

SUMMARY REPORT

Towards a queer-inclusive WPS agenda in the Asia-Pacific region



INTRODUCTION

The Women, Peace, and Security agenda, established through UN Security Council Resolution 1325, has played a critical role in promoting gender-inclusive peace and security frameworks. However, its implementation has largely failed to recognise the specific needs and contributions of lesbian, bisexual, and queer (LBQ) women, as well as gender-diverse individuals. This study explores how the WPS agenda can be expanded to be more inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) communities in the Asia-Pacific region.

KEY FINDINGS

Challenges Faced by SOGIESC Communities

- **Conflict and Exclusion from Peace Processes** – SOGIESC-diverse individuals in conflict-affected areas face targeted violence and exclusion from peace negotiations.
- **Post disaster: Lack of Inclusion, exacerbated marginalisation** – Queer communities are often neglected in disaster response efforts, experiencing discrimination in aid distribution and shelter access.
- **Climate Crisis** – Climate change often worsens vulnerabilities for SOGIE-diverse individuals by amplifying existing inequalities and discrimination. Queer communities often face compounded impacts during climate disasters, leading to displacement and precarious living conditions.
- **Violence in the Home and Community** – SOGIESC-diverse individuals often face violence within their homes, which extends into communities through stigma, forced evictions, and honour-based harm, with limited legal protections.
- **Rise of Extremism and Online Violence** – Extremist ideologies fuel online and offline attacks against SOGIESC-diverse communities, with hate speech, cyberbullying, and doxing creating a climate of fear and insecurity.
- **Shrinking Civic Space** – Despite progress in SOGIESC inclusion, LGBTIQ CSOs face increasing restrictions, including funding constraints, surveillance, and limitations on expression, weakening their ability to advocate and hold governments accountable.

Queer Perspectives on Peace and Security

Queer activists in the Asia-Pacific region view peace and security through a holistic, intersectional lens, beyond traditional state-centred approaches. For SOGIESC-diverse communities, peace is not just the absence of war but the ability to live authentically without fear of violence, discrimination, or exclusion. Security must be understood as human security, encompassing access to employment, healthcare, and protection from state and digital surveillance.

Transgender women face heightened risks in conflict settings, while economic insecurity and restrictive laws further marginalise queer communities. Exclusion from disaster response and the lack of tailored support services deepen inequalities. Despite some legal progress, shrinking civic space and systemic barriers continue to undermine peace and security for SOGIESC-diverse people, highlighting the urgent need for inclusive and intersectional approaches to peacebuilding.

APPETITE FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WPS AGENDA

- Many LGBTIQ+ organisations are already engaged in peace and security work, but not necessarily under the WPS framework, using labels like human rights or anti-discrimination.
- There is interest in engaging with the WPS agenda, especially if it aligns with core work and includes broader conceptions of gender and security.
- Sustainability and flexibility in funding are crucial to ensuring meaningful participation in WPS initiatives.
- Organisations want funding models that support long-term capacity building and strategic partnerships.
- Some organisations face challenges in engaging with the WPS framework due to its narrow focus and the overwhelming number of UN processes.
- There is a call for recognising and resourcing queer peace and security work that already exists, outside of rigid WPS labels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the Australian Government and Regional Multilateral Organisations

1. **Encourage SOGIESC inclusion in DFAT-funded WPS initiatives** – Ensure LGBTIQ+ CSOs are engaged in events and projects funded by Australia.
2. **Sustainable and ethical core funding** – Prioritise long-term funding for grassroots LGBTIQ+ organisations with minimal reporting requirements.
3. **Local queer consultation** – Consult directly with local SOGIESC organisations rather than assuming mainstream NGOs represent them.
4. **Support for local GPS research** – Fund studies that capture LGBTIQ+ perspectives in peace and security.
5. **Promote intersectional and intergenerational approaches** – Address intersecting factors like race, class, gender identity, and age.
6. **Law enforcement training** – Support gender-responsive policing and SOGIESC inclusion in law enforcement training.
7. **Post-disaster support and refugee policy** – Ensure queer-inclusive aid and protection for displaced LGBTIQ+ individuals.
8. **Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)** – Invest in tailored mental health initiatives for queer communities.
9. **Understanding colonial legacies** – Recognise and challenge laws that marginalise LGBTIQ+ individuals.
10. **Create space for engagement by LBQ and gender-diverse people in Australia** – Acknowledge and support domestic queer peacebuilding efforts

Recommendations for Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) Leading on WPS

1. **Promote inclusive partnerships and platform diverse voices** – Include SOGIESC-diverse voices in WPS discussions and ensure queer-led groups are central.
2. **Use language that reflects the diversity of experiences** – Adopt inclusive language like “women in all their diversity” or “GPS”.
3. **Acknowledge and validate existing queer peace and security work** – Recognise LGBTQI+ organisations' work within peace and security, even if not labelled as WPS.
4. **Support capacity building for SOGIESC-diverse CSOs** – Provide training on WPS frameworks and advocacy.
5. **Understand specific barriers and risks for SOGIESC-diverse networks** – Be aware of the unique challenges faced by LGBTQI+ activists in conflict and crisis.
6. **Create safe and supportive spaces** – Offer safe spaces for LGBTQI+ activists to share and work on peace and security.
7. **Acknowledge colonial legacies and prioritise neglected crises** – Address colonial histories and amplify neglected crises.
8. **Strengthen networks and foster solidarity** – Build solidarity with SOGIESC-diverse groups based on shared goals.

CONCLUSION

SOGIESC-diverse communities across the Asia-Pacific region are already engaged in peace and security work, yet they remain largely excluded from the WPS agenda. Queer activists emphasise that true security goes beyond the absence of conflict—it means freedom from discrimination, access to justice, and the right to live authentically without fear. Ensuring meaningful inclusion requires structural change, sustainable funding, and recognition of existing queer-led initiatives. Without this shift, the WPS agenda will continue to overlook the lived realities of those most at risk.



ABOUT US

The Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security ('the Coalition') is a non-partisan and independent coalition of civil society organisations, networks, and individuals working to advance the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in Australia, the Asia-Pacific region, and globally. The Coalition brings together activists, feminists, practitioners, humanitarian actors, and those with first-hand experience working on WPS issues. Members have a wide range of expertise in gender and peace.

For more information:
www.wpscoalition.org



EDGE EFFECT

Edge Effect is a global diverse SOGIESC (aka LGBTIQ+) humanitarian and development organization established in 2017. Edge Effect's mission is to ensure that the rights, needs and strengths of people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics are addressed within the humanitarian and development sectors. Edge Effect works with LGBTIQ+ civil society organizations and communities, alongside donors, UN agencies, and international non-government organizations.

For more information:
www.edgeeffect.org



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