



REPORT

**A review of
NIGERIA'S 1ST
NATIONAL ACTION
PLAN ON WOMEN,
PEACE AND SECURITY
(2013 – 2016)**

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Introduction

Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council on the 31st October 2000, recognising, for the first time, the disproportionate and unique impact of conflict on women, and their often under-valued and under-utilised contributions as active agents in peace and security. UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1889 (which was adopted in 2009 and called for steps to improve implementation of 1325), laid the foundation for Member States to take forward the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) as the primary mechanism to deliver against the goals and ambitions of the WPS agenda.¹ In addition, frameworks such as General Recommendation 30 (adopted in 2013) recommended that states ensure their NAPs and strategies to implement UNSCR 1325, be aligned and compliant with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and that adequate budgets be allocated to support their implementation.

NAPs act as a key platform for countries to: 1) help implementers set priorities, coordinate action and track progress, 2) prompt meaningful changes in behaviour, policies and funding, 3) provide civil society with a mechanism to hold governments accountable, and 4) create space for governments, multilateral institutions, and civil society to work together for greater impact.² As of August 2017, 67 countries have developed a NAP on WPS and of this total, 19 have been developed in African states.³ Africa has steadily built up an extensive body of instruments and policies of relevance to the WPS agenda, including the Protocol to the African Union Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).⁴ West Africa has the largest concentration of NAPs, with thirteen ECOWAS Member States (out of a potential fifteen) having plans in place. A recent review of UNSCR 1325 across Africa highlights that "it must be acknowledged that progress has been registered broadly", however, this has "predominantly been in terms of process [...] deeper implementation, impact, and monitoring has been weak. Monitoring and reporting (both statutory and voluntary) of this basket of commitments has been, to date, limited and insufficient".⁵ Whilst NAPs are still relatively new, with 71% being drafted in or after 2010⁶, their increased prevalence has led to a scaling-up of research and evaluation looking to assess the successes and challenges associated with their implementation, as outlined in the case of the recent African Union Commission (AUC) review.

Responding to an escalating need to address WPS issues in the Nigerian context, and building on momentum at the global level, the Federal Government of Nigeria launched its first three-year NAP (2013 – 2016) on the 27th August 2013, through the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development (MOWASD) and with support from key partners, including the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), UN Women and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Nigeria's first NAP marked an important step in the country's commitment to delivering against the WPS agenda, and over its three year life-span the NAP supported a number of key developments, including developing WPS networks (WPSNs) at federal and state level to support the localisation of the agenda, and signing the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Bill into law in 2015. However, commentators have highlighted a number of challenges associated with the implementation of the first NAP, including a lack of capacity, buy-in and resourcing at the government (federal, state and local government authority) level, limited clarity on reporting, responsibility, accountability across stakeholders, and an evolving contextual landscape, not captured in the NAP's framework.

¹ Additional resolutions on WPS, include: UNSCR 1888, 1960, 2106, and 2122, see:

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>

² Muehlenbeck, A. (2016) 'Designing Inclusive Strategies: Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security for Sustainable Security', Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Inclusive Security, p.8

<http://www.osce.org/secretariat/294731?download=true>

³ <http://www.peacewomen.org/member-states>, Burkina Faso; Burundi; Central African Republic; Cote D'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of Congo; The Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea Bissau; Kenya; Liberia; Mali; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; Sierra Leone; South Sudan; Togo; Uganda.

⁴ Abdulmelik, S. (2016) 'Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa', (Addis Ababa: Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC))

⁵ Ibid., p.9

⁶ Muehlenbeck, A. (2016) 'Designing Inclusive Strategies: Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security for Sustainable Security', Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Inclusive Security, p.7

Drawing on learning from the recent ‘NAP refresh’ process, NAP knowledge products (developed by NSRP), and key informant interviews with stakeholders currently operating in the WPS space in Nigeria⁷, this rapid review aims to specifically highlight the successes and challenges of designing, implementing and monitoring Nigeria’s first NAP, and understand where impact on WPS has been achieved and how. The findings of this review are intended to showcase the Nigerian experience, but also inform and provide learning for governmental and implementing actors working in the WPS space, in addition to stakeholders across the global WPS community. This review is structured across four sections:

- **Section 1:** What makes a ‘high impact’ NAP;
- **Section 2:** NAP design process;
- **Section 3:** NAP implementation;
- **Section 4:** Reflections.

⁷ The methodology for the NAP review consisted of two components: a desk-based review of existing project and non-project literature; and key informant interviews with relevant public and third sector stakeholders at the federal and state level. Face-to-face interviews were carried out in Abuja and Plateau state with a wide range of stakeholders, including government representatives, WPSN members, broader NGOs/INGOs, security actors and the UN. Phone interviews were carried out with a selection of WPSN members in NSRP operational states.

1. Setting the scene: what makes a ‘high impact’ NAP?

Box 1. Spotlight: Impact across African Member States

A recent review of UNSCR 1325 implementation across African Member States highlights a number of areas of impact, including:

- **Legal and policy reform and adoption.** There has been progress in adopting gender equality legal and policy provisions and gender responsive laws and policies across Member States, particularly in the area of prevention of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). Whilst there have been some advances in the availability of SGBV services, there has been far less progress with regards to access to justice.
- **Women’s participation in decision-making processes and the security sector.** Special measures and quotas have been put in place by Member States, increasing the representation of women in decision-making bodies – particularly legislatures and the security sector (particularly the police).
- **Promotion.** The WPS agenda has been promoted through sensitisation and training initiatives for service providers and other civil servants, as well as community members. Some Member States have localised and translated key documents into local languages.
- **Implementation institutions.** New institutions have been established and/or mechanisms put in place within existing institutions to support the delivery of UNSCR 1325, including gender desks.
- **Coordination and monitoring.** Multi-stakeholder coordination and monitoring mechanisms have been established across Member States, with representation from government and civil society partners.

Source: Abdulmelik, S. (2016) ‘Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa’, Addis Ababa: Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), pp.15-16

Approaches to designing, implementing and monitoring NAPs vary, as do their quality and content. Whilst understanding around NAP impact is limited⁸, the available evidence discusses various implementation challenges, including a lack of genuine participation of key stakeholders and political actors, weak accountability, lack of dedicated financing, and a focus on measuring outcomes rather than results.⁹ Gaps between national-level commitments and subnational implementation are also seen to pose particular challenges to achieving meaningful impact and traction on the ground. As such, actors operating in the WPS space are increasingly looking to develop strategies that involve local governance structures and processes of decentralisation, with a focus on monitoring and evaluating at regional and community levels.¹⁰

Where evidence is available, there is some consensus that NAP impact is linked to a selection of common factors, across countries and contexts. Firstly, impact has been linked to demonstrations of effective co-operation between government and civil society, where an overall plan coordinator has been allocated to support delivery, where monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are defined at the conception of the plan, and where concrete actions with clear goals, budgets, and responsibilities are articulated.¹¹

In addition, ensuring that design and implementation processes are inclusive, that M&E plans are results-based, and that

adequate resources are earmarked to support implementation, are all identified as critical in facilitating ‘high impact’.¹² Finally the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Inclusive Security¹³ highlight three core elements, they see as integral:

⁸ See EPLO (2013) ‘UNSCR 1325 IN EUROPE 20 case studies of implementation’

⁹ See Miller, B., Pournik, M., Swaine, A. (2014) ‘Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation’

¹⁰ Swaine, A. (2013) ‘National Implementation of the UN Security Council’s Women, Peace and Security Resolutions’, Policy Brief published by NOREF, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, March 2013, Transitional Justice Institute Research Paper No. 13-06

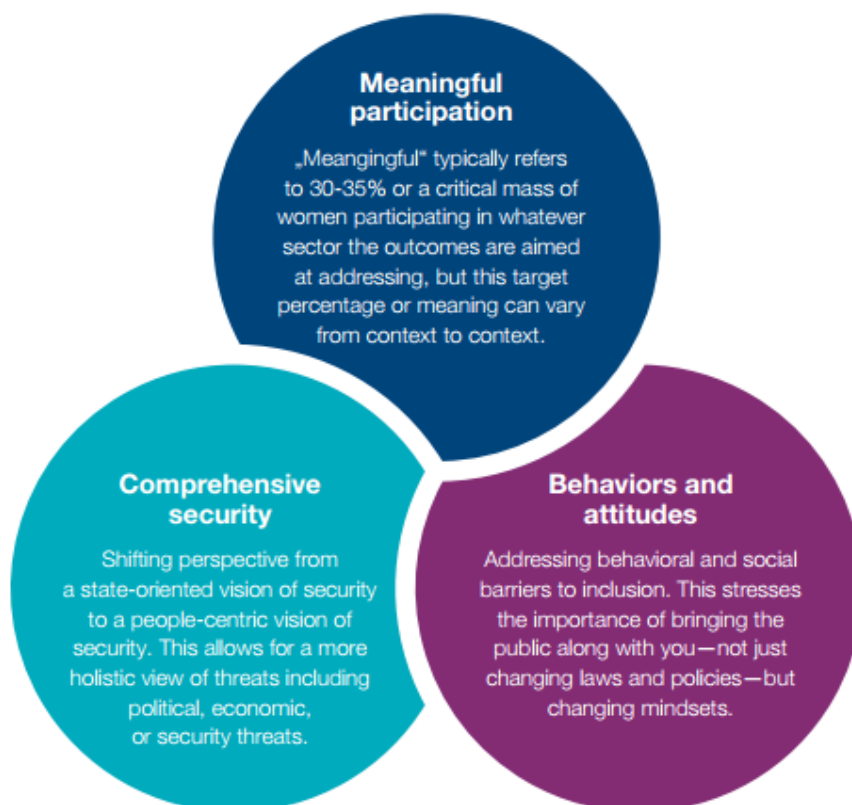
¹¹ As summarised in Muehlenbeck, A. (2016) ‘Designing Inclusive Strategies: Results-Oriented National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security for Sustainable Security’, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Inclusive Security, p.7

¹² Ibid., p.13

¹³ Ibid.

1. **Meaningful participation;**
2. **Comprehensive security;**
3. **Behaviours and attitudes.**¹⁴

Drawing on learning from wider NAP evidence at the global level, this review considers the relative merit of Nigeria's first NAP in terms of impact at both the process and implementation level. As is discussed in the following sections, Nigeria's first NAP can be seen to have arguably achieved a number of key achievements, many of which align with the findings of 'success' at the regional and continent level (see Box 1 above). However, a number of challenges are also identified, which observers (and this review team) concur, have hampered progress and impact over the first NAP's lifespan. As discussed in this paper's concluding section, Nigeria's newest NAP iteration (2017 – 2020) has gone a significant way in addressing some of these identified challenges – at least the level of intention and commitment.



¹⁴ Ibid.

2. Designing Nigeria's first NAP (2013 – 2016)

Ownership and accountability

On the 27th August 2013 the Federal Government of Nigeria launched its first NAP on WPS. The NAP had a three year lifespan (2013 – 2016), and was structured around five pillars, referred to as the '5 Ps' (discussed below). The NAP development and launch was led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development (MoWASD), in collaboration with key partners, including ECOWAS, NSRP, and UN Women. Individuals such as Esther Eghobamien-Msheila (MoWASD) spearheaded and catalysed action around Nigeria's NAP at the federal level following her experience as Head of Gender for the Commonwealth played a particularly important role in championing action around the development of the NAP from the civil society perspective, supporting the process from its inception in 2009. Partners like NSRP have also continued to play a substantive role in supporting NAP implementation and monitoring (both formally and informally), and have a central role to play in the successful ownership and delivery of NAP outcomes (as discussed below). This is also "duly noted" in Nigeria's new NAP, which asserts that "gratitude also goes to the DFID funded Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) especially Dr Eleanor Nwadinobi, Manager, women and girls, for being a consistent partner throughout the lifespan of the 1st NAP".¹⁵ Thus, in formal terms, ownership and accountability for the first NAP sat across government *and* civil society, as reflected through the governing bodies of the National Steering Committee and the Women, Peace and Security Networks at federal and state levels:

1. National Steering Committee

At the federal level the MoWASD established a National Steering Committee with support from NSRP, comprised of both government and civil society representatives, and tasked with meeting and reporting back on progress on a quarterly basis. In reality this committee was heavily reliant on the updates provided by civil society partners as per the activities and updates provided by both the federal and state level WPSNs. Partners such as NSRP had a critical role in supporting these processes, through their convening and organising of SC meetings in their capacity as co-Chair of the SC and as Chair of the federal level WPSN (discussed below). In theory this multi-stakeholder committee comprised of representation from a number of Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs), including Defence, Justice, Humanitarian Affairs, and finance, in addition to representation from security agencies. As highlighted through interviews as part of this review, levels of attendance and participation were seen to have varied over the lifetime of the NAP.

2. Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs)

WPSNs were part of NSRP's efforts to support the implementation of the NAP and were established at both federal and state level¹⁶, encompassing a broad base of representation from across civil society organisations working on WPS related issues. At both levels WPSNs served a number of related functions, including: i) supporting the promotion of NAP and delivery against its various expected outcomes, ii) building the individual and collective capacity of network members and encouraging improved future WPS-related programming, iii) taking a lead role in monitoring progress against NAP implementation in close collaboration with the MoWASD at state and federal level. In practical terms, the selection of activities to support delivery against NAP commitments, in addition to the monitoring of progress against these commitments, were held by the WPSNs, and captured through NSRP's own M&E data. In this respect, NSRP took a lead role in supporting NAP delivery and M&E with little being captured beyond these fora. The successes and experiences of the WPSNs are discussed in more detail in the following section of this review.

Content – priorities and focus

As outlined, Nigeria's first NAP was structured across '5 Ps':

- **Prevent** all types of violence against women and girls, enact and strengthen utilisation of existing laws;
- **Protect** women and girls from all types of violence including sexual and gender based violence during and after conflict;
- **Promote** dissemination of the NAP and develop strategies for awareness, ownership and funding of the NAP;

¹⁵ <http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/NAPNigeria.pdf>, p.xi

¹⁶ WPSNs were formed in NSRP's eight states of operation: Bayelsa, Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Rivers, and Yobe.

- Ensure women's full **participation** in all activities in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery processes at all levels;
- Strengthen **prosecution** and ensure quick trial of perpetrators of gender-based violence to end impunity.

A detailed implementation plan was developed to sit behind these priorities, outlining activities, progress indicators, expected outcomes and key actors. As is the case with a selection of NAPs at the global level, having a broad coverage of themes and priorities, may act as a barrier to achieving targeted impact. For example, NSRP's Learning Series, highlights that "the NAP consists of a long list of actions covering most aspects of the women, peace and security agenda. While this holistic approach is commended, when matched with lack of resourcing and insufficient political will at the highest levels, it is not realistic to implement the whole scope of the NAP as it presently stands" (NSRP, 2016: 9).

Beyond challenges associated with the NAP's broad thematic coverage, there has also been criticism around the extent to which the design process was seen to be sufficiently consultative. As highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, consultations to inform the development of Nigeria's first NAP were planned to be carried out in all 36 states to ensure the NAP reflected the conflict dynamics and realities of women and girls across the country (NSRP, 2016: 4). However, despite this intention, the process was fast-tracked, resulting in a smaller selection of consultations in the six geo-political zones, in order to align with the launch of a Security Council Open Debate on WPS, held in October 2013 (ibid.). Partners interviewed for this review highlighted that the process of designing the first NAP was seen to have not been sufficiently collaborative, and that the zonal consultation processes were not adequately representative, with relatively low levels of attendance at the local level. Additionally partners highlighted that key MDAs were absent from the consultations, and that overall, as an interviewee highlighted, the process *'didn't feel very strategic'* (CSO partner, federal level).

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

The first NAP laid out a clear plan for monitoring and evaluating progress, committing to participatory analysis and annual planning with actionable plans and budgets. However, in reality M&E against the NAP was relatively light-touch and largely led through the efforts of partners such as NSRP, rather than meaningfully owned by the government. For example, as highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, "[a]lthough the Nigerian NAP had a clear strategy from inception, it has been challenging to ensure that progress is monitored and evaluated since this task is often left to civil society alone" (2016: 11). This is in spite of the fact that the MOWASD at federal and state level were tasked with owning the NAP M&E process, in addition to providing yearly reports on implementation status to the President, and were responsible for reporting to UNCSW and CEDAW. In practical terms, both the National Steering Committee and WPSN at federal level have been responsible for collating and tracking progress against the first NAP. However, as discussed later in this review, due to wide-reaching, multi-stakeholder, and broad thematic coverage of the NAP itself (common features of NAPs across many countries), M&E data (where it exists) has not captured the range of relevant progress and developments across the first NAP's lifespan. Partners such as NSRP have fed limited M&E data in to WPSN meetings at the federal and state level, but this has been restricted to documenting the number of NAP activities prioritised and progress against specified outcomes.

3. Implementing Nigeria's first NAP (2013 – 2016)

This section attempts to outline the extent to which Nigeria's NAP has meaningfully translated into action and change at the national, state and local level. Given the lack of baseline, and the broad range of activities, progress indicators and expected outcomes captured in the NAP's implementation plan, it is challenging to carry out a robust assessment of progress on implementation within the scope of this review. However, a selection of key findings relating to where impact has been achieved, and where challenges and limitations have been identified, are outlined below, drawing on: monitoring data provided at federal and state level meetings (primarily captured through NSRP's programmatic M&E), learning and knowledge products (primarily NSRP's review of the NAP as part of their Learning Series - NSRP, 2016), documentation produced as part of the NAP refresh process (primarily zonal consultation reports), and interviews with key informants both within government and civil society involved in NAP implementation.

In summary, this review finds that Nigeria's first NAP has:

- Driven the WPS agenda forward in Nigeria and provided a clear **WPS policy 'road map'**;
- Helped to establish a **WPS infrastructure** to help **implement NAP commitments on the ground** – most notably in the form of a multi-stakeholder **National Steering Committee**, and state and federal level **WPS networks (WPSNs)** who have supported the **domestication and localisation of NAP delivery**, resulting in the development of **State Action Plans (SAPs)** and in some instances **Local Action Plans (LAPs)**;
- Supported a number of high profile **sensitisation** events contributing to increased awareness and buy-in around the NAP and WPS issues;
- Catalysed the development of **key WPS related policy and legislation** at federal and local level;
- Supported improvements in the **gender sensitivity and awareness of security institutions**;
- Supported promising progress around **women's political participation** in decision-making bodies at the local level.

In spite of these achievements, progress against implementation has been hampered by a number of factors. This review finds strong support for the issues identified in NSRP's Learning Series (NSRP, 2016), and those discussed as part of the NAP refresh process, including (though not exhaustively) consensus across the following points:

- Lack of **capacity, buy-in and resourcing at the federal and state government level**;
- Lack of clarity on **reporting, responsibility, and accountability**;
- Evolving **contextual landscape not adequately represented in the NAP's framework**.

It is important to note that NAP attribution remains challenging; ultimately, the NAP is a policy document, which critically draws attention to, and is intended to galvanise support around a set of related issues. However, implementation cannot be solely driven or achieved by the NAP in isolation. . In this respect, the NAP is dependent on the actions of stakeholders both within and outside of government, and impact must be accordingly distributed across multiple stakeholders, actions and processes. With this in mind, NAP 'impact' may involve varying levels of input/output, and be tied to a number of external variables.

Where impact has been achieved and why WPS policy road map

Nigeria's first NAP has played a key role in bringing needed visibility to the WPS agenda in Nigeria, and providing a clear 'road map' and plan for implementation of WPS related activity. A number of key informants from this review

"The NAP shines a light on the issues and the issues as they affect women [...] I think it was huge. A milestone". (WPS expert)

emphasised the ways in which the first NAP crucially *'brought to the fore the discourse on WPS'* (WPS expert), and *'brought the issue to the front burner'* (WPS expert). Further, WPS/gender experts from this review highlighted that the *'the first NAP changed the conversation of women as victims in Nigeria. It gave us a new strategy for gender equality in the long term'* (WPS expert).

This was found to also be the case for partners operating in the WPS space who had high levels of awareness around UNSCR1325. For these partners, this review found general consensus around the notion that the NAP, as a country specific articulation of UNSCR1325, provided a much needed grounding for operators, as one implementer emphasised, the *'NAP acts as guiding departure point'* (civil

society implementer). Moreover, the NAP was described as providing a powerful tool through which to discuss WPS with both government and broader stakeholders, and a helpful tool to leverage action and status associated with the agenda. Whilst these intentions have not necessarily been matched with action in all cases – or these processes remain ongoing – the intention to deliver, and the creation of a mechanism and opportunity to raise the profile of WPS, is an important achievement in and of itself. Beyond raising the profile of WPS and NAP at the national level, there has been notable impact at regional/global levels. For example, UNOWAS have adopted the Federal WPSN into their own working group structure and WPS panels have been hosted by the Nigerian Government at two consecutive UNCSW meetings in 2016 and 2017.

WPS infrastructure and impact on the ground

Translating policy into practice remains a key priority for governments and practitioners, and the establishment of delivery mechanisms to support this translation is critical. Perhaps one of the most impressive areas of impact that

“The SAP guide us. Without SAP we would be working haphazardly”. (WPSN member)

local action plans in collaboration with objectives. At the time of this review 8 government in NSRP’s states of operation – see table 1. Domestication of Local Action Plans (LAPs) have also taken place in Wase, LGA, Plateau state in July 2016, and in October 2016, in Fagge LGA, Kano State. In June - July 2017 three local governments in Delta state published their LAPs, Oshimili, Ukwuani and Ughelli South LGAs. A key ingredient of the WPSNs’ success has been in their flexibility and autonomy, allowing them to function effectively, and with wide representation.

As highlighted in a recently completed internal NSRP “How-to-Note”, the WPSNs’ “[l]oose structure promotes responsiveness and flexibility. By not imposing membership fees, joining deadlines or limits on membership numbers, WPSNs were inclusive, reflected the WPS landscape of their state, and evolved in line with emergent issues. This flexibility means networks could easily support the work of future stakeholders” (NSRP, 2017).

The success of the WPSN structure is also reflected through the UN office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS), as members of the Nigeria working group on WPS, looking to adopt the WPSN structure and apply this across their work at the regional level. In addition,

Nigeria’s first NAP has seen the development of a ‘WPS infrastructure’ at both federal and state levels to help support the delivery of NAP commitments. This is most clearly demonstrated through the establishment of Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs) at federal and state level, which have directly supported the domestication and localisation of NAP commitments through their advocacy and support in developing state and the MoWASD, and their central role in directly delivering SAP and LAP State Action Plans (SAPs) have been developed and endorsed by the local

Box 2. Spotlight: Learning from the Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs) – NSRP’s experience:

Establishing WPSNs can serve as an effective means of promoting the WPS agenda, particularly at the state level and below. Based on NSRP’s experience, the WPS networks have the potential to:

- **Help to translate the NAP from national policy** to something that is relevant, understood and implemented at state level, including through spearheading the development of contextually-tailored policies in the form of State and Local Action Plans
- **Bring together and forge relationships between actors** working on the WPS agenda, to build cooperation and collaboration and a sense of shared purpose
- **Build the capacity of smaller and more localised organisations**, whilst simultaneously raising awareness of the work going on at the lowest grass-roots level amongst larger CSOs
- **Raise awareness** of the WPS agenda in its broadest sense at a local level

NSRP’s experience is that it is critical to take the following elements into account in order to establish and run WPSNs effectively:

- **Purpose and strategy:** clearly articulated mission statement, paired with flexible approach towards achieving stated goal
- **Membership:** inclusive, broad, open to all organisations broadly focused on WPS-relevant areas; no (or minimal) membership fees or deadlines for registration
- **Technical support:** technical support, both in initial training and on an ongoing basis, but channelled through member organisations where possible
- **Financial support:** minimal, covering only administration/transport costs and activity implementation

Source: NSRP (2016) ‘How To Note: Output 3 Setting up and running Women Peace and Security Networks’, NSRP (internal document)

UN Women who are implementing the *Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria* programme in three states (Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe), with a specific output focused on creating a conducive environment for the delivery of NAP, have adopted the NSRP WPSN model in Plateau state and are looking to scale-up to the other areas of operation. In an interview as part of this NAP review, UN Women emphasised the importance of their collaborative relationship with NSRP in the setting up and delivering their own programme, describing the experience as a *'good learning process for us and we really appreciate that kind of synergy'* (UN Women representative, federal level).

"People starting to report cases of rape. Breaking silence around stigma. Working together hand in hand". (WPSN member)

The majority of the WPSNs activity aligned to four international days (International Women's Day, International Widows' Day, International Peace day, and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence), which created key platforms to raise the profile of WPS issues and the NAP specifically, the networks went beyond the international day remit to support a number of diverse collaborative actions including: community outreach on issues such as intimate partner violence, trafficking and communal violence; awareness-raising visits to IDP camps; and engagement with security actors to promote women's enrolment in the police and military.

The Borno WPSN also undertook particularly high profile advocacy and engagement around the abduction of the 276

Box 3. Spotlight: WPS State Action Plans (SAPs)

As part of Nigeria's efforts to localise NAP implementation, WPS State Action Plans (SAPs) have been developed and endorsed by the local government in NSRP's states of operation, spearheaded by NSRP in collaboration with the state level MoWASDs.

The development of SAPs and LAPs under Nigeria's first NAP can be seen as one of the country's key successes. This innovative represents a key learning opportunity in terms of strengthening translation of national policy into meaningful implementation on the ground and at local levels. As at NSRP's most recent reporting period, the following SAPs had been developed and endorsed:

State	Date WPS formed	Date SAP created	Date Govt Endorsed	Date of Budget Appropriation
Bayelsa	20-Mar-14	02-Apr-14	02-Apr-14	25-Mar-15
Borno	12-Mar-14	07-Feb-14	07-Feb-14	N/A
Delta	20-Mar-14	05-Sep-14	05-Sep-14	N/A
Kaduna	10-Jun-13	09-Dec-16	09-Dec-16	13-Dec-16
Kano	15-May-13	27-May-16	27-May-16	28-Dec-16
Plateau	12-Feb-13	26-Aug-15	26-Aug-15	10-May-16
Rivers	21-Jun-13	18-Jul-14	18-Jul-14	10-Mar-15
Yobe	20-Jul-14	20-Feb-17	20-Feb-17	N/A
Total	8	8	8	5

SAPs, LAPs and now ZAPs (Zonal Action Plans) form a central part of Nigeria's new NAP (2017 – 2020), including dedicated monitoring and coordination structures at the state and zonal level.

Chibok schoolgirls by the Islamic extremist group Jama'atul ahl al-sunnah li da'awati wal jihad (JAS) in April 2014. In response to the abduction, the Borno WPSN travelled to Chibok and subsequently delivered the first international press conference confirming the abduction had taken place. Building on continued efforts to support the schoolgirls, the WPSN travelled again to Chibok after one year (which was at this point inaccessible to most development actors) in order to meet with the girls' families and revive public awareness of the abduction. "Due to the brave actions of the Borno WPS, the abduction of the Chibok girls was brought to light nationally and internationally, and the network continues to pressure the government to take action to free the girls who are still missing. However, network members put themselves at considerable risk in travelling to Chibok and speaking publicly about the abduction" (NSRP, 2017).

There are a number of additional 'success stories' that can be drawn out in relation to the work of the WPSNs. For example, the Plateau WPSN supported the drafting of a WPS Bill (the first of its kind) and has been working to get this passed at state level, building on their strategic relationships

with MoWASD and other peace and security stakeholders at the state level.

The Plateau WPSN has also been heavily engaged on advocacy around the Gender and Equal Opportunities (GEO) Bill, currently under consideration in the Nigeria National Assembly (NASS). In Rivers, the WPSN has been instrumental in establishing and supporting the running of a physical safe space (the only of its kind in the state), which has supported increased reporting around cases of gender-based violence (GBV) - the WPSN convenor in this instance described the ways in which they have been able to refer cases to the NSRP funded observatory.¹⁷

The benefits of establishing networks also go beyond the direct WPSN mandate. For example, WPSNs have promoted synergies and cross-working within the WPS space, whereby smaller organisations have been able to learn from larger or higher capacity counterparts, gaining exposure to activities and actors beyond their previous geographical or mandated reach. WPSNs also promoted joint advocacy horizontally (amongst likeminded organisations within a certain geographical area) and vertically (connecting local programming with state, national and international activities). In this respect, the establishment of a WPS infrastructure as part of the first NAP has laid the foundation to support future NAPs and WPS related implementation.

WPS related policy and legislation

As highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, the achievement and impact of the NAP is arguably most visible at the policy level (NSRP, 2016: 6). This review identified a number of developments that have helped strengthen Nigeria's WPS policy infrastructure and coherence at the national level. One widely cited success relates to the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Bill, which was signed into law on the 25th May 2015. The final stages of this process were critically supported by actors such as NSRP and other partners within the federal level WPSN. Following an advocacy meeting with the Chair of the Senate Committee handling the Bill, the Technical Committee was tasked with producing a report on the Public Hearing in order to fast-track the Bill being signed into law; NSRP subsequently engaged consultants from the Gender Technical Unit (GTU) of the National Assembly to produce the draft report, which was adopted in both Chambers. At the state level there have been attempts to domesticate the VAPP Bill, including in Ogun state where the VAPP Bill has passed the 2nd and 3rd readings at the State House of Assembly .

In addition, Gender Based Violence in Nigeria: National Guidelines and Referral Standards, were produced by the MoWASD and Ministry of Health in 2014, drawing on the experiences of women survivors of GBV in the north east, with technical and financial support from NSRP, UN Women, UNFPA and Fistula Care Plus. There is now also a gender section in the National Security Strategy and NAP specific provisions in the National Peace Policy. As outlined in NSRP's Learning Series, "[a]mending existing peace and security policies such as National Security, Peace and Defence Strategies is useful to ensure policy coherence and diffusion of the women, peace and security agenda across government" (NSRP, 2016: 10), and, "[i]deally revised policies will state an over-arching commitment to gender mainstreaming and implementation in line with the NAP in addition to citing relevant provisions of the NAP that fall within their remit" (ibid.).

The NAP cannot be unilaterally attributed with the above progress. In the case of the VAPP Bill in particular, success must be situated within the cumulative and sustained efforts of lobbying led by civil society, and champions within the government and National Assembly, in particular the Legislative Advocacy Coalition on Violence Against Women and Girls (LACVAW). However, the coordinating action of the WPSN at federal level (in particular contributions from NSRP, and additional DFID-funded programmes Voices for Change (V4C) and Justice for All (J4A)), was in large part driven and incentivised by activities attached to delivering on commitments in the NAP. As such the NAP has played an important role in triggering action at this level.

In terms of alignment at the broader, global level, the federal government has ratified, amongst others, the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (though is yet to domesticate it), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

¹⁷ As part of NSRP's efforts to reduce the impact of gender-based violence in conflict-affected areas of Nigeria, NSRP set up three 'safe spaces' initiatives in 5 states. The Observatory is a virtual 'safe space' which consists of an online platform for reporting incidences of VAWG, coordinated by a local civil society partner in the states (referred to as the Coordinating CSO).

on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol), and developed a National Gender Policy (2006). However, as outlined in a 2012 report developed by the British Council, “[e]xcellent policies and intentions have not translated into budgets or action to make the changes required if women are to contribute effectively to Nigeria’s development”, and “The National Gender Policy has yet to bear fruit, while implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has stalled” (British Council, 2012: iii).

However, as at 2017 there have been some key developments related to strengthening Nigeria’s NAP alignment with broader policy frameworks. For example in March 2017, the CEDAW Coalition on Women, Peace and Security was formed as a network of six registered Nigerian NGOs, with the aim of providing the CEDAW Committee with information relating to gaps in the implementation of CEDAW with a specific reference to the CEDAW Committee’s General Recommendation 30 and the WPS agenda more broadly.

Gender sensitivity and awareness of security services

This review identified noteworthy developments in relation to the gender sensitivity and awareness of a selection of security institutions, which several respondents highlighted as connected to the increased levels of visibility and traction associated with WPS and gender issues more broadly at the federal level. Whilst these were not commonly attributed to the NAP directly, interviewees emphasised that the NAP had indirectly influenced a number of these process and informed working cultures and awareness of WPS within the security sector. For example, there are now gender desks operational across all Nigeria’s states (at zonal and state level), a standalone Gender Unit (initially funded by the Ford Foundation) and a sector specific gender policy. Discussions with staff as part of this review emphasised that there has perceptible progress in terms of the visibility, awareness and reporting around issues of GBV in particular, but this was positioned as a work in progress. As discussed in a recent interview with Katmun Gomwalk (Nigeria Police Force, Deputy Superintendent of Police) carried out by Gender Hub, delivered through the V4C programme¹⁸, “our greatest surprise, most people do not know about the gender desk”, and further “[w]e need do need training and retraining; we need to know how to handle gender issues, and we need to know how to handle evidence... there’s still a lot of missing gaps”.¹⁹

“We have been doing a lot of sensitisation to raise awareness about the desk. In the past people didn’t report things like rape. We’ve seen an increase in the number of cases reported”. (Police representative)

As highlighted in interviews as part of this review and the Deputy Superintendent, the representation of women within the police system is a critical area that could support progress, which has seen limited gains to date. As she emphasises, “[m]easures have also been put in place to try and give us equal opportunities [...] But now you see women joining the mobile police force, going on beats, going on arrests and a lot of things. For me it’s very slow, but it’s a process that has begun, and hopefully, we pray it should catch like wildfire”.²⁰ Discussions with police staff also drew attention to a selection of particularly promising approaches in relation to the management of children’s cases in particular (through UNICEF and Ford Foundation support), which has involved the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) and training materials in this area. In theory, the approach undertaken as part of this work, could be replicated and scaled-up to support the delivery of WPS related objectives. In addition, the development of a WPS infrastructure (as discussed) and the increased momentum around this issues as brought about through the NAP process, provide further support and opportunity for this work to be taken forward.

In related terms, in 2014 the Nigerian military adopted a policy of allowing women to be admitted into the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA). This marked a significant development since the NAP was launched, as women are now able, for the first time, to progress into positions of leadership and rank within the defence forces. In addition, the MoWASD deployed its WPS focal points to the military training centre, resulting in their training curriculums being reviewed and a standalone gender focal point being recruited. The Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Centre for troops deployed to the north-east and overseas now have a code of conduct and general rules of engagement that includes clauses on zero tolerance for gender-based violence (NSRP, 2016).

¹⁸ <http://www.genderhub.org/be-inspired/interviews/interview-katmun-gomwalk/>

¹⁹ (Ibid.)

²⁰ (Ibid.)

Women's participation in local governance

Despite representing relatively modest achievements, this review identified a selection of examples from partners working within WPSNs where women's representation in local governance structures and traditional councils (in Gombe) and as special advisers in local government (Kano), were found to have led to particularly innovative and transformational impact. Women's representation on WPSNs themselves, and across WPSN management committees have also provided leadership opportunities for women.

NSRP's self-assessment as part of their project completion report highlights fledgling efforts towards stepping up the inclusion of women in community governance, at a time when violent and expensive electoral processes continue to inhibit women's political participation. Traditional authorities in states such as Delta and Yobe have committed to include and consult with women representatives in their councils. NSRP is also promoting change around patriarchal norms where only 'Royal Fathers' (male traditional rulers) attend public events. For instance, during the launch of the revised NAP (2017 -2020), a female traditional ruler ('Royal Mother') from Delta was given prominence among other assembled 'Royal Fathers'. The zonal consultations conducted as part of the NAP refresh process have also demonstrated some impressive examples of women's political representation. For example in Ondo State, CSOs were able to use the principles of UNSCR 1325 during the 2016 elections to train women on supporting and advocating for peaceful elections, and other states are in the process of selecting female 'Peace Ambassadors'.

Overall women's participation and leadership, particularly in political structures, remains a key area for strengthening, and NSRP's Learning Series emphasises that Nigeria's second NAP should pay more attention to understanding and operationalising women's meaningful participation in decision-making around peace and security specifically.

Where impact has been limited and why

Lack of capacity, buy-in and resourcing at the government level

One commonly described challenge to NAP implementation identified by informants from this review related to a lack of capacity and buy-in at the government level. This is also a key theme identified in NSRP's Learning Series, which emphasises that "[s]ome of those charged with facilitating implementation lack knowledge of the women, peace and security agenda and what this means for their work. Civil society organisations are often the ones who inform government officials about the very existence of the NAP and their role in its implementation" (NSRP, 2016: 7). In related terms, lacking awareness and understanding around WPS and the NAP specifically has been matched with a lack of prioritisation and resourcing.

Many of the participants from the ministry were not conversant with the NAP. Very clear from the beginning that this was just a document (WPS expert)

Key partners such as NSRP and UN Women have made significant ground in building relationships and capacity of ministry staff (within the MoWASD and across wider MDAs). For example, in their three states of operation, UN Women have designated Gender Advisers to sit with the ministry, who provide ongoing support and advice. However, high attrition rates mean many of these gains have not been sustained, and ministry staff suffer from having multiple demands and responsibilities and lack of budget to take forward this work. As one informant emphasised, *'it's not about the number of workshops you do it's about what happens afterwards'* (civil society partner, federal level).

At state level WPSNs have worked closely with the MoWASD to support the development and roll-out of SAPs and LAPs, but this review identified varying levels of capacity and support from the ministry across states. Moreover, critically, support and buy-in is required across all MDAs, and from those individuals in positions of influence and authority, and it is clear that this remains an ongoing project. For example, despite, the NAP being positioned as a cross-government initiative, in reality, outside of the MoWASD, participation and input from additional MDAs has been limited. Even within the MoWASD prioritisation and capacity remains challenging; as one informant highlighted, there is a need to *'build a critical pool in the ministry who can provide technical guidance across sectors'* (WPS expert). As highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, "although there are advocates in government and security MDAs" this was found to often "not translate to the highest levels" (NSRP, 2016: 6).

Lack of clarity on reporting, responsibility, and accountability

A large number of informants for this review emphasised that a significant lack of clarity on reporting mechanisms for NAP had hindered progress around implementation. This also emerged as a strong theme through the zonal consultations carried out as part of the NAP refresh process. NSRP's Learning Series emphasises that "[a] clear monitoring and evaluation strategy is necessary from the start. Although the Nigerian NAP had a clear strategy from inception, it has been challenging to ensure that progress is monitored and evaluated since this task is often left to civil society alone" (2016: 11).

If you don't say how and very clearly point out step 1, 2, 3 and 4 then it falls off (WPS expert)

Informants interviewed for this review concurred that whilst there was a structure and strategy theoretically put in place for reporting against the NAP, this did not translate into practice, whereby *'the previous NAP said MoWA is in charge – working together with different MDAs, but didn't say how'* and further *'indicators were really missing in the last NAP and there was a lack of clarity about how we collect this information'* (WPS expert). This speaks to a wider point around the attribution of NAP impact. As NSRP's Learning Series describes, "the NAP seeks to contribute much more – to drive action on the women, peace and security agenda forward. This dynamic also presents difficulties for monitoring – some activities may not be documented as 'NAP activities' as they were on-going activities initiated independent of the NAP. This presents a challenge in assessing the extent to which the NAP has galvanised government action on the women, peace and security agenda" (NSRP, 2016: 7).

Evolving contextual landscape

The content of the first NAP's thematic priorities has also been questioned by a number of actors, as highlighted through the zonal consultations for the second NAP refresh process, and the interviews undertaken as part of this review. This has been most prominently connected to the evolving context in the north-east. A number of informants emphasised that the first NAP did not adequately speak to these emerging issues, or capture the changing 'conflict landscape' in Nigeria, including consideration of additional issues around peace management, reconstruction and the humanitarian crisis. This speaks to broader challenges around the practical

When people think of peace and security they automatically think of Boko Haram and what's happening in the north-east, but it wasn't until we came to the zonal consultations that we realised that each state has its own challenges. (WPS expert)

operationalisation of NAPs, particularly in conflict settings. Beyond the issues of the north-east, the zonal consultations conducted as part of the NAP review process identified that WPS issues articulated at state level vary significantly across geographies.

For example, in the south-west challenges around ethnic and religious tensions, as well as climatic issues such as flooding, which affect women's security were revealed to be key issues. This again highlights the importance of the localisation and domestication of the agenda at state and local levels, emphasising the importance of Zonal Action Plans (ZAPs), SAPs and LAPs to ensure successful and meaningful implementation.

Box 4. Spotlight: Nigeria's new NAP (2017 – 2020)

A number of respondents from this review highlighted that in large part, the key challenges and areas of contention from the first NAP (2013 – 2016) have been addressed in Nigeria's newest NAP, at least in intention.

The 'NAP refresh' process involved extensive consultations across all Nigeria's zones with both civil society and government actors. One key area that informants from this review and participants in the zonal consultations both emphasised was the increased levels of participation and inclusion as part of the NAP refresh design process; as one informant emphasised, *'the process for the reviewed NAP was fantastic. They took on board all the challenges from the first NAP'* (civil society partner, federal level).

In addition, a number of concerns around emerging thematic priorities, clearer lines of reporting and accountability, and an emphasis on sustaining a focus on locations and domestication and

4. Reflections

As outlined, Nigeria's first NAP led to impact across a number of areas, however progress must crucially be positioned as an ongoing, multi-stakeholder project. This review has identified a number of active and engaged WPS actors, including dedicated champions within the government system and across civil society, and women and girls on the ground, leading change and action at multiple levels. However, as highlighted, NAP attribution remains complex; ultimately, the NAP is a policy document, which critically draws attention to, and galvanises support around a particular issue. As such, implementation cannot be solely driven or achieved by the NAP in and of itself. Rather, by leveraging the efforts and commitments of women and men operating in the WPS space, the Nigerian NAP should be used as an effective tool and mechanism through which these actors can strengthen their delivery, harness additional support and buy-in at the highest political levels, and ultimately work collaboratively to achieve sustainable and meaningful impact. This rapid review concludes with the following reflections:

The new NAP (2017 - 2020) presents significant opportunity, but learning and adaption should be ongoing

Nigeria's first NAP has seen a number of notable achievements, and critically laid the foundation for Nigeria to learn, adapt, and take forward its delivery around the WPS agenda. Further, a number of the challenges identified with the first NAP, captured within this review, have to a large extent been acknowledged and addressed in Nigeria's new NAP (2017 – 2020). In this respect, there is a significant opportunity to take forward both the learning and experience from the first NAP, and achieve real impact as Nigeria moves into a new phase of implementation. This can be helpfully understood as an iterative process; as one WPS expert in the field emphasised, *'although we have a new NAP, the new NAP wouldn't be what it is without the old NAP'* (consultant, WPS expert). This highlights the importance of ongoing learning and reflection around NAP implementation, rather than this being positioned as one-off process that happens at the end of a NAP's lifetime. Encouraging iterative and adaptive processes of learning throughout the NAP implementation period is essential to achieving meaningful progress. This is also discussed in NSRP's Learning Series, where there is a specific emphasis on a lack of peer-learning in the Nigerian context, which means that "replication of what works vis à vis the NAP or other policy and practice on the women, peace and security agenda does not happen. There is a need to share plans and lessons on successful approaches both vertically and horizontally to facilitate cross-learning across state and federal levels" (NSRP, 2016: 7). Creating fora for knowledge exchange may be particularly well-placed in this context.

Translating intention into action is key

Whilst the first NAP has witnessed a number of important achievements, and the new NAP is positioned to address a number of the first NAP's 'short-falls', translating intention into action requires substantive political, financial and collective efforts from both the Nigerian government and civil society, in addition to commitments from the international donor community. Translating intention into action crucially involves:

i) Responsibility and ownership of both government and civil society/development actors

Responsibility and ownership of NAP implementation in the first instance needs to be taken forward by the Nigerian government, who in fundamental terms 'own' the NAP and its financing. However, this involves not only providing financial and coordinating oversight, but is part of a much bigger project of political buy-in and strategic prioritisation. As highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, "[s]trategies to ensure closer cross-government working and to drive political will at the highest levels should be put in place. As part of this, government should consider appointing high-level champions for the NAP who sit on the Federal and State Executive Councils" (NSRP, 2016: 12). Further, the Nigerian government should also "ensure frequent and robust consultations with civil society actors on an ongoing basis. This will provide an opportunity for MDAs to benefit from the rich experiences and insight of relevant civil society groups" (NSRP, 2016: 12). However, responsibility and ownership must also be equally held by civil society actors themselves, who have a key role to play in supporting NAP implementation. And as such, there should be both vertical and horizontal lines of accountability. This extends to organisations and institutions critical embedding WPS principles into their own systems and structures, and resourcing both the 'demand' and 'supply' side of the agenda.

ii) A focus on transformational change

Beyond the structural and institutional environments in which the WPS agenda plays out, norms and expectations around women and girls are at the centre of inequality and exclusion. As such, whilst amending and creating a supportive policy and legislative environment and increasing women's formal representation is critical, the underlying norms that drive exclusion must also be addressed in order to translate intent into sustainable and transformational action. Efforts that look to understand and engage with norms and behaviour are therefore equally as important as policy gains. Within such processes, engaging with traditional male leadership is often key, as well as acknowledging that marginalised groups may need additional support to have their interests and voices heard. For example, as highlighted in NSRP's Learning Series, "women with disabilities find it more difficult to escape violent conflict, are not part of early warning and early response systems, have less access to essential services and are at greater risk of gender-based violence (NSRP, 2016: 13). Informants as part of this review also emphasised that the NAP could better harness the voices of young people, and young men in particular, and initiative such as the Voices for Change (V4C) programme²¹ have started to lay the groundwork for thinking in this space. There could also be a stronger focus on specific cross-cutting areas, such as women's voice and leadership, which cut across all pillars, and situate concepts of empowerment, and re-positioning power, at their core.

iii) A need for immediate and multi-year funding

There is an important practical need for both the Nigerian government and international actors to fund and resource NAP implementation and related WPS action. As highlighted, with the launching of Nigeria's new NAP, an established and functioning 'WPS infrastructure' is now in place at federal and state level, representing an opportune moment to direct resourcing into NAP delivery and build on current momentum. With key programmes coming to an end in 2017, including NSRP, it is clear that there will be a significant gap in terms of expertise and support, which has been demonstrably critical in the successes of Nigeria's NAP delivery to date. As such, additional resourcing and multi-year programming, aligned with the new NAP, would be extremely helpful in building on the groundwork laid by key partners such as NSRP and UN Women. It is also important to note that where Nigeria's first NAP has seen particular impact, this is primarily located within the 10 states in which NSRP and UN Women are operational. This highlights an urgent need to scale-up resourcing in order to support a WPS footprint across the country.

Building an evidence base is essential

In broad terms this review found there to be a noted lack of evidence demonstrating the various levels of impact and achievements of the first NAP (which are known to have occurred). In part this can be linked to a lack of clarity and process attached to NAP M&E and challenges around attribution, in addition to the a lack of peer-learning and knowledge exchange at the government and civil society level (discussed above). In order to strengthen the visibility and credibility of progress against NAP implementation, the government and NAP implementers must improve their documentation and data collection around NAP impact. One practical implication of this relates to how a robust evidence base can be used to leverage additional resourcing and international donor support (see above). More broadly, helping to provide evidence on what is and isn't working for the WPS agenda at both a policy and programmatic level will help inform more responsive and comprehensive interventions, which will ultimately strengthen delivery and impact for women and girls.

The improvements in M&E systems and processes articulated in the new NAP should go some way to addressing this. However, it is critical that this now involves sustained engagement with the broader set of actors operating beyond the WPSNs, to ensure that contributions within and beyond the implementation plan are systematically captured and used to inform programme and policy design, and to identify key opportunities and entry points moving forward. Documentation such as the upcoming WPSN-led publication "Sheroes in Peacebuilding", which provides a compendium of outstanding woman peace builders in each of the 36 states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, and is positioned as a 'live' resource to be updated, also provide one example of documenting and disseminating evidenced.

²¹ <http://www.v4c-nigeria.com/>



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