



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



# **DFAT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2021-2031

## Secretary's Foreword

Australia prioritises security, stability, and prosperity, at home and abroad. Critical to progressing these priorities is the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. This is because gender equality and human rights are essential for enduring peace and security, as well as sustainable development. Conversely, violence and conflict thrive where there is discrimination, exclusion, and exploitation.

As a committed WPS advocate and actor, Australia launched its second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2021. The second National Action Plan sets out how Australia will continue to support full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and the subsequent nine resolutions that form the framework of the WPS agenda.

Under Australia's second National Action Plan, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is assigned whole-of-government leadership on WPS, as well as implementation responsibilities. DFAT embraces this role, recognising that WPS national action plans support the systematic and systemic action needed to achieve gender equality, peace, and security in a just and safe world.

This document outlines DFAT's contribution to whole-of-government efforts to advance the WPS agenda, encompassing principles and priorities, means of implementation and accountabilities. DFAT will invest in women's participation and leadership, as well as the mainstreaming of gender and the WPS agenda, in conflict prevention, resolution, relief and recovery, as well as across peace processes and security. In doing so, DFAT is committed to working collaboratively across government and in partnership with civil society, to deliver concrete results and advance gender equality.

Kathryn Campbell AO CSC and Bar  
Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

# CONTENTS

Secretary's Foreword	1
List of Acronyms	3
1. Context	4
2. Purpose and principles	5
3. Actions for outcomes	6
4. Actors and accountabilities	11
Annex A: Annual international advocacy opportunities	13
Annex B: Priority areas of action	14

## List of Acronyms

<b>AFP</b>	Australian Federal Police
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MIKTA</b>	Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Australia
<b>P/CVE</b>	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
<b>PSEAH</b>	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNIDIR</b>	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WPS</b>	Women, Peace and Security

# 1. Context

Australia advocates for and implements the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The WPS agenda is the agreed and tested framework for advancing human rights, inclusion and equality, required for peace and security to prevail.

On 12 April 2021, Australia reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), and the subsequent nine WPS-related resolutions,<sup>1</sup> with the launch of its second National Action Plan on WPS.<sup>2</sup> As stated in the second National Action Plan:

*The Australian Government promotes the human rights of women and girls, and gender equality in fragile and conflict-affected contexts to protect their safety and because it is essential to economic and development gains, stability after crises, preventing conflict, and creating durable peace.*

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the whole-of-government lead of Australia's second National Action Plan and an implementing partner, along with the Australian Federal Police (AFP),<sup>3</sup> Department of Defence (including the Australian Civil-Military Centre),<sup>4</sup> and Department of Home Affairs (and Australian Border Force).<sup>5</sup> The WPS work of the three Departments and the AFP is guided by their own strategies and plans, as required under the second National Action Plan. This document constitutes the DFAT WPS implementation plan.

As well as framing DFAT's commitments under the second National Action Plan and complementing the work of the other implementing partners, this Implementation Plan aligns with the Australian Government *Foreign Policy White Paper (2017)*<sup>6</sup> and *Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response (2020)*,<sup>7</sup> as well as the *DFAT Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy (2016)*<sup>8</sup> and *DFAT Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy (2019)*.<sup>9</sup> This Implementation Plan also seeks to reinforce integration of the WPS agenda in the UN's Peace and Security Pillar,<sup>10</sup> such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), Peacekeeping and Protection of Civilians, Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, Children and Armed Conflict, and Sustainable Development Goal 16.

<sup>1</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/australias-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security-2021-2031> The first Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security covered the period 2012-2018 and is available at <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/publications-articles/government-international/australian-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security-2012-2018>

<sup>3</sup> AFP International Command Gender Strategy 2018-2024: <https://www.afp.gov.au/sites/default/files/PDF/23082021-InternationalCommandGenderStrategy.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Defence Gender, Peace and Security Mandate: [https://defence.gov.au/jcg/JSSD/Gender\\_Peace\\_Security/docs/Defence-Gender-Peace-Security-Mandate-Sep%202021%20updated.pdf](https://defence.gov.au/jcg/JSSD/Gender_Peace_Security/docs/Defence-Gender-Peace-Security-Mandate-Sep%202021%20updated.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Department of Home Affairs Women, Peace and Security Implementation Plan 2021-23: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/commitments/files/women-peace-and-security-implementation-plan-2021-23.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/minisite/2017-foreign-policy-white-paper/fpwhitepaper/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/aid/partnerships-recovery-australias-covid-19-development-response>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-strategy.pdf>, with a 'refresh' to be issued in 2022.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/preventing-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment/Pages/default>

<sup>10</sup> The three pillars of the United Nations are (i) human rights, (ii) peace and security, and (iii) development.

## 2. Purpose and principles

DFAT will contribute to achievement of the long-term ambition of the second National Action Plan – of gender equality, the human rights of women and girls, and enduring peace – and the four final outcomes and associated mid-term outcomes (Table 1).

The four outcomes of the second National Action Plan are:

- (i) supporting women’s meaningful participation and needs in peace processes, with an increase in women’s participation in conflict prevention and all peace processes;
- (ii) reducing sexual and gender-based violence, including addressing harmful gender norms, women’s and girls’ safety and security, and access to justice;
- (iii) supporting resilience, crisis, security, law and justice efforts to meet the needs and rights of all women and girls, including in relation to violent extremism, humanitarian action and disaster management; and
- (iv) demonstrating global leadership and accountability for results on WPS.

DFAT’s efforts to achieve the four outcomes will be long-term, systematic and systemic, with opportunities for transformative changes seized as they arise.

**Table 1:** Final and medium-term outcomes of Australia’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2021-31

<i>National Action Plan outcomes</i>	<i>Medium-term outcomes</i>
1. Women’s and girls’ meaningful participation and needs in conflict prevention and peace processes supported	1.1 Women’s meaningful participation in conflict prevention increased
	1.2 Women’s meaningful participation in peace processes increased
2. Sexual and gender-based violence reduced	2.1 Harmful gender norms reduced
	2.2 Safety and security of women and girls increased
	2.3 Access to justice increased
3. Resilience, crisis, and security, law and justice efforts to meet the needs and rights of all women and girls supported	3.1 Access to security, law and justice responses increased
	3.2 Humanitarian action, stabilisation and disaster management improved
4. Leadership and accountability for WPS demonstrated	4.1 Australian Government commitment to, and leadership of, the WPS agenda demonstrated
	4.2 Australian Government accountability for its WPS efforts effectively demonstrated
	4.3 Australia’s efforts to support the WPS agenda harmonized

The principles of Australia's second National Action Plan that underpin DFAT's Implementation Plan and support for the WPS agenda are:

- do-no-harm – risks associated with any actions will be identified and avoided or mitigated;
- human rights-based approach – applied to processes and intended outcomes;
- gender mainstreaming – gender and intersectional analyses will inform the design, monitoring and evaluation of activities;
- recognition and response to diversity in identities, knowledge and experiences, including addressing intersecting inequalities; and
- evidence-informed action – investment in and use of data, research and expertise.

DFAT recognises that women are not a homogenous group and that it is critical to remove the barriers that prevent the full participation and enjoyment of human rights by women and girls in all their multiple identities and experiences. DFAT will work to ensure that humanitarian responses, conflict prevention and peace processes are accessible to all women and girls, including those with disabilities, including physical, intellectual, psychosocial and sensory disabilities; and indigenous women and girls, including those who are geographically and/or politically isolated. We will advocate for the inclusion of all persons irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

DFAT will collaborate with the spectrum of WPS stakeholders, including governments, multilateral entities, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, civil society organisations, organisations for people with disabilities, research institutions, and the private sector. In engaging with other WPS actors, DFAT will prioritise the agency and leadership of diverse women and girls, and their organisations.

### 3. Actions for outcomes

For each of the four outcomes of the second National Action Plan, DFAT will (i) engage and advocate for the WPS agenda internationally; (ii) provide WPS-related development and humanitarian assistance; and (iii) strengthen its WPS capabilities and leadership. In taking actions across these three modalities, and in recognition of the breadth of the WPS agenda and the importance of shared responsibilities, DFAT will complement, rather than duplicate, the actions and efforts of the other second National Action Plan implementing partners.<sup>11</sup>

DFAT's **international engagement and advocacy** will advance the WPS agenda – and Australia's national interests in stability, security and prosperity grounded in gender equality and human rights – through bilateral, regional and multilateral diplomacy, engagements, partnerships and both traditional and social media. Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls is a leading advocate for this work, in domestic and international diplomacy. Some of the annual international advocacy opportunities are listed in Annex A.

DFAT will sustain and strengthen its WPS-related **humanitarian and development assistance**, especially in the Indo-Pacific region and in partnership with women and their networks. Humanitarian and development assistance will be informed by evidence-based designs and promote diversity and inclusion in processes and outcomes, in which women and girls have leading roles. WPS-targeted assistance will be provided through the Indo-Pacific Gender Equality Fund.

To strengthen **capabilities**, DFAT will support research, awareness-raising and training on WPS. DFAT will share its contribution to the evidence-base through briefs, papers, reports and dialogues that explore the

<sup>11</sup> DFAT's nine priority areas for mainstreaming WPS and pursuing WPS-targeted work are listed in Annex B.

linkages between conflict and gender inequalities, and peace and gender equality. DFAT will use the outcomes of research to advance the WPS agenda and inform learning opportunities for employees and partners. Capacity strengthening activities may include e-courses, briefings, in-person training, exchange of good practices, development and dissemination of guidance, and engagement with WPS specialists.

### 3.1 Outcome 1 actions

To support women's meaningful participation and needs in peace processes, with an increase in women's participation in conflict prevention and all peace processes, DFAT will:

#### *International engagement and advocacy*

- Advocate for women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in peace processes, including women and girls with disabilities, through the work of the Ambassador for Women and Girls and the diplomatic network, and across multilateral fora focused on the rights of women and girls in all their diversity, such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Advocate for the inclusion of women mediators, women from civil society, human rights defenders and women refugees in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes, such as with the members of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks, and by encouraging event organisers to strive for gender parity and diversity in panels;
- Host international events that highlight the contributions and leadership of women in conflict prevention, peace processes, security, humanitarian preparedness and response, and disaster risk reduction;
- Profile women's participation and leadership, and include WPS messages, in relevant media, meetings and discussions of like-minded multilateral, regional, and cross-regional groupings, as well as bilateral engagements, dealing with conflict prevention, peace and security;
- Advocate for gender-responsive and gender-inclusive training and deployments, such as women's participation in regional peacekeeping training centres and engagement in fragile, conflict-affected and humanitarian and disaster settings;
- Advocate for and support inclusion of prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) specialists and focal points in training delivery, deployments and peace processes;

#### *Development and humanitarian assistance*

- Resource UN peace processes and architecture, and direct support to the WPS agenda;<sup>12</sup>
  - Fund the UN Global Facility on WPS, which has a focus on enhancing women's voices and agency to ensure peace and social justice within communities;
  - Fund the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, given its mission to enhance women's engagement, leadership and empowerment across the crisis, peace, security, and development continuum;<sup>13</sup>
- Support capacity-strengthening of entities established to increase women's participation and leadership in peace processes, such as the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry;
- Ensure application of the *DFAT Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy* (2019) to partnerships and provision of assistance;

<sup>12</sup> UN entities which receive funding from Australia include the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Department of Peace Operations, the Peacebuilding Commission, and funds and agencies which engage on the WPS agenda, including OCHA, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDIR, UN Women and WFP.

<sup>13</sup> <https://wphfund.org/>



### *Capabilities*

- Engage with Australian civil society to strengthen and share information, insights and effective practices on women's participation and leadership in conflict prevention and peace processes, including with the Australian WPS Coalition;<sup>14</sup>
- Commission and undertake research, which yields recommendations for practical application, on women's participation in conflict prevention and peace processes;
- Provide professional development opportunities for women working for DFAT to acquire and strengthen confidence and capabilities to be part of Australian delegations, and facilitate participation for women with caring and other responsibilities through measures such as scheduling of meetings and enabling virtual attendance; and
- Ensure that the contributions and interests of diverse women are represented in negotiations, communications and other work done by Australian delegations.

## 3.2 Outcome 2 actions

To reduce sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), DFAT will:

### *International engagement and advocacy*

- Address SGBV through the work of the Ambassador for Women and Girls, the Ambassador for People Smuggling and Human Trafficking, and the Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism;
- Maintain and advocate zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) in any context, operation or mission, including through engagement of the DFAT PSEAH Champion;
- Support the UK-led Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative;<sup>15</sup>
- Continue to advocate for the prevention and elimination of SGBV in conflict and atrocity prevention actions, and maintain hard fought gains in multilateral fora, including the United Nations Human Rights Council;
- Ensure our statements and contributions to normative frameworks are informed by the experiences and interests of survivors of sexual- and gender-based violence;
- Co-Chair, with Indonesia, and continue participation in, the Global Counterterrorism Forum Countering - Violent Extremism Working Group, which has a focus on gender and countering violent extremism;<sup>16</sup>
- Promote and encourage States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, of which Article 7(4) requires States Parties to take into account the risk of arms exports being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence when approving conventional arms exports;
- Protect and advance international human rights norms related to sexual and reproductive health and rights;

### *Development and humanitarian assistance*

- Be a partner of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, including delivering on commitments made under the *2021-2025 Road Map*;<sup>17</sup>
- Invest in SGBV-targeted initiatives, such as the Centre for Gender-Based Violence Prevention in South-East Asia;
- Fund civil society organisations to develop early warning indicators and systems for SGBV, particularly in situations of high atrocity risk;

<sup>14</sup> <https://wpscoalition.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/preventing-sexual-violence-in-conflict-initiative>

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.thegctf.org/Who-we-are/Structure/Working-Groups/Countering-Violent-Extremism>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/>

- Implement Australia’s international engagement strategy on human trafficking and modern slavery;
- Apply the DFAT *Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy* to all partnership agreements and across DFAT’s overseas network;<sup>18</sup>
- Fund sexual and reproductive health and rights initiatives and support the provision of essential sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian crises, such as the Indo-Pacific Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights COVID-19 Response (2021-2023), Regional Prepositioning Initiative, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Program in Crisis and Post Crisis Situations (SPRINT);

#### *Capabilities*

- Support implementation of the ‘Gender and P/CVE Policy Toolkit’ of the Global Counterterrorism Forum Countering Violent Extremism Working Group;
- Commission and undertake research to better understand and address the harmful gender norms and other factors that create and perpetuate SGBV, violent extremism and terrorism; and
- Implement the DFAT *Family and Domestic Violence Policy*.

### 3.3 Outcome 3 actions

To support resilience, crisis, security, law and justice efforts to meet the needs and rights of all women and girls, DFAT will:

#### *International engagement and advocacy*

- Advocate for action on the WPS agenda in priority areas, with leadership by the Ambassadors for Women and Girls, Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation, Counter-Terrorism, Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology, People Smuggling and Human Trafficking, Regional Health Security, and the Environment, as well as the DFAT Humanitarian Coordinator;
- Support increased participation and leadership of women in the security sector, such as in the armed forces, law enforcement agencies, judicial and justice systems, border services, and intelligence services;
- Promote and undertake practical initiatives towards equal, full and meaningful participation in multilateral fora, for example pursuing Rules of Procedure which are gender-responsive, and gender balance in appointments to relevant peace, security, accountability and justice positions across the multilateral system;
- Deliver relevant national and joint statements in, and support declarations and resolutions of, multilateral fora in response to country situations, humanitarian crises, climate change and international security matters;

#### *Development and humanitarian assistance*

- Integrate WPS into humanitarian, disaster response, resilience, and disarmament and arms control programs, including the Australian Humanitarian Partnership,<sup>19</sup> Australian NGO Cooperation Program, and climate adaptation and mitigation programs;<sup>20</sup>
- Ensure the inclusion of women and specialists in gender, disability, PSEAH and gender-based violence in humanitarian responses and Australia Assists;<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/preventing-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment/Pages/default>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.australianhumanitarianpartnership.org/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/who-we-work-with/ngos/ancp/australian-ngo-cooperation-program>

<sup>21</sup> Australia Assists deploys technical specialists to work with governments, multilateral agencies and communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural hazards and conflict, focusing on the root causes of conflict, mitigating its impact, and building the foundations for peace.

- Fund local women’s rights organisations to strengthen their capacities and opportunities to contribute to humanitarian preparedness and responses, disaster risk reduction, and climate adaptation and mitigation;
- Implement *Australia’s International Cyber and Critical Tech Engagement Strategy 2021*;<sup>22</sup>
- Implement the 2019-22 Strategic Framework of the Indo-Pacific Centre for Health Security;<sup>23</sup>
- Fund initiatives that advance the WPS agenda in resilience, crisis response, security, law and justice efforts, such as the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect,<sup>24</sup> Women’s Resilience to Disasters program (2021-25), and Pacific Women Negotiators Program;
- Support implementation of the Gender Action Plan of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in line with DFAT’s Climate Change Action Strategy, including through provision of gender-responsive and socially-inclusive climate finance;
- Assess the integration of gender equality and achievement of gender equality outcomes in disarmament and arms control programs (for example, mine action), including the participation and leadership of women, use of gender equality action plans, extent to which needs and interests of diverse women and girls are met and accessibility issues;

#### *Capabilities*

- Commission and undertake research that examines WPS, conflict prevention and natural resource management and consultations exploring the role of women’s networks in early warning systems for conflicts and disasters in the Indo-Pacific;
- Develop and implement a gender equality and WPS learning program for DFAT personnel involved in humanitarian action and international security; and
- Join military exercises to support attention to the WPS agenda and full and equal inclusion of women.

### 3.4 Outcome 4 actions

To demonstrate global leadership and accountability for results on WPS, DFAT will:

- Engage relevant Australian embassies and diplomatic posts, including the Australian Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, and thematic Ambassadors in advocating for action on the WPS agenda;
- Lead and sponsor statements, resolutions, declarations and other outcome documents on WPS in multilateral fora (Box 1), including the Main Committees of the UN General Assembly,<sup>25</sup> UN Security Council, Human Rights Council and Commission on the Status of Women, as well as regional and thematic fora and groupings, such as the Commonwealth,<sup>26</sup> ASEAN,<sup>27</sup> Asia-Europe Meeting,<sup>28</sup> East-Asia Summit,<sup>29</sup> G20, MIKTA,<sup>30</sup> and Pacific Islands Forum;<sup>31</sup>
- Convene and co-host dialogues, high-level events, and side events on the WPS agenda;

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.internationalcybertech.gov.au/our-work>

<sup>23</sup> <https://indopacifichealthsecurity.dfat.gov.au/>

<sup>24</sup> See, respectively, <https://r2pasiapacific.org/>, <https://www.globalr2p.org/>, and <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/>

<sup>25</sup> The WPS agenda is relevant to four of the UNGA Main Committees (<https://www.un.org/en/ga/maincommittees/>), with the First Committee being on Disarmament and International Security, the Second being the Economic and Financial Committee (with issues of financing and countries in special situations), the Third Committee addressing Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues (encompassing humanitarian affairs, human rights and the advancement of women), and the Fourth Committee on Special Political and Decolonization (inclusive of peace operations and mine action).

<sup>26</sup> <https://thecommonwealth.org/>

<sup>27</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations: <https://asean.org/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.aseaninfoboard.org/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://eastasiassummit.asean.org/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.mikta.org/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.forumsec.org/>

- Contribute to the work of the Group of Friends of WPS and other relevant UN Groups of Friends, such as those on the Responsibility to Protect and Children and Armed Conflict;
- Participate in and support the initiatives of the global WPS Focal Points Network;<sup>32</sup>
- Advocate for and uphold zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment;
- Support the engagement of women mediators, human rights defenders, WPS specialists, women with disabilities, persons of diverse gender identities and other feminist actors in regional and international fora;
- Convene the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Brisbane in 2022);
- Regularly report on Australia’s actions in support of implementation of the Gender Action Plan of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and
- Coordinate and disseminate the second National Action Plan progress reports.

*Box 1: Examples of statements made in support of the WPS agenda*

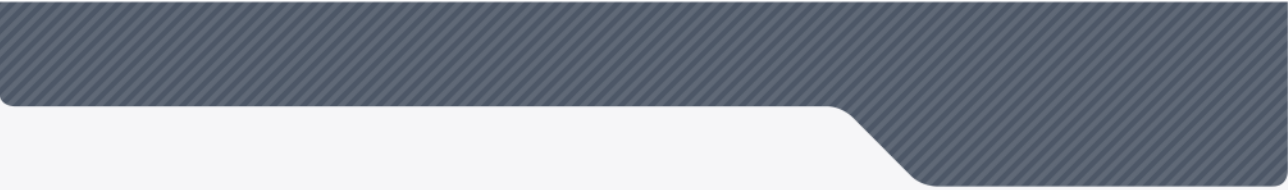
45 <sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (14 September – 7 October 2020)	<a href="#">Resolution on Promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)</a>
2021 United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (21 October)	<a href="#">Australian National Statement</a>
2021 United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict (14 April)	<a href="#">Australian National Statement</a>
31 <sup>st</sup> Special Session of the Human Rights Council (24 August 2021)	<a href="#">Australia and Spain-led Joint statement on Afghanistan women’s and girls’ human rights</a>

## 4. Actors and accountabilities

DFAT is the whole-of-government lead on the WPS agenda. DFAT’s Gender Equality Branch hosts the secretariat to the Australian Government WPS Inter-Departmental Committee and leads government coordination of the second National Action Plan reporting obligations of (i) progress reports to Government in 2023, 2025, and 2028, (ii) an Independent Interim Review (2025); and (iii) an Independent Final Review (2030). As part of this, DFAT oversees the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, which was agreed by and applies to all implementing partners. The M&E Framework is the main means through which progress towards and achievement of the second National Action Plan outcomes will be determined. In addition to the four outcomes of the second National Action Plan, DFAT will contribute to achievement of the medium-term outcomes of the M&E Framework (Table 1). The Gender Equality Branch has overarching responsibility for promoting and coordinating this Implementation Plan for DFAT.

Other parts of DFAT have key roles in advancing the WPS agenda, including the Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation Branch, Australian Safeguards and Non-proliferation Office, Office of the Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism, Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology Branch, Multilateral Health Branch, Centre for

<sup>32</sup> <https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/>



Health Security, Security Division, Office of the Pacific, Pacific Gender Section, Humanitarian and Partnerships Division, Climate Change and Sustainability Division, and UN Political, Peace and Security Section (see Annex B).

DFAT will review and revise this Implementation Plan over the 10-year period of the second National Action Plan, to remain strategic and responsive to an evolving international environment, local contexts, and innovative ideas, as well as the findings of the progress reports and interim review. Accordingly, DFAT will regularly update this Implementation Plan, remaining “responsive and flexible to change” as foreseen in the second National Action Plan.

## Annex A: Annual international advocacy opportunities

Month	Date	Opportunity
February		Human Rights Council (first annual session)
March	8	International Women’s Day
	weeks 2&3	Commission on the Status of Women
	24	International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims
April	4	International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
	second half	UN Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict
	24	International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace
May	29	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers
		UN General Assembly Plenary Meeting on “The responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity”
June	20	World Refugee Day
	29	International Day for The Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
		Human Rights Council (second annual session)
August	19	World Humanitarian Day
	21	International Day for the Remembrance and Commemoration of Victims of Terror
September	21	International Day of Peace
		Human Rights Council (third annual session)
October	2	International Day of Non-Violence
	13	International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
	second half	UN Security Council Open Debate on WPS
	24	United Nations Day
		UN General Assembly – Third Committee
November	6	International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
	25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
December	10	Human Rights Day

## Annex B: Priority areas of action

Across our portfolio, DFAT will mainstream gender equality and WPS, and pursue WPS-targeted actions, across nine priority areas of action.

<i>Area of action</i>	<i>DFAT-lead</i>	<i>Relevant DFAT framework</i>
Arms control, disarmament and counter-proliferation	Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation Branch (ACB) & Australian Safeguards and Non-proliferation Office (ASNO)	<a href="#">2017 Foreign Policy White Paper</a>
[International engagement on] Counter-terrorism	Office of the Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism (OCT)	<a href="#">Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2015)</a>
Cyber affairs and critical technology	Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology Branch (CYB)	<a href="#">2017 International Cyber Engagement Strategy</a>
Gender equality and women's empowerment	Gender Equality Branch (GEB)	<a href="#">Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy 2016</a>
Health security	Global Health Division (GHD) Multilateral Health Branch (HCB) Centre for Health Security (CHS)	<a href="#">Health Security Initiative Strategic Framework (2019-22)</a> <a href="#">Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response</a>
Human trafficking and modern slavery	Security Division (SCD)	Australia's international engagement strategy on human trafficking and modern slavery
Humanitarian response	Humanitarian Partnerships Division (HPD)	Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action Roadmap 2022-2026
Climate change action	Climate Change and Sustainability Division (CSD)	<a href="#">Climate Change Action Strategy 2020-25</a>
Peacebuilding, peacekeeping, atrocity prevention and responsibility to protect	UN Political, Peace and Security Section (UNP)	Commitments and partnerships to the UN Peace and Security Pillar <a href="#">Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy</a>

The Women, Peace and Security agenda is part of DFAT's broader priority of advancing **gender equality and women's empowerment** (GEWE), as reflected in the 2016 *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy* and the importance attached to security in *Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response*. The Ambassador for Women and Girls is a lead advocate for women, peace, and security and the Gender Equality Branch leads targeted engagement and support to mainstreaming of gender equality across DFAT. This includes promoting a holistic approach to WPS, from the integration of GEWE in policies on peace and security to support to civil society organisations. This work includes advocacy and action on advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights.

A priority area of action on WPS is **peacebuilding and peacekeeping**. For DFAT this combines direct support to UN peace and security processes and architecture, the WPS agenda, Responsibility to Protect and atrocity prevention, and PSEAH. The Australian Government's zero tolerance for SEAH, aligns with the second National Action Plan outcome of reducing sexual- and gender-based violence.

Australia's Ambassador for **Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation** will continue to lead Australia's international advocacy on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament and promote the connections with the WPS agenda.

In terms of international engagement on **counter-terrorism**, WPS is part of the work of the Office of the Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism, which includes fostering cooperation and collaboration as exemplified in Australia being Co-Chair, with Indonesia, of the Global Counterterrorism Forum Countering-Violent Extremism Working Group, which has a focus on gender and CVE.<sup>33</sup>

Gender equality is integrated into *Australia's International Cyber and Critical Tech Engagement Strategy 2021*,<sup>34</sup> with 'diversity and gender equality' being one of the four core values and commitment to the WPS agenda.

Addressing gender inequalities and the WPS pillars is central to the achievement of **health security** for all. Gender equality is one of the four cross-cutting themes of the 2019-22 Strategic Framework of the Indo-Pacific Centre for Health Security.<sup>35</sup> DFAT's health programming will continue to be gender-responsive and gender-inclusive, supported by the advocacy of the Ambassador for Regional Health Security. Women's participation, leadership, safety, and resilience will remain areas of action in preparing for, responding to and recovering from health security challenges.

DFAT recognises the Department of Home Affairs' international leadership on efforts to eradicate **modern slavery**, including through implementation of the *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25*.<sup>36</sup> DFAT's action on WPS in this area is led by Australia's Ambassador for People Smuggling and Human Trafficking through implementation of Australia's international engagement strategy on human trafficking and modern slavery. Focus on ending human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage, as well as action on gender equality and the WPS pillars of participation and protection, are interwoven in the international engagement strategy.

In **humanitarian response**, implementation of the second National Action Plan is part of the DFAT 'Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action Roadmap 2022-26'. Under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, DFAT recognises that central to humanitarian response is the participation and leadership of diverse women, such that the specific needs and interests of all affected persons can be identified, and adequate assistance provided.

The WPS agenda is integrated into DFAT's **disaster risk reduction, response and resilience** (DRRR) work, with clear connections to the pillars of participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery. This work is linked to DFAT's international **climate action** which engages the Ambassador for the Environment and is guided by the Climate Change Action Strategy and UNFCCC Gender Action Plan.

<sup>33</sup> See <https://www.thegctf.org/Who-we-are/Structure/Working-Groups/Countering-Violent-Extremism>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.internationalcybertech.gov.au/our-work>

<sup>35</sup> <https://indopacifichealthsecurity.dfat.gov.au/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/reports-and-publications/submissions-and-discussion-papers/combat-modern-slavery-2020-25#>