

MAG (Mines Advisory Group)

Written Evidence to the International Development Committee inquiry on “Women, Peace and Security”

15 May 2025

Summary

The conditions experienced by women and girls are deteriorating globally. Conflict and armed violence, including the use of explosive weapons and ordnance have a disproportionate and gendered impact on women and girls, including long-term consequences. Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are the weapons used in most of the gender-based violence, including gender-based war crimes and domestic violence. Furthermore, women and girls are particularly affected by explosive weapons, explosive ordnance and their impact on their human rights and socio-economic condition. As WPS penholder at the UN Security Council, the UK should continue to promote the design and planning of evidence-based implementation of the WPS pillars. In the field of humanitarian mine action, the UK should continue to promote the mainstreaming of gender and women's rights, both in policymaking and practical interventions, supporting, among other things, the participation of women in humanitarian disarmament fora and the dissemination of approaches that put women's and girls' lived experience at the centre of peace and security discussions. FCDO has mainstreamed gender in its Global Mine Action Programme (GMAP) and could follow GMAP example for other arms control and disarmament interventions, including those related to small arms control and conventional ammunition management. Especially in the field of conventional arms control, the FCDO and the UK have great potential to support innovative approaches to the implementation of WPS which should be further explored and used.

Introduction

This submission details the reflections of Mines Advisory Group (MAG) on the FCDO's approach to the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and its implementation, especially in the fields of operation of MAG: humanitarian mine action, weapons and ammunition management, and armed violence reduction.

This submission draws on our experience as an NGO working in areas that are affected by active hostilities or the long-term impact of past conflicts, as well as other situations of violence. FCDO is a valued partner and donor in this work. The submission makes recommendations on how the UK Government could strengthen its approach in the practical implementation on the pillars of the WPS agenda.

MAG is engaged with the implementation of the WPS agenda in mine action, weapons and ammunition management and armed violence reduction both at policy and operational level. MAG has a dedicated Gender and Inclusion Global Advisor and is a founding member of the Gender and Diversity Working Group for the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), as well as being an active member of the informal coordination group on SALW and gender, chaired by UNODA.

MAG believes that, as WPS penholder at the UN Security Council, the UK has a critical role in protecting and promoting the WPS agenda at the political level and should ensure the

practical implementation of the WPS agenda across all of the programmes and projects implemented by the FCDO and the UK Government.

Key Recommendations

What are the current trends that can be observed in respect of adherence of the international WPS agenda? What role does the UK play on an international scale, and how can this be improved?

Recommendation 1: Considering the disproportionate and gendered impact of conflict on women and girls, the UK Government should continue to invest in humanitarian response that is gender responsive and transformative.¹

The conditions experienced by women and girls are deteriorating globally. Recent trends show an increase in the number of women and girls killed in armed violence and conflict. Approximately 612 million women and girls lived within 50 kilometres of conflicts in 2023, an increase of 50 per cent compared to 2022.² According to the UN Secretary General, 4 out of every 10 civilians killed in conflict were women in 2023, double the number from the previous year.³ Women and girls are also disproportionately affected by conflict-related sexual violence.⁴ Sexual violence in conflict rose dramatically with UN-verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence soaring by 50 per cent to 3688 cases⁵ and the number of girls affected by grave violations in situations of armed conflict increased by 35 per cent.⁶ It has been well documented that in conflict situations women's and girls' specific rights are often ignored.⁷

Conflict and armed violence, including the use of explosive weapons and ordnance⁸ have a disproportionate and gendered impact on women and girls, including long-term consequences. The UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 recognises that the immediate and long-term effects of conflict and armed violence also have a significant gendered impact on women's and girls' lives and livelihoods. Men and boys represent the highest casualties and fatalities caused by explosive ordnance,⁹ meaning that women and girls are more likely to become caregivers for survivors of

¹ For concise definitions of 'gender sensitive', 'gender responsive' and 'gender transformative' mean in the fields of arms control and disarmament, see page 24 of the publication at the following link

<https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-GLASS-Gender-HB.pdf>

² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security#90012>

³ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/110/29/pdf/n2411029.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SG-2023-annual-reportsmallFINAL.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/202404-UN-annual-report-CRSV-factsheet-covering-2023.pdf> and <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security#90012>

⁶ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/095/07/pdf/n2409507.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WPS.pdf>

⁸ In this document, the expression 'explosive ordnance' includes landmines, cluster munition, unexploded ordnance, abandoned ordnance, booby traps, and explosive devices, including those of an improvised nature.

⁹ See, for example,

https://www.clusterconvention.org/files/brochures/UPDATED_2022_Gender_and_Diversity_in_the_Convention_on_Cluster_Munitions_CCM_2022.pdf; https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/UNIDIR_Factsheet_Gender_and_Diversity_in_the_APMBC.pdf

landmine accidents and become the main breadwinner and sole caregiver if male family members are killed or injured.¹⁰ Women and girls are also more likely to suffer social stigma after surviving an explosive weapons accident.¹¹

Small arms and light weapons (SALW)¹² are the weapons used in the vast majority of gender-based violence, including gender-based war crimes and domestic violence. The uncontrolled circulation of SALW and illicit trafficking also fuels and perpetuates conflict, instability and gender-based violence and crime.¹³ Where data is available it has been estimated that between 70% and 90% of conflict-related sexual violence incidents between 2020 and 2022 involved SALW.¹⁴ In regions such as the Caribbean, where firearms are widely available and gun violence is rife, the likelihood of women and girls to be victims of firearms killings is significantly higher than the worldwide rate.¹⁵

Women and girls are particularly affected by explosive weapons, explosive ordnance and the related impact on their rights and socio-economic condition. In all areas of MAG's intervention, it has been shown how women and girls are affected by long-term gendered impacts of explosive weapons and their remnants, as well as of SALW. For example, the destruction of schools and hospitals through explosive weapons as well as their post-conflict inaccessibility after the end of active hostilities, generally increase the likelihood for women and girls to be deprived of their rights to education and health. In this circumstances exposure to various forms of gender-based violence is common, including under-age marriages, recruitment in armed groups, rape, and high rate of women and girls' mortality for issues that could be prevented in ordinary circumstances.¹⁶

What can the UK Government do to ensure that its WPS efforts are sustainable long-term, particularly in light of global political shifts?

Recommendation 2: in line with Strategic Objective 5 of the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027, the FCDO and the UK Government should continue and intensify its efforts to ground interventions in concrete evidence of the gendered impact of conflict and armed violence on women to respond 'to the knowledge gap' indicated in the National Action Plan.

The implementation of the WPS should rely on different types of data that allow evidence-based decisions, policymaking and interventions. The UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 is clearly based on evidence from a comprehensive range of sources, including FCDO and UK Government's own analysis, as

¹⁰ https://undir.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UNIDIR_Gendered_Impacts_of_the_Use_of_Explosive_Weapons_in_Populated_Areas.pdf

¹¹ <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1550&context=cisr-journal>

¹² Also known as "firearms".

¹³ <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2023/823>

¹⁴ https://undir.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/UNIDIR_Addressing_Weapons_in_Conflict_related_Sexual_Violence.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/CARICOM-IMPACS-SAS-Caribbean-Firearms-Study.pdf>

¹⁶ https://undir.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UNIDIR_Gendered_Impacts_of_the_Use_of_Explosive_Weapons_in_Populated_Areas.pdf

well as content and material from UN agencies, research entities and civil society organisations. Even in the context of cuts, it is critical that the FCDO and the UK Government continue and intensify its support towards types of research and studies that generate data for evidence-based policy and practical interventions.

The establishment and development of sustainable partnerships with research entities, including research centres and civil society organisations should be central to the UK's strategy on WPS. Although the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 is clearly based on relevant evidence, it does not seem to be the product of strategic use of all the content and research produced by research entities and civil society organisations based in the UK. It is recommended that future work on WPS should be based on coordinated partnerships and networks of experts linked to the UK, including university research centres, and civil society organisations.¹⁷

Data underpinning implementation of the WPS should concern the lived experience of women and girls as survivors and peacebuilders, including both quantitative and qualitative nature and should be disaggregated by at least gender and age. In particular, it is critical that qualitative data, gathered through qualitative research methodologies is collected and analysed in systematically with a focus on conveying the lived experience of women and girls as survivors and peacebuilders. This could be done through supporting agencies, entities and organisations that have experience and expertise in the sector and are able to approach and interact with women and girls in different parts of the world, even when these are marginalised.¹⁸ An important example of this type of data-gathering, research, and analysis has been undertaken in the mine action sector, supported by FCDO's Global Mine Action Programme (GMAP). This can and should also be extended to other areas of interventions, including SALW control measures (see recommendations 5 and 8 below).

Recommendation 3: the FCDO should continue to mainstream gender in humanitarian mine action and humanitarian disarmament in international fora, showcasing its own work on the link between these two fields and supporting civil society organisations that are committed to work on the intersection of WPS and humanitarian disarmament.

The FCDO should continue to promote the links between humanitarian disarmament treaties, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and the WPS agenda. As a champion of humanitarian disarmament and the WPS penholder at the UN Security Council, the UK is well positioned to lead on the links between the frameworks of those different frameworks. In particular, the FCDO should lead on how those conventions and frameworks, including the Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), are critical to prevent and address the gendered impact of conflict and armed violence on women and girls. The link between WPS and humanitarian disarmament frameworks should be considered as a field where strategic objective 1 of the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 can be effectively fulfilled.

Participation in different relevant decision-making processes by women and girls

¹⁷ The commitment expressed at page 34 of the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 should be central to build sustainable partnerships with these entities.

¹⁸ This is in line with some of the commitments outlined in the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027, pages 31-34.

and their role as peacebuilding leaders is concretised through the implementation of the APMBC and CCM action plans, where gender is mainstreamed. It is noteworthy that the UK's GMAP is particularly focused on involving women in the mine action sector and ensuring that different processes aimed at gathering needs and views are meaningfully accessible to women and girls. The UK should look to build on efforts that specifically aim to involve women and girls in the mine action and disarmament sector. For example, the UK should support initiatives that aim to involve young women and girls in these sectors, including promoting Resolution 78/31¹⁹ and the Youth for Disarmament initiatives.²⁰

Recommendation 4: the FCDO should continue to demonstrate willingness and interest in innovative policy developments in both the fields of WPS and humanitarian mine action and arms control, exploring synergies among different sectors, including those related to peacebuilding, human security, SDGs and human rights.

Innovation on policy matters is beneficial to the full implementation of the WPS agenda, especially those that concern peacebuilding, human security, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and human rights. For example, a human rights-based approach and mainstreaming of human rights in humanitarian mine action and armed violence reduction interventions can facilitate the integration of different perspectives, including the needs, views, and rights of women and girls. In a recent publication MAG has outlined a possible way forward on how to create synergies between humanitarian mine action and the protection and fulfilment of human rights.²¹ Mainstreaming human rights in arms control and disarmament, including mine action, facilitates understanding of the gendered impact of conventional weapons on women.

Efforts in reforming the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, with a renewed role for the UN Peacebuilding Commission can also be relevant to the synergic promotion and implementation of humanitarian disarmament, armed violence reduction, and WPS interventions. Ensuring that the Peacebuilding Commission becomes an institution where an integrated approach to peace is adopted and implemented can create the conditions needed to link the WPS to arms control and armed violence reduction interventions more effectively.

Similar considerations can also be made with regard to the EWIPA Declaration, which requires action towards effective implementation by endorsing states. Through UK Government bodies including both the FCDO and MoD, the UK can demonstrate how consideration of the rights of women and girls can inform the implementation of the EWIPA Declaration. This will reduce harmful practices involving explosive weapons and their gendered impact and promote a more integrated approach to protection of civilians by the UK Armed Forces and among the UK's allies and partners.

Recommendation 5: more generally, it is critical that UK's efforts at international policy level to promote and mainstream the WPS agenda in the arms control and disarmament sector are matched with implementation of those policy measures in practice. Practical measures should also have the necessary level of flexibility to adapt to specific needs of women and girls in a context-responsive way.

¹⁹ <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/78/31>

²⁰ <https://www.youth4disarmament.org/>

²¹ <https://www.maginternational.org/whats-happening/mine-action-and-human-rights/>

It is critical that the UK's strong political commitment to the WPS agenda and its implementation at international level is matched with its practical implementation. For example, in the context of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT),²² the UK's political commitment to support gender-mainstreaming initiatives should also correspond to practical support to other states parties and other relevant stakeholders in their efforts to implement relevant rules of the ATT. For example, the UK should focus on measures that support the development of import control systems and other related infrastructure and policies to minimise the risk of diversion of weapons to actors who commit gender-based violence and other types of discriminatory and harmful conduct.²³

The FCDO should invest more in projects that concretely integrate the WPS with other frameworks and agendas, such as the mainstreaming of the WPS and the SDGs in SALW national action plans. With a suitable approach to international cooperation and assistance, the UK can support the drafting and implementation of national action plans that aim to minimise the impact of the illicit circulation and misuse of SALW and conventional ammunition, including the gendered and discriminatory impact on women and girls. These synergies fulfil two interrelated goals: they ensure that the needs and views of women and girls are properly addressed and met, and they minimise the risk of incoherence in implementation.²⁴ Examples of this type of intervention include meaningful participation of women to decision-making processes through engagement with local, national and regional stakeholders and inclusion of gender perspectives in national action plans on SALW.²⁵

The FCDO should also extend and build on support to local civil society organisations and their involvement in decision making settings and processes. MAG welcomes the recognition of civil society as “strategic partner” and “critical friend” in UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027. It is important that the FCDO approach and interact with both global and local civil society organisations (CSOs), and provides support to local CSOs, who are most proximate to and aware of needs and views of women and girls in specific contexts. CSOs often lead in addressing stereotypes and barriers preventing women and girls from fully enjoying their rights and leading in peacebuilding processes. Supporting local CSOs requires long-term vision and strategy and reliable funding.

Being driven by women's and girls' needs and views require flexibility to adapt interventions to context, dynamic insecurity, and concrete needs. MAG's experience finds that implementation of the WPS agenda requires the ability to adapt to the specific needs and views expressed by women and girls during the project. For example, MAG staff have frequently identified situations in which women and girls share experiences of discrimination and gender-based violence that fall outside the direct scope of intervention. Furthermore, in some scenarios women and girls have expressed fear of possible

²² E.g. <https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/Mexico%20and%20Netherlands%20-%20Joint%20Statement%20-%20ATT%20CSP9%20-%20Joint%20Statement%20on%20Gender%20-%20FINAL%20DRAFT/Mexico%20and%20Netherlands%20-%20Joint%20Statement%20-%20ATT%20CSP9%20-%20Joint%20Statement%20on%20Gender%20-%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>

²³ E.g. <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-BP-2024-WPS-EN.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-BP-2024-WPS-EN.pdf>

²⁵ <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-How-to-guide-2025-Gender-NAP-EN.pdf>

retaliation by community or family members, requiring careful and conflict sensitive analysis of how to manage these barriers. This is a typical example of how adaptability, flexibility and multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to protect and fulfil women's and girls' rights in practice.

Are women's voices, particularly those from conflict-affected communities and marginalised groups, sufficiently included within the UK's approach to the WPS agenda?

Recommendation 6: the FCDO should increase its activities aimed at strengthening the role and agency of women in peacebuilding by convening different stakeholders in the UK and abroad, including women in the UK's Diplomatic Service, Civil Service and Armed Forces. The UK should also continue to support various forms of representation of women's and girls' agency in peacebuilding.

The commitment set out in the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027 to increase of the number of women in peacebuilding-relevant sectors should continue and offers a potential route to reinforce the UK's ability to establish and maintain trustworthy relationships with women in peacebuilding around the world. The positionality of UK representatives is critical to incentivise meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes and leadership roles, in line with Strategic Objective 1 of the UK's national action plan. These efforts should be extended to and reflect in support to NGOs and civil society organisations.

The FCDO should implement projects that support and encourage men and boys to be WPS advocates and back the work of women and girls. MAG has identified the important role of men within armed forces and other security sector institutions in supporting the implementation of the WPS agenda. This has been explored by MAG in West Africa, for example, where MAG has successfully worked to identify men within the armed forces to be gender champions.

The FCDO and the UK Government should continue to support projects that highlight the role of women in peacebuilding and challenge stereotypes, including artworks, exhibitions, and other cultural actions. MAG, for example, designed and produced a photo exhibition titled *The Female Lens: Women and War* that portrays the identity and agency of women in mine action and their role as peacebuilders in their communities in post-conflict settings.²⁶ This has been an effective approach when displayed at international conferences that represents the agency and leadership of women in peacebuilding, challenges perceptions, and convenes discussion.

To what extent does the UK Government integrate Women, Peace and Security principles across its ODA-funded programming?

Recommendation 7: the FCDO should continue to support gender mainstreaming in humanitarian mine action through its Global Mine Action Programme (GMAP). GMAP should continue to be substantially and sustainably funded as it provides a positive example of synchronisation of humanitarian disarmament measures with WPS pillars that are central to the structure of the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027.

²⁶ <https://mag-thefemalelens.zenfoliosite.com/>

Prevention of conflict and violence and protection of women and girls are themes well integrated across all mine action activities, including those that go beyond survey and clearance i.e. explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and advocacy activities. EORE messaging is gender-sensitive, using tailored and targeted messaging for different groups with particular attention to women and girls, who are often marginalised. EORE empowers women and girls to protect themselves and prevent serious accidents. Cascading of community messaging also empowers women to share safety messaging with the wider community. Studies have shown that mine action that is sensitive, responsive, and transformative to gender is more effective and fairer.²⁷

To appreciate and respond to women's and girls' needs and views, mine action and arms control should be sensitive and responsive to gender and aim to challenge norms and stigmas in a transformative way. Mainstreaming gender considerations, ensures the work funded through GMAP framework is more effective and fairer, ensuring that mine action activities are driven by the voices and needs of women that could otherwise go unheard or unseen. This can be done through a wide variety of practical interventions, ranging from deployment of mixed or women-only teams who can better liaise with women and girls affected by explosive ordnance in a way that is contextually and culturally sensitive, to practical interventions, such as the fitting of appropriate infrastructure to allow women attendance to training sessions.²⁸

In the fields of women's and girls' relief and recovery and mine action, the FCDO should support processes and mechanisms that facilitate referral of women and girls to relief organisations when needs are met by mine action operators. WPS relief and recovery is relevant to the different processes that organisations like MAG put in place to approach explosive ordnance survivors and refer them to specific organisations.

Recommendation 8: The FCDO should consider GMAP as an exemplar to be replicated in other disarmament fields, including SALW and conventional ammunition control.

The FCDO has demonstrated willingness and ability to draw on the lessons learned through GMAP to promote arms control measures concerning other conventional weapons. This includes the UK's participation to the drafting of the *Global Framework on Conventional Ammunition Management* and the recent review conference of the *UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons*. GMAP is a significant contributor and driver towards implementation of the WPS agenda and the opportunity should be seized by the FCDO to use it as blueprint for other similar programmes, while protecting GMAP from cuts and budget reductions.

Are there appropriate accountability mechanisms in place to ensure that the Government is meeting its WPS commitments, and that these commitments are translated into substantive outcomes?

Recommendation 9: although GMAP is an excellent positive example, the FCDO should

²⁷ [https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Media/GICHD-resources/info-documents/Gender_Working_Group/Explainer_How_does_gender_and_diversity_relate_to_mine_action .pdf](https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Media/GICHD-resources/info-documents/Gender_Working_Group/Explainer_How_does_gender_and_diversity_relate_to_mine_action.pdf)

²⁸ To know more about this, watch the presentation by Hiba Ghandour, MAG Lebanon Programme Manager and Chair of Lebanon's Working Group on Gender in Mine Action https://youtu.be/uCzkNXfJAYM?si=W-uxA6Us_qGLKRG8&t=3075

improve the mainstreaming of the content of the WPS agenda in other disarmament, arms control, and peacebuilding initiatives, in particular those that concern conventional weaponry and cross-cutting issues.

Whilst GMAP is a very positive example of integration of WPS themes in disarmament and arms control, this approach to the rights of women and girls should be strengthened in other sectors concerning other types of conventional weapons, including SALW and conventional weapons control and security sector training and reform. MAG's experience of partnering with the Counter-Proliferation and Arms Control Centre (CPACC) in tackling illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons in the Caribbean demonstrated positive engagement with WPS and gender equality. MAG proposed a series of measures to improve women's and girls' agency to address the power dynamics affecting their choices and engage with governing structures such as community, national and regional institutions, policies, social norms. This type of intervention in the field of SALW control should not only continue but should also be strengthened and expanded to other related and adjacent fields, fulfilling Strategic Objective 4 of the UK's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023-2027. For example, the WPS pillars should be mainstreamed in the practical implementation of the EWIPA Declaration through the operations and activities of human security advisors within British Armed Forces. Similarly, arms control measures and projects could expand to training aimed at reducing armed violence and increase the accountability of members of armed and security forces.

The potential synergy involving disarmament, arms control and WPS in the policy field should also be matched with improved coordination among relevant departments and teams within the FCDO. Mainstreaming of the WPS agenda requires coordination and identification of synergies between different parts of the FCDO structure. This approach, which in some cases is already practised, can facilitate the identification of interventions that benefit the implementation of the WPS. For example, the current UK Government's focus on conflict prevention should be linked to conflict and armed violence early warning systems, and also coordinated with strengthened understanding of the specific needs and views of women and girls. For example, the FCDO should promote actions aimed at intercepting early warning signs related to the demand for SALW and figures and indicators related to domestic or gender-based violence.²⁹

The FCDO should draw on the experience and expertise of other states supporting measures linking the WPS with arms control and disarmament measures. With the support of other donor states, MAG, for example, has designed and implemented a series of activities that address marginalising and discriminatory stigmas and social norms affecting women in the armed forces and their roles in activities that reduce risks of diversion of small arms and their ammunition and other types of incidents.³⁰

What financial resources has the UK allocated towards advancing the WPS agenda? Are these resources appropriately distributed across programmes and regions?

Recommendation 10: financial resources for the implementation of the WPS agenda

²⁹ <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/revcon4/gender-and-demand-in-arms-control>

³⁰ https://www.maginternational.org/media/filer_public/7a/d8/7ad85549-d755-416b-ae47-2ef50f3fa03b/gender_and_diversity_in_salw_in_wa_1122-2.pdf

should increase, be better organised, and more transparent.

Although resources for the implementation of the WPS are available, there is a certain level of unclarity on the availability of resources to fund and implement projects that mainstream the WPS pillars in other interventions (e.g. mine action and disarmament).

The FCDO should mainstream the WPS agenda throughout its projects by clearly allocating and making available resources for organisations to concretise the link between WPS and other sectors. Although organisations such as MAG are willing and able to mainstream WPS agenda in sectors such as disarmament or peacebuilding and security, it is not always clear whether the FCDO makes resources available for this aim and where they can be accessed.

Recommendation 11: considering deteriorating conditions for women and girls globally in light of the disproportionate impact of conflict and insecurity, it is fundamental that cuts to the aid budget take into account the impact of reducing programmes that implement the WPS agenda and the rights of women and girls. Gender and WPS mainstreaming do not only facilitate the addressing of women's and girls' concrete needs; it also increase the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian mine action and arms control interventions.

Decisions on how to cut the aid budget should be informed by the needs and rights of women and girls, and the frequent discrimination against and marginalisation of these groups. As penholder of the WPS agenda at the UN Security Council, the UK should lead by example and place protection of women's and girls' needs and rights at the centre of its approach to aid cut, preventing essential resources from disappearing. Disinvestment in WPS projects means removing the support to millions of women and girls,³¹ implementing more inefficient and ineffective projects,³² and losing the UK's primary role in such a critical and essential space.

About MAG (Mines Advisory Group)

MAG (Mines Advisory Group) is a humanitarian, development and peacebuilding organisation that limits the causes and addresses the consequences — both immediate and long-term — of conflict and armed violence. Headquartered in Manchester, UK, MAG employs 6,000+ staff in 40+ countries across Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Our mission is to save lives, ease suffering and enable sustainable development by limiting the causes and addressing the consequences of armed violence and conflict so people can live with dignity and choice, free from fear. We clear landmines and unexploded ordnance, deliver risk education, and work to reduce the threat and likelihood of armed violence, conflict, and unplanned explosions. Our work helps almost two million people every year.

³¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security#90012>

³² <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol26/iss1/7/>

MAG is committed to advocacy that prevents future harm caused by conflict and armed violence. We were co-recipients of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for our work campaigning to bring about the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We also support governments to meet their obligations under other international frameworks, such as the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the Arms Trade Treaty.

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