

The 1325 Scorecard – United Kingdom Summary (October 22, 2015)

General Assessment:

The United Kingdom has embraced the principles of the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda in policy formation. However, in terms of actual implementation of established goals, it falls short.

National Importance/Political Will:

The UK attributes significant importance to UNSCR 1325, which is exemplified in the three National Action Plans dating back to 2006. Principles of the WPS agenda have been incorporated into major foreign policy and national security doctrinal documents, particularly in the Building Stability Overseas Strategy (July 2011), which identifies women as potential peacebuilders and agents of stability, not merely victims of conflict.

Despite these achievements, funding remains a critical obstacle to the successful implementation of UNSCR 1325, particularly in military operations. The Conflict Pool, which funds conflict prevention, stabilization, and peacekeeping activities that fall under the purview of the Building Stability Overseas Strategy, primarily supports the activities of the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID). Without a budget for NAP implementation specifically allocated to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the NAP cannot adequately be integrated into military operations.

Institutional Policy and Practice:

While the principles of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda are referred to in key military strategies and policies, such as the Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01 (British Defence Doctrine) and the Joint Doctrine Publication 03-40 (Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution), this has not translated into full integration into exercises, operations, and other military activities.

The lack of a full-time gender advisor, as defined by NATO Bi-SC Directive 40-1, assigned as a member of the commander's staff hinders full implementation. The MoD has employed gender advisors in operations: the first gender advisor, who was of General Officer rank, was deployed with the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2013. The majority of gender advisors, however, appear to be civilians. Military personnel are better equipped to navigate the operational and planning structure of the organization, and therefore more fully integrate the principles of UNSCR1325 and implement the NAP.

Training is lacking at critical levels. Although senior-level officials take a one-day Women, Peace, and Security module, entry and mid-level personnel only receive annual training on the Geneva Conventions and diversity. These trainings are not adequate in providing servicemen and women with a gender perspective.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation:

Monitoring and Reporting are required for all of the major actors identified in the NAP, including the MoD. The NAP also indicates that sex-disaggregated data should be collected to develop best practices.

Additionally, her Majesty's Government commissioned an independent evaluation of the NAP in 2013 in preparation for developing the next iteration and claims to regularly consult with civil society.¹

Recommendations:

The MoD should appoint a full-time gender advisor within the commander's staff to direct the implementation of the NAP and ensure that the principles of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda are incorporated into the everyday business of the organization, planning, and operations. Additionally, it is critical that the MoD develops an implementation plan of its own and allocates an appropriate and specific budget. Without these efforts, implementation will continue to fall short.

¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security: Final Annual Review, October 2013", accessed on October 22, 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/259411/NAP_Review_2013.pdf