

03



Queering
Women, Peace
and Security
National
Action Plans

3.1: Queering Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans

WPS National action Plans are national-level strategy documents that outline a government's approach and course of action for implementing WPS on a domestic and international level. Much of the focus on future directions for WPS, and feedback on ongoing WPS efforts, take place during consultations with academia, civil society, and policy makers during the drafting of WPS National Action Plans (NAPs). There are now over 100 WPS NAPs with some countries having multiple NAPs, renewed every four or five years.

3.2: Examples of LGBT inclusion in WPS National Action Plans

There are a growing number of NAPs that include attention to the LGBTQ+ community. As of early 2023, 13 of the 104 countries with NAPs currently mention LGBTQ+ people.⁴⁶ There are 18 countries with current or previous NAPs with at least one reference to LGBT people or sexuality. This includes Albania, Argentina, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Nepal, Norway, Paraguay, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, The Netherlands, the UK and Uruguay.

Canada's National Action Plan (2017-2022): pledges to pay attention to LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers through specific indicators supporting LGBT+ refugees under the refugee program resettlement indicator. This focus on asylum illustrates how NAPS offer an opportunity for states to draw attention to LGBTQ+ human rights not just in foreign policy but also in domestic policy. There is also attention to "LGBT civil society groups" in the section about sexual and reproductive rights.

United States National Action Plan (2019-2023): explicitly mentions intersex individuals alongside attention to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and individuals whose meaningful participation should be sought for executing WPS policy.

United Kingdom National Action Plan (2023-2027): the UK's fifth NAP mentions LGBT+ people three times, though the document never spells out the acronym so the words lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender do not appear in the document. The first mention of LGBT+ people is regarding the "overlapping barriers to accessing assistance" faced by LGBT+ women, and other vulnerable communities. The second mention is in relation to LGBT+ people's increased vulnerability to GBV. LGBT+ people are mentioned as a community under threat within the discussion of transnational threats" Previous UK NAPS include reference to "sexuality" (third) and one

to "sexual orientation and gender identity" (fourth) but included no further context beyond listing as a category for potential discrimination.

South African National Action Plan (2020-2025): pledges to engage in activities that protect LGBTIQ communities by providing awareness and psychosocial programmes and dedicated social services. The plan also points to the need to employ protective measures generated by innovative technology and transitional safe houses.⁴⁷

Nepal National Action Plan (2011-2016): broadly excluded LGBTQ+ groups. In the first quarter of 2022, the Ministry of Home Affairs in charge of developing Nepal's second NAP invited the Federation of Sexual and Gender Minorities Nepal (FSGMN) to participate in the meetings of the drafting committee and present and discuss their views and concerns. As such, it is expected that in the next draft of the NAP, there will be a greater focus on LGBTQ+ issues.

Albanian National Action Plan (2018-2020): calls to "strengthen professional capacities of police officers to investigate crimes on the grounds of sexual orientation (hate crimes)." This is an example of an indicator focusing on inclusion of LGBTQ+ people as a part of WPS within the protection pillar, recognizing violence against LGBTQ+ people as a hate crime.

Example of indicator from the Albanian National Action Plan (2018-2020):

Objective 1.2 "Integrate the gender perspective in educational programs for the application of UN SCR 1325"

Objective:	Strengthen professional capacities of police officers to investigate crimes on grounds of sexual orientation (hate crimes).
Responsible Institutions:	MoIA and CSOs specialized in Resolution 1325, supported by OSCE/ODIHR
Indicator to verify compliance:	Indicator to verify compliance: No. of training events; No. of trained persons orientation (hate crimes).
Deadline:	2018-2020
Budget needed for Implementation:	1,120,000 Albanian Leks. = £9004.14 Pounds Sterling

3.3 How and why to queer National Action Plans

"For 40 years women have taken on the task of documenting how the armed conflict has affected their lives and families. During that time we have realized how territorial, ethnic, and orientation differences sexual orientation and gender identity mark disproportionate and differentiated risks."

- Marcela Sanchez, Director of Colombia Divesra

Queering in practice means revisiting underlying norms about gender and disrupting common practices for providing security that relied on the police and militarized responses. Including LGBTQ+ people does not mean the country has engaged with the queer and trans community during consultation of the NAP, nor that a queer analysis was applied in writing the document. Additionally, inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues in one version of a country's NAP does not ensure inclusion in the next version of a country's NAP.

Queering security in the WPS agenda and centering LGBTQ+ people in WPS is not just about bringing LGBT people into the conversation, rather it is about rethinking how we frame gender and thinking about sexuality as a part of WPS altogether. Instead, it is important to see how underlying patriarchal social norms are behind the prejudice LGBT people are facing. WPS NAPs offer an opportunity to call on states to address homophobia and transphobia as a dimension of everyday violence. The violence faced by human rights defenders promoting the rights of LGBTQ+ people living in conflict should also be a part of the gendered response outlined in NAPs.

3.4: Case study: Colombia Diversa's work to queer Colombia's first National Action Plan

Reflections for feminist organizations:

What recommendations from the Colombia case study for queering the NAP are relevant to your context?

How are LGBTQ+ organizations engaging with the NAP process in your country context?

Is there funding available for localization or engagement with diverse populations you could ear-mark for funding lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer women's engagement in NAP development?

Although Colombia does not yet have a NAP, the country already has a strong history of acknowledging gender as a dimension of peace and security. It is important that the country's WPS NAP complements the gender perspective already in the Colombian peace agreement.

The inclusion of LGBTQ women in the construction of the Colombian NAP stems from concerns about the recognition of previous work for the inclusion of lesbian women in the WPS agenda.^{48 49} Some Colombian feminist peacebuilders have concerns about the possibility of cisgender men taking over the discourse and losing hard-won space for discussing women, peace and security. They worry that involving cisgender men in the queer agenda would exclude women. These concerns are based in the reality that there are very limited resources for WPS.

Colombia Diversa has highlighted the importance of the NAP in advancing strategies and measures to prevent violence and transform cultural imaginaries about gender and sexuality, understanding that compulsory heterosexuality and cisnormativity are factors of differential insecurity for the lives of LGBTQ women.⁵⁰

If LGBTQ+ perspectives are successfully included in the UNSCR 1325 NAP in Colombia, the country would become a leader in Latin America. Efforts by civil society organisations means the LGBTQ+ victims of the Colombian internal armed conflict are increasingly gaining visibility, as their recent inclusion both in the Special Peace Jurisdiction's (JEP) and in the Truth Commission's report clearly show. However, it is important that LGBTQ+ activists and organisations tackle intersecting needs for a wider range of experiences from the grassroots up and avoid falling into the trappings of "legal fetishism" where simply passing laws stands in for meaningful change.

Engaging lesbian, bisexual and transgender women in NAP development

On June 14 and 15, 2022 about 30 lesbian, bisexual and trans women from 10 departments (country subdivisions) across Colombia met in Bogotá to contribute to the construction of Colombia's NAP. At the meeting "*first forum of lesbian, bisexual and trans women: for a dignified life was a space for dialogue*" Colombia Diversa collected 20 recommendations on the four pillars WPS. UN Women also participated. The recommendations were delivered to the National Government.

Table 3: Recommendations for how to address needs of LBT women in Colombian NAP

Pillar	Recommendation
 Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and follow-up of GBV cases experienced by LGBTQ+ women • Require Ministry of Defense to institute gender training for personnel with attention to LGBTQ+ perspectives to maintain the level of sensitivity and understanding that prevents re-victimization when working with LGBTQ+ victims of violence • Guarantee self-ID for the trans and non-binary people
 Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies for the eradication of anti-LGBTQ+ violence. Recognize local knowledge of the territories. • Develop a national level prevention protocol that attends to the localised needs of LGBTQ+ women (i. e. gender-sensitive budgets; transparent distribution of resources, effective sanctions for institutional violence; retention of officials with training)
 Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis of the barriers to meaningful and continued participation of LBTQ women in political decision-making and leadership. • Effective resourcing to strengthen the capacities of LGBTQ+ collectives to participate and effectively influence the construction of public policies, development plans and local agendas, departmental and national.
 Relief and Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating/training for strengthening leadership of LBTQ women to enable their participation in the construction of peace and security. • Ensure economic security, access to justice for LBTQ women. • Conduct historical memory exercises of the armed conflict led by organizations of grassroots and LBTQ women. • Capacity building and economic empowerment measures for those in recovery.