

Dominican Republic - Summary Report

WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status: The Dominican Republic has not developed a WPS NAP.

Overall Assessment: The Dominican Republic demonstrates strong political commitment to the principles of gender equality, as can be seen in policy documents and offices that support women's inclusion. That said, the implementation of actions is uneven and the number of women who serve in the security and defense forces remains low. Furthermore, only a fractional minority of those who serve are promoted to the highest ranks.

National Importance/Political Will:

Gender equality is mentioned in the Dominican Republic Constitution (Article 39) and is supported by other laws and rules.¹ Additionally, the *2030 National Development Strategy* and the *2015-2020 Foreign Policy Strategic Plan* prioritize gender equality and the provision of equal opportunities and rights for all citizens.² Moreover, the main national security documents include provisions to protect and advance gender equality³.

In 2000, the government created the Ministry of the Woman as a way to implement the commitments established in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action.⁴ The Ministry of the Woman is responsible for preparing the Plan of Egalitarianism and Gender Equality and monitoring its progress. The latest National Plan of Egalitarianism and Gender Equality III 2018-2030 was presented in 2018.⁵ The plan evaluates the advances in terms of gender equality and presents recommendations and observations for the future. It presents the context, priorities, objectives, and lines of actions in seven issue areas: education, health, economic autonomy, social and political participation, the environment, violence, and digital technologies. The plan serves as guide for all governmental offices.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is relevant to the WPS agenda because it oversees all the international commitments of the Dominican Republic, including the ones related to UNSCR1325. In its *New Policy of Foreign Affairs*, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers gender equality, human rights, and social inclusion as key components of their foreign policy.

¹ See <https://www.ifrc.org/docs/idrl/751ES.pdf>

² Ministry of Planification and Development, *Ley 1-12 Estrategia Nacional de Desarrollo 2030*, (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 2012), at: <https://mepyd.gob.do/mepyd/wp-content/uploads/archivos/end/marco-legal/ley-estrategia-nacional-de-desarrollo.pdf>; and Ministry of Foreign Relations, *Plan Estratégico 2015-2020 La Nueva Política de Relaciones Exteriores*, (Santo Domingo, 2015) at: <https://www.mirex.gob.do/pdf/planestrategico.pdf>

³ Ministry of Defense, *Plan Estratégico Institucional PEI 2017-2020*, (Santo Domingo, 2017), at: <https://www.mide.gob.do/transparencyfile.aspx?id=6516> and National Police, *Plan Estratégico Institucional*, (Santo Domingo, January 2017) at: <https://www.policianacional.gob.do/transparencia/plan-estrategico-institucional/>

⁴ UN Women, *The Beijing Platform for Action: inspiration then and now*, (UN Women, 2015), at: <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about>

⁵ Ministry of Women, *Plan Nacional de Igualdad y Equidad de Género*, (Santo Domingo, 2020), at: https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2019_planeg_iii_dom.pdf

In the Dominican Republic, the national police is part of the Interior and Police Ministry, while the Ministry of Defense (MoD) has authority over the army navy and air force.⁶ The MoD has a Strategic Plan (Jan 2017-Dec 2020) that presents the strategic objectives, the lines of action, and goals for the different services.⁷ The Strategic Plan is in alignment with the national constitution and the different laws to achieve gender equality.

Article 11 of the Strategic Plan states that the armed forces employ a gender perspective (gender approach), as called for in the legal framework of the country, with an objective to increase gender equality and decrease gender discrimination. Article 12 of the MoD Strategic Plan requires that “all the plans, programs, projects and public policies should incorporate a gender approach, to identify discriminatory situations between men and women and to take actions to guarantee egalitarianism and gender equality.”⁸

Institutional Policy and Practice:

Strategy, Plans, and Policy

The principles of WPS/gender equality are sometimes integrated into military and police exercises, operations, and activities, as evidenced by documents to include exercise directives, operations orders, etc. The MoD has a *Directorate of Gender Equality and Development* that is headed by a colonel who is responsible for gender equality workshops and education programs.⁹ This office serves as the MoD’s and military’s full-time gender advisor. Additionally, the army, navy and air force each have their own Office for Gender Affairs. Similarly, the national police have an *Office of Gender Equality and Development*.

Gender in the Ranks (Military and Police)

Service	Men	Women	Percent Women
Army	24,133	4,420	15.5
Army Senior Women			4
Navy	9,465	2,540	21.2
Navy Senior Women			2.3
Air Force	13,277	5,349	28.7
Air Force Senior Women			4.4
National Police	31,977	6,729	21.04%
National Police Senior Women			8.6
Women Deployed			5.1-8

All positions are open to women in the military and police forces, although women report that there are cultural and institutional limitations. For example, policewomen report that there are

⁶ Ministry of Defense, *¿Quénes Somos?* (Santo Domingo, 2020), at: <https://www.mide.gob.do/detail.aspx?id=449&sl=96>

⁷ A PDF can be downloaded at Ministry of Defense, *6. Plan Estratégico de la institución*, (Santo Domingo, 2017), at: <https://www.mide.gob.do/transparencia/index.html>

⁸ Ibid. page 119.

⁹ Mirando al los Cuarteles. *Coronel Ana O Matos Feliz sigue en Equidad y Genero del MIDE*, (September, 2016), at: <https://www.mirandoloscuarteles.com/2016/09/coronel-ana-o-matos-feliz-sigue-en.html>

ceilings on the number of women who may serve in some states, and that many women are not put to work “on the streets.” Promotions across the institutions are equally offered, but few women have reached senior ranks. The national police, the army, the navy and the air force all have their own strategic and operational plans, and each one of them carries out different actions in terms of gender equality.

The national police have specific objectives and allocation of resources to tackle different aspects of gender equality.¹⁰ For example, Goal 1.1.3 of the Operative Plan 2020 of the Office for Gender Equality and Development establishes a coordination mechanism with other institutions to follow up on the actions and training measures regarding gender equality. At the same time, objective 1.1.5 includes activities such as: 1) training personnel in the different aspects of gender equality; 2) elaborating a didactic guide to support the gender perspectives; 3) incentivizing decision makers to include women in senior positions; and 4) creating a work plan to track the network of focal points.

As to the military, although the army had the objective of strengthening the Department of Gender Equality in its Strategic Plan, the Operative Plan 2019 and 2020 show no extra allocation of financial resources for this objective.¹¹ The only gender-related activity considered in the operative plan was a single conference to advance gender equality in senior ranks. Similarly, the Strategic Plan 2017-2020 of the air force does not present any specific actions to increase and advance gender equality.¹² The only reference in the air force Plan 2020 to gender equality is about planned “talks about gender equality.”¹³ In the case of the navy, no information was available on its official website at the time of writing this report.

Work Environment

Family Policies: The Labor Law of the Dominican Republic grants 14 weeks of paid maternity leave and seven paid days of paternity leave.¹⁴ The employees of the MoD and the national police

¹⁰ National Police, *Oficina de Equidad de Género POA 2020*, (República Dominicana, 2020), at: <https://www.policianacional.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/OFICINA-DE-EQUIDAD-DE-GENERO-POA-2020.pdf>

¹¹ Army of the Dominican Republic, *Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2020*, (Santo Domingo, 2017), at: https://www.ejercito.mil.do/transparencia/images/docs/plan_estrategico/2018/PLAN%20ESTRATEGICO%20INSTITUCIONALERD%202017-2020.pdf Army of the Dominican Republic, *Avances del Plan Operativo 2019*, (Santo Domingo, 2019), at: <https://www.ejercito.mil.do/transparencia/planificacion-estrategica/plan-operativo-anual-poa/category/2019-30> and Army of the Dominican Republic, *Avances del Plan Operativo 2020*, (Santo Domingo, 2020), at: <https://www.ejercito.mil.do/transparencia/planificacion-estrategica/plan-operativo-anual-poa/category/2020>

¹² Fuerza Aérea de República Dominicana, *Plan Estratégico Institucional*, (Santo Domingo, 2017) <https://transparencia.fard.mil.do/plan-estrategico-institucional/#59-wpfd-planificacion-estrategica-institucional>

¹³ Fuerza Aérea de República Dominicana, *Plan Operativo Anual 2020*, (Santo Domingo, 2020), at: <https://transparencia.fard.mil.do/plan-estrategico-institucional/#60-wpfd-plan-operativo-anual-poa-plan-estrategico-institucional-1555038726>

¹⁴ Congreso de la República, *Resolución No. 211-14* (Santo Domingo, 2014), at: https://observatoriojusticiaygenero.gob.do/documentos/PDF/normativas/NOR_Res_No_211_14.pdf and La República, “Discurso Completo de rendición de cuentas de Danilo Medina en 2019” *La República*. (February 27, 2019), at: <https://listindiario.com/la-republica/2019/02/27/555400/discurso-completo-de-rendicion-de-cuentas-de-danilo-medina-en-2019>

have access to the same social benefits as other governmental ministries, including childcare stays.¹⁵

Equipment and Facilities: The MoD Strategic Plan 2012-2020 and the National Police Strategic Plan 2017-2020 specifies that one of the lines of action to improve physical infrastructure is to be more inclusive of women. Such actions would include dormitories, bathrooms, sport facilities, lactation rooms, and childcare stays.¹⁶ However, even when the Strategic Plan notes the improvement of the facilities to accommodate women, the goal has only partially been achieved.

Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies: Documentation related to programs that seek to prevent, protect and respond to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and abuse is part of the internal rules and procedures of each institution. At the national level, sexual harassment and sexual violence are established as criminal offences in the Law 29-97 of the Penal Code.¹⁷

Training, Education, and Exercises

Training in gender affairs and gender perspectives are conducted at entry and mid-level positions. Senior level personnel also receive training in gender and updates in institutional and inter-agencies actions. In addition to standard training, there are multiple educational actions through the year conducted at the armed forces academies and police academy. Other institutions also provide specialty topics in their education programs, such as the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Right Graduates School.¹⁸ Similarly, the national police consistently provides gender training to its personnel at the entry, mid- and senior levels, following the National Police Annual Operative Plan 2020 that states that the Office of Gender Equality and Development should offer related trainings to its personnel.¹⁹

Military and police personnel consistently receive training on the prevention and response to sexual violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. Military pre-deployment training includes: the importance of protection, rights and needs of women, men, girls and boys; how integrating a gender perspective can serve as a force enabler and how it increases operational effectiveness; and specific information on gender norms in areas of operations.

Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation:

Efforts for monitoring the performance of the public sector, including the military and police, are outlined under the Presidential Goals System.²⁰ Both the military and police collect sex-

¹⁵ Ministry of Defense, “MIDE resalta iniciativas del Gobierno para mejorar la vida de los militares” Ministry of Defense, at: <https://mide.gob.do/detail.aspx?id=1409>

¹⁶ Op. Cit. page 74

¹⁷ National Congress, *Ley No. 24-97*. (Santo Domingo, January 1997), at: <https://pdba.georgetown.edu/Security/citizenssecurity/domrep/Leyes/ley24.html>

¹⁸ See Instituto Superior para la Defensa, *Escuela de Graduados en Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario* (Santo Domingo: Ministerio de la Defensa, 2020), at: <https://egdhdih.mil.do/>

¹⁹ See <https://www.policianacional.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/OFICINA-DE-EQUIDAD-DE-GENERO-POA-2020.pdf>

²⁰ Office of Gender Equality and Development, *Plan Nacional Operativo 2020*, (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: National Police, 2020), at: <https://minpre.gob.do/transparencia/publicaciones-oficiales/>

disaggregated data, which can be easily accessed at each of their transparency offices.²¹ However, there is a challenge to presenting a general picture of the security institutions due to the existence of multiple decentralized agencies. Although each agency collects its own information, there is a need to create one national report that integrates and presents the data from the different security and defense agencies. There are very few NGOs that consistently monitor the security sector. At this point, the latest report monitoring actions regarding gender equality was presented by Pax Christi International.²²

Recommendations:

At the national level, the Dominican Republic shows real commitment towards achieving gender equality. The activities of the Ministry of the Women and the National Plan of Egalitarianism and Gender Equality are a guide and a tool for all governmental institutions. However, it is advisable that the country creates a WPS NAP. The MoD makes it clear that gender equality is a priority for the ministry; however, the MoD's prioritization differs from the actions reported in the operational plans of the three military branches. Therefore, we recommend the following measures:

- The offices for Gender Affairs of the army, of the air force and of the navy should increase their efforts towards gender equality and define specific activities and measurement tools to achieve gender equality objectives. For example, the army and the air force could organize more workshops that educate, promote and encourage people in all ranks about gender perspectives.
- MoD's gender advisor office functions at the directorate level; however, we recommend that the army, the air force and navy gender offices appoint senior personnel to oversee and lead these offices. Furthermore, these offices should report directly to the senior leadership of each military service.
- In addition, it is advised that the MoD commission a study to determine why so few women are reaching senior ranks and how each armed service is applying the gender equality objectives.
- The MoD should establish an action plan for the services to be accomplished by the army, the navy and the air force. Such plan should have measurement tools and reviews to ensure the accomplishment of all objectives.
- Although the army, the navy and the air force have their own strategic and operational plans, each one of them carries out different actions in terms of gender equality. The MoD should establish minimum standards to be accomplished by each service branch.
- Finally, the principles of the WPS agenda should be included in the next strategic plan for the armed forces.

The National Police, including its de-centralized agencies, should consider gender equality as a priority. To further their efforts in this regard, the recommendations are as follows:

²¹ National Police, *Memoria Anual 2019*. (Santo Domingo, 2019) at: <https://www.policianacional.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MEMORIA-ANUAL-2019-FIRMADA.pdf> and Ministry of Defense, *Bienvenidos al Portal de Transparencia del Ministerio de Defensa*. (Santo Domingo, 2020), at: <https://www.mide.gob.do/transparencia/index.html>

²² Pax Christi International, *Mujeres, paz y seguridad: panorámica y perspectivas en América Latina y el Caribe*. (Belgium: Pax Christi International, December 2013), at: <http://archive.paxchristi.net/MISC/2014-0216-es-am-GE.pdf>

- The National Police should establish coherency and coordination between the Strategic Plan and the Operative Plan.
- The National Police should communicate the gender policy across departments, with awareness as a goal.
- The Ministry of Interior, including the National Police, must coordinate joint actions to further gender equality at all levels and to create awareness of the WPS principles.
- Observing the efforts carried out by the Ministry of Interior and the National Police on gender issues within the operative plans, it is advised that the efforts extend to the creation of the Dominican Republic’s WPS National Action Plan.

As a UN member state, the Dominican Republic’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MIREX) should:

- Increase awareness about the UNSCR1325 and the WPS principles within all national institutions and facilitate efforts for the creation of a NAP.
- Create a collaborative network between international actors and the national institutions to further the actions related to gender equality.
- Given that all members of the diplomatic and consular offices are trained by the Instituto de Educación Superior, Diplomática y Consular “Eduardo Latorre” (INESDYC),²³ it is advised that INESDYC is considered a tool within the Dominican Republic’s future NAP, and that it develops specialized courses and trainings regarding the WPS agenda.

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²³ See Instituto de Educación Superior en Formación Diplomática y Consular (INESDYC), *Sobre el INESDYC*, (Santo Domingo, 2014), at: <http://www.inesdyc.edu.do/sobre-el-inesdyc>