



EMERGING ISSUES

DECOLONIZATION

QUEERING THE
WPS AGENDA

CLIMATE, SECURITY
& GENDER

ABILITY &
DISABILITY

CYBER SECURITY

WPS ACTION PLAN ADVISORY GROUP MEETING (DECEMBER 2021) SUMMARY REPORT

MAY 20 2022

PREPARED BY
THE WOMEN, PEACE
AND SECURITY
NETWORK-CANADA

Thank you to all the meeting participants, especially to our discussion leaders and those who chaired discussion groups and took notes.

Queering the WPS Agenda

Discussion leader: Gwen Temmel

Moderator: Jo Rodrigues

Note taker: Méliné Svadjian

Climate, Security, and Gender

Discussion leader: Sara Rose-Carswell

Moderator: Laura Sewell

Note taker: Ambika Varma

Decolonizing the WPS Agenda

Discussion leader: Daniel Canough

Moderator: Diana Sarosi

Note taker: Panthea Pourmalek

Ability, Disability, and the WPS Agenda

Discussion leader: Susan Bazilli and Meenu Sikand

Moderator: Elinor McNamee

Note taker: Brittany Potvin

Cyber Security and the WPS Agenda

Discussion leader: Allison Pytlak

Moderator: Elin Miller

Note taker: Sarah Wazzi-Moukahal

This report has been reviewed by Government of Canada officials working on CNAP implementation.

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Background

Canada's current National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) (2017-2022) established the WPS (Women, Peace and Security) Advisory Group, co-chaired by PSOPs/GAC and the Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada (WPSN-C).¹

The WPS Advisory Group is to hold two general meetings each year: spring and fall. In addition 'special' meetings can be organized.

- September 2021: Regular meeting (discussing the 2019-2020 progress report)
- December 2020: Regular [meeting](#) (focus on government implementing partners)
- November 2020: Special meeting on [disarmament](#)
- June 2020: Regular meeting focusing on five themes²
- January 2020: WPS and GBA+

This special meeting of the WPS Advisory Group focused on WPS 'emerging issues.' The objectives of the meeting were:

- Discuss and share information/approaches on issues/themes that are becoming part of the WPS agenda.
- Identify themes/questions for further discussion and elaboration during the CNAP 3 consultations.

The WPS Agenda continues to evolve. Since the adoption of the current CNAP in 2017, discussions of peace, security, rights, and gender equality have broadened and deepened. There are many issues currently under discussion that could be addressed by the next CNAP. This meeting offered an opportunity to advance some of these themes.

During the meeting, break out groups explored:

- Queering the WPS agenda
- Climate, security, and gender

¹ The [WPSN-C](#) has both organizational and individual members. It focuses on monitoring Canada's WPS commitments and supports exchange and learning among Canadians on WPS issues.

² Supporting and protecting women peacebuilders; Programming and other forms of support for the WPS Agenda during COVID-19; Implementation of the UN Secretary General's Appeal for a global ceasefire; Peace and security in Canada: What does implementation of the WPS agenda look like at home?; Action Plan reporting and mid-term review: Strengths and areas for improvement.

- Decolonizing the WPS agenda from an Indigenous Canadian perspective
- Ability, disability, and the WPS agenda
- Cyber security

In the planning discussions, other relevant issues were suggested and organizers hope that these can be discussed at a later date. These include anti-racism/racial justice; youth, peace and security; and WPS and the 'anti-gender' movement.

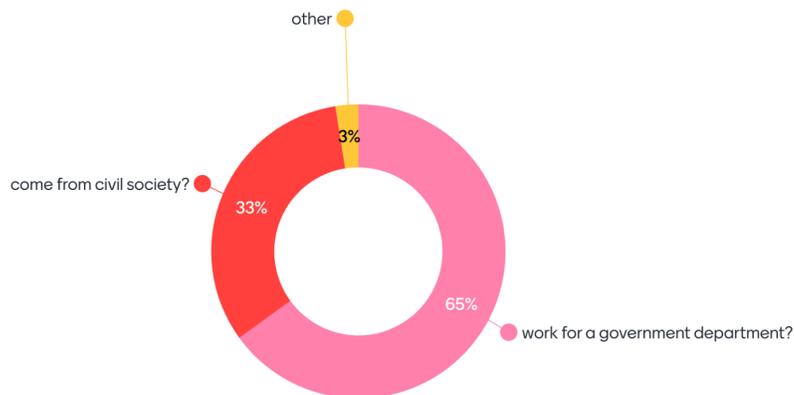
The 63 participants included:

- WPS focal points from across CNAP implementing departments, and other staff
- Office of the Ambassador for WPS
- WPS Champions
- Representatives from Indigenous Organizations
- WPSN-C members (and other civil society representatives).

At the start of the meeting, participants were asked to identify where they worked/who they were representing. The results of the poll are presented below.

The goal of this report is to provide a flavour of the discussions rather than a comprehensive presentation of all the points that were raised.

Do you...



(Figure 1: Responses by participants via Menti.com)

Thematic group discussions

The main focus of the meeting was breakout groups where participants had the opportunity to explore issues in more detail. Each group had a discussion leader who kicked off the session with a brief introduction and acted as a resource, as well as a moderator and a note taker. The focus was on sharing ideas and exchanging and raising questions for further exploration, rather than developing a consensus or a common position.

1) *Queering the WPS agenda*

Resource person, Gwen Temmel, highlighted a number of issues from the readings:

- The WPS agenda needs to address more equitable peace – falls short on gender, ignoring trans and diverse gender backgrounds, leaving a binary framework.
- Military context tends to erase gender considerations.
- LGBTI human rights defenders are especially at risk during conflict.
- No resolutions explicitly reference LGBTI, so there is a need for the WPS agenda to push this issue forward.

Gwen also raised a number of additional points, noting that even though the WPS agenda is a response to marginalization, if the gender is seen as binary, then we have an incomplete picture of who is identified as a victim and cycles of violence are reinforced. It can be particularly difficult to address the ‘+’ component of LGBTIQ+ .

Gwen noted that there are two issues that regularly arise for GAC:

- The topic of inclusive gender remains a huge challenge and there is often both defensiveness and fear. An emotional response is normal, however it’s important to give space while recognizing the needs of all.
- While it is not easy to make inclusive policies, it begins at the individual level and will take time to shift.

Gwen offered three questions for discussion:

- What role can Canada play to ensure a more inclusive WPS agenda?
- What are the desired outcomes we are trying to achieve with sexual identity and inclusion in mind?
- What recommendations to better integrate LGBTIQ+ issues into CNAP 3?

The group discussion covered a wide range of issues and topics, including:

- We've heard internally and externally that there is hesitance to include queer theory / activism because not all countries are at the same stage.
- Line departments with responsibility for providing figures/data at the end of the year are often faced with the challenge of reporting on indicators. There is a need for a discussion to better understand what is realistically feasible to deliver on.
- To "queer WPS" in action, we'll need to leverage action plans and get departments to put meaningful elements into the next national action plan. This will help hold the government to movement on this agenda.
- We need to include practical considerations, such as how we fund projects in conflict-affected states. One thing we could do is not see LGBTIQ+ issues as separate, but rather explicitly part of and connected to WPS agenda. If there is a specific commitment in the CNAP to LGBTIQ+ issues, then we would have a reference to point to in order to justify the need to do this.
- One issue: how to provide protection while also not identifying LGBTQI+ people when this might be dangerous?
- The language used in WPS discussions generally and in the CNAP in particular is still very gendered and often defaults to a binary view of gender. Civil society has a lot of best practices we in government could use / learn from, as a way to be more inclusive.
- One question: to what extent should LGBTIQ+ be in the CNAP / WPS agenda versus having its own linked agenda? There is a risk of WPS becoming a 'catch all' because there is no other place where this policy language belongs. OR do we fully transition to a Gender, Peace and Security action plan?
- We have yet to tackle the question of HOW to include LGBTIQ+. These issues need focus and attention either way, so does it matter if they are together or separate? There are points for either side.
- We need to reflect on how we link various agendas together in a useful / meaningful way.
- If we don't explicitly include a queer perspective, we're probably doing harm as this results in re-victimization and marginalizes people.
- To get practical, we must do personal work.

Suggested readings and resources

- [The WPS Agenda and Its Implications for LGBTIQ People](#), Outright Action International, 2020

- [The Future of LGBTQ Human Rights in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#), Jamie T. Hagen, IPI Global Observatory, July 2019
- *Why Canada Needs to be Intersectional: Inclusion of LGBTQ+ Folks in Women, Peace and Security Priorities*, by Alexandria Kazmerik in [Reflection on Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Gains, Gaps & Goals \(March 2021\)](#)
- For those in attendance from GoC departments, there are often internal opportunities to take workshops on the Positive Space Initiative to learn more about LGBTIQ2+ rights and inclusion, with reflections on bias, privilege and intersectionality.
- Public resources:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2019/02/canada-announces-new-funds-in-support-of-lgbtq2-rights.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/free-to-be-me/about-lgbtq2-secretariat.html>
- https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/human_rights-droits_homme/inclusion_respect.aspx?lang=eng
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2019/02/canada-announces-new-funds-in-support-of-lgbtq2-rights.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/free-to-be-me/about-lgbtq2-secretariat.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/identity-management/naming-procedure/s/sex-gender-policy.html>
- ACTIF just announced their first round of funding
<https://twitter.com/InfoDignity/status/1469034036299538434>
- Article that calls for inclusionary language in defence -
<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/INCLUSIONARY+LANGUAGE%3A+Military+Woman.-a0652701268>

2) *Climate, Security, and Gender*

In her introduction to kick off the discussion, Sara Rose-Carswell (Global Affairs Canada) outlined how climate change is a threat multiplier of conflicts. It increases violence and decreases security and is becoming more of a priority in more populated

and wealthier countries as these are directly feeling the effects of climate change. She noted that we must work together to strengthen approaches to disaster response, risk, recovery, and prevention.

Sara noted various gendered challenges and human security issues of climate change:

- Sexual violence. For example, in Canada we witnessed a spike in sexual violence after the Fort McMurray fires.
- Women often must travel longer for water and food and are more vulnerable.
- Livelihoods: Women are often either denied land rights in the first place or forced off their lands as arable agricultural and grazing land becomes more scarce. As a result, many become migrants and refugees, who face increased food, social and physical insecurity.
- Deforestation and unsustainable, and harmful land use practices: women land rights and environmental defenders who oppose these activities are increasingly targeted with violence and many have been killed, in regions all over the world.
- Women are also important actors in responding to climate change. They are trusted leaders in early warning response and recovery (as seen with COVID-19).
- Women are key actors in building resilience in communities, thus women need to be at the center of this decision making.

Yet to date, the WPS agenda has been slow to recognize climate change as a security risk. Sara argued that we can do more to make it a cross-cutting subject in the next CNAP. There is the potential for new government partners to join CNAP and support this through their implementation plans. As well there will be a new Center of Excellence on Climate Change and WPS must be a part of it (as the PM noted in his announcement).

The group developed on these points and raised other issues in their discussion:

- A civil society participant mentioned a potential United Nations Security Council resolution brought forward by Ireland and Niger that explored climate as a security threat that was vetoed by Russia. A government representative responded that Canada must continue to work with like-minded countries to integrate WPS and climate as much as possible in international discussions
- There was discussion on the links with extractive industries, conflict, climate, and WPS. One participant noted that the GAPS paper (included as pre-meeting reading material) spoke about the corporate sector and climate change and made the point that this relates to Canada. A civil society representative linked this topic to a [paper on petro-masculinity](#) and stated that they are working on a framework to try and define where gender is *implied* in the climate conflict.

Another participant commented on the links among racism, colonialism and Canada's mining industry abroad. Participants pointed out that the Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) must take trade policy into account and the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) must also explore how Canada interacts in these environments.

- Questions were asked about how WPS issues will be part of new Canadian climate financing commitments, in particular how human security and fragility will be addressed.
- One participant noted that there are traditions that are practiced by Indigenous women that are more resilient and essential for survival, but they are also being slowly lost. This knowledge is very important to preserve.

The group also had suggestions and specific reflections for the next CNAP. There were arguments in favour of making the climate change element of the next CNAP detailed and the importance of advocacy to push for the climate agenda to be more prominent.

Participants identified the importance of commitments such as:

- Understanding interaction between WPS and human security in relation to disasters, possibly committing to conducting more vulnerability assessments using a gendered lens.
- Assessing survival and mortality, livelihood, healthcare, education, participation in decision-making, and how it varies amongst different demographic groups
- Conducting more research to understand the dynamics in conflict-affected situations. For example, one commitment could be to research how to approach conflict or disasters domestically versus internationally.

The group also noted several challenges in bringing climate change into the CNAP. A participant pointed out that human security and security files are very siloed within government departments. Although the CNAP is a very important way to bring them together, it's hard to do so because there is resistance to talking about WPS or gender in some of these areas. This is especially the case with more masculinized files like the extractive industry, conflict, or military. Another participant noted that it can be difficult to bring new government departments into the CNAP process as they often have questions around process (how many consultations, how to consult, how to make sure it evolves over time).

One final thought from the group: We could learn lessons from the inclusive "whole of society" gender responsive language of the [Sendai Framework](#) which engages the public, private, and civil society sectors. Men and women of diverse perspectives are really involved in operationalizing this and taking practical, localized approaches.

Suggested resources

- [Defending the Future: Gender, Conflict and Environmental Peace](#), GAPS-UK, November 2021
- Elizabeth Smith (5 June 2020) [Scope for improvement: Linking the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to climate change](#) SIPRI
- Keina Yoshida and Lina M. Céspedes-Báez (11 January 2021), [The nature of Women, Peace and Security: a Colombian perspective](#).
- Potential link of interest about the inclusive trade agenda: https://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/campaign-campagne/inclusive_trade/index.aspx?lang=eng

3) *Decolonizing the WPS Agenda*

Daniel Canough from Crown-Indigenous Relations kicked off the discussion. He raised a number of issues that could be considered, including:

- How is the inclusion of GBA+ lens connected to the WPS agenda in a culturally appropriate way?
- Inclusion of traditional values and traditional knowledge, traditional law, traditional justice, and/or dispute resolution in WPS discussions.
- Engagement with Indigenous peoples has been done in relation to extractive industries in different conflict scenarios. How can communities be supported to make sure that human rights and environmental rights are not violated?
- It is important to look at how international development is couched within a colonial structure and legacy. We should consider what a decolonized international solidarity framework looks like, in Canada and globally.
- Healthcare provision is also an issue, including the definition of healthcare in relation to these synergies.
- Supporting Indigenous women in other parts of the world.
- Perhaps a framing is *community* peace and security.

He outlined the role and work of Crown-Indigenous Relations as a CNAP implementation partner. The department joined the CNAP a few years into the implementation of the second plan. They also released a national action plan on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) in the summer of 2021.

Their priorities are set by Indigenous partners, for example the recent negotiation of UN resolutions in the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. But these Indigenous partners are not part of WPS conversations in the same way. There are multiple demands on Indigenous organizations and they often have limited resources. Going forward it would be good to explore how we can best leverage Indigenous relationships or expertise from the MMIWG NAP.

In the group discussion that followed, there were responses to this presentation and new points raised.

- There was significant discussion on what consultation means and involves. Non-governmental participants reiterated both the importance of consultation and engagement and the challenges this poses given resource limitations. Is it possible to create specific entities within organizations to carry on the consultation work and expand their capacity? There was also a hope that consultations could go beyond CIRNAC. The challenge of not just feeding into existing government processes, but also setting agendas was raised.
- Participants asked how this process could respect the existing work that is done by Indigenous women leaders in *their* communities. They know best how to bring people together but are not getting the support they need to put their solutions into practice and reality
- Participants noted the need for honest and authentic representation. It's important for government officials to recognize that these issues are very real and life and death situations.

Suggested Resources

- *A Responsibility to Lead: A Domestic Lens to Women, Peace and Security Includes Indigenous experiences*, by Shayne Wong in [Reflection on Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: Gains, Gaps & Goals \(March 2021\)](#)
- [Statement by Ms. Celia Umenza Velasco at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security](#), October 2021
- "Ashinaabe Peacemaking is the New Justice":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tng2A2NJYkU>
- AFN's First Nations Action Plan Report on MMIWG2S+:
<https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/First-Nations-Action-Plan-Report.pdf>

3) Ability, Disability and the WPS Agenda

Susan Bazilli and Meenu Sikand (WPSN-C representatives) were the resource people for this group. Their opening remarks noted that despite feminist engagement on the topic of ability and disability and decades of advocacy by disability rights activists, the theme is not prominent in the WPS agenda. For example: “Only two of the ten resolutions on women, peace and security mention the needs of persons with disabilities explicitly, while none include an explicit reference to women with disabilities.” (April 2021 Human Rights Watch Joint Submission on Promoting and Protecting the Human Rights of Women and Girls in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations). Discussing why the theme is missing from the agenda is very important.

They pointed out that there are few readings on the topic and of the two shared as pre-readings, one dates back to 2010. There are no mentions in the Canadian and global WPS policy documentation on persons with disability.

Susan and Meenu noted that the role of women in this sector is often left out of the discussion on WPS - “when we look at the humanitarian sector, we see that women who become disabled through conflict are not included.” They made the case for greater inclusion: “Say it, name it, change who is leading and include those who are excluded.” Talking isn’t enough. Without specific intentions that are documented, inclusion will not happen, “We need to proactively make space for women [with disabilities] at the table.”

They encouraged the group participants to share and consider their respective work in ability, disability and WPS and make a recommendation to the WPSN-C to further the conversation on this thematic area.

During the discussion, participants made a number of key points:

- Disarmament and disability are an overlooked topic in WPS, and are linked to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Those working in the disarmament space work closely with those who have acquired disabilities from armed conflict. This includes the topic of victim’s assistance, which is even further removed from current understandings of WPS.
- Unfortunately, there is little consideration of the people directly affected by weapons (such as land mines, cluster bombs, explosions, etc), and their effects on the wider community in WPS.
- Including the principles of inclusion, non-discrimination, and accessibility would be welcome for CNAP 3.
- The disarmament space is doing a significant amount of work to include people with disabilities, recognizing that most often the experts [in disarmament] are the

people who have experienced the weapons directly. Recognizing this level of expertise in CNAP 3 is encouraged.

- Considering disability in intersectional analysis is something that Canada can improve on. For example, in Afghanistan, many colleagues working in the disarmament space are land mine survivors and now are at risk after advocating for women with disabilities. People with disabilities have not been considered by the resettlement programs. Moreover, it may not be possible to apply for resettlement with a disability, whether that is a visual impairment or otherwise. For example, it can be difficult to access funds from the bank, which has required standing in line for hours, which can present significant barriers for some.
- Group members acknowledged that programming needs a disability lens. Not all disabilities are visible and this should also be considered for the next CNAP.
- Government representatives acknowledged the important work that CSOs are doing in this area during COVID times, and that the GoC comes to the space in the spirit of learning.
- Participants noted that it is important to consider what WPS means from a domestic and implementation lens, as these issues aren't just applicable to conflict and post conflict countries, but are important in Canada too. For example, a recent study by a federal partner department has been looking at the barriers that individuals face in accessing justice and services, and is specifically looking at the issue with ability/disability as a lens. Activists are still fighting in Canada for the rights of persons with disabilities and despite the mechanisms in place, there has been little change for people with disabilities.
- It is important to consider 'gender' dimensions (not only women) when thinking about WPS and disability. A gendered analysis of ability, disability and WPS would help to better understand various issues more accurately.
- Any discussion on preventing and responding to SGBV in the new national Action Plan should take into account women, girls, boys, and men with disabilities, as SGBV is higher among this group.
- Regarding the domestic conversation, it is important to remember that a disability is not a niche issue and should be mainstreamed across all policies, as 15% of people globally are living with disabilities.
- The lack of understanding and a framework on disability within WPS needs more attention, and sharing personal stories makes an important contribution to an improved understanding.
- One participant shared an example of an organization's efforts to improve intersectional analysis and establish an accountability framework.

- o Gender and diversity lens at organization was not sufficient.
- o A disability expert familiar with the organization was hired to mainstream disability within all the policies, establishing minimum standards regarding protection, gender and inclusion.
- o Established a commitment to collect sex, age, and ability/disability disaggregated data.
- A GoC representative noted how the importance of ensuring information is accessible to persons with disabilities was specifically highlighted in public engagement on the content of an Open Justice Commitment in Canada's next National Action Plan on Open Government. A small recent example of progress, Justice Canada recently made the Criminal Code available in braille.
<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/ccc/braille.html>

Suggested Resources

- [The Forgotten Peace Builders: Women with Disabilities](#),” Loyola of Los Angeles International and Comparative Law Review, 33 Loy. L.A. Int’l & Comp. L.Rev. 83 (2010).
- [Joint submission on promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations](#), Human Rights Watch (2021)
- UNFPA, International Disability Alliance et al. (2016). Decidimos. Jóvenes con discapacidad por la igualdad de derechos y una vida sin violencia :
https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Disability_Guidelines_in_Spanish.pdf
- UNFPA, Women Enabled, We Decide. Women and Young Persons with Disabilities. Guidelines for Providing Rights-Based and Gender-Responsive Services to Address Gender-Based Violence and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. 2018:
<https://www.unfpa.org/featured-publication/women-and-young-persons-disabilities>
- Muñoz, W., Salas, D. Promising practices in response to violence against girls and women with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Humanity & Inclusion, Spotlight Initiative. 2021:
<https://serviciosesencialesviolencia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/DISC-Resumen-Ejecutivo-ENG.pdf>
- Rights of persons with disabilities: <https://undocs.org/en/A/76/146>
- Washington Group on Disabilities: <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

- Recent working paper on the links between a disarmament treaty and other treaties that includes work on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):
https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/CCM_CONF_2021_5.pdf

4) *Cyber security*

Allison Pytlak (Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom), resource person for this group, began the session by providing an overview of key issues within cyber security, highlighting gendered challenges within cyber security and how the field can benefit from increased WPS analyses. She noted that cyber security covers a broad range of issues and has multiple dimensions, including a human rights dimension, an international policy and security dimension, and a technical and technological dimension. She emphasized that while these are distinct dimensions, they are also interrelated and overlap in many cases. She also noted the challenge in convincing decisions makers on the importance of gender dimensions within cyber security and technology discussions

Participants had many questions for Allison and noted that her presentation raised many issues that they had not considered before.

Allison’s presentation and the discussion noted key points on the connection between gender and the cyber security field, including:

- Participation – the cyber sector is not gender diverse and is primarily male-dominated, both at the cyber diplomacy level and at the technical working level.
- Digital access and the gendered digital divide – there exists a gender gap concerning technological access and technological literacy for women. Networks and Information/Communications Technologies (ICTs) are not always distributed evenly.
- Feminist activists, women peacebuilders, and women more generally use Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) to advance the WPS agenda and participate in public life, politics, and peacebuilding.
- This use of ICTs for feminist activism also brings forth high risks of gender-based harms for women.

- Gender determines how ICTs may be utilized. For example, ICTs might act as a lifeline for women attending school from home who may otherwise be unable to due to family commitments or restrictions.
- Disinformation campaigns have gendered impacts – specifically misinformation campaigns by foreign governments. Online GBV is often gendered and sexualized within such campaigns. These campaigns also tend to be more directed towards women, and the nature of these attacks on women are very gendered/sexualized. This can become a disincentive and discourage women to continue in that career trajectory.
- Many aspects of cyber security can benefit from increased gender analyses, including the impacts of internet shutdowns, data breaches, economic cyber attacks, online radicalization, etc.
- Government organizations that cover these issues tend to be siloed, which poses a challenge in incorporating a more holistic approach that encompasses gender issues and human rights.
- Gendered analyses of cyber security have to be intersectional and address intersecting identity factors, such as race, that may affect levels of online vulnerability or the impact of online attacks such as attacks on critical infrastructure (like the recent attacks on health infrastructure in Canada).
- There is space to bring intersectional analysis of cyber security and the impacts of cyber attacks within broader cyber security strategies.
- None of the UNSC Resolutions on WPS have made reference to cyber space in the context of WPS in the past two decades.
- Only two WPS NAPs include a mention of cyber threat: Ireland’s and Namibia’s.
- Countries, including Canada, should work on including cyber security within NAPs and bring in domestic CSOs who are experts on these topics, to do so.

Allison noted that while Canada has made concerted efforts to look at gender in cyber security – particularly in the disparity of participation within the career field – Canada needs to do more. Canada’s next NAP should have references to cyber security, including the gendered impacts of cyber attacks both domestically and globally, the gender divide in participation within the cyber security field, gendered access to ICTs, and gendered impacts of online harassment. Canada should ensure that it is bringing in CSO experts on the topic within consultations. Additionally, responses to cyber-attacks can be informed by GBA+ analyses to understand the gendered impacts of such attacks.

Suggested Resources

- [Gender Approaches to Cybersecurity](#) by Katharine Millar, James Shires, Tatiana Tropina, UNIDIR (2021)
- [Why Gender Matters in Cyber Security](#) by Deborah Brown and Allison Pytlak, WILPF (2020)
- [System Update: Toward a Women, Peace and Cybersecurity Agenda](#) by Lisa Sharland, Netta Goussac, Emilia Currey, Genevieve Feely, and Sarah O'Connor, UNIDIR (2021)
- [Gender Approaches to Cybersecurity](#) by Katharine Millar, James Shires, Tatiana Tropina, UNIDIR (2021)
- [Why Gender Matters in Cyber Security](#) by Deborah Brown and Allison Pytlak, WILPF (2020)
- [System Update: Toward a Women, Peace and Cybersecurity Agenda](#) by Lisa Sharland, Netta Goussac, Emilia Currey, Genevieve Feely, and Sarah O'Connor, UNIDIR (2021)
- [AC 5: Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality](#), WILPF .
- [Women, Peace, and Security and Human Rights in the Digital Age: Opportunities and risks to advance women's meaningful participation and protect their rights](#), GNWP.

Plenary Discussion

After a short break, participants return to a plenary discussion moderated by WPS Ambassador Jacqueline O'Neill. The goal was to share highlights and some of the themes discussed in the small groups. The Ambassador asked the group to see where there is energy around engagement for the drafting of the next National Action Plan and where we want to follow up and have further discussions.

Highlights from the small group discussion on “Queering the WPS Agenda”

- The language we use is very gendered and remains very focused on gender as a binary. We need to look at the working language and how it communicates our approach. It is an entry point in how we understand and see things. Can we focus on how we can change that language?
- There is a question about whether or not we bring these issues into WPS or if we need a separate discussion. One person noted that they found the insight “We

are doing harm when we are not bringing this discussion into current discussions” to be very powerful.

- It’s important to have these conversations. We should have a better understanding about how this fits into the larger WPS discussion
- This takes a personal shift. There is a need for personal reflection. There are people who have the knowledge, dedication, passion for the issues – both inside and outside of government. However, it is also important going forward that these discussions be more systematic and more institutionalized.
- The group also discussed the importance of a clear policy statement from the Government of Canada. It’s important to have something that can be pointed to as Canada’s position on LGBTIQ+ internationally.
- An important question is how to we bring WPS specifically (and feminist approaches generally) and LGBTIQ+ issues together and not see them as competing or siloed. Right wing movements see how they are connected. The ‘anti-gender’ movement targets anyone one who is gender non-conforming and people who step away from ‘traditional’ gender roles or identities.
- There were questions on whether or not we should call this agenda “Gender, peace, & security” or WPS.
- Many NGOs and others in civil society are developing more nuanced, accurate language. CNAP 3 planning could include an assessment of what is being done by other organizations, whether new vocabularies or otherwise.

Highlights from the small group discussion on “Climate, Security, and Gender”

The group rapporteur highlighted points that are outlined in the earlier section, so not repeated here.

Additional points raised include:

- With WPS and gender issues, there is always pushback. We need to acknowledge opponents will disagree on both climate and gender, combined and individually. In many climate discussions there is resistance to highlighting gender issues versus the safety of everyone. There is a lot of political resistance in international spaces. Our strategies will have to take this opposition into account.
- GAC needs to institutionalize/operationalize this connection between climate security and gender, one of the hardest things to ask, institutionalizing is always the goal, but how much is it achieved

- There is a lot of capacity in the group and many people are thinking deeply about climate and security coming together with gender analysis/perspectives. There has been a lot of growth in thinking about these topics since 2017.
- What's the best way of addressing these issues in the next CNAP? Is it a cross-cutting theme or should there be specific objectives? There was no consensus in the discussion.
- Environment & Climate Change Canada is a potential new CNAP signatory. There have been initial discussions with them.

Highlights from the small group discussion on “Decolonizing the WPS Agenda”

Group members noted that there were many key takeaways related to conversation around the next iteration of the CNAP and its domestic agenda. They stressed the importance of making sure this is not an afterthought.

Issues noted in the plenary discussion included:

- Making connections and building relationships is key. There are so many individuals on the ground that have solutions, how do we raise their voices, recognize them as experts. How do we amplify solutions from the ground up? How do we strategically align ourselves with those individuals that have the passion, experience, and knowledge base in moments of allyship? How can the WPS work be done in a way that acknowledges and builds on (rather than repeats) work that has already been done and/or is ongoing. It is important to make sure we're not asking the same questions. It's important to build on previous conversations. Sometimes it's about new consultations. Sometimes it is about relying on documents that have already been produced in a collaborative way, integrating what we already have into the next CNAP, answers that have already been published
- First Nations organizations are doing this work. All these things need to be First Nations led. There are often regional solutions that should be woven together.
- We also need to recognize that we're pushing against hundreds of years of colonial and genocidal policies.
- The CNAP should include MMIWG NAP and implementation as well as UNDRIP.
- Indigenous organizations do want to continue to collaborate, but capacity is limited.

Highlights from the small group discussion on “Ability, Disability, and the WPS Agenda”

When looking for reading material, there is not a lot on WPS and disability specifically. Yet people with disabilities represent about 15% of the global population.

There are various issues that should be included this discussion, including:

- Disarmament/disability linkages.
- Visible versus invisible disabilities (people do not need to disclose their specifics).
- Acquired disabilities, those that are the result of conflict.
- The issue is often important but not addressed. For example, in the recent efforts around evacuation and asylum for Afghans, there was no accounting for disability challenges.
- Need for accountability frameworks to be in place.
- Participation and accessibility are key issues. This includes taking into consideration basic accessibility needs (eg meetings in buildings that are not wheelchair accessible).
- Whose voices are heard? Can policies be reviewed by women with disabilities?

Other points made during the discussion included:

- Again, as in other areas, there is no paper, no policy, or similar from the government of Canada that explicitly lays out the approach to be taken. Unless you name it, it is not going to have any life to it outside of this conversation. Need to be explicit, that anything the federal government does with regard to the WPS agenda outside of Canada should meet the same accessibility requirements that it would need to meet inside of Canada.
- Disability should not be an afterthought in the next CNAP. It should be there from the beginning of the design, within implementation plans, etc. This is part of the “+” in GBA+.
- How will progress be measured? What will be the accountability measures?

Highlights from the small group discussion on “Cyber security”

The rapporteur noted many of the points outlined earlier from the opening presentation by Allison Pytlak. These are not repeated here. See above.

In the plenary discussion, additional points included:

- The CNAP is an interesting opportunity to explore gender dimensions of cyber security (including threats). Given that many government departments sign on to

the CNAP, there is an opportunity to look at this as a cross-cutting issue. There are links to preventing violent extremism, misinformation campaigns, threats against women human rights defenders, and more.

- It's important to break down silos and see how to approach these issues in a coherent way.
- It's also important to be intentional about including these issues and identifying concrete ways they can be included in the next CNAP.

Wrap Up/Conclusion

The meeting demonstrated the interest in incorporating new issues into the next CNAP and that there was energy and interest in taking these discussions forward.

The meeting concluded with thanks for the organizers, discussion leaders, moderators, and note takers. Participants were asked to identify three issues they would like to see included in the next CNAP and we generated the following 'word cloud.'

What 3 issues would you like to see included in the next CNAP?



(Figure 2: Responses by participants via Menti.com)