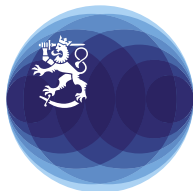


15 September 2023



Women, Peace and Security

Finland's National Action Plan
2023–2027

Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

Publications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2023:13

Women, Peace and Security

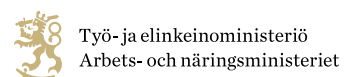
Finland's National Action Plan 2023–2027

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Helsinki 2023

Publication distribution

**Institutional Repository
for the Government
of Finland Valto**

julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

© Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and authors

CC BY-NC 4.0

ISBN pdf: 978-952-281-379-4

ISSN pdf: 2737-0844

Layout: Government Administration Department, Publications

Helsinki 2023 Finland

Women, Peace and Security Finland's National Action Plan 2023–2027

Publications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2023:13

Publisher Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Group author Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Language English

Pages

74

Abstract

In 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Its implementation is binding on all UN Member States. The principal aim of the Resolution and the nine additional resolutions is to enhance women's role and decision-making power in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding and to improve women's security.

Finland's fourth National Action Plan (NAP) to implement the Resolution on Women, Peace and Security was drawn up as a joint effort of the central government, CSOs, research institutes and civil society. The NAP will guide Finland's national efforts to implement the objectives of the Women, Peace and Security resolutions in five areas: conflict prevention and building lasting peace; peace processes and mediation; security sector, crisis management and preparedness; safety and rights of women and girls in conflict settings; and advocacy and mainstreaming. The NAP's cross-cutting themes include reinforcing a knowledge-based approach; strengthening women's participation; strengthening partnerships; and linking climate and environmental matters to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

The objectives, outcomes and outputs set out in the NAP concern Finland's domestic and international activities. The NAP will be implemented by different branches of government and civil society organisations. A monitoring group will oversee the implementation of the NAP, and progress will be reported to Parliament on an annual basis.

Keywords

UN, foreign and security policy, peace, women, gender equality, peace processes, crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, equality, conflict prevention, preparedness

ISBN PDF 978-952-281-379-4

ISSN PDF

2737-0844

URN address <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-281-379-4>

Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus Suomen kansallinen toimintaohjelma 2023–2027

Ulkoministeriön julkaisuja 2023:13

Julkaisija Ulkoministeriö

Yhteisötekijä Ulkoministeriö

Kieli englanti

Sivumäärä

74

Tiivistelmä

YK:n turvallisuusneuvosto hyväksyi vuonna 2000 päätöslauselman 1325 "Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus", jonka toimeenpano on YK:n jäsenmaille velvoittavaa. Päätöslauselman ja sitä seuranneiden yhdeksän päätöslauselman päätavoitteena on vahvistaa naisten roolia ja päätösvaltaa konfliktien ehkäisyssä, ratkaisemisessa ja rauhan rakentamisessa, sekä lisätä naisten turvallisuutta konflikteissa.

Suomen neljäs kansallinen toimintaohjelma Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus -pätöslauselman toimeenpanemiseksi on laadittu yhteistyössä valtionhallinnon, järjestökentän, tutkimuslaitosten ja kansalaisyhteiskunnan kanssa. Toimintaohjelma ohjaa Suomen kansallista työtä Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus -pätöslauselmaperheen tavoitteiden toimeenpanoksi viidellä sektorilla, jotka ovat: konfliktien ehkäisy ja kestävän rauhan rakentaminen; rauhanprosessit ja rauhanvälitys; turvallisuussektori, kriisinhallinta ja varautumistyö; naisten ja tyttöjen turvallisuus ja oikeudet konflikteissa sekä valtavirtaistamis- ja vaikuttamistyö. Toimintaohjelman läpileikkaavia teemoja ovat naisten osallistumisen vahvistaminen, tietopohjaisuuden vahvistaminen, kumppanuuksien vahvistaminen sekä ilmasto- ja ympäristökysymysten linkitys Naiset, rauha ja turvallisuus -agendaan.

Toimintaohjelmaan kirjatut tavoitteet, tulokset ja tuotokset koskevat Suomen toimintaa kotimaassa ja kansainvälisesti. Toimintaohjelmaa toimeenpaneavat eri hallinnonalat sekä kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijat. Toimintaohjelman toimeenpanoa seurataan seurantaryhmässä ja sen toimeenpanosta raportoidaan eduskunnalle vuosittain.

Asiasanat

YK, ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka, rauha, naiset, tasa-arvo, rauhanprosessit, kriisinhallinta, kehitysyhteistyö, humanitaarinen apu, yhdenvertaisuus, konfliktien ehkäisy, varautuminen

ISBN PDF 978-952-281-379-4

ISSN PDF

2737-0844

Julkaisun osoite <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-281-379-4>

Kvinnor, fred och säkerhet Finlands nationella handlingsplan 2023–2027

Utrikesministeriets publikationer 2023:13

Utgivare Utrikesministeriet

Utarbetad av Utrikesministeriet
Språk engelska

Sidantal 74

Referat

År 2000 antog FN:s säkerhetsråd resolution 1325 om kvinnor, fred och säkerhet, som är förpliktande för FN:s medlemsländer. Det huvudsakliga syftet med resolutionen och därpå följande nio resolutioner är att stärka kvinnors roll och inflytande i konfliktförebyggande, konfliktlösning och fredsbyggande, och att öka kvinnors säkerhet i konflikter.

Finlands fjärde nationella handlingsplan för att verkställa resolutionen om kvinnor, fred och säkerhet har utarbetats i samarbete mellan statsförvaltningen, organisationsfältet, forskningsinstitut och det civila samhället. Handlingsplanen styr Finlands nationella arbete för att verkställa målen i resolution 1325 och relaterade resolutioner inom fem sektorer: konfliktförebyggande och byggande av hållbar fred; fredsprocesser och fredsmedling; säkerhetssektorn, krishantering och beredskapsarbete; kvinnors och flickors säkerhet och rättigheter i konflikter samt påverkans- och integreringsarbete. Genomgående teman i handlingsplanen är stärkande av kunskapsbasen, stärkande av möjligheterna för kvinnoorganisationer, kvinnoledda organisationer och organisationer för kvinnors rättigheter att delta, stärkande av partnerskapen samt koppling av klimat- och miljöfrågor till agendan Kvinnor fred och säkerhet.

Målen, resultaten och utbytena i handlingsplanen gäller både Finlands nationella och internationella verksamhet. Handlingsplanen genomförs av olika förvaltningsområden och aktörer i det civila samhället. En uppföljningsgrupp följer genomförandet och rapporterar årligen till riksdagen.

Nyckelord FN, utrikes- och säkerhetspolitik, fred, kvinnor, jämställdhet, fredsprocesser, krishantering, utvecklingssamarbete, humanitärt bistånd, jämlikhet, konfliktförebyggande, beredskap

ISBN PDF 978-952-281-379-4

ISSN PDF 2737-0844

URN-adress <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-281-379-4>



Contents

Foreword	8
Introduction	11
A changing global environment	11
State of play of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.....	15
Starting points for the Women, Peace and Security work in Finland.....	17
Finland's achievements during the previous Action Plan period 2018–2021	21
Evaluation report	23
Principles of the Action Plan	24
Action Plan structure.....	26
Cross-cutting themes	29
Implementation channels.....	32
Drafting process.....	33
Parties responsible for implementing the Action Plan.....	33
Objectives	35
1 Conflict prevention and peacebuilding	36
2 Peace processes and peace mediation	42
3 Security sector, crisis management and crisis preparedness	49
4 Safety of women and girls and realisation of their rights in conflicts	60
5 Mainstreaming and advocacy	69
Follow-up of implementation	73
Acronyms	74

FOREWORD

When women are excluded from decision-making and peace processes, half of humanity's resources are unused. In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the landmark Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Resolution 1325 stressed women's active role and agency in issues of peace, security and conflicts. It was the first time that a Security Council Resolution referred to women not only as victims, but active agents in the context of conflicts.

Today, more than 20 years later, the Women, Peace and Security agenda is well established, widely accepted and well known. The ten existing UN Security Council Resolutions form a solid normative foundation for gender equality in peace and security and demonstrate the commitment of the international community.

Promoting women's and girls' rights is a long-term priority of Finland's foreign policy and the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda is an integral part of it. Finland's three previous National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security have served as a compass and a tool for our work on implementing his agenda.

Finland's new Action Plan was written at a moment when multilateral cooperation is called into question and the international rule-based system is in many way challenged. Russia's war of aggression and its broad negative impacts, as well as climate change, and the socio-economic spill-over effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have disproportionately affected women and girls.

Many challenges lie ahead in the forthcoming period. Authoritarian tendencies and weakened democratic practices and institutions in some societies and countries have undermined women's rights and status. One third of humanity lives in countries with no democracy. As anti-gender movement is gathering strength, there are more attempts to curb women's rights. In Afghanistan, the Taliban's rise to power has left women with little or no room for manoeuvre. Women in Iran have risen to defend their rights and freedoms. Sexual violence in conflicts is widespread and widely used as a method of warfare.

There has also been encouraging development, for example in security sector. Women's participation has increased, and gender equality is more often integrated in security issues. Tools and methods have been developed to protect women and improve their safety. The genuine involvement of women enhances possibilities for more sustainable peace processes. Women's participation also improves operational effectiveness of crisis management operations.

Finland's new Action Plan was created in broad-based and close cooperation relying on open consultations. I extend my warmest thanks to all those involved in the preparation of the Action Plan. I would also like to encourage all authorities, NGOs and Finnish people to actively implement the plan over the next five years.

March 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pekka Haavisto', written in a cursive style.

Pekka Haavisto
Foreign Minister

Picture: The UN secretary general delivers his report on the implementation of the Resolution 1325 in Security Council's annual open debate. In October 2022 discussion revolved around female leadership. Photo: Rick Bajornas, UN Photo.



Introduction

In 2000, the Security Council of the United Nations (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325; WPS), the implementation of which is binding on UN Member States. The main objectives of the Security Council Resolution and the nine following Resolutions are to strengthen women's role and decision-making power in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as well as to improve women's safety in conflicts. Resolution 1325 emphasises the active role and participation of women and girls.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has urged Member States to create National Action Plans (NAPs) to ensure and accelerate the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. National Action Plans have guided the implementation of Resolution 1325 also in Finland. The first Action Plan was written in 2008, while the second one covered the period 2012–2016 and the third one years 2018–2021. Finland's National Action Plan defines Finland's priorities and actions in implementing the UNSCR 1325.

A changing global environment

The international environment has changed significantly since Finland's previous Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. The number and complexity of conflicts has increased, and the consequences of COVID-19 pandemic, spread of authoritarian tendencies and effects of climate change have affected the operating environment globally and locally. The international rules-based system is being challenged in many ways. Violations of international law, including conscious violations of state sovereignty, human rights and humanitarian law, have multiplied. The pursuit of national interests has become more common at the expense of international obligations and the functioning of the international multilateral system. Competition between the major powers has hampered cooperation and affected the multilateral system.

Human rights, democracy and rule of law are being challenged by countries with authoritarian governments or tendencies. This trend is seen also in developing countries, even though democracy has been strengthened in many parts of the world in the past decades. Global disparities have deepened in recent years, especially regarding the rights of women and girls as well as sexual and gender minorities. The anti-gender movement,

undermining efforts to promote the rights of women and sexual and gender minorities, is increasingly organised, proactive and better funded. This can be seen as an attempt to change the normative base, which underpins gender equality and non-discrimination.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally changed Europe's security environment. Invasion is a flagrant violation of international law and the multilateral international rules-based order and has led to a large-scale humanitarian emergency and movement of people fleeing from their homes. Russia's armed forces and its mercenaries have committed systematic and serious violations of humanitarian law, by targeting civilian targets. Women and people in vulnerable situations, including children, persons with disabilities and sexual and gender minorities, have suffered disproportionately from the effects of the war. Integrating a gender perspective into support measures for Ukraine and into country's reconstruction is vital. The ripple effects of Russia's war of aggression are also widely seen in global development, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and other regional crises.

The number of violent conflicts in the world has continued to grow. Most of them are still armed conflicts resembling a civil war, often with a regional dimension. Often there are non-state actors, such as violent extremist movements, private military companies or organised crime, directly or indirectly involved in conflicts. Gender affects the subjective experience of armed conflict in many ways; conflicts often have the strongest impact on women, girls and persons in vulnerable positions. *Conflict-related sexual violence* has increased around the world. Violence is increasingly brutal and systematic, therefore safeguarding women's rights is more important than ever. In armed conflicts, sexual and gender-based violence is widely used as a method of warfare. Studies indicate that gender inequality and gender-based violence are important factors when assessing a country's susceptibility to slide into armed conflict.

Global military expenditure and the volume of arms trade have grown while the arms race gathers momentum. The supply of and demand for small arms feed conflicts, and illicit proliferation of weapons exacerbates instability. Growing military expenditure is linked to slower development of gender equality, especially in low-income countries.

In recent times, a concept of *polycrisis* has been increasingly recognised to describe crisis that are in a state of continuous flux. These crises include wars, the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, as well as food crises, which are interlinked and interact with each other, adding up to more than their sum. For example, Russia's

war of aggression against Ukraine has exacerbated the food crisis, making the situation in many crisis-ridden countries more difficult than ever. The impacts of crises are not gender neutral: women's weaker economic and social status and gender discrimination accentuate the adverse effects.

Climate change, loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation are among the greatest security challenges of our time. They increase indirectly vulnerability to conflicts, for example by deepening poverty and driving migration, thereby having an impact to root causes of conflicts, such as access to natural resources. Increased competition for resources and uneven development challenge the stability and resilience of societies. The most fragile countries in the world, many with an unstable security situation, are disproportionately affected by climate change. The impacts of climate change are also often gendered and further undermine the safety and status of women, girls and persons in vulnerable situations.

The widespread socio-economic spill-over effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have hit regions suffering from conflicts particularly hard and exacerbated gender inequality further. They have had a particularly strong impact on women in vulnerable situations. Domestic and gender-based violence encountered by women increased significantly during the pandemic. The pandemic also eroded the quality of democracy and reinforced authoritarian tendencies in many countries.

The fast development of information technology and digital global networks have brought opportunities for economic growth, innovation, business creation and growth. While this development has encouraged civic participation and improved actors' ability to network, online harassment and violence against women have also become more widespread. The deepening digital gender divide, especially in developed countries, deprives many women and girls of the opportunities offered by modern technology. Disinformation campaigns waged on the Internet also seek to exploit social divisions related to gender, identity and sexuality.

Picture: On 24 February 2022 Russia launched its illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. From the very beginning, Finland has strongly condemned Russia's military action in Ukraine and responds to it as part of the European Union. Millions of people have fled the war and sought refuge in the EU and Moldova. Tatiana Costei (right) works as a volunteer in Junior Chamber International Ungheni organization helping refugees at the Ukrainian Moldavian border in in March 2022. Photo: UN Women.



State of play of the Women, Peace and Security agenda

Women, Peace and Security agenda has a solid normative foundation, but its implementation has slowed down in recent years. Reasons for this trend include the global challenges, as well as the rise of anti-gender movement, and stronger opposition to gender equality¹. We can witness this trend in various international organisations and multilateral negotiations. Achieved progress has been questioned, and there are more attempts to weaken language in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights, the status of human rights defenders and participation of civil society. On a positive note, in an increasing number of countries the gender equality agenda is integrated and emphasised in the foreign and security policy. Many countries have also started to pursue feminist foreign policy, in which women's and girls' rights are embedded in a cross-cutting manner in all sectors of foreign policy. In recent years, many international organisations, including the EU and NATO, have stressed the importance of the 1325 agenda and developed their guidelines to implement the Resolution on Women, Peace and Security.

Women continue to be under-represented in peace and security sector and decision-making on security policy. Even in UN-led peace processes, the number of women has remained low, and the gender perspective is rarely integrated into peace agreements. Less than 20% of peace agreements contain references to women, girls or gender equality. Less than one out of four Security Council Resolutions refer to the importance of the rights of women's groups, women human rights defenders and civil society. Only 4.2% of the military forces deployed in UN peacekeeping operations are women. In countries affected by conflict, the proportion of women parliamentarians is approximately 19% and 23% in public administration tasks. Both figures are well below the global average (approx. 25%/46%).

According to the *Women, Peace and Security Index*, the advance of women's status slowed down at the global level in 2017–2021, and the disparities between countries increased. The Taliban's rise to power in autumn 2021 was an immense setback for women and girls in Afghanistan. Many laws and institutions created with the support of the international community to promote gender equality and rights of women and girls have been dismantled. The status of women has deteriorated dramatically, their rights have been restricted, and they have been left with little or no room for manoeuvre. The developments in Afghanistan have created pressure to examine the effectiveness of the

1 The term anti-gender refers to movements and ideological trends in which different parties actively oppose gender equality and the rights of women, girls and sexual minorities. Anti-gender movements are linked to a decline in democracy and rise of authoritarianism. Curbing women's rights and trampling on minority rights play an essential role in authoritarian exercise of power.

instruments at the international community's disposal in fragile countries also in a broader context. In the light of the experiences in Afghanistan, the importance of local ownership and shared, realistic objectives as well as a carefully selected range of instruments is emphasised in support measures for fragile states.

While in many countries the room for manoeuvre of civil society has diminished and women's rights have been abolished, women's role in promoting change and democracy has become increasingly visible as they demand rights and changes in society. Iran is one example, where a resistance movement led by women has been mobilised through social media. Also in Sudan, large numbers of women took to the streets to demand democratic reforms. Women's multiple roles have been recognized and become more visible. Women can be peace mediators – but they can also be soldiers and fighters.

Picture: More and more countries around the world are calling their foreign policy 'feminist'. The concept has been discussed also in Finland, also in a context of an international conference on advancing gender equality through foreign policy, called together by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland Pekka Haavisto. The conference took place at House of the Estates in Helsinki, Finland on 16 November 2022. There is no clear-cut definition of what constitutes a feminist foreign policy, and different countries give the concept their own meaning. However, in general terms it means mainstreaming the participation of women and girls in all areas of foreign policy. The promotion of gender equality has been at the heart of the different dimensions of Finland's foreign policy already for years. Photo: Konsta Partanen, MFA Finland.



In his annual reports, UN Secretary-General has stressed the need to allocate sufficient financial resources for the implementation of Resolution 1325. The Security Council's latest resolution (UNSCR 2493) also called for adequate resources, monitoring, context sensitivity and full implementation of the Resolution, yet the agenda remains underfunded.

Only 0.4% of all bilateral financial support for fragile regions is channelled to women's movements and organisations promoting women's rights. The COVID-19 pandemic further reduced funding for the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as the international attention and financial resources were largely directed to managing the pandemic and its impacts.

Defending and promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda requires long-term and consistent work, efforts and international cooperation.

Starting points for the Women, Peace and Security work in Finland

The Security Council's Resolutions are binding on the UN member states. The ten Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security contain recommendations for promoting women's participation and strengthening their safety and rights. Finland is committed to implementing these Resolutions, and the National Action Plan defines Finland's priorities and guides Finland's actions for implementing Resolution 1325.

According to a Government White Paper on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2020), Finland highlights a human rights-based approach, inclusion and gender equality in its foreign policy. The report stresses that Finland will continue its work to strengthen the role of women in peace processes and high-level decision-making for in accordance with resolution 1325.

Finland's foreign and security policy is underpinned by the rules-based international system and multilateral cooperation relying on international law. As a party to a number of international human rights treaties, Finland is committed to promoting the equality before the law of all genders as well as measures that improve women's safety and strengthen their role and decision-making power in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. CEDAW (the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, Finnish Treaty Series 67 and 68/1986) is one of the most important among these conventions. It is also one of the most widely ratified international human rights conventions in the world. Finland is also a party to the Istanbul Convention (*Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*, Finnish Treaty Series 52 and 53/2015). The Istanbul Convention is the world's most progressive legally binding document aiming to prevent and combat violence

against women and domestic violence. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Finnish Treaty Series 59 and 60/1991), the world's most extensively ratified international human rights convention, is also relevant.

Additionally, the legal basis for implementing Resolution 1325 comprises the Government Programmes of Finnish governments, the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act, Government Report on Gender Equality Policy, Government Report on Human Rights Policy (2021) and Government Resolution on Finnish Democracy Policy in the 2020s (2022). Many of the objectives set out in the Report on Development Policy Extending Across Parliamentary Terms (2021) are closely linked to the Action Plan.

As an EU Member State, Finland is committed to implementing the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019–2024) and EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III). As a NATO ally, Finland will also be committed to NATO's Women, Peace and Security Action Plan (2021–2025). The strategic concept updated in 2022 that guides NATO's activities integrates the Women, Peace and Security agenda and human security into NATO's three main tasks. Finland is a member of the UN Human Rights Council in 2022–2024, and in this role, Finland emphasises the long-term priorities of its international human rights policy and is strongly committed to the comprehensive implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The National Action Plan also contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and implementing the 2030 Agenda.

EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA:

International documents

- 2030 Agenda
- CEDAW
- EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019–2024)
- EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence (2022)
- EU Civilian CSDP Compact (2018)
- EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III)
- Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011)
- NATO strategic concept (2022)
- NATO Women, Peace and Security Action Plan (2021–2025)
- UN group of Resolutions 1325

National documents

- Humanitarian Policy (2019)
- Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings (2021–2023)
- Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention (2022–2025)
- National Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women (2020–2023)
- Government of Finland Report on Human Rights Policy (2021)
- National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism (2019–2023)
- Towards a more inclusive Finland for LGBTIQ people (2021)
- Recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Crisis Management on developing Finland's crisis management (2021)
- Lanzarote Convention: National implementation plan (2022–2025)
- Ministries' operational equality and non-discrimination plans
- Guideline: Triple nexus approach and cooperation with fragile states and regions (2022)
- Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promote Good Relations (2021)
- Report on Development Policy Extending Across Parliamentary Terms (2021)
- Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2020)
- Supporting Human Rights Defenders Together: Guidelines of the Finnish Foreign Service (updated in 2022)
- Action Plan for the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (2019)
- Government Resolution on Finnish Democracy Policy in the 2020s (2022)
- Government Report on Gender Equality Policy (2022)
- An Equal Finland: Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups (2021)
- Development of conscription and fulfilling national defence obligation: Report of the Parliamentary Committee (2021)

Picture: Finland hosted a meeting of the Syrian Women’s Advisory Board (WAB) from 26 September to 1 October 2021. The WAB is a network of Syrian women, which advises the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Syria as he mediates a political solution to the conflict, in line with United Nations Security Council resolution 2254. The members of WAB come from a variety of socio-economic, political, cultural and geographic backgrounds. The WAB takes women’s empowerment and rights into consideration when advising the Special Envoy and seeks to convey the diverse perspectives of Syrian women, as they relate to the political discussions. Finland is an original supporter to the work of the WAB. Photo: Laura Kotila, Prime Minister’s Office.



Finland's achievements during the previous Action Plan period 2018–2021

Implementing its third National Action Plan, Finland actively influenced the preparation, development and implementation of international and regional policies associated with the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The main fora were the EU, the UN, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO. In all these organisations, Finland continued its steadfast support for the implementation of Resolution 1325. Civil society actors funded by Finland have played an important part in this multisectoral cooperation.

During the previous Action Plan period, Finland became the largest core funding donor for UN Women (EUR 19 million in 2020, 2021 and 2022). Approx. one third of the core funding was channelled to promoting Women, Peace and Security themes. In addition to this, Finland has granted project funding for UN Women's activities relating to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In 2021 Finland joined the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action in the Generation Equality campaign coordinated by UN Women, and served as co-chair of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality. In addition, Finland is one of the largest funding providers of UNFPA, the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency (EUR 33 million in 2020, 2021 and 2022).

The establishment of the Centre for Peace Mediation by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in October 2020 gave a boost to Finland's profile in peace mediation. One of the Centre's thematic focus areas is women's participation in peace processes. The Centre for Peace Mediation coordinates the network of Finnish Women Mediators, which is part of the Nordic network. The Nordic Women Mediators work together with other regional networks of women peace mediators. Through the '*Commitment 2025 on Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes*' initiative launched with Spain, Finland has supported the realisation of women's meaningful participation in peace processes and dialogues.

In civilian crisis management, almost one half of the experts seconded by Finland were women, which is one of the highest figures in the world. Together with Spain, Finland led an EU working group that promoted women's participation in civilian crisis management. In the field of military crisis management, Finland has promoted the themes of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in international crisis management organisations as well as developed its national and international training and gender focal point activities.

Finland has supported its partner countries in the development and implementation of national Women, Peace and Security action plans since 2009. During 2018–21 Finland worked together with Kenya, Afghanistan and Nepal and supported projects in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Libya and Tunisia. Finland promoted the establishment of a co-financing

programme in Jordan, and the implementation and funding of a national action plan are well under way in this country. On the other hand, work in Afghanistan came to an end as the Taliban came to power.

Finland has also promoted participation of young women in the peace and security sector. Finland was the first country in the world to adopt a national Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security to implement UN Resolution 2250 in 2021. Finland emphasises synergies between Resolutions 2250 and 1325.

Picture: Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) is communication between the military forces and the surrounding society, with the aim of establishing and maintaining good relations and stability and bringing the state of the surrounding society to the attention of a commanding officer. In the UNIFIL operation (United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon) CIMIC is realized by supporting the role of local government and the education system, and improving the basic services of the local population (education, water, health and electricity). In 2019, a new water distribution system was built to a school in Lebanon in a CIMIC project. In the photo, a member of CIMIC team visits the school. Kuva/Photo: Finnish Defence Forces.



Evaluation report

An evaluation report was commissioned from an external evaluator on the outcomes of Finland's third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security². Nearly 60 people, who represented the parties responsible for the Action Plan, NGOs and the research community, were interviewed for the evaluation.

The evaluation report praises Finland for its extensive multi-stakeholder cooperation and its long-term contribution to and support for the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Finland's consistent work on Women, Peace and Security issues was regarded as particularly important in a situation where gender equality questions and the progress made in them are under pressure. The greatest challenges were associated with undersized personnel and budgetary resources.

The evaluation report contains several recommendations for the preparation of Finland's fourth Action Plan. The report recommends that the fourth Action Plan should be focused, adaptive and operationalised. A clear budget and sufficient human resources should be allocated to the implementation of the Resolution. Instructions for budget reporting should be harmonised. The added value of national action should be clarified, taking into account possible synergies and overlaps with existing national gender equality instruments. The gender perspective should be more strongly taken into account in national security and preparedness work, in particular.

Investments should be made in increasing Women, Peace and Security knowledge, coordination and mainstreaming, in particular within the government administration. Coordination between bilateral actions and advocacy within multilateral fora should be developed further. Coherence and coordination between humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peace processes should be improved. The twinning model should be developed further. Local ownership and needs-based approach should be ensured in all activities.

2 The evaluation was conducted by Stenius Consulting Tmi. The report is available in Finnish online at <https://um.fi/strategiat-ja-linjaukset>

Principles of the Action Plan

Building and maintaining a lasting peace, conflict prevention and crisis management comprise a wide range of actions, such as supporting dialogue between the parties, implementing peace agreements or strengthening civil society, democracy and the rule of law. The Action Plan sets concrete goals for improved integration of the gender perspective into these activities.

In the spirit of the UN Security Council Resolution, the Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security focuses on violent conflicts and fragile contexts. The actions are not exclusively limited to conflict-affected areas, however, and preventive activities are also envisaged in more stable situations, taking into account the objective of strengthening women's participation in peace and security decision-making and planning. When implementing the Action Plan, an effort will be made to avoid duplication of action in sectors for which a national action plan, policy or other framework guiding the efforts already exists. (See fact box p. xx) The objective is that the national level work on Women, Peace and Security would create added value for existing actions.

The Action Plan is human rights based, as are all aspects of Finland's foreign and security policy. This means that their human rights implications are taken into consideration when examining and promoting all recommended actions. Finland works for the realisation of the human rights enshrined in international and European human rights conventions and supports the international rule-based system.

The Action Plan is based on the concept of *comprehensive security*. In addition to traditional military and hybrid threats, the comprehensive security concept addresses the security impacts of such global challenges as climate change, environmental degradation, health threats, human rights violations, migration, economic crises, increased inequalities, terrorism and international crime. Characteristically, the links between these global challenges are growing stronger. Not only international cooperation, but also measures across various sectors are needed to overcome them. As new military threats arise, other problems are often also exacerbated, including human rights violations and poverty.

The Action Plan has a gender transformative approach. This means addressing the underlying factors of gender inequality, including discriminatory structures, social norms and gender stereotypes. Gender mainstreaming must be strengthened and gender equality promoted by such means as education and training, awareness raising, emphasising the role of local women's and women's rights organisations, supporting women's stronger participation in discussions and decision-making on peace and security, and reforming discriminatory legislation. Men's and boys' involvement and role is central to attaining the Action Plan's objectives and transforming gender structures.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING

Rather than only the absence of violent conflict, **peace** means an equal and democratic society underpinned by human rights and human security, in the building of which everyone is involved and included. Lasting peace is built by addressing the root causes of conflict, such as social inequalities, by bolstering human rights and democracy, and by engaging different groups in society as indicated by local needs. Actions that build lasting peace improve society's resilience and contribute to preventing conflicts. Women's economic and political empowerment, education, better legal protection, sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as respect for their human rights lay a foundation for stability, security, sustainable development and peace.

A **comprehensive approach** to peace not only focuses on post-conflict situations but also covers all stages of the conflict cycle from prevention, conflict outbreak and escalation to conflict resolution, lowering tensions and establishing peace. The key word is cyclicity: if consolidation of peace fails, for example, the conflict may break out again. Various instruments are stressed in different stages of conflict, including diplomacy, peace mediation, military and civilian crisis management as well as reconstruction and development cooperation.

In a conflict situation, the preconditions for a **comprehensive approach** include cooperation between the international community as a whole, improved coordination of actors at the country and regional level, and an overall understanding of the conflict. Addressing the needs of the target country and region in the planning of the measures is vital. Ownership is the key. Lasting peace cannot be brought in from the outside, as it must be anchored to the texture of local society. The **triple nexus** approach, which Finland also strongly supports, is a useful starting point. It refers to links between development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding as well as to stepping up cooperation and improving coherence and effectiveness. Different tools, including peace mediation, crisis management operations and humanitarian assistance, should be seen as mutually supportive instruments used at different stages of the conflict cycle and often also simultaneously. The triple nexus approach is particularly important in efforts to resolve prolonged conflicts.

Intersectionality is one of the Action Plan's key objectives. The concept of intersectionality describes the way in which a person's status in society is influenced by various other factors in addition to gender, such as age, disability, ethnic background, socio-economic status, religion, and sexual orientation and gender identity. The different impacts of intersecting factors and the obstacles they create for women's agency in society must be taken into account in Action Plan implementation. To promote women's participation, it is important to pay attention to the fact that women and girls are not a homogeneous group; their different backgrounds and needs should be addressed, and obstacles to their participation and agency should be dismantled.

While the Women, Peace and Security agenda deals with discriminatory structures and root causes specifically affecting women, it is not exclusively an agenda for women. Gender equality is a human rights issue that cannot be promoted without the involvement of all genders and actors. Neither is the Women, Peace and Security agenda alone enough to achieve gender equality. To transform discriminatory structures, social norms and gender stereotypes, cooperation and sensitisation to gender equality issues are needed across different agendas, sectors and genders.

The Women, Peace and Security agenda has been criticised for reinforcing a binary gender perception. A simplified gender perception can, for example, be reinforced by a rhetoric in which women are seen especially as peacemakers and victims, while men are branded as violent miscreants. As a result of this mindset, people who do not fit in with the given categories – for example boys, men and persons with non-binary gender identity experiencing sexual violence, or girl and women soldiers – can easily be overlooked. Finland strives to take into account gender diversity and the multiple roles of the representatives of different genders in times of both conflict and peace.

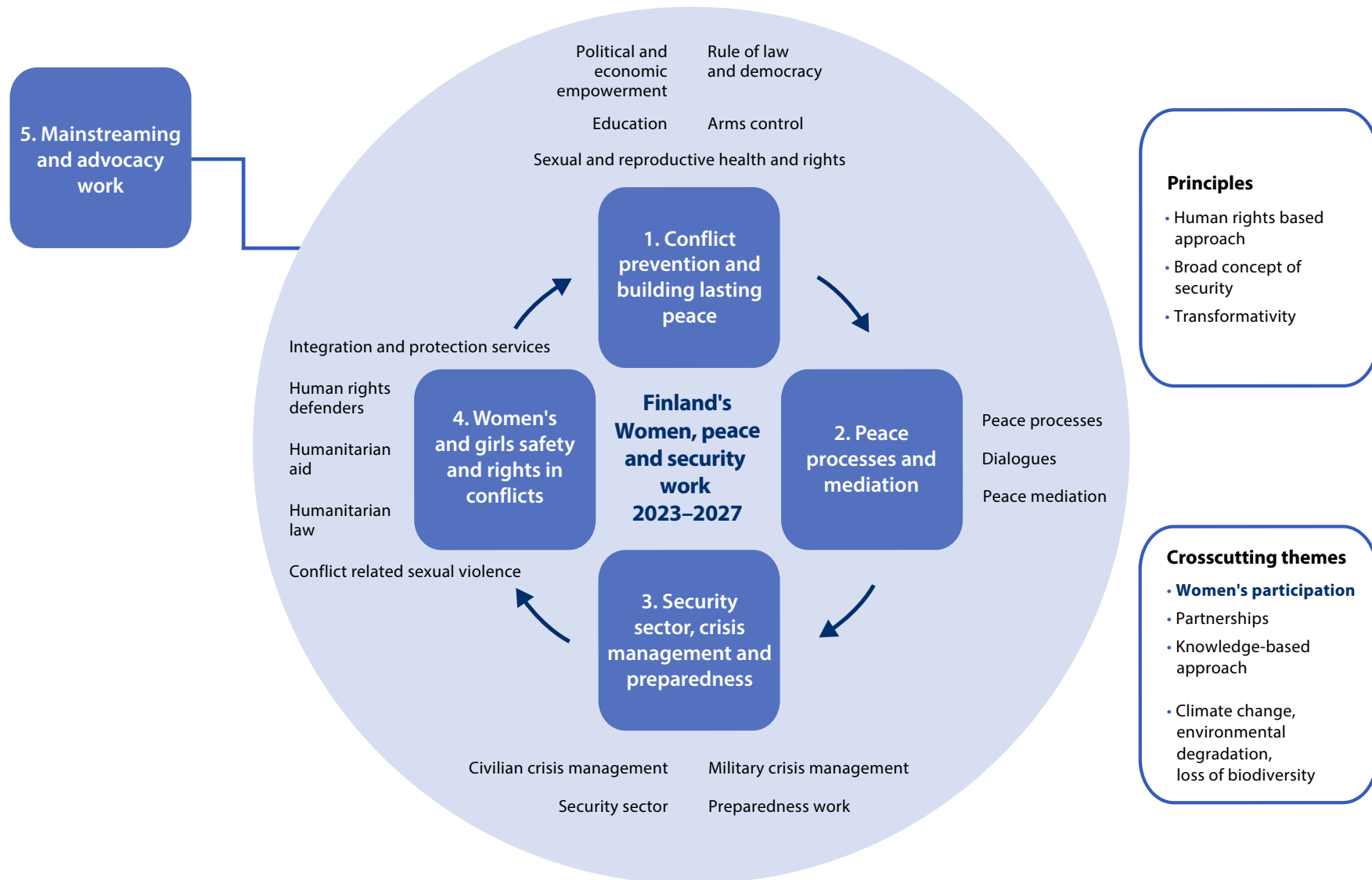
Action Plan structure

Finland's fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security has five sectors and four cross-cutting themes. The sectors cover the main pillars of the UN Resolutions, which are

1. women's participation,
2. protection of women and girls,
3. measures to prevent conflicts and
4. relief and recovery.

- I** The first sector, '**conflict prevention and building of lasting peace**' comprises actions that promote gender equality. They contribute to preventing outbreak of violent conflicts and to the building of lasting peace in fragile and conflict contexts, as well as in situations of prolonged refugeeism. These actions include enabling women's economic and political empowerment, supporting women's and girls' education, and promoting their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Key tools include development cooperation, work on rule of law and humanitarian assistance.
- II** The second sector consists of '**peace processes and peace mediation**' and involves actions that promote women's status and their involvement in peace mediation, dialogues and peace processes. Peace mediation being a foreign and security policy priority for Finland, this sector has a key role and has been bolstered through the establishment of the Centre for Peace Mediation in 2020. The activities include diplomatic peace mediation, as well as support and cooperation with other peacebuilding actors. Finnish NGOs and networks of women peace mediators play a central part in this sector.
- III** The third sector is '**security sector, crisis management and preparedness**', which aims for reinforcing the Women, Peace and Security agenda / within military and civilian crisis management, exercise activities and national preparedness. In the defence sector, Finland's NATO membership boosts the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In addition, the agenda will be strengthened by increasing training and exchanges of information in the police and the Border Guard. Gender equality will also be addressed in security of supply work and national preparedness planning. Crisis management is the key tool in this sector.
- IV** The fourth sector is '**safety of women and girls and the realisation of their rights in conflicts**'. This sector deals with reducing violence against women and girls, women's access to legal protection as well as legal responsibility. The protection of human rights defenders and women's active role in humanitarian assistance activities is an important theme within the sector. The sector also covers measures addressing the specific needs of women fleeing conflict in national integration measures. Key tools of this sector include political and humanitarian advocacy and national integration work and policies.
- V** The fifth sector comprises '**mainstreaming and advocacy**'. Its aim is to continue and intensify the efforts to advocate the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the normative level and raise awareness of it. In particular, these objectives will be put into practise in international organisations (UN, OSCE, EU, AU and NATO). Efforts will also be made to strengthen the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda to bridge the gap between normative work and everyday actions. At the national level, there will be a focus on building up competence and knowledge. Advocacy is the key tool in this operating sector.

Figure 1. Finland's Women, peace and security work 2023–2027.



Cross-cutting themes

The cross-cutting themes of the Action Plan are promotion of women's participation, partnerships, and a knowledge-based approach. Climate and environment, with their link to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, are also visible as a cross-cutting theme.

Increasing women's participation is a key priority throughout the Action Plan. While striving to promote balanced representation of the genders, Finland will also build up women's expertise and facilitate their recruitment to peace and security sector and especially to leading positions. Attention will also be paid to gendered structures that hamper women's opportunities to participate. Finland accounts for women's diverse roles and statuses and women belonging to different minorities. Finland continues to pay particular attention to supporting and tapping the expertise of women's organisations operating at the local level, women's rights organizations and women-led organisations.

Finland has solid experience of building partnerships with different countries, for example in the preparation and implementation of national action plans in so called 'twinning model'. This equitable partnership model continues to be used in bilateral projects, international partnerships, when providing support for local organisations and in triple nexus work. In partnership activities, Finland stresses local solutions and ownership (*'shift the power' mentality*) and the *do no harm* principle,

Finland will promote a knowledge-based approach by linking research and practical work. Practical tools for gender mainstreaming in different sectors will be developed. Finland will highlight knowledge-based ex-ante assessment of gender impacts, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and statistics disaggregated by sex, and invest in evaluating its activities and learning.

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND BIODIVERSITY LOSS ARE SOME OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES

Finland was the first country in the world to include concrete climate objectives in its first Women, Peace and Security Action Plan in 2008. In 2015, UN Resolution 2242 linked the Women, Peace and Security framework to climate change and stressed the importance of taking women into consideration also in climate issues. Finland's fourth Action Plan sets out more practical climate and environmental actions and also identifies them as a cross-cutting theme. Particular emphasis will be placed on promoting women's participation in climate and environmental negotiations as well as in water diplomacy.

Climate change and nature loss are mutually reinforcing. They have significant impact on security and exposure to conflict, often with complex cause and effect relationships. Climate change and nature loss erode the foundations of economic activity and have a significant impact on food and nutrition security as well as on access to water and energy in many countries. Extreme conditions as droughts or exceptional flooding can contribute significantly to disputes over natural resources and other conflicts. Unsustainable use of natural resources, such as forests, is an important source of local conflict around the world. The destruction of nature and livelihoods in armed conflicts also affects post-conflict reconstruction and stabilisation of societies. Climate change and environmental degradation also indirectly increase conflict sensitivity, for example by accelerating urbanisation, forced migration, poverty, inequality and conflicts.

Globally, climate change and biodiversity loss as well as environmental degradation hit the hardest those who are less able to adapt to the ensuing changes and instability to begin with. Impacts are frequently gendered, and they often weaken women's safety and status further. Impacts on food security and food systems have serious consequences for women's and girls' nutrition and well-being. Arranged marriages of minor girls occur more frequently where families are unable to feed large households as soils degrade and food systems deteriorate. Forced migration separates women from their support networks, increasing their risk of being targeted by violence and hampering their access to work, education and essential health care services. Armed conflicts break down traditional family structures: women bear greater responsibility for the family and its livelihood when men go off to fight.

Better understanding and consideration of the gender dimensions of climate and environment security are important in terms of equality, comprehensive resilience and lasting peace. Finland stresses women's enhance participation, a gender transformative approach, and the importance of gender responsive research and conflict analysis when exploring these themes. Seeing women as equal agents is crucial. When women's status in society improves, for example as their land rights and just use and management of natural resources are strengthened, societies become more stable.

Finland will actively promote and participate in discussions on the security impacts of climate and environmental issues in the UN, the EU and other international fora and seek solutions for responding to them.

Picture: Adar Aden lives in a village of Hara Adan. She does not have a water filter nor possibilities to clean the water. She collects her drinking water from a pool used also for animals. Photo: Aapo Huhta, Red Cross Finland.



Implementation channels

The objectives of the Action Plan will be promoted nationally, in bilateral cooperation and multilaterally through crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and expert assistance, training and diplomacy, among other things. Advocacy work in international organisations, including the UN, the EU, NATO, OSCE and the Council of Europe, will be essential. In international organisations, the objective will be to ensure sufficient resources for the Women, Peace and Security agenda and competence development.

Finland has been one of the largest donors for UN Women since the organisation was established and will continue to support it strongly. Maintaining UN Women's core funding at a high level is strategically important, taking into account the growing global backlash against gender equality and women's rights. Finland's significant core funding for the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) continues to be a key instrument for providing concrete support for women and girls, especially in conflict-affected countries. UNFPA's country level work focuses, amongst other things, on preventing violence against women and promoting their agency and leadership, also in humanitarian contexts.

Finland's human rights policy emphasises equity, gender equality and non-discrimination. These values will be promoted consistently and in a cross-cutting manner within the EU, in the UN fora, including as a member of the UN Human Rights Council in 2022–2024, in the Council of Europe and in the OSCE, taking the perspectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda into account.

Finland will continue to maintain and form new partnerships for implementing the fourth National Action Plan. In bilateral partnerships, cooperation on supporting the development and implementation of national Women, Peace and Security action plans will continue. Current partnership projects within the framework of UN Women in Kenya and Nepal, and regionally in the Middle East and North Africa will continue during the forthcoming Action Plan period. The agenda will also be advanced through multilateral partnerships with partners such as the African Union. Active cooperation and partnerships with the Nordic countries remain important for Finland. Civil society actors have a key role in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan, both in Finland and internationally. The expertise and resources of the civil society and information produced by NGOs play an important part in implementing the Action Plan.

Development policy instruments and funding instrument for support for democracy are important in Action Plan implementation, as they are used to fund a number of projects relevant to the Women, Peace and Security theme. The goals of the Women, Peace and Security agenda support the objectives of Finland's development policy and are in line with them.

Drafting process

Finland's fourth national Action Plan was drafted in cooperation with various administrative branches and the civil society. The work began in January 2022, and the Action Plan was published in March 2023. Background work was carried out in workshops and seminars, and the Action Plan was written in a participatory process by different actors. More than 60 parties participated in drawing up and commented on the draft Action Plan.

The cross-administrative Women, Peace and Security monitoring group coordinated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs played a key role in preparing the Action Plan. The expertise of NGOs was tapped across a broad front. The evaluation report on Finland's third National Action Plan produced in summer 2022 provided a comprehensive foundation for the drafting work, and the recommendations of the evaluation were used in the preparation process.

Parties responsible for implementing the Action Plan

Finland's national Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security will be implemented and coordinated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Other authorities implementing the Action Plan include the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Defence, the Defence Forces, the Ministry of the Interior and the Crisis Management Centre (CMC Finland) that operates in conjunction with the ministry, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of the Environment.

The partners committed to implementing the Action Plan are the CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, Finn Church Aid, the Rule of Law Centre, Political Parties of Finland for Democracy – Demo Finland, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finnish Refugee Council, the Finnish Red Cross and the Family Federation of Finland. A large number of other research organisations and NGOs also work to promote the achievement of the Action Plan's objectives.



Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1	Meaningful participation of women in all their diversity is strengthened in conflict prevention and peacebuilding
OBJECTIVE 2	Leadership and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity as well gender mainstreaming are strengthened in peace processes and peace mediation
OBJECTIVE 3	Integration of gender perspective and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity is strengthened in the security sector, crisis management and preparedness work.
OBJECTIVE 4	The safety and rights of women and girls are better safeguarded and their diverse needs are better met during crises
OBJECTIVE 5	The implementation of the WPS agenda is strengthened and context sensitivity is increased in national and international activities.

In this context, **meaningful participation** is defined as a right to influence decision-making, including the drafting of decisions, planning and implementation of actions, and assessment of their impacts. Participants must have the opportunity to assess the impacts of their participation in the decision-making process.

The Action Plan's reference to women in all their **diversity** means that rather than being a heterogeneous group, women and girls have different backgrounds and needs that should be addressed. Their opportunities for participation and agency are influenced by many other factors besides gender, including age, religion, social class, political background, ethnic background, disability or belonging to a minority, including a sexual or gender minority. Activities that support the participation and empowerment of women with diverse backgrounds and identities are the key.

1 Conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Women's economic and political empowerment, education and respect for their fundamental rights form the necessary ground for stability, security and lasting peace. Finland promotes women's and girls' rights and status by supporting the education of girls and women, decent workplaces for women and women's political and economic participation, as well as by reinforcing their sexual and reproductive health and rights in fragile contexts and conflict areas.

Women's political empowerment and strengthening the rule of law and democracy

Finland supports women's political empowerment in conflict areas and post-conflict situations. Women's active role in society builds resilience of communities and contributes to more sustainable, lasting peace agreements. Violence against women has been identified as one of the main obstacles to their participation in decision-making. By reducing violence against women, women's roles in peacebuilding and societal decision-making can be enhanced.

Finland stresses methods for promoting the participation of women, young people and those in vulnerable situations in building the state. Finland promotes women's opportunities of participating in and influencing legal reforms, including the drafting of constitutions and formation of election and law commissions. Finland supports OSCE and EU election observation activities by sending observers to their election observation missions. On these missions, particular attention is paid to women's participation in elections as organisers, candidates and voters alike. The missions also issue recommendations for improving possibilities for women's meaningful participation. Finland also exerts influence for improving the public services provided by administrations and judicial systems as well as women's and girls' access to them.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs funds the Rule of Law Centre established in connection with the University of Helsinki and working to dismantle obstacles to women's and girls' meaningful participation in society. The basic idea in the Rule of Law Centre's work is that lasting change can be achieved by developing and promoting women's and girls' opportunities for meaningful participation. By supporting the work on the rule of law, the

goal is to also provide effective support for women's and girls' meaningful participation and the realisation of their rights. In the forthcoming Action Plan period the Rule of Law Centre will, in particular, produce more information on the relationship between gender and fragile contexts in the rule of law work. At the national level, Finland supports peace, social stability and conflict prevention by providing grants to national NGOs working to promote peace in Finland.

Education, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and economic empowerment of women and girls

One in seven adults in the world is illiterate, and two thirds of these people are women. In conflict-affected areas, more than 40% of women may be illiterate. Illiteracy makes women more vulnerable and limits their economic opportunities and meaningful participation. Inclusive, quality education supports peaceful and well-functioning societies. It is a basic prerequisite for women's active and meaningful participation in society. Finland works to improve the opportunities of women, girls and persons with disabilities to access basic education and to learn vocational, entrepreneurial and basic skills, also in fragile contexts. Women's and girls' access to education will also be improved in humanitarian crises and by participating in the Education in Emergencies work.

An individual's human rights will not be realised unless their sexual and reproductive health and rights can be secured. Consequently, securing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women plays an essential part in supporting their empowerment. Access to sexual and reproductive health services weakens in crisis, especially for women and girls. Every day, 500 women and girls die from complications of pregnancy or childbirth in crisis areas – accounting for two out of three maternal deaths. Structural violence, which includes harmful traditions such as child marriages, is also highlighted in crises. Forced migration increases the risk factors further. Finland strongly defends sexual and reproductive health and rights in international fora.

Finland promotes women's economic empowerment also through private sector cooperation and investments. Promoting gender equality is one of the criteria taken into account for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' loans to and fund investments in the private sector. In practice, this means that funding is allocated through partners to companies, which have women owners or managers and which pay particular attention to women's rights as workers. For example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has granted seed money for a loan to FCA Investments, an impact investing company established by Finn Church Aid. This has enabled the company to launch its investments targeting fragile and least-developed African countries, in particular. Finland expects the companies it supports or

works together with to comply with internationally recognised corporate responsibility standards. These standards include the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation

Climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are risk multipliers and underlying factors in many conflicts. Conflicts related to natural resources exacerbate existing discriminatory structures and gender roles and affect the different genders in different ways. Through development policy measures, Finland supports women's participation in the management and use of natural resources, promotes women's land rights and strengthens partnerships with women's groups and organisations at local level in conflict and disaster areas. Finland works to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation, and safeguarding biodiversity by preventing nature loss while enabling the full realisation of fundamental and human rights.

Arms control and disarmament

As the world's military spending increases, work on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of arms is particularly important. Illegal arms trafficking and uncontrolled proliferation of small arms drive conflicts and violence, making it increasingly difficult to contain and stop conflicts and keep peace. Small arms are also used to perpetrate violence against women. Finland has traditionally drawn attention to promoting the gender perspective in arms control. Finland participated in drafting the criterion on gender-based violence included in the international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) adopted by the UN in 2013. Under this Treaty, gender-based violence must be taken into account when assessing exports of defence materiel. Finland has promoted the integration of the gender perspective into the implementation of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines and supports the clearing of anti-personnel mines through humanitarian project funding. Women's opportunities to participate in mine clearing have been improved by recruiting women to mine clearance and other humanitarian mine action tasks.

Picture: Through its development policy and development cooperation, Finland seeks to ensure that opportunities for high quality, inclusive and equitable basic and secondary education and lifelong learning are realised for all. Inclusive education contributes to peaceful and well-functioning societies. In the picture Hawa Isak Warsame (16) takes part to education provided by Finn Church Aid in Somalia. Hawa says that in the future, she would like to work for a humanitarian organization. Photo: Ismail Taxta, Finn Church Aid.



OBJECTIVE 1**Meaningful participation of women in all their diversity is strengthened in conflict prevention and peacebuilding****RESULT 1.1****Women's social, economic and political status has improved**

OUTCOME 1.1.1	Finland dismantles discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes as part of peacebuilding [All]
OUTCOME 1.1.2	Finland promotes women's participation to strengthen the rule of law and democracy, paying particular attention to women in vulnerable situations [Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI, Demo Finland, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Rule of Law Centre, Family Federation of Finland]
OUTCOME 1.1.3	Finland improves women's economic opportunities in fragile contexts and (prolonged) crises, paying attention to women in vulnerable situations [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Refugee Council]
OUTCOME 1.1.4	Finland promotes the right of women and girls to early childhood education and care, vocational education and training and adult education up to higher education level in fragile contexts and (prolonged) crises, paying attention to women and girls in vulnerable situations [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Refugee Council]
OUTCOME 1.1.5	Finland promotes equality and non-discrimination in peacebuilding at the national level [Ministry of Justice]

RESULT 1.2**Women's legal protection has improved**

OUTCOME 1.2.1	Judicial and legal assistance services provided with Finland's support are accessible to women and girls, paying attention to women and girls in vulnerable situations [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finn Church Aid]
OUTCOME 1.2.2	Finland supports measures aiming to strengthen the rights and improving the access to sexual and reproductive health services of women and girls in fragile contexts and crises [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Finnish Red Cross, Family Federation of Finland]

RESULT 1.3**Gender perspective is integrated into climate and environment actions, with special attention to women's roles and meaningful participation as well as intersecting factors**

OUTCOME 1.3.1	Finland supports the promotion of gender equality, improved conflict sensitivity, and attention to environmental and climate risks, especially in development cooperation related to natural resources, biodiversity, land use and management as well as climate and environmental issues in fragile contexts. [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTCOME 1.3.2	Finland supports the promotion of gender equality and improved conflict sensitivity in international environment and climate negotiations as well as advocacy. [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for the Environment, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid]

RESULT 1.4

Gender perspective has been integrated into arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation at national and international levels

OUTCOME 1.4.1	Finland supports the implementation of Article 7(4) of the Arms Trade Treaty on preventing gender-based violence at both national and international levels [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTCOME 1.4.2	Finland integrates the gender perspective into arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation at national and international levels. [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTCOME 1.4.3	Finland promotes and supports the meaningful participation of women in policy discussions and negotiations on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

Picture: Donations of medical instruments and protective equipment come in need in a children’s hospital in Kiev, where mothers and newborns are taken care of in a cellar whilst bombardments take place outside. Photo: Andriy Boiko, UNICEF.



2 Peace processes and peace mediation

Peace processes and peace mediation play a key role in Finland's Women, Peace and Security work. Finland contributes to enhancing women's leadership and meaningful roles as well as gender mainstreaming in peace processes and mediation. The Centre for Peace Mediation, established at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2020, bolsters Finland's activities and profile in this sector.

Women remain under-represented in peace processes, be it in the role of negotiators, mediators, witnesses, observers or signatories. However, studies have found that women's meaningful participation in the peace process improves the possibilities of reaching a peace agreement and enhances the implementation of the agreement, and thus the chances of a more sustainable peace. Over the years, this has been increasingly understood, both in conflict-affected countries and in international fora, but the implementation is lagging behind. Women's participation has proven particularly challenging in the preparation and initial stages of peace processes, with a male-dominated elite of conflict parties and mediators often determining the course of the process.

Finland considers that it is essential to strengthen women's participation in official peace negotiations and in high-level decision-making fora. Women must have a role at all levels and stages of peace processes – from informal discussions to ceasefire agreements, planning of negotiation processes and negotiations on them (*'talks about talks'*) to the implementation and monitoring of peace agreements. Women's participation in informal dialogue and peace processes is of crucial importance, as it has been found to support women's access to official negotiations at all stages. Finland will consequently pay particular attention to the inclusion of women in peace processes and negotiations from the early stages on and strive to remove obstacles to women's participation.

FINNISH PEACE MEDIATION AND THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS' CENTRE FOR PEACE MEDIATION

Peace mediation has been one of the priorities stated in Finland's Government Programmes since 2007. It represents a continuum in Finland's foreign and security policy, at the core of which is supporting the multilateral system and the peaceful resolution and prevention of conflicts. Finland has been active in strengthening the position of peace mediation among the instruments available to the UN, EU and OSCE. A number of Finns have been posted on international peace mediation related assignments, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has funded peace mediation activities of both Finnish and international organisations. The special representatives on peace mediation, appointed by different Foreign Ministers, have promoted issues of importance to Finland. In addition to the continuum in Finland's foreign policy, Finland's credibility in peace mediation is bolstered by the country's own narrative of transformation – from civil war and poverty to prosperity and stability.

The purpose of the Centre for Peace Mediation, which started operating at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in October 2020, is to further develop peace mediation in Finland and, in particular, to enhance the Ministry's agency. Through diplomacy Finland builds trust which is the most important asset in peace mediation. Finland can support the resolution of prolonged conflicts by various means such as good offices, facilitating confidential dialogue, etc. The network of Finnish missions is a significant resource for developing diplomatic peace mediation.

The Centre for Peace Mediation strives to expand Finnish participation in peace mediation and dialogue processes and to strengthen a networking approach with Finnish mediation actors. In addition to Finnish NGOs, other key partners include the Finnish chapter of the Nordic Women Mediators and the Finnish Water Diplomacy Network, both established by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as the Finnish Parliament Network on Peace Mediation.

The Centre for Peace Mediation actively participates in the international discussion on the operating conditions of peace mediation in the current global state of transformation.

Inclusivity and the diverse roles of women

Inclusivity is needed to achieve sustainable results. Rather than involving all stakeholders directly in formal negotiations, inclusive process means promoting systematic interaction between the conflict parties and other relevant actors. Inclusion means more than mere presence. Especially with regard to women, opportunities for genuinely meaningful participation should be emphasised. In addition to the number of women actors, Finland will pay attention to their roles, the impact of their participation, and their opportunities to make use of their competence and networks.

In peace mediation, Finland will support a multi-track approach that enhances inclusion and local, national and regional ownership. By building links between the high-level political process and community and local level work, a more comprehensive picture can be obtained of the views of different population groups, the root causes of the conflict and the factors that promote and trigger it. In turn, this makes it possible to find solutions that meet the needs and correspond with the views of different population groups better and, consequently, are more enduring. It is consequently important to strengthen support for women actors at local level as well as for women's organisations, organisations promoting women's rights, and women-led organisations. Their participation in the different stages of the peace process must be increased, and efforts must be made to link them better to high-level mediation.

It should also be noted that women are not always peacemakers. They may also be participants in a conflict, for example, as fighters or by supporting violent extremism. Therefore, in peace mediation more attention should be paid to the fact that women are not a homogeneous group. In addition to gender, their opportunities for participation and agency are affected by many other factors such as age, disability, political background, religion and/or ethnicity. Consequently, the methods for enabling and strengthening their participation and agency vary, too. This diversity also creates opportunities. Indigenous women, for example, often have valuable experience of conflict resolution, and the inclusion of young women also promotes the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. Women in the most vulnerable situations often have special needs and experiences that can easily be overlooked. Finland will enhance, in particular, consideration for women with disabilities in peace processes in line with its development policy and the commitments given at the *Global Disability Summit* in 2022.

WOMEN MEDIATORS' NETWORKS

The network of Nordic Women Mediators (NWM) is a collaborative forum established by Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland in 2015. It brings together Nordic women with experience in peace mediation or peace negotiations. The network promotes women's meaningful participation in peace processes and supports the participation of Nordic women in peace work. The network has over 140 members. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Centre for Peace Mediation coordinates the network of Finnish Women Mediators, which operates as part of NWM. The network's operational partner is CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, while NWM's other national networks have their own operational partners.

In recent years, there has been growing interest in women mediators' networks around the world, and increasing numbers of both national and regional networks have been established. NWM works actively together with other regional women mediators' networks. In addition to NWM, five other regional networks currently belong to the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks established in 2019 (FemWise of the African Union, Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, Women Mediators across the Commonwealth, Arab Women Mediators Network, and Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators). Women peace mediators' networks lend visibility to women working in the field of mediation and may play an important role in bringing women to the negotiating table. These networks can also support intergenerational mentoring to develop young women's mediation capacity.

Picture: The Nordic Women Mediators' Network held their annual meeting in Helsinki in November 2022. In the meeting, they discussed how the European security situation has changed and how the network could support women's political participation in Ukraine. Photo: Atte Kajova.



Tools of peace mediation

Globally peace mediation and especially in high-level processes seen in public are still very much dominated by men. The preconditions for a more systematic consideration of women's meaningful participation and gender perspective in peace mediation and the planning of peace processes, include creating different mechanisms and procedures and putting them on a permanent footing as standard activities. Existing good practices and proven mechanisms and procedures can be tailored to suit the situation in question. Innovativeness and willingness to invest in developing new tools are also needed. The use of digital tools, for example, may enable larger groups to participate in peace processes.

Supporting a peace process and peace mediation require partnerships and promoting peace at all levels: local, national and international. Finland will strengthen its partnerships in the field of peace mediation and pay particular attention to the realisation of the *do no harm* principle, women's meaningful participation, and to safeguarding their status and rights in peace processes. NGOs are important partners in this respect. Making better use of diaspora communities' competence will be examined. Finland will provide political and economic support as well as expertise for civil society actors in conflicts and conflict-prone regions with the aim of promoting women's more active roles as mediators and peace negotiators.

Gender mainstreaming

In order for the peace processes to be more effective, gender perspective and gender equality need to be taken better into account in peace mediation. Gender-sensitive and locally based conflict analysis supports peace mediation in finding solutions that meet better the needs of not only women but all those affected by the conflict. Finland will promote at the international level gender mainstreaming and the integration of issues relating to gender and women as a central part of peace processes and peace agreements. Finland will also offer expertise and training to support peace mediators with these themes.

Water diplomacy is a good example of mainstreaming. Peaceful management of transboundary waters and water diplomacy are ways of preventing and mitigating water-related tensions, which are exacerbated by climate change. In terms of conflict prevention as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, it is essential to involve women in transboundary water cooperation and regional decision making on managing water resources for the use of different functions of society. Finland will strengthen the integration of the gender perspective into, and women's participation in, water diplomacy processes.

Picture: Finland organized the first National Dialogues Conference (NDC) in 2014. Since then, there has been five of them, serving as an international platform for sharing best practices in peace mediation and concrete dialogues. In 2022, 65% of the speakers and moderators of the conference were women. The conference is organized in cooperation between the MFA Finland, Finn Church Aid, CMI and Felm. Photo: Maria Santto.



OBJECTIVE 2**Leadership and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity as well gender mainstreaming are strengthened in peace processes and peace mediation****RESULT 2.1****Women's role and meaningful participation in peace processes and peace mediation have been strengthened**

OUTCOME 2.1.1	Finland supports the diverse roles and participation of women actors in both official and informal dialogues and peace processes [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid]
OUTCOME 2.1.2	Finland enhances the mediation capacity, networking and access to peace mediation tasks of women peacebuilders and peace mediators [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission]
OUTCOME 2.1.3	In international and regional fora, and in its cooperation with international peace mediation actors, Finland promotes policies and actions aimed at increasing women's leadership and participation, and safeguarding the status and rights of women and girls in dialogue and peace processes from the early stages on [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 2.2**Gender perspective has been better integrated into peace processes and peace mediation**

OUTCOME 2.2.1	Finland promotes the integration of gender perspective in peace processes, dialogues and peace mediation, which it participates [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI]
OUTCOME 2.2.2	Finland promotes more participatory and gender responsive practices, mechanisms and procedures in peace processes, dialogues and peace mediation at different levels [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid]
OUTCOME 2.2.3	Finland provides training for authorities and other actors on integrating the gender perspective into the different stages of peace processes, and promotes the sharing of experiences [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, CMI, Finn Church Aid]
OUTCOME 2.2.4	In water diplomacy, the integration of gender perspective and women's participation are enhanced, and existing networks are strengthened [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

3 Security sector, crisis management and crisis preparedness

In the changing security environment the role of the national security sector, national defence and preparedness work has been emphasised. In this situation, stronger integration of the objectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda into military and civilian crisis management and the national security sector is a key objective for Finland. Efforts will be made to increase women's participation in security sector and to promote gender responsiveness³ in this sector. As a new NATO ally, Finland will also be obliged to take measures to improve national gender equality competences, as the Women, Peace and Security agenda has been integrated into all core tasks of NATO.

Gender mainstreaming in crisis management

Participation in international crisis management is part of Finland's active foreign and security policy. Finland takes part in international crisis management and its development within the framework of the UN, European Union, OSCE, Council of Europe, and NATO. It is essential to ensure the integration of the gender perspective into all levels of crisis management operations: political, strategic, operational and tactical planning, implementation and monitoring of operations, competence development and operational support, recruitment, and leadership training. Gender mainstreaming in crisis management allows Finland to respond to the different security needs of the genders during conflicts and in post-conflict situations. In order to strengthen the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the practical level, regular reporting on the implementation of gender, gender equality and non-discrimination issues in operations is important.

3 Gender responsiveness, or gender sensitivity, refer to recognising assumptions, prejudices and perceptions culturally and socially associated with different genders in everyday activities and ways of speaking. Gender responsiveness also includes recognising gender stereotypes and assessing them critically as well as awareness of gender diversity.

Picture: The interest towards women's voluntary military service has been increasing in recent years with over 1000 women applying to service annually. Over the years, the Finnish Defence Forces has trained more than 10,000 women into the reserve. Photo: Veikka Suni, the Finnish Defence Forces 2022.



Women's participation in crisis management operations

Women's participation in crisis management is a priority for Finland and a way of strengthening the comprehensive approach to crisis management. Through women's increased participation, the operations and missions have an easier access to local women, which makes it possible to provide a more effective response to the needs of the entire population. Finland will continue to work systematically to promote women's participation in crisis management, both nationally and internationally. Finland has supported international initiatives on training women for and increasing their number in crisis management operations (including the *Elsie initiative*). Finland actively promotes the recruitment of women to crisis management tasks, with particular emphasis on operational tasks and leadership positions. Personnel recruited for crisis management operations include military personnel, experts from the police force, Finnish Border Guard and Finnish Customs, and legal sector experts. Civilian crisis management experts may also have a background in the private sector, NGOs or research institutes. Finnish experts work in a variety of tasks, from operational planning and combating sexual and gender-based violence to war crime investigations and the reconstruction of the state.

The share of women serving in military crisis management operations in Finland has varied between 4.7% and 7.8% in recent years, whereas the UN target is 15%. The goal set by the Finnish Parliamentary Committee on Crisis Management (2021) is to double the number of women. Military crisis management personnel are recruited from among reservists who have completed their military service, and from professional soldiers. In order to increase the number of women in military crisis management operations, the Defence Forces must take active measures to recruit women both to voluntary military service, and to professional soldiers. The gendered nature of military service is also reflected in the personnel structure of the Defence Forces. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) reviewed Finland in 2022, and Finland was required to report on increasing the representation of women in decision-making positions in the Defence Forces in an expedited procedure. The Defence Forces are examining the possibilities of increasing women's participation in leadership roles.

Women accounted for 46% of the experts posted by Finland to civilian crisis management tasks in 2022. This is one of the highest numbers in the world and almost in line with the 50 % goal set by the Parliamentary Committee on Crisis Management. With this number, Finland has achieved the UN target of 25% of police officers posted to crisis management operations being women. However, civilian crisis management tasks remain gendered; as security sector tasks are men-dominated, women's representation concentrates in certain task areas. In order to maintain women's high share in civilian crisis management, wider representation of women must be seen in a more varied tasks and more women police

officers must be recruited and trained. Experts with diverse expertise and backgrounds also enhance the impact of international civilian crisis management. Finland aims to increase women's share in crisis management by developing the training of security authorities and women's career paths in the security sector, as well as by dismantling structural obstacles inherent in international crisis management tasks. In addition to the number of women, attention will be paid to the impacts of their participation.

Studies indicate that family reasons are one of the most important factors that cause women to drop their careers in crisis management, which is also reflected in women's possibilities of progressing to senior roles in these operations. Finland has developed support measures for the family members of crisis management personnel and, among other things, amended the legislation on civilian crisis management to address better the role of families. To this end, Finland will also participate in developing the policies of international organisations.

Picture: Young soldiers at Kriisinhallinta NYT (Crisis Management NOW) event in November 2022. Photo: Konsta Partanen, MFA Finland.



Security sector and crisis management training

A precondition for gender mainstreaming in the security sector and crisis management is increasing and developing training related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Finland will continue and step up its national training activities. The Defence Forces will examine and respond to the needs for developing the gender training and structures of its peacetime organisation.

Finland will participate in integrating the gender perspective into international crisis management training and support efforts to improve the quality of training in the UN, EU, OSCE, NATO, in its actions as a partner to the African Union, and in bilateral cooperation. In particular, Finland should invest in tailored training provided during operations (incl. *in-mission training*), through which Finland's special expertise can be efficiently targeted to suit the needs of an individual operation and the local context. Drawing on local actors' expertise is important in this respect. Finland is a pioneer in training delivered in cooperation between civilian and military, in which the inclusion of Women, Peace and Security agenda is vital. The Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) and the Crisis Management Centre (CMC Finland) are long-standing expert actors whose international training curricula support these objectives.

Protection of civilians and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

Protecting civilians is one of the most important tasks in crisis management operations. Finland stresses the protection of civilians in armed conflicts and, in its dimension relating to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, particularly the status of women and young people, prevention and elimination of sexual and gender-based violence, and the protection of children in armed conflicts. Those serving in crisis management positions have an important task of monitoring and reporting on sexual and gender-based violence related to conflicts. The gender focal points and experts working in the operations support this work.

The activities of Finnish crisis management personnel are governed by both the Code of Conduct of the organisation in charge of the crisis management operation and the Criminal Code of Finland. Finland stresses the fact that sexual exploitation and abuse are an offence, and that all sexual and gender-based harassment is prohibited. All suspected offences and abuses are investigated in accordance with Finnish legislation. Finland actively contributes to ensuring that the codes of conduct of international organisations prevent discrimination, harassment and exploitation, that the officials in charge of the operations fully adhere to the codes of conduct, and that all suspected cases of exploitation and abuse are investigated without delay, addressing the victim's rights and needs.

Picture: Satu Koivu has acted as Head of Police Component at UNFICYP (United Nations Force in Cyprus) since 2021. Koivu was the first Finn to be nominated to a lead position in UN Civil Crisis Management. In the picture Koivu is on the Green Line together with the Head of Military Component. Photo: Captain Dorothea Bade, UNFICYP.



Preparedness

In the changing international security environment, the importance of national preparedness work has been emphasized. Issues of security of supply, civilian preparedness and resilience associated with a broad concept of security are becoming increasingly important. Finland will take into account the objectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the related international frameworks and good practices also in these measures. The aim is to identify women's special needs and to promote their participation in national preparedness.

Finland will consistently take the gender perspective into account in key international and national exercises in the security sector. Gender mainstreaming in the exercises supports the practical implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and helps to identify the challenges and opportunities related to it.

Climate change

The impacts of climate change affect disproportionately countries that are already fragile and unstable. Consequently, a large proportion of crisis management operations take place in areas where climate change exacerbates social instability and conflict risks. The impacts of climate change also clearly affect women, girls and persons in vulnerable situations more than others. The links between the Women, Peace and Security agenda and climate, environment and security should be taken into account more consistently and strongly. In the UN and the EU, Finland will actively participate in discussions on these themes and support practical means by which these links can be taken into account, for example in the planning and implementation of crisis management operations.

ROLE OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN PREPAREDNESS AND WOMEN IN NATIONAL DEFENCE IN FINLAND

Finnish NGOs, and especially women's organisations, played an important role in rebuilding Finnish society after the Second World War. In war and conflict situations, women participate in many critical functions of society, including maintaining social welfare and health care services or security of supply, while also caring for children, older people or other persons in need of attention. Strengthening women's participation and taking their role into account in planning for society's preparedness is crucial.

Women's organisations remain a vital part of Finnish society and have an important role in preparedness work. Women's National Emergency Preparedness Association, which was established in 1997, is an example of national cooperation organisations. It is an umbrella organisation for ten affiliated voluntary organisations engaging in national defence and comprehensive security work with more than 100,000 women as their members. The purpose of the Association is to provide training that builds women's capabilities related to security and preparedness and to widen women's possibilities of acting for the benefit of society in emergency conditions. The activities of the Association are non-military.

An active debate is on-going in Finland on the equality dimensions of conscription and developing general conscription. Under section 127 of the Constitution of Finland (731/1999) and pursuant to the Conscription Act (1438/2007), every male Finnish citizen is liable for military service from the beginning of the year in which he turns 18 until the end of the year in which he turns 60. The Act on Women's Voluntary Military Service (285/2022) complements this legislation. A Parliamentary Committee has looked into developing general conscription and fulfilment of the national defence obligation (2021). Among other things, the Committee proposes extending the call-up system to the entire cohort and also opening civil service for women.

The organisation of national defence is a matter of fundamental importance in terms of gender equality. For this reason, it is important that the promotion of gender equality is addressed in all decisions concerning national defence and any future development work.

OBJECTIVE 3

Integration of gender perspective and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity is strengthened in the security sector, crisis management and preparedness work.

RESULT 3.1

Gender balance in the security sector and crisis management has improved and diversity has made headway

OUTCOME 3.1.1	Finland increases the number of women serving in the security sector and takes measures to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities for career advancement and meaningful participation [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior]
OUTCOME 3.1.2	Finland increases the number of women serving in military crisis management and takes measures to ensure equal treatment and possibilities for meaningful participation for everyone [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces]
OUTCOME 3.1.3	Finland maintains gender parity in civilian crisis management tasks, strives for gender balance in basic civilian crisis management training and also takes active measures to achieve qualitative and task-specific parity [Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTCOME 3.1.4	Finland increases the share of women especially in operative tasks and leaderships roles in operations [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTCOME 3.1.5	Finland develops mechanisms for promoting women's meaningful participation in Defence Forces' leadership tasks [Defence Forces]
OUTCOME 3.1.6	Finland assesses gender differences in well-being at work in the security sector and crisis management and develops support for well-being at work [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTCOME 3.1.7	Finland develops support measures for the families of crisis management personnel [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTCOME 3.1.8	Finland promotes the enforcement of codes of conduct and the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment as well as intervention in and reporting of these behaviours in the security sector and crisis management tasks [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]

RESULT 3.2**Integration of gender perspective is strengthened in research, planning, implementation and evaluation in the security sector and crisis management**

OUTCOME 3.2.1	Finland increases the number of gender experts and develops the gender structure of the Defence Forces' peacetime organisation [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces]
OUTPUT 3.2.2	When operating as part of NATO, Finland takes into account the aspects of Women, Peace and Security [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTPUT 3.2.3	Finland increases the number and meaningful participation of gender experts. Efforts are made to improve gender balance among experts. [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTPUT 3.2.4	Finland contributes to integrating the gender perspective into the planning and implementation of mandates for operations at all levels (strategic, operational and tactical) and to ensuring the availability of sufficient resources and capacity for the implementation of equality mandates. [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior]
OUTPUT 3.2.5	Finland integrates the gender perspective into operational planning and actions at the strategic, operative and tactical level, accounting for the operating possibilities allowed and limitations set by the mandate of the operation [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces]
OUTPUT 3.2.6	Finland integrates the gender perspective into the reporting and impact assessments of operations and uses the information obtained through the operations more efficiently in developing the gender perspective [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs]
OUTPUT 3.2.7	Finland supports the efforts of the international community to address the Women, Peace and Security agenda more consistently and strongly as part of climate security issues [Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 3.3**Gender perspective has been developed in security sector and crisis management training with a gender transformative approach**

OUTPUT 3.3.1	The needs for training related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and gender equality are assessed [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTPUT 3.3.2	Gender perspective and gender analysis are integrated into the basic and further training and qualifications of security sector personnel, and the impact of this is assessed [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTPUT 3.3.3	Senior management and experts are trained to address the gender perspective [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTPUT 3.3.4	Finland develops gender perspectives for crisis management training and ensures that all those posted to crisis management tasks have received training on gender equality, including gender mainstreaming. The impact of the training is assessed [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTPUT 3.3.5	The competence of Finnish experts working in Women, Peace and Security agenda tasks is built up [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC]
OUTPUT 3.3.6	Finland offers training modules and/or events incorporating the Women, Peace and Security theme tailored for international use. [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTPUT 3.3.7	Finland strengthens international training and research partnerships in the security sector and crisis management and promotes training relating to the Women, Peace and Security agenda in international fora [Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 3.4**Women's diverse participation and addressing of their special needs are promoted in preparedness work and key exercises**

OUTPUT 3.4.1	Finland strengthens the gender perspective in preparedness work [Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTPUT 3.4.2	Women's participation in voluntary national defence has increased [Defence Forces]
OUTPUT 3.4.3	Finland integrates the gender perspective into international and key national exercises [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Red Cross]

RESULT 3.5**Safeguarding of the rights of women and girls has been strengthened in conflict-affected areas**

OUTCOME 3.5.1	Sexual and gender-based violence against civilians associated with conflicts is responded to effectively [Ministry of Defence, Defence Forces, Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Red Cross]
----------------------	--

4 Safety of women and girls and realisation of their rights in conflicts

Women's access to justice weakens especially in conflict situations. Women are also in a vulnerable position in situations of forced migration resulting from conflicts. Concrete measures to strengthen women's resilience to crisis are of paramount importance, as conflicts prolong and forced migration situations affect up to 80 million people. Finland promotes the protection of women and girls and the full realisation of their rights at all stages of conflict. Finland emphasises in particular the elimination of violence against all women and girls, women's access to legal protection, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

As a party to a number of international human rights conventions, Finland is committed to measures that strengthen women's role and decision-making power in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding and improve women's safety. Especially, as a party to CEDAW, the Istanbul Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Finland is committed to measures that protect women and girls from gender-based violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual abuse.

Law of armed conflict

Finland is committed to the full implementation of international humanitarian law. The law of armed conflict, in other words international humanitarian law, protects the civilians, the sick, the wounded, the shipwrecked and the prisoners of war. They must be respected, protected and treated humanely. International humanitarian law places particular emphasis on women's right to special protection against sexual violence and on the special right of pregnant women and mothers of young children to health care and assistance. The law of armed conflict have evolved through case law. Finland supports stronger integration of a gender perspective into understanding of the law of armed conflict.

Finland pays special attention to the need for protection of persons in vulnerable situations. They include, among others, women and girls subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, sexual and gender minorities and persons with

disabilities. The share of persons with disabilities in the population grows during armed conflicts. Persons with disabilities are at an increased risk of losing their lives in natural disasters during conflicts and, similarly, women and girls with disabilities have a higher risk of becoming victims of sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation during conflicts.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

Significant increase in sexual and gender-based violence is often linked to armed conflicts. Sexual violence during conflicts refers to, for example, rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, abortion or sterilisation, forced marriage or other forms of extreme sexual violence. These acts may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is also used as a method of warfare, against which in particular girls and women find it difficult to protect themselves. UN Secretary-General's report notes that 97% of the CRSV crimes reported in 2021 targeted women. As a whole, CRSV crimes are strongly under-reported. Sexual violence in conflicts, especially when against men and boys, becomes rarely visible and should also be actively combated. Increased sexual and gender-based violence among the civilian population during an armed conflict often also continues after the conflict.

Rather than being a problem of only conflict zones, sexual and gender-based violence is an alarming and internationally recognised human rights problem also in Finland. Women with disabilities and those with a foreign background experience violence in Finland two to three times more often than women belonging to the majority groups. Women with a foreign background have almost doubled risk to be a victim of rape compared to women belonging to the majority population. The Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention drawn up by the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE) sets out Finland's national measures for implementing the Istanbul Convention. The current Action Plan covers years 2022–2025. In addition, a National Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women has been implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice in 2020–2023.

ONLINE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Online gender-based violence is part of the continuum of gender-based violence. This phenomenon is also known as technology-facilitated gender-based violence. It refers to violence that is perpetrated, supported or intensified by means of digital tools and that targets a person or persons based on their gender. The perpetrator may be an individual, organised group or some other party. Their purpose is to control, silence or harm the victim in different ways. Among other things, online gender-based violence restricts the targeted persons' and population groups' possibilities of participating in public debate, social life and political activities.

Online gender-based violence takes not only the forms familiar from the real world, including harassment or persecution, but also new forms that have been facilitated specifically by the online environment. These forms include image-based sexual abuse and doxing, which means unauthorised disclosure of personal data online, such as a person's location. Online gender-based violence targets especially politically active people or those who have a public presence, such as politicians, journalists and activists. Also age may expose to violence and harassment: girls and young women face significant amounts of online harassment. Women and girls belonging to minorities, such as ethnic, sexual or gender minorities, and women and girls with disabilities often encounter more online gender-based violence than others.

Online violence is linked to violence in the real world, and misogyny correlates for instance with the likelihood of participating in political violence. Consequently, interventions in online violence may play an important role also in conflict prevention and management. Finland defends all women's and girls' right to a safe online environment worldwide, for example in the international Generation Equality process coordinated by UN's gender equality organisation UN Women, in which Finland serves as co-chair of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation.

Legal responsibility

Finland is active in preventing and eliminating gender-based violence and emphasises legal responsibility, especially bringing perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence to criminal justice. Finland supports the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and emphasises the rights and status of victims, as well as provides voluntary funding for the work of the Trust Fund for Victims in supporting victims of SGBV. Finland's support for the prevention of violence against women is mainly channelled through UN Women and UNFPA.

Training is an important means of combating gender-based violence and ensuring criminal responsibility. Finland supports the UN's Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, which provides training with the objective of reducing sexual violence associated with armed conflicts and ensuring legal accountability. Finland is also committed to support the Justice Rapid Response (JRR), which trains experts for investigating SGBV crimes, among other most serious international crimes. The JRR maintains a roster of experts who are prepared to assist states and international organisations on a short notice in the investigation of crimes upon their request. Finland dispatches also experts to support judicial systems and, for example, investigations of war crimes as part of the civilian crisis management work. Peacekeepers play an important role in monitoring and reporting on conflict-related sexual violence in their operations. Finland supports judicial and legal aid services targeted at girls and women as well as organisations maintaining safe houses for women.

Humanitarian assistance

The purpose of humanitarian assistance is to help people to survive in emergencies. It also supports communities' early recovery from crises, including by protecting the environment and livelihoods and promoting their recovery. Finland's Humanitarian Policy (2019) and Guidelines for the triple nexus approach also emphasise the integration of the Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security into humanitarian work. When planning and implementing humanitarian programmes, more attention needs to be paid to the gender perspective, women's participation, and threats and risks women and girls encounter due to their gender. Finland will emphasise women's free access to humanitarian tasks. This requires also women's participation in the planning of assistance and its implementation. Finland participates in the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies. When responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian assistance, essential functions include prevention, helping those who have experienced violence to access health care and protection, as well as psychosocial, economic and legal support. Humanitarian organisations must also ensure that persons who have experienced violence can access these different services, even if the organisations would not themselves provide them.

Picture: Finland emphasises women's free access to humanitarian tasks. In the picture a voluntary worker of the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Kinshasa. Photo: Aapo Huhta, Finnish Red Cross.



Human rights defenders

Human rights defenders play an important role in preventing conflicts and creating a situational picture of them. They report on inequality, discrimination and serious human rights violations, which are often the reasons behind conflicts. The role of human rights defenders is stressed in situations where access to information is difficult, such as in crisis areas or under authoritarian regimes. Many human rights defenders in numerous countries are still doing their work at the risk of their personal safety or even lives. Woman human rights defenders face various additional risks and challenges due to their gender. These problems are often related to gendered power structures, discriminatory attitudes and practices, including multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and sexual and gender-based violence and harassment. While new technologies make it easier for human rights defenders to access and communicate information and network, such technologies can also expose to violence, harassment and, for example, surveillance. Online gender-based violence has put women human rights defenders in a more difficult position everywhere in the world.

The Foreign Ministry of Finland's guidelines on supporting human rights defenders (updated in 2022) place particular emphasis on supporting work that aims to promote the rights of women and girls as well as persons in vulnerable situations. Finland also stresses supporting among these persons human rights defenders who operate in conflict situations, including women human rights defenders.

In some situations, it may be important for human rights defenders whose safety is at risk to leave their country of residence. Finland has found that in addition to current entry pathways, there is a need to create a safe, flexible, efficient and systematic pathway for entry to the country in which, in exceptional humanitarian situations, a decision on permission to enter can be made quickly without a burdensome administrative procedure. For this reason, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is preparing a Government proposal on creating a national humanitarian visa in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior.

Refugeeism in Finland

Refugees, and women and girls who are forced to leave their homes, are at a particular risk of violence and discrimination. Finland strives to ensure in its actions the safety of women, consideration of their special needs and their participation at different stages of the refugee process (in their countries of origin, at refugee camps, on the journey and as asylum seekers in the country of arrival). The quota refugee system is one of the most efficient ways of helping those in the most vulnerable situations. In its refugee quota Finland emphasises selecting families as well as women and children in vulnerable situations.

Gender equality and the gender perspective are enhanced in Finland in the permit and reception services for individuals seeking international protection, as well as in the services and support measures promoting the integration of individuals granted international protection and other immigrants. Many of the women and girls arriving in Finland as refugees or asylum seekers have experienced sexual violence either in their country of origin or during their flight. For this reason, women and girls should be provided with a comprehensive range of services intended for the victims of sexual crimes in the reception centres. In this context, their backgrounds and possible cultural obstacles that may affect their willingness to seek help should be taken into consideration.

Support measures for integration promote also the receptiveness of society, in other words society's ability to recognise and dismantle power structures and mechanisms that lead to inequalities, especially racism in all its forms. The opportunities available for women with a refugee background in the Finnish labour market are clearly narrower than for other immigrant groups. The proposal for a new Integration Act submitted to Parliament in autumn 2022 would improve the opportunities of immigrant women, especially parents caring for children at home, to receive services that promote integration. In the future, an assessment of skills and integration service needs would be conducted for all beneficiaries of international protection and children's home care allowance. The education and employment of immigrant women has a great importance not only for themselves but also for the future of their children in Finnish society.

OBJECTIVE 4

The safety and rights of women and girls are better safeguarded and their diverse needs are better met during crises

RESULT 4.1

The international community's ability to combat sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts and to hold the perpetrators accountable has strengthened

OUTCOME 4.1.1	Finland emphasises accountability for sexual and gender-based violence in crisis situations [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
OUTCOME 4.1.2	Finland promotes the integration of a gender perspective into international humanitarian law [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTCOME 4.1.3	Finland supports national authorities' capabilities for promoting the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence offences in fragile contexts and conflicts [Ministry of the Interior, CMC, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid]
OUTCOME 4.1.4	Accessible support is available to those who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence, and they participate in the planning of services in fragile contexts and conflicts [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Refugee Council, Finnish Red Cross, Family Federation of Finland]
OUTCOME 4.1.5	Online gender-based violence is increasingly addressed also in fragile contexts and conflicts [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 4.2

Gender perspective and the participation of women in all their diversity in humanitarian assistance work is promoted

OUTCOME 4.2.1	Finland promotes gender equality and non-discrimination issues and their coordination in the work of UN organisations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movements, and NGOs [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTCOME 4.2.2	In humanitarian fora, Finland emphasises the special needs of women and girls in vulnerable situations (including women with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, older women) and promotes the accessibility of humanitarian assistance [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Finnish Red Cross]
OUTCOME 4.2.3	As part of the localisation of assistance, Finland promotes local women's full, equal, effective and meaningful participation at all stages of humanitarian assistance provision, taking into account women's needs for safety [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Finn Church Aid, Finnish Red Cross]

RESULT 4.3**Women human rights defenders are protected and their equal opportunities for action and participation have improved**

OUTCOME 4.3.1	Finland provides information on the work, rights and need for protection of women human rights defenders, meets them, and supports politically and financially their work and NGOs that support them [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Family Federation of Finland]
OUTCOME 4.3.2	Finland supports women human rights defenders' right to have their voices heard in international fora, including the UN Human Rights Council, in which Finland is a member in 2022–2024 [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, CMI]
OUTCOME 4.3.3	Finland develops mechanisms for protecting human rights defenders [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 4.4**Suomen kansalliset toimet huomioivat sotaa pakenevien ja erityistä suojelua tarvitsevien naisten ja tyttöjen tarpeet heidän vastaanotossa ja kotoutumisessa**

OUTCOME 4.4.1	Finland strengthens the response to the special needs of women in need of special protection in services promoting integration, increases their participation in measures that promote integration, and strives to improve their employment [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Refugee Council]
OUTCOME 4.4.2	The ability of service providers participating in the reception of asylum seekers and persons who have been granted temporary protection to address the special needs of women and girls is improved by strengthening national measures [Ministry of the Interior]
OUTCOME 4.4.3	Girls and women arriving in Finland are offered high-quality basic services into which the gender perspective has been integrated, and more specific services are provided for victims of crimes in compliance with the EU Victims Directive, particularly taking into account the special support needed by victims of sexual and hate crimes and mitigating the risk of re-victimisation [Ministry of the Interior]
OUTCOME 4.4.4	Asylum seekers and women and girls receiving temporary protection are offered different activities and channels that promote their well-being and the development of their prerequisites for independent initiative and integration in a new environment [Ministry of the Interior, Refugee Council, Finnish Red Cross]

5 Mainstreaming and advocacy

Finland has been active in promoting the normative development of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Advocacy work will continue in international contexts and organisations (including the UN, EU, OSCE, NATO, AU) with emphasis on improving women's participation and safety as well as on gender mainstreaming.

Finland will incorporate perspectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in negotiations relating to conflicts, peace processes and security and incorporates the agenda to its contributions in international contexts. Presidencies, chairmanships and coordinator roles are an effective way of bringing up the theme of Women, Peace and Security more prominently and strengthening the international partnerships related to it, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Finland continues to participate in international friendship and likeminded groups promoting the Women, Peace and Security theme, with emphasis on the priority areas set out in the Action Plan. Finland will continue its work as a catalytic member of the Generation Equality campaign's 'Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action' coordinated by UN Women. Collaboration with Spain in the Commitment 2025 joint initiative aimed at supporting women's participation in peace processes continues.

At the country level, Finland continues its long-term support for drawing up, reinforcing and supporting the implementation of national Women, Peace and Security Action Plans, including through UN Women. Particular attention is paid to collecting good practices and sharing lessons learned, especially from Finland's long-term partner countries, taking into account the context specific features and the challenges of implementation. Context sensitivity is important for ensuring impact and guaranteeing that the *do no harm* principle is followed.

At the national level, Finland will build up the competence of and develop guidelines for public officials relating to the Women, Peace and Security themes in the responsible ministries and agencies. Finland will liaise more intensively with posted Finnish experts and increase exchanges of information between experts working on Women, Peace and Security themes. Finland will integrate the gender perspective into national security-related guidance documents and discussions. At the national level the perspectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda will be brought to the preparation processes of national action plans whose themes are relevant to the Resolutions. An example of such

action plans is Finland's National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism (2019–2023). When this Action Plan is updated, references to the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the UN Global Strategy against Terrorism will be accounted for.

Finland will strengthen the connection between research and practical work related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda as well as knowledge-based decision-making, drawing especially on research and information produced in Finland. Finland will strive to promote exchanges of information between research institutes and think tanks and promote their contacts with authorities in order to disseminate research evidence relevant to the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Picture: The annual meeting of the Nordic Women Mediators' network was held in Helsinki in November 2022. The effects of the changing global security situation on peace mediation and peacebuilding was discussed in a panel called "Navigating peace in the current global security environment". Photo: Konsta Partanen, MFA Finland.



OBJECTIVE 5

The implementation of the WPS agenda is strengthened and context sensitivity is increased in national and international activities.

RESULT 5.1

Mechanisms for mainstreaming and operationalising the Women, Peace and Security agenda have been strengthened and the actors' knowledge of the themes has improved

OUTCOME 5.1.1	National practices for monitoring, funding and reporting as well as learning have become more effective [All]
OUTCOME 5.1.2	Finland develops tools to support responsible parties' mainstreaming activities and context sensitive approaches [All]
OUTCOME 5.1.3	The Women, Peace and Security themes and the gender perspective are integrated into national security-related guidance documents and discussions [All]
OUTCOME 5.1.4	Finland liaises more closely with posted Finnish experts and steps up exchanges of information between experts working on Women, Peace and Security themes [All]

RESULT 5.2

Finland contributes to the preparation, development and implementation of international and regional policies related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda

OUTCOME 5.2.1	Finland's proposals, initiatives, contributions and recruitments promote the integration of the Women, Peace and Security agenda into international and regional activities [All]
OUTCOME 5.2.2	Finland influences the mainstreaming of the Women, Peace and Security themes in key financing instruments and funds and addresses the need to support local women's organisations, women's rights organisations and women-led organisations [Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Environment]

RESULT 5.3**Finland promotes the development and implementation of national Women, Peace and Security action plans**

OUTCOME 5.3.1 Finland supports the preparation and implementation of national Women, Peace and Security action plans [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

OUTCOME 5.3.2 Finland strengthens its action plan partnerships and exchanges of information between action plan projects [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]

RESULT 5.4**Research and information on Women, Peace and Security themes are used to support decision-making**

OUTCOME 5.4.1 Finland forges stronger links between research and practical work and strengthens evidence-based decision-making on Women, Peace and Security themes [All]

OUTCOME 5.4.2 Finland highlights the importance of research and information production on the Women, Peace and Security agenda with the aim of increasing the funding for Resolution 1325 themes [All]

Follow-up of implementation

Responsibility for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda rests with governments. The responsible parties in the central government mentioned in the Action Plan will monitor and implement the Action Plan for their part and allocate the necessary resources to this work. Civil society actors possess valuable knowledge, which brings important added value to the implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan.

The progress made with Action Plan implementation will be followed up by a national monitoring group led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Representatives of the parties responsible for implementing the Action Plan and partners, including ministries and NGOs as well as the Finnish National Women, Peace and Security Network, will be invited to participate in the monitoring group.

A separate implementation plan and measures will be drawn up under the coordination of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to ensure efficient implementation. The implementing parties will participate in its preparation in their areas of responsibility and update it if necessary. The implementing parties undertake to report on their work to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the national monitoring group. Guidelines will be developed to support reporting, and indicators will be created to underpin the monitoring of the Action Plan. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will submit an annual report to the Parliament (Foreign Affairs Committee) based on reports received from the implementing parties and the monitoring group's work, and report on Finland's activities in international contexts (UN, EU). A mid-term review of the Action Plan will be conducted, and the implementation plan that supports its operationalisation will be updated. The evaluation report drawn up at the end of the Action Plan period will also take beneficiaries' viewpoints into account.

Acronyms

CMC	Crisis Management Centre Finland
OKM	Ministry of Education and Culture
OM	Ministry of Justice
PLM	Ministry of Defence
PV	Defence Forces
SM	Ministry of the Interior
STM	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
TEM	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
UM	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
YM	Ministry of the Environment
CMI	CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
KUA	Finn Church Aid
Demo Finland	Political Parties of Finland for Democracy
FELM	Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission
Refugee Council	Finnish Refugee Council
SPR	Finnish Red Cross



OPETUS- JA
KULTTUURIMINISTERIÖ



OIKEUSMINISTERIÖ
JUSTITIEMINISTERIET



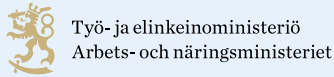
Puolustusministeriö
Försvarsministeriet
Ministry of Defence



Sisäministeriö
Inrikesministeriet



SOSIAALI- JA
TERVEYSMINISTERIÖ



Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö
Arbets- och näringsministeriet



Ulkoministeriö
Utrikesministeriet



Ympäristöministeriö
Miljöministeriet
Ministry of the Environment



Publications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

2023:13

ISSN PDF 2737-0844

ISBN PDF 978-952-281-379-4