexual harassment on deployment; supporting the voices of civil society

organizations in WPS decision-making; and promoting the agenda in the countries of concern for Australia and internationally through the UN system (Australia NAP 2012:21-25). As such, the implementation matrix fails to give recognition to the nuanced gender analysis that was explicated so eloquently in the narrative part of the NAP. A civil society interviewee who praised the NAP in the aforementioned statement, added:

The challenge I have with our NAP is that it's all very well[-written] in the preface. But there is that tension between conceptually recognizing something but not actually figuring out what that means in implementation. That's where the NAP stands. (A-CSO 6, interview)

Neither the five strategies nor the 24-action points succeeded in addressing the complex impact of conflict on gender inequalities or the continuum of violence and the persistence of discriminative gender norms across conflict and peace. Instead, the implementation framework is reductive and superficial.

If the action matrix of the NAP can be described as simplistic, then the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is even less robust. The 2015 Interim Review symptomatically dedicated as many as five of 16 recommendations to the M&E framework (Humanitarian Advisory Group 2015), whereas in our research report we called it “the single biggest failing of the first [Australian] NAP” (Jay et al. 2017:27). In comparison to early NAPs adopted elsewhere, it is positive that the Australian policy designed 16 indicators which attempt to combine predominantly quantitative with some descriptive, quasi-qualitative measures. Yet, these indicators are output-based and limited to ‘counting women’ or ‘describing activities’ without providing any tools to measure the actual impact of the NAP’s action points. The M&E framework requires collection of sex-disaggregated quantitative data such as the number of women and men employed by relevant government agencies, the number of reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence allegedly perpetrated by Australian personnel deployed overseas, or qualitative data with description of policy documents or seminars referencing the WPS agenda. As a result, the M&E framework “is inadequate to measure the effectiveness of the NAP”, to use the words of Cap. Jennifer Wittwer (in Hewitt 2016:4), one of the most outspoken government advocates of the WPS agenda. Lee-Koo (2016:345; emphasis added) specifically explained that “[i]t is impossible to gauge the *feminist impact* of these training activities without a qualitative analysis of their philosophy, quality and outcomes.”

The inadequacy of the M&E framework becomes evident in the NAP progress reports. The first report released in 2014 consists of descriptive and numeric data without deeper scrutiny of the progress made on the ground, least of all the impact on gender equality (if any), whether in Australia or in conflict-affected states, or at the very least in the operation of the relevant government departments. The voluminous 105-page long document claims that

[A] gender perspective has been integrated into 29 official Government policy and guidance documents related to peace and security, and the Women, Peace and Security agenda is being embedded into the Government's approach to human resource management, with over half (54.3 per cent) of the 1141 Australian military, police and Australian Public Service (APS) personnel deployed in operations receiving training on Women, Peace and Security. (PM&C 2014:8)

Although these policy documents and other relevant activities on WPS undertaken by the departments are described in much detail in the report, the reflection on any structural change that the NAP would have achieved by that time is missing entirely. Instead, the 2014 Progress Report is 'a shopping list'; repetitive and difficult to digest. The most recent Progress Report, published in 2017, attempted to overcome some of these shortcomings. For example, in addition to the list of activities, it included some (albeit limited) reflection on their outcomes (PM&C 2017). These outcome statements are relatively detailed, offering more insight into the implementation of the NAP. However, they are presented in an unsystematic way (i.e. only under selected strategies) and there is still no mention of their *impact* – whether on gender equality or any other WPS-related goals.

Another related weakness of the Australian WPS policy is the over-reliance of the accountability mechanism on this deficient reporting. The implementation framework, in addition to being essentially unfocused, listed nearly all action items as shared between relevant government departments, without a specification of the leading actor on each activity. This ultimately makes the NAP "everyone's issue, but no one's responsibility" (Westendorf 2011, cited in Miller; Pournik & Swaine 2014:24-25). Even though the reporting mechanism is extensive (i.e. it consists of three progress reports and two independent reviews over the six-year life span of the NAP) and even though the government is obliged to table the progress reports before Parliament, there is no mechanism that responds to insufficient progress. The independent reviews were imagined to mitigate this problem, however, the 2015 report conducted independently by the Humanitarian Advisory Group has not been

comprehensively addressed by the government to date. The Final Review is, at the time of writing, underway.

What all of this means for the gender equality objective is that – regardless of whether it is considered a priority by the Australian stakeholders or not – there are no tools in the NAP to measure or account for it. The document itself, while informative and evidently dedicated to gender equality principles, is only a weak instrument insufficient to make a difference to the lives of conflict-affected women. Instead, the advancement of gender equality relies almost entirely on the capacity of implementing actors, who might hold different views on how this should occur. The remaining part of this chapter will therefore examine the understanding of gender equality among the NAP stakeholders and how this influences their approach to implementation.

### **Gender equality in the implementation practice**

The shape of the current Australian NAP has two major implications for the objective of gender equality briefly noted in the previous section. First of all, the holistic approach to gender equality evident in the NAP's narrative is inclusive of the views of government agencies in their diversity. A research participant highlighted this point when stating that “the departments [...] have different understandings of gender equality and they have been included in it [the NAP]” (A-CSO 5, interview). This enables engagement with the WPS agenda across the departments' work, accounting for their different mandates and subsequent gender equality priorities. Secondly, the weak implementation strategy, however, leaves the realization of the NAP's objectives in the hands of the implementing stakeholders. These actors might or might not be interested in advancing gender equality as part of their WPS work. Even when they do, they might understand it in vastly different ways, sometimes departing from the more transformational goals. Already the Interim Review noted as a major weakness of the NAP “[t]he absence of an overarching goal” (Humanitarian Advisory Group 2015:7). In the following, I offer an exploration of how the Australian NAP stakeholders view gender equality and apply it to the implementation of UNSCR 1325. This policy analysis is based primarily on the narratives of the relevant actors from government agencies and from civil society, examined in conjunction with departmental-level policy frameworks put in place to comply with the NAP.

To begin with, the Australian WPS policy presents a “whole-of-government approach” (Australia NAP 2012:3). The NAP has assigned a set of responsibilities to the following

agencies: the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Department of Defence (Defence), the Attorney-General's Department (AGD), the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP), under the leadership of the Office for Women (OfW). The work across these agencies is coordinated by the high-level Inter-Departmental Committee on Women, Peace and Security (IDC),<sup>24</sup> that meets biannually, and is assisted by the lower-level Subcommittee on Women, Peace and Security (Subcommittee), first convened in 2014 to coordinate the day-to-day tasks. Both are chaired by the OfW and include civil society representatives in their composition. It is also worth noting that WPS activists established in 2013 the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security (WPS Coalition) to collectively support the government in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (for more, see WPS Coalition 2018).

### ***Office for Women and Australian Civil Society***

Both the Office for Women (OfW) and civil society organizations are the 'framers' and the 'watchdog' of the Australian WPS policy. In these roles, they articulated a similar, all-encompassing approach to gender equality. The OfW is a policymaking agency providing gender expertise to the Australian government, including but not limited to the context of the WPS agenda.<sup>25</sup> Through chairing the IDC and the Subcommittee as well as compiling progress reports, the OfW essentially oversees the NAP implementation undertaken by the government agencies. Australian civil society organizations and individual activists led the nation-wide consultations for the NAP and have since monitored the government's overall progress in the WPS space through publishing annual shadow reports (see Hutchinson et al. 2014; Lee-Koo & Hutchison 2015; Lee-Koo 2016; Jay et al. 2017). Perhaps cementing their interrelatedness, under the NAP strategy 3, it is a distinct obligation of the OfW to reach out to Australian civil society organizations and integrate their views in WPS decision-making.

The OfW perceives itself as "the custodian of the NAP" (OfW 2, interview). While overseeing the NAP work of other departments, the OfW emphasized the centrality of gender equality to the realization of UNSCR 1325. For instance, the most recent discussion paper released by the OfW in connection with the development of the second Australian NAP explicitly states that "gender equality should be at the forefront of what governments do to prevent conflict, respond to national disasters and contribute to peacekeeping and

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<sup>24</sup> The IDC initially operated as a working group and was later turned into a committee.

<sup>25</sup> At the time of the NAP development, the OfW sat within the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). In 2013, the OfW moved into the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), securing more direct access to and stronger impact on government undertakings.

peacebuilding” (OfW 2018:2). When asked about the gender equality component of the WPS agenda in an interview, a representative from the OfW asserted the following:

From the OfW perspective, we know that women are disproportionately represented amongst the most poor, marginalized people in Australia and in the world. We know that gender inequality is a source of violence against women, including systematic violence. We know that women’s economic inequality, women and children not being safe and being subjected to violence, the exclusion of women from decision-making roles are all expressions of fundamental gender inequality and denial of women’s human rights. The WPS goals are really around recognizing that this as a set of circumstances means that conflicts play out very differently for women and girls from men [and boys]. So, you need to have different interventions. (OfW 2, interview)

The approach of the OfW, as represented in the excerpt, is holistic, structural and informed by a nuanced gender analysis. While all-inclusive, it bears marks of engagement with human rights principles most strongly through the recognition of the continuum of gender inequalities and through focus upon women’s decision-making and rights.

The interviewed Australian civil society representatives held similar views on gender equality in relation to UNSCR 1325 to those presented by the OfW. Even though Australian civil society is not homogenous and the WPS Coalition members reported that “[w]e all have our own different lens that we come in with” (A-CSO 3, interview), the interviewed representatives (seven in total) commonly underscored the all-encompassing nature of gender equality as a policy objective of the WPS agenda. This is most evident in the following statement made by one of key civil society stakeholders:

You can’t just do one aspect of gender equality. If you want women participating in peace processes, you’ve got to work to improve the status women, so they actually get involved in all these decision-making processes in their communities or their countries. This then in turn increases their equality. It all has to go hand-in-hand. So, you can’t do one thing without the other. You can’t advocate preventing violence against women or women’s participation in peace processes without including all the other aspects that you have to include in order to achieve gender equality. This is all about the structural changes and institutional changes and community attitudinal changes and education, the whole spectrum. (A-CSO 4, interview)

In addition to the monitoring role, through the WPS Coalition, civil society acts as a quasi-formal advisor to the Government on UNSCR 1325-related matters. In this capacity, the vision of the WPS Coalition is “a world in which gender equality, and the contributions and rights of diverse women and girls, are at the forefront of transforming conflict to build peace” (WPS Coalition 2018).

Ultimately, for the OfW and civil society, gender equality is crucial for Australia’s WPS policy. The interviewees touched upon the structural character of gender discrimination, emphasizing the complexity around the gender politics of conflict, post-conflict, humanitarian emergency and peace. They were aware of range of variables that impact gender inequalities across the board, such as the denial of women’s human rights, structural and physical violence and lack of safety, exclusion from socio-economic decision-making processes or low levels of political participation. Both the OfW and civil society stakeholders articulated the need to adopt a comprehensive approach to gender equality, inclusive of these many aspects. Although it lacks coherency, precisely because it is all-encompassing, this perhaps does not present a disadvantage, taking into account the distinct role of these stakeholders in framing the WPS agenda in Australia. The diversity of their views enriches the NAP implementation and ensures the inclusion of a variety of gender equality issues to be considered by other departments.

However, as much as Australian civil society and the OfW outlined a nuanced approach to advancing gender equality through the WPS agenda, neither has significant capacity to influence the government as a whole. Typically for gender agencies around the world, the OfW exhibits limited authority across the government agencies. A representative of the OfW stated that:

We certainly don’t have any big sticks that can apply and that includes, under the NAP, our inability to discipline departments [...]. At the end of the day it’s about influence. It’s very seldom that we have direct control over resources, outcomes or other agencies, really. (OfW 2, interview)

Civil society has historically had less power than governments in WPS processes. As previously noted, the limited impact of the voices of Australian civil society on the shape of the NAP was raised as a concern. Even though civil society is currently represented in the NAP’s governing structures (i.e. on the IDC and the Sub-committee), their roles are often restricted to advisory and advocacy, rarely involving direct decision-making. This limited



political authority of the OfW and civil society, coupled with no direct engagement in WPS projects on the ground, under the NAP, means that it is the duty of other departments to operationalize these complex ideas around gender equality in the implementation practice.

### ***Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade***

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is a major actor in operationalizing WPS objectives in the Australian case study. Together with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), which was later integrated into the structures of DFAT, the department is assigned to 21 (out of 24) action items under the NAP implementation framework. Distinctively, DFAT's obligations relate to the strategies 3 and 4 on the promotion of the WPS agenda in international fora, and through projects and programs in fragile, conflict-affected states.

As the objective of gender equality has been at the heart of DFAT's mandate, the WPS agenda has easily fitted into pre-existing policy environment, providing additional impetus for this work rather than driving it. Even though DFAT has engaged in a broad spectrum of initiatives falling under the banner of the WPS agenda, the narratives of my research participants allowed me to systematize them under a solid human rights approach to gender equality. Women's leadership, political participation, and engagement in decision-making have been commonly emphasized by DFAT's representatives as the key elements of UNSCR 1325. These principles have been subsequently integrated across the department's policy and corporate priorities.

Development and aid is the core area of DFAT's work. As described in the NAP progress reports published in 2014 and 2017, DFAT supported a very broad range of projects in conflict or fragile, post-conflict states where Australia operates. Thematically, this included everything from women's participation in the peace process in Mindanao, the Philippines, through gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance to post-disaster Fiji, to protection of female refugees in fragile states of Southeast Asia. While the great variety of these projects (along with the unsystematic format of the progress reports) does not provide for a consistent approach to the WPS agenda, in February 2016, the department released the *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy* (DFAT 2016). This important policy document expresses a more cohesive approach to gender equality across the entire department but also designed guidelines for DFAT's work on the WPS agenda. The Gender Strategy outlined three priority areas focused on "enhancing women's voice in decision-making, leadership and

peacebuilding; promoting women's economic empowerment, and ending violence against women" (DFAT 2016:5), all of them primarily in the Asia Pacific region. The NAP-related work is clustered under the first priority on women's political participation and leadership. The DFAT's Gender Strategy states, for instance, that:

Australia will [...] ensure that women participate effectively at all stages of peace processes and reconstruction. We will support a stronger focus on gender equality in humanitarian crisis responses and promote women's participation in decision-making in response and recovery efforts. (DFAT 2016:7; emphasis added)

In an interview, a representative from DFAT confirmed my understanding, explicitly saying that "our WPS work fits under the pillar of women's decision-making and leadership and peacebuilding" (DFAT 1, interview). Even though DFAT engages in a range of projects, the Gender Strategy integrated WPS priorities across the department's core business, aligning with the global human rights approach to gender equality. In the words of another interviewee, the NAP has provided "a platform to speak about gender equality and to encourage other countries to do better on gender equality" (GOV A, interview).

The advocacy in multilateral fora, such as the UN Security Council or the UN Human Rights Council, is another major area of DFAT's work impacted by the WPS agenda. This impact has been most evident with regards to the former. While a Security Council member in years 2013-2014, Australia articulated a distinct – in comparison with other member states – approach focused precisely on the participation and empowerment of women, in line with human rights principles. The WPS agenda has been crucial for DFAT's engagement with the Security Council from the very development of the NAP. As already briefly noted, the plan played a pivotal role in Australia's victory in the bid for the temporary seat on the Security Council (Lee-Koo 2014, 2016; Shepherd & True 2014a, 2014b). In its campaign, the Australian Government used the issue of gender equality and its commitment to the WPS agenda to prove its credentials for the seat. This was justified through co-sponsorship of UNSCR 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960, and the adoption of the NAP. The term on the Security Council, furthermore, presented Australia with a unique opportunity to showcase the contributions to advancing the WPS agenda globally. Australia was a vocal supporter of the WPS agenda on a number of occasions. This included co-drafting two WPS resolutions (i.e. UNSCR 2106 and 2122 passed on 24 June and 18 October 2013 respectively), delivering strong statements at WPS debates (see, for instance, the statement by Gary Quinlan at the WPS debate on 18 October 2013 (S/PV.7044)), as well as making references to the agenda

during country-specific debates (especially with respect to Afghanistan, where as a result of Australia's advocacy, UNSCR 2145 adopted on 17 March 2014 included gender-sensitive language). Together with partner governments and civil society organizations, Australia further led and participated in numerous side-events, such as Arria Formula meetings.

During its time as a member of the Security Council, Australia adopted a distinct approach to the WPS agenda (see also Shepherd & True 2014b:261). In comparison to other self-proclaimed global leaders on UNSCR 1325, such as the US, and especially the UK which primarily focused on protection from conflict-related sexual violence (e.g. through the UK-lead Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative), Australia emphasized women's participation and empowerment most strongly. This was evident upon its presidency of the Security Council in September 2013, when Australia co-hosted the high-level Panel on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding. In the same month, Australia led the work on UNSCR 2117 on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the resolution which subsequently integrated strong language on "women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer [of weapons]" (S/RES/2117, OP 12) (see also Shepherd 2017). Australia's leadership on WPS during its presidency has been perceived as a prominent achievement. One of civil society representatives stated that "[i]t could well be that without Australia's leadership on that issue, UNSCR 2117 would have gone without any recognition that women and girls suffered disproportionately from the violence caused by the flows of small arms and light weapons" (A-CSO 7, interview; see also Shepherd 2017). A government representative similarly highlighted Australia's contribution to advancing gender equality globally through the WPS agenda, even beyond the 2013-2014 term on the Security Council:

Our membership in the Security Council demonstrated that being able to engage in these multilateral fora is not exclusive to having strong bilateral relationships but that we can provide real leadership. And *one of the issues that we've been known for leadership on is gender equality*. (ACMC, interview; emphasis added)

Australia's inputs into the implementation of the global WPS agenda have been undeniable during its term on the Security Council and translated into concrete achievements, such as the gender-sensitive language of UNSCR 2117 on Small Arms and Light Weapons or of UNSCR 2145 on the extension of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Where the NAP's influence has been more limited with regards to global politics is in Australia's interventions on the UN Human Rights Council. Through the Universal Periodic Review some conflict-affected countries reported on their progress in advancing the WPS agenda (see also Swaine & O'Rourke 2015; Coomaraswamy 2015). Yet, Australia has not thus far integrated UNSCR 1325 into its human rights monitoring mechanisms, despite this obligation being outlined under the NAP (see the action point 4.7 and the indicator 4.3 in Australia NAP 2012:24, 29; see also Jay et al. 2017). Presumably, this is due to the fact that Australia has historically faced significant criticisms on the Human Rights Council for the (mis)handling of asylum seekers, including conflict-affected women. As will be described in more detail towards the end of this chapter, the Australian Government has thus far refused to address this problem as part of the NAP.

In sum, DFAT's understanding of gender equality in the WPS context falls under the human rights approach to gender equality. This is evident both through the narratives of DFAT's representatives as well as through strategic policy documents that support the department's implementation of the NAP. Whether on the Security Council or in fragile states, the NAP has been utilized by DFAT as a vehicle for advocacy for gender equality, ultimately making it a priority of Australia's diplomatic efforts, foreign affairs, development and aid policies. However, it is important to note that the WPS agenda has resonated with pre-existing policy frameworks and organizational culture within the department – rather than initiating this change per se. When asked about how these changes have been related to the NAP, a representative responded by saying “it is a chicken and egg situation” (DFAT 2, interview). The research participant explained that “it is difficult to say whether the NAP has created this change, or the NAP has been reflective of a broader change within the department”. Another interviewee also maintained that the implementation of the NAP has been a manifestation of the existing work, especially in the area of development and aid program, rather than a driver of it (DFAT 1, interview). Nonetheless, the NAP has capitalized on ongoing gender equality efforts of the department and has been acknowledged as an important platform to progress women's rights within multilateral institutions or in partner countries.

### ***Department of Defence and Australian Federal Police***

Next to DFAT, the Department of Defence (Defence) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) are the other major government agencies implementing the NAP. Of the 24-action items under the NAP, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) (both falling under Defence) contribute to 17, whereas the AFP to 15

(Australia NAP 2012:21-25). Their primary responsibilities concern incorporating UNSCR 1325 into policies and operations, covered under the NAP's strategy 1, along with embedding WPS principles into human resource management of the military and police forces, as stipulated by the strategy 2. The ADF and the AFP have reported impressive advancements at the level of policy and operations where gender equality principles had been previously missing. But at the same time, the departments have only seen limited engagement with respect to the NAP strategy 2, which makes the overall progress largely uneven.

The interviewed representatives from Defence and the AFP held similar views on the WPS agenda and how it relates to their mandates. In a nutshell, WPS implementation has been founded on the integration of a gender perspective into military doctrines and policies, planning and operations. In line with the security approach, the importance of gender equality has been emphasized for the effectiveness of offshore missions. Importantly, however, this approach has been informed by human rights principles which subsequently prevented the securitization of gender equality.

#### *Gender equality as an operational imperative*

Despite being initially “oblivious” to the WPS agenda, to use the words of a research participant (ADF, interview), it is the AFP, but especially Defence, where the progress has been most notable. Both departments developed distinct policies to comply with UNSCR 1325 – the Defence Implementation Plan (Defence 2014) and the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) Gender Strategy (IDG 2014, recently reviewed). The DIP is a classified, high-level operational security document. Its focus is described by the Australian Government as follows:

[The DIP] includes tasks which provide greater emphasis and focus on gender mainstreaming activities that align with international, UN and NATO efforts to *integrate [a] gender perspective into armed forces, military operations and missions and planning processes* and align with the intent of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions. (Defence 2014; emphasis added)

The IDG's Gender Strategy is an eight-page long concise document that spells out strategies and targeted outcomes under the three overarching objectives in which the AFP commits to:

Objective 1: *Integrate a gender perspective* into IDG policy.

Objective 2: Support partner country policing organizations to develop policies and practices that enable men and women to participate equally as employees.

Objective 3: Support partner countries policing organizations to promote equality and deliver services equitably, including through appropriate (lawful) responses to gender-based violence. (IDG 2014:2-4; emphasis added)

Both documents align primarily with the security approach to gender equality. The integration of a gender perspective into policies, tactical planning and offshore operations is underscored in both cases (i.e. as an overall goal of the DIP and the first objective of the IDG's Gender Strategy), with operational effectiveness being emphasized most strongly.

However, the approach to gender equality held by Defence and the AFP also bears marks of engagement with human rights principles. The IDG's Gender Strategy, which is a more mixed case, articulates some interest in improving women's participation and leadership in offshore operations. Moreover, the IDG's Gender Strategy states early on that the AFP "is committed to the promotion and development of equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys" (IDG 2014:1). Even though this is subtler in the approach of Defence, the interviewed representatives were dedicated to applying human rights principles to their NAP-related work. As explained by a research participant from the ADF:

Because we focus on the gender perspective part of UNSCR 1325, this has started to enable our people [in the ADF] to understand the nexus between women's equality, their participation in public life and their participation in armed forces as being an essential part of being successful in our peace and security efforts. (ADF, interview)

A representative from the APMC reiterated this statement when saying: "We have now arrived in a position when we consider gender mainstreaming as being a core human terrain issue of offshore operations" (APMC, interview). For the interviewees from Defence and the AFP, operational effectiveness was inseparable from gender equality. This is in contrast to the global understanding where the security approach tends to exclude a human rights lens, thereby sacrificing long-term gender equality for short-term operational goals. Operational effectiveness itself was understood in terms of the ability of the Australian security forces to adequately respond to local populations in fragile states, men and women alike. Integrating a gender perspective was seen a major strategy for Defence and the AFP in offshore operations, but also a means to bring about greater gender equality on the ground. Cap. Wittwer (2013:57; emphasis added) highlighted this point when arguing that "gender perspective, analysis and mainstreaming [...] is a strategy to achieve gender equality by assessing the

implications for women and men in conflict areas of any planned action”. In my interviews, the leadership from the ADF, the ACMC and the AFP was able to establish meaningful links between operational effectiveness on the one hand, and women’s rights on the other, connecting the security approach with human rights principles.

This very approach has been applied to the implementation practice and translated into concrete mechanisms that support the integration of a gender perspective into policy and operations. The Department of Defence created the post of the Director National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security within the Office of the Chief of the Defence Force. To date, this remains the only full-time senior-level position in the Australian Government appointed in the context of UNSCR 1325. At the operational level, the most significant achievements in the ADF identified by my interviewees were the introduction of Gender Advisors, starting in 2013, as well as the integration of the WPS agenda into Australia’s major military exercise, Talisman Sabre, from 2015 onwards. These two mechanisms were created as part of Defence’s compliance with the NAP. On the issue of Gender Advisors, a representative from the ADF stated the following:

I am absolutely excited about the prospect of Gender Advisors and what they can do and what their role is in conflict environments, and how we can relate all this to women’s equality and empowerment in a conflict context. (ADF, interview)

This clearly demonstrates the assertion that gender equality as a policy objective and in implementation practice is intertwined with the operational effectiveness of the security forces. While the appointment of Gender Advisors has been thus far a major vehicle to incorporate a gender perspective across military planning and offshore operations, Talisman Sabre is one concrete example of successful integration of WPS objectives into a military exercise on the ground (see also Lee-Koo 2016b on Talisman Sabre). Conducted on a biennial basis, Talisman Sabre is a joint Australian and United States training activity in conduct of combined operations (for more see Defence 2015). According to an ACMC representative, the integration of UNSCR 1325 in this exercise is “an extraordinary achievement”. As explained:

In the initial phases of planning the 2015 training when we said that we would like to have WPS as an issue, it was almost ruled out of contention a number of times, usually by mid-level American officers who went: What is this, it’s a soft women’s issue, we don’t need to consider this [...].

At the end of the exercise when we were looking at what have been achieved, what have been learned, we had the Commander of the US First Army Corps and we had the Commander of the US Specific Command (these are the most senior military people in the world!) turning around and saying: Well, one thing we've learned from the Australians was the importance of having a gender perspective. (ACMC, interview)

The goal of integrating WPS into Talisman Sabre was precisely for military personnel to develop greater gender awareness and establish links between the gender impact of conflict and operational effectiveness of the security forces deployed to complex settings. Women's rights and participation were highlighted as essential for the Australian forces to provide security to local women and men, also cementing the very pragmatic interrelations between the human rights and security approaches. Achievements in these areas prompted Prescott, Iwata and Pincus (2016:6) to call Australia in their recent NAP study "a model of a best practice for militaries to consider".

#### *Absence of WPS objectives across human resource management*

While the progress of Defence and the AFP has been by all means significant with respect to integrating a gender perspective into overseas missions, the impact of the NAP on human resource management has been negligible. Under the NAP strategy 2, Defence and the AFP are obliged to "[e]mbed the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the Australian Government's approach to human resource management" (Australia NAP 2012:19). There are 4-action items under this strategy that cover issues such as enhancing the staff competence on UNSCR 1325, ensuring the opportunity for the ADF and AFP women to exercise leadership roles, and improving complaints mechanism on sexual harassment (Australia NAP 2012:21). This, however, has been applied merely to the personnel deployed overseas. The human resource management of the staff 'at home' bears no marks of engagement with UNSCR 1325 whatsoever.

The lack of engagement with the WPS agenda in human resource management is even more disappointing, given the fact that NAP implementation has been ongoing in parallel to other processes within Defence and the AFP captured under the term 'cultural reform'. Originating from the 2011 'Skype scandal' caused by publicized improper sexual behavior within the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA),<sup>26</sup> the cultural reform initiative involved a series

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<sup>26</sup> An ADFA cadet, Daniel McDonald, secretly filmed and live-broadcasted to his colleagues via Skype video of himself having sex with a female cadet who was unaware of being filmed. This scandal brought to the public scrutiny the problematic gender culture of the Australian security sector.



of independent reviews into the treatment of women within the Australian security forces. This independent examination conducted by the former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, revealed problematic gender culture within Defence and the AFP, bringing to public awareness high levels of discrimination against uniformed women.<sup>27</sup> Despite the overlaps between cultural reform and the NAP's strategy 2 on human resource management, these two policies have been consistently disconnected. To my surprise, an ADF representative admitted in an interview that this has been a strategically motivated decision to ensure the implementation of the NAP with the Department of the Defence:

If we've started to make it a much bigger picture around women's equality and empowerment, we would just lose our people. They would start to think 'It's women's business, we are over it, it's not relevant to us'. So, we had to tread a little bit carefully [...]. We've tried to do it in such a way that they understand it's an operational imperative as opposed to those much more strategic goals around equality and empowerment of women. (ADF, interview)

A representative from the AFP similarly pointed out that "in terms of the NAP and its implementation in the AFP, we've always struggled to get interest in it beyond the international operations portfolio" (AFP, interview). In addition to these conceptual or attitudinal issues, this resistance has been cemented through bureaucratic processes, as the WPS agenda and cultural reform fall under two different institutional portfolios, both within Defence and the AFP.

Omissions of this nature, while they might seem relatively innocent, have in fact negatively affected long-term gender equality efforts within these departments. Both Defence and the AFP representatives with gender expertise complained about the lack of understanding of structural discrimination among the majority of their subordinates in these two massive institutions. An interviewee from the AFP stated that:

Generally, there is not a good understanding of gender equality within the organization. There is limited understanding of gender equality in terms of the need to address equal/unequal [gender relations]. There is little appreciation for the structures that exist

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<sup>27</sup> The now former Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, conducted independent examination of Defence, starting in 2012 (Defence 2017) and subsequently the AFP in 2016 (see AFP 2016). As a result, the following reports were publicly released: *Review of the Treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA)*, *Review of the Treatment of Women in the ADF and Pathways for Women into ADF Leadership*, and *Cultural Change: Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the Australian Federal Police* (hereafter referred to as the Broderick reviews).

in the organization and have been created over a number of years that limit equal participation between the genders within the organization. (AFP, interview)

Isolating the cultural reform from the WPS agenda has eventually led to real life implications. Such processes are to blame, at least in part, for the security personnel's lack of knowledge on persistent structural inequality. Hewitt (2016:7) similarly concluded her interview with Cap. Wittwer from the ADF with a suggestion that "[b]roadening our understanding of gender equality and WPS, what it is and why it matters is essential to overcoming impediments to successful implementation".

To conclude, the WPS trajectory across the Department of Defence and the AFP is distinct from the processes identified in DFAT. The NAP implementation has been separated from other ongoing and technically overlapping gender equality efforts in human resource management. Instead, new frameworks have been put in place specifically for the departments to comply with UNSCR 1325, moving the focus toward more internationally-oriented issues. This has resulted in uneven progress. Critical advancements have been made with regards to gender mainstreaming in offshore operations but the problematic gender culture with the organizations persists. These findings can be further corroborated through the analysis of the most recent Defence White Paper. Released in February 2016, it includes one stand-alone paragraph on the NAP (Defence 2016:137, para. 5.79), again failing to link the cultural reform (which has been addressed in more details throughout a dozen paragraphs) to the WPS agenda. While it needs to be acknowledged as "an important step forward" for such a prime policy document to explicitly mention Australia's obligations under UNSCR 1325 (see also Jay et al. 2017:14), it is clear that the WPS agenda has had a limited impact on this 191-page document.

#### ***Attorney-General's Department and Department of Immigration and Border Protection***

Even stronger resistance towards a comprehensive incorporation of WPS objectives can be noted in the cases of the last two departments that are analyzed in this chapter. Neither the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) nor the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) has registered significant engagement with UNSCR 1325. The concept of gender equality has not diffused – through the WPS agenda – across these government agencies, in spite of the applicability of UNSCR 1325 to their core business. The AGD, responsible for three action points under the NAP, perceives the WPS agenda through a securitized, legalistic lens and has claimed its irrelevance to the department's mandate. The

DIBP, recently integrated into the structures of the newly formed Department of Home Affairs (DHA), has not been formally included in the NAP.

The AGD – responsible for Australia’s law and justice frameworks – describes UNSCR 1325 in securitized terms, pushing the security approach to gender equality to its extreme. In our research we found that “civil society remains disappointed with the apparent low level of engagement by the Attorney General’s Department with the WPS agenda” (Jay et al. 2017:14). Yet, according to the interviewed representative, the agenda is essentially not applicable to the AGD’s work because the department does not operate in countries that are currently on the Security Council’s agenda. A research participant admitted the following at the start of our conversation:

I might just start by explaining what the AGD does in this space which is actually... In terms of the work that we do on issues affecting gender equality but in the WPS context, it is, well, pretty much non-existent, really. (AGD, interview)

Interestingly, the department has not been oblivious to its WPS obligations. On the contrary, the interviewee demonstrated far-reaching knowledge of the WPS resolutions, the NAP itself as well as the AGD’s responsibilities that fall under it. However, those were perceived as not relevant because the agency is not operating in narrowly-defined ‘conflict-affected’ countries. With regards to the action items explicitly assigned to the AGD, a representative reacted by saying:

Because we don’t work in the conflict-affected or post-conflict countries, there is actually nothing to do to give effect to that. So, we do it by doing nothing because there is no policy framework that could apply to it [...]. There is nothing other than being aware of what other governmental agencies are doing. There is nothing in particular for us to contribute to that either. (AGD, interview)

The AGD has established a strong record on protecting human rights, including the rights of women in Australia and in fragile countries of the Asia Pacific. Hence, I expected the department to develop a robust human rights approach, perhaps similar to the one articulated by DFAT but with a stronger emphasis on transitional gender justice. Instead, the AGD adopted a securitized approach and consequently disengaged from the NAP implementation. Even though in the 2014 and 2017 NAP progress reports, the AGD shared a number of programs related to gender equality, such as ongoing assistance to the Pacific Islands (especially Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Cook Islands)

in developing policy legislations on women's rights and protection from gender-based and family violence (for more see PM&C 2014, PM&C 2017), these initiatives have not been prompted or actually even affected by the NAP. The department's securitized understanding of the WPS resolutions goes so far as to contemplate whether the AGD should be involved at all in the Australia's WPS policy (AGD, interview).

In contrast with the AGD, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) is not mentioned throughout the NAP: neither in the narrative part nor in the implementation framework. Australian civil society, however, has been "unanimous in identifying conflict-affected women seeking asylum in Australia as falling within the remit of Australia's WPS obligations" (Jay et al. 2017:21; see also Lee-Koo 2018). The protection of conflict-affected women from sexual and gender-based violence and the need to address their gender-specific needs in post-conflict recovery is clearly within the ambit of UNSCR 1325, whether in the human rights, security or development approach to gender equality. Conflict-affected refugees living in Australia often also hold profound knowledge on the countries in which Australia operates and their involvement in WPS policymaking could lead to better outcomes of the NAP. Yet, the issue of including under NAPs the situation of conflict-affected refugees remains controversial in Australia as well as in many other countries of the Global North (Lee-Koo 2018). As already mentioned with respect to Australia's interventions on the UN Human Rights Council, this problem is highly politicized. Despite encouragements from civil society, there has been a significant resistance from the Australian Government to deal with this issue as part of the WPS policy. Perhaps this problem will be better addressed through Australia's membership in the UN Human Rights Council in years 2018-2020.

In sum, the AGD and the DIBP have both had limited, almost non-existent, engagement with the WPS agenda. It is fair to say that the NAP has not influenced the departments' projects, programs or policies and the concept of gender equality, as laid out in the WPS resolutions, has not diffused across these two agencies. But in contrast to the AGD where work on gender equality has been ongoing yet is not labelled as WPS-related, Australia's asylum seeker policy remains gender-blind, having devastating consequences for conflict-affected women seeking refuge in Australia.

## **Conclusions**

The Australian NAP reflects the deeply political process in which it has been developed and implemented. The national-level politics around the NAP entailed several government

priorities: international (such as the bid for the Security Council membership or most recently the Human Rights Council's seat), regional (including the development and aid programs or the security operations across the Asia Pacific) and domestic (such as excluding the voices of female refugees living in Australia from WPS consideration). A mixture of political, institutional and personal interests of the numerous stakeholders involved in the WPS agenda in Australia, whether government agencies or civil society organizations, have further impacted the shape and content of the NAP as well as its implementation.

The result is an inconsistent and uneven document. The NAP's narrative demonstrates a strong rhetorical commitment to gender equality, perceived primarily through a human rights lens. Founded on thorough gender analysis, this narrative report is dedicated to delivering a transformative change to conflict-affected women. But while conceptually recognizing the complexity around gender equality politics, the NAP follows with a reductionist implementation strategy and elusive accountability mechanism. This leaves the potential impact on gender equality nearly entirely in the hands of the NAP implementers. In the face of these shortcomings, the leadership by individual government members with strong notions of gender equality is crucial for the buy-in (or sell-out) of the WPS agenda at the departmental levels. My empirical data points to the conclusion that the majority of the implementing actors in Australia have attempted to overcome these obstacles in the implementation practice. Yet, the absence of clear direction in the implementation strategy has allowed for these actors – both from government and civil society – to implement the NAP in line with their institutional priorities. The NAP's narrative is holistic and broad enough for these stakeholders to reinterpret UNSCR 1325 in line with their core business.

The consequence of this is that the diffusion of the WPS agenda – and notions of gender equality within it – has taken different courses in the work of the implementing agencies. The Office for Women and the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security have remained strong gender equality advocates and supported the work of the departments, offering a holistic, nuanced approach. Yet, both exhibit limited authority, power and resources. In the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the WPS agenda complemented pre-existing policies, strengthening the overall commitment to gender equality. The NAP ultimately resulted in a relatively consistent approach grounded in human rights principles. In other departments, especially the Department of Defence and the Australian Federal Police, the NAP has created new policy frameworks that had not been previously in place, addressing important gaps with respect to the relationship between gender equality and

operational effectiveness. This work resonated most strongly with the security approach to gender equality, but it was informed by human rights principles that prevent the securitization of this objective.

The limitations in the implementation strategy also opened a gate for disengagement, as evident in case of the Attorney-General's Department. The department has demonstrated significant involvement in gender equality work in the Asia Pacific and yet refused to consider the WPS agenda as part of this work. Somewhat similarly, Defence and the AFP, while putting in place new policies, ignored pre-existing agendas that overlap with the NAP. Consequently, while significant progress is evident in these departments in terms of short-term gender equality goals, there is less evidence of the potential for long-term and transformative change. Finally, the NAP in its current shape might also reinforce some of the pre-existing silences, for example through the exclusion of Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which remains largely gender-blind. While UNSCR 1325 could serve as a remedy to this gender-blindness, the Australian Government has thus far opposed considering conflict-affected refugee women living within Australia's jurisdiction as falling under the ambit of the WPS agenda.

In conclusion, the case of Australia offers an example of norm negotiation. The failure to translate the strong human rights-based rhetoric of gender equality into actual obligations for implementation has allowed the concept of gender equality to be negotiated within individual implementing agencies. As this chapter has demonstrated, this lack of precision around the implementation strategy enabled norm diffusion, but simultaneously constrained the possibilities for meaningful impact on long-term gender equality. The next chapter explores the case of the Philippines, which unlike Australia has developed a strong and robust implementation strategy.

## Chapter 6. Case Study: Philippines

This chapter continues the examination of the diffusion of gender equality through the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in a nested case study. The Philippines, like Australia, adopted the human rights approach to gender equality in its two National Action Plans (NAPs). Apart from this, the Philippines presents a completely different case of WPS implementation. Being a country in an active, protracted conflict, the Philippines designed a domestic-level policy that represents perhaps an ideal type of an inward-looking NAP. With the involvement of most government agencies, local civil society organizations, and with support from international partners,<sup>28</sup> the principles of UNSCR 1325 have been applied through the NAPs to this country-specific context. But despite the participation of a range of actors operating under different institutional mandates, the Philippine approach to gender equality has been relatively coherent and purposeful, again contrasting with the Australian case study where major inconsistencies were identified. This is a consequence of aligning the Philippine WPS policy with government's responsibilities under CEDAW and institutionalizing the NAPs through pre-existing human rights instruments.

When "The Philippine National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and 1820" (Philippines NAP 2010, 23 pp.) was adopted in March 2010, the country pioneered NAPs in the Asia Pacific. The plan underwent the full life cycle, including a review and revision in 2014, eventually concluding in June 2016. The following March, the Philippine Government launched the second-iteration "National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security" (Philippines NAP 2017, 30 pp.). Due to this established WPS record, the Philippines is considered the regional WPS champion as well as one of the global WPS leaders. At the most recent Open Debate on WPS held by the UN Security Council in October 2017, a Government representative maintained that "the Philippines is most proud of the three national action plans on women and peace and security that it has delivered" (S/PV.8079).<sup>29</sup> Significantly, UNSCR 1325 has

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<sup>28</sup> The Philippine research participants will be referred to according to their institutional belonging, as follows: OPAPP – Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process; PCW – Philippine Commission on Women; DND – Department of National Defense; AFP – Armed Forces of the Philippines; PNP – Philippine National Police; DSWD – Department of Social Welfare and Development; DOJ – Department of Justice; DILG – Department of Interior and Local Government; DFA – Department of Foreign Affairs; NCIP – National Commission on Indigenous Peoples; LGU – Local Government Unit; NCMF – National Commission on Muslim Filipinos; P-CSO – Philippines civil society participants; P-IO – international organizations operating in the Philippines; and UN – United Nations agency operating in the Philippines. For more details about the interviewees, see Appendix 1.

<sup>29</sup> The revised 2014 NAP is sometimes called by the Government the second-generation NAP, making the current NAP the third-generation plan. However, research does not make a distinction between the 2010 NAP and the 2014 revision (see Barrow 2016; Amling et al. 2016). As will be described in more detail in this chapter, the amended 2014 NAP only refined the implementation matrix of the 2010 NAP that was still in operation until

secured a place on the current Six-Point Peace and Development Agenda that guides the Government's implementation of peace processes across the country. In 2015, the *Global Study* featured the Philippines as a good practice example of women's participation in leadership roles in peace processes (Coomaraswamy 2015:43). Despite identifying a number of difficulties in the implementation of the WPS policy, Amling et al. (2016:25) also argued that the Philippines demonstrated "innovation in advancing broader goals of gender equality and women's empowerment".

However, the consistent human rights approach adopted in the Philippine NAPs has resulted in virtually no impact of UNSCR 1325 on the National Security Policy which to date remains gender-blind. The refusal to consider gender equality as a security issue has perhaps provided a veil to the state's gendered violence. This ultimately points to the paradoxical risks of *not securitizing* the WPS agenda. The human rights language has been incongruent with the dominant militarized security discourse, producing limited or no impact on that area of policymaking.

Moreover, the Philippines has currently been facing a serious backlash against women's rights as well as an overall security crisis. According to my informants, these negative attitudes have extended to the WPS agenda. The government-rebel conflict in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) resulted in the region being placed under Martial Law. International organizations reported massive human rights abuses from state and non-state actors, including incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in evacuation centers (Human Rights Watch 2018). In his approach, current President Rodrigo Duterte is characterized by "misogyny and machismo" in the words of a civil society participant (P-CSO 3, interview), and "bravado and misogyny" to use the words of a UN representative (P-UN 1, interview). This affects the national security politics of the country that has been increasingly militarized. If this was not enough, Duterte's sexist 'rape jokes' as well as orders to "shoot female rebels in the vagina" have sparked public outrage in the Philippines and internationally (Reuters 2017; Rauhala 2018). But in spite of the unfavorable political climate, the institutional structure that has been built around the NAPs allows for WPS work to continue – yet with minimal impact on the upper echelons of the security sector.

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2016 (cf. OPAPP 2016:34-35, 42-47). Therefore, I refer to both the 2010 NAP and the 2014 revision as the first-generation plan (I articulate a distinction between them where relevant), while I consider the 2017 NAP to be the second iteration.



## **Conceptualizing gender equality in the Philippine WPS policy**

As the Philippine WPS policy has been in place since June 2010, it has operated under no less than three government administrations. Despite the commonplace practice in the Philippines of new governments coming in with new and sometimes diametrically different policy directions, WPS has been firmly founded on human rights principles since its inception, with gender equality staying at the forefront of the NAPs and being, in the word of an interview, “the ultimate end goal” (OPAPP 2, interview). My empirical data suggests that this is a consequence of two major issues: the pre-existing gender equality infrastructure with which UNSCR 1325 has resonated in conflict-affected Philippines, and the inclusive NAP development process.

To begin with, the Philippines is considered a global gender equality leader. The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap reports have, since 2006, ranked the Philippines among the top ten countries nearing the closure of the gender gap, next to Scandinavian states and New Zealand (WEF n.d.). The country slipped down a few places under the current administration due to the decrease in political participation of women in national governance. Yet, it no doubt remains a global leader with the 10<sup>th</sup> position achieved in 2017, demonstrating high results across the other three sub-indexes of education, health and economy (Australia, by contrast, was ranked only 35<sup>th</sup>; see WEF 2017).<sup>30</sup> Moreover, even though law enforcement remains an immense challenge in the Philippines, the country is commonly praised for its established gender equality infrastructure. A national machinery for gender equality in the form of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)<sup>31</sup> was created in 1975, two decades before the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA). Since the early 1990s, a number of gender-sensitive laws and policies have been introduced.<sup>32</sup>

Of these gender-aware national laws, the 2009 Magna Carta of Women deserves special attention because it inspired the WPS policy. Described as “a comprehensive women’s human rights law”, the Magna Carta of Women serves to enforce CEDAW (PCW 2009). This treaty included provisions pertaining specifically to the role and protection of women

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<sup>30</sup> Note that the Global Gender Gap Index measures only ‘the gap’ in the welfare of women vis-à-vis men in a given country (WEF n.d.).

<sup>31</sup> Formerly known as the National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women.

<sup>32</sup> These include: Women in Development and Nation-Building (RA 7192), the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), the Anti-Rape Act (RA 8353), the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act (RA 8505), the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (RA 9208), the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act (RA 9262), and the Magna Carta of Women in the Philippines (RA 9170) (for more see Veneracion-Rallonza 2013).

affected by conflicts in the Philippines. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Philippines has suffered from protracted and ongoing low intensity conflicts,<sup>33</sup> making this issue particularly relevant. In this sense, the Magna Carta of Women laid the conceptual foundations for broader engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the first NAP. Moreover, in 2014, the NAP was eventually placed under the jurisdiction of the Magna Carta for Women, as will be described later in this chapter.

### *Civil society driven consultations with support from government agencies*

Both government and civil society interviewees described the process of designing the first NAP in the Philippines as highly collaborative and non-conflictual (see also OPAPP 2016; Veneracion-Rallonza 2013), contrasting with the Australian case study. It started with a “rather incidental meeting” in 2007 of three prominent peace activists who identified no progress in implementing UNSCR 1325 in the Philippines (Veneracion-Rallonza 2013:73). One of them told me in an interview: “We didn’t want the resolution [1325] to go to waste” (P-CSO 4, interview). Having strong notions of WPS, Jasmin Nario-Galace from the Center for Peace Education, Miriam Coronel-Ferrer from the International Women’s Tribune Center and Mavic Cabrera-Balleza from Sulong CARHRIHL subsequently convened a national gathering in Manila to discuss the prospects for a Philippine NAP. The summary report published thereafter recommended the Philippine Government to develop, in partnership with civil society organizations, a WPS policy (Dionisio & Cabrera-Balleza 2008:7).

These initial consultations turned into a nation-wide process. In collaboration with two key government agencies, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), and with support from the UNDP, these three activists conducted six regional cluster consultations between 2008-2009 – three in Luzon, two in Mindanao and one in Visayas (P-CSO 4, interview; see also OPAPP 2016). As a result, government representatives and civil society actors formulated the WPS plan in a series of national validation workshops. This process has been described by the Philippine Government as an example of “collaborative politics” (OPAPP 2016:140), whereas a Filipino researcher Veneracion-Rallonza (2013:76) called it “unprecedented in so far as government-civil society collaboration and consultative processes are concerned”. As she concluded, “[w]hat emerged was a form of dialogic politics” (Veneracion-Rallonza 2013:76).

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<sup>33</sup> According to the UCDP (2018), the death toll for years 1989-2017 amounts to 18,333. Of these, 17,352 were contributed to state-based violence.

Perhaps confirming a genuine interest of the Philippine Government in implementing UNSCR 1325, the Philippine NAP started with a financial commitment. This is quite unprecedented when compared to the global practice around early NAPs (see Miller, Pournik & Swaine 2014:41-42). The Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Presidential Executive Order no. 865 with which the NAP was launched in March 2010 mandated the establishment of the government-level National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security (NSC-WPS), dedicating to this purpose from the President's Contingency Fund PHP 5,000,000.00 (app. USD 93,975.00). Furthermore, in November 2010 civil society organizations formed a national network, Women Engaged in Action on UNSCR 1325 (WE Act 1325; for more see WE Act 1325 n.d.), to hold the Government accountable to WPS obligations.<sup>34</sup>

*Table 5: Timeline for the Philippine NAPs development*

Year	Event
<b>2000</b>	UNSCR 1325 was passed by the UN Security Council.
<b>2007</b>	Jasmin Nario-Galace (Center for Peace Education), Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (International Women's Tribune Center) and Mavic Cabrera-Balleza (Sulong CARHRHL) met at Miriam College to discuss WPS implementation in the Philippines. After they identified no progress in implementing UNSCR 1325 in the Philippines, the three peace activists started lobbying the Government for developing a NAP.  In December, Nario-Galace, Cabrera-Balleza, and Miriam Coronel-Ferrer convened, with support and participation of PCW and OPAPP, a national meeting on UNSCR 1325. The meeting was attended by prominent women peacebuilders. It resulted in publication of a summary report recommending that the Government develop a NAP (Dionisio and Cabrera-Balleza 2008).
<b>2008-2009</b>	With support from the UNDP, OPAPP and PCW, national consultations were conducted by civil society in Luzon, Mindanao and Visayas (see OPAPP 2016).
<b>2009</b>	Write-shop Workshop and National Validation Workshop with civil society actors and government agencies followed the nation-wide consultations. A draft NAP was produced and presented to the Government.
<b>2010</b>	The NAP was launched with the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Presidential Executive Order no. 865 "Creating of a National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security to Implement the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 and Providing Funds Thereof" (EO 865).  The National Steering Committee on Women Peace and Security (NSC-WPS) was appointed to coordinate the whole-of-government effort in implementing the NAP.  Civil society organizations formed the national network under the name Women Engaged in Action on UNSCR 1325 (WE Act 1325) to support the government in the NAP implementation and independently monitor the progress.
<b>2014</b>	The 2010 NAP was revised by the Government of President Benigno Aquino III. A new implementation framework was published, and the Government conducted a review of progress in 2010-2014.
<b>2016</b>	The first Philippine NAP expired in June 2016.

<sup>34</sup> However, it deserves to be noted that civil society organizations reported a struggle to get the NAP published by the Government. As mentioned by my interviewees, the publication only happened a year after the NAP adoption, with financial support from international actors (P-CSO 4, interview).

***Strong human rights discourse and purposeful approach to implementation***

The result of this collaborative design process is a relatively consistent, country-specific WPS policy. The Philippine NAPs are inward-looking and embedded in pre-existing gender equality infrastructure (see also Amling et al. 2016:25). The primary focus has been around the rights and participation of women affected by conflict, resonating with the human rights approach to gender equality. Starting with the 2010 NAP, the following goals were set by the Philippine Government with respect to UNSCR 1325:

[T]o ensure the *protection of women's rights* in situations of armed conflict and *prevention of violation of their rights* during and after armed conflict; empower women and *ensure their active and meaningful participation* in peace building process; and promote and *mainstream a gender perspective* in all aspects of peace building, including conflict prevention and resolution. (Philippines NAP 2010:7-8; emphasis added)

Even though protection remains the central theme throughout the 2010 NAP, a whole spectrum of human rights violations is taken into account beyond conflict-related sexual violence. The 2010 NAP begins with a comprehensive gender analysis of ongoing conflicts and their gender impact, emphasizing the root causes of armed violence. These were identified as uneven access to resources, political rivalry among powerful dynasties, warlordism, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, poverty, poor governance, and finally discrimination and marginalization of minority groups such as indigenous people, Moro people (the Muslim population of the Philippines) and women more broadly (Philippines NAP 2010:3-5). In all of this, the NAP demonstrates an understanding of the gender implications of armed conflict as underpinned by the country-specific context in the Philippines. This far-reaching, grounded comprehension of structural inequalities, their causes and impact, is reportedly a consequence of nation-wide community consultations. According to my interviewees who were part of this process, women from different regions were requested in these consultations to name the specific challenges they have been facing in relation to ongoing conflicts.

The 2017 NAP is even more direct in the engagement with human rights, perhaps in response to the recommendations from the 2015 *Global Study* (as discussed in Chapter 3). It explicitly

“seeks to embed the language of women’s human rights, specifically, gender equality, as provided for in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women” (Philippines NAP 2017:12). Furthermore, the pillars of work have been reprioritized with participation/empowerment of women in peace processes being now emphasized over protection from/prevention of women’s human rights abuses. As explained in the NAP, this is a result of the lessons-learned processes around implementing the WPS agenda in the Philippines. An entire section of the NAP is dedicated to the “Privileging of women’s agency”, indicating that “[t]he NAP WPS 2017-2022 anchors its vision to achieving expansion of women’s role in the various spaces of peace” (Philippines NAP 2017:14). The strategies dedicated to women’s empowerment underscore political participation broadly as well as leadership, including in national and local governance, again in line with the human rights approach to gender equality.

In contrast to the Australian case study, this sophisticated human rights discourse is not limited to the narrative section of the NAP but there was a concerted effort to translate it into a robust framework for action. One of my interviewees highlighted: “We wanted to make the NAP a useful document, a document that can be used by women” (OPAPP 1, interview). Undersecretary Atty. Maria Cleofe Gettie Sandoval in OPAPP in the Aquino Government, a lawyer by profession and a member of a feminist organization PHILIPINA, was responsible for turning the results of the nation-wide consultations into a policy that can be implemented on the ground. Sandoval ensured the fit of the NAP into the policy environment of the Philippines, and helped develop a feasible implementation strategy. After the NAP had been launched, Sandoval stated: “This isn’t like a declaration only. These are concrete plans that will yield results. This is not a plan that you will keep in your cabinet and leave to rot” (cited in Veneracion-Rallonza 2014:3). The implementation framework of the 2010 NAP is indeed results-oriented and purposeful, reflecting to some extent the compressive gender analysis presented in the narrative report.

The purposefulness of the Philippine approach manifests, first of all, in the way the NAPs set out the WPS objectives across the narrative and the implementation framework, both strongly emphasizing women’s human rights. Already in the 2010 NAP, a distinction was made between content issues and technical considerations, with a reflection upon how they relate to each other. This has crystallized over time to a well-developed approach in the amended 2014 NAP and the 2017 NAP (see Figure 8, taken from the current NAP). In principle, the content issues are grasped through the ‘substantive’ pillars of protection/prevention and

empowerment/participation, aligning with UNSCR 1325’s objectives of protection and participation. These content matters are assisted by the technical considerations spelled out in the form of two ‘support pillars’ of promoting/mainstreaming a gender perspective, and capacity development/monitoring and reporting. The support pillars serve to operationalize the high-level objectives of the NAP – women’s participation in peace and security governance, and protection from human rights abuses in conflict settings – and to “enhance accountability for successful implementation and the achievement of its goals” (Philippines NAP 2010:22). In our research, Lee-Koo, Johnson and I suggested that the inclusion of technical considerations among the priority areas or pillars often strengthens the development of a more impactful NAP (Trojanowska et al. 2018:44). This is because concrete tools are designed in such cases to translate the content issues from policy into implementation strategies.

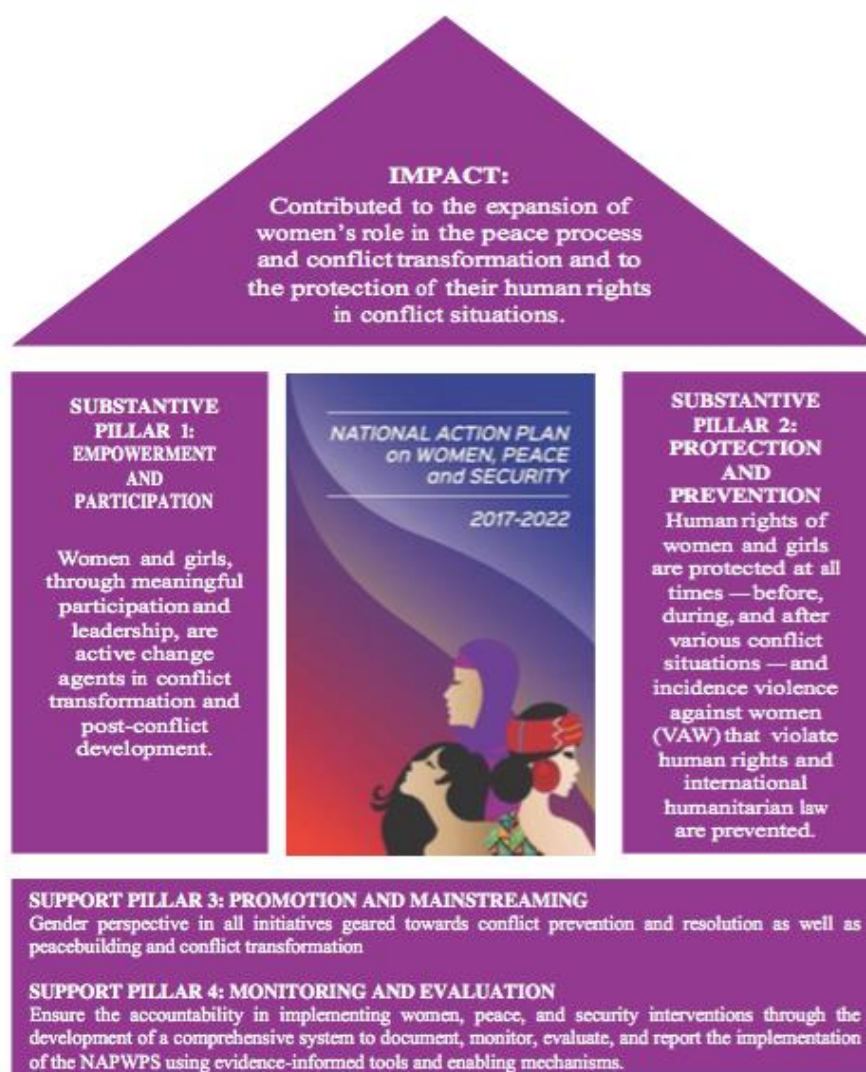


Figure 8: Substantive and support pillars in the 2017 Philippine NAP

Secondly, the implementation matrix of the 2010 NAP, refined in the amended 2014 NAP, is both “comprehensive” and “targeted”, in the view of a civil society expert (P-CSO 3, interview). For each of the four aforementioned pillars an overall outcome statement was designed alongside high-level indicators. The following 18-action points have associated results statements and at least one indicator each (63 in total). Both the action points and indicators are specific, time-bound and relevant, perhaps due to the extensive involvement of civil society in their development.<sup>35</sup> The indicators are predominantly quantitative (such as “number of programs sustained and enhanced” or “number of women in peace and security bodies”) but some qualitative measures were also developed (for example “evidence of reform and enhancement of weak aspects of the criminal justice system”). The Aquino Government refined this implementation framework in 2014. While largely unchanged, the updated matrix is more concise, systematic and outcome-based. Some changes include the reduction of the number of action points (from 18 to 11) and the growing specification of the indicators (e.g. the indicator on women and girls in the evacuation centers has been divided into different parameters to measure support with regards to health, shelter, livelihood and education). Even though Barrow (2016:26-27) suggested that these indicators alone might not be sufficient to comprehensively assess whether these “services are effective,” the M&E framework is comparatively strong and in the words of an interviewee constitutes an “outcome-based instrument” (OPAPP 2, interview). It definitely presents a much more results-oriented case than the merely output-based Australian NAP.

The strength of the implementation framework is also evident in the Progress Report published by the government. A review was conducted in 2014 by the Aquino Government and updated in 2016 by the Duterte Government after the first NAP expired (see OPAPP 2016). While the 2014 review is no longer publicly available on the website of OPAPP, the 2016 Progress Report clearly engages with a reflection upon the quantitatively measured and attitudinal impact of the NAP, including on the lives of conflict-affected women. It maps efforts to institutionalize the NAP at the government-level as well as the impact of projects in conflict-affected areas on the livelihoods of women (OPAPP 2016). Significantly, the progress report complements the review of government policies and programs with data gathered through “key informant interviews” and “follow-up visits”. It is therefore a relatively comprehensive account of WPS implementation undertaken by 2016 – even though

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<sup>35</sup> See principles for WPS indicators suggested by the UN Secretary-General in his 2010 report on WPS (S/2010/173, para. 7).

the government agencies admitted that qualitative data is often of an “anecdotal” character (PCW 1, interview).

### ***Current state of the WPS policy***

Serious concerns can be, however, raised with regards to the transparency of the NAP reporting processes. Even though the progress reports are typically compiled by independent experts, the 2014 review is no longer available after the Duterte Government took power. The updated 2016 review bears no marks of recognition of the previous administration which, according to a number of interviewees, saw headways in both the operationalization and implementation of the NAP. These omissions appear to be politically motivated.

Moreover, the current NAP that was launched by Duterte’s administration in March 2017, has no implementation matrix as such. Instead, it developed in the narrative part an overall impact statement with an overarching NAP goal to “Contribute to the expansion of women’s role in the peace process and conflict transformation and to the protection of their human rights in conflict situations” (Philippines NAP 2017:17). Each of the four pillars (without change) has an outcome statement and overall strategy, followed by 17-action points unpacked in a further 53 statements. These statements, however, are presented in the form of neither activities nor indicators. They call, for example, for “supported grassroots women’s economic empowerment initiatives” or “awareness raising on women’s economic rights conducted at the grassroots level”. Not only are they highly unspecific but perhaps more importantly, there is no division of roles or responsibilities between the implementing actors. It is therefore unclear who is obliged to act upon which statement and how the results will be measured and reported. The Government might intend to develop a more robust implementation framework at a later stage (similar to the third Dutch and the third UK NAPs in which the implementation matrix followed the narrative plans that had been released earlier) or, more probably, the relevant agencies will selectively design specific action items at the departmental-level, in line with their priorities. As of June 2018, an overarching implementation matrix has not been publicly released and some research participants pointed to this fact being symptomatic of the absence of a genuine interest of the current Government in implementing the 2017 NAP. One of them explicitly stated that “[t]here is a backlash on this plan” and “[i]t’s gonna be tough to ensure the NAP will be implemented” (P-UN 1, interview).



## **Gender equality in the implementation practice**

Nonetheless, in comparison with the Australian case study, the Philippine WPS policy has a stronger history of institutionalization, falling under the umbrella of the government's obligations to CEDAW. The infrastructure that supports the NAP rests on two mechanisms that apply UNSCR 1325's principles to the government itself, on the one hand, and through projects and programs to conflict-affected areas on the other. Starting with the former, the Philippine NAPs have been conceived as a policy requiring effort across the government. The Presidential Executive Order no. 865, with which the first NAP was effectively adopted, dedicated funds to the creation of the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security (NSC-WPS) to coordinate the whole-of-government work. In addition to the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) who were subsequently nominated to chair the NSC-WPS, it is composed of the following departments: Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF).

In 2014, a Technical Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (TWG-WPS) was convened to assist the NSC-WPS, with a view to apply the principles of UNSCR 1325 to projects on the ground. Specifically, the TWG-WPS expanded the membership to agencies that implement the government-sponsored "Peaceful and Resilient Communities Programme", called PAMANA (org. PAyapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn). These are the agencies with projects in conflict-affected areas: Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Health (DOH), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Agriculture (DA), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC), and National Electrification Administration (NEA).

In addition to the government agencies that are members of the NSC-WPS and the TWG-WPS, the Philippine NAPs have seen large involvement of local civil society actors and international partners. Neither is an implementing party to the NAP, yet their contributions to the WPS process have been critical. The NSC-WPS is mandated in accordance with EO 865 to develop partnerships with women's groups in the country, and my informants confirmed

that selected activists have been consulted throughout the entire process. UN agencies and other international partners have further provided assistance in terms of material resources and technical expertise on WPS – both to the government and to civil society organizations operating in conflict areas.

This range of national, local and international actors has certainly created a hybrid environment for WPS implementation in the Philippines. Despite the variety of institutional interests that come into play with UNSCR 1325's objectives, the Philippine NAPs have been guided by a relatively coherent human rights approach to gender equality, perhaps thanks to its institutionalization through pre-existing human rights mechanisms that will be outlined in detail in the following. While minor differences could be identified, the understanding of the purpose of the WPS agenda and how it relates to broad gender equality goals, has been relatively similar across the interviewed government agencies, civil society representatives and international actors. This, however, has had negative consequences too. For instance, some departments were unable to make a meaningful distinction between UNSCR 1325 and their other gender equality-related work. More importantly, however, I argue that the stable human rights narrative has resulted in limited influence of the NAPs upon the upper echelons of the security sector, where the diffusion of gender equality could potentially have produced the most impact. The rest of this chapter explores the different roles of the NAP actors in the Philippine WPS process, with focus upon their comprehension of gender equality and how they have employed it in WPS implementation.

***Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Philippine Commission on Women and Philippine Civil Society***

The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and national civil society organizations are the 'framers' and the 'watchdog' of the WPS policy in the Philippines. In their distinct capacity, these actors have collectively laid the conceptual foundations for the human rights approach to gender equality to guide the NAPs. In terms of their general roles, OPAPP and PCW are high-level policymaking bodies that advise the President and have limited direct engagement in projects or programs on the ground. Philippine civil society organizations, while not formally included in the NAP governing bodies, are named in support roles in both the 2010 and 2014 NAP implementation frameworks (the 2017 NAP has no implementation matrix). Through the WE Act 1325 network, they have continued to monitor the government's progress on WPS, advocating for UNSCR 1325 to remain a national priority.

### *Placing the NAPs under the umbrella of human rights*

OPAPP and PCW oversee the implementation of the NAPs, each contributing to this process with different expertise and authority. Overall, the first NAP can be seen as an attempt to fill an important gap in the work of both agencies – specifically with respect to the situation of conflict-affected women. In their high-level advisory role, OPAPP gathers from other departments data on ongoing conflicts and peace processes to update the President, whereas PCW collects similar data on the status of women across the country. The representatives from PCW admitted in an interview that until the NAP adoption, little had been done to cross-map the data from these two agencies – that would ultimately allow assessment of the gender-specific impact of conflicts (PCW 1-2, interview). As a matter of fact, the 2010 NAP started with an imperative to assess human rights abuses committed against women in conflict areas, with its major purpose being specified as “the protection of women’s human rights and prevention of violation of these rights in armed conflict and post-conflict situations” (Philippines NAP 2010:9). The NAP has ultimately created a vehicle for the Philippine government to relate to these human rights violations.

Most recently, the work of OPAPP and PCW has been refocused from protection of women’s human rights towards participation of women in peace processes and decision-making, whether at the national or local levels. My research participants explicitly attributed this shift to the growing understanding from government departments that women need to gain higher status in their communities and in the society at large for the protection and prevention efforts to be more effective. A representative from OPAPP maintained that:

We are seeing this [2017] NAP as something that women can use. So, if I’m supposed to use this, I need to be first empowered before I can protect myself [...]. Protection doesn’t necessarily lead to empowerment. Women have to participate first, women have to be empowered and have a voice so that they can promote their rights. That’s the reason why the pillars were switched. (OPAPP 1, interview)

PCW officials held similar views also pointing out that in the NAP context, “gender equality is the expansion of women’s roles in peace and security” (PCW 1, interview). The first NAP also contributed to the collection of data on women’s political participation across the country. The *Women Count: Civil Society Monitoring Reports* (hereinafter the *Women Count* reports) that will be described in more detail below found low levels of female representation in governance, especially in conflict-affected areas (see Nario-Galace & Piscano 2010; Nario-Galace & Piscano 2011; Piscano et al. 2012; Cabrera-Balleza et al. 2013; Veneracion-

Rallanza & Rallanza 2014). No doubt the appointment of Miriam Coronel-Ferrer as the chairperson of the peace panel between the government and the MILF, with her subsequently becoming the first woman in the world to sign a major peace accord (i.e. the 2014 Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro) has also had a positive impact on this awareness around the importance of women's participation in conflict resolution (see also Nobel Women's Initiative 2014). This lessons-learned process has eventually led to the reordering of the pillars in the 2017 NAP, with participation/empowerment being made into the major objective of the current WPS policy. At the time of my field research, OPAPP and PCW have been engaged in enhancing the capacity of other departments to improve women's participation in peace and security governance across the country.

The concerted efforts resulted in a milestone for NAP implementation in 2014. In that year, OPAPP and PCW issued the Joint Memorandum Circular on "Integration of Women, Peace and Security Programs, Activities and Projects (PAPs) in Annual Gender and Development (GAD) Plans and Budgets (GPBs) and Gender and Development Accomplishments Reports (GAD ARs)". As a policy directed at the member agencies of the NSC-WPS and the TWG-WPS, the Joint Memorandum was created to "strengthen the operationalization" of the Philippine NAP (OPAPP-PCW 2014:IV). It put in place concrete guidelines for the departments with NAP implementing responsibilities, firmly placing the WPS agenda under the human rights mandate of the Magna Carta of Women (OPAPP-PCW 2014:1). The importance of the 2014 Joint Memorandum Circular cannot be exaggerated as it stipulated both a budgeting and reporting requirement, effectively turning the NAP into law. Starting in 2014, each agency of the NAP reports annually on completed WPS projects and related spending. Sanctions apply to departments that fail to submit their reports or use funds inappropriately (OPAPP 1, interview). But while OPAPP and PCW now have tools to monitor funds dedicated to NAP implementation, with regards to which they can discipline departments, the interviewed government representatives highlighted that they have much less control over the merit of this work (see also Amling et al. 2016:35). PCW, for instance, in the words of a representative essentially has "no teeth" to enforce the quality or the effectiveness of NAP implementation (PCW 2, interview). It is for this reason that both OPAPP and PCW reported their continuous reliance on 'soft pressure' in the form of WPS training and advocacy, often in collaboration with civil society experts.

### *Partnerships with local civil society*

Civil society continues to advocate for the rights of conflict-affected women through the “loosely-structured” network WE Act 1325 (Veneracion-Rallonza 2013:77; WE Act 1325 n.d.). However, the civil society movement is extremely divided in the Philippines. During my field research, I could identify important differences of opinions between the national organizations working on WPS-related matters that operate in Manila. Research by Amling et al. (2016:28) further pointed out the divides between these national organizations centered in the capital and grassroots organizations based in conflict-affected areas, especially in Mindanao.<sup>36</sup> Veneracion-Rallonza (2013:77) grouped the now 33-member organizations that form the WE Act 1325 network according to three major categories: “peace groups”, “women’s groups” and “human rights and atrocities prevention groups”. For the NAP to be adopted in the first place, the aforementioned norm entrepreneurs (Nario-Galace, Coronel-Ferrer and Cabrera-Balleza) had to work beyond and across “ideological tensions” between these groups, as expressed by a research participant (OPAPP 3, interview). Not only do these organizations often find themselves in a battle for limited funding (P-CSO 4, interview) but they also align with different political blocks or sympathize with different administrations (P-IO, interview). The current Government, perhaps inadvertently, supports this polarization. Collaborations between the individual organizations working on these different subject matters (albeit all related to WPS) are limited and rather uncommon. More common is “turfing”, a term used by another research participant to describe the competition for material resources and support from international partners (P-CSO 4, interview).

The key organizations named in the 2010 NAP are the following: Center for Peace Education (CPE), International Women’s Tribune Center (IWTC), Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZO), Women and Gender Institute (WAGI), and Sulong CARHRHIL. While they do not necessarily work on common projects, one commonality in their approach to the WPS agenda that has emerged early in my analysis is a strong emphasis on the rights of local women, often Muslim women from the ARMM or indigenous women spread across the country. In the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines, these women face multilayered challenges rooted in discrimination of an intersecting character across conflict and peace. These civil society organizations advocate to the government for local women’s rights and/or train

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<sup>36</sup> Due to the imposition of Martial Law in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, my field research was limited to Manila. However, I had an opportunity to interview civil society (and government) representatives who frequently travel to work on the WPS agenda in Mindanao and in other areas with ongoing armed conflict.

women on the ground in order to enhance their decision-making capacity and ability to engage in peace processes (see also Veneracion-Rallonza 2013).

According to my interviewees, peace organizations have shaped the Philippine WPS policy most strongly and have been consulted by the government on a regular basis. Also focusing on the rights and participation of local women, they emphasized a distinct aspect that UNSCR 1325 brought to this discussion – a conflict lens. In particular, peace organizations pointed out in my interviews the explicit relevance of the WPS agenda to conflict and post-conflict settings, and the need to take into account how conflicts affect the livelihoods and safety of local women. A civil society representative explained this in the following statement:

The NAP is about women having equal rights to governance and decision-making particularly on issues that concern peace and security [...]. So, it is really about gender equality in terms of a particular focus: gender equality in peace processes and gender equality in decision-making processes that affect peace and security. (Nario-Galace in Trojanowska forthcoming)

This research participant pinpointed the gender-specific implications of armed conflicts and how they interplay with women's enjoyment of basic human rights. Driven by an imperative to improve women's participation and leadership, peace organizations highlighted in their approach the need to integrate a conflict lens into the analysis of the situation of local women and their access to decision-making structures. These issues will be analyzed in more detail towards the end of this chapter with regards to the security sector's implementation of the NAP.

Finally, peace organizations commonly stressed the importance of a bottom-up approach to WPS implementation (P-CSO 1-2, interview). While they continue to work on both fronts of lobbying the government on the one hand, and carrying out community projects on the other, their reported priority is “empowering women and developing their capabilities so that they can undertake a more active role in peace processes” (P-CSO 3, interview). As explained by this interviewee, the primary concern is women living in conflict and post-conflict settings where they have fewer opportunities to exercise leadership. Many peace activists from Manila travel on a regular basis to conflict-affected areas to train local women. Nearly all civil society research participants interviewed in the Philippines noted the prominent WPS educator, Jasmin Nario-Galace, as most of them had been trained by her.

To sum up, it can be confidently said that the Philippine NAPs are an expression of ideas coming primarily from OPAPP, PCW and civil society organizations. In their distinct capacity, these actors provide policy direction with regards to the WPS agenda that framed gender equality in terms of human rights, in particular of conflict-affected women. The Joint Memorandum Circular issued by OPAPP and PCW in 2014 has cemented this human rights approach through bureaucratic and legal processes. Often in partnership, these government and civil society actors ultimately utilized UNSCR 1325's principles to advocate for the rights and protection of conflict-affected women. Other government agencies have the formal obligation to operationalize and localize the NAP objectives through projects and programs.

***Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Interior and Local Governance and International Actors***

The operationalization of the high-level WPS objectives in conflict-affected areas, sometimes covered under the term *localization*, is critical for UNSCR 1325 to deliver a positive change to local women (Chowdhury 2013; Coomaraswamy 2015:15-16; GNWP n.d.). This area of NAP implementation is the responsibility of two major government departments, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Department of Interior and Local Governance (DILG), as well as Local Government Units (LGUs) through the latter.<sup>37</sup> International actors, next to Philippine civil society organizations, have also supported projects and initiatives in conflict-affected areas. Operating on the ground, these stakeholders can mitigate the gender-specific impact of armed violence and provide direct assistance to women victimized by this violence. While their approach is not always distinctive, the conceptualization of gender equality appears to be now moving from development towards human rights issues. The decision-making capacity of local women has been reportedly placed at the forefront of several projects undertaken under the WPS banner in the context of the current NAP.

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<sup>37</sup> For the purpose of this study, the Department of Foreign Affairs was also interviewed. Put simply, DFA's involvement in the NAP – as reported during the interview – mirrors the responsibility of DSWD in service provision, yet in the context of foreign employment. An estimate of 10 percent of Filipinos, or 8 million people, are overseas workers (CFO n.d.), the majority of them reportedly being conflict-affected women. DFA has included the WPS agenda into their pre-deployment training and into the psycho-social assistance services available to the Filipinos employed overseas. Otherwise, the WPS agenda did not quite fit into the operation of the department given the NAP's inward-looking focus. For this reason, it will not be elaborated in more depth in this chapter. DFA may play an important role in mobilizing funds for WPS implementation from partner governments and international actors. Yet, the interviewed representative did not mention this aspect, perhaps due to this issue being contentious at that point of time (DFA, interview).

DSDW typically maps the needs of the entire population, such as the gender-specific priorities of women. This includes the regions affected by conflict where the department often operates in close collaboration with “Peaceful and Resilient Communities Programme” (PAMANA) agencies that were subsequently integrated into the NAP governing structure in 2014. While not being an entirely new agenda, the NAPs have strengthened the conflict lens, reportedly improving the overall responsiveness to conflict-affected women. During a group interview with a representative from DSDW and two PAMANA officers, I learned that the department’s engagement in the NAP is concrete, tangible and practical. Evidently, DSWD makes efforts to operationalize the NAP’s pillars and translate UNSCR 1325 into projects on the ground. The departmental-level action plan on WPS that was showed to me during the interview was comprised of relatively specific activities, focused on post-conflict recovery of women and assistance to their families. Put in practice, during the Marawi crisis that evolved after Martial Law was declared in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in May 2017, an important aspect of DSWD’s work under the NAP was to ensure that the recovery packages for female evacuees contained sanitary napkins, pants and a safety whistle. Ultimately, DSWD initially organically adopted the development approach to gender equality to its NAP work. The department rarely has a capacity to address the root causes of the ongoing conflicts. Instead, DSWD attempts to mitigate their effects, including gender-specific implications, for instance through the provision of gender-sensitive assistance.

Over time DSWD has been paying increasing attention to encouraging women’s leadership roles in peacebuilding processes at the local levels, resonating more strongly with the human rights approach to gender equality. The interviewees specifically highlighted that “more weight is now on women’s participation and women’s involvement in peace processes and peacebuilding” (PAMANA 1-2, interview). The PAMANA officers maintained that this has not been an ideological or principal issue but rather a practical one. That is, DSWD reportedly made headways throughout the course of the first NAP in providing gender-sensitive assistance to conflict-affected women, whereas women’s participation in governance, including at local and community levels, has not improved nearly as much. Therefore, this very aspect requires more attention from DSWP in the implementation of the second NAP. Importantly, in its focus on participation, the interviewees refrained from essentializing women’s roles or gender differences.

As opposed to DSWD, DILG appeared to have been less exposed to WPS as a distinct policy. In a group interview, four representatives reported on a number of projects conducted by the



department on gender equality or mostly on violence against women. With an exception of one participant, the interviewees had little idea of UNSCR 1325, essentially drawing no distinction between the WPS agenda and other gender-related work undertaken by the department. In several attempts to redirect the attention specifically towards UNSCR 1325, I only managed to learn that DILG is currently developing a policy that would prescribe their engagement with Local Government Units (LGUs) on the NAP. This policy will reportedly “mainstream WPS, based on the NAP, localizing it into the Local Development Plans” that cover and fund specific projects (DILG 1, interview). It will surely support the efforts to implement the NAP through initiatives at the local levels. However, at the time of the interview, the research participants were unable to name concrete initiatives specifically on WPS that would have been completed thus far, explaining that potential activities are typically identified at local levels (DILG 1-2-3, interview).

When it comes to Local Government Units’ (LGUs) engagement with UNSCR 1325, the progress across the country appears to have been largely uneven and reliant on personal interests and knowledge of local leaders in conflict regions. Some local governments have been directly involved in the NAP, even developing local policies to support WPS implementation, sometimes in the form of local action plans (LAPs) (LGU, interview; P-CSO 6, interview; see also WE Act 1325 and GNWP 2017). Others had no knowledge of the existence of UNSCR 1325. Real Municipal Government (Real Quezon) is one region where the NAP has been localized and UNSCR 1325 utilized as an additional impetus for pre-existing gender equality work. This is as a consequence of the work by a strong gender equality advocate, Linda Villaflor (trained by Nario-Galace), who ultimately acted in her municipality as a norm entrepreneur. Significantly, Real Quezon adopted a resolution on UNSCR 1325. In an interview, a representative from Real Quezon explained that their work at community levels is often different from the high-level policy processes and a large bulk of it is centered around combating gender stereotypes around women’s decision-making capacity specifically in relation to peace. Again, the distinction between any gender equality-related work and the WPS agenda was often blurred. Concrete examples of NAP localization in the Philippine municipalities are beyond the scope of this thesis but the recently published report by WE Act 1325 and GNWP (2017) provides an excellent overview.

#### *Support from international actors*

The implementation of the NAP in the Philippines can be characterized by the presence of international partners, who support projects on the ground. Over the last decades, a large

number of non-locals, including UN and other multi- and bilateral organizations (with the primacy of the UNDP, OCHA and UN Women and previously the European Union), foreign governments (e.g. the United States, Norway and Australia) and big international civil society organizations (such as Oxfam, CARE and Plan International) have been involved in peacebuilding initiatives across the country. My empirical data suggests that the major international actors adopted the human rights approach to gender equality and focused on enhancing women's leadership capabilities, especially in conflict-affected areas. Even though these stakeholders have no formal obligations under the Philippine NAPs, they have participated in numerous local initiatives dedicated to UNSCR 1325, strengthening overall WPS implementation. Yet, the relationships between international actors and the Philippine authorities were also ambiguous at the time of my field research.

The contributions of internationals to the Philippine NAP process can be easily tracked. For instance, the UNDP supported the nation-wide consultations for the NAP, while the Royal Embassy of Norway provided funding for its publication (P-CSO 4, interview). New York-based Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) (led by Filipino Mavic Cabrera-Balleza who was among the peace activists who started the NAP in the Philippines) runs a localization program in ten countries, including the Philippines (see GNWP n.d.). As part of this project, GNWP published the previously mentioned progress reports entitled *Women Count*, mapping WPS implementation between 2010-2014 and being thus far the most transparent account of it (see Nario-Galace & Piscano 2010; Nario-Galace & Piscano 2011; Piscano et al. 2012; Cabrera-Balleza et al. 2013; Veneracion-Rallonza & Rallonza 2014). Moreover, I learned in an unofficial conversation that local non-governmental organizations are often required to form partnerships with international actors to access external funding, perhaps due to high levels of corruption across all sectors in the Philippines. For instance, WE Act 1325 partnered with Oxfam on a number of projects in order to obtain funds for grassroots implementation of the WPS agenda from Australian DFAT.

Cross-cultural engagements on WPS are rarely simple and never free of political underpinnings or power (see for instance Basu 2016; Pratt 2013). IR researchers have used the term *hybridity* "to make sense of local and international interactions within post-conflict peace, security and development initiatives" (McLeod 2015:48). By its very nature, hybridity points to complex relationships between local actors and their international counterparts. Yet, the interviewees – whether from the government or civil society – reported on mostly

positive interactions with international partners.<sup>38</sup> Access to external funding is commonly a pre-requisite for the work of local women's organizations, including for NAP implementation. These partnerships are therefore considered critical. A Government representative explicitly stated that "Without the UNDP, we would have not moved the NAP forward" (OPAPP 2, interview). Moreover, UN representatives highlighted in an interview that even though they are not an implementing agency under the NAP, they still map gaps and – upon request – support the government in addressing them (UN 2, interview).

One such gap was identified as the underrepresentation of women in decision-making at the local levels. UN Women, for instance, recently completed a WPS-related project that aimed to identify women leaders from conflict-affected areas and provide them with capacity building training (UNW 2016b:6). In collaboration with local activists and women's rights advocates and with support from non-governmental national organizations such as PILIPINA and GZO, UN Women's report identified 1,889 female leaders and 150 civil society organizations in the Bangsamoro region. Similarly, an interviewed representative from Oxfam introduced me to the organization's long-standing work, even pre-dating the NAP, towards amplifying the voices of conflict-affected women. Together with WE Act 1325, Oxfam commissioned a report on "Women, Peace and Security in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao" (We Act 1325 and Oxfam 2016:VI) with the purpose to deliver "research that will feed into policy-making" around "the twin objectives of strengthening women's leadership and participation in governance". Moreover, in 2017 with the support from the Australian Government, Oxfam started a three-year project on "Women's Empowerment for Leadership in Development and Peace in the Bangsamoro" (Oxfam n.d.).

However, the situation has been increasingly complex since the Duterte's administration took power in 2016. President Duterte repeatedly rejected funds from the European Union, most recently telling international partners in an official statement: "Just don't f\*\*\* with my country about sovereignty. That is really an insult. I consider it as a very serious insult" (CNN Philippines 2017a). As a consequence, international actors need to approach the situation extremely carefully in order to continue to have any influence. For instance, even after Duterte's 'rape jokes' circulated in international media and were condemned across the globe, no statement was immediately published by the UN agencies operating in the Philippines, presumably in fear of political repercussions.

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<sup>38</sup> Their positive attitudes might have been influenced by the fact that many of them perceived me as an international.

In sum, local implementation is absolutely necessary for the Philippine NAPs to deliver the promise to protect women's rights in conflict and uphold women's voices in peacebuilding. The role of government agencies that provide assistance to conflict-affected women, whether DSWD, PAMANA agencies, DILG and LGUs, is therefore crucial but it has also been supported by local civil society organizations and international partners. Collectively, these actors have articulated an approach to gender equality that lies in between development and human rights paradigms, with the latter over time being emphasized most strongly. A remaining challenge is, however, the lack of expert knowledge in some government departments on the WPS agenda. Merging the NAPs together with any other gender equality-related work, without paying enough attention to the specific implications of armed conflicts for women, is relatively common. Finally, while international actors have an important role to play in enhancing WPS implementation in the Philippines and specifically through filling the identified gap in women's representation in local governance and peace processes, their influence is constrained by the contentious national politics.

***Department of National Defence, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and Minority Groups***

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) are seen as “frontline enforcement agencies” for the NAPs (Philippines NAP 2010:6). Similar to other government departments, an overarching approach of the Philippine security sector aligns with human rights principles.<sup>39</sup> Yet, the protection aspect has been underscored most strongly. The NAPs have reportedly strengthened the ability of state security actors to respond more adequately to diversified communities precisely through improved protection of conflict-affected women, often belonging to minority groups, from human rights violations. In this role, the NAP work undertaken by the security sector has connected with the mandates of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), who promote and protect the rights of their respective minority groups. These minorities effectively constitute the overwhelming majority of conflict-affected people in the Philippines. But while the enhanced protection of conflict-affected women by all means represents a positive change and a crucial impact of the NAPs in the Philippine case study, the WPS agenda has yet to influence the upper echelons

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<sup>39</sup> Formally, the AFP falls under the Department of National Defence (DND), while the PNP is integrated into the structures of DILG. This is reportedly due to the rivalry between the AFP and the PNP. Here, both agencies are analyzed together and with the DND – as they effectively constituted the state security sector in the Philippines.

of the security sector. My empirical data suggests that UNSCR 1325 has had limited impact upon the masculinist identity of the military and the police, and has not influenced the highest-level National Security Policy of the Philippines to any extent.

*Protection of minority women from human rights abuses*

The primary role of the Philippine security sector in the NAP implementation falls under the protection/prevention pillar and focuses on improving the safety of women in conflict-affected areas. The first NAP states early on that:

For frontline enforcement agencies such as the AFP, PNP and other peacekeeping forces, the National Action Plan affirms *their significant role in protecting the physical safety and security of women and girls* from gender-based violence and in identifying their specific needs in the times of crisis. (Philippines NAP 2010:6; emphasis added)

In conflict-ridden Philippines where state-based violence is rife (see UCDP 2018), it is perhaps unsurprising that the WPS agenda has been approached by the security sector through a protection lens and with emphasis on local women in conflict areas. Civil society representatives affirmed the importance of protection of minority women. The WE Act 1325 network together with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders conducted several capacity-building trainings for AFP and PNP officers starting as early as in 2012 and continuing this activity to this day (see WE Act 1325 and GNWP 2017:78-96). UNSCR 1325's objectives were subsequently integrated into the gender modules of the military and the police forces. My research participants, including the representatives from the AFP, PNP and from the Department of National Defence (DND), pointed out the importance of these modules for the increased gender awareness among personnel deployed to conflict areas. A DND interviewee highlighted that "We've become more sensitive now, more conscious about how we are managing women in disaster and in conflict settings" (DND 1, interview). The research participants unanimously perceived UNSCR 1325 as an integral component of these modules and claimed that the WPS agenda contributed not only through adding a gender lens but also through increasing cultural sensitivity towards conflict-affected minority groups (DND 1-2-3, interview; AFP, interview).

The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) similarly perceived the NAP as a tool to sensitize the state security forces to the issues of minority women. Both commissions were invited, for instance, by the leadership from the AFP to educate the agency on the issues of minority groups. Cases

of abuses against minority women by the military and the police have been registered across the country, not only in the conflict-affected areas, and the relationship of the indigenous peoples and the Muslim population with the state security forces is typically tense. Therefore, both commissions have grounded their advocacy in the protection/prevention pillar of the NAP, pointing to the abuses of minority rights by state and non-state actors. It is with these goals in mind, that these two agencies have pursued WPS implementation, also in line with the human rights approach to gender equality.

Essentially, the NCIP and NCMF promote the rights and interests of their respective minority groups in the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines. The mandate of the NCMF is more complicated due to the fact that the ARMM (where the Muslim people constitute the majority) has since 1989 had its own government, remaining the only autonomous region in the Philippines. Similar to the NCIP, the NCMF aims to work towards improving the status of minority groups and its relationships with the Catholic majority, yet the NCMF is at the same time expected not to step into the mandate of the ARMM government (NCMF, interview). Nonetheless, both commissions have been involved in the Philippine NAP process from the beginning of it. My interviewees admitted that local WPS meetings of the AFP and the PNP with conflict-affected groups are often the first time these actors find themselves in one room (NCIP, interview; AFP, interview). A consequence of the NAPs, as reported both by the AFP and PNP representatives and by the commissions, is that the security sector has been able to build better relationships with conflict-affected communities, and protect (and respect) the rights of minority women. For instance, when President Duterte made ‘rape jokes’ in which he assured the security forces that they would not be held accountable for sexually abusing female rebels in Marawi under Martial Law (see Guardian 2017), one of my research participant highlighted that “the AFP didn’t buy it” (OPAPP 3, interview). A PNP representative similarly stated that after this ‘joke’ “nobody laughed” (PNP 1, interview). Both interviewees explained that the state security forces were trained on UNSCR 1325 and aware of the legal consequences of such human rights abuses – precisely thanks to the NAPs.

While NAPs have been utilized as a platform to advocate for the rights of these minorities and educate the departments on the impact of conflict on indigenous and Moro women, both the NCIP and the NCMF complained about the short-sighted impact of the WPS agenda thus far. It has been reportedly a challenge for the commissions to fit into NAP implementation, as expected by the government. For instance, a representative from NCIP reported that when the

commission was consulted on its WPS priorities, the answers initially provided did not fit into the scope of the NAP in the way it was envisioned by the NSC-WPS. The NCIP preferred the NAP to look deeper at the drivers of armed violence and security issues – or “the deep root causes of the war” – in her own words, including limited land rights or access to resources for indigenous peoples that have profound gender implications (NCIP, interview). Yet, the commission received a feedback that the NAPs were supposed to address the rights of conflict-affected women but without stepping into the politicized issues around this conflict (NCIP, interview). A representative from the NCMF also maintained that “while the NAP is prominent, it is still very limited in terms of its scope” (NCMF, interview), pointing out similar issues. And yet, the role of the NCMF is even more complicated, because the commission is not only constrained by contentious politics at the national level but also needs to avoid interfering with the ARMM government that operates in conflict-affected Mindanao. As a result, the NCMF most commonly addresses issues that directly have little to do with the conflict, such as *hijab* regulations or domestic violence in Muslim communities. Hence, while both NCMF and NCIP continue to advocate for the rights of minority women, this is often without references to the legacy of past and ongoing conflicts that are perceived too controversial to be spoken about in the context of NAP implementation. Therefore, NCMF and NCIP appear to find themselves on the margins of this process.

#### *Masculinist identity of the security sector*

Despite this growing emphasis on the protection of minority women, the masculinist identity of the Philippine security sector remains largely unchanged. To start with, the focus on women’s participation has been much more limited in the context of the NAPs. While the Philippine security sector has over the past decades introduced some gender-sensitive policies, including gender quotas (see also WE Act 1325 and GNWP 2017), these developments appear to be only weakly related to the WPS agenda. Amling et al. (2016) argues that the NAPs have provided an additional impetus for increasing the participation of women in the security sector; however, a bulk of scholarly literature on the Philippine military fails to mention WPS on any occasion. This includes studies on women’s military participation by a prominent Filipino scholar Rosalie Hall who made no reference to UNSCR 1325 (Hall 2016, 2012; Hall & Cular 2016). This points me to the conclusion that the WPS agenda has had little – if any – impact on the organizational culture of these institutions. Such conviction could be drawn from some of my interviews too. When asked explicitly whether women’s participation in the military has been affected by the NAPs or rather by the earlier

policies, a DND interview replied by saying “That’s a good question”, adding after reflection that the NAPs might have strengthened the institutionalization of these earlier frameworks.

Representatives from the PNP were even more hesitant and complained that NAP implementation has been heavily focused on service provision to the clients (i.e. on protection of local women’s human rights), while it has not challenged the gender biases within the agency itself. When it comes to professional promotion and deployment, male favoritism prevails, and this has been nearly untouched by the NAPs (PNP 1-2, interview). One of these research participants explicitly stated that the security institutions “perpetuate gender inequalities” adding that “We are protecting the victims, but we are not protecting the people who are protecting the victims [i.e. the employees of the PNP]” (PNP 1, interview).

Even more disappointing is the fact that the NAPs’ objectives have not translated into the overall security policy of the Philippines. The prime document that deals with the Philippine domestic, foreign and military affairs is the National Security Policy (NSP) launched every five years. Neither the NSP (2011-2016) of President Benigno Aquino III, nor that recently endorsed by President Rodrigo Duterte for years 2017-2022 bears any marks of engagement with the WPS agenda whatsoever. The references to the agenda, either explicit or implicit, are missing completely from these two major policies, where ‘WPS’ in fact stands for West Philippine Sea. Both NSPs involve minor – at most – references to violence against women but without making sense of the impact of these issues upon the country’s national security or foreign affairs. Gender equality is not perceived as a security issue in the Philippines, most probably due to the incongruence of the human rights approach to the NAP with the dominant security discourse that has been increasingly militarized and masculinized under the Duterte administration. This omission might also be motivated by the silencing of the gender-based violence committed by the state security actors against minority women.

In sum, the impact of the WPS agenda on the security sector has been crucial yet fragmented and, in the words of a research participant, “not leveled” (AFP, interview). The NAPs have improved the protection of conflict-affected women, in line with the human rights approach to gender equality (see also OPAPP 2016). This is perhaps a consequence of WPS training activities conducted for the PNP and the AFP by civil society organizations (WE Act 1325 and GNWP 2017), as well as the direct involvement of the NCIP and the NCMF in the NAP. This aspect was seen as a prominent achievement in NAP implementation – by the government and civil society interviewees alike. However, the WPS agenda has not reformed the security institutions, where gender biases persist, and has not addressed the root causes of



conflicts. Nor has it translated into the highest-level security policy, which remains gender-blind. The Philippine Government strongly resisted the security approach and the notions of gender equality they would bring to the fore. This is perhaps to silence state-based abuses and the history of violence, especially against minority groups, as well as due to the conceptual separation between security and human rights issues.

### ***Department of Justice and Commission on Human Rights***

The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) were envisioned among the most important actors in WPS implementation in the Philippines, with the 2010 and the 2014 NAP assigning the bulk of responsibility to these agencies. As just discussed, high levels of state-based violence have been registered across the Philippines and the majority of it is attributed to state actors such as the AFP and the PNP (UCDP 2018). Respect for the rule of law and fighting widespread impunity have been seen by WPS advocates as pre-requisites for building a more peaceful, equal and just society, in line with the human rights approach to gender equality. However, while DOJ reportedly had no involvement in the NAP at the time of my field research, the operation of CHR was threatened all together under the current administration.

Evidently, DOJ was among the forefront of departments in the early years of the NAP, with significant involvement of its Secretary, Leila de Lima (see for instance, Veneracion-Rallonza 2014:2). Yet, at the time of my field research DOJ had no WPS focal point and was not listed on the OPAPP's directory of agencies active in the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Despite several attempts, neither was I able to schedule a meeting with the department, nor to identify a representative who had recently been engaged in WPS implementation. Working backwards, I found out that Leila de Lima contributed to the first NAP development. At the time of my research trip, however, she was imprisoned allegedly for corruption, although Lima calls herself "Duterte's first political prisoner" (Goetz 2017).<sup>40</sup> It appears that since her leaving DOJ in 2015, little engagement of the department with the NAPs can be tracked. This conclusion was confirmed by interviewed civil society actors who complained that DOJ has perhaps been least impacted by WPS among government agencies (P-CSO 4, interview).

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<sup>40</sup> Formerly chair of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Leila de Lima investigated the violence of Duterte's regime as the Mayor of Davao City. Later in her function as a senator, she condemned extrajudicial killings in Duterte's 'War on Drugs' (Goetz 2017; Villamor 2017).

By contrast, the CHR has had important and ongoing involvement with the WPS agenda through advocacy, training and reporting activities. Yet, its current situation is overall difficult. As a quasi-government agency, the CHR essentially works on the Philippine compliance with International Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law or with respect to gender issues with CEDAW and the Magna Carta of Women. Pursuant to the latter, the CHR was appointed to be the Gender Ombudsman in the Philippines. The NAPs – which the Commission has continuously supported – added a conflict lens onto its work on gender equality. In line with the human rights approach, the CHR has been engaged in capacity trainings for government agencies working on the NAP, focusing on civil and political rights (CHR, interview). It has been of particular importance for the CHR to work with the AFP and the PNP, again, because these are sectors that see most abuses of the local population by state actors. However, the CHR currently faces strong backlash, with Duterte calling for the abolition of the commission. Negative attitudes from the current Government towards the CHR were noted by the interviewed representative and shortly after my field research, the CHR's budget was drastically cut which leaves the agency with an unknown future (Gavilan 2017). Ultimately, the involvement of both DOJ and the CHR has been limited by the contentious politics, despite these agencies being imagined as guards in NAP implementation.

## **Conclusions**

In its WPS policy, the Philippines has articulated a consistent human rights approach to gender equality. The country has seen conspicuous progress in implementing the WPS agenda since 2010, remaining the regional leader in the Asia Pacific and perhaps to some extent also a global leader. Developed by skilled policymakers with significant input from civil society and support from international partners, the Philippine NAPs have been envisioned as a vehicle to produce tangible impact for women affected by armed violence. UNSCR 1325 has resonated with the pre-existing gender equality infrastructure, cementing the human rights approach.

The most significant achievement in the Philippine case study is the translation of WPS into binding national jurisdiction. Thanks to the leadership of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process and the Philippine Commission on Women, the NAPs have, since 2014, been placed under the human rights mandate of the Magna Carta of Women. It is for this reason, in addition to significant advocacy from civil society, that the Philippine approach is coherent and purposeful, in spite of the involvement of a large number of

stakeholders and a hybrid and highly complex environment for WPS implementation. This accomplishment of WPS advocates should be recognized as a global best practice example in creating accountability mechanisms for NAPs through pre-existing human rights frameworks. In contrast with Australia, where people and personal ambitions are sometimes the major drivers of the WPS agenda, in the Philippines there is actual infrastructure for this work to continue, despite the current Government being less favorable to the WPS agenda.

Ultimately, the current state of diffusion in the Philippines resonates with the final stage in the norm life cycle theory (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998), where the norm has been institutionalized through legal and bureaucratic processes. Yet, in a country where the head of the state makes ‘rape jokes’, it would be a stretch to say that WPS – and gender equality – has “acquire[d] a taken-for-granted quality and [is] no longer a matter of broad public debate” (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998:895). The norm life cycle theory is therefore not entirely adequate to explain the impact of global frameworks on national politics, especially in countries of large gender paradoxes. While it allows mapping certain policies and practice in relation to international standards, it does not provide for assessment of the quality of the impact on the ground. Furthermore, it underemphasizes the fluctuating nature of norm diffusion and the elusiveness of gender equality gains.

Finally, in this chapter I identified important risks related to stabilizing the meaning of UNSCR 1325’s goals. From the very beginning, the Philippines adopted a strong human rights approach and the WPS agenda has been perceived as a women’s human rights issue first and foremost and thereafter a development-related issue. This has resulted in milestones for gender equality such as the improvement of service provision to conflict-affected women by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. However, in some contexts the WPS agenda has not been seen as a distinct policy – one that would have security connotations – but has been merged with pre-existing gender equality frameworks losing its distinct focus. This was evident in the case of the Department of Interior and Local Governance that appeared to have less expertise on UNSCR 1325. While this fixed meaning has prevented co-optation of the WPS agenda and its gender equality objective for security-driven ends, this has also resulted in virtually no impact of UNSCR 1325 on certain segments in the Philippine government. While the state security institutions, such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have enhanced their protection efforts and have perhaps also improved the relationship with conflict-affected minority groups, their masculinist identity has not been reformed on the inside. Furthermore, the National Security Policy of the

Philippines remains completely gender-blind and untouched by UNSCR 1325. This is due to the persistent conceptual separation between the human rights and security issues in the Philippines.

On a related matter, the NAPs have thus far not been allowed to address the root causes of the conflicts and gender-based violence against the minority groups, in particular the Moros and the indigenous people. That state-based violence remains under the veil in the context of the NAPs is also confirmed by the limited involvement of the Department of Justice and the Commission on Human Rights that were initially imagined as the guards of the respect for human rights in the Philippines. To conclude, even though there appears to be an effort from the government to talk about women's rights in NAP implementation, this has been done in a way that silences the conflicts across the country which are much more politically sensitive. Amling et al. (2016:30) similarly pointed to one of the major problems of the Philippine NAPs being precisely "[t]he failure to address the grievances of affected populations". These issues point to the paradoxical risks of *not securitizing* the WPS agenda.

## Conclusion

Gender equality proves to be a complex, multi-dimensional concept and a cross-cutting issue in peace and security policymaking. In this thesis, I argued that as such, gender equality is fluid and this fluidity has created numerous opportunities and challenges for the implementation of the United Nations Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and its impact upon the lives of conflict-affected women. This is evident at the global level of the UN system, in the regional security politics of the Asia Pacific, and at the national levels in the Philippines and Australia. Rather than being a goal that can be achieved once and for all, my empirical research suggests that the pursuit of gender equality involves an ongoing, non-linear, and fluctuating process. Many of the actors interviewed for this thesis agree that gender equality has – at its core – a set of stable principles that include non-discrimination, equity and justice for women, as well as re-shaped gender power relations. Yet, how these principles are interpreted and implemented is shaped by national, regional and international gender priorities, mandates, institutional identities and bureaucratic structures, as well as the personal interests and experiences of relevant stakeholders.

But while as a policy objective gender equality is elusive, implementation of gender equality policies has the capacity to result in real-life implications for conflict-affected women. Consequently, its outcomes can be very tangible. Adopting UNSCR 1325 in 2000 was so important because it acknowledged that gender equality should be at the heart of conflict prevention, conflict transformation and post-conflict peacebuilding.

This entire thesis has been driven by my long-standing goal of understanding the potential of the UN's WPS agenda to achieve greater gender equality. I first came across UNSCR 1325 in 2010 when I worked for the Norwegian Peace Council in Oslo. I was both exhilarated and troubled by this resolution. I was exhilarated because such a resolution immersed in gender equality principles is not an expected outcome document of the Security Council's patriarchal decision-making structures. But I was also troubled by the masculinist environment in which it emerged, and I questioned the impact that this environment might have on gender equality as a policy objective. After all, UNSCR 1325 sat somewhat oddly within the mandate of the most powerful security institution in the world.

The Security Council had a history of refusing to debate gender equality as a matter relevant to global security. Quite unexpectedly, when I was engaged in the Security Council Monitor

for the PeaceWomen Program<sup>41</sup> in New York in 2013-2014, I noted the growing traction of the WPS agenda and gender equality within it. Yet, even though the principles of gender equality were present in the way the Council was addressing the WPS agenda, and sometimes other thematic or country-specific issues too, it was not often that gender equality was spoken about explicitly. The Council's members were rather uncomfortable about placing gender equality under the remit of their ultimate mandate to maintain international peace and security.

This has been changing over the most recent years, especially after 2015. Already in 2013, the Security Council had adopted UNSCR 2122, its seventh resolution under the WPS banner that represented, in the words of Shepherd (2014:2), “a radical departure from previous WPS resolutions”. While Shepherd highlighted the agency and meaningful inclusion of women and women's civil society organizations throughout the text of the resolution, for me the references to gender equality were most significant. As opposed to earlier resolutions where the term “gender equality” was scattered, if mentioned at all, UNSCR 2122 was more extensive in its attention to it. It went so far as to explicitly claim its centrality to the WPS agenda, reaffirming that “women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality are critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security” (S/RES/2122, Preamble).

The milestone in tackling gender equality as part of the WPS agenda came with the 2015 High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security and especially with the publication of *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (Coomaraswamy 2015). The *Global Study*, completed independently based on a series of field trips, firmly placed gender equality on the WPS agenda and called for a human rights-focused approach to the agenda's implementation. A strong gender equality advocate commented on this shift saying, in an interview, “I nearly fell off my chair”. Having been able to conduct my field research during the High-level Review of Women, Peace and Security, I can admit that so did I. I was struck by the fact that suddenly everyone seemed to be discussing gender equality, including five explicit references to it in UNSCR 2242 that was unanimously passed during the debate on 13 October 2015.

In 2018, this progress continues. The most recent debate dedicated to Sexual Violence in Conflict held by the Security Council on 16 April was entitled “Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict through Empowerment, Gender Equality and Access to Justice”. Taking into

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<sup>41</sup> The Security Council Monitor is an initiative by the PeaceWomen Program that keeps track of and assess the Council's accountability to the WPS agenda (for more, see PeaceWomen n.d.).

account the fact that the Security Council's debates on Sexual Violence in Conflict are usually less progressive (when gender equality language is considered), this is by all means a telling title. It demonstrates that gender equality as a policy objective has diffused throughout the UN's WPS agenda, securing a relatively stable position as a critical variable for global peace and security efforts and a valid category of analysis for international WPS scholarship. Perhaps it can be said that gender equality is no longer a contested objective in this context. In the norm life cycle theory of Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), the fact that the values associated with a given norm are no longer considered controversial or present a subject of public dispute signifies that the norm has been internalized.

While gender equality is nowadays more commonly brought up in political discussions around peace and security, my empirical data on the WPS agenda suggests that it remains ill-defined – and for that very reason it has gained traction. These findings empirically corroborated the more critically-oriented scholarship on international norms that argued that lack of specificity, somewhat paradoxically, contributes to diffusion (see especially Krook & True 2012:105). However, having traced the process of diffusion of UNSCR 1325 within the UN system, in regional security politics of the Asia Pacific and in national-level policies of Australia and the Philippines, I could observe that gender equality as a policy objective is sometimes depoliticized, sometimes securitized, and its transformative potential might be diluted or disregarded in the implementation practice. In this sense, the WPS agenda has certainly diffused – and diffused widely – but what the constructivists underemphasized is the constant reshaping of the norm itself.

Perhaps this is the price that gender equality advocates need to pay for the global diffusion of the WPS agenda, not least of all across the UN's "bastion of high politics", to borrow an apt description of the Security Council from Shepherd and True (2014a:258). A research participant told me after the debate in October 2015: "The UN took our discourse and made it into what they want. So how are we going to get it back?". In all of this, I have been wondering, is the WPS agenda actually about gender equality like its architects imagined, and has UNSCR 1325 encouraged the peace and security policy field to genuinely seek gender equality?

It was at that point that my research interests moved from the measurable impact of the WPS agenda towards the meaning of gender equality and how it relates to the purpose(s) of UNSCR 1325, in the face of the dynamically changing political climate and emerging security challenges. This is because I was confronted with a fundamental problem – one

relating to the very definition of gender equality. Around that time, Lee-Koo (2016:337) argued that the *reading* of UNSCR 1325's principles presupposes the course of action on WPS. And yet, the great majority of my research participants, senior-level officials and WPS experts among them, had difficulties in explaining during an interview what gender equality meant to them. This was despite their conviction around the centrality of gender equality to UNSCR 1325 and their great sense of how structural inequalities have been intertwined with current peace and security efforts. My interviewees are among the implementers of UNSCR 1325 and often among the designers of WPS infrastructure. How they understand gender equality is not limited to their personal views but impacts the institutionalization of the WPS agenda and the outcomes it produces through implementation. My first research trip in October 2015 was designed to provide me with a proxy for gender equality by drawing upon the expertise of WPS advocates engaged in progressing the agenda at the international level. Instead, it changed my entire research design and the course of my interrogation towards the question: 'How far and in what ways has the *concept* of gender equality diffused in the United Nations' Women, Peace and Security agenda and in regional and national-level politics?'. Guided by feminist, grounded methodologies, I ultimately decided to focus my thesis on how gender equality as a policy objective is understood and institutionalized in the politics around the WPS agenda. I subsequently took this examination all the way from the global-level of UN policymaking to national-level implementation, in order to understand how the principles of gender equality translate from general policy recommendations into implementation strategies that might deliver change to conflict-affected women.

The first two research chapters (2 and 3) were dedicated to the examination of gender equality in the UN's WPS agenda, with particular emphasis upon policy development within the institutional home of UNSCR 1325 – the Security Council. I learned from my semi-structured interviews with global experts, in conjunction with detailed policy analysis of prime WPS documents, that how gender equality is comprehended in the context of UNSCR 1325 resonates with earlier gender equality frameworks. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA) were considered the most critical. These two frameworks emphasized women's human rights along with women's empowerment in socio-economic development. Departing from these ideas around gender equality, UNSCR 1325 also brought forth a new framework specifically addressing the security of women in armed conflict. At the time of writing, these three approaches to gender equality drive the policy



development around the WPS agenda: *the security approach* (focusing on the protection of women (and children) from conflict-related sexual violence and advocating women's inclusion in the security sector), *the human rights approach* (emphasizing women's human rights and encouraging women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels and women's protection from all forms of violence, across conflict and peace), and *the development approach* (underscoring the gender-specific needs of women in post-conflict recovery, and highlighting women's contributions to community-based projects or peacebuilding initiatives).

These findings contribute not only to WPS scholarship but also to the understanding of gender equality in international politics more broadly and specifically to the literature on global gender equality regimes. Over a decade ago, Kardam (2004) depicted the emergence of "a global gender equality regime" that began with the adoption of CEDAW and was elaborated through later policies such as the BPA. To reflect on more recent policy developments, I suggest distinguishing the aforementioned three gender equality regimes in operation with the UN system that focus on security, human rights and development issues respectively. The distinction between them is essential because these three paradigms are institutionalized through structures that push the gender equality objective into a number of directions. While partly overlapping, the gender equality outcomes are in some instances contradictory.

Hence, it does not come as a surprise that some of these approaches and the notions of gender equality they bring forth with respect to UNSCR 1325 continue to be contested. For instance, a research participant claimed that when the security approach focuses on global stability, which is often founded on structural violence, rather than on threats to women's safety per se, it is no longer about gender equality. Another interviewee held similar views on the development approach when it brings women to peace processes but in gender-stereotyped roles, rooted in discrimination and gendered division of labour. Co-optation along with instrumentalization of gender equality for goals indirectly related to it, if at all, has been highlighted as a growing concern and "a red flag" for WPS actors. The human rights approach, while finding the most support from global feminist advocates, is not without difficulties, either. Even though it has been increasingly supported within the UN WPS's system and beyond it in most recent years, its implementation is weak as gender equality in this understanding has been easily deprioritized or under-resourced. This, again, empirically validates the critical scholarship of diffusion that argued that international norms often

constitute “a process” and “[an] unfinished discourse” (Zwingel, Prugl & Calgar 2014:184; Krook & True 2012). Put in practice, such norms – including UNSCR 1325 – might depart from their original purpose and in doing so, produce intended and unintended outcomes for long-term gender equality.

With the passage of UNSCR 1325, the UN Security Council laid out a normative framework on gender equality in peace and security. Yet, the UN system has not provided regional organizations and national governments with direct guidelines on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Instead, the WPS resolutions are said to have included “everything but the kitchen sink in there,” to use the words of an interviewee. What that means in practice is that it is up to those actors to translate WPS objectives and operationalize gender equality beyond the global level of UN policymaking processes.

The diffusion of UNSCR 1325 with its gender equality objective across the Asia Pacific, while interacting with these global processes, presents a unique WPS story. The Asia Pacific was the last geographical region to begin formal implementation of the WPS agenda. It has, however, engaged with UNSCR 1325 with increasing confidence from 2010 onwards. In Chapter 4, I demonstrated that this ambiguous trajectory of UNSCR 1325 across the Asia Pacific is closely related to the interpretation of WPS objectives. The three approaches to gender equality singled out in earlier chapters help understand this process. Through the detailed analysis of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security (NAPs) developed to date by nine countries (i.e. the Philippines, Nepal, Australia, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Japan, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands) as well as relevant frameworks released by the major regional security organizations (the Pacific Islands Forum and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), I established that the security approach to gender equality was resisted nearly entirely. This resistance explains the initial lack of traction of WPS. This is consistent with the experience of other global security frameworks in the Asia Pacific, such as the Responsibility to Protect (see Acharya 2004, 2005, 2013; Bellamy & Beeson 2010; Bellamy & Davis 2009). Incongruent with pre-existing norms, in particular with the rule of non-interference, the security approach to gender equality was rejected in the analyzed national and regional actions plans, with the only exception being the Republic of Korea.

Regional attitudes towards WPS shifted, however, and influenced global discourses that sought to incorporate a stronger human rights approach or, to a lesser extent, a development approach. Regional organizations and national governments of the Asia Pacific have

subsequently designed relatively robust WPS action plans. The comparative strength of these frameworks – when juxtaposed with global developments around early NAPs – suggested a genuine commitment of these stakeholders in the Asia Pacific to advance gender equality for conflict-affected women. This pointed me to a conclusion, aligning with the research by Basu (2016:364), that the Asia Pacific states are not merely “passive recipients” of global policies – as often imagined in mainstream IR scholarship. On the contrary, in the context of UNSCR 1325, local actors have strategically disengaged with the securitized notions of gender equality and instead, tailored WPS objectives to their country-specific contexts, national gender priorities and the needs of conflict-affected local women. Elsewhere Lee-Koo and I (2017) further found evidence of these WPS policies to have been designed in inclusive processes with participation of civil society organizations or women’s groups. I concluded in Chapter 4 that understanding the regional processes around UNSCR 1325 should inform the global security debates, in order to improve gender equality outcomes for conflict-affected women, as well IR scholarship, with a view to provide a more adequate account of the Asia Pacific experience with the WPS agenda.

After mapping WPS developments across the Asia Pacific in Chapter 4, the last two chapters were dedicated to investigating what happens with the concept of gender equality in national-level WPS politics in two nested case studies. NAPs have been the major vehicle for the diffusion of UNSCR 1325. Therefore, two countries with NAPs were selected from the Asia Pacific sample for in-depth examination. The Philippines and Australia are both self-proclaimed gender equality leaders, in the region as well as globally, with a demonstrated WPS record. Not only have they developed their NAPs relatively early but also over time participated in review, recalibration and lessons-learned WPS processes that have in turn informed global good practice. At the policy level, both the Philippines and Australia applied the human rights approach to gender equality in their respective action plans which was the one that found most support from feminist advocates at the global level. In practice, however, they present vastly different instances of WPS implementation. Chapters 5 and 6 utilized interview data as well as analysis of departmental-level frameworks developed in Australia and in the Philippines in support of UNSCR 1325.

In Australia, the NAP’s sophisticated and encompassing human rights language around gender equality was translated into an incoherent implementation framework and ineffective accountability mechanism. These findings align with the research by Lee-Koo (2014:301) for whom “the failure [...] to translate this promising discourse into action” is “the primary

weakness” of Australia’s WPS policy. As a consequence, successful implementation of the NAP is fully reliant on the actors with implementing responsibilities. While I found a significant commitment to gender equality among interviewed Australian government agencies and civil society organizations progressing UNSCR 1325, large gaps remain in both WPS policy and implementation. The vagueness of the agenda has allowed certain stakeholders, such as the Department of Defence, to integrate gender equality into their international operations, despite little previous knowledge on gender issues. This can definitely count as an achievement for gender equality advocates within the institution. However, the very same feature of the agenda has also opened up a gate for both the Australian Department of Defence and other relevant stakeholders (such as the Attorney-General’s Department or the Department of Home Affairs) to strategically disengage either with UNSCR 1325 altogether or with selected aspects of the agenda, claiming its irrelevance to the domestic context in Australia. This is due to the highly politicized status of certain issues that the WPS agenda would bring to the fore if properly addressed, such as the rights of refugee women fleeing from conflict-zones to Australia. Ultimately, the implementation of UNSCR 1325 has been inconsistent in and across the relevant departments, the knowledge on the crosslinks of WPS with other gender equality frameworks is often limited, and the gender equality gains have been uneven – yet undeniable. Australia is nearing the completion of the first-generation NAP (due June 2019), with the consultations on the shape of the WPS policy that will follow currently underway. It is, therefore, a moment of hope for feminist advocates, both from the Government and civil society organizations, that these shortcomings will be addressed in the second-generation plan. It is also my hope that the empirical analysis presented in Chapter 5 can aid this process.

In the Philippines, the WPS trajectory has been vastly different. The human rights discourse around UNSCR 1325 has resulted in a much more coherent and purposeful approach to gender equality that relies more on bureaucratic structures and less on the work of individuals. More specifically, the Philippine WPS policy has put in place a relatively robust implementation framework, firmly founded on human rights principles and aligning with the government’s responsibilities under CEDAW. As a consequence, an accountability system was built for the NAP in 2014 and the agenda has been institutionalized through pre-existing national jurisdiction. The relevant government agencies have been, since then, obliged to submit WPS progress reports annually and they have budget for NAP implementation. For this reason, the Philippines presents a much stronger case for WPS implementation where the

commitment to gender equality translates into concrete bureaucratic processes that have integrated the agenda into pre-existing human rights mechanisms. Yet, while this progress has been by all means significant, UNSCR 1325 has virtually had no impact on the policy area that perhaps would benefit most from gender equality – the security policy of the Philippines. Neither the current nor the previous National Security Policy (both released after the NAP had been published) engages with WPS in any place, both remaining essentially gender-blind documents. This is, as I argued in Chapter 6, due to the conceptual separation between human rights issues and the dominant militaristic security discourse in the Philippines. Placing gender equality under the umbrella of human rights, while it has resulted in a strong enforcement mechanism, has also resulted in its incongruence with the notions around national security. Ultimately, the most important security document of the country has been untouched by the concept of gender equality, and UNSCR 1325 has had minor impact on the upper echelons of the security sector. If integrated across the security policy, the WPS agenda would allow addressing gender-based violence committed by state and non-state actors as a matter of national priority. Instead, it has been perceived as a soft women's issue with no relevance to state security.

In sum, Australia and the Philippines are complex and engaging case studies. Their juxtaposition teases out the opportunities and risks associated with certain interpretations of gender equality in policy and practice at the national level. In both countries, the WPS agenda interplays with a number of priorities and institutions as well as personal interests or ambitions. This in turn affects the way in which gender equality has been operationalized through implementation strategies, and the outcomes it might produce on the ground. The main difference is that the institutionalization of the human rights approach to gender equality in the Philippines NAP has allowed for stable, (reasonably) strong and sustained engagement with WPS despite its difficult political context, while Australia's human rights approach is based on rhetoric, allowing the goal of gender equality to move (or stall) in different directions.

Bringing it all together, it is clear that UNSCR 1325 has scratched the surface of patriarchy around the masculinist peace and security policymaking processes. But it has yet to permeate the very deep structures of inequality that prevail in this policy field. In the words of an interviewee, the WPS agenda has been “a hook” for feminist advocates because it has legitimized their efforts and provided additional impetus (and sometimes material resources) for their work. However, the flexibility of the WPS agenda to encompass such a variety of

meanings puts it in a very real danger of co-optation by more powerful agendas (such as countering violent extremism at the UN level), inconsistent implementation practice (such as in case of the Australian NAP) or disengagement by powerful institutions (such as the security sector in the Philippines). IR researchers of earlier gender equality norms such as CEDAW similarly asserted that in the process of norm diffusion, “despite the difficulties of agenda *setting*, agenda *keeping* is the real challenge for feminist advocates” (Zwingel, Prugl & Caglar 2014:182). However, my research further points to the conclusion that gender equality, being an elusive policy objective and a process rather than an end goal, is moving too. Given its unfixed nature and embedment in large political processes, it is important for feminist advocates to engage in continuous assessments of WPS policies in order to examine how far and in what ways certain institutionalized interpretations or pronouncements of gender equality move us towards non-discriminatory, just and transformative gender power relations. This is also the area of research that requires more attention from the academic community in the near future.

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## Appendix 1. List of interviews

No.	Affiliation	Type of actor <sup>42</sup>	Referred as	Date of interview
<b>NEW YORK</b>				
1	UN Human Rights Council	UN	UNHRC	October 2015
2	UN Department of Political Affairs	UN	UNFPA	October 2015
3	Self-identified both as civil society representative and UN consultant	UN	G-UN/CSO	October 2015
4	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations	UN	UNDPKO	October 2015
5, 6	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 1-2	October 2015
7	United Nations Development Program	UN	UNDP	October 2015
8	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 3	October 2015
9	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 4	October 2015
10	UN Security Council	UN	UNSC 1	October 2015
11	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 5	October 2015
12	UN Security Council	UN	UNSC 2	October 2015
13	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 6	October 2015
14	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 7	October 2015
15	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 8	October 2015
16	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 9	October 2015
17	International civil society organization	CSO	G-CSO 10	October 2015
18	UN Women	UN	UNW	October 2015
19	UN Peacebuilding Commission	UN	UNPCB	December 2015
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>				
20, 21	Office for Women (former employee) & Australian civil society organization	GOV-CSO	OfW 1 & A-CSO 1	April 2016
22	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 2	May 2016
23	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 3	May 2016
24	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 4	May 2016
25	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 5	May 2016
26	Australian Government (*request for anonymizing the agency)	GOV	A GOV	June 2016
27	Australian Civil-Military Centre	GOV	ACMC	June 2016
28	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 6	June 2016
29	Australian civil society organization	CSO	A-CSO 7	June 2016
30	Australian Defence Force	GOV	ADF	November 2016
31	Attorney-General's Department	GOV	AGD	February 2017
32, 33	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	GOV	DFAT 1-2	March 2017
34	Office for Women	GOV	OfW 2	March 2017
35	Australian Federal Police	GOV	AFP	May 2017
<b>PHILIPPINES</b>				

<sup>42</sup> The table specifies WPS actors as follows: UN for United Nations agency, CSO for civil society organization, GOV for government department, agency or program.

36, 37	Philippine civil society organization	CSO	P-CSO 1-2	May 2017
38	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process	GOV	OPAPP 1	May 2017
39	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process	GOV	OPAPP 2	May 2017
40	Philippine National Police	GOV	PNP 1	May 2017
41	Philippine National Police	GOV	PNP 2	June 2017
42	Philippine civil society organization	CSO	P-CSO 3	June 2017
43	UN Women	UN	P-UN 1	June 2017
44	Philippine civil society organization	CSO	P-CSO 4	June 2017
45, 46	Philippine Commission on Women	GOV	PCW 1-2	June 2017
47	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UN	P-UN 2	June 2017
48	Philippine civil society organization	CSO	P-CSO 5	June 2017
49	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	GOV	DFA	June 2017
50, 51, 52	Department of Social Welfare and Development and Peace and Development Program	GOV	DSWD PAMANA 1-2	June 2017
53	Commission on Human Rights	GOV	CHR	June 2017
54	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process	GOV	OPAPP 3	June 2017
55	Local Government Unit	GOV	LGU	June 2017
56, 57, 58	Department of National Defence	GOV	DND 1-2-3	June 2017
59	Philippine civil society organization	CSO	P-CSO 6	June 2017
60	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples	GOV	NCIP	June 2017
61	International organization	CSO	P-IO	June 2017
62	Armed Forces of the Philippines	GOV	AFP	June 2017
63	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos	GOV	NCMF	June 2017
64, 65, 66	Department of Interior and Local Government	GOV	DILG 1-2-3	June 2017

## Appendix 2. A sample of the explanatory statement

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

**Project:** Prospects for Gender Equality in Peace and Security Policymaking: The Potential and Impact of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

**Project Number:** CF15/3166 – 2015001351

**Chief Investigator**  
**Associate Professor Katrina Lee-Koo**  
Deputy Director  
Monash Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) Centre  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]  
k[REDACTED]

**Co-Investigator**  
**Professor Jacqui True**  
Director  
Monash GPS Centre  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

**Doctoral Researcher**  
**Barbara K. Trojanowska**  
PhD Candidate  
Monash GPS Centre  
Phone: +[REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

*Dear Madam/Sir,*

*My name is Barbara K. Trojanowska and I am a doctoral researcher at Monash Gender, Peace and Security Centre (Monash University, Melbourne). I would like to invite you to participate in my study on National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security in the Asia-Pacific region.*

*Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether you would like to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, please do not hesitate to contact me via email: [barbara.trojanowska@monash.edu](mailto:barbara.trojanowska@monash.edu).*

#### **What does the research involve?**

This study explores National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security in the Asia-Pacific region. The purpose of this research is to understand the potential and impact of the Women, Peace and Security agenda for gender equality advancement in the studied region.

Participation will be in the form of a personal interview which would take between 30-60 min, at a convenient for you location.

The researchers are very keen on audio recording the interview to ensure that your expertise and views are reflected in the reporting as precisely as possible. But you may or may not allow the use of digital voice recorder throughout the interview. You may also decide to have it turned off at any stage of the interview.

#### **Why were you chosen for this research?**

You were chosen to take part in this study because you have expertise in the area of the Philippine National Action Plan(s) on Women, Peace and Security.

#### **Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research**

Participation in this research is voluntary. You are cordially encouraged to discuss with the doctoral researcher any concerns you may have, before and during the interview.

A consent form is also provided along with this explanatory statement. A copy will be available for you to complete before the interview.

#### **Audio recording**

Audio recording is preferred, but optional, as we are keen for your participation. During the interview, you will have a chance to reconsider or amend your responses. After the interview, audio recordings will be transcribed by the doctoral researcher.

The audio recording will NOT be used for any other purpose, however with your consent the data may be utilized within other research projects.

### **Withdrawing participation in the research**

You can withdraw your participation from this research during the interview and up until July 2017. This means no information derived from your interview would be used in the research, from analysis to publication.

### **Possible benefits and risks to participants**

It is expected that the research findings of this project may inform future policy strategies on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, thereby increasing the chances to advance gender equality in the peace and security context.

We do not foresee risks that your involvement in this research project might involve.

### **Confidentiality**

All your comments and responses will be treated confidentially. Unless you wish your name to appear in the research, the reporting of findings will be done in a manner that does not disclose the participant as the source of the information. However, the researcher cannot guarantee anonymity of the participant: as the names of the government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in the development and implementation of NAPs are publicly available, some individuals may be potentially identifiable by their comments.

### **Storage of data**

Electronic data will be stored on the computer of the researcher and individual responses will be destroyed once the data has been collated and analysed.

### **Results**

A summary report of the study will be electronically sent to research participants upon the completion. The research participants can also request a copy of the whole dissertation.

### **Complaints**

Should you have any concerns about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

Executive Officer  
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)

Research Office, Monash University VIC 3800

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

*Thank you – we appreciate your kind participation in this study,*

**Katrina Lee-Koo**

[REDACTED]

**Jacqui True**

[REDACTED]

**Barbara K. Trojanowska**

[REDACTED]



## Appendix 3. A sample of the consent form

### CONSENT FORM

**Project:** Prospects for Gender Equality in Peace and Security Policymaking: The Potential and Impact of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

**Project Number:** CF15/3166 – 2015001351

**Chief Investigator**  
**Associate Professor Katrina Lee-Koo**  
Deputy Director  
Monash Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) Centre  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

**Co-Investigator**  
**Professor Jacqui True**  
Director  
Monash GPS Centre  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

**Doctoral Researcher**  
**Barbara K. Trojanowska**  
PhD Candidate  
Monash GPS Centre  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the following:	Yes	No
I agree to take part in the interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will allow audio recording during the interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for the researcher to use non-identifiable data in future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature and date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 4. Sample interview structure and questions**

### **Indicative interview questions: Government and Civil Society Organizations in the Philippines**

#### **Introduction**

1. What has motivated you to work on WPS issues? How has the adoption of the NAPs influenced your work so far?
2. Your department/agency/organization has been responsible for the implementation of the NAPs. Would you be able to tell me about the development of the NAPs? How has your WPS-related work changed over time?

#### **Gender equality**

1. The Philippines is ranked very highly by the World Economic Forum in the Global Gender Gap Reports. How do you think the Philippine NAPs fit into this reputation?
2. How is the Philippine commitment to gender equality reflected through the NAPs? What are the ways in which the NAPs aim to advance gender equality?
3. Is gender equality a major goal for the NAPs or is it a means to achieve other goals? What goals?
4. Is the NAPs' approach to gender equality inclusive? Whose views on gender equality are represented in the NAPs?
5. Is there anything that in your opinion should have been included in the NAPs?

#### **Implementation practice**

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the NAPs' implementation framework?
2. How does your department/agency/organization understand gender equality in the context of the NAPs' implementation?
3. Can you give me some examples of how your department/agency/organization uses and has used the NAPs to advance gender equality?
4. What are the major challenges for the implementation of the NAPs?
5. Do you think the NAPs have created significant changes thus far? Can you name some of these changes? I am interested in bureaucratic changes (i.e. changes in procedures) and cultural changes (changes in beliefs and attitudes)?

#### **Other actors**

1. How do you see the role of civil society in the implementation of the NAPs? What has the relationship between the Government and civil society been on WPS issues?
2. How do you see the role of international actors (UN or international NGOs like Oxfam) or partner countries (such as Australia) in the implementation of the WPS agenda in the Philippines?

#### **Closing**

1. What is the biggest achievement of the NAPs and what would you call a failure?
2. Are there any lessons learned that you would like to share with other governments or civil society organizations?
3. Would you like to add anything?