EDITORS
FITRIANI
MARYRUTH BELSEY PRIEBE

CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

PACIFIC FORUM INTERNATIONAL

CSCAP
NEW ZEALAND

EXPERT PAPERS

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

COUNCIL FOR SECURITY COOPERATION IN THE ASIA PACIFIC (CSCAP) STUDY GROUP

- CYBERSECURITY
- DISASTER MANAGEMENT
- COUNTERING TERRORISM
- WOMAN IN SECURITY FORCES

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

AMAN	Asian Muslim Action Network
APSC	ASEAN Political-Security Community
ASCC	ASEAN Socio Cultural Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-IPR	ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
AWPR	ASEAN Women for Peace Registry
CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DoD	Department of Defense
EVAW	Elimination of Violence against Women
INDOPACOM	US Indo-Pacific Command
KUPI	Indonesian Women's Ulema Congress
LBTI	Lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex women
LDC	Least developed countries
NAP	National Action Plan
PDC	Pacific Disaster Center
P/CVE	Preventing and Countering Violence Extremism
RPA	Regional Plan of Action
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
VE	Violence Extremism
WGWC	Working Group on Women and PCVE
WPS	Women Peace and Security

Introduction

The October 31, 2000 unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was a ground-breaking step for women's leadership and participation. The UNSCR 1325 marked the first time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and recognized the under-valued and under-utilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. Over the years, significant efforts and progress have been made in this regard.

To date, 11 states in the Asia Pacific have adopted National Action Plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, including two of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states, namely, the Philippines and Indonesia. There have been several major efforts building towards a Regional Plan of Action on WPS for ASEAN. Three of note are the Joint Statement on Promoting WPS in ASEAN (2017), the soon-to-be-adopted Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (2022) and the Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW) (2015). The Joint Statement is the closest ASEAN has come to a consensus document on UNSCR 1325. The Joint Statement on Promoting the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum in 2019 reaffirmed that commitment and included stronger and more specific language on advancing the agenda in the region. Meanwhile, the RPA on EVAW is a comprehensive framework adopted throughout ASEAN for protecting women against physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence, which it recognizes is the result of historical and structural imbalances in power relations between genders. Inclusivity is also a pillar in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025, and is a key element of the people-oriented, people-centered concept based on international law enshrined in the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025. Under the APSC Blueprint, the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) is tasked with helping indoctrinate voices of moderation in the culture of ASEAN. ASEAN-IPR undertakes research, capacity-building, developing a pool of expertise, networking, and information dissemination in service of peace, conflict management, and conflict resolution. It also houses the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR, est. Dec. 2018), a network of experts who contribute to the implementation of 2017 Joint Statement. In November 2020, the East Asia Summit signaled its own commitment to supporting the WPS agenda through its Leaders Statement on Women, Peace and Security.

While these are laudable achievements, still more needs to be done to make peace more durable and inclusive and, ultimately, transform international peace and security. The ongoing global pandemic has illustrated how the same event has drastically different effects on women and men. Eight ASEAN member states still lack UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans, while this group of countries works to adopt a regional action plan in 2022. Even with ASEAN,

there are major divisions on the WPS agenda. For example, the APSC Blueprint 2025 makes limited mention of women's rights; these items are siloed under the ASCC. Research has shown that when women's priorities are at the heart of peace processes and decision-making, from planning to monitoring, prevention will be strengthened, and conflicts will be less likely to relapse so peace can last longer. Advancing women's participation, leadership, and opportunities in all areas of society, not just in politics, strengthens national economies and societies.

To this end, the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) that provides an informal mechanism for scholars, officials, and others in their private capacities to discuss political and security issues and challenges facing the region, saw the need to conduct a study to further the adoption of WPS agenda in the region. Thus, USCSCAP, represented by Pacific Forum, CSCAP Indonesia, represented by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia, and CSCAP New Zealand, co-chaired a CSCAP Study Group focused on the advancement of the WPS agenda in the Asia Pacific, with a particular focus on Southeast Asia. By demonstrating the value and utility of a gender perspective, this study group propagates application of a gendered lens throughout CSCAP studies, providing timely and relevant insights on longstanding policy and security issues. Study group findings—derived from an inclusive Track-2 process consulting stakeholders from academia, civil society, government, and defense communities—are channeled into the Track-1 process as practical policy recommendations to advance the WPS agenda in the region. There is a great deal of interest in the WPS agenda in ASEAN through the ASEAN Socio Cultural Community (ASCC) and various related activities have already begun. The CSCAP study group, by linking Track-2 and Track-1 levels, as well as the ASCC and the APSC, would help channel ASEAN's energy so it can emerge as a leader of WPS norms in the Asia-Pacific region; especially as they apply to the protection of women in armed conflict and in enhancing their role in the prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction of such conflicts.

This compilation of Expert Papers presented at the CSCAP Study Group on WPS is published with the aim to advance policy planning, implementation and evaluation that support meaningful participation of women in all parts of security and peace processes. There are four expert papers included in this compilation covering the topic of cybersecurity, disaster management, countering terrorism, and women in security forces. Realizing the myriad of issues on WPS, this compilation represents the laying of but one small paving stone as we seek to build the road to a more equal and inclusive security sector.

In making this compilation of Women, Peace and Security Expert Papers, the editors would like to thank David Capie, Bethan Greener, and Crystal Prior who assisted with the gathering of the experts; Nandita Putri Kusumawati who assisted with the layout and finalization of the report; as well as the experts on WPS, namely Steve Recca, Farlina Said, Keshab Giri, and Ruby Kholifah who contributed their writings to this compilation.

Using Data to Inform Climate Security Planning with a Gender Perspective: A case study on a multi-sector partnership

Steve Recca and Maryruth Belsey Priebe

There is a strong and growing consensus at both the national and grass-roots levels that women, as half the world's population, necessarily must be engaged as leaders and essential contributors in responding to the complex challenges of global peace and security. Climate security presents perhaps the most multifaceted and difficult tests of humanity's ability to collectively solve problems. Importantly, we must acknowledge that climate change will exacerbate violence and conflict and a panoply of human-induced threats and hazards the world over, especially if women's voices are absent from our strategies.

One of the major gaps in identifying and truly understanding the scope of local climate security risks is gender-disaggregated data. By the sheer complexity of the challenges we face, it seems obvious that an "all-hands-on-deck" approach is required. Yet, a lack of comprehensive understanding of the critical elements of these issues, including how society is affected and should respond in an effective, sustained approach, has hobbled decision-making. We have, in effect, been operating with one hand tied behind our collective backs.
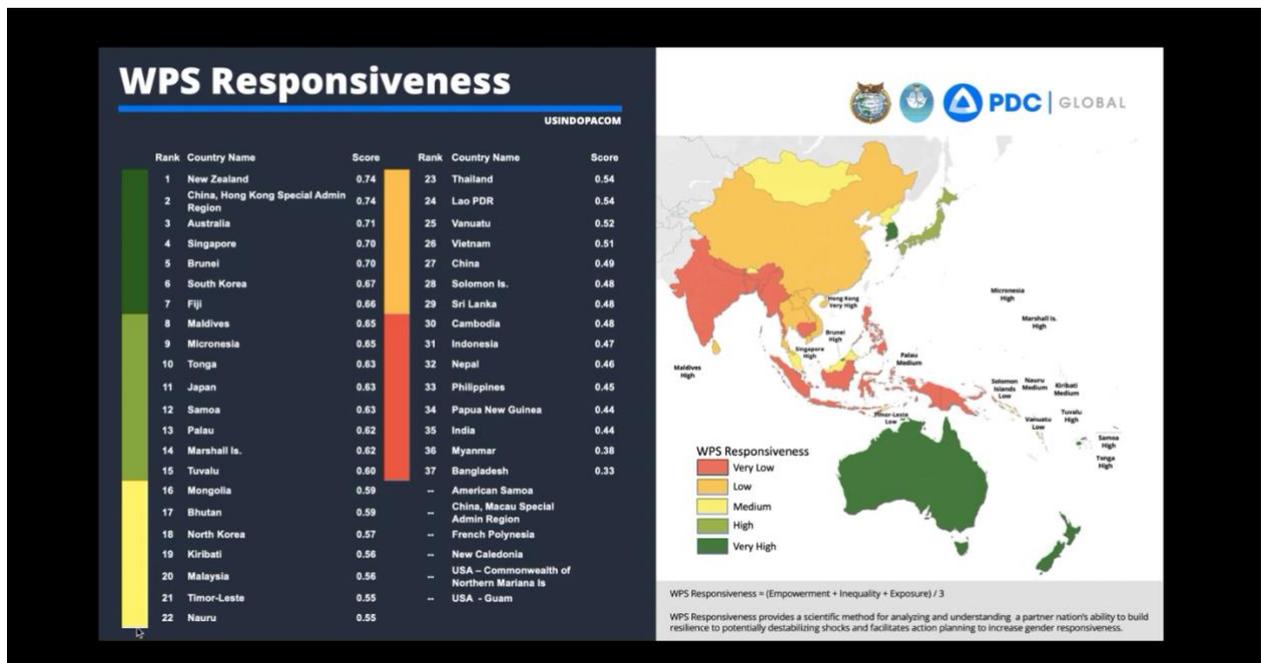
As a way of making a substantive difference in enhancing human security, the US Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and the University of Hawaii's applied science and research center, known as the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), partnered together to develop a science-based assessment of the key drivers of risk and vulnerability. The following case study explores this year-long collaborative research and analysis effort which aims to provide a fundamental baseline understanding of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) in the context of regional climate security issues.

An all-hands-on-deck partnership to analyze climate security risks

This joint effort stems from the groundbreaking 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, and is guided by the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, which codified the US Government's commitment to the principles of the WPS agenda. Going forward, WPS-focused US initiatives are part of a broad range of national and international efforts designed to bring WPS issues – in security, peace-making, and peacekeeping – to the forefront of security policymaking, including that impacted by climate change.

"This is not only informative, but transformative," said Robson. "This is the first time that the US Department of Defense (DoD) has commissioned a research project for an accurate picture of current gender trends across the globe, with a focus on the USINDOPACOM region."

Robson focused on how the results will help eliminate previous gender-blind spots and address destabilizing factors within the region due to gender inequality. The science-based analysis will more effectively identify root causes of instability and assist partner nations with the tools to understand the unique security needs of men, women, boys, and girls who are affected by conflict and crisis differently.

WPS Responsiveness

USINDOPACOM

Rank	Country Name	Score	Rank	Country Name	Score
1	New Zealand	0.74	23	Thailand	0.54
2	China, Hong Kong Special Admin Region	0.74	24	Lao PDR	0.54
3	Australia	0.71	25	Vanuatu	0.52
4	Singapore	0.70	26	Vietnam	0.51
5	Brunei	0.70	27	China	0.49
6	South Korea	0.67	28	Solomon Is.	0.48
7	Fiji	0.66	29	Sri Lanka	0.48
8	Maldives	0.65	30	Cambodia	0.48
9	Micronesia	0.65	31	Indonesia	0.47
10	Tonga	0.63	32	Nepal	0.46
11	Japan	0.63	33	Philippines	0.45
12	Samoa	0.63	34	Papua New Guinea	0.44
13	Palau	0.62	35	India	0.44
14	Marshall Is.	0.62	36	Myanmar	0.38
15	Tuvalu	0.60	37	Bangladesh	0.33
16	Mongolia	0.59	--	American Samoa	
17	Bhutan	0.59	--	China, Macau Special Admin Region	
18	North Korea	0.57	--	French Polynesia	
19	Kiribati	0.56	--	New Caledonia	
20	Malaysia	0.56	--	USA – Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Is	
21	Timor-Leste	0.55	--	USA - Guam	
22	Nauru	0.55			

WPS Responsiveness
Very Low
Low
Medium
High
Very High

WPS Responsiveness = (Empowerment + Inequality + Exposure) / 3

WPS Responsiveness provides a scientific method for analyzing and understanding a partner nation's ability to build resilience to potentially destabilizing shocks and facilitates action planning to increase gender responsiveness.

Global Women, Peace and Security Analysis results based on first-ever composite index for Gender Responsiveness.
Source: https://www.pdc.org/wps-global-regional-analysis/

INDOPACOM highlighted the significance of the first composite-index, data-driven Gender Responsiveness Baseline Assessment. Described as a tool to mainstream and operationalize WPS concepts, the body of work provides key indicators of destabilizing factors identified in previous human security research products within organizations such as the United Nations, USAID, and the Red Cross. The baseline assessment analysis reinforces DoD policies and practices and provides practitioners and planners with a new tool – supporting clearer analysis and planning at INDOPACOM and across the U.S. government. In this case, the assessment will support development of 10-year whole-of-government plans at US embassies for US Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability partner countries.

These efforts are cited in the 2022 Women, Peace, and Security report drafted by the US Congress. The report noted that the, "PDC WPS analytic framework provides an effects-based approach to collecting consistent gender data with quantifiable metrics that can be used to measure (DoD) WPS program effectiveness, as well as drive data-informed WPS operations, activities, and investments, including but not limited to security cooperation."

PDC's Dr. Joseph Green, Director of Applied Science and Advanced Analytics, noted that certain indicators, while not often perceived as gendered, can be cross-cutting and impinge upon gender-based security concerns. The research findings presented by PDC included data on a variety of metrics that will allow for climate-based WPS challenges to be managed with resourcing and policy decision making strategies. In particular, the research measures gender responsiveness based on economic opportunity, government participation, law, health care access, advanced education, and security capacity. It also analyzes gender inequality based on information access, health outcomes, economic participation, clean water/sanitation access, and personal security. Ultimately, PDC's research provides a framework for understanding gender-based climate insecurity regarding conflicts, non-state malign actors, climate change, maritime security.

What's next for gender and climate security data in the Indo-Pacific?

INDOPACOM representatives, working with multi-agency and organizational partners – including PDC and the Pacific Forum – noted their commitment to leveraging the WPS analysis for climate security planning activities. Going forward, INDOPACOM will use several avenues for working with partner nations to eliminate barriers to women's participation in their own national security forces and programming. From the DoD perspective, the WPS engagement effort is a paradigm shift in the approach to human security, requiring new tools, methodologies, and partnerships. Furthermore, partnerships such as these encourage open, serious dialogue designed to build capacity and capability in WPS and support a more holistic understanding of security in the region.

Nevertheless, much more is required to ensure women and gender data is used to prepare gender-responsive climate security and disaster risk reduction plans. For instance, while data is important, so are the actual voices of women. Engaging in consultations with women's civil society organizations to understand their climate change concerns is essential. More importantly, women should be consulted as sources of climate security innovators and champions. Incorporating women's ideas and solutions into community strengthening strategies is important for increasing the number of system-level resources and tools available for achieving climate resilience and avoiding climate-driven conflicts.

Moreover, data is only useful when it can be used to empower action. As such, the gender-climate security data and analysis developed by PDC and INDOPACOM must be shared with local governments, security agencies – and importantly also by women's groups – to develop disaster plans and climate resilience strategies at the local level. Along with the data, these organizations and agencies should be adequately trained and funded in order to implement such plans.

International engagement in WPS issues has reached a tipping point, where the requirement for broadening perspectives on security and the need to utilize science-based methodologies

and tools to accurately assess population climate vulnerabilities is widely acknowledged. That is, gender security issues are no longer considered outliers, but rather have become essential to mainstream planning for governments and militaries. The objective is to ensure that underrepresented populations – especially women – are included in analyses and implementation across all domains affecting humanitarian assistance, climate security, and disaster risk reduction, and leading to greater resilience for all. Without all of these pillars, the aims of the WPS agenda for gender and climate security cannot be realized.

***

Steve Recca is executive director of the Center for Human Security at the University of Colorado and humanitarian assistance program advisor at Pacific Disaster Center. Maryruth Belsey Priebe is director for women, peace and security programs and senior fellow at Pacific Forum.

Women, Peace and Cybersecurity

Farlina Said

The pandemic has been transformative in many consequential ways, presenting significant and expanding cybersecurity challenges for women. While the Internet population has swelled by 782 million people since 2019, gendered access to the Internet has remained stubbornly imbalanced.[1] Prior to the pandemic, the Economist Intelligence Unit estimated that globally, men are 21% more likely to be online than women, rising to 52% in the world's least developed countries (LDCs).[2] Much of the digital divide between genders persists today. Moreover, the cyber, women, peace, and security community has identified the need to address the ways in which real life violence and sexual harassment have been translated into online spaces. Offline factors rooted in culture, such as gender roles ascribed to women and men, have profound influences on gendered online experiences, with gaps and differences in data collected by developed, developing, and least-developed countries. Recognizing that women are not a monolith, it is important to understand the different ways women experience cyber insecurity in order to put a stop to it.

The experience of women

The statistics are pretty stark on the negative impacts the pandemic has had on women's experience of cyberspace, particularly as it has seen increases in gender-based violence. For example, a UN Women report on the first year of the pandemic noted that online misogynistic hate speech and references grew by 100% since the introduction of Covid-19 lockdowns and quarantines.[3] In journalism, the 2020 UNESCO report noted that out of 901 female journalists interviewed, 73% experienced online violence, while 20% of online violence cases translating into offline violence.[4] It's important to note that cyber insecurity impacts different women differently. Women of colour tend to experience more online gender-based violence than white women, and rates of online abuse on Twitter are higher in women with disabilities, as well as lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex women (LBTI).[5]

---

[1] Sustainable Development Goals, "As Internet user numbers swell due to pandemic, UN Forum discusses measures to improve safety of cyberspace," *United Nations,* 7 December 2021, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2021/12/as-internet-user-numbers-swell-due-to-pandemic-un-forum-discusses-measures-to-improve-safety-of-cyberspace/.

[2] Carlos Iglesias, "The gender gap in internet access: using a women-centred method," *Web Foundation,* 10 March 2020, https://webfoundation.org/2020/03/the-gender-gap-in-internet-access-using-a-women-centred-method/.

[3] UN WOMEN, *Women, Peace, & (Cyber) Security in ASIA and the Pacific* (UN WOMEN, 2020), https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/2020/06/Action%20Brief%20%20WPS%20%20CYBERSECURITY16620final.pdf.

[4] Julie Posetti, Nermine Aboulez, Kalina Bontcheva, Jackie Harrison, and Silvio Waisbord, *Online violence against women journalists: a global snapshot of incidence and impacts*, (UNESCO, 2020), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375136.

[5] Strasbourg, "No space for violence against women and girls in the digital world," *Commissioner for Human rights,* 15 March 2022, https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/no-space-for-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-the-digital-world.

The types of online cybersecurity risks people experience may also be gendered, ranging from gender-based slurs and harassment, to nonconsensual photography, defamation, death threats and rape threats, mob attacks, hate speech, stalking, unsolicited pornography, online impersonation, spying and sexual surveillance. For instance, a report by Sensity AI, *The State of Deepfakes 2019 Landscape, Threats, and Impact*, found that 96% of deepfakes were non-consensual sexual deepfakes, and of those, 99% were made of women.[6] Data breaches may also have unique impacts on women, particularly as personal data breaches can be related to sexual and reproductive health rights, dignity and self-development.[7] Cited in a report by the Association for Progressive Communications and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was a data breach at a public health system in Brazil which compromised the details of 15,926 mothers, 4,237 abortions and 181 stillbirths. As abortion is illegal in Brazil, this data breach may lead to criminal charges for women and additional emotional distress for the victims, underlining the importance of taking data security responsibilities seriously.

Due to how easy it is to replicate and disseminate online content with speed and ease, there are few effective barriers to sharing illicitly taken data, images, or videos. This is especially true when such content is distributed in closed and encrypted platforms such as Telegram, where taking the content down requires negotiations with the private sector and justification to local authorities. The experience of women in cyber crosses offline identifiers such as race, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and profession. Civil society organisations have noted that young people are especially vulnerable to gender-based abuse online, often leading to serious trauma that may require additional channels of support and legal advice—support that is often unavailable.

Importantly, lack of safe cyber spaces can hinder women's freedom of speech and empowerment.[8] In 2017, Amnesty polled 4,000 women in eight countries and found that over three quarters (76%) of women who had experienced abuse or harassment on a social media platform made changes to how they use the platform.[9] This included restricting what they post: 32% of women said they'd stopped posting content that expressed their opinion on

---

[6] Suzie Dunn, "Women, Not Politicians, Are Targeted Most Often by Deepfake Videos," *CIGI*, 3 March 2021, https://www.cigionline.org/articles/women-not-politicians-are-targeted-most-often-deepfake-videos/.

[7] Deborah Brown and Allison Pytlak, *Why Gender Matters in International Cyber Security*, 1st ed. (Melville: Association for Progressive Communication, 2020), https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/CyberNorms/UNGGE/Why+Gender+Matters+in+International+Cyber+Security+(Submission+to+the+OEWG+by+the+Women's+International+League+for+Peace+and+Freedom).pdf.

[8] Anwar Mhajne, Luna K.C., and Crystal Whetstone, "A call for feminist analysis in cybersecurity: highlighting the relevance of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda," *LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security*, 17 September 2021, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2021/09/17/a-call-for-feminist-analysis-in-cybersecurity-highlighting-the-relevance-of-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda/.

[9] Amnesty international, "Online abuse of women thrives as Twitter fails to respect women's rights," *Amnesty international*, 20 March 2018, https://www.amnestyusa.org/reports/online-abuse-of-women-thrives-as-twitter-fails-to-respect-womens-rights/.

certain issues. Essentially, gendered cyber violence can sharpen existing intersections of discrimination, impact women's participation in the gig economy and serve as a barrier to women's empowerment and may even deter women from seeking leadership positions. Technologies used in a malicious manner will deliver better tools to exploit the role of women as technological companies underperform in their capability to monitor and introduce new tools for the creation of safer cyberspaces.

Crucially, cybersecurity threats can be disruptive by introducing new challenges and scaling back progress already achieved on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Therefore, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, with participation, protection, and prevention among the pillars, should look for new ways to frame and streamline approaches to creating safer cyberspaces. First, the participation pillar has to be supported by increasing general access to the Internet, including by improving women's access to telecommunications services and devices. The participation pillar should also address ways to increase the participation of women in creating safer cyberspaces. This would mean providing access to upskilling trainings as well as targeted awareness campaigns. Second, more can be explored in areas of protection, which could look into facilitating systems that would protect women and gendered experiences online. Third, much more research should be done on how to prevent online harms and threats to women.

Increasing participation in policymaking, diplomacy and production of technologies
Women must be better represented in many important spheres in order to combat gendered cybersecurity threats. Access to technology would be the first sphere in which women's meaningful participation would be beneficial.[10] GSMA's findings for mobile internet penetration among low and middle-income countries reveals that women are 16% less likely than men to use mobile internet, with a further 18% less likely than men to own a smartphone.[11] Though the number of women going online is steadily increasing, the report states that there is a stagnant 7% seemingly unreachable for mobile phone ownership and Internet access. Access issues can stem from national development challenges in securing cheaper, contiguous, and adequate internet connectivity. Further, women's lack of access to computers and mobile devices must be addressed to bring more women online. As women increase their participation in the online world, they may be empowered to earn (additional) income, increase employment opportunities, and access knowledge and general information. Importantly, government services are increasingly moving online; as such, shrinking digital gender gaps is important for supporting their access to important government programs.

---

[10] Web Foundation, "Women's Rights Online: closing the digital gender gap for a more equal world," *Web Foundation*, 12 October 2020, https://webfoundation.org/research/womens-rights-online-2020/.

[11] GSM Association, *The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2022*, (London: GSM Association, 2022), https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2022.pdf?utm_source=website&utm_medium=download-button&utm_campaign=gender-gap-2022.

Second, security in cyber participation would be increased with digital awareness campaigns that increase women's knowledge of how to stay safe in online spaces. Such programs could include tools needed to protect their privacy, as well as knowledge of the logic and technical systems of cyber.

Third, there is a need for more women in the tech space. Globally, 72% of scientific researchers are men. Only one in five countries achieve what is classed as "gender parity" in which women make up 45%-55% of researchers, and in only a handful do women working in science outnumber men, including Thailand.[12] Women's low participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields may be due to family responsibilities, financial considerations, workplace culture, or gender discrimination.[13] Programmes targeting these biases—with particular attention to delivering upskilling, reskilling, and online educational opportunities—would be useful in boosting the participation of women in cyber.

Finally, women's participation in decision-making and policy-making spaces regarding technology use and safety is also needed. According to a UN Women report, women's representation in the UN Group of Governmental Experts on the use of ICTs, a group responsible for examining existing and emerging cyberthreats, among other things, has averaged only 20% women since its inception, which is below the recommended 30% needed for mainstreaming gendered perspectives.[14] To improve these averages, the UN system could engage in capacity building programmes, not only for policymakers and the public servants, but also those in civil society and defenders of human rights. Those advocating for women's rights could also be incorporated in conversations on cyber.

Protection of women in online spaces

In addition to improving women's participation in technological spaces, more must be done to protect women and girls from the uniquely gendered cybersecurity risks. However, the enforcement and protection of women in online spaces faces many barriers. Among them, is the uncertainty in roles of authorities to address issues of gender-based violence online, which can be further complicated by jurisdictional challenges. The latter is made more complex by the fact that online applications can be used to facilitate crime, but may not be subject to any laws that prohibit their use for nefarious purposes.

Further, survivors of gender-based violence are likely to require emotional and psychosocial support, but by and large, enforcement resources globally lack sufficient trauma-informed

---

[12] Alex Thornton, "Gender equality in STEM is possible. These countries prove it," *World Economic Forum,* 5 March 2019, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/gender-equality-in-stem-is-possible.

[13] Johnny Wood, "3 things to know about women in STEM," *World Economic Forum,* 11 February 2020, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/stem-gender-inequality-researchers-bias/.

[14] UN WOMEN, *Women, Peace, & (Cyber) Security in ASIA and the Pacific* (UN WOMEN, 2020), https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/2020/06/Action%20Brief%20%20WPS%20%20CYBERSECURITY16620final.pdf.

personnel to engage in multi-stakeholder responses to meet these mental health challenges. Such multi-stakeholder processes should include technological companies which provide services to women. For instance, applications should be made socially responsible to provide services dedicated to customer safety, inclusive of improving user interfaces for complaints, with accountability for resolving complaints as well.[15] One example is to require that online dating applications respond to assault victims or victims of rape, enabling law enforcement to identify and apprehend perpetrators following reports of an incident.[16] Such laws should be applicable regardless of legal jurisdiction, requiring various stakeholders to have accountability to ensure cyber spaces are safe for users. Developing tools and technologies that could create safer spaces for women could have spin-off benefits for the protection of other vulnerable communities using cyberspace.

Prevention of online harms

Finally, the WPS agenda should take seriously the need to prevent harm to women and girls by building baselines of digital citizenship. The fundamentals of digital citizenship include the ability to engage positively, critically, and competently in the digital environment, drawing on the skills of effective communication and creation, to practice forms of social participation that are respectful of human rights and dignity through the responsible use of technology. Developing digital literacy campaigns that incorporate the impact of online and offline factors would be the long approach to addressing issues such as hate speech or disinformation. Further, gender mainstreaming in cyber and digital policies can consider principles such as those outlined by the Feminist Principles of the Internet, which articulates how technology affects women. This could prepare governments for challenges posed by women's negative experiences and cyber insecurities.

Policy recommendations for a WPS response to cybersecurity threats

In every aspect of the cybersecurity issue, regional Asia-Pacific organisations, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), could take the lead on building a WPS response to cybersecurity threats. The place to start is in acknowledging that cyber is a part of the WPS agenda. This should be followed by a mapping of stakeholders—including infrastructure availability, digital government agencies, educational institutions, international governance bodies, and technological companies—to understand how to craft and target a strategic approach to identifying and holding accountable those responsible for cyber crimes. Finally, ARF could engage with technology companies to create safer and inclusive cyberspaces for women. As the world digitises, community safety will become more and more connected to digital safety—this and much more needs to be done in order to ensure a safer future for us all.

---

[15] Brian Edwards, Elizabeth Picciani, Sarah Spicer, and Keith Cousins, "Addressing Rape in Foour Minutes or less: Dating App Reps Left Unprepared to Respond to Assault Victims," *Prorepublica*, 17 May 2021, https://www.propublica.org/article/addressing-rape-in-four-minutes-or-less-dating-app-reps-left-unprepared-to-respond-to-assault-victims.

[16] Robin Young and Serenca McMahon, "The Dating App Industry's Flawed System for Addressing Sexual Assault," *wbur*, 27 May 2021, https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2021/05/27/dating-apps-sexual-assault.

***

Farlina Said is a Senior Analyst in the Foreign Policy and Security Studies Programme, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia.

Women in Security Forces – Key Questions

Keshab Giri

In the last two decades, many countries have taken steps to include women in the military and remove combat exclusion based on sex. For example, NATO is seeking to increase the participation of women in the organization through three principles: integration, inclusiveness, and integrity.[1] Such a trend is consistent with the historical participation of women in war as combatants.[2] This article touches upon the motivations behind reversing long-held exclusionary policy and proposes policies for the meaningful inclusion of women in the armed forces.

The question of women in the armed forces has drawn excitement as well as criticism from various feminist scholars. While some argue that such inclusion invalidates the logic of masculinist protection and debunks myths of war, others contend that this does little to advance the cause of gender equality as it perpetuates militarization, patriarchy, and war.[3] While revisiting this debate always generates useful insights to understand the major stakes and points of contestation embedded in the participation of women in the armed forces, this article, however, explores the rationales behind the inclusion of women in the armed forces and key considerations that could make their inclusion meaningful.

The inclusion of women in the armed group has been advocated for four primary reasons. As in any sector, recruiting from 100 percent of the population pool in society is one way to ensure that the armed forces are composed of the most talented, committed, and competent humans. The 100 percent mobilization approach is also useful at a time when armed forces in Western countries like Australia and the USA are struggling to get recruits for the army.[4]

The entry of the most talented, committed, and qualified women in the armed forces not only addresses the human resource shortage, the inclusion also improves operational capabilities

---

[1] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Women, Peace and Security," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 22 July 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_91091.htm.

[2] Joshua S. Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), https://www.warandgender.com.

[3] Swati Parashar, *Women and Militant Wars: The Politics of Injury*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2014), https://www.routledge.com/Women-and-Militant-Wars-The-politics-of-injury/Parashar/p/book/9780367600914; Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2000), https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt14qrzb1.

[4] Lisa Visentin and Shane Wright, "ADF boost hard to achieve without overhaul of recruitment and retention policies," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 March 2022, https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/adf-boost-won-t-be-achieved-without-overhaul-of-recruitment-and-retention-policies-20220310-p5a3bx.html; Thomas Spoehr, "Military Recruiting Faces Its Biggest Challenge in Years," *The Heritage Foundation, 13 May 2022* https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/military-recruiting-faces-its-biggest-challenge-years.

of the army.[5] The nature of warfare is changing. Research shows that many women possess certain skills that are vital in modern warfare. For example, women often have a greater attention to detail which is often very useful for tasks such as operating military drones, giving them an outsized positive impact on the drone industry.[6] They are also frequently better at team-oriented skills. Additionally, women soldiers have been noted as effective in counter-terrorism operations.[7]

Ending exclusion of women from military service is also a way to align with the values of honouring women's human rights and women's 'right to fight'.[8] Citizenship rights have been associated with service in the security sector, particularly within military service. While it is naïve to believe that getting women in the security sector will alone spur community-wide gender equality, the military has been arguably the last bastion of masculinity. Women's inclusion may be a way to unsettle patriarchal norms and the logic of masculinist protection, as well as a strategy for debunking essentialist notions of women as only caregivers, teachers, and so on.[9] Incorporating women into security services may also have an effect beyond the boundaries of the security sector, creating a virtuous circle and opening opportunities in other spheres of society.

Finally, there have been arguments for women's inclusion in the armed force to make it more sensitive to gender issues and civilizing the armed forces, an interesting notion given the documented sexual violence, sexism, and misogyny in the Australian, American, and Canadian armed forces.[10] While there are structural issues that need to be addressed for genuine

---

[5] United Nations, "Deployment of Female Personnel Boosts Effectiveness, Says Secretary-General, as Secuirty Council Holds Open Debate on Women in Peacekeeping," *United Nations,* 11 April 2019, https://press.un.org/en/2019/sc13773.doc.htm

[6] Miriam McNabb, "Why Women are Important to the Drone Industry – Voices From the Field," *dronelife,* 8 March 2019, https://dronelife.com/2019/03/08/dronelife-exclusive-why-women-are-important-to-the-drone-industry/.

[7] MAJ Marne L. Sutten, "The Rising Importance of Women in Terrorism and the Need to Reform Counterterrorism Strategy," *United States Army,* 2009, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA506225.pdf.

[8] Claire Duncanson, "Regendering the military: Theorizing women's military participation," *Security Dialogue* 47, Issue 1 (2015), https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0967010615614137?__cf_chl_tk=PqwqluehD4ezqlHXgBDfIohAX q_yMgcsEwEi.GUfoUg-1664953260-0-gaNycGzNB5E.

[9] Swati Parashar, *Women and Militant Wars: The Politics of Injury*, ed. 1. (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2014), https://www.routledge.com/Women-and-Militant-Wars-The-politics-of-injury/Parashar/p/book/9780367600914; Iris Young, "The Logic of Masculinist protection: Reflections On the Current Security State," *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26, no. 1 (2003), https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/375708.

[10] The Conversation, "In the military and beyond, more women doesn't mean more equity," *The Conversation,* 18 April 2021, https://theconversation.com/in-the-military-and-beyond-more-women-doesnt-mean-more-equity-157287; Tom Brook, "Exclusive: Female troops saw the highest level of unwanted sexual contact since Pentagon began collecting data," *USA TODAY,* 31 August 2022, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2022/08/31/female-troops-unwanted-sexual-contact-pentagon/7876761001/?gnt-cfr=1; Tracey Lindeman, "Women in Canada's military face greater harm from comrades than enemy, says judge," *The Guardian,* 1 June 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/01/canadian-armed-forces-louise-arbour-report.

gender equality within armed forces, the importance and impact of women's inclusion in military institutions cannot be discounted.

Instrumental reasoning aside, women's meaningful inclusion in the armed forces is not predicated upon their recruitment only. A person like Clare Hutchinson, the former NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women Peace and Security (WPS), has argued that women must participate in all aspects of conflict such as military planning, strategizing, operations, political maneuvering, and so on to ensure meaningful participation of women in peace processes and peacebuilding (though this is not a popular opinion).[11] Without full inclusion in all aspects of security, women's participation at the peace negotiation tables or in the post-conflict peace processes will only be tokenistic.

An often clichéd, though useful, adage is that as women enter the military, women can change the system from within. It is not new that security sector as an institution is known as masculine, patriarchal, and exclusionary. It needs radical change. But it helps little if there are no women, no people from the marginalized groups in the military to raise important questions on inclusion. However, importantly, women's inclusion in security forces can't be detached from issues of equality in political, socio-economic, legal, and cultural spheres. Furthermore, women should not be expected to 'civilise' the security force in addition to their existing work and care/domestic responsibilities. Such an approach is a recipe for failure.

An important question regarding women's meaningful participation in security forces is what that should look like. The security sector has an image problem in that it has traditionally included only males of a certain race and color. The culture of homophobia, sexism, and misogyny within security forces is also a problem. As countries like Australia and New Zealand are only getting more diverse, security forces must also be representative and inclusive. For substantial diverse participation, a radical overhaul of cultural norms that sees all genders, races, and ethnicities as defenders of the nation and security provider is therefore required to take discrimination into consideration. Apart from culture, a radical overhaul of socio-cultural infrastructure within the security sector can make the inclusion of women tangible and meaningful. The provision of childcare and parental leave, along with gender-sensitive military gear, equipment, and training not only helps women to perform their duties, it also enhances operational efficiency. Such change doesn't occur overnight; it is a long-term process needing constant vigilance.

Essentially, what is missing from the WPS discussion is the idea of intersectionality. Women are not a monolithic, homogenous group. There is diversity among women in terms of race,

---

[11] Försvarshögskolan, "Strategic Talks: Mobilizing Women, Peace and Security in Ukraine – Gender Pespectives on NATO," *Försvarshögskolan YouTube Channel*, Panel Discussion, 9 May 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7ReTkC6eT0&list=PL30AKWCdWNizLXRrCKLNuUKJDLmBEWhUX&index=2.

ethnicity, class, culture, language, age, and ability. They may have many commonalities, but they have many differences in terms of experience, problems, priorities, and needs. The WPS agenda has not taken intersectionality seriously. All countries, especially those that consider themselves multi-cultural and diverse like Australia and New Zealand, need to consider the practical implications of intersectionality deeply. A more radical reckoning would be revisiting the roots that propel the cogs of war. Using feminist theory, we should be asking: how do we dismantle the role of patriarchy in militarism?

***

Keshab Giri is Lecturer in International Relations at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Sydney

Prevention of Violent Extremism with the Women, Peace and Security Framework

Ruby Kholifah

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda was adopted to build a sustainable and peaceful world for everyone, including women and children, by ensuring a gender perspective and women's participation, protection and rights, prevention and disarmament, protection in displacement settings, peacekeeping, policy-making, and reconstruction.[1] Securing a civic space to strengthen women's full participation is an important goal, for which the WPS framework is a useful lens. This is especially true when it comes to understanding violent extremism. In particular, the WPS agenda stresses the need to take gender into consideration in determining how to set policy regarding prevent and counter violence extremism (P/CVE).

Before exploring what WPS has to say about P/CVE, it's important to understand how the WPS agenda attempts to speak about gender, particularly in security settings. First, a movement has begun within the WPS community to employ an intersectional perspective by emphasizing that women's experiences are not universally the same. This perspective equire that each woman be seen as a unique individual who has had a unique experience of engagement depending on their exposure and social upbringing. Second, new WPS theory emphasizes the need to avoid securitization and instrumentalization of women. Instrumentalization in this case could be interpreted as the subjection of women's natural biological functions to a politicized patriarchal agenda. Meanwhile, securitization is the process of state actors transforming subjects from regular political beings into entities of "security". With this in mind, when considering why gender matters to P/CVE, we must also look at how legal frameworks around violent extremism create institutional gendered vulnerabilities. Both international WPS frameworks and local policy are relevant in this regard, and examining them often demands more reflection on how legal frameworks affect people differently along gender lines.

In VE (violence extremism) there are five key elements of gender. First, as already mentioned, a woman is not a single entity. In other words, we must recognize the diversity of women, including gender expression. Consequently, to understand women's security needs in VE, an intersectional perspective must be applied. Second, we should note that women's experiences could be used as a basis of policy making and "tafsir". Experience in this context could be seen as a women's experience related to being a victim of SGBV, which could form the basis of policy or "tafsir". Third, because women's stories and experiences can be used as

---

[1] Peace Women, "Why Women, Peace and Security?" *Peace Women,* https://www.peacewomen.org/why-WPS.

the basis of policy, we can conclude that women have meaningful participation. More than just including women, their aspirations should also be presented, listened to, adopted, and implemented. And fourth, since women's experiences and aspirations may be used as the basis of policy, their experiences, especially those related to gender inequality and injustice, may also become a pathway to radicalism and VE (yet women in this context must include women's dual identities as SGBV victims and as actors in VE). Last, women's agency may be a pathway to empowering them through their critical thinking processes and their abilities to make decisions. Empowered women help demonstrate women's leadership through their narratives of life and "the politics of care" that could change the perspective of people and policy makers alike.

Therefore, with the key elements of gender in VE, WPS creates a framework that helps strengthen gender mainstreaming in P/CVE. First, the WPS framework helps increase women's inclusion in conflict prevention. As part of society that experienced SGBV in VE, women's experiences can and should be used as the basis of policy analysis and religious interpretation. Furthermore, the inclusivity of women also may promote the existence of women ulama and women-friendly interpretation. Women's input can also support the implementation of National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS and is key to critical awareness raising along with expanding exchanges with other marginalized groups.

Second, WPS focuses attention on the need to protect victims of SGBV and women human rights defenders (WHRDs). 'Protection' in this sense means to raise awareness about the existence of SGBV in VE, and requires effort to protect the rights of the victim of terrorism (acknowledging that women and children have unique needs). Likewise, WHRDs need protection from victimization from elements within VE.

Third, the WPS framework supports women's meaningful participation. Women are not just included, but in this context, their issues are also presented to the public and decisionmakers. Their experiences and stories are to be listened to, and their recommendations are to be adopted and implemented. Women should be given the opportunity to offer their skills and abilities to help in peace processes and peacebuilding. What's more, women should be encouraged to engage in political participation in general and to be involved in security operations for countering terrorism (CT).

Fourth, the WPS framework on relief, rehabilitation, reintegration, and resilience requires that gender sensitivity be exercised in crises, while recognizing women's agency to promote their own "narratives of life" and their own understandings of the "politics of care". In strengthening relief, rehabilitation, reintegration, and resilience, WPS emphasizes the restorative practice approach to building community resilience where "wrongdoers" and the community can live in coexistence.

Gender mainstreaming in P/CVE is strengthened through the use of these key elements in WPS and VE. But how do we maintain civic space to allow women's participation? According to the Working Group on Women and PCVE (WGWC), changing the trends within terrorism requires changing the measure of VE from "back yard" to "dining room". Meaning, discussions and efforts on VE should also engage women and children who were often sidelined and previously not considered as serious actors. Including women also addresses the gender deficit in VE that Is often experienced given that traditional actors engaged in security have been primarily men.

The other option is to support civil society organizations (CSOs) to work on the front lines of VE. This requires first that women's CSOs decide whether they have the capacity to be involved in front line VE work, or if their primary work of community resilience from radicalism and VE should remain their focus. For those CSOs that do choose to be involved, collaboration between all levels of society must be achieved. Cooperation of the whole government and whole society is how to achieve successful outcomes and partnerships among multiple actors. Such successful collaborations can produce better policies that include gender mainstreaming in P/CVE. Furthermore, collaborations can be very useful in engaging actively in a public consultation in the development of WPS NAPs that include P/CVE. In addition to including women in every consultation meeting, other strategies include submitting 'Policy Briefs on gender mainstreaming in P/CVE' and hosting specific consultations on WPS, all of which may help to enhance women's participation in civic space.

Importantly, the localization of P/CVE within a NAP at the provincial level (which has occurred in 6 provinces) is important for developing highly effective strategies to strengthen gender mainstreaming, and requires consultations with CSOs at the local level to ensure knowledge transfer and the empowerment of women. Facilitating localization is seen as the most effective approach to creating CSO engagement on VE at the local level. But this measure also supports the building alignment on the P/CVE agenda and its incorporation into a WPS NAP. The process of NAP localization is best achieved by strengthening the capacity of the inter-agency taskforce at the local level, and ensuring CSOs and women's group are engaged in the inter-agency taskforce. Strategies for localizing a NAP could include discussing gender in the context of national readiness, deradicalization, and counter-radicalism, along with ensuring the protection of witnesses and fulfilling the needs of victims for safety, as well as guidance on counter-narrative, prison, and care programs.

Because CSOs are often frontline actors, it is crucial to advocate for the creation of a CSO Taskforce under the joint national secretariat for developing a NAP on P/CVE. There are a few steps to advocating for a CSO Taskforce. First, a CSO taskforce should be established as a formal engagement mechanism through which CSOs can be involved in policy-making related to P/CVE. Second, technical guidance should be provided to the CSO Taskforce, including monitoring and reporting. Third, women's groups and women leaders should participate in

the decision-making process. Fourth, there should be an equal distribution of information and resources.

Some additional measures would also help to strengthen women's roles within the WPS and P/CVE spaces. Through CSO and policy-related efforts to mainstream gender in PCVE, the role of women in social integration will be enhanced. Women's groups could also be game changers in the social reintegration of ex-ISIS combatants and sympathizers; with the help of women groups, we could integrate a dialogue approach to increasing social acceptance of these individuals. Women's CSOs could also strengthen support groups; by transforming the role of the female victim of terrorism, these survivors can become advocates for long-term support of victims through counseling and economic empowerment, and could be instrumental in the formation of an association for the wives of ex-ISIS fighters. Additionally, through collaboration and support for the WPS framework, strengthening the role of women could be a crucial effort in promoting positive narratives on gender and Islam, for example through the Indonesian Women's Ulema Congress (*Kongres Ulama Perempuan Indonesia*/KUPI). It is very important to strengthen the role of women clerics (ulama) in promoting gender and Islam in civic spaces. We could also use a platform, for example, *mubadalah.id* as a channel through which people can learn progressive perspectives on gender and Islam. Last but not least, in the digital age, knowledge transfer and information sharing could take place through *kupipedia.id* and dissemination of 60 *hadith* (the corpus of the sayings or traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, revered by Muslims as a major source of religious law and moral guidance) on women's rights in Islam.

Several organizations are taking the lead on this kind of work in the region. In ASEAN, the Southeast Asia Women Peacebuilders hosted a series of conferences addressing P/CVE and WPS. The Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN started to create an exchange forum with Malaysia and Thailand, by strengthening CSO voices to be engaged in P/CVE NAP development using lessons from Indonesia. ASEAN CSOs also hosted a discussion on P/CVE-related issues, particularly capturing Southeast Asia dynamics. The agenda included the ASEAN Plan of Action on WPS, which is an integrated P/CVE agenda; and the ASEAN Plan of P/CVE, an integrated topic in the ASEAN agenda. Evidently, there is much more to be done to secure civic space in ways that strengthen women's full participation in P/CVE in Southeast Asia.

***

Ruby Kholifah is Country representative of the Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN) Indonesia

2022