



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs



Women, Peace and Security

Implementation Plan 2021–23

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FOREWORD

Australia has long been a strong and consistent advocate for the importance of the participation of women and inclusion of gender perspectives in peace negotiations, humanitarian planning, peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict peacebuilding and governance. We have reinforced the need for peace processes that take into account the needs and experiences of both men and women and the differential impacts that conflict has on them.

The Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force (ABF) are proud to be an implementation partner of Australia's second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Home Affairs and the ABF play a critical role in maintaining Australia's national security and promoting peace internationally, including on transboundary issues, and have important contributions to make to Australia's Women, Peace and Security agenda.



The National Action Plan is an opportunity to outline our priority efforts across a range of opportunities to counter terrorism and violent extremism, disrupt transnational serious and organised crime, prevent child abuse, combat human trafficking and slavery, and maintain secure borders.

Home Affairs' first Implementation Plan focuses on highlighting Women, Peace and Security across relevant policies and frameworks. This Plan identifies how Home Affairs and the ABF through our activities internationally contributes to the objectives of the United Nations Security Council Women, Peace and Security agenda notwithstanding the long standing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Advancing Women, Peace and Security will support Home Affairs and the ABF in our commitment to achieving a prosperous, secure and united Australia.

The Hon Karen Andrews
Minister for Home Affairs



INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Australia is a proud supporter of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the substantive roles women and girls play in conflict prevention, peace processes and the promotion of peace and security. For the first time, the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force (ABF) are an implementing partner of the *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2021-31*.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) is an international landmark, recognising the changing nature of warfare and explicitly linking women and girls to the international peace and security agenda. For the first time the international community formally recognised the impact of conflict on women, their different experiences and their critical role in resolving conflicts, peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery.

UNSCR 1325 affirms that peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the prevention of violent conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts, and in the forging of lasting peace.

Resolution 1325 also affirms the importance of protecting women and girls from all forms of gender-based violence – especially rape and other forms of sexual violence that are particularly widespread during times of violent conflict – and incorporating and mainstreaming gender perspectives throughout peace and security efforts. Each of these mandates fall within Resolution 1325's four basic pillars: participation; protection; prevention; and relief and recovery.

Since the adoption of Resolution 1325, the United Nations Security Council has adopted nine additional resolutions that make up the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Together, these ten resolutions promote women and girls' human rights, the importance of achieving sustainable peace, and broadening the agenda beyond traditional security issues to include women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention, and a focus on preventing and responding to sexual violence.

Australia's National Action Plan

Home Affairs and the ABF's work to implement these resolutions are guided by the *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2021-31* (National Action Plan) and the preceding *Australian National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security 2012-18*. The National Action Plan is a whole-of-government plan that provides a coordinated approach to integrating gender into Australia's peace and security efforts. The National Action Plan is the primary mechanism through which the Australian Government seeks to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda internationally and identifies the strategies and actions that Australia is undertaking, nationally and internationally. The National Action Plan also highlights the strong involvement of civil society and commitment to independent reviews.

The National Action Plan is framed around the delivery of the following four key outcomes to guide Australia's international efforts in fragile and conflict-affected areas:

- support women and girls' meaningful participation and needs in conflict prevention and peace processes;
- reduce sexual and gender-based violence;
- support resilience, crisis response, and security, law and justice sector efforts to meet the needs and rights of women and girls; and
- demonstrate leadership and accountability for the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Home Affairs and the ABF work with other implementing partners – the Department of Defence, the Australia Federal Police, the Australian Civil-Military Centre and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – on the National Action Plan.

Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force

The Department of Home Affairs and the ABF are committed to achieving a prosperous, secure and united Australia. We are responsible for centrally coordinating strategy, policy and operations in relation to social cohesion, the protection of our sovereignty and the integrity of our borders, the resilience of our national infrastructure, domestic and national security arrangements, law enforcement, countering foreign interference and counter-terrorism.

The Women Peace and Security agenda recognises the importance of integrating a gender perspective into policies and operations. This approach supports our priorities of delivering sustainable security and peace outcomes, including on issues of countering terrorism and violent extremism, disrupting transnational serious and organised crime, preventing child sexual abuse, combating human trafficking and slavery and maintaining secure borders, as set out in our *Blueprint for Home Affairs*.

Through our broad policy and operational remit, the Department of Home Affairs and the ABF contribute to the four National Action Plan outcomes supporting coordinated actions and ensuring that the Women, Peace and Security agenda is an inseparable part of Australia's efforts to peace, security, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and development assistance.

The COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the international peace and security landscape, creating long-standing ramifications. The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities faced by women and girls. Women and girls can suffer disproportionately, including experiencing higher rates of sexual and gender-based violence, unequal access to food, healthcare, education, justice and economic opportunities.

Despite the challenging operational environment of the COVID-19 pandemic, Home Affairs maintains its ongoing commitment to addressing the holistic approach to peace and security under the United Nations Women, Peace and Security agenda. The agenda is underpinned by four pillars: promoting women's full and meaningful participation; preventing conflict and sexual and gender-based violence; protecting human rights; and meeting the needs of women and girls and reinforcing their agency in relief and recovery efforts. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Home Affairs' delivery of programs that contribute to the objectives of the United Nations Women, Peace and Security agenda, in particular due to travel restrictions. A number of programs and activities have been impacted or reprioritised to support initiatives addressing the challenges of COVID-19. Home Affairs continues to ensure the Women, Peace and Security agenda is integrated into the Department's efforts to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.



THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS AND THE AUSTRALIAN BORDER FORCE ACTIVITIES ADVANCING WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

The Women, Peace and Security agenda and Australia's National Action Plan are important to creating new lines of effort and collaboration across the Department of Home Affairs and the ABF. This contributes to our priorities and to gender equality across our peace and security efforts.

In programming the Women, Peace and Security agenda, Home Affairs and the ABF, in partnerships with portfolio agencies, State and Territory governments, the community, industry, and our international partners, will ensure Australia continues to be a prosperous, secure and united nation.

Home Affairs and the ABF activities to advance Women, Peace and Security include:

Implementing Australia's new National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25

Administering and implementing the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth)

Co-chairing the Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons

Supporting Countering Violent Extremism initiatives, including gender-based approaches

Supporting international operations on disaster response

Managing the Humanitarian Program, including the Women at Risk Program

Incorporating a gender perspective into the International Capacity Building program

Establishing a review mechanism for the implementation plan to capture and build on our ongoing activities across Home Affairs and the ABF.

Reducing sexual and gender-based violence

Reducing sexual and gender-based violence is key to promoting equality and increasing women's participation in societies, while also preventing and resolving conflict. Ensuring that all members of a community are empowered and informed to advance gender equality, challenge gender norms and discriminatory practices, and amplify women and girls' capacity to speak and be heard is necessary to drive change. By strengthening laws to protect, reduce and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence, Home Affairs promotes and provides protection to women and girls, and men and boys, including those with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, to reduce the risk of further violence and discrimination.

Reducing and eradicating forced marriage

Forced marriage is a modern slavery crime and a complex form of family and genderbased violence. Forced marriage occurs when a person gets married without freely and fully consenting. Lack of free and full consent to marriage includes when a person has been coerced, threatened or deceived, they are incapable of understanding the nature and effect of a marriage ceremony, or when the person was under the age of 16 when they were married.

The ABF is committed to combating forced marriage, which significantly impacts women and girls, and supports Australia's whole-of-government response to forced marriage. Since 2013, the Australian Government has taken strong action to combat forced marriage. Actions include comprehensive criminal offences in Division 270 of the Criminal Code Act 1995, specialist Australian Federal Police teams to investigate forced marriage crimes, dedicated support for forced marriage victims through the Support for Trafficked People Program (administered by the Department of Social Services), and funding for specialist anti-slavery non-government organisations. In 2019, the ABF progressed amendments to Australia's forced marriage offences through the *Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Act 2019*. The amendments expand the definition of forced marriage to explicitly capture marriage involving children under the age of 16 years as part of Australia's whole-of-government response to forced marriage.

The Government has reaffirmed its commitment to combat forced marriage in Australia's *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25*. Under Australia's *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25*, the ABF is leading development of enhanced civil protections and remedies for individuals in, or at risk of, forced marriage. Enhanced civil protections and remedies are intended to complement Australia's criminal offences and provide new tools to prevent forced marriage and to support and protect victims.

Reducing and eradicating child sexual exploitation and abuse

Strengthening criminal offences for child sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse is a global problem that is becoming more prevalent, more organised and more extreme. Child exploitation and abuse has been enabled by technological advancements. The Department of Home Affairs is committed to continually reviewing and updating the Commonwealth framework of offences for child sexual abuse to better protect children.

In September 2019, the Commonwealth Parliament passed the Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Act 2019. The Act combats new trends in child sexual abuse materials and addresses operational challenges being faced by the Australian Government, police, prosecutors, and border agencies through reforms such as:

- strengthening child abuse possession laws (including by creating a new offence for possessing a child-like sex doll);
- creating a new offence to criminalise the conduct of Commonwealth officers who fail to take certain actions relating to the protection of children in their care, supervision or authority; and
- strengthening laws for the persistent sexual abuse of a child overseas.

The Department of Home Affairs is now focused on working with the Australian Federal Police, the ABF and other partner agencies to monitor the operation and effectiveness of these reforms.

In June 2020, the Commonwealth Parliament also passed the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Sexual Crimes Against Children and Community Protection Measures) Act 2020. Amongst other things, the Act criminalises the grooming of a third party via a carriage service (such as the internet) to make it easier to procure a child for sexual activity, and activities such as creating, developing and controlling an electronic service for the purposes of facilitating online child abuse material.

As a whole, these reforms provide important additional protections for children, and particularly for girls, who are more likely to be sexually abused and disproportionately represented or affected by online child sexual abuse material. The reforms also send a strong message about Australia's zero tolerance approach to child abuse, whether perpetrated within Australia's borders or by Australians overseas.

Strengthening criminal offences and national law enforcement to counter online and technology-facilitated abuse/violence

The advent of “the fourth industrial revolution”, and rapid adoption of new and emerging technologies has proliferated the production and distribution of child abuse material. Changing technologies and anonymising tools continue to provide child sex offenders with unprecedented access to vulnerable victims.

The Department of Home Affairs will continue to work with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, the Australian Border Force, the Australian Federal Police and other relevant agencies to assess whether the existing Commonwealth offence and penalty regimes sufficiently encompass and criminalize technology-facilitated abuse.

There is opportunity for law enforcement and intelligence agencies to harness and capitalize on the capabilities presented by new technology to counter and prevent online child sexual abuse. The Department of Home Affairs will support Portfolio agencies, including the Australian Federal Police, to enhance their ability to employ technological solutions to proactively target live distant child abuse.

The Department of Home Affairs is engaged with international government, non-government, industry and academic stakeholders on solutions to stop the global trade of technology-enabled child sexual abuse, particularly the online production, dissemination and accessibility of child abuse material.

The Department of Home Affairs is working closely with the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand through the Five Country Ministerial forum to demand stronger industry action on tackling the escalating threat of online child sexual abuse. In March 2021, the Five Country governments marked the one-year anniversary of the launch of the Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (Voluntary Principles), which were developed in consultation with digital industry and leading non-government organisations. The Voluntary Principles, which are now overseen by the WePROTECT Global Alliance, assist governments, digital industry and non-government organisations to drive collective global action to prevent online services and platforms from being used to facilitate child sexual abuse.

In addition, Australia’s successful May 2019 Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution on child sexual exploitation and abuse online attracted significant support, including from traditionally non-likeminded states. This resolution has prompted some States to strengthen their domestic child sexual abuse material offences. Australia built on these efforts by co-hosting side-events on child sexual abuse at the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Crime Congress) in March 2021, alongside the UK. The political declaration from the Crime Congress recognised the importance of addressing the needs, and protecting the rights, of children to ensure they do not suffer abuse and exploitation, including online.

Informing visa recipients of our laws and shared liberal democratic values

The Department of Home Affairs recognises that domestic and family violence can affect women, men and children of any socioeconomic, cultural, geographical or age group. In the context of our work in managing migration and protecting our borders, there are people who may be especially vulnerable, such as women who have recently arrived in Australia as refugees, or prospective partners, including in situations of forced marriage. This can be compounded by language and cultural barriers that make it difficult to access relevant information or support. There may also be other barriers preventing vulnerable clients from disclosing their experiences outside the family unit and further exacerbating their reluctance to seek assistance.

The Department of Home Affairs provides programs and information to newly arrived migrants, both prior to departure and post arrival, which have dedicated components on the topic of family violence and equality of the genders in Australian society. Our diaspora communities in Australia maintain contact with family and friends in their home countries, providing the mechanism for information to be disseminated more broadly, and contributing to international efforts to reduce sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination.

This includes information about Australia's laws and shared liberal democratic values, based on respect, equality, freedom and a commitment to the rule of law. Home Affairs will continue to ensure the provision of information and programs to newly arrived migrants are updated and fit for purpose.

The Australian Government funds a range of pre and post-arrival settlement programs, including the Australian Cultural Orientation program and Settlement Engagement and Transition Support program. These programs are based on the principles of early intervention, needs-based services and fostering social and economic participation. Settlement programs are targeted at the most vulnerable, including addressing particular barriers faced by women. Through these programs, clients are provided with information on Australian law, including laws around gender equality, equal opportunity and equality in the workplace, the unacceptability and illegality of domestic and family violence, sexual assault and forced marriages. Settlement providers utilise a number of practices to engage with women and to achieve outcomes.

The Australian Cultural Orientation program

The Australian Cultural Orientation program is a voluntary program offered to Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program entrants over the age of five years, prior to their departure for Australia. The Australian Cultural Orientation program gives practical advice about the journey to Australia, including quarantine laws and information about what to expect post-arrival, and assists in ensuring a successful start to the clients' settlement journey.

Australian Cultural Orientation program trainers use a variety of teaching methods; including group discussion, brainstorming, and the provision of the Australian Cultural Orientation program Student Folder—available in English and nine humanitarian cohort languages. The 'Australian families', 'Employment' and 'Australian law' pamphlets and the activity book included in the Australian Cultural Orientation program Student Folder supplement the content of these sessions.

The Australian Cultural Orientation program Student Folder is available on the Department of Home Affairs' website at immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/ausco/information-in-your-language.

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support

The Settlement Engagement and Transition Support program aims to equip and empower humanitarian entrants, other eligible permanent migrants and their communities, to address their settlement needs and improve clients' social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness. Settlement Engagement and Transition Support services are targeted, flexible, and tailored in providing timely and effective early intervention support.

Services are focussed on supporting the most vulnerable clients, including women.

Several Settlement Engagement and Transition Support providers specialise in services for eligible women, including those outside of urban areas.

See immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/sets-program.

The Family Safety Pack has been developed for both women and men coming to Australia and includes information on Australia's laws regarding domestic and family violence, sexual assault and forced marriage, and a woman's right to be safe.

The publication is available in 46 languages and contains information on support services for victims and emergency contacts in Australia. The publication can be found at www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack.

Improving engagement with multicultural communities through the Community Liaison Officer Network

The Department of Home Affairs has a Community Liaison Officer Network, consisting of around 30 people who manage Home Affairs' relationships with a wide range of cultural, religious and ethnic communities around the country. The Community Liaison Officer Network engages with communities around Australia about the Department of Home Affairs' key priorities of: building trusted relationships with community leaders; promoting the Australian Government's social cohesion and integration policy; and providing informed feedback to the Department of Home Affairs, the ABF and the Australian Government on community sentiment.

Community Liaison Officers regularly meet with stakeholders including community leaders and federal, state and local government representatives to inform them about the Department of Home Affairs' business including migration, status resolution and citizenship. The Officers also disseminate whole-of-government messages on a range of issues such as domestic violence, social cohesion, countering foreign interference and extremism, and national security.

The role operates on the understanding that trust-building, provision of information, an open dialogue and establishing respect between the community and the Department of Home Affairs enables us to deliver the Australian Government's strategy of building a successful multicultural nation, united by our allegiance to Australia and commitment to freedom and prosperity.

Engaging with multicultural communities on domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence has been raised consistently with Community Liaison Officers as a key issue impacting a number of multicultural communities around Australia.

There were over 50 engagements with Community Liaison Officers in the last six months where domestic and family violence was raised as a key issue.

The Community Liaison Officer Network engages with a wide range of stakeholders including federal and state government agencies, federal and state police forces and domestic and family violence service providers, to discuss issues that arise within their line of work and to share information and practices to improve access to domestic and family violence support services.

Community Liaison Officers disseminate information regarding relevant visa provisions and services to multicultural community leaders, and escalate any concerns or issues raised by communities back to the relevant areas within the Department of Home Affairs and the ABF for their awareness. The Community Liaison Officer Network has hosted several whole-of-government domestic and family violence information sessions and

forums for multicultural communities to disseminate information on domestic and family violence and support services available. These sessions provide community leaders with information on domestic and family violence services, particularly for victims of domestic and family violence who hold temporary visas. Community leaders maintain strong ties to communities both in Australia and internationally allowing for information to be disseminated to communities outside Australia and to prospective visa applicants.

Countering violent extremism

Australia's countering violent extremism (CVE) strategies aim to help individuals disengage from violent extremism. Australia's CVE strategies also aim to counter the proliferation of violent extremist ideologies and efforts by violent extremist organisations to recruit people to their cause in Australia. These strategies address the drivers of all forms of violent extremism and focus on promoting social cohesion and building the resilience of communities, supporting the diversion of individuals at risk; and rehabilitation and reintegration. Australia's CVE strategies are inclusive of gender and acknowledge women and girls' role in the violent extremism and terrorism landscape.

The Department of Home Affairs is the forward-facing coordination point for Australia's domestic and international countering violent extremism engagement.

The Department's international engagement and capacity-building gender based CVE activities include:

- supporting the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Australia's role as co-chair of the Global Counterterrorism Forum CVE Working Group with Indonesia to host a series of workshops as part of the Gender and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) Policy Toolkit Initiative. The objective of this Initiative is to develop a Gender and P/CVE Policy Toolkit which will provide practical guidance to support the implementation of the Global Counterterrorism Forum Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism, and its Addendum;
- supporting the South East Asian Network of Civil Society Organisations (SEAN-CSO) in their mission to prevent violent extremism across South East Asia. Established in 2016, the SEAN-CSO provides a mechanism for civil society organisations from Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand to share CVE expertise in the areas of policymaking, research, social advocacy and gender; and
- delivery of the CVE In Prisons Program in Indonesia to assist prison authorities in the management of violent extremist prisoners and recognizing the need to support the management of the increasing cohort of female violent extremist prisoners in Indonesia's prisons.

Home Affairs supports the inclusion of a gender-based approach to CVE through:

- capacity building activities
- supporting information exchange on gender approaches
- supporting gender-based research and policy development

Supporting resilience, crisis response and security, law and justice sector efforts to meet the needs and rights of all women and girls

To meet the needs and rights of all women and girls, the Department of Home Affairs, through its portfolio responsibilities, is committed to supporting resilience, crisis response, security and law and justice. By building capacity and cooperation to prevent, respond and combat violence, conflict, humanitarian crises, forced displacement and natural disasters, Home Affairs encourages the meaningful participation of women and girls. Through this work, Home Affairs builds long-term community resilience, reduces vulnerabilities in conflict and crisis and ensures our international and domestic responses better target the needs, protection, services and livelihoods of women and girls.

Australia's Response to Modern Slavery

Australia's new *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25* sets the strategic framework for Australia's response to modern slavery. Modern slavery disproportionately affects women and girls. Launched in December 2020, the *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25* outlines the Government's commitment to 46 actions in support of Australia's new five National Strategic Priorities to focus its efforts in combating modern slavery:

1. Prevent;
2. Disrupt, investigate and prosecute;
3. Support and protect;
4. Partner; and
5. Research.

The *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25* is underpinned by nine principles to guide work in implementing these strategic priorities, which include a principle emphasising the Government's commitment to addressing the unique needs of women and children in its modern slavery response.

Key initiatives under the *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25* include awareness raising to build community resilience to modern slavery crimes, delivery of training and resources to a cross-section of frontline responders, and guidance to businesses on modern slavery risks in global supply chains and reporting requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (the Modern Slavery Act). A cornerstone of the Government's response to modern slavery, the Modern Slavery Act drives public accountability by requiring large businesses and other entities to report annually on their efforts to address modern slavery risks in their global operations and supply chains.

The ABF leads implementation of the National Action Plan. Implementation is supported by a Budget commitment of \$10.6 million over five years and includes \$4.4 million in new grant funding to support civil society and business efforts to combat modern slavery and research to inform evidence-based policy.

Bali Process Trafficking in Persons Working Group

The ABF continues to lead regional efforts to combat modern slavery through the Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons (TIPWG). Australia (ABF) and Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been co-chairing the TIPWG since its establishment in 2015. Its membership comprises 16 countries from the IndoPacific region and three member international organisations.

The TIPWG provides a mechanism for members to share information, best practice and emerging trends. It promotes more effective and coordinated law and justice responses to combat modern in the Asia-Pacific region, recognising that these crimes disproportionately affect women and girls. Since its establishment, the TIPWG has developed and provided training on a series of regionally-endorsed policy guides to help governments develop and implement effective responses to modern slavery, including responses that address the specific vulnerabilities of women and children. The TIPWG has also delivered annual regional conferences on key challenges and trends relating to modern slavery where gender-specific challenges and responses are considered.

A key priority for the TIPWG in 2020-23 will be implementing the TIPWG's *Forward Work Plan 2021-23*. Under the Forward Work Plan, the TIPWG will continue to develop resources, guidance and training that strengthens regional responses to modern slavery and recognises the unique and heightened vulnerabilities and needs of women and girls.

Engaging in the Indo-Pacific on Modern Slavery

The ABF works closely with partner governments in the Indo-Pacific to strengthen law and justice responses to modern slavery. Through the Indo Pacific Justice and Security Program (FY 2017-18 to FY 2020-21), the ABF delivers targeted peer-to-peer assistance to foreign counterparts to strengthen regional responses to modern slavery in line with international standards and best practice. The ABF works with partner governments to develop and implement strong legal and policy frameworks and to provide tailored support and protection to victims, including women and girls who are disproportionately affected by these crimes. Through this work, the ABF also encourages women to take a leadership role in law and policy development. The ABF will continue to work with partner governments in the region under Australia's *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25*, which commits the Government to promote effective and coordinated international and regional responses to modern slavery.

Home Affairs' Anti-Money Laundering Assistance Team and the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering are developing a program that encourages regional governments and financial intelligence units to counter human trafficking by sharing information and establishing partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors. The program highlights the importance of collaborating across sectors and leveraging their information and knowledge to identify, prevent and prosecute the financial aspects of human trafficking. The Anti-Money Laundering Assistance Team, with the Asia-Pacific Group, will continue to engage with regional stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to counter the financing of human trafficking through measures that align with international best practice.

Women in National Security initiative

The National Security College at the Australian National University, in partnership with the Department of Home Affairs representatives from the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby, delivered the first ever 'Women in National Security: Why diversity is in Papua New Guinea's national interest' course in Port Moresby in September 2019. It highlights the tangible benefits greater diversity brings to the national security environment. This new initiative led by Home Affairs supports Australia's Pacific step-up and our deepening partnership with Papua New Guinea, contributing to the commitment of the Australian Government to address shared security interests of both countries.

Supporting women, child refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia

The Department of Home Affairs supports delivery of the ASPIRASI (which translates in English to “Aspiration”) project in Indonesia, which provides assistance to vulnerable women and child refugees and asylum seekers, including those who are unaccompanied. Delivered by Church World Services, the project provides critical support to these vulnerable groups, including physical protection safeguards (including shelter and security), access to healthcare services (including psychological and mental health support), access to education and vocational training, and a weekly subsistence allowance. The program, which has been ongoing since 2016, aims to enhance the independence and empowerment of women and children refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia while they seek more sustainable and permanent solutions.

Countering violent extremism in Indonesian prisons

Through the Indo-Pacific Justice and Security Program, the Department of Home Affairs works in partnership with the Global Center on Cooperative Security to deliver the CVE-Prisons project in Indonesia. The CVE-Prisons project includes targeted training, capacity development and ongoing technical assistance to prison authorities who manage violent extremist offenders in high maximum security prisons. The project acknowledged the need to increase the number of female prison authorities undertaking training. Female trained prison authorities may be able to more effectively manage female violent extremist offenders.

Incorporating a gender perspective in the International Capacity Building Program

Home Affairs, through the Department’s International Capacity Building Program, and the Indo-Pacific Justice and Security Program (FY 2017-18 to 2020-21) protects Australia’s sovereignty, security and safety by strengthening relationships with partner governments and by working collaboratively with international organisations. The program aims to enhance capability in countering terrorism, violent extremism, modern slavery and financial crime, as well as capability in technological innovation and intelligence collection.

Home Affairs will look to incorporate a gender perspective in our future programs’ approval and evaluation criteria to explicitly address potential gender risks and consequences in program delivery. Additionally, Home Affairs will seek to increase women’s representation and participation in workshops and other capacity building initiatives funded through the Department’s International Capacity Building Program to specifically support and empower women.

Addressing challenges in anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing

In May 2019, the Department of Home Affairs held the inaugural International Women Against Money Laundering (WAML) Conference in Canberra. The conference was established to build participants' capacity to address the challenges they encounter working in the anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing space. The conference provided an opportunity to share experiences and expertise, discuss professional development and career progression, and develop networks that can be drawn on to enhance international and interagency cooperation and information sharing. The conference was attended by 14 women from law and justice agencies across the Pacific.

In August 2019, a WAML networking event was held in the sidelines of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering Annual Meeting. The networking event was attended by 45 officials from 20 jurisdictions, as well as the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. At the event the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering Deputy Executive Secretary spoke on trends in women's representation at international anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing forums and the Asia/Pacific Group's efforts to improve gender balance, while the Governor of the Central Bank of Samoa shared her reflections on the role and contribution of women to regional anti-money laundering efforts.

Due to COVID-19, the second WAML conference, due to take place in 2020, was postponed. In early 2021, the Department of Home Affairs hosted a virtual morning tea event for WAML participants from the Pacific to discuss participant's progress against their action plans, and consider future engagement.

Women and Countering Violent Extremism – Global Counter Terrorism Forum Countering Violent Extremism Working Group

The Global Counter Terrorism Forum Countering Violent Extremism Working Group Work Plan for 2019-21 acknowledges that further work is needed on a gendered understanding of the motivations to radicalisation and violent extremism. Going forward, an effective countering violent extremism method will need to champion women's leadership, economic empowerment and their agency in social cohesion, address women's agency in terrorism itself, and incorporate violence prevention. Respect for human rights and the importance of monitoring and evaluation are core components of all aspects of countering violent extremism and will be underlying themes across all work areas.

The Global Counter Terrorism Forum Countering Violent Extremism Working Group has developed a set of Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism, which were endorsed at the sixth Global Counter Terrorism Forum Ministerial Plenary Meeting in 2015. The good practices address:

- General practices on women and gender in the countering violent extremism context.
- Countering women and girls' involvement in violent extremism and terrorism.
- Advancing women and girls' roles in countering violent extremism.
- Women and girls as victims of violent extremism and terrorism.

An Addendum, which updates the Good Practices document, and has a focus on mainstreaming gender, was endorsed at the tenth Global Counter Terrorism Forum Ministerial Plenary Meeting in 2019. Home Affairs is contributing subject matter expertise to the development of a Policy Toolkit on Women and Gender, led by Australia (through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) and Indonesia, as co-chairs of the Working Group.

Woman at Risk Program

Home Affairs is strongly committed to assisting highly vulnerable refugee women and their dependents, and Australia is one of only a few resettlement countries that has a dedicated refugee visa program to assist women at risk and their dependents. Refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world. In times of forced displacement, refugee women and their children are at even greater risk, particularly if they have become victims of gender based violence, exploitation and abuse. This can happen to many women and girls during transit and while they wait in refugee camps for an opportunity to resettle elsewhere.

The Woman at Risk visa program was established in 1989 in recognition of the priority given by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the protection of refugee women in particularly vulnerable situations. It provides a pathway for the resettlement of vulnerable women refugees and their dependents. Over 25,900 visas have been granted to vulnerable women and their dependents since the establishment of the Woman at Risk visa program.

The focus on resettling women at risk under the Humanitarian Program has been expanded in recent years. In 2017-18, the target for vulnerable women and children of 1,550 places was exceeded with more than 2,126 visas granted to this group. In 2018-19, Australia allocated 15 per cent of the offshore Humanitarian Program for vulnerable women and children, with 2,947 visas granted to this group. For 2019-20 this target increased to 20 per cent of the offshore Humanitarian Program. Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic impacted program delivery, of those visas granted 20.3 percent were to vulnerable women and children.

Supporting disaster resilience of communities

The Department of Home Affairs is committed to inclusive engagement as a guiding principle to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework (the Framework). The Framework is Australia's domestic response to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction target to 'substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020'.

Specific actions to deliver the Framework's five-year outcomes (2019-23) are captured in a National Action Plan for the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework. Home Affairs led the development of the first National Action Plan, which was endorsed by Emergency Management Ministers in May 2020 and demonstrates how collective efforts are coming together across Australia to reduce risks for Australians.

Home Affairs will encourage all sectors to connect with diverse stakeholders, including women and girls, in the development of future National Action Plans to ensure inclusive decision-making leading to more effective solutions to reduce disaster risk. This commitment is also reflected in emergency management doctrine, published in the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection. See <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/collections/handbook-collection>.

Demonstrating leadership and accountability for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Home Affairs will continue to demonstrate its leadership in support of the Women, Peace and Security agenda through our ongoing work with global, regional partners and institutions. Home Affairs will remain committed to promoting diversity and gender equality both within our organisation and in our engagement with cross-regional groupings, like-minded countries and global non-government partners. By actively pursuing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, Home Affairs will continue to raise awareness of, and encourage others to comply with, international law obligations.

The Department of Home Affairs Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-24

The Department of Home Affairs' Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021-26 is currently being developed and will be launched following the release of the APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026, due for launch in June 2021. Through the Department's GEAP, we strive to provide a supportive and enabling culture – embedding gender equality in leadership, employment and people-management practices and processes; and promoting flexible working arrangements for all staff.

Our GEAP priorities for 2021-26 include:

- Enhancing support to staff on leave and return to work processes
- Increasing the number of flexible working arrangements
- Improving workplace culture, inclusion, and intersectionality
- Enhancing gender balance in leadership and employment practices
- Continuing to build on the success of the 2017-20 GEAP

Our commitment to achieve gender equality will be actioned through the GEAP's Implementation Plan, which sets out clear and realistic goals, actions and measures that are required to drive change, as well as gauging our progress towards these outcomes. The Department of Home Affairs' commitment to gender equality will be realised not only through our internal structures, but also through increasing women's representation and engagement in domestic, bilateral and multilateral forums.

Our departmental gender equality and staff support pages provide information to staff on how they can access domestic and family violence resources and support services. The Department of Home Affairs' work is focused on Australian Public Service employment and considers how it can adequately and appropriately support staff affected by domestic and family violence. The Domestic and Family Violence Network of trained Contact Officers has a wide reach in terms of client-facing domestic and family violence issues.

Additionally, the Department has a Staff Advancing Gender Equality (SAGE) Network that meets quarterly to support and promote gender equality across the Department. The Network is open to staff of all genders and is led by co-chairs representing Home Affairs and the ABF.



GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The National Action Plan is a coordinated whole-of-government partnership. Home Affairs will contribute to the success of the National Action Plan by contributing to the following governance and accountability mechanisms.

Whole-of-government Inter-Departmental Committee on Women, Peace and Security

As an implementing partner, the Department of Home Affairs will be a member of the whole-of-government Inter-Departmental Committee on Women, Peace and Security. The Inter-Departmental Committee will provide an opportunity for the Department to contribute to the Australian Government's implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and to discuss progress of the National Action Plan outcomes.

Progress Report

The Department of Home Affairs and the ABF will contribute to the National Action Plan progress reports to track our contributions to the Women, Peace and Security agenda over the course of the National Action Plan. It is expected that the Department of Home Affairs and ABF will release four implementation plans over the 10-year life of the National Action Plan. As the Women, Peace and Security agenda is mainstreamed into the Department of Home Affairs policies and programs, the Department will establish a review mechanism to ensure that future implementation plans identify, capture and build on our ongoing activities. The Department of Home Affairs and the ABF are committed to continuously improving, refreshing and reframing our contribution to the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Independent Interim Review

The Department of Home Affairs and the ABF will contribute to the independent interim review and the Office for Women's whole-of-government response to the recommendations. The interim review recommendation may change the Department of Home Affairs and the ABF outcomes, priorities and actions, to be reflected in subsequent implementation plan(s).

Independent Final Report

At the conclusion of the National Action Plan, the Department of Home Affairs and the ABF will contribute to the independent final review, assessing the overall effectiveness of Australia's implementation.

The final report will seek to inform the design, outcomes, priorities and actions of the Government's next National Action Plan.



CONCLUSION

Home Affairs and the ABF are committed to the principles of Women, Peace and Security. We recognise that our ongoing effort to incorporate and mainstream a gender perspective in our policies, frameworks and programs is critical to contributing to Australia's whole-of-government response to this global agenda.

Women and girls' full and meaningful participation is a pinnacle of Australia's socially cohesive society, the fabric of civic and political participation, social relations, institutional trust and solidarity. Home Affairs and the ABF continue to implement policies and programs that address the differential effects of conflict on women and girls, such as gender-based violence and sexual abuse and exploitation. This helps to protect Australia's sovereignty, safeguards our democracy, builds community resilience, engenders respect of Australia's shared values and institutions, our way of life and rule of law, and ensures Australia continues to be a prosperous, secure and united nation.