

# **GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

**DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS  
2020**





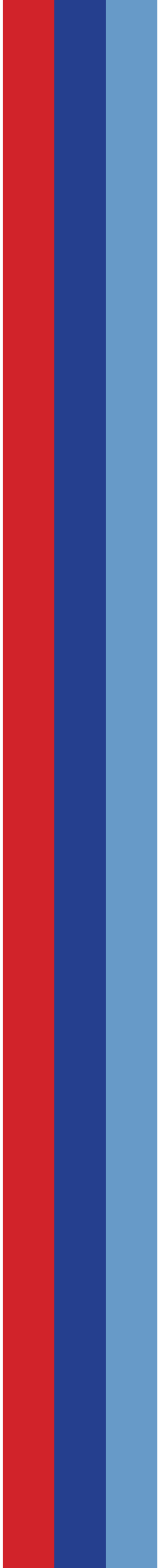
# **GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**





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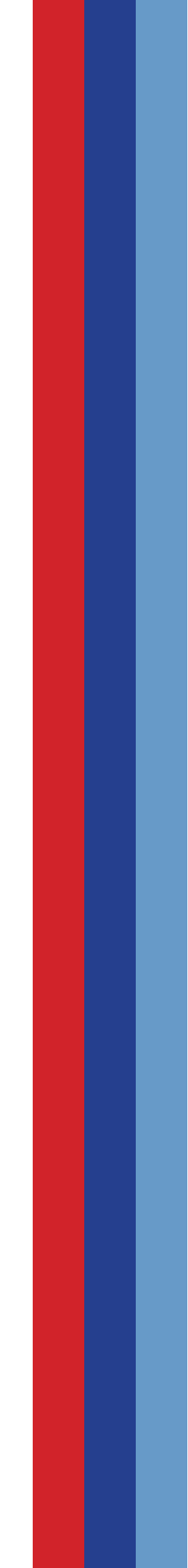


# FOREWORD

The Federal Government of Nigeria has over the years demonstrated commitment to several global, regional, and national instruments that seek to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Nigeria is a signatory to some important international and regional women's rights conventions, treaties, and declarations. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995; and United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, 2000. This is in addition to the adoption of several progressive laws and policies by the Government, including the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015. The adoption of the first and second National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 in 2013 and 2017, respectively, and their localization at the state level are important interventions aimed at operationalizing Resolution 1325 in Nigeria. These milestones have undoubtedly created an enabling environment for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in the country, including the adoption and implementation of gender policies by several institutions. The Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) is one of these institutions.

The development of a gender policy by the AFN is timely and significant, as this year represents the twentieth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, a landmark global commitment on women, peace, and security. The current period also requires a strategic, collaborative, and gender-sensitive approach by the various security Services, given the multidimensional conflicts and security challenges confronting the country. Women are largely underrepresented in virtually all sections of the armed forces, with an average of only 10 per cent representation in the three Services, and much lower in combat and other strategic and decision-making positions. The policy will therefore create an enabling environment to address the widespread gender inequality in the military, which is often regarded as a profession preserved exclusively for men. This situation underutilizes the capacities, perspectives, and value addition that women bring to war fighting, including a reduction in the likelihood of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict settings.

More so, the gender policy will promote the increased recruitment and retention of women, particularly in specialized combat/non-combat roles; improve gender mainstreaming in the various military training institutions; eliminate discrimination and gender insensitivity in the promotion and posting of personnel; and



improve civil–military cooperation from a gender and human rights perspective, among others. These are indeed critical areas with huge gender gaps in the military, which require policy actions and reforms.

To effectively implement the Gender Policy of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, a strategic framework for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation – with clear guidelines for achieving set targets, objectives, and goals – is critical. Partnerships with various actors are relevant: the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and other key ministries, departments, and agencies; UN Women and other UN agencies; development partners and relevant CSOs, including Partners West Africa Nigeria; and other stakeholders. It is heartening to note that these have been carefully considered in the implementation strategies for the policy. The technical support from these partners in the development of the gender policy has indeed strengthened the already established partnerships with the AFN, which will be sustained for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment in the security sector and Nigeria at large.

**Comfort Lamptey**

*UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS*



# PREFACE

Gender mainstreaming has gained traction within the AFN with the establishment of the Gender Department and Gender Focal Points in the Defence Headquarters (DHQ) and the Services. This was in response to UNSCR 1325, which laid out the framework for the inclusion of women's needs and perspectives in all conflict-related issues and the building of sustainable peace.

Gender is a cross-cutting issue, and the implementation of the gender policy will require the commitment, participation, and contribution of every member of the AFN, with a view to benefit maximally from Resolution 1325 and other related documents, as well as guide the AFN on all issues concerning gender mainstreaming.

The DHQ is committed to the implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 as mechanisms for strengthening women's participation and involvement in the promotion of peace and security. This is within the context of conflict prevention and resolution, eradicating sexual violence, and ending impunity in conflict-prone situations. This will undoubtedly contribute to the implementation of Nigeria's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.

The Gender Policy comes as a commitment of the DHQ to gender mainstreaming and creating safe workspaces and equitable opportunities for all members of the forces regardless of gender. It provides for a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming within the AFN and in the civilian components of the AFN, while being mindful that an overarching policy is required to assure continuity and strengthen the delivery of this mandate.

The Gender Policy is guided by five principles: fulfilling obligations; changing the environment; participation and representation; gender-sensitive budgeting/procurement; and conditions of service.



The policy is further grounded on three specific objectives: formalize the commitment to gender mainstreaming; strengthen capacities for gender mainstreaming; and integrate gender into training, planning, budgeting, and operations.

The drafting of a policy on gender is a clear manifestation of the DHQ's commitment to gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality in its system and service functions. I believe that the implementation of the provisions of this policy document will be a positive step towards strategic gender integration in the AFN.

**A. G. Olonisakin**

*General*

*Chief of Defence Staff*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The initiative for writing the Gender Policy of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (GPAFN) is that of the Chief of Defence Staff, to whom the AFN will eternally be grateful for championing gender issues and concerns. In addition, the collaborative efforts of many interest groups and institutions, including the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, UN Women, Partners West Africa Nigeria, the DHQ Gender Advisor (GENAD), and the Services' Gender Desk Officers and Gender Focal Points, ensured the production of the policy. The technical support received from other well-meaning personalities, too many to mention, are appreciated.

The AFN wishes to express its profound gratitude to the Honourable Minister of Defence, who has continually provided the needed leadership, interfacing military and political spaces to ensure acceptance of the concept of gender mainstreaming in the AFN. It is the space provided by the Honourable Minister of Defence that has allowed the emergence of the GPAFN.

Finally, on behalf of all the Officers and Non-commissioned Officers of the AFN, we thank the President, Commander-in-Chief of the AFN, for untiringly backing the AFN in all its endeavours, including the production of the GPAFN.

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AFN</b>	Armed Forces of Nigeria
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>DHQ</b>	Defence Headquarters
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>GBV</b>	gender-based violence
<b>GENAD</b>	Gender Advisor
<b>GPAFN</b>	Gender Policy of the Armed Forces of Nigeria
<b>NGP</b>	National Gender Policy
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNSCR</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution
<b>UNWomen</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

# DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Assessment:** Assessment is often used as a synonym for evaluation, and sometimes recommended for approaches that report measurement, without making judgements on the measurements.

**Baseline data:** Baseline data is the set of conditions that exists at the onset of a programme/project. Results are measured or assessed against baseline data and frequently related to the performance indicators.

**CEDAW:** The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) provides the basis for realizing equality between men and women through ensuring women's access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life; state parties have agreed to take appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**Development:** Development is a process with economic and social dimensions that entails quantitative changes in aggregates such as gross national product, as well as changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures, with the objective of effecting the material and social advancement of the population. It is also regarded as liberating people.

**Domestic violence:** Domestic violence is a form of aggression that takes place within the domestic domain. It is usually perpetrated on a victim who is in a domestic relationship with the perpetrator, to the detriment of the victim. It involves intimidation and control, including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, verbal, and economic abuse, used either alone or in combination, with the sole purpose of establishing and maintaining power and control over the victim. It can manifest in the form of wife battery, child abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse and exploitation, child labour, and forced and early marriage. Other forms include female genital mutilation or female circumcision, marital rape, widowhood practices, abandonment of a wife and children without means of sustenance, etc. Domestic violence is gender-specific violence because it is mostly targeted at women and girls.

**Empowerment:** Empowerment is the process of generating and building capacities to exercise control over one's life through expanded choices. Empowerment is linked with inherent self-confidence, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and voice. It is a function of the individual's initiative that is backed by institutional change.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is a time-bound exercise that aims to assess systematically and objectively the relevance, performance, and success of ongoing and completed programmes and projects.

**Gender:** Gender refers to the socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women and boys and girls, which give them unequal value, opportunities, and life chances. It also refers to typically masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities, and expectations about how women and men should behave in society. It is the social relationship between men and women and the way that relationship is made by society. It informs how we are shaped after we are born into society. These characteristics are time bound and changeable.

**Gender Advisor:** A Gender Advisor is member of staff who reports directly to the Commander and provides support to ensure that a gender perspective is properly integrated into planning, execution, and evaluation. It is a full-time role and requires adequate training, education, and experience.

**Gender analysis:** Gender analysis refers to qualitative and quantitative assessments to determine the differential impacts of development activities on women and men and the effect that gender roles and responsibilities have on development efforts, and to trace the historical, political, economic, social, and cultural explanations for these differentials.

**Gender awareness:** Gender awareness is the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs, and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status, and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.

**Gender blind:** Gender blind refers to a situation or approach in which potential differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored.

**Gender-responsive budgeting:** Gender-responsive budgeting is a budgeting method that considers the impact of budgets on men and women and girls and boys. Gender-responsive budgeting entails analyses of revenue and expenditure impacts so as to avoid or correct gender imbalances.

**Gender ceiling:** The gender ceiling is an invisible artificial barrier created by attitudinal and organizational prejudices that block women from senior executive management positions.

**Gender discrimination:** Gender discrimination is differential treatment given to individuals on the grounds of gender.

**Gender division of labour:** Gender division of labour refers to different work roles assigned by society to men and women. For example, women tend to be engaged in unpaid domestic work and low pay, low status, and informal sector jobs, while men tend to be employed in higher paid and formal sector work.

**Gender equality:** Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of one's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits or in access to services. It exists where the different behaviour, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued, and favoured equally.

**Gender equity:** Gender equity is fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between men and women. It is fairness in treatment of women and men according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities.

**Gender Field Advisor:** A Gender Field Advisor is a person tasked with conducting gender analysis in the area of operations and ensuring that the Commanders' intent and execution of tasks will be in line with the GPAFN.

**Gender Focal Point:** A Gender Focal Point is a member of staff with a dual-hatted position who supports the Commander in implementing directives and procedures with a gender perspective. The Gender Focal Point maintains functional dialogue with the GENAD, but reports within the chain of command. Gender Focal Points are at the tactical level and ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated into daily operations.

**Gender gap:** A gender gap is a difference in any aspect of the socio-economic status of women and men, arising from the different social roles ascribed by society to women and men. It is the difference in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation and access to resources, rights, power and influence, remuneration, and benefits.

**Gender issues/concerns:** A gender issue/concern arises when there is gender-related discrepancy, discrimination, or injustice.

**Gender indicator:** A gender indicator is an indicator that captures gender-related changes in society over time and in relation to a norm.

**Gender mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

**Gender neutral:** A gender-neutral position is the assumption that policies, programmes, and project interventions do not have a gender dimension and therefore affect men and women in the same way. In practice, policies intended to be gender neutral can be gender blind.

**Gender policy:** A gender policy is an organization's policy that integrates gender into the mainstream of its programme activities; it designates institutional arrangements, responsibilities, management functions, and tools/guidelines for mainstreaming.

**Gender relations:** Gender relations refer to relations between men and women in terms of access to resources and decision making and the relative positions of men and women in the division of resources, responsibilities, benefits, rights, power, and privileges.

**Gender roles:** Gender roles refer to the expectations for behaviour and attitudes that the culture defines as appropriate for men and women and boys and girls.

**Gender sensitivity:** A mindset where people recognize or are aware of gender-based discrimination, which hinders enjoyment of human rights. It is an understanding and routine consideration of the social, cultural, and economic factors underlying discrimination based on sex.



**Gender stereotyping:** Gender stereotyping happens when there is a consistent portrayal in the media or the education system of women and men occupying certain roles according to the socially constructed gender division of labour and expectations in behaviour.

**Gender systems:** Gender systems are systems that define the attributes, ways of relating, hierarchies, privileges, sanctions, and spaces in which men and women are organized. In most communities in Africa, women are dominated by men via patriarchal power, which has been a traditional and indeed a historical privilege for men.

**Gender training:** Gender training is the provision of formal learning experiences and skills in order to increase gender analysis and awareness skills, which serve to recognize and address gender issues in the programming process. Training can include the following three dimensions. Political: introducing gender concepts and analysis; professional: providing staff with “how-to” skills; and personal: challenging an individual’s gender attitudes and stereotypes.

**Physical violence:** Physical violence is the most common form of violence against women in our society. It is the inflicting of injury to the body, causing harm, pain, and sometimes long-lasting disability. Examples of this abound: wife battery, hitting, acid attacks, murder, female genital mutilation, early marriage, widowhood practices, etc. Women suffer this kind of violence from their immediate family, community, and/or state.

**Practical gender needs:** Practical gender needs are needs related to the roles (e.g. reproduction, production, and community roles) that men and women currently have and that do not necessarily change their relative position in society.

**Productive work:** Productive work is work carried out for the production of goods and services intended for the market.

**Psychological violence:** Psychological or mental violence includes a variety of actions and inactions or behaviours targeted at the emotional level. It includes harassment, threats, verbal abuse, and denial of financial and personal resources, as well as other discrimination of different types.

**Sex:** Sex refers to the biological and physiological state of being a male or female. Sex is not the same as gender.

**Sexual violence:** Rape is the most common form of sexual assault. Sexual violence can also manifest in the form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and incest. While sexual harassment constitutes unwanted and unwelcome sexual advances, requests, and displays, incest (a strong cultural taboo) refers to (often forced) sexual relations between family members.

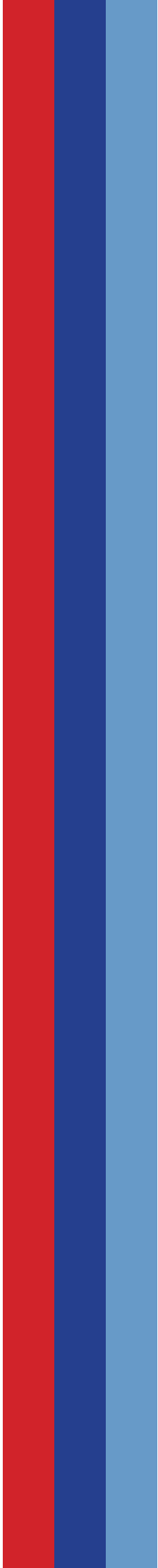
**Socio-economic violence:** Socio-economic violence involves total deprivation or certain restriction on social, economic, and political sources of power. This can include refusal to pay hospital bills, observance of widowhood rites, and denial of inheritance rights to women and girls on grounds of their sex.

**Strategic gender interests:** Strategic gender interests are those interests or needs that help society achieve gender equity and equality. The satisfaction of strategic gender needs improves women's status in relation to men.

**Women's empowerment:** Women's empowerment means giving energy to women or enabling women to take charge and control their affairs and to overcome structural inequality that had previously placed them at a social disadvantage. Women's empowerment addresses discrimination and oppression against women by devising programmes and strategies that increase women's capacities, opportunities, and access to and understanding of their human rights. It creates conditions for them to become agents of their own development and to be able to find sustainable solutions for change at personal, family, and civil society levels. Women can then contribute to the reduction of poverty; improve nutrition; seek health care; monitor child survival; prevent HIV/AIDS; stop harmful cultural practices; and go to school freely.

# LIST OF ADDENDUMS

Serial	Section	Date of Approval	Authority	Reference	Remark(s)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)



# CHAPTER ONE

## **BACKGROUND TO THE GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

### **GENERAL**

1. The global trend towards gender policies for the military stems from the changing perspective on the use of human resources to employ all the innate abilities of both genders for operational effectiveness and productivity. This led the United Nations to launch gender mainstreaming policies, UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, and other resolutions. Regional organizations also enacted other relevant regional gender instruments, and nation states were expected to ratify and domesticate these instruments to effect their goals. The Federal Government of Nigeria has committed to several global and regional instruments to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Nigeria is signatory to a variety of international and regional women's rights conventions, treaties, and declarations such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa 2004, and UNSCR 1325, among others. The Federal Government of Nigeria also adopted several progressive laws and policies such as the National Gender Policy (NGP) of 2016, the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act (2015), the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill in some states, the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, and other related resolutions on women, peace, and security (2013 and 2017).

2. In line with the Federal Government of Nigeria's efforts, all government ministries and parastatals have been directed to give equal opportunities to all, including provision for 35 per cent affirmative action for women. The ultimate essence of these instruments is to close the gap of inequality between men and women. The NGP, coupled with the various commitments of the Federal Government of Nigeria to international instruments on integrating a gender perspective in all engagements, placed a burden by extension on the Armed Forces of Nigeria to

act and emplace necessary measures. One such means is gender mainstreaming, which entails bringing the perceptions, experience, knowledge, and interests of women and men to bear on policy, planning, and decision making.

3. Perhaps one area of human endeavour in which the restriction of women is obvious is the military profession, which is generally regarded as the exclusive preserve of men – with the attendant loss of the specific capacities, abilities, and perspectives that women bring to the operational environment. The complex deployment and employment of conventional forces to overcome contemporary challenges and plan for future challenges require the performance of diverse tasks during peace time, crisis management, internal security operations, and peace support operations. This has necessitated changes in the purpose, posture, and structure of armed forces of many nations, including the review of gender roles in all deployments. Globally, the traditional gender division of labour in assigning roles is gradually changing, as more women are now involved in combat operations. Accordingly, nations have formulated policies to enlarge/expand roles that could be played by each gender in peace and combat operations. Despite the commendable exploits of some women in combat in the annals of many nations over the ages, women are yet to be fully integrated into the combat mainstream of many militaries, including the AFN.

4. In line with policies, the global quest for gender equality, and best practices in military deployments, AFN is gradually embracing the employment of women in combat roles and to enhance its operations. The addition of a gender perspective to AFN operations has the potential to add new capabilities and to improve the effectiveness of operations. Therefore, women are increasingly playing pivotal roles in AFN operations through gathering intelligence, engaging in police duties, conducting body searches, serving on ships, flying combat aircraft, managing roadblocks, and participating in cyber warfare. These deployments have, however, brought to the fore some pertinent concerns regarding suitability, gender mainstreaming, gender disparities, and sociocultural prejudices, thereby necessitating a gender policy.

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR THE GENDER POLICY**

5. A gender policy for the AFN provides guidelines for all operations within a gender-inclusive framework that allows for respect for human dignity, social justice, and the elimination of acts and behaviours that serve as embarrassments to individuals and the nation. The AFN appreciates gender mainstreaming as

## GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA

a veritable tool towards equality and empowerment as well as maintaining peace and security. It is therefore important that efforts should not be spared to improve gender mainstreaming in order to generate efficient and equitable outcomes.

6. Importantly, the Armed Forces of Nigeria has the mandate to protect all interests and groups, including women and other vulnerable people in society, against internal and external aggression. Also, gender parity of women and men in security matters is in accordance with international norms and instruments such as UNSCR 1325. A gender policy also provides an opportunity to enhance gender competencies throughout the AFN, which leads to improvement in operational effectiveness. Creating a policy will allow for better appreciation of the conflicting/competing gender interests in the AFN.

7. In line with DHQ strategies (2015–2020), the AFN is committed to ensuring that gender mainstreaming is enhanced in its planning, decision-making, procurement, deployment, and promotion processes. This gender policy will enable the AFN to align itself with national priorities on gender equality, as stipulated in the Constitution of Nigeria and the NGP. Through this policy, the AFN seeks to deepen its work around gender responsiveness, as well as fulfil its national, regional, and international obligations. This policy intends to provide a comprehensive framework to guide gender mainstreaming, ensure gender integration processes, and easily track the gender mainstreaming targets that are to be developed. Furthermore, it enhances a visible accountability for gender results in line with AFN priorities.

8. The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework to guide the process of developing appropriate strategies and programmes that will promote gender parity and opportunities for women and men at all levels in the AFN. Through the implementation of this policy, the AFN seeks to ensure professionalism, inclusiveness, and an effective response to gender-related issues in the day-to-day running of the AFN, including during conflict, strategic engagement, and other related activities.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

9. The overall goal of the GPAFN is to institutionalize gender mainstreaming within the Armed Forces of Nigeria. The policy is guided by five principles:

fulfilling obligations; changing the environment; participation and representation; gender-sensitive budgeting/procurement; and conditions of service. The objectives are as follows:

- To formalize the commitment to gender mainstreaming.
- To strengthen capacities and capabilities for gender mainstreaming.
- To integrate gender concerns into training, planning, budgeting, and operations, as well as other military engagements.
- To ultimately increase women`s participation in decision-making processes at all levels.
- To bridge the current gender gap existing in the AFN, and to make the AFN an equal opportunity employer.

## **SCOPE**

10. GPAFN will apply to all three Services, namely: Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, and Nigerian Air Force.

## **SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

11. The situational analysis provides an overview of the critical issues that impact the AFN's progression towards gender parity. It will also examine the key normative and legal frameworks that are in place to advance gender-balance principles and strategies at national, regional, and international levels. The cultural and socio-economic environment in which the AFN exists and conducts its activities will also be in focus. Other areas that will be analysed include all the essential ingredients and components that contribute to the capacity, capability, and composition of the AFN.

## **OBLIGATIONS AT INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL LEVELS**

12. International treaties, conventions, and resolutions generate gender obligations that shape regional and national commitments, which in turn place demands on the AFN to respond to emerging gender requirements. A look at the



various instruments will bring to the fore expectations and responsibilities for the AFN.

**13. International Obligations.** On the international stage, obligations for gender issues date back to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, in which member nations affirmed their commitment to basic standards of human rights. This created the background for other instruments for driving gender mainstreaming, including CEDAW (adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly), the Beijing Platform for Action, UNSCR 1325, and other related resolutions on women, peace, and security. CEDAW marked the global advent of the right to equality for all women and guaranteed equal access to opportunities in the political, business, and public spheres (enabling aspiration to any level or position). The Beijing Platform for Action, on the other hand, included 12 areas of critical concern and hundreds of actions to be taken in relation to the advancement and empowerment of women. Among other statements, it recognized the need for women to have improved economic status, increased participation in the political process, and empowerment. UNSCR 1325 specifically focuses on peace and security, and emphasizes gender mainstreaming as key to the promotion of a culture of peace, democracy, economic and social development, and human rights. All of these documents impose responsibilities on member states of the UN and regional organizations to integrate gender mainstreaming into all their engagements. The cascading effects of these instruments were a clarion call for the AFN to include gender sensitivity at all levels and in all its international engagements.

**14. Regional Obligations.** At the regional level, Nigeria is a signatory to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The protocol to a large extent emphasized the need for the enlargement of space for women in politics and appointive positions. Nigeria is also a party to the African Union Gender Policy of 2009, the Initiative for Gender Equality and Development in Africa, and the Supplementary Act on Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS Region. The African Union Gender Policy noted, among other pronouncements, that the development and promotion of the welfare of women are essential factors for development, progress, and peace in society. Consequently, these instruments undertake to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harmful and degrading practices against women. They have been domesticated at the national level and therefore impose certain obligations on the AFN in its commitments to joint security in combined operations under African Standby Forces and ECOWAS military engagements.

**15. National Obligations.** Nigeria has domesticated many obligations synthesized from international and regional instruments on gender issues and concerns. National instruments in this regard include the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria as amended, the Armed Forces Act 2004, the NGP, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, the Nigeria National Defence Policy, and other Service documents such as harmonized terms and conditions of service. Most of these instruments, apart from the NGP and National Action Plan, are crafted with little or no consideration given to the gender mix of the AFN and are not fully gender sensitive. For instance, the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, which is the ground norm for other laws, acts, and other legal instruments, has been framed in masculine language. The pronoun “he” appears about 235 times, without corresponding female gender consideration. This and other instruments would require reviews and amendments to conform with gender sensitivity. In this direction, the AFN is committed to fulfilling all obligations at the national, regional, and international levels.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER CONCEPT**

16. The concept of gender has been around for a long time. However, this is quite new within the AFN, and apparently there is very limited understanding of the concept of gender and its issues and concerns. Among the officers’ cadre and across the non-commissioned officers of the AFN, the level of basic understanding of gender and associated issues needs a lot of improvement. Interactions between GENADs, Gender Desk Officers, Gender Field Advisors, and Gender Focal Points in DHQ and Services and some senior male officers reveal difficulty among the officers in distinguishing between “gender” and “sex”. In most cases, these terms were erroneously used interchangeably, while the low status of women was seen as normal, natural, “God ordained”, and a cultural pattern that may be difficult to change. There are also testimonies of the discrimination female personnel have experienced over the years. Such perspectives and realities have taken root in the AFN, thereby hampering the effective utilization and employment of women in the Services. The adoption of a gender policy will bring change to the status quo, and more flexibility towards gender issues is an essential condition for progress in the AFN.

17. Gender has been a contentious issue for many people around the world. Unlike the predetermined biological differences between males and females, gender is solely determined by our social environments, which include our values, history, and culture. In many cultures, gender has commonly been referred to as a dichotomy distinguishing males and females. For example, females throughout

history have been designated the role of “keeper of the family”, which was often justified by the female capacity to give birth to children. On the other hand, males have historically been given the role of “protector of the family”, which in turn has been justified by their physical size and incapacity to give birth to children. Analyses and explanations of frequently used terminologies related to gender issues and concerns should give more clarity to the concept of gender.

**18. Gender Mainstreaming.** The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality outcomes, and this can be applied to all activities, policies, and programmes of any organization. Gender mainstreaming now forms part of many national and supranational policies, and is mandatory in developmental pursuit. The implication of this analysis is that effective gender mainstreaming would require a broader and more holistic conceptualization within the AFN in order to secure greater gender parity. One essential tool in gender mainstreaming is a gender perspective. Integrating a gender perspective into the military is the first step towards realizing the objectives of the gender policy.

**19. Military Gender Perspective.** Integration of a gender perspective involves the systematic process of assessing the gender-based differences between women and men as reflected in their social roles and interactions, particularly in the distribution of power and the access to resources within an organization. In providing a safe and secure environment in conflict areas, military personnel must develop a gender perspective in order to accurately analyse the environment in which they operate. Applying gender analysis and integrating a gender perspective into daily operations and conflict situations must start long before military forces deploy. Integrating a gender perspective into pre-deployment routine work is important so that by the time troops deploy, the gender perspective has become innate to the institution. The differing security needs of the men, women, boys, and girls that soldiers might encounter when undertaking a mission must be anticipated and prepared for if they are to be well addressed and success is to be achieved. Similarly, the impact that social power imbalances have on the successful completion of the mission must be analysed beforehand. Unfortunately, most conflict analyses and military institutions, including those in Nigeria, do not adequately take into consideration the role of gender in conflict and post-conflict situations. The military in particular has generally been gender ignorant. Too often gender perspectives are equated with simply increasing the number of women within the military. However, gender does not mean women, and a gender perspective is not limited to the presence of women within the armed forces. A basic understanding of the concept of gender is necessary for full gender mainstreaming in the AFN.

## **THE CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENT FOR THE GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

**20. Nigeria's Cultures and Traditions.** The diversity of Nigeria's cultures and traditions has tremendous influence on the gender construct in society. They have set practices, ethos, and norms, some of which prevent harnessing the innate endowments of both genders. Of particular importance is the patriarchal nature of Nigerian society. The AFN reflects this nature, which consciously and unconsciously impacts its activities, processes, procedures, policy formulations, doctrines, and choice of strategies, with resultant gender disparity outcomes. In the AFN, there are certain jobs, including combat roles and physically exerting engagements, that have over time been considered the exclusive preserve of men, and to which women have not been granted access. While there is a gradual change of opinion on these issues, they have to be reviewed continuously to enable the AFN to conform with various gender obligations, commitments, standards, and responsibilities.

**21. Socio-economic Issues.** The AFN is one of the avenues for addressing socio-economic issues in the country through the provision of employment opportunities. Observations over time reveal that the AFN is a choice place for youths seeking employment. However, economic deprivations stemming from social factors, including some enumerated in the preceding paragraphs, perpetuate economic gender inequalities and deprivations that result in women lacking adequate access to critical resources and attaining low educational outcomes. The situation limits the availability of women for recruitment into the AFN, particularly in certain parts of the country. This calls for deliberate efforts and measures to be emplaced by the AFN to encourage gender equality within its ranks in the concerned areas.

**22. Prevailing Security Environment.** The Nigeria security environment is facing a myriad of complex security concerns and issues, including terrorism, insurgency, and other criminal acts. Such criminal acts include piracy, hijacking, human/drug trafficking, cattle rustling, kidnapping, and illegal oil bunkering, as well as those acts that lead to political instability and ethno-religious conflicts. The modus operandi in this environment, with regard to equipment and tactics, is sophisticated and deadly; the actors involved are as diverse as the situation and include men, women, girls, and boys. The import of this is that the security architecture must factor this diversity into all efforts and activities geared towards proffering solutions to these challenges. Attention therefore has to be paid at all levels to the special capacities, capabilities, and competences that both

genders can bring into play in confronting the security environment difficulties. The AFN, as a matter of priority, has to fully embrace gender-mainstreaming tools, which are key to discovering and harnessing these special capacities, capabilities, and competences of personnel.

**23. Peace Support Operations.** The realization that women bring capacities and competences hitherto not contemplated into peace support operations has made the call for the increased deployment of women to conflict zones. The AFN, being a leading contributor to peace support operations in fulfilment of Nigeria's obligation to international peace and security, will continue to play its part in ensuring gender balance in troops contribution. In doing so, the AFN is expected to engage more women and benefit from additional opportunities being made available by partner nations and development organizations. The AFN will take advantage of these opportunities and initiatives to enshrine gender mainstreaming in its deployments to UN peace support operations. This scenario requires the AFN to improve approaches to addressing gender concerns and issues.

## CURRENT STANDING OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA ON GENDER ISSUES

24. The AFN has over time employed women among its ranks and has had women that have risen to higher ranks in the three Services, even though women have not been allowed to serve in all specializations within the AFN. This could be attributed to culture, tradition, and certain inherent beliefs regarding gender roles in the AFN. A look at the statistical representation for each Service reveals that the Nigerian Army has 4.2 per cent female officers and 6.6 per cent female soldiers; the Nigerian Navy has 9.9 per cent female officers and 12 per cent female ratings; and the Nigerian Air Force has 8.8 per cent female officers and 13.1 per cent airwomen. These percentages are far below the NGP's recommended 35 per cent. Further analyses of these statistics show that women's representation is in favour of support roles, while in combat roles there is little or no representation. However, in recent times some efforts – such as the appointment of a GENAD at DHQ and various gender officers at the Service Headquarters, as well as allowing women to be admitted into the Nigerian Defence Academy – have been put in place to address gender-related matters. The nature and adequacy of such efforts vis-à-vis the expectations and obligations from various international, regional, and national gender instruments need to be kept in focus. Areas which require consideration are recruitment, education/training, retention, promotion, postings, and maternity and paternity responsibilities. Others areas include operations, logistics, accommodation, budgeting, community engagement, and data/statistics.



**25. Recruitment.** The AFN eligibility criteria for recruitment and enlistment use the same educational requirements for male and female candidates, while different provisions are made for physical requirements. However, not every area of specialization (combat/non-combat) is open to women; for those that are open, the quota allocated to women is contrary to global best practices. Various UN instruments for gender equity and the NGP stipulate a minimum of 35 per cent women's representation in procedures, processes, and the conduct of certain activities. One area requiring critical attention is the composition of boards that conduct recruitment exercises, which have in the past been lopsided in favour of men. Ideally, both male and female personnel should be involved in recruitment and selection exercises. Also, gender-sensitive recruitment should not only involve an increase in numbers, but should also be responsive to the gender needs of the entire military population. Reviewing the composition of recruitment boards, as well as eligibility and selection criteria to ensure they meet these affirmations, reduces gender bias and sets the right tone for gender equality and equity in the AFN.

**26. Education and Training.** Training and education in the AFN are conducted for professional improvement and higher productivity, as well as preparation for resettlement after retirement. In this regard, there are institutions and schools in each of the Services and DHQ that have been involved in the training of women, but they have not mainstreamed gender appropriately. This is noticeable in their general set-up and activities, including in the composition of their training curricula, staff, doctrines, and policies. An overview of past training activities reveals a set-up that does not conform to international, regional, and national instruments recommending a minimum standard for gender sensitivity and responsiveness. Policy initiatives that would engender gender mainstreaming would have to be put in place for AFN institutions and schools.

**27. Retention.** Retention is key to making a workforce sustain a high level of proficiency, productivity, and sound outputs. Organizations with high turnover of employees struggle with maintaining good and acceptable standards of productivity. Some factors that affect retention are the workplace environment (which can include realities such as sexual harassment and intimidation), salary, benefits, perceived future prospects, postings, pregnancy, and childbirth. While there is a scarcity of research on retention in the AFN, experiences and practices in the AFN show that women are disproportionately negatively affected by some of the identified factors in the area of retention. The AFN and defence institutions need to adapt continuously to the evolving needs and expectations of each new generation of recruits and cadets from a gender perspective.

**28. Promotion.** Promotion provides access to opportunity and position within the AFN. Promotion criteria and promotion boards without a gender perspective are discriminatory and result in gender inequality and the disenfranchisement of female personnel. A cursory look at the yearly promotion across the Services indicates gender disparity, especially at higher ranks in both the officer and soldier/rating/airman/airwoman cadres. Therefore, promotion/advancement exercises within the AFN should eliminate all forms of gender insensitivity in their conduct and reflect gender mainstreaming in all of their engagements across the Services. In this direction, all promotion boards should regularly consider the inclusion of women as board members.

**29. Postings.** Postings are essential tools in the management, administration, training, and utilization of personnel for the achievement of desired goals and objectives. Posting-related processes assist in ensuring that the requisite experiences and exposures are garnered by personnel towards effective engagements and placements. Engagements and placements held over time play an important role in promotion and generally in job opportunities within and outside the AFN. Inappropriate postings disenfranchise personnel and could be a source of psychological and physical stress for the concerned. This often has traumatic effects on families, with children and women mostly affected. Inappropriate postings by the Services affect female personnel in a disproportionate way, considering the burden women bear in such circumstances in the Nigerian society. Therefore, the AFN need to be gender sensitive in all matters pertaining to postings, deployments, and placements in the various Services.

**30. Maternity and Paternity Responsibilities.** Regulations and practices governing pregnancy and childbirth are other gender issues of concern in the AFN. Childbirth in families within the AFN brings responsibilities to each member of the family. The paternal/maternal responsibilities, which should be shouldered by the man and the woman respectively, start the moment conception takes place. The practice in the AFN is to grant the female employee maternity leave, as stipulated in extant regulations, while the male employee whose wife is pregnant is not considered for any form of leave to render the necessary support under the circumstances. Male personnel in this situation often resort to unwholesome tactics to get time to provide the needed support to the affected wife. This practice, which does not conform with international and regional instruments on gender mainstreaming, calls for necessary adjustments.

**31. Operations.** Military operations are the core activities of the AFN and require many areas of specialization for their effective and efficient conduct. Women personnel are not presently serving in most of these areas of specialization and

thereby do not undertake certain roles and responsibilities considered the exclusive preserve of men. This deprives female personnel of the opportunity to aspire to high-level positions in the AFN. This gender discrimination is at variance with AFN commitments and obligations at the international, regional, and national level, and it calls for immediate change in policies, traditions, and procedures.

**32. Logistics.** Logistics are at the heart of military operations and underlie the successes achieved in all operational environments. In order for gender mainstreaming and the GPAFN to achieve their goals and objectives, logistics arrangements have to be done using a gender lens. Hitherto, most purchases, procurements, and construction of infrastructure in the AFN have been undertaken without gender consideration. For instance, the Services Headquarters and DHQ buildings do not have provisions for female conveniences and spaces/creches for young children and breastfeeding mothers. Also, female pilots, engineers, armoured personnel carrier crews, and others in the AFN are compelled to wear masculine uniforms, which are inappropriate for their operational effectiveness and do not give room for comfort. Additionally, some uniform designs and practices have neglected certain female concerns, cultures, and traditions, such as covering hair. This could be addressed through formally permitting female personnel wanting to cover their hair to do so. AFN logistics that make adequate provisions for gender concerns will further encourage females from certain sections of the country to join the AFN.

**33. Accommodation.** Accommodation is a right for all serving personnel of the AFN. Personnel not accommodated due to shortages in available housing are entitled to financial compensation in line with the public service regulations that have been domesticated in the AFN. Observably, there are some policies containing instructions, directives, and practices that deprive civilian spouses of women personnel in the AFN of access to barracks and accommodation in the barracks. This is gender discrimination against the women personnel and should be addressed to ensure gender equality.

**34. Budgeting.** Budgeting provides an avenue for directing funds to the intended activities and programmes of organizations. No new initiatives and tasks can be undertaken without appropriate financial backing. Addressing gender concerns and issues, as conceptualized in the GPAFN, is relatively new to the AFN; for successful implementation, adequate finances would be required. Accordingly, AFN budgeting should be gender responsive and would need to be adjusted to include adequate financial resources for GPAFN-related actions.



**35. Community Engagement.** The AFN operates within various communities locally and internationally, and the positive engagement of these communities to gain their support is essential for mission accomplishment. Civil–military cooperation, as a required tool for community engagements, must be gender sensitive, with all of its activities outlined and executed in line with gender responsiveness. This should include enhanced synergy with civil society organizations, including women-led NGOs and networks, community leaders, and youth organizations, among other stakeholders.

**36. Data and Statistics.** Data, information, and statistics in the AFN are not usually disaggregated by sex and age in their collection, collation, and presentation. This influences any attempts to statistically track growth, strategic direction, and other indices using a gender lens. For example, information and statistics from the Services' nominal roll and other personnel information are not presented in a gender-disaggregated format. There is a need for a more accessible gender perspective in the processes and procedures of the AFN, and a need to pay urgent attention to enabling gender parity and equity in the Services.

## **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

**37.** Gender-based violence (GBV) covers wide-ranging issues related to violence against men, women, boys, and girls. GBV includes sexual exploitation and abuse and violence against women. The patriarchal nature of Nigerian society and the existent stereotypes and attitudes have over the years encouraged harmful practices that promote GBV and violence against women. Other factors contributing to and sustaining male dominance over women and other forms of abuse in the society are tradition, religion, language, and division of labour in the house, among others. Also, unequal power relations, the subordinate position of women, gaps in the implementation of laws, the non-enforcement of existing laws, and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation help to sustain GBV.

**38.** UN Women in 2017 found that in Nigeria, as in several other parts of the world, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime – with the perpetrator usually being someone known to her. Such violence is perhaps the most pervasive violation of the rights of women and girls that exists. It devastates lives, fractures communities, and stalls development. The AFN has its fair share of GBV, especially in barracks

and while troops are deployed for operations, both internally and externally. Therefore, efforts have to be made through policy formulation for zero tolerance to GBV in all its forms in the AFN.

**39. Violence against Women.** Violence against women has been described as any violence directed against somebody simply because she is a woman. It is also a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which has included men's domination of women and discrimination against women. Violence against women ranges from domestic and socio-economic violence to physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, and verbal violence. Such acts have become the norm, with little or no attention paid to them, and some have direct linkages to the ongoing spread of HIV among women and girls. Many of these types of violence are common among AFN personnel, and measures to eradicate them through appropriate policy formulation have to be engaged.

**40. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.** The prevalence of sexual exploitation and abuse worldwide among military personnel deployed for peace support operations made the UN and regional organizations establish policies to thwart the menace. AFN personnel have been indicted in some incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse in certain internal and external operations, just as there are cases of such exploitation and abuse in the barracks. Therefore, the AFN would need to institute measures to adequately prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse within its ranks – during internal security deployment and external operations, and within the peace time work environment. These measures have to trickle down to the lowest level of the Services.

# CHAPTER 2

## POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. Gender mainstreaming in the AFN has received some attention recently, with the attendant impetus from stakeholders foster greater action. The level reached thus far remains distant from the expected standard and would require major interventions if the objectives of the GPAFN are to be realized. Areas of intervention include the establishment of gender-mainstreaming tools that devolve to the entire command structures of the AFN, the provision of dedicated funds to pursue activities highlighted in the GPAFN, and the provision of central gender coordination at DHQ.

2. Consequently, there shall exist a gender policy (GPAFN) for the AFN that guides all activities related to gender matters. This gender policy framework outlines ways of addressing identified gender issues and concerns, as well as some of the observed incongruences in the policy instruments within the AFN. These are in the areas of international, regional, and national obligations, as well as administration, operations, training, logistics, budgeting, accommodation, and community engagement, in addition to GBV and the institutional structure.

### **INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

3. The AFN is committed to all international, regional, and sub-regional obligations for gender mainstreaming synthesized from various treaties, resolutions, and communiques ratified by national instruments, action plans, and policies. These shall form the basis for all activities, processes, procedures, and interventions for gender mainstreaming outlined in the GPAFN.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

4. To formalize gender mainstreaming, the AFN shall ensure that administrative regulations and guidance tools are gender responsive. Gender responsiveness shall be integral to all policies, processes, and procedures concerning recruitment, retention, promotion, posting, and leave. Other areas for administrative

gender responsiveness include maternity and paternity leave and the formation of women's corps across the three Services.

**5. Recruitment and Enlistment.** Recruitment and enlistment into the AFN shall be in accordance with gender equality and equity. Therefore, the AFN shall reflect at all levels the minimum female representation of 35 per cent, in compliance with the NGP.

**6. Retention.** There shall be a deliberate effort at ensuring career progression and retention for women in relation to their male counterparts in the AFN. The AFN shall establish an environment that is conducive to retention and a workplace that is gender sensitive, while efforts shall be made to encourage women to serve longer in the Services.

**7. Promotion.** The AFN shall emplace measures that ensure equity in the promotion of women at all levels. Promotion of women in the AFN shall reflect the minimum NGP requirement of 35 per cent representation. All promotion boards shall be gender sensitive and have women's representation of a minimum of 20 per cent. For female personnel who are not available for promotion consideration for reasons of childbirth, such absences shall not be counted against them.

**8. Posting.** All postings within the AFN shall be responsive to the gender needs of personnel. Therefore, postings and diplomatic mission deployments shall reflect the minimum NGP standard of 35 per cent representation for women.

**9. Maternity Leave.** Maternity leave for female personnel shall be reviewed to six months, in line with proposed civil service rules.

**10. Paternity Leave.** Male personnel shall be granted paternity leave in line with UN standards (UNHCR/IOM/70/2001 and UNHCR/FOM/67/2001). Paternity leave shall consist of eight weeks, which may be taken as one continuous period or two separate four-week periods. When paternity leave is sought immediately following the birth of a child, personnel shall present a document from government healthcare facilities indicating the wife's expected date of delivery. Requests for post-delivery paternity leave shall be accompanied by the child's birth certificate. When this is not possible, it may be authorized pending receipt of the required birth certificate, which must be presented within the first two months of the child's birth.

**11. Formation of Women's Corps.** The AFN shall emplace measures to enable both genders to serve in all areas of specialization and aspire to the highest

positions. Accordingly, each individual Service of the AFN shall form an all-female Special Women's Corps for special operations.

## **OPERATIONS**

12. The AFN shall integrate gender perspectives into operations planning and execution, logistics, and budgeting and shall provide funding for gender-mainstreaming activities. All internal and external operations shall take immediate measures to implement the GPAFN and forward shortcomings and requirements to the appropriate superior authority to meet the mission objectives. The AFN shall also ensure that:

- a. Restrictions barring female personnel from serving in combat roles shall cease to exist and applications shall be given adequate consideration in view of the right of the individual. All personnel, irrespective of gender, shall be able to aspire to serve in any field of specialization within the AFN.
- b. Deployment for internal and external operations duties shall reflect at all levels the NGP minimum requirement of 35 per cent female representation.

## **TRAINING**

13. The implementation of the GPAFN will increase the number of female personnel in the AFN; accordingly, all training institutions and schools shall reflect gender perspectives in all their facilities, activities, processes, procedures, and interventions. Consequently, the following measures reflecting the minimum NGP standard of 35 per cent representation for women shall be emplaced at levels of training institutions and schools:

- a. Provide accommodation and reflect gender perspectives in the provision of conveniences.
- b. Reflect a gender perspective in the number and composition of training instructors.
- c. Integrate gender perspectives into training curricula for officers, soldiers/ratings/airmen/airwomen, cadets, and recruits.
- d. Integrate gender awareness into existing basic and further military training curricula at all levels.

- e. Strengthen gender competencies of the gender focal point staff on planning and implementation.
- f. Develop gender-mainstreaming indicators.
- g. Promote research and development in gender mainstreaming.
- h. Integrate a gender component into all communications through the public relations departments.

## **LOGISTICS**

14. The implementation of the GPAFN will increase the number of female personnel in the AFN. Accordingly, gender perspectives shall be integrated into all logistical planning and execution. Thus, the AFN shall do the following:

- a. In procurement of equipment and clothing, make provision for men's and women's body structure differences.
- b. Purchase gender-sensitive uniforms/accoutrements for members of the AFN. There shall be uniformity in the style of female officers' mess kits and uniforms in the AFN.
- c. Ensure that design and construction, including messes and soldiers' clubs in all formations of the AFN, are gender friendly and provide for the needs of women and children, such as restrooms and creches.
- d. Provide baby creches at workplaces for nursing mothers and fathers.
- e. Provide nursing rooms at workplaces for nursing mothers to feed and provide other care support to their babies and return to work.
- f. Provide specially designed head caps/hair covers appropriate to each individual Service for female personnel, who shall be permitted to cover their hair up to the hairline.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

15. Accommodation policies, processes, and procedures shall ensure gender equality. Personnel provided with Service accommodation shall be allowed to live with their spouses irrespective of their gender.

## **BUDGETING**

16. Budgeting in the AFN shall make provision for financial requirements for the implementation of the GPAFN and reflect gender perspectives in its collations and presentations.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS**

17. The AFN shall emplace gender-responsive and gender-sensitive measures to engage communities in their area of responsibility and area of operations while executing activities and tasks. Gender mainstreaming shall be implemented in all civil–military cooperation activities, interventions, processes, and procedures.

## **DATA AND STATISTICS**

18. The AFN shall maintain sex- and age-disaggregated data to reflect the efforts made to enhance implementation of the GPAFN and identify any gaps. Other data and statistics to be maintained in the AFN shall be disaggregated by sex and age and reflect gender sensitivity.

## **OTHER MEASURES**

19. Other measures that would assist and accelerate the implementation of the GPAFN include strengthening partnerships with UN Women and other UN agencies, development partners, and civil society organizations. In addition, the following are imperative:

- a. The AFN should partner with relevant civil society organizations, development partners, and UN agencies to receive expertise in the implementation of the GPAFN in areas such as training sessions/workshops for AFN personnel to increase their knowledge and understanding of gender perspectives. This is in addition to strengthening civil–military cooperation at all levels.
- b. The AFN shall at all levels design and implement a strategic mentorship and coaching programme for women to accelerate their career growth and development.

- c. The AFN shall identify and establish a database of mentors well versed on gender mainstreaming and other relevant gender issues in the AFN.
- d. Any other measure(s) that shall be employed in the implementation of the GPAFN shall conform to gender sensitivity and gender perspectives.

## **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

20. In compliance with HRCR 38/5 of July 2018 and 61/1 of 24 March 2017 on accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, the AFN shall have zero tolerance of all forms of GBV, sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment. In furtherance to this declaration, the AFN shall:

- a. Establish functional gender offices in all military barracks as part of its preventive and responsive mechanism.
- b. Educate and sensitize members of the AFN on the centrality of gender mainstreaming and GBV.
- c. Conduct training and workshops on what constitutes GBV and its consequences.
- d. Adopt the UN pro forma for reporting cases of GBV.
- e. Ensure that complaints of GBV are forwarded to a higher authority and are dealt with expeditiously within two months.
- f. Ensure that offenders of GBV are held accountable and disciplined accordingly.
- g. Ensure that any act of victimization against personnel who report a case of GBV shall be considered as additional acts of misconduct and investigated and disciplined accordingly.

## **INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES**

21. In fulfilling its commitment to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, the AFN shall establish the Gender Advisor directorates in DHQ and departments in Services Headquarters and Gender Focal Point cells/sections in formations/units. In addition, the AFN shall:

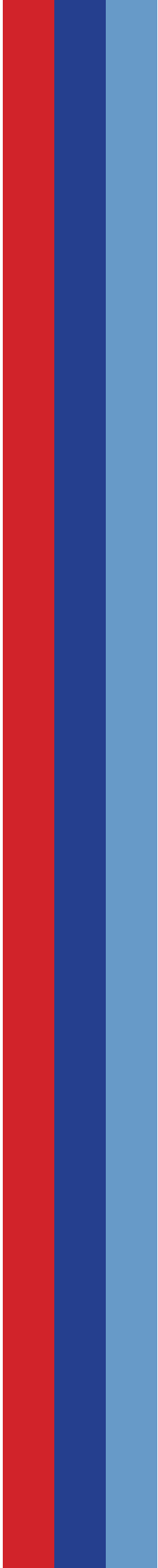


## **GENDER POLICY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA**

- a. Establish a Directorate of Gender at Services Headquarters.
- b. Ensure that appropriate senior female personnel are in attendance at peace support operation meetings to make inputs, including on issues that may concern gender.
- c. Establish Departments of Gender Studies in AFN training institutions.
- d. Conduct intensive training on UNSCR 1325, other related resolutions, and gender mainstreaming, among other related topics, for senior male and female personnel.
- e. Launch the HeForShe Campaign in the AFN for the identification of male gender champions among personnel, and their strategic engagement for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

## **REVIEWS AND REVISIONS**

22. Reviews and revisions are necessary ingredients for the continuous development of the GPAFN and shall be part of implementing the policy. Reviews and revisions shall commence immediately upon the signing of this document. It shall be the responsibility of all implementers of the GPAFN to carry out reviews and revisions at all levels. Procedures for reviews and revisions shall be through Services' chain of command up to the DHQ Gender Directorate. A periodic review every six months shall be carried out at all levels, and the GPAFN shall be revised every four years.



# CHAPTER 3

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. The successful implementation of the GPAFN demands the unswerving commitment, support, and cooperation of the entire DHQ (departments, institutions, and agencies), the three Services, and all personnel towards meeting the set goals and targets. The collective ownership of the GPAFN is a fundamental requirement for implementation and sustainability. The need to establish and strengthen structures for delivering interventions and activities in a coordinated approach to enhance optimal implementation of the policy is critical.

2. The DHQ will provide overall guidance for the implementation of the Gender Policy. The DHQ Gender Advisor Directorate serves as the coordinating directorate for the AFN and will collaborate and work closely with the Gender Advisors/Officers of the different Services, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, and other key ministries, departments, and agencies. Other agencies for partnering include UN Women and other UN agencies, development partners, and civil society organizations (including Partners West Africa Nigeria), to support the implementation of the GPAFN and the attainment of the set goals and objectives.

3. The operationalization of the GPAFN is a prerequisite for the attainment of the set goals and objectives, and this requires commitment and strategic action at all levels. The specific actions to be undertaken are encapsulated in the implementation strategy. The need for a GPAFN implementation strategy stems from the determination to ensure the realization of its objectives and goals. Adequate considerations are given to the prevailing environment and circumstances within the Services and the nation at large that could hinder the full and immediate implementation of the GPAFN. These considerations require that the implementation strategy be phased into immediate-, short-, medium-, and long-term phases. Within the phases, the implementation strategy will set milestones and timelines, articulating ways and means as well as identifying roles and responsibilities. Also, a monitoring system will be identified for the GPAFN.

**4. Phasing of the Implementation Strategy.** There shall be four phases for the implementation of the GPAFN: immediate-, short-, medium-, and long-term phases.

a. ***Immediate-term Phase.*** The immediate-term phase recognizes various efforts currently in place that align with the direction of the GPAFN, which include the appointment of Gender Focal Officers/Gender Advisors at Defence and Services Headquarters and a general understanding of the issues pertaining to gender mainstreaming in DHQ and Services Headquarters. This would pave the way for the immediate implementation of some aspects of the GPAFN. The immediate-term phase will have a timeline of zero to six months. Milestones within this phase are as follows:

1. Sensitization/awareness creation on the GPAFN, including the development of a communication strategy/plan.
2. Appointment of Gender Focal Officers at all levels of the AFN's formations and units.
3. Domesticating the GPAFN in all the Services of the AFN.
4. Initiating the process of integrating gender mainstreaming into all activities of the AFN, including ongoing operations.
5. Initiating the generation of sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive statistics.
6. Identifying gender gaps in the AFN/Services.
7. Services/DHQ to set targets for gender mainstreaming in line with the limits contained in the GPAFN.
8. Making immediate adjustments to the working environment to engender gender sensitivity.
9. Conducting gender enlightenment training for personnel deployed for implementing the GPAFN.
10. Launching the GPAFN.
11. Identifying and collating areas for capacity development.
12. Creating a dedicated/standalone fund for the implementation of the GPAFN. This shall be repeated on a yearly basis.
13. Rendering reports on the immediate-term phase to DHQ-GENAD.
14. Designing and sourcing for specialized courses for mid-level and senior personnel and personnel deployed to operations.

15. Addressing immediate logistical requirements, including the provision of gender-sensitive uniforms.
16. Repealing all laws, standard operating procedures, practices, processes, doctrines, and policies that are discriminatory and do not conform to gender mainstreaming.
17. Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the GPAFN.

**b. *Short-term Phase (6–12 months).*** The short-term phase would leverage on the achievements of the immediate-term phase to further the implementation of the GPAFN. The timeline in this phase is 6 to 12 months, and the following milestones are expected to be attained within the set time:

1. Review of existing policies/regulations to conform to the GPAFN, including the rules of engagement and standard operating procedures guiding ongoing operations.
2. Introduction/review of training curricula to accommodate gender issues as outlined in the GPAFN.
3. Establishment of a Gender Committee for the implementation of the GPAFN.
4. Drawing up relevant logistical and budgetary requirements for the implementation of the GPAFN.
5. Initiation of a gender self-assessment of the Services and DHQ institutions.
6. Conducting initial gender capacity building.
7. Initiation of civil–military cooperation gender initiatives.
8. Rendering reports on the short-term phase to DHQ-GENAD.

**c. *Medium-term Phase (one to two years).*** The medium-term phase is to accelerate the implementation of the GPAFN. This phase galvanizes the achievements in the first two phases to drive the GPAFN in high gear towards the achievement of the set objectives. It has a timeline of one to two years and has the following milestones:

1. Implementing recommendations from the gender self-assessment.
2. Conducting monitoring and evaluation of actions undertaken thus far.
3. Establishing infrastructure that supports gender mainstreaming.

4. DHQ and Services to produce bi-annual reports on GPAFN compliance.
5. DHQ to collate observations and recommendations for intervention actions.
6. Conducting training-of-trainer courses for focal gender personnel.
7. Consolidating civil–military cooperation gender-responsive activities and interventions.
8. Rendering bi-annual reports on the medium-term phase to DHQ-GENAD.

d. ***Long-term phase (three to four years)***. The long-term phase is designed to consolidate all the other phases, fill in identified gaps, and provide leverage for further commitments to drive gender mainstreaming at even higher gears. The timeline is from three to four years. Milestones in this phase are as follows:

1. Review of the GPAFN.
2. Identification of shortfalls in the implementation of the GPAFN.
3. Initiation of gender issues/concerns in military research.
4. Promulgation of the revised GPAFN after every four years.
5. Rendering bi-annual reports on the long-term phase to DHQ-GENAD.

# CHAPTER 4

## CONCLUSION

1. The GPAFN is a policy that mainstreams gender into the AFN in alignment with various national, sub-regional, regional, and international instruments on gender. It is a bold commitment to institutionalize gender perspectives in all activities and engagements of the AFN, including processes, procedures, policies, doctrines, and strategies. The essence of the GPAFN is to make the AFN gender friendly and gender sensitive to the diverse needs of all personnel and their families, and indeed to all the people of Nigeria, on behalf of whom the AFN was established to serve. The policy also has in its focus the aim to contribute to international efforts towards world peace and security and gender-balanced contingents with gender awareness and capacities.

2. The core issue that the GPAFN seeks to address is gender mainstreaming to ensure that all AFN activities, operations, administration, and engagement with society are gender responsive, in line with global best practices, and in tandem with many commitments at the national level and the AFN strategic level. With effective gender mainstreaming, concerns such as gender equity and gender equality would be addressed. This focus needs to be borne in mind as the GPAFN is implemented.

3. The commitment of all personnel, including senior and junior officers, as well as non-commissioned officers of all ranks and rates, is required to have the GPAFN achieve the intended objectives. Civil society organizations, UN agencies, ministries/departments/agencies, and the Nigeria populace at large are expected to rally round, lend expertise to, and support the policy to ensure its success.

4. The GPAFN should be read in conjunction with all other national, sub-regional, regional, and international gender-relevant resolutions, treaties, and policies for a comprehensive understanding and for effective implementation. Efforts at the individual personnel level towards more awareness on gender issues and concerns are encouraged.

