
May 2018

Assessment Report
Acknowledgments

About This Paper
The paper was made possible through funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) the “NAP 1325 Monitor” project and Oxfam Afghanistan for the “Citizen’s for NAP 1325” project.

About NAP 1325 Monitor
NAP 1325 Monitor is a research, monitoring, and training project designed to conduct a full implementation analysis of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 at the national level. The research component identifies challenges and opportunities for implementing NAP 1325, the monitoring component documents and reports changes relevant to the implementation of NAP 1325, and the training component is aimed at facilitating closer interface between state authorities and civil society on moving toward meeting NAP 1325 objectives. The focus of NAP 1325 Monitor is the national policy making process while the scope for the research and monitoring components consists of Kabul, Bamyan, Daikundi, Balkh, Kunduz, Samangan,, Nangarhar, Laghman, Khost, Kandahar, Nimruz, and Herat provinces.

About Citizens for NAP 1325 (C-NAP)
C-NAP is designed to monitor the implementation of two pillars of NAP 1325, Protection and Relief and Recovery, at the provincial level in Daikundi, Herat, Kabul, Balkh, and Nangarhar provinces. C-NAP consists of a capacity building component and a monitoring component. The capacity component trains and mentors civil society organizations and state authorities at a provincial level on the policy process and evidence-based advocacy with a focus on NAP 1325. The monitoring component documents and reports on changes as a result of training and mentoring.

About APPRO
Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO) is an independent social research organization with a mandate to promote social and policy learning to benefit development and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and other less developed countries through conducting applied social research and monitoring, training and mentoring, and evaluations. APPRO is registered with the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan as a non-profit non-government organization and headquartered in Kabul, Afghanistan with offices in Mazar-e-Sharif (north), Herat (west), Kandahir (south), Jalalabad (east), and Bamiyan (center). APPRO is the founding member of APPRO-Europe, registered in Belgium. APPRO also acts as the Secretariat for the National Advocacy Committee for Public Policy (NAC-PP). For more information on APPRO, see: www.appro.org.af. For more information on APPRO-Europe, see: www.appro-europe.net. For more information on NAC-PP, see: www.nac-pp.net

Contact: mail@appro.org.af

About the Researchers
The researchers who worked on this report were (in alphabetical order): Ahmad Shaheer Anil, Laura Cesaretti, Lucile Martin, Baser Nader, Saeed Parto, and Hasan Raha.

Laura Cesaretti, Saeed Parto and Hasan Raha authored this report.

Front Page Photo: Oriane Zerah

APPRO takes full responsibility for all omissions and errors.

© 2018. Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization. Some rights reserved. This publication may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted only for non-commercial purposes and with written credit to APPRO and links to APPRO’s website at www.appro.org.af. Any other use of this publication requires prior written permission, which may be obtained by writing to: mail@appro.org.af
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPRO</td>
<td>Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTF</td>
<td>Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHRWIA</td>
<td>Directorate of Human Rights and Women’s International Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>Gender and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC</td>
<td>High Peace Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IARCSIC</td>
<td>Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDLG</td>
<td>Independent Directorate of Local Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Independent Elections Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOTFA</td>
<td>Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoD</td>
<td>Ministry of Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoEd</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoJ</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLSAMD</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyred and the Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoRR</td>
<td>Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoWA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women’s Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAP 1325</td>
<td>National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPWA</td>
<td>National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization on Cooperation and Security in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sida</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMAF</td>
<td>Self-Reliance Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSCR 1325</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WID</td>
<td>Women in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPS</td>
<td>Women, Peace and Security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

Background .......................................................................................................................... 6

About This Assessment ........................................................................................................ 7

Development, Gender and UNSCR 1325 .......................................................................... 8
Development, Gender and Afghanistan Reconstruction ....................................................... 10

Assessment Framework ....................................................................................................... 13

NAP 1325 Implementation in Afghanistan ......................................................................... 15
Costing Process .................................................................................................................... 17
Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation .......................................................................... 19
Funding Mechanisms ......................................................................................................... 19
Implementation Challenges .............................................................................................. 20

Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 21

Recommendations ............................................................................................................... 22
Planning and Programming ............................................................................................... 22
Monitoring and Evaluation ............................................................................................... 23
Financial Planning ............................................................................................................. 23
Background

In 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted the landmark Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, stressing the importance of increasing women’s participation in the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict and in all matters related to peace and security. Afghanistan developed its own National Action Plan to implement this resolution, adopted in June 2015. The document aims to achieve 25 strategic objectives, ranging from women’s inclusion in peace and security processes to combatting gender-based violence. There are also 39 indicators to measure the proposed results, based on pillars as follows:

- **Participation**: Increase participation of Women at all levels of decision-making related to peace, security and civil service.
- **Protection**: Ensure the protection of women, vulnerable to various types of violence in conflict and post conflict societies.
- **Prevention**: Prevent violence against women to ensure their rights and political participation.
- **Relief and Recovery**: Create funding mechanism, economic development opportunities and the provision of relief and recovery services to women from/within conflict-affected communities, IDPs, and survivors of violence.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has released its first progress report for 2016. At the time of writing (May 1, 2018), the 2017 progress report has not yet been released.

MoFA and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) held various consultations with the implementing entities to finalize the costing of the implementation NAP 1325. These consultations were concluded in April 2018. The amount and allocation of funds, as well as the main financial mechanisms to support implementation activities, has been finalized. However, provisions for monitoring performance against NAP 1325 objectives remain unclear. The government entities tasked with the implementation of NAP 1325 have been slow in fulfilling their roles. The explanations given by the entities and agencies for the slow pace of implementation include a lack of technical capacity, lack of coordination among the main entities and agencies, and lack of earmarked implementation funds.

Since 2001 Afghanistan has been the arena for the largest gender-focused aid intervention, with gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of a gender perspective in development and humanitarian programming as a key component of policy making by international donors and their Afghan counterparts. At the Brussels Conference in October 2016 Afghanistan’s international donors renewed their commitments to continue assistance to Afghanistan in the Transformation Decade (2014-2024). As before, a crosscutting theme in this renewed international commitment was gender-focused aid programming with efforts to support the rights of women in tangible and sustainable ways.

There is recognition by all sides that achievements relating to the situation of Afghan women since 2001 are at the risk of being undermined or reversed if lessons from past performance on gender mainstreaming are not put into practice. In finding ways to implement these lessons the role of donors and the international community in supporting gender programming in Afghanistan will continue to be crucial. Concrete and effective measures will be needed to move toward the WPS agenda formulated in 2000 under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR
Unsustainable or ill-conceived programming and advocacy could have severe adverse consequences for the situation of women, men, boys and girls, and gender relations in general. There is now an urgent need for clear WPS policies; driven by informed contextual knowledge and achievable goals, embedded in conscientious coordination mechanisms supported by robust monitoring, periodic evaluation and sustained financial support.

Various studies have shown that addressing gender inequality in strategies and programming in Afghanistan is often reduced to a “requirement” on a checklist by the funding agency of considerations to be addressed, without specifying how gender-related issues should be integrated into programming or how gender-related outcomes and impacts are to be reported. Similarly, little or no effort is put into building organizational or institutional capacity to deliver on “gender objectives.”

About This Assessment

This report is based on data collected for two projects being implemented by APPRO with a focus on NAP 1325. The first project, “Citizens for NAP 1325” (C-NAP), is funded by Oxfam Afghanistan with a sub-national focus on citizen-driven initiatives and activities to move toward meeting the objectives of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325. The second project, NAP 1325 Monitor, is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to conduct an implementation analysis of NAP 1325 at the national level in Afghanistan. The findings from this assessment are intended to serve both projects and, more generally, actions and initiatives at different levels by various national and international entities with a “Women, Peace and Security” (WPS) mandate in Afghanistan.

This assessment was carried out to examine progress toward implementing Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 since June 2015. A starting point in this assessment is the observation that gender in Afghanistan has often been understood as programming for women, rarely taking into account the impact of women-centred programming on gender relations. With some exceptions, concrete measures for the protection and prevention of violence against women, girls and boys, and the inclusion of men and boys in gender processes have been largely absent from the discourse on gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan. The data on the implementation status of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 were collected during the February-April 2018 period. This assessment should be read bearing in mind that the implementation of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 is an evolving process and, as such, the status reported in this assessment is subject to change in the remainder of 2018 and beyond.

This report is organized as follows. The next section provides a brief historical overview of gender in humanitarian and development aid since the 1970s, followed by an overview of gender-based programming in Afghanistan since 2001. The analytical framework for this assessment is then described, followed by the findings from the analysis of data collected from secondary sources such as reports and other documents and primary sources through interviews with key informants. The final section concludes with recommendations.

Development, Gender and UNSCR 1325

Gender-based and gender-sensitive policies began to emerge in development programming as an outcome of “Women in Development Movement” (WID) in the 1970s. The movement was initiated by the western feminist movement and informed by the principles and ideas of the Danish feminist economist Ester Boserup, whose work pointed to a positive correlation between the role women in economic activity and their status in society vis-à-vis men. From 1975 until 1985, development aid policy making was informed, at least at the formal level, by the equity approach. This approach sought to increase the legal status of women by focusing on legal and institutional reform targeting legal provisions that tended to discriminate against, and subjugate, women. The focus on institutional reform was often accompanied by welfare based approaches aimed at improving women’s material / economic conditions.

Critics of the WID movement held that progress toward equality for women had been slow due largely to resistance to gender mainstreaming in development programming within donor countries and in aid receiving, less developed, countries. In addition, the critics held that development policy makers had failed to fully understand the complex household dynamics and how they undermine, or enable, efforts to empower women. By the end of the 1970s the champions of mainstreaming gender in development programming had come to the conclusion that a new approach was needed. This led to the emergence of Gender and Development (GAD).

The GAD approach goes beyond WID by focusing on unequal relations between men, women, rich and poor that prevent equitable development and women’s full participation in development processes. This includes an analysis of men and women’s spheres of rights, obligations, social norms, and values which govern the places of women in society. Since women’s places in society are functions of many variables including economic status, particular attention must be paid to interventions that bring economic standing to women and thus give them voices in domestic and out of home decision making processes. The approach views increased economic independence as the necessary foundation on which to build equality strategies. The first official GAD-based approach came to light following the United Nations’ pronouncement of “Decade for Women” in 1985. GAD-based approaches began to advocate for the integration of women into influential socio-economic positions as a means to empower women and to increase arenas in which women’s voices needed to be present. Today gender mainstreaming is almost always a specific component of development policy and a means to assess:

...the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

---

5 Razavi and Miller (1995).
In practice, however, much remains to be done to meet the spirit of gender mainstreaming in development policy making. There is an inherent contradiction between top-down models of development and state building and the ideals of gender mainstreaming based on equal or equitable economic standing of women, as the case of Afghanistan since 2001 has clearly shown.  

Recognizing the shortcomings in gender-focused development policy making and building on its 1997 report, *Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997*, on October 31, 2000 the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), officially acknowledging women’s right to participate in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, and peace building, and to be included in decision making bodies at all levels of governance. UNSCR 1325 formalized the conclusion of the Windhoek Declaration on “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations”, and was followed by six subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, creating a normative policy framework for UN member states to adopt a gender perspective in their peace operations and provide guidance for translating high level recommendations into concrete policies and action plans (Box 1).  

**Box 1. Subsequent Resolutions to UNSCR 1325**

- Resolution 2122 (2013) on women’s leadership and empowerment as a central component for resolving conflicts and promoting peace through a number of specific calls for regular consultations, funding mechanisms to support women’s civil society organization and changes in the Council’s working methods in relation to WPS.
- Resolution 2106 (2013) on the need to better operationalize existing obligations, particularly those related to sexual violence.
- Resolution 1960 (2010) calls for refining institutional tools to combat impunity related to sexual violence, notably through the setup of a ‘naming and shaming’ list in annual reports.
- Resolution 1889 (2009) focuses on women’s participation in peace building and calls on United Nations Secretary General to develop a set of global indicator to measure impact of UNSCR 1325 at global and national levels. It further welcomes “the efforts of member states in implementing Resolution 1325 at the national level, including the development of national action plans”.
- Resolution 1888 (2009) calls for appointment of a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the establishment Women’s Protection Advisors within Peacekeeping missions.
- UNSCR 1820 (2008) draws attention to sexual violence being used as a weapon of war and calls for the need for prosecution of gender-based war crimes.


Each member state is expected to develop a National Action Plan as a national strategy to implement UNSCR 1325 and other resolutions of the Women Peace and Security agenda. UNSCR 1325 does not mention National or Regional Action Plans (N/RAPs) for implementation. The need for NAPs was further elaborated in the UN Security Council statement (2002), UN Secretary General’s Report (2004), and UNSCR 1889 (2009), inviting member states to prepare National Action Plans as a step toward the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Through its Recommendation Number 30, issued in October 2013, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) further renewed the focus on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 through adequately funded National and Regional Action Plans, while calling on all member states to:

---


... cooperate with all UN networks, departments, agencies, funds and programmes in relation to the full spectrum of conflict processes, including conflict prevention, conflict, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction to give effect to the provisions of the Convention” and “enhance collaboration with civil society and non-governmental organizations working on the implementation for the Security Council agenda on women, peace and security.9

A later (2014) interpretation of National Action Plans for UNSCR 1325 states:

... [National Action] Plans should contain concrete recommendations on how women should be included in all peace and conflict related decisions and processes, and how a gender perspective should be included in efforts to prevent conflict and sexual violence, protect women and girls, and in relief and recovery activities. [The Plans] provide an opportunity to assess priorities for the states’ work both nationally and internationally and to co-ordinate relevant actors, including co-operation with civil society. Plans should contain clear goals, actions and responsibilities and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.10

**Development, Gender and Afghanistan Reconstruction**

Women’s oppression and the appalling social and economic status of Afghan women were invoked as one of the key justifications for the military intervention by international forces in Afghanistan late 2001.11 As such, “gender mainstreaming” became one of the main areas of programming by the international development aid entities in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, and commitment to gender equality has been a major feature of post-2001 reconstruction and development programming in the country. This commitment was first made in the Bonn Agreement (December 2001), followed by similar commitments in the Constitution of Afghanistan (2003), Afghanistan Compact (2006), National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA, 2008 – 2018), Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS 2008 – 2013) and Afghanistan’s National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions (2015). In addition, Afghanistan is signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 2003), has made specific commitments to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) including Goal 3, “Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women”, and endorsed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which include SDG 5 on gender equality.

The Bonn Agreement (2001) laid the foundation for Afghanistan’s Constitution and made provisions for the creation of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) to act as the lead ministry for the advancement of Afghan women. Afghanistan is also signatory to the Platform of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1984) and the Beijing Platform of Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (1985). Article 3 of the Afghan Constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women in Afghanistan while maintaining that no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions Islam. Article 22 commits to a policy of non-discrimination and equality in rights and duties between women and men. Afghanistan’s Constitution further makes general provisions regarding the advancement of women’s economic rights by creating and protecting spaces for women in the workforce, monitoring their progress, and developing institutions that foster female employment.12

---

9 Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, ratified by Afghanistan in 2003.
11 This section is an updated version of a “rolling overview” by APPRO of women-centered programming in Afghanistan.
The Afghanistan Compact (2006) made the commitment to address the many issues faced by Afghan women through the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA) as a means for Afghanistan to meet its commitments to MDGs. The Afghanistan Compact also made the commitment to increase female participation formal structures of government. Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008) presents gender as a crosscutting theme within the national development agenda while committing eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, develop women’s human capital, and ensure women’s full participation and leadership in all aspects of life in Afghanistan.

ANDS (2008) also calls for institutionalizing gender-responsive development aimed at economic growth, poverty reduction, and reconstruction. ANDS considers the implementation of the strategy for gender equity as a shared responsibility among the different entities of the government at the national and sub-national levels. “Gender Equity Cross Cutting Strategy” in ANDS is intended to provide guidance for various sectors engaged in development on how to improve women’s situation and progress toward meeting MDGs.13 Consistent with ANDS, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development’s “Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme” (AREDP), for example, was designed to enhance the participation of rural men and women in economic activities that have proven beneficial for women.

The Government of Afghanistan identifies nine major goals under the MDG framework including a commitment to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and setting specific women-centered targets in education, economic activity, health and wellbeing, and political participation. Afghanistan’s MDG commitments and targets are further elaborated in NAPWA.14 NAPWA (2008) makes gender mainstreaming and women’s rights the responsibility of all governmental agencies, sectors, institutions, and individuals. NAPWA’s third pillar, “Economic and Social Development”, focuses on the Government’s responsibility in creating an enabling social and economic environment conducive to the advancement of women in Afghanistan.

In December 2011, the Bonn Conference renewed the commitment of the international community to support Afghanistan in the post-2014, during Afghanistan’s “Transformation Decade”, underlining gender equality and the rights of women as key areas of focus.15 These were renewed in 2014 during the London Conference. In December 2014, new commitments were made under the Self-Reliance Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF) with a specific focus on the development of policy framework for empowering women, increased participation of women in the government, and the implementation of the WPS agenda. Afghanistan’s National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 was approved in June 2015. Addressing the commitments made under UNSCR 1325, Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 called for developing a robust framework for the implementation of measures supporting women’s active participation in society. The Brussels Conference in October 2016 reaffirmed the commitment to gender equality by the Afghan government and its international donors.

Each of these commitments emphasizes gender mainstreaming as a crosscutting theme to be incorporated into all government policies and all manner of donor aid programming. All key development and reconstruction objectives in Afghanistan, including ministerial policies and strategic plans, are to include gender as a crosscutting theme. At a formal institutional level, the existence of MoWA, solely devoted to women’s affairs and rights, is a significant achievement. Through its name and existence alone MoWA draws attention to Afghan women’s needs and their

14 This summary of the regulatory environment is based, in part, on a more detailed summary provided in the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development’s Gender Policy (2011), pages 6-8.
place in society, despite its weak position in the still predominantly patriarchal societal and political system governance in Afghanistan. In addition, most ministries have had a gender unit, a gender focal point, and a gender policy. Since the passage of NAP 1325 in June 2015, “NAP Focal Points” have also been appointed at key ministries to facilitate the implementation of NAP 1325.

At the same time, the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies and policies by the government and its international donors has consistently fallen short of meeting the objectives. Several reports have pointed to the lack of understanding of the concept of gender and of the process of gender mainstreaming in the Afghan context within the donor community and among implementing organizations. Poorly informed policy design, inadequate implementation plans, and a general lack of capacity among the many international gender specialists and their Afghan counterparts combined with inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have rendered many of the myriad of gender policies of the international donors and their Afghan institutional counterparts superficial and on-paper-only exercises. In many instances the inclusion of a “gender perspective” in programming has not gone beyond being an item to tick on the checklist used for releasing development funds. Similarly, there has been little reflection on new means of engagement on meeting WPS and gender mainstreaming objectives. UNSCR 1325 and NAP 1325 have become for many additional on-paper requirements or reference point to justify women-centred programs and funding streams by donors and funding proposals by national and international NGOs.

Approaches to women’s integration in decision-making processes thus remain wanting both at the institutional and grass-root levels. The presence of women in political participation is often presented from the perspective of participation through the number of seats reserved for women at the Parliament, Provincial Councils, or Community Development Councils without much thought given to the conditions in which these women must function. At the grass-root level women’s participation in decision-making remains limited while there are numerous barriers for women in terms of access to work and public life, health, education, and justice.

Gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan has been consistently equated with promoting women’s rights, which, while an essential component of gender mainstreaming in patriarchal societies such as Afghanistan, is only one of the key components. Focusing exclusively on women at the expense of all else has been described as “women highlighting”, the net result of which is to mention “women” at every opportunity in written reports and speeches but actually doing very little to systematically address women’s many needs. Similarly, advocacy for gender rights and gender mainstreaming has become, in practice, women’s rights activism with an emphasis on protesting and denunciation. While rights activism is and should be an integrated component of advocacy, advocacy should also have elements of engagement and awareness changing through dialogue, incentives, and

---

16 For a critical self-assessment confirming this, see, for example, Norad (2012), Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Afghanistan (2001 – 2011).
19 Other components notably include an understanding of people’s values and beliefs about gender, gender partnerships and men’s involvement in promoting equality for women.
education.\(^{21}\) Though acknowledged in theory, the inclusion of men and boys in gender programming remains minimal, or poorly formulated.

Despite the disconnect between women-centred policy objectives at the formal level and programming outcomes at the practical level, and a systematic miscomprehension gender mainstreaming, by all accounts the situation of women in Afghanistan has improved significantly since 2001. Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 for 2015-2022 thus constitutes a key policy instrument to build on these gains and support and protect efforts toward gender equality.

As Afghanistan enters the second half of the timeline for implementation of its NAP 1325, the purpose of this assessment is to establish what has been done since June 2015 to implement NAP 1325 in Afghanistan and identify pathways forward for informed development programming with gender as a key integrated component. The tool used for this assessment is drawn from the Organization on Cooperation and Security in Europe’s (OSCE) most recent framework on evaluating peace building operations and UN Women’s criteria for the Global Technical Review Meeting on WPS and related documents.\(^{22}\) In addition, a number of interviews were held with key individuals from government and civil society with mandates on NAP 1325 to obtain up-to-date data on progress since June 2015 and the remaining challenges.

**Assessment Framework**

Provisions of UNSCR 1325 and, by extension, Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 are to mainstream gender into conflict prevention and resolution, peace building and reconstruction efforts. The four thematic areas (or pillars) outlined in UNSCR 1325 to support the goals of the resolution are Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery, all of which can be used as broad indicator areas to track the implementation of UNSCR 1325.\(^{23}\) For policies with a WPS focus, specific attention needs to be paid to how comprehensively these pillars are addressed in the policy framework and implementation activities, using well-established indicators by the United Nations (Table 1).

This assessment pays particular attention to measure taken to implement NAP 1325 in Afghanistan by state and non-state authorities including coordination mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation plans for performance assessments, and financing plans. This approach to assessment of NAP 1325 is consistent with the guidelines from UN Women’s Global Technical Review Meeting (2013), which emphasizes the need for a robust M&E system, indicators for measuring progress to improve


\(^{23}\) Following *Resolution 1889* (2009), which called on the Secretary-General to develop a set of indicators to track the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the “four pillars” are used for programming within the United Nations and have been adopted by member states and NGOs. See, for example: [http://www.peacewomen.org/security_council_monitor/indicators](http://www.peacewomen.org/security_council_monitor/indicators)
planning and taking corrective action, and a sound financial plan to ensure success and provide a basis for accountability.\textsuperscript{24}

### Table 1: WPS Implementation Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>UN indicators\textsuperscript{25}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thematic area 1: Prevention</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific measures for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence including recommendations on type of measures, reporting on type of violations, type of perpetrator and specific groups affected.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific measures for safeguarding of women and girls’ rights, including reporting and investigation on violations, inclusion of a gender perspective and gender mainstreaming in human rights activities.</td>
<td>3a, 3b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures for the inclusion of gender perspectives in conflict prevention, security and peacekeeping missions.</td>
<td>5a, 5b, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thematic area 2: Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear understanding or working definition of gender mainstreaming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated organizational capacity to advance the WPS agenda, notably through the appointment of Senior level gender experts, advisers and/or focal points in field missions; Gender sensitive training incorporated at all levels of decision-making.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific measures to support the inclusion of women’s interests and priorities in peace agreements and decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts (including through specific measures on women’s participation and representation among mediators, negotiators, observers and technical experts in peace negotiations).</td>
<td>11a, 11b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific measures on women’s participation and representation at all decision-making levels.</td>
<td>12a, 12b, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thematic area 3: Protection</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures ensuring the protection and respect of human rights of women, men, girls, and boys particularly as they relate to the Constitution, the electoral system, the police and judiciary.</td>
<td>15, 16, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and security Sector Reform (SSR) activities including a gender perspective</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thematic area 4: Relief and Recovery</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-perspective incorporated throughout planning and implementation of development and relief and recovery programmes and projects.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures that support local CSOs and local women’s peace initiatives and processes for conflict resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures to support collaboration and coordination with other actors involved in the area of intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: APPRO (2017)\textsuperscript{26}

Essential requirements for successful implementation of WPS agenda are:

- Concrete actions connected with the objectives and goals set forth in the NAPs, including clear link between goals, actions that are proposed to lead to these goals, indicators meant to assess them, entities responsible for their implementation and timelines set to reach these goals.


• Monitoring and evaluation to ensure success and document challenges and lessons learned. This includes the collection of comprehensive data focused on progress and impact, identification of gaps in programming and areas for improvement, and accountability. In this respect, it is essential to have clear outcomes, outputs, activities, and responsibilities in collecting, managing, and analyzing data and reporting. Periodic reviews and clearly defined timeframes within which to evaluate the process need to be explicitly articulated and the reports need to be publicly available.

• Specific human and financial resources should be allocated to the implementation of WPS agenda from the outset, including clear mechanisms for accountability on how these resources are used (Table 2).

Table 2: WPS Implementation Components and Requirements

| Implementation Plan | • Systematic, sustainable and results driven implementation plan with the expected impacts clearly formulated, clear statement of objectives, and full description of the concrete means to reach these objectives  
| | • Lines of responsibility clearly specified  
| | • Clear timeline with short, medium, and long-term achievable goals (including the list of priorities)  
| | • Clear description of coordination mechanisms  
| | • Engagement of national authorities  
| | • Involvement of CSOs  
| | • Inclusion of boys and men in efforts to promote WPS and reflected in SMART indicators  
| | • Inclusion of public outreach efforts and mechanisms  
| M&E Plan | • Collection of comprehensive qualitative and quantitative data, focused on results, to monitor progress and evaluate impact  
| | • Accountability mechanisms through collaboration with and inclusion of CSOs in monitoring and evaluation  
| | • Clear, comparable indicators that allow for easy reporting, indicate responsible actors and enable monitoring by both governments and civil society  
| | • Periodic reviews and clearly defined timeframes within which to evaluate the process  
| Financial Planning | • Financing plan including dedicated resources from the onset, and mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability  
| | • Adequate human and financial support and other resources  
| | • Funds allocated to CSOs and Multi-donor Trust Funds address gender equality issues (indicators 23 24 S/2010/498)  


In the next section, the available information on the implementation status of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325 and findings from the analysis of the data collected through key informant interviews are used to establish whether and how Afghanistan has succeeded in meeting its commitments. The analysis also identifies the remaining challenges and recommendations on how to move forward.

NAP 1325 Implementation in Afghanistan

NAP 1325 is the Afghan government’s concrete commitment to take measurable steps toward meeting WPS objectives. The document identifies functions and roles and responsibilities under each function for implementing NAP 1325 as follows:
- **Steering Committee**: Formed by Deputy Ministers of key ministries and agencies, including civil society, and led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Steering committee is the lead coordinating entity for the implementation of NAP 1325. The Committee is also responsible for finalizing the annual progress reports compiled by the Directorate of Human Rights and Women’s International Affairs (DHRWIA) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Steering Committee is to meet 4 times per year.

- **Technical Working Group**: Formed by Ministries’ Focal Points for NAP 1325 and representatives of civil society organizations. The Technical Working Group is led by DHRWIA and has been meeting on a regular basis.

- **Advisory Group**: Includes representatives from international organizations and foreign diplomatic mission in Afghanistan. It was first led by the European Union, followed by the Finland Diplomatic Mission in Afghanistan.

- **Women, Peace and Security Working Group**: Is a platform established to consult and discuss the implementation process of NAP 1325 that includes international donors, NGOs, and government representatives. The Working Group has played a leading role in supporting the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in their coordination activities for implementing NAP 1325. There is also a small task force, comprising one representative from NGOs, one from the donor community, and one from UN Women, to facilitate consultation among different actors and provide technical support in implementation efforts. The task force meets every two months.

Two ministries have key management roles in scheduling coordinating meetings and compiling progress reports. These are:

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)**: DHRWIA at MoFA is the main coordinating body for the implementation of NAP 1325. DHRWIA is responsible for supporting the implementing and support agencies, identifying their capacity needs and organizing capacity building programs, and compiling the annual progress report of NAP 1325. However, due to insufficient technical capacity at DHRWIA, UN Women is currently providing technical support, including the finalization of the progress report on NAP 1325 implementation for 2017. To fill the technical gaps and lack of resources for implementing NAP 1325, the Ministry of Finance has allocated approximately one million USD (930,000) to MoFA for the next four years from the available governmental budget allocated for the implementation of NAP1325. This fund is to ensure that there is sufficient technical capacity, human resources, coordination, reporting, and monitoring of efforts to implement NAP 1325. Funding for some activities such as grants for civil society and others will be funded through off-budget contributions.27

**Ministry of Finance (MoF)**: has been in charge of finalizing the budget for implementing NAP 1325, coordinating the financial mechanisms with the donor agencies, and managing the funding that will be given to the ministries for the implementation of NAP 1325-related projects and activities. At the time of writing, MoF is reviewing its Monitoring and Evaluation Policy to increase its ability to measure performance toward meeting NAP 1325 objectives and targets.28

**Line Ministries and Government Agencies**: with roles and responsibilities for implementing NAP 1325 are: Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Education (MoEd), Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Refugees and

---

27 KI-CS-KAB-2
28 KI-GOV-KAB-1
Repatriations (MoRR), High Peace Council (HPC), Independent Elections Commission (IEC), Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC).29

The work of these entities is supported by formal and informal working groups, which often involve representatives of the civil society and women’s rights organizations and groups. The Ministries report directly to the coordinating agencies, MoFA and MoF. Civil society plays mainly a watchdog role to ensure accountability by offering consultations, assistance in the implementation, and providing shadow reports on progress toward implementing NAP 1325. The role of civil society is underlined explicitly in UNSCR 1325, as one of critical assessment of actions on implementing NAP 1325 and ensuring sustainability in conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building processes.

**Costing Process**

To achieve objectives and maximize impact and sustainability, programming for WPS needs to be multi-sectoral and integrated. Various attempts have been made to integrate gender in a number of policy, legislation, planning and implementation of programs though with little success. At a formal level, NAP 1325 brings a much-needed focus on targeted actions to address the vulnerability of women in a conflict context.

However, the initial costing proposed by the various implementing entities, including the key ministries, resembled a “wish list” rather than a well thought out, and integrated, request for earmarked funding. In addition, the initial requests for funds included activities that overlapped with or duplicated on-going women-related programs.30

The role of MoF has been crucial in streamlining the funding requests by the various entities. All funding proposals were assessed by MOF to establish whether the specific requests could be addressed through existing budgetary provisions or through additional funds earmarked for implementing NAP 1325. MoF also aligned each funding proposal with different laws, policies, and ministerial plans developed for women’s rights in Afghanistan since 2001. Priority for the allocation of NAP 1325 funds to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyred and the Disabled, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Public Health, and the High Peace Council were the programs by these entities with the specific focus on gender, security and peace-building.31

Another key action by MoF was consultation with civil society organizations as a means to verify and prioritize implementation activities and identifying areas relating to WPS covered under existing budgetary provisions and thus not requiring additional funding. The net result of these initiatives by MoF was a major reduction in the total amount of earmarked funds to support the implementation of NAP 1325. The final budget allocated to NAP 1325 was 47.33 million USD, slightly over half of the initial amount requested by the implementing entities (Table 3).

Negotiations in the consultations organized by MoF with the implementing entities resulted in a number of significant decisions. For example, MoLSAMD had requested funding for the construction of 8 factories over 4 years. The proposal was discussed by the Finance Working Group, which debated on whether the funds required should be allocated under another program, namely the Women Economic Empowerment Program (WEEP), instead of NAP 1325. Decision was made that

---

30 KI-IC-KAB-1; KI-CS-KAB-1; KI-CS-KAB-2; KI-GOV-KAB-1
31 KI-GOV-KAB-1
the project proposed by MoLSAMD related to women peace and security rather than women’s economic empowerment and thus the funding request was approved without change.\textsuperscript{32}

Table 3: NAP 1325 Budget Allocation (Million USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing Entity</th>
<th>Initial Costing</th>
<th>Revised Costing</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MoWA</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoJ</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoD</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>(4.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>33.26</td>
<td>14.98</td>
<td>(18.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoFA</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGO</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoPH</td>
<td>10.04</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>(6.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHRAMA</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>(1.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NoIC</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IARSCSC</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>(0.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLSAMD</td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>19.30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoRR</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoEd</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(2.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoF</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(0.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.16</strong></td>
<td><strong>47.33</strong></td>
<td><strong>(35.83)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoF

Similarly, some activities proposed by MoRR were not considered as a priority at this stage of NAP 1325, despite the fact that NAP 1325 stresses the importance of adequate care and humanitarian services during the relief and recovery period after conflict. The decision not to prioritize the fund for the MoRR was based on the fact that activities proposed by MoRR for additional funds under NAP 1325 were already covered, and better addressed, through the “Creating Jobs for Returnees and IDPs” program, already funded by the World Bank.\textsuperscript{33}

The bulk of the funding for implementing NAP 1325, 47.33 million USD (Table 3), is to be divided up between LOTFA and ARTF as on-budget contributions. With the budgetary requests, allocations, and modalities of funding finalized, the next stage is the request for funds from the international donors. The government currently has 20 million USD available, drawn mainly from the other programs. The remaining 27.33 million USD needs to be funded by the international community. To date none of the donors has committed to providing this remaining amount, but consultations are ongoing.

Table 4. Pillar-based Budget Allocation and Funding Gaps (Rounded, Million USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pillar</th>
<th>Total Requirement</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Funding Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>CSTC-A</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>UNFPA, SEHAT, GoA</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>CSTC-A</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief &amp; Recovery</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>GoA</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>30.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Reporting</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency Fund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GoA</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>19.9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>27.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoF

\textsuperscript{32} KI-GOV-KAB-2

\textsuperscript{33} ibid.
The budgeting for the four pillars, monitoring activities, and contingency are shown in Table 4.

**Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The need for a detailed implementation plan, coordination, and monitoring and evaluation are clearly articulated in NAP 1325. To date, however, there is little evidence of an implementation plan or any mention of mechanisms for monitoring progress and evaluating impact.

Consistent with implementation requirements according to NAP 1325, dedicated Focal Points for the implementation of NAP 1325 have been appointed at key ministries. There appears to be no linkage between the appointment of NAP 1325 Focal Points and the long-standing Gender Focal Points and Gender Units at most of the key ministries.

The Steering Committee, Coordination Committee, and the Focal Points are expected to “invest time and resources in training, capacity building, technical support and creating an enabling environment for the implementing agencies... The annual reports should include an analysis of the capacity and technical skills and suggestions for improvements.” Further, a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is to ensure that there is “annual monitoring, mid-term (after two years) and final [evaluation] in the fourth year.” To date, there has been no evaluation, or monitoring, of NAP 1325-related activities, largely attributed to a lack of clarity about budgeting but also due a general lack of interest by the relevant government stakeholders. The lack of technical capacity and insufficient human resources at MoFA as the key responsible ministry has also been a factor. The allocation of some of the earmarked funding for MoFA is intended for increasing technical capacity and human resources.

The current M&E Plan for NAP 1325 includes 39 indicators based on specific activities. All implementation agencies are responsible for collecting data on their activities under NAP 1325 and report to DHRWIA / MoFA on an annual basis. DHRWIA is to compile the reports, obtain approvals from the Steering Committee, and submit them to the President’s Office and the National Assembly. There are some concerns, however, about the risk of under-reporting failure to perform and thus of the reports having no utility in terms of lessons learned or taking corrective action. A number of civil society organizations with mandates on WPS and NAP 1325 are additionally concerned that they would have little or no input into the monitoring or evaluation processes as the self-assessing entities are under no obligation to include them in these processes.

**Funding Mechanisms**

Two types of funding mechanisms are envisaged:

- Direct on-budget funding by MoF to key ministries: Five institutions are targeted for direct funding through MoF for the implementation of NAP 1325. These include the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSAMD) and the High Peace Council (HPC).

---

35 KI-IC-KAB-2
37 Ibid., Pages 8-9 and page 29
38 KI-GOV-KAB-3; KI-CS-KAB-1; KI-IC-KAB-1
• Multilateral trust funds, such as ARTF and/or LOTFA, to channel international financial support.

For developing countries such as Afghanistan, programming on UNSCR 1325 depends largely on technical assistance and financial support from international donors. There are several international agencies with interest in supporting the implementation of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325. These are the European Union Delegation – Afghanistan, the United Kingdom, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, and Canada, among others.\(^{39}\)

To ensure transparency in the financial mechanism to support WPS objectives, the United Nations designed a Strategic Results Framework on WPS, aiming to guide the UN’s implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions through to 2020. The UN’s Framework called for all UN member states working in conflict and post-conflict situations to develop fund-tracking mechanisms with specific targets and indicators for funding on gender equality. In Afghanistan, the implementation of NAP 1325 will likely follow these guidelines, with the international donors preferring to channel their funds mainly through two different streams of LOTFA and ARTF.\(^{40}\)

There appears to be a preference by the Ministry of Finance for using ARTF rather than LOTFA, based on the fact that LOTFA works almost exclusively on the security sector whereas ARTF funds multiple programs in a number of sectors including civic activities and programming. The arrangement agreed upon in mid-April 2018 is with both ARTF and LOTFA. The agreement includes instituting specific arrangements for direct access to the earmarked funds by the relevant ministries and agencies using a dedicated budget code. The agreement also has provisions to fund some unspecified activities by civil society organization in support of the implementing agencies.\(^{41}\)

### Implementation Challenges

As with most intervention, and particularly women-centered interventions, insecurity will be a significant impediment to implementing NAP 1325, particular in the less safe provinces and districts.\(^{42}\) Ability to overcome this impediment is, almost exclusively, a function of how effectively local actors are engaged and act as supportive stakeholders. Engagement with local stakeholders must continue throughout the intervention period and linked to efforts to conduct monitoring progress and evaluation of results. The key ministries and international donors have long recognized the potential role of sub-national civil society organizations as facilitators, peace makers, monitors and evaluators. Efforts need to be made, at the planning stage, to engage with local stakeholders.

Another major challenge is how, and based on what assumptions, women are drawn into the security sector and peacebuilding. Portraying all women as “natural peacebuilders” overlooks the fact that women social discrimination against women often finds its way into the work place and that women are not a uniform mass, but that they can and do act as representatives of different interests and perspectives. Increasing the number of women to meet the requirements under the Participation pillar of NAP 1325 must be accompanied with provisions to protect and empower them while putting into place mechanisms that prevent discrimination and different forms of violence against women.

---

\(^{39}\) KI-IC-KAB-1

\(^{40}\) KI-GOV-KAB-1; KI-IC-KAB-1; KI-IC-KAB-2

\(^{41}\) KI-CS-KAB-1

\(^{42}\) KI-CS-KAB-1; KI-CS-KAB-2
Conclusion

One key outcome of the process to set a budget for the implementation of NAP 1325 in Afghanistan has been the leading role by the Ministry of Finance in questioning the unjustified budget requests by the various key ministries to fulfill their obligations under NAP 1325. A main argument used by the Ministry of Finance in reducing the requested amounts was that many of the key ministries were already programming in areas covered under NAP 1325 and, as such, what was needed was not additional funds but a relabeling of already existing budget lines to link them to NAP 1325 objectives. The benefits of relabeling existing budget lines and linkages to NAP 1325 are threefold.

First, relabeling of current activities and aligning them under NAP 1325 forces the relevant key ministries to carry out a gender analysis of existing budget lines, a necessary practice not yet sufficiently institutionalized in Afghanistan. One area for this type of realignment is the budget lines for activities under WEE-NPP, which in effect address the objectives of NAP 1325. Second, because of doing gender analysis of current activities, program budgeting by key ministries would necessarily have to adopt an integrative approach and examine the consequences of budgeted activity areas on gender relations, rather than “gender aspects” as an afterthought, as central aspect of the entire budgeting process. Third, relabeling will facilitate the continued close scrutiny exercised by the Ministry of Finance of the amounts requested by key ministries for programming to meet NAP 1325 objectives.

Despite the impressively organized and efficient budgeting process, the fact remains that movement on implementing NAP 1325 took almost two years to commence. In many ways, this long delay to start making the initial steps to implement NAP 1325 in Afghanistan is symptomatic of all other well-meaning policies made in Afghanistan since 2001. That is:

- Public policies being developed without inclusive consultation with, and full participation of, “the public”
- State-civil society “consultations” being held with unrepresentative presence of a few handpicked NGOs, less than affectionately referred to by other civil society organizations as “the NGO mafia”
- Reliance on international policy experts for policy drafting purposes who have little or no knowledge of the Afghan context, its complexities and the many challenges, and thus no stake or interest in whether or not the policy they help draft will actually be implemented
- Lack of capacity at the key implementing government entities, and their civil society counterparts, in terms of applied knowledge of the public policy process and the practical benefits of state-civil society relations in making good, implementable policies
- Failure of international donors to take into account, despite knowing, the serious shortages in capacity and resources, and the political heterogeneity, that so characterize the government when pressure is being put on the government to have a policy on this or that fundamental issue as soon as possible and as a condition of continuing to receive development aid.

The exclusion of the public from public policy is even more prevalent in policy implementation with no collaboration between ministries and NGOs, particularly research organizations and think tanks, that could assist the government in identifying entry points for implementation interventions, technical assistance, independent monitoring of the implementation process, and periodic evaluations. The tendency is to rely on overpriced and insufficiently grounded international experts or international agencies active in Afghanistan, the latter of which is staffed at senior levels by
international experts that rotate on a regular basis, thus minimizing continuity and the retention of organizational memory.

**Recommendations**

Considering the evidence on the implementation status of Afghanistan’s NAP 1325, and given what is needed to implement NAP 1325, the following recommendations can be made under Planning and Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Financial Planning.

**Planning and Programming**

- At the ministerial level, set clear and realistic WPS objectives and specify responsibilities, outcome-oriented indicators, realistic timeframes for implementation, and adequate human and financial resources. Successful operationalization requires clear linkages activities, outputs, outcomes, and strategic objectives.

- Conduct gender analysis of existing budgeted activities to establish what activities could be realigned with direct reference to NAP 1325. At a higher level, sectoral strategies, policies, programs, and projects need to be aligned with the broader requirements of NAP 1325.

- Set program and project objectives and implementation priorities based on empirical evidence, generated by ongoing research and monitoring, to document whether and how the implementation of NAP 1325 serves women’s rights while improving gender relations.

- Programming under NAP 1325 must be based on the recognition that changing gender relations norms must be driven by changes in fundamental values and belief, a very slow process likely to take decades and generations rather than 5 or 10 years.

- International donors must intensify efforts on gender-based development programming to support and strengthen the thousands of empowered and educated women who work as teachers, nurses, doctors, lawyers, journalists, civil servants, and NGO employees.

- Make specific provisions for inclusion of men and boys in WPS-related programming and activities since, as in other patriarchal societies, progress towards gender equality in Afghanistan can only be ensured with active participation and support by men.

- Reorienting international assistance from development, with a focus on creating a closer bond between state and civil society, to humanitarian emergency aid must be resisted as it is likely to neglect efforts to institutionalize gender-based development programming, including efforts to implement NAP 1325.

- International donors, the government, and civil society must find ways of collaborating much more closely than they are on the implementation of NAP 1325. To have closer collaboration, the international donors must demand it, the government must feel that it needs it, and civil society must learn to advocate based on evidence and constructively.

- Strengthen the place and voice of women in the peace process while placing the impact of peace negotiations on gender relations high up on the agenda.
• Continue to develop understanding and capacity of national and international implementers on the strategic place of gender relations in programming in Afghanistan while providing guidance and frameworks for pragmatic and inclusive policy making, grounded in constructive state-civil society interface.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

• Design and implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system as an integrated component of NAP 1325, using SMART indicators that allow for the collection of sex and age disaggregated data on progress toward, or deviation away from, WPS objectives.

• Define and enforce responsibilities and attribute timelines for reporting on outputs and outcomes of implementing NAP 1325.

• In monitoring and evaluations, complement quantitative indicators on inputs and outputs with qualitative indicators tracking outcomes and impact.

**Financial Planning**

• As much as possible, institute gender-based budgeting throughout government ministries and agencies while providing specific funds for WPS-related activities and their follow-up that cannot be supported through existing budgetary practices.

• In requests to international donors for funding earmarked for the implementation of NAP 1325, use donors’ own NAP 1325 budgetary conventions, including best practices in integrated, gender-based budgeting.