



**Assessment of  
Canada's Action Plan for the Implementation  
of United Nations Security Council Resolutions  
on Women, Peace and Security 2010-2016**

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## Executive Summary

### Background

In mid-2014, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD) contracted with Inclusive Security to conduct an independent mid-term review of Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP). The Plan, "Building Peace and Security for All," covers the period 2010-2016. Annual progress reports for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 were tabled in January 2014 and March 2014, respectively.

### Commitment to Peace and Security: The Success of the Canadian NAP

The Plan is a strong example of Canada's enduring commitment to women's inclusion in peace and security processes. It has had a significant, positive impact on areas including:

- Prioritization of women's inclusion by Canadian personnel
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police International Policing Development (RCMP/IPD) recruitment, training, and communication practices
- Department of National Defence training practices
- Multilateral and bilateral partnerships and external perceptions of Canada's role as a global leader in the area of women, peace, and security

The CNAP is one of few National Action Plans in the world to include a monitoring and evaluation framework.

### Recommendations

Despite impressive successes, Canada can improve the Plan's implementation. Inclusive Security proposes the following to maximize impact:

#### 1. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation practices

Drawing out the objectives more clearly by adding results statements and outcome indicators (to include qualitative indicators), establishing clear baselines and targets, and providing definitions or examples for each indicator would greatly improve the ability to measure, evaluate, and improve results.

#### 2. Release regular, simplified reports that address challenges as well as successes

Releasing annual reports in a timely manner is critical. Simplifying and perhaps shortening the report will make it more accessible while addressing challenges will make it more credible. DFATD should incorporate more statistical analysis, including year-by-year comparisons, that more clearly illustrate progress over time.

**3. Consult more regularly and predictably with civil society.**

Establishing a regular schedule of semi-annual meetings would allow civil society an opportunity to prepare, facilitate more robust participation and coordination, and contribute to a sense of shared investment and partnership.

**4. Create space for and encourage sharing of best practices across and among organizations.**

Allowing stakeholders to highlight key successes, share information, discuss challenges, and learn from each other could reinforce and buttress progress. Mechanisms for doing so could be as simple as a monthly brownbag – or could be more formal, such as annual recognition for individuals or organizations/units for key successes related to CNAP implementation.

**5. Identify and profile high-level CNAP champions.**

Enabling visible supporters (particularly at the most senior levels) could reaffirm the CNAP as a policy priority and help ensure accountability to its implementation.

**6. Reaffirm Canada's commitment to the CNAP as a policy directive.**

DFATD, DND, and the RCMP/IPD should consider crafting organization wide reminders (e.g., a broadcast message from the most senior levels to all personnel) of the Plan and its relevance to each organization's work. Such a message could be delivered annually, ideally at the beginning of strategic planning and budget development processes, so that the goals and the objectives of the CNAP are more likely to be considered in plans for the following year(s).

## A. Background

Canada is a strong supporter of international laws and mandates regarding women's rights and empowerment, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. As a founding member and chair of the "Friends of Women, Peace, and Security" coalition in New York, Canada often convenes forums promoting dialogue on progress and challenges of implementing UNSCR 1325. Canada has long been a leading advocate for the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance, armed conflict and peacebuilding. Recognizing the importance of integrating a gender perspective in Peace Support Operations (PSOs), Canada and the United Kingdom developed The Gender Training Initiative (GTI) for military and civilian personnel involved in PSOs. The GTI provides material for a three-day course on gender sensitive approaches to PSOs and has been used by the UN in the development of their own standard training modules for peacekeepers.

In 2001, Canada created the Canadian Committee on Women, Peace, and Security, comprised of parliamentarians, civil society representatives, and government officials dedicated to implementing the principles of UNSCR 1325. Domestically, Canada's gender policy is overseen by Status of Women Canada, an agency dedicated to advancing women's economic security and prosperity, encouraging women's leadership and democratic participation, and ending violence against women.

Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Canada is officially the responsibility of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD), the Department of National Defence (DND), and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police International Policing Development (RCMP/IPD). DFATD is the amalgamated result of the 2013 merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP), "Building Peace and Security for All," was officially launched in 2010, accompanied by a press release stating that the CNAP will "...guide the way Canada develops policy, how we select, train and deploy Canadian personnel, and how we ensure they have the right knowledge and guidance for implementing Canadian policies effectively in the field..." and "...steer Canada's interventions abroad so they encourage the participation of women and girls, promote their rights and advance their equal access to humanitarian and development assistance."<sup>1</sup>

The CNAP covers the period 2010-2016. Annual progress reports for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 were tabled in January 2014 and March 2014, respectively. The Plan was drafted by relevant policy makers across Government with the support of prominent civil society leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communiqués/2010/324.aspx?lang=eng>

## B. Mid-Term Assessment Overview

DFATD contracted Inclusive Security in early July 2014 to conduct an independent mid-term review of the CNAP between July and August 2014.<sup>2</sup> The objectives of the review as described in the contract are to:

- A. Assess whether and how the CNAP has influenced Canada's overall policy direction in working with conflict-affected and fragile states;
- B. Provide an analysis of gaps where objectives have not been met;
- C. Provide recommendations for adjustments to the CNAP to address any gaps and reflect the changing international environment with respect to women and girls in conflict situations, including the adoption of new UN Security Council Resolutions from 2010-2013;
- D. Advise CNAP partner departments on how to better define actions; plan and execute for results; and track, monitor, and report on actions and indicators; and
- E. Improve the CNAP as a guide for planning, conducting, monitoring, and reporting of women, peace, and security activities.

This mid-term review comes at an opportune time. UN Women is leading a Global Review of UNSCR 1325, examining progress made to date in implementing the Resolution as its 15 year anniversary and the 20 year anniversary for the historic Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action draw near. As both anniversaries approach, many countries and organizations are planning large events or initiatives to highlight successes and focus attention towards resolving challenges encountered implementing UNSCR 1325 and the Beijing Platform of Action. As a result, over the next 12 months, countries can expect a multitude of high-profile opportunities to demonstrate their continued commitment to advancing the objectives of both.

The assessment is supported by Inclusive Security's newest initiative, Resolution to Act (Res2Act). This ground-breaking program provides unparalleled support and expertise to countries creating or implementing effective NAPs. It provides the platform to help countries move from a pro forma NAP design and implementation process to one that consistently delivers meaningful results. In cooperation with our partners<sup>3</sup>, we engage directly with government officials and civil society providing targeted, practical guidance and fostering greater buy-in among stakeholders to design, develop, and implement effective NAPs, leading to greater, more meaningful participation of women in processes and decisions related to security, thereby contributing to just and lasting peace for all. Res2Act was formally launched in Washington, DC in March 2013.

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<sup>2</sup> The workplan allows for continued refinements to the report as directed by DFATD through late September.

<sup>3</sup> Club de Madrid, Cordaid, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, Government of Finland, Norwegian Foreign Ministry, UN Development Programme, UN Women, and US Department of State.

Inclusive Security has reviewed several NAPs and seen first-hand the impact of these important plans. Our experience is that while gaps remain; namely insufficient or inconsistent political will, inadequate resources (financial, human and technical), and ineffective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, these plans do make an appreciable difference in the lives of those impacted by conflict. Unfortunately, the lack of data demonstrating the exact nature of these positive changes presents an obstacle which Inclusive Security seeks to overcome. When countries commit to reviewing their NAPs on a regular basis and sharing that information with the public, it pushes the entire community closer to our goal of demonstrating the value and impact of these crucial plans.

For the CNAP, Inclusive Security focused its review at the headquarters level, looking specifically at organizational policies related to implementation of the CNAP, processes for collecting, evaluating and sharing data about program and project progress (in support of the CNAP), and mechanisms for communication across organizations about challenges, success, best practices and lesson learned in implementing the CNAP. Inclusive Security did not evaluate the external impact of the CNAP; e.g., the impact of programs or projects in other countries or regions. Instead, Inclusive Security examined how the CNAP influenced the behaviors and attitudes of personnel inside the Canadian government. An impact evaluation, which may be appropriate once the implementation period of the CNAP has expired, would include interviews and consultations with persons in conflict-affected and/or fragile states where the CNAP is used to guide foreign policy, programs, and other assistance. Such interviews would produce valuable corroborating information as to the actual and perceived impact of the CNAP from the perspective of a key group of informants. Ideally, such an assessment would also include interviews and data collection from a broader range of personnel in each relevant government agency.

Given the targeted focus of the review, Inclusive Security conducted interviews and consultations with government and civil society stakeholders in Ottawa, Canada and a small number of phone and email consultations with Canadian government stakeholders abroad.

In this report we present our assessment methodology in further detail as well as a review and analysis our findings. Subsequent sections will:

1. Introduce our assessment methodology;
2. Summarize findings from stakeholder interviews;
3. Review challenges to NAP implementation; and
4. Provide options for potential next steps to sustain momentum.

## C. Methodology

Two Inclusive Security staff led a three-week assessment of the CNAP; this process included two trips to Ottawa. The assessment included:

### **1. Background Research**

Background research included in-depth analysis of relevant reports and documents, including annual DFATD progress reports on CNAP implementation. We also reviewed civil society reports that tracked NAP implementation as well as testimony submitted to the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights.

### **2. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Analysis**

To better assess the NAP's monitoring and evaluation framework, Inclusive Security analyzed the indicators and corroborating data included in the CNAP and further addressed in annual progress reports. This analysis enabled evaluators to uncover gaps in implementation and data accessibility as well as challenges related to current CNAP reporting methods.

### **3. Stakeholder Interviews, Consultations, and Workshops**

We conducted approximately 25 interviews from July 28 to August 15, 2014. Interviewees included officials from relevant government ministries and institutions as well as civil society leaders (a full list of organizations interviewed can be found in Appendix I). DFATD also organized an all-day workshop with approximately 15 members of the Women, Peace and Security Network in which we participated. The workshop provided us an excellent opportunity to discuss CNAP progress, challenges, and opportunities with key stakeholders. It also helped to facilitate our follow-up conversations with individual members of the WPSN, which were extremely valuable to the overall process and report.

Many in-person interviews were conducted as “focus groups.” In addition, several interviews were conducted over the phone (a list of interview questions can be found in Appendix II).

## D. Commitment to Building Peace and Security: The Success of the Canadian NAP

The CNAP is a strong example of Canada's enduring commitment to women's inclusion in peace and security processes. This section identifies three notable points of success:

### 1. Success: Affirming Canada's Global Leadership on Women, Peace, and Security

Canada is a recognized leader on promoting the rights of women and girls. Shortly after UNSCR 1325's passage by the UN Security Council in 2000, the Government established the Canadian Committee on Women, Peace, and Security comprised of relevant government officials, parliamentarians, and civil society leaders. The body focuses on implementation on UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions. Since then, Canada has taken additional leadership on this agenda, regularly organizing gatherings on related topics and publicly calling for the realization of UNSCR 1325 within relevant international bodies.

Many interviewees reported that relevant actors successfully capitalized upon Canada's global reputation on this agenda as well as high-level domestic political support on these issues to secure approval for CNAP development in 2006. The resulting CNAP accurately reflects the efforts Canada undertook prior to 2010. It also codifies its future commitments to implementing UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions. The CNAP's four thematic areas (i.e., Prevention, Participation and Representation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery) closely mirror those of the aforementioned Resolutions. Each thematic subcomponent includes specific areas for action.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Relevant officials used Canada's global reputation on issues of women, peace, and security as well as existing domestic support for the agenda to secure approval for CNAP development in 2006.**

The CNAP is one of the few NAPs to include a monitoring and evaluation framework; other Global North countries possessing a similar framework include Norway, the UK, and Denmark. Many areas of action include indicators to measure impact; each designates specific institutions charged with collecting data. Under the CNAP, DFATD is required to compile data around the aforementioned indicators into a yearly progress report that is publicly accessible. The Plan also mandates the creation of an interdepartmental working group, led by DFATD, to monitor implementation and provide periodic updates to senior officials.

Additionally, the CNAP requires the completion of a mid-term review to assess implementation and allow for necessary substantive adjustments and course corrections to occur in real time. Several other Global North countries have mandated a similar review as part of their respective NAP process. However, it is important to note the majority of these reviews were summative; in addition to Canada, only Ireland and the Netherlands conducted mid-term reviews. Groups responsible for

reviews ranged from contracted external evaluators, to civil society organizations producing “shadow reports”, to mixed government-civil society working groups (e.g., The Netherlands, Finland, and Switzerland), to solely government-led processes. In addition to Canada, only the UK and Ireland chose an external auditor for their respective reviews.

## 2. Success: Sparking Behavioral Change in DFATD

A majority of DFATD interviewees credited the CNAP with beginning to transform attitudes and behaviors related to women, peace, and security across the Department. This sentiment was particularly noted by officials in DFATD’s Stabilization and Reconstruction Taskforce (START). As

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*- DFATD official*

one official reported: “The CNAP definitely impacted the Department’s perception of the women, peace, and security agenda. Managers went from viewing the integration of women’s needs and priorities as a “nice to have” to a “have to have” in relevant programs.”<sup>4</sup>

Interviewees identified several internal structures that have facilitated this shift. One example is the Department’s project design and review process. Specifically, all new DFATD projects are required to include comprehensive gender-based analysis as part of the review process. The analysis, included in proposal’s submission form, is reviewed by the program’s gender focal point followed by a manager. This process provides a platform for ensuring consistent gender mainstreaming in program design and planning. It is important to note here that the former Canadian International Development Agency has required such analysis in their project review and approval process since 1999.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Requiring gender-based analysis as part of the internal proposal approval process helps ensure that managers are held accountable for integrating women’s needs and priorities into program design and planning.**

Gender specialists in the Peace Operations and Fragile States Division (IRP) have also been essential to behavioral shifts, particularly within START. In interviews, the IRP team was regularly lauded as a “one-stop shop” for guidance on the Plan as well as issues of women, peace, and security more broadly. Staff expertise coupled with the IRP team’s approach has contributed to its effectiveness. Specialists provide an array of services related to the CNAP including technical-level policy assistance, training guidance, and periodic data collection and reporting. In addition, the IRP team is a critical conduit to the Women, Peace, and Security Network, a coalition of Canadian civil society leaders that have significant expertise on these issues. START officials highly value the team’s

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<sup>4</sup> DFATD focus group 8/6

broad-based assistance and, as a result, have reported increased commitment to CNAP implementation.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Centralized staff expertise on the CNAP in START increased institutional support for implementation.**

### 3. Success: Positioning the CNAP as a Meaningful Platform for Action

Across sectors, interviewees credited the CNAP with realizing significant progress. Res2Act documented these achievements in two categories:

- a. **Security Sector Reform:** We identified significant impact in this sector, specifically within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP/IPD) and the Department of National Defence (DND). Here, interviewees consistently reported on the successful integration of the CNAP across a wide array of RCMP/IPD programs and initiatives. As one official from the peace operations program stated: “RCMP/IPD views the CNAP from a philosophical rather than a modular approach—it’s already embedded in everything we do.” DND has also made significant progress incorporating CNAP principles in three key areas detailed below.

Within the RCMP/IPD, CNAP integration is evident in three primary ways. The first is in regard to women’s representation and participation in international peace operations. The RCMP/IPD’s stated goal is 20% women’s representation in Canadian peace operation missions. In the last few years, the institution has made significant progress toward that goal—increasing representation from 10% to nearly 18%.<sup>5</sup> Adjusted recruitment tactics significantly contributed to this increase. For instance, all calls for recruitment now include explicit language encouraging women to apply. Increasing the number of recruitment materials, as well as disseminating them more broadly, has also widened the pool of eligible women recruits. When applicable, large networks, such as the International Association of Women Police, are leveraged to circulate recruitment information. Increased emphasis has been placed on the importance of women in strategic, senior leadership positions.

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<sup>5</sup> RCMP/IPD interview July 30

As a result, women assumed high-level positions in Afghanistan, New York, and the West Bank, among others. Improved access to relevant international training and other professional development opportunities help ensure that more women can fill similar positions moving forward.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Canada demonstrated a best practice in recruitment when the UN asked for assistance in increasing the percentage of women peacekeepers. Canadian officials provided pre-selection assessment training to help prepare women for the recruitment process. In one pilot country, passage rates for women increased from 30% to 80%.**

CNAP integration has also occurred with the RCMP/IPD's training program. Interviewees reported that issues of women, peace, and security have been incorporated into all training materials. Efforts are currently underway to expand the pre-deployment training to include mission-specific modules on women, peace, and security. Moreover, the Department has begun to build a pool of qualified trainers on these topics, even utilizing formerly deployed police officers when appropriate.

Finally, the RCMP/IPD has made significant progress in integrating CNAP principles through its broader communications. Success stories related to gender are regularly reported across the entire institution. This reaffirms the RCMP/IPD's focus on these issues and also broadens awareness and support among Department staff.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Consistent communications profiling related successes raises institutional awareness of CNAP impacts.**

DND has integrated the principles of UNSCR 1325 within its pre-deployment training, dedicating a 40 minute session on women, peace, and security. The Peace Support Training Center, in particular, has enhanced materials created by the UN for training DND personnel. In addition to incorporating these principles within training programs, both the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, which are reinforced throughout the career of DND personnel, emphasize the importance of recognizing the differential impact of conflict on women and girls. Finally, DND has incorporated a gender perspective into training and cooperation programs for foreign military personnel. In addition to the mandatory training topics (which include subjects like human trafficking, protection of women and children, sexual exploitation/abuse and recognition of diversity) DND has sponsored additional trainings overseas that include components of gender awareness, such as a new seminar on gender, peace, and security.

DND has also taken steps to overcome obstacles to the recruitment and retention of women in Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). For example, DND has created the Defense

Women's Advisory Women's Organization (DWAOWO). Additionally, DND has identified a champion for women - Rear Admiral Bennett, an internal and external advocate for women within the organization who speaks regularly about the gendered impacts of conflict. Together with the DWAOWO and Directorate of Human Rights and Diversity, Rear Admiral Bennett works to find solutions to obstacles preventing women's full participation within the DND and CAF.

Finally, DND has prioritized outreach to NATO on matters related to women, peace, and security. Canada has chaired the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives several times and is frequently referenced as a key resource for other NATO member states developing education and training plans for gender and military operations.

It's important to note that much of the work in which DND is engaged started prior to the adoption of the CNAP. Since many of these initiatives were already underway when the CNAP was adopted, DND has a relatively high baseline from which to measure progress. This reflects a significant depth of experience in implementing key principles of UNSCR 1325.

- b. Multilateral Advocacy and Bilateral Partnerships:** The CNAP impacted Canada's ongoing influence on multilateral institutions as well as on its bilateral partnerships. As one DFATD official reported, "Other national governments and international organizations know that UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions are important to us; this awareness influences their behavior."

Canada has had several specific successes in this regard. In interviews, officials reported that CNAP principles were integrated into the Government's formal negotiating instructions for all relevant international gatherings. Moreover, the Government assumed significant leadership around UNSCR 1325 and CNAP principles in several prominent settings. For example:

- Canada was the first country to include women, peace, and security in the G8 agenda; the issue has since become a standing agenda item.
- The Government prominently promoted CNAP principles during the 2012 Chicago Summit, an international convening that focused on the global impacts of the Arab Spring, Libyan civil war, global financial crisis, and the NATO transition out of Afghanistan.
- Canada is among one of the 122 countries who have signed the UN Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence. In September 2013, Minister Baird delivered a statement at a UN General Assembly side event, co-hosted by the UK Foreign Secretary Hague and the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General for Sexual Violence in Conflict, announcing the Declaration.

- This July, Canada made several commitments at the UK-hosted Girl Summit, which included continuing to drive forward international engagement on Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEFM); building consensus for a target on CEFM in the post-2015 development agenda; and providing support to the African Union Campaign to end CEFM. The Government has advocated for gender to be a standalone goal part of the post 2015 Millennium Development Goals.

**NAP BEST PRACTICE: Incorporating CNAP principles into Canada's formal negotiating structures reaffirmed the Government's prioritization of women, peace, and security.**

CNAP principles have also become a thematic priority for Canada's bilateral and multi-lateral programming. For instance, the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) has begun to fund local National Actions Plan development in a number of partner countries, including South Sudan. Local NAPs often involve strong partnerships with relevant civil society organizations in both design and implementation. They can be an excellent way to ensure that CNAP principles are realized in countries deeply affected by conflict.

Additionally, CNAP objectives are strongly visible in Canada's global humanitarian assistance programming. For example, Canada supports the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which plays a critical role in upholding the Geneva Conventions and protecting civilians affected by armed conflict. Canada provided the organization with a \$5 million grant to expand their capacity to prevent and reduce sexual and gender-based violence, specifically by strengthening emergency preparedness and operational responses to sexual violence; promoting international humanitarian law among all parties to a conflict. Canada also coordinates with national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to increase awareness of sexual violence and integrate prevention measures into their programming; and works with governments to increase the prosecution of violators by strengthening national laws and policies.

Moreover, Canada also supports civil society organizations working on CNAP-related issues in conflict areas. Through a project with the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Canada is increasing the quality of and access to sexual and reproductive health services in Afghanistan, Mali, and Sudan. This project promotes the participation of women and integrates their needs and capacities in the creation of mobile health clinics, as well as the use of community-based female volunteers. The program also focuses on coordination with local government authorities, religious leaders, male members of the community, and the media to address the myths and misconceptions regarding family planning and women's health.

## E. NAP Implementation Challenges

Based on feedback from interviews, we noted the following challenges to NAP implementation:

### 1. Challenge: Monitoring and evaluation needs improvement

**Impact:** Implementation activities that lack associated results statements, clearly defined indicators (including both qualitative and outcome-oriented indicators), baseline data, and targets don't accurately gauge or meaningfully track progress.

Many interviewees reported some level of dissatisfaction with the indicators used to measure progress. Though the CNAP is one of the few existing NAPs to include a monitoring and evaluation framework, and though Canada has made significant progress in terms of collecting and sharing data measuring implementation progress, there are still several areas in which Canada can further improve.

For the purposes of this review, we've grouped the monitoring and evaluation related challenges into three primary categories: (a) the lack of outcome or results statements, (b) the lack of baselines and targets, and (c) the need for more qualitative indicators. It's also worth noting that several interviewees reported perceiving several indicators to be repetitive while at the same time some activities outlined in the CNAP have no associated indicators. Others reported that the lack of harmonization with other global indicators on women, peace, and security is problematic. Nearly all interviewees agreed that clear definitions or examples of the kind of information sought would help to mitigate the issue of perceived overlaps and gaps (or lack of clarity) in the indicators.

- a. **Results statements and outcome indicators:** Clear outcomes are required to measure and evaluate results. However, the CNAP does not contain any results statements, nor does it contain any outcome indicators, which makes it difficult to assess the *impact* of the CNAP.<sup>6</sup> This gap became most clearly apparent when interviewees were asked to define success: e.g., what does success look like when the CNAP is complete in 2016? Few interviewees could easily answer this question. In some cases, the inability to answer the question demonstrated a lack of familiarity with the objectives of the CNAP. In other cases, it demonstrated a lack of connection to an overarching objective, e.g.: what is the outcome or result expected from the activity for which my organization is responsible?

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<sup>6</sup> The indicators and data collected for the purpose of the annual report does an excellent job of measuring progress in terms of output – in other words – it is easy to see from that data which activities have been conducted (or not) and to what extent they've been conducted. Including results statements and outcome indicators would build on an already solid platform in terms of data collection.

- b. Baselines and targets:** Several interviewees reported that some of the indicators appear to presume baseline data exists where it does not. Other interviewees reported that one of the major, un-recognized successes of the CNAP is the creation of baseline data. Nearly all interviewees agreed that the addition of baselines and clearer targets would be useful to guide activities and attribution of activities for the annual report.

It's impossible to accurately gauge progress without defining a starting point. However, in many cases, the creation of a starting point (e.g., the creation of baseline data) is progress, in and of itself.

The question of targets, however, is more complicated. Some organizations have clear, well-understood targets. Other organizations with a less clearly-defined role in CNAP implementation do not. While establishing targets on an organization-by-organization basis would be an enormous task, DFATD could work to establish targets for each indicator, including new outcome indicators (if created).

- c. Qualitative versus quantitative indicators:** Many interviewees commented that qualitative indicators would be more appropriate than quantitative indicators for the kinds of activities contained in the CNAP. Additionally, the range of activities reported by interviewees that support the objectives and spirit of the CNAP extend far beyond those that respond to the existing indicators. For example, quite a few organizations are engaged in training efforts which are currently only tracked by counting the number of trainees, classes, or hours. Though such measures are important in terms of tracking whether the activity is happening, they don't measure the results of the activity. Another group of activities not well served by quantitative indicators alone is advocacy. Canada is engaged in a multitude of advocacy efforts across and outside of DFATD that support the objectives of the CNAP. However, without qualitative indicators to measure the extent to which this advocacy is influencing behavior inside and outside of Canada, it's difficult to develop a full picture of the successes of the CNAP.

## **2. Challenge: Inconsistent reporting and accountability mechanisms**

**Impact:** Accountability measures ensure that priorities remain priorities. Inconsistent reporting undermines Canada's ability to convey its commitment to implementing the objectives outlined in the CNAP.

One of the most widely-cited (by civil society) challenges to demonstrating accountability on CNAP implementation was the delayed public release of the progress reports. Many interviewees noted that the report is too long and is difficult to read. Few interviewees use the report to inform decision-making, and several were unsure as to the purpose of the report. Many interviewees also

felt that they were doing positive things that ought to be included but that are not. Others felt that there's a lot of data in the report that could be more useful if analyzed and presented in a more readable format. A majority of interviewees see the report as a largely retroactive, attribution exercise meaning that instead of being used as an opportunity to reflect and ask not just "What did we do well?" but also "What could we do better?", most use it only as an opportunity to ask "What did we do that fits?"

Many interviewees noted that reading other organizations' input is useful, and that with a few minor changes to the format, it could become a much more compelling document that the public could and should be interested in reading. To that end, more statistical analysis, year-by-year comparisons, and fewer indicators were all suggested as means by which to improve the report. Other suggestions include a greater emphasis on outcomes, more uniform and consistent reporting on resource allocation, and more robust discussion of challenges. At initial glance, it may seem as though the various recommendations are conflicting; e.g., include more data analysis yet simplify the report and add outcome indicators, but reduce the overall number of indicators. To accomplish each of these objectives, Canada should carefully review the existing indicators and select only those which best capture the progress of each organization implementing the CNAP. Several of the indicators appear to overlap, and some were identified as not useful to individual organizations. Through such a review, Canada will be able to identify only the most critical and useful indicators, making space for the addition of outcome or results related data as well as greater attention to data analysis.

One issue which came up repeatedly, with no clear agreement on means for resolution, is the difficulty in quantifying resource allocation. Our interviews with civil society stakeholders indicate a high level of frustration with the lack of consistent reporting on financial commitments, as did some of our interviews with government stakeholders. Yet it's clear that there is no easy way to pull numbers effectively to develop a total amount spent on women, peace, and security devoid of any caveats.

### **3. Challenge: Inconsistent consultations with civil society**

**Impact:** Including the perspectives of civil society and local women's groups increases buy-in, improves policies and programming, and can lead to more sustainable solutions.

Most civil society interviewees lauded DFATD CNAP leads for making a noticeable effort to include civil society in conversations about the CNAP. However, many of those interviewed feel a lack of ownership or commitment to the CNAP, and believe that opportunities for providing input are somewhat ad hoc and inconsistently managed.

#### 4. Challenge: Inconsistent mechanisms for sharing best practices

**Impact:** There are missed opportunities to improve programs, capitalize on successes, and re-invest in shared commitment to the objectives of the CNAP.

We asked interviewees whether mechanisms exist through which success stories, best practices or lessons learned could be regularly shared (outside of the annual report). Answers varied widely. Most referred to internal reporting processes; e.g., weekly or monthly progress reports to senior management, or advisory board meetings. Only one organization reported a mechanism for sharing successes (an internal mechanism – not government-wide) and only one organization reported having ever met with another for the specific purposes of sharing lessons learned. Generally, information sharing is reportedly very reactive, only occurring when there is a specific request, most often originating at a very senior level.

It's not uncommon for energy and commitment to a national strategy like the CNAP to flag in later years, particularly if there aren't regular, consistent mechanisms for applauding successes. The results of our interviews and consultations suggest that the vast majority of information sharing happens only around the annual report. There seem to be few opportunities to call out an individual, unit or organization as an example across government. It also appears that outside of the annual call for data it's unlikely that individuals organizationally situated further away from the CNAP leads will think about the CNAP as they design a project, program, or other kind of intervention.

Information sharing outside of formal reporting processes is an important way to share lessons learned that contribute to programmatic improvements. Sharing news about key successes across the range of CNAP stakeholders is an important means through which commitment to its objectives can be re-invigorated. Many individuals with whom we spoke lacked deep knowledge of the contents of the CNAP. In fact, most referred only to the information contained in the reports, rarely to the objectives outlined at the beginning of the plan. Over time, it appears, individuals have become somewhat disconnected from the underlying purpose and vision of the CNAP. Creating a means for more regularly sharing successes and learning would help to mitigate that effect.

#### 5. Challenge: CNAP is not widely considered to be a policy directive

**Impact:** CNAP is perceived as not significantly influencing Canada's overall policy direction with respect to conflict-affected and fragile states.

Few interviewees think of the CNAP as an operational guide. Some thought it was a useful mechanism for gathering information about pre-existing activities into one place, but rarely did

anyone consider it to be an “operational” instrument meant to direct activities. Out of all interviewees, only one organization considered the CNAP to be a formal tool; e.g. a mandate, to be used in conflict or crises. Interviewees in several organizations think of the CNAP as a philosophy, one that reflects long-standing respect and appreciation for the importance of gender equity on the whole.

The CNAP’s influence appears to be strongest for those working on policy or multilateral advocacy-related agendas. Some interviewees commented that external stakeholders know that the CNAP is a priority for Canada, which positively influences their behavior. Canada has many success stories related to multilateral advocacy on women, peace, and security, and the existence of the CNAP bolsters that advocacy. However, most interviewees characterize the impact as one of “influence” rather than “direction,” and feel that the CNAP should be seen as a directive. Moreover, for those managing programs (rather than policy or advocacy-oriented files) the CNAP has less influence. Many of those managers report that gender-sensitivity has been a priority for program work for quite some time, even pre-dating the CNAP. For them, the CNAP is not influential at the program design phase; it becomes relevant only when they’re requested to attribute activities for the annual report.

Regular reminders both of the importance of the CNAP as a policy directive and of the successes seen to date outside of the annual reporting process could help to reinforce the CNAP’s priority status and re-energize those who work on relevant activities.

## **F. Recommendations**

### **1. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation practices**

Drawing out the objectives of the CNAP more clearly by adding results statements, outcome indicators (to include qualitative indicators), establishing clear baselines and targets, and providing definitions or examples for each indicator to which organizations are required to report would greatly improve the ability to measure, evaluate, and improve results.

The difficulty in associating activities with results could be alleviated by stating the CNAP objectives more clearly, and creating big-picture results statements and outcome level indicators to measure progress. The existing indicators, the vast majority of which are activity or output indicators, could be retained (though removing overlapping or redundant indicators would be ideal), but connecting them to the anticipated outcomes or results would help to more clearly illustrate the role of the activity in contributing to the CNAP objectives.

Though views differed on whether baseline data exists for all indicators, this challenge could be fairly easily addressed by identifying the data collected for the first annual report (Fiscal Year 2011-

2012) as the established baseline, and clearly indicating as such. Where data does not exist, it is noted, and the goal becomes establishing a baseline. For each successive report, displaying the new data side-by-side with each previous year's data will illustrate progress more clearly. This challenge could be addressed by incorporating qualitative indicators that ask whether the knowledge or capacity of the individual who receive the training improved. Information gathered in support of such an indicator would also demonstrate the utility of the training, and illustrate the positive impact on the ability of training recipients' to identify and address women, peace, and security related issues in their work. Similarly, qualitative indicators that measure the results of advocacy oriented work—rather than tracking simply whether or not advocacy happened—would help to better capture the impact of the CNAP on foreign policy.

Any new indicators should be developed through a process inclusive of all implicated agencies/departments. Ideally, civil society would be given an opportunity to provide input as well. This would ensure that each organization implicated understands the impetus behind the results statements and indicators, and has a clear understanding of what information is to be collected.

## **2. Release regular, simplified reports that address challenges as well as successes**

Releasing annual reports in a timely manner is critical. Simplifying, perhaps even shortening, the report might help to make it easier navigate the clearance process. Additionally, DFATD should consider incorporating more statistical analysis, including year-by-year comparisons that more clearly illustrate progress over time. Such analysis will help to combat the perception that the report is simply an attribution exercise, as it helps make the data more useful to its reader and increase the likelihood that organizations use the data to inform decision-making.

Drafters of the report should not shy away from highlighting and discussing challenges. While it may seem counter-intuitive, a transparent discussion of obstacles to CNAP implementation reassures the reader that the report is more than a “check the box” accounting of activities, and that Canada genuinely uses the report as a means to measure progress and make course corrections to improve results.

Finally, while there is no simple solution to the challenge of quantifying resource allocation, defining the methodology used and using it consistently throughout the life of the CNAP will ensure that readers understand the information provided, and mitigate this challenge until a more comprehensive solution can be identified. What comments about resource allocation truly reflect is a desire to understand the scale of Canada's commitment to the objectives of the CNAP. Improving the overall readability and analysis contained in the report will help to demonstrate Canada's commitment to providing meaningful accounting of its commitment and progress to date.

### **3. Consult more regularly and predictably with civil society**

Despite the lack of a formal role for civil society, generally speaking, DFATD has made a significant effort to engage civil society and seek their input and feedback. To improve on this further, several interviewees suggested setting up a more regularized schedule for input of 1-2 formal consultations per year. One consultation could be a knowledge sharing forum (offering an opportunity to share expertise on key programmatic issues) and the other a policy discussion around CNAP implementation progress.

Establishing a regular schedule of semi-annual meetings, and providing advance notice of such meetings would allow civil society an opportunity to prepare, facilitate more robust participation, and contribute to a sense of shared investment and partnership among civil society and government stakeholders.

### **4. Create space for and encourage sharing of best practices across and among organizations**

Sharing information about successes, challenges, and lessons learned is a great way to capitalize on long term investments in the CNAP. DFATD should consider creating an informal mechanism through which stakeholders can highlight key successes, share information, discuss challenges, and learn from each other's efforts. Such a mechanism could be as simple as a monthly brownbag – or could be more formal; e.g., annual recognition for individuals or organizations/units for key successes related to CNAP implementation.

### **5. Identify and Profile High-Level CNAP Champions**

Across sectors, interviewees consistently noted the need for high-level champions of the CNAP. Such individuals can reaffirm the CNAP as a policy priority and help ensure accountability to its implementation, both at home and abroad. The model used by DND might provide lessons that can be learned about how to identify, support, and utilize such a champion.<sup>7</sup>

The Government has publicly committed to ensuring the rights of women and girls. A majority of interviewees confirmed that the environment is ripe for increased political leadership on the CNAP. Efforts should be made to identify individuals at most senior levels and cultivate support and leadership on continued CNAP implementation. For example, progress updates on CNAP implementation should be included in regular inter-departmental meetings between deputy ministers.

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<sup>7</sup> Note: The DND champion is not assigned, specifically, to the UNSCR 1325 portfolio. Her activities, however, contribute to the objectives and principles underlying the Resolution.

## **6. Reaffirm Canada's commitment to the CNAP as a policy directive**

Multi-year strategies or plans are an excellent tool for developing long-term commitment to a priority agenda. However, without regular reminders, commitment to such strategies can often fade over time, especially for those organizations or units for whom the CNAP is only one element of a much broader portfolio or file. DFATD, RCMP/IPD and DND should consider crafting organization wide reminders (e.g., a broadcast message from the most senior levels to all personnel) of the CNAP and its relevance to each organization's work. Such a message could be delivered on an annual basis, ideally at the beginning of strategic planning and budget development processes, so that the goals and the objectives of the CNAP are more likely to be considered as individuals design activity plans for the following year(s). Additionally, DFATD should ensure that all new Foreign Service officers are introduced to and familiarized with the CNAP at the beginning of their career.

## G. Appendices

### Appendix I: List of Interviewees

- **Canadian Mission to Afghanistan**
- **Citizenship and Immigration Canada**
- **Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development**
  - Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force Divisions
  - International Crime and Terrorism
  - Human Rights and Governance
  - Child, Early and Forced Marriage
  - Global Issues and Development Divisions
- **Department of National Defense**
- **Parliament of Canada**
- **Permanent Mission of Canada to the World Trade Organization, The United Nations, and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva**
- **Public Safety Canada**
- **Royal Canadian Mounted Police**
- **Status of Women Canada**
- **Women, Peace, and Security Network Canada members (approximately 20 in total)**

## Appendix II: Interview Questions

Note that not all questions were asked during each interview; only those which were relevant to the interviewee(s).

1. Do you know about the Canada National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security?
  - a. If yes, what is/was your role in designing, implementing, monitoring or evaluating the CNAP?
  - b. What do you perceive as the primary objectives of the CNAP?
2. What activities does your organization focus on? What resources do you have to support these activities?
3. What are the projected results of these activities; e.g., what does success look like, in your view?
4. Are the desired results (or goals, objectives, or outcomes) communicated widely?
  - a. If so, how are they communicated?
  - b. Do you feel such communications are effective?
  - c. If not, why not?
  - d. What would you change?
5. Are there any obstacles present that limit your ability to execute NAP-related activities?
  - a. If yes, are these obstacles internal, external or both?
  - b. Do you have any recommendations as to how to mitigate or overcome these obstacles?
6. Are there any significant “success” stories from CNAP implementation that you’d like to share?
  - a. Do you think most stakeholders are aware of this/these stories?
  - b. If no, why not?
7. How well do you feel the CNAP is integrated into your “other” activities? Do you think about the CNAP objectives when going about your daily business, so to speak?
  - a. If yes, how does the CNAP influence your daily activities?
  - b. If no, can you make any recommendations for how to better integrate the CNAP with the rest of your work?
8. How do you measure success? What kind of data/information do you collect (and how) to monitor and evaluate your organization’s activities?
9. Do you have external assistance in collecting data and monitoring and evaluating?
10. What are specific challenges to monitoring and evaluating your work?
11. To better monitor and evaluate your work, what tools/resources do you need?
12. How familiar are you with the indicators outlined in the CNAP?
  - a. Do you think these indicators are a good measure of CNAP progress?
  - b. If yes, why?
  - c. If no, why not? What would you recommend be measured instead?

13. Do departments/organizations communicate regularly on issues (e.g., challenges, obstacles, emerging trends, best/proven practices) related to the CNAP?
  - a. If so, how do they communicate?
  - b. Are there strategies for communication that you think work particularly well?
  - c. Are there ways to improve that process?
  
14. Do departments/organizations share resources and lessons learned (e.g., success stories, best/proven practices, collaborative programs/projects) related to implementation of the CNAP?
  - a. If so, how do they share?
  - b. Are there strategies for sharing that you think work particularly well?
  - c. Are there ways to improve that process?
  
15. Are you familiar with the annual reporting process? Do you think it adequately represents progress made by individual departments? By the government as a whole?
  
16. If not, what changes would you make to the reporting process? To the report structure? To its content?
  
17. In your opinion, has the CNAP influenced Canada's overall policy direction in working with conflict-affected and fragile states?
  - a. If yes, how has it influenced Canada's overall policy direction?
  - b. If no, why not?
  - c. What could or should be done different to amplify the CNAP's influence?
  
18. In your opinion, is the CNAP on track to meet most or all of its objectives?
  
19. If it isn't likely to meet its objectives, what recommendations would you make to adjust the CNAP?
  
20. Does the adoption of new UN Security Council Resolutions (e.g., 2122, among others) indicate that the CNAP should be adjusted? If so, how would you recommend adjusting it?