

## Enhancing Security: Women’s Participation In The Security Forces In Latin America And The Caribbean: Part II

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## Antigua and Barbuda - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Antigua and Barbuda does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Antigua and Barbuda have yet to adopt a NAP but have made concrete progress in addressing the security of women and girls through other avenues. The country is working toward gender mainstreaming and integrating gender perspectives into a wide range of policies, programs, and initiatives related to peace and security—notably in climate change policies and gender-based violence (GBV) programs. The government shows a commitment to integrating gender equality and WPS principles in the national police and defense forces and mainstreaming gender in other parts of its administration, such as the Department of the Environment. Still, more can be done to provide more and sustained funding for gender mainstreaming and greater participation of women in its security forces. The government should augment its efforts by appointing trained Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points in its security forces and implement a data-driven and results-based monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure efficient and effective implementation of its gender equality plans.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Antigua and Barbuda is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women’s political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.

At the national level, Antigua and Barbuda have adopted a national policy framework on gender equality, enacted relevant and progressive legislation, and worked towards increasing women’s participation in decision-making positions. Like other Caribbean nations, Antigua and Barbuda identifies climate change as a primary security concern and has developed national plans and policies to address the impacts of natural disasters and climate emergencies.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the disproportionate effects of climate change on women and girls, the government acted to develop gender-responsive plans and programs to address these effects.

### Institutional Policy and Practice

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

Antigua and Barbuda does not have a WPS NAP. However, over the past two decades, the government successfully implemented the following gender-responsive policies and national gender action plans:

- National Policy Framework: Antigua and Barbuda adopted “The National Gender Policy (2013-2018),” which provides a strong foundation for addressing women’s rights and gender equality,

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<sup>1</sup> Antigua and Barbuda are small islands with a combined population of 85,567 people, 60% of whom live in coastal zones most likely to experience the impacts of climate crises; Rashauna Adams-Matthew, Environmental Social Safeguard and Gender Officer, *Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Climate Finance in Antigua and Barbuda*,

[https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/events/cop25\\_pavilion\\_20191203\\_1315\\_gender\\_presentation\\_4.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/events/cop25_pavilion_20191203_1315_gender_presentation_4.pdf).

recognizes the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding, and emphasizes the importance of protecting women and girls during armed conflict;<sup>2</sup>

- Gender Responsive Implementation: During the process of updating the “National Determined Contributions 2021,” Antigua and Barbuda made sex-disaggregated data for gender analysis more accessible and developed a series of national surveys to create an evidence base “of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women and the role of women as agents of change and on opportunities for women;”<sup>3</sup>
- Legal Measures: Antigua and Barbuda took steps to align its legal framework with the principles of the WPS agenda. The Domestic Violence Act (2015) criminalizes domestic violence and provides legal remedies for survivors.<sup>4</sup> The Sexual Offences Act (1995) was amended to strengthen protections against sexual violence and harassment;<sup>5</sup>
- Gender-Based Violence: Antigua and Barbuda recognizes the urgency of addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and has taken steps to combat it. A series of national strategic plans were developed and updated in the past decade, outlining the government's approach to addressing GBV, setting out strategies for prevention, support services for survivors, and measures to strengthen the legal and institutional response to GBV.<sup>6</sup>

Antigua and Barbuda increased its efforts to advance gender mainstreaming to fight climate emergencies and its effects on women and girls. The Department of the Environment took the lead in several initiatives:

- Developed creative gender-responsive frameworks, including climate financing for women and girls, recruited young women professionals as M&E consultants, and established a fund through which vulnerable communities, including women, can access support;<sup>7</sup>
- Adopted a Gender Action Plan focusing on building women's capacity to access the scientific and technical fields;<sup>8</sup>
- Developed a Gender Manual to guide the Department's National Gender Focal Points and other local agencies on how to mainstream gender into their daily activities.<sup>9</sup>

The government of Antigua and Barbuda partnered with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the regional inter-governmental entity for disaster management, to launch a gender-responsive early warning system in the country.<sup>10</sup>

### *Military and Police*

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<sup>2</sup> “Antigua and Barbuda Review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Report 2014-2019, *CEPAL*, (2019), [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/informe\\_beijing25\\_antigua\\_y\\_barbuda.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/informe_beijing25_antigua_y_barbuda.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, *National Gender Submissions*, March 2022, p. 8, <https://genderclimatetracker.org/sites/default/files/Resources/202204010853---Antigua%20and%20Barbuda%20National%20Gender%20Submissions.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “Antigua and Barbuda,” *UN Women*, <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/caribbean-gender-portal/antigua-and-barbuda>.

<sup>5</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Beijing Declaration.

<sup>6</sup> “National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21\* Antigua and Barbuda,” *Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*, November 2021, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G21/288/06/PDF/G2128806.pdf?OpenElement>.

<sup>7</sup> Adams-Matthews, *Advancing Gender Equality*.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, *National Gender Submissions*, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> “Antigua and Barbuda Beijing Declaration.”

The Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda (RPF) planning documents and operational planning processes reference WPS principles. National policies and documents include legal protection of vulnerable persons (women, girls, and boys) from domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Information specific to the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force (ABDF) was unavailable.

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

Data were unavailable to confirm whether the military and national police forces have appointed Gender Advisors or Gender Focal Points.

#### *Gender in the Ranks*

The ABDF is a small military force. Out of an estimated 245 members, 50 are women (20%).<sup>11</sup> Its main priorities include internal security, prevention of drug smuggling and trafficking, protection from marine pollution, and relief services during natural disasters. Since the ABDF's founding, all positions are open to men and women.

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

Training of government officials, law enforcement agencies, and civil society organizations addresses gender issues in the context of peace and security. Gender-sensitive training programs and workshops have been conducted to sensitize stakeholders, including police, judges, magistrates, and court personnel, on “the basic concepts of gender and GBSV, victim-blaming and other forms of re-victimization, and the relevant support services available to both survivors and perpetrators.”<sup>12</sup>

The Directorate of Gender Affairs has trained over 300 police officers on domestic violence legislation and gender-based violence, among other related topics.<sup>13</sup> Authorities also reported that several domestic violence programs include law enforcement and army officers training.<sup>14</sup>

The ABDF and RPF have also received training on conducting gender-sensitive firearms investigations. The United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs partnered with both forces to teach participants how to apply gender perspectives to criminal firearms investigations. By adopting this approach, investigators have identified evidence of gender-based violence and equipped security personnel with the necessary skills to conduct a gender-sensitive and rights-based approach.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

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<sup>11</sup> World Bank Group, “Antigua and Barbuda Country Gender Scorecard,” December 2021, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/822421645769028203/pdf/Antigua-and-Barbuda-Country-Gender-Scorecard.pdf>; Dion E. Phillips, “Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force: A Preliminary Look, 2004,” *University of the West Indies*, 2004, <https://www.open.uwi.edu/sites/default/files/bnccde/antigua/conference/papers/phillips.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, “Review Beijing Declaration;” Gabrielle Hosein, Tricia Basdeo-Gobin, Lydia Rosa Gény, *Gender mainstreaming in national sustainable development planning in the Caribbean*, United Nation ECLAC, 2020, p. 44, [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45086/1/S1901209\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45086/1/S1901209_en.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), “Antigua and Barbuda Response to the Questionnaire Third Multilateral Evaluation Round,” 2017, Question 16, <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/Questionnaire3-AntiguaBarbudaResponse.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Antigua and Barbuda Country Report on Human Rights Practices, 2022,” <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/antigua-and-barbuda/>.

<sup>15</sup> “Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda Promotes Gender Mainstreaming into Firearms-Related Criminal Investigations,” United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs-Regional Center for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, November 7, 2022, <https://unlirec.org/en/royal-police-force-of-antigua-and-barbuda-promotes-gender-mainstreaming-into-firearms-related-criminal-investigations/>.

The RPF has promoted gender mainstreaming in its policies. The RPF does not publicly provide official guidelines or policies. However, the government has partnered with academic institutions and international organizations like the UN to strengthen its commitment to gender mainstreaming. On March 4, 2023, the RPF partnered with the American University of Antigua-AUA Campus, convening over 200 policewomen to present on topics aimed at empowering female police officers.”<sup>16</sup> While the RPF does not publish current sex-disaggregated employment rates, women comprise more than 200 of the estimated 750 staff members of the RPF—over 26% of the total force.<sup>17</sup> All positions and ranks are open to women and men in the RPF.

#### *Family Policies*

No publicly available documents outline family leave policies specifically for the ABDF or RPF. Labor laws in Antigua and Barbuda provide 13 weeks of maternity leave but no statutory paternity leave.

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

As in many countries, women in Antigua and Barbuda are adversely affected by gender-based violence. Acknowledging this, the RPF launched the Special Victims Support Unit (SVSU) in 2017, handling all cases of domestic and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and other gender-based related crimes.<sup>18</sup> The SVSU comprises officers who have received specialized sensitization training to meet the needs of survivors of gender-based and sexual violence. There is no publicly available information on workplace harassment, abuse policies, or training for the ABDF and RPF personnel.

#### *Equipment and facilities*

No information on gender-specific equipment or facilities is publicly available.

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

The government of Antigua and Barbuda monitors and evaluates the implementation of gender mainstreaming within various government agencies and ministries. It works closely with several UN agencies, including the UNDP, UNEP, and UN Women, to promote gender-inclusive initiatives. Antigua and Barbuda also regularly submit voluntary reports to international organizations on its efforts to promote gender equality and women’s rights. These reports update the country’s progress and challenges in implementing gender-related policies and initiatives.

However, the ABDF and the RPF appear disconnected from the gender mainstreaming initiatives by the government and do not monitor, evaluate, or report gender-responsive programming. More publicly available information regarding monitoring and evaluation requirements from these security organizations would provide more transparency. The government acknowledges that advancing in gender integration requires the collection of sex-disaggregated data; more needs to be done both in the collection and public distribution of such data.<sup>19</sup> Information on whether the RPF and ABDF have appointed gender advisors or gender focal points was not available.

### **Recommendations**

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<sup>16</sup> Antigua Observer, “Two hundred female police officers to participate in Women’s Police Retreat,” March 2, 2023, <https://antiguaobserver.com/two-hundred-female-police-officers-to-participate-in-womens-police-retreat/>.

<sup>17</sup> INTERPOL, “Antigua and Barbuda,” <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Member-countries/Americas/ANTIGUA-BARBUDA>.

<sup>18</sup> “The Criminal Investigation Department,” Ministry of Public Safety and Labour, <https://mpsl.gov.ag/departments/police/department/c-i-department/>.

<sup>19</sup> Hosein et al., pp. 28-29.

Overall, Antigua and Barbuda have advanced gender equality and gender mainstreaming considerably. The government has implemented policies and programs to promote and advance women's rights at all levels of society and made political and financial commitments to promote gender equality and the security of women and girls. Yet, more can be done to achieve the goals set forth by UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions.

For the Government of Antigua and Barbuda:

- Adopt a WPS NAP, drawing inspiration from existing gender-responsive laws, frameworks, and policies and engaging with key stakeholders, including government agencies and the security sector, civil society organizations, and women's groups in its development.
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation to ensure gender mainstreaming within security forces, gathering sex-disaggregated data to support the process.
- Commit to gender-responsive budgeting to track progress in training, programming, and institutional capacity building related to gender mainstreaming goals in the security forces.

For the ABDF:

- Ensure all ranks receive anti-harassment and abuse training and make ABDF policies publicly available.
- Work with government agencies to collect and publish sex-disaggregated data on female participation in the force.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess progress in implementing gender equality and WPS principles over time.
- Recruit Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points to support ABDF leadership.

For the RPF:

- Commit to a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that engages civil society and utilizes sex-disaggregated data to guide future planning, programming, and policy decisions.
- Promote gender-sensitivity and sexual harassment prevention training to ensure all police officers and law enforcement personnel have access to such training.
- Recruit Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points to ensure the integration of gender perspectives in RPF policies and programs.

## Barbados - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Barbados does not have a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Barbados has demonstrated a moderate amount of political will and has taken several steps in recent years toward implementing the WPS agenda. Women remain underrepresented in the military but do not face sex-based restrictions on promotion. In the police force, women are more proportionally represented, and the force has a strong orientation toward the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). Future actions taken by the government of Barbados toward achieving WPS principles depend on committing funding and staff to transform institutional policies and culture to advance gender equality and WPS principles in security sector forces.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Barbados is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, the current National Strategic Plan (2005-2025) mentions gender equity and equality as areas of strategic note.<sup>1</sup> Barbados established a Bureau of Gender Affairs whose mandate is the integration of a gender perspective in all national development plans to achieve gender equality.<sup>2</sup> Barbados also adopted the Domestic Violence Protections Order Amendment Act 2016, which empowers the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) with robust emergency protection orders in cases of gender-based violence.<sup>3</sup>

### Institutional Policy and Practice

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policies*

The principles of WPS and gender-based violence are mentioned in police strategic documents and operational policy processes. The RBPF has created an action plan for addressing domestic violence and GBV.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Gender in the Ranks (Military and Police)*

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<sup>1</sup> The National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2005-2025, 2005, <http://www.sice.oas.org/ctyindex/BRB/Plan2005-2025.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> "Bureau of Gender Affairs," *Barbados Integrated Government*, accessed June 14, 2023, <https://www.gov.bb/Departments/gender-affairs>.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Barbados, *Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) (Amendment) Bill 2016*, <https://www.barbadosparliament.com/bills/details/138>.

<sup>4</sup> "Royal Barbados Police Force Annual Report," Parliament of Barbados, 2013, <https://www.barbadosparliament.com/uploads/sittings/attachments/c5fee634002ca489f1cd9a9257504cbd.pdf>.



Service	Men	Women	% Women
Military <sup>5</sup>	540	60	10
Barbados Police Force	1,187	172	16.3

Women in the Barbadian military have achieved the highest level of enlistment distinction for a soldier.<sup>6</sup> All positions in the military and police forces are open to women.

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

There are no Gender Advisors (GENADs) or Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in the Barbados Defence Force (BDF) or the RBPF, though the country has gender equality offices and units.

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

Barbados provides updates to the Organization of American States MESECVI, which examines adherence to the Belém do Pará Convention. The MESECVI 2019 reported that the Barbados police conducts training “in relation to women’s Human rights[sic].”<sup>7</sup> Barbados has hosted intervention programs focused on encouraging nonviolent lifestyles for men.<sup>8</sup> In 2022, Barbados was one of six country police forces in the Caribbean to form a community of practice to improve responses and mitigation measures against gender-based violence.<sup>9</sup>

The 2005-2025 National Strategic Plan signaled an intention to conduct gender sensitivity training “at all levels of the public services, private sector, and the community.”<sup>10</sup> Police officers receive training from the Family Conflict Intervention Unit (FCIU) on domestic violence, as do new recruits.<sup>11</sup> Information pertaining to training for military personnel was unavailable.

#### *Work Environment*

<sup>5</sup> “Field Listing–Military and Security Service Personnel Strengths,” *Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook*, 2022, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/field/military-and-security-service-personnel-strengths/>.

<sup>6</sup> Kyle Straker, “Another First! Ladies in Military Leadership,” *The Barbados Defence Force*, October 30, 2020, <https://www.bdfbarbados.com/another-first-ladies-in-military-leadership/>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> “Partnership for Peace Program,” *Global Database on Violence Against Women*, accessed July 18, 2023, <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/barbados/2012/partnership-for-peace-program>.

<sup>9</sup> “Caribbean Police Join Forces Against Gender-Based Violence,” Inter-American Development Bank, press release, July 22, 2022, <https://www.iadb.org/en/news/caribbean-police-join-forces-against-gender-based-violence>.

<sup>10</sup> National Strategic Plan, p. 160.

<sup>11</sup> UN Women, *Barbados: Beijing +25 Report: Progress Made on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 2014-2019*, April 2019, p. 48,

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Barbados.pdf>.



Women in Barbados are entitled to at least 12 weeks of maternity leave.<sup>12</sup> The Barbados government announced on July 29, 2023, that paternity leave will be available in 2024.<sup>13</sup> No data were available regarding uniforms and equipment. Police stations in Barbados cite inadequate facilities as a notable constraint in integrating women into the force.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

Police strategic action plans highlight the responsibility to protect civilians from GBV and domestic violence. Toll-free domestic violence reporting lines are maintained at each station.<sup>15</sup> Data on anti-harassment and abuse policies in the RBPF and BDF were unavailable.

#### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

Information on the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the military and police forces was unavailable. While the Barbados national police publish police statistics, the data collected are not sex-disaggregated.<sup>16</sup> The Bureau of Gender Affairs collects data, but the Bureau's limited resources make data collection difficult.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Recommendations**

For the Barbados government:

- Adopt a WPS NAP, engaging with key stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, women's groups, and local communities throughout the process;
- Provide necessary resources to maintain a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure the effective implementation of gender integration policies;
- Secure better funding and staff for the Bureau of Gender Affairs and for collecting sex-disaggregated data and data analysis to assess progress in gender integration.

For Barbados Defence Force:

- Appoint fully trained Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points to implement gender mainstreaming in military policy, planning, and operational documents;
- Evaluate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse policies for personnel and provide sexual harassment and abuse prevention programming and training in all ranks;

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<sup>12</sup> "Barbados Employment Of Women (Maternity Leave) Chapter 345A," *International Labor Organization*, July 16, 1976, <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/1225/Employment%20of%20Women%20Chapter%20345A.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> "PM: Paternity benefits in 2024," *Barbados Today*, July 29, 2023, <https://barbadostoday.bb/2023/07/29/pm-paternity-benefits-in-2024/>.

<sup>14</sup> Parliament of Barbados, Annual Report.

<sup>15</sup> "Selection of Indicators for the Follow-up Phase of the Third Multilateral Evaluation Round of the MESECVI-2019," *Organization of American States*, 2019, <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/QuestionnaireThirdFollowUp-Barbados-Response.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), "Barbados Country Report Third Round", November 21, 2022, paragraph 36, <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2017-Barbados.pdf>.

- Evaluate institutional policies and practices (e.g. family leave, childcare, sexual harassment and abuse policies, promotion opportunities, hostile work environment) that work to recruit, promote, and thus retain women in the force.

For the Royal Barbados Police Force:

- Appoint a Gender Advisor or Gender Focal Point to promote gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive policies in the force;
- Collect sex-disaggregated data to ensure better analysis and evaluation of measures needed to improve police services;
- Ensure that sexual harassment and abuse prevention policies for police personnel are in place and training in sexual harassment/abuse and GBV programs are mandatory for all police and law enforcement officers.

## Belize - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Belize does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

The government of Belize has made a significant commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Belize's 2020 WPS agenda for its security forces is a big step towards achieving gender equality and inclusion in the Ministry of National Security of Belize. The Belize Police Force (BPF) performs better in terms of women in the ranks—over 25% as opposed to 6% of women represented in the Belize Defense Force, signaling the need for the defense force leadership to review recruitment policies as well as existing institutional policies and practices that are often hurdles to women's participation in security forces. As the Belize government steps up its efforts to address growing gender-based violence, it must also act to decrease gender-based violence in its security forces through prevention training and the enforcement of existing zero-tolerance policies.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Belize is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, Belize's interest in the WPS agenda has grown over the past decade. In 2020, the Ministry of National Security launched the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda for the security forces in Belize to “empower women as equal partners in the development of a prosperous and stable Belize, especially in achieving our national security goals.”<sup>1</sup> In the Belize National Security and Defense Strategy 2018-2021, Goal 3 aimed to “provide the necessary environment for a prosperous and stable Belize.” The Strategy further includes an objective to “[i]mprove investment in gender equality and youth development.”<sup>2</sup>

As in many countries, gender-based violence incidents in Belize have increased. The rise in gender-based violence prompted the government to pass a National-Gender Based Violence Plan of Action (2010-2013) that led to legislative reform and the establishment of a domestic violence unit in the Belize National Police, among other actions.<sup>3</sup> However, the Belize Ministry of Human Development acknowledged that the impact of these changes was limited, and it is still unclear whether the plan will be renewed in the current decade.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Belize Press Office, “Ministry of National Security Launches Women, Peace and Security Agenda,” September 11, 2020, <https://www.pressoffice.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Sept-11-MNS-Launches-WPS-Agenda.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Government of Belize, “National Security and Defence Strategy (2018-2021)”, 2021, <https://bco.gov.bz/download/national-security-and-defence-strategy-2018-2021/>.

<sup>3</sup> Belize Ministry of Human Development, National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action, <http://humandevlopment.gov.bz/index.php/national/>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid; Government of Belize, “National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action 2010-2013”, 2013, <http://www.humandevlopment.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GBV-PlanOfActionGBV-FINAL-revised-August-2010.pdf>.

The creation of the Ministry of National Security’s WPS agenda demonstrates the political will to advance gender equality and the rights of women in Belize. Other efforts to improve the conditions of women are the regular publication of “Gender-Based Violence Statistics” through the Belize Crime Observatory and the Women and Family Support Department of the Ministry of Human Development, which works to “promote gender equality and equity” among its citizens.<sup>5</sup>

The National Women’s Commission acts as “a strategic advisory body to the Government of Belize on issues of gender.”<sup>6</sup> The Commission addresses threats and mistreatment a person may suffer when reporting gender violence. It has opened a virtual space for the person submitting the complaint to report any unprofessional behavior while filing the report.

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

As mentioned earlier, Belize’s National Security and Defense Strategy 2018-2021 states that gender equality is a strategic objective. In January 2022, the Government of Belize announced the beginning of stakeholder consultations for the National Security Strategy 2022-2027, which included the participation of members from the security forces, government, private sector, and civil society.<sup>7</sup> However, no further information about the 2022-2027 Strategy is publicly available online.

The Ministry of National Security’s WPS agenda (2020) aims to set the framework “to increase women’s participation in efforts to promote security, maintain peace, and prevent conflict.”<sup>8</sup> The Ministry has focused on recruiting and promoting more women, education, and training in sexual- and gender-based violence in security forces and implementing the WPS agenda.

The Women’s Department of Belize released a handbook in 2012 on sexual violence, which presented definitions, response protocols, risk reduction actions, and other relevant information regarding sexual violence.<sup>9</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

The Belize Police Force has over 500 female police officers. Currently, 25% of police officers serving are women.<sup>10</sup> In March 2023, the BPF held a ceremony celebrating the promotion of 62 female police officers to positions ranging from constable to senior superintendent.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Government of Belize, “Gender-Based Violence,” *Belize Crime Observatory*, December 2022, <https://www.bco.gov.bz/gender-based-violence/>; Belize Ministry of Human Development, “Women and Family Support Department,” April 12, 2023, <http://www.humandevlopment.gov.bz/index.php/service-units-2/womens-department/>.

<sup>6</sup> “The National Women’s Commission: Belize Women’s Rights Advocacy Organization.” *The National Women’s Commission*, accessed June 18, 2023, <https://www.nwcbelize.org/>.

<sup>7</sup> “Stakeholder Consultations on the Development of the National Security and Defence Strategy 2022-2027,” *Government of Belize*, January 11, 2022, <https://www.presseoffice.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Jan-11-PR008-22-Stakeholder-Consultations-on-the-Development-of-the-National-Security-and-Defence-Strategy-2022-2027.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Women’s Department Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, “Hand Book on Sexual Violence,” 2012, <http://www.humandevlopment.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Sexual-Violence-handbook.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> “Belize Police Department Honour Female Officers and Staff,” *News 5*, March 10, 2023, <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/249412>.

<sup>11</sup> “Sixty-two Women Police Officers Promoted,” *News 5*, March 17, 2023, <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/249754>.

In contrast, just over 90 female officers in the Belize Defence Force (BDF) are women and constitute only 6% of the total number of BDF officers.<sup>12</sup> There have been allegations of assault in the military, though the BDF maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and assault. Progress is evident in the 2023 officer selection board decisions, where five of the ten recruits are women. Five women recruits are in officer training programs in the United States and will be commissioned as second lieutenants in the BDF.<sup>13</sup> All positions in the Belize military and police forces are open to women.

No data were available on the appointment and training of Gender Advisor and Gender Focal Points in the military or police forces.

#### *Training and Education*

Members of the BPF and BDF have access to training and education opportunities on gender mainstreaming and GBV. Members of the BDF also participate in region-wide WPS training to encourage more effective gender integration in the military.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

According to the Belize Labour Act, women receive fourteen weeks of maternity leave in any public or private industrial or commercial undertaking and every branch of government.<sup>15</sup> The law does not provide for paternity leave or parental leave.

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

In February 2022, the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security and the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries established the Joint Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (JSVPR) Programme for the security forces that will provide response services when sexual assault occurs within the Belize security forces.<sup>16</sup>

In 2019, the Belize organization Our Circle, a national organization that supports family units formed by LGBTQ+ persons, received funding to address gender and diversity issues in the Belize Defence Force and to conduct “a review of welfare policies which already exist not only from a gender equality perspective but also a sexual orientation and gender identity approach.”<sup>17</sup> Part of the initiative involved training a cohort of peer educators to provide training in the ranks and work to ensure the BDF has the guidance and data to ensure a safe environment for all service members. Although there is no more information on the advancement of this project, it shows the collaboration between civil society organizations, a regional non-governmental organization, and the security forces in Belize.

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<sup>12</sup> “B.D.F Women Officers and Soldiers Celebrated on International Women’s Day,” *News 5*, March 8, 2023, <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/249248>.

<sup>13</sup> “BDF Celebrates Women,” *Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights*, March 18, 2023, <https://caribbeansrhobservatory.com/bdf-celebrates-women/>.

<sup>14</sup> Erica Jaros, “Partner Nations Discuss Women, Peace, and Security at Tradewinds22,” *Diálogos Americas*, May 25, 2022, <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/partner-nations-discuss-women-peace-and-security-at-tradewinds22/>.

<sup>15</sup> “Employee Registration (Insured Person).” *Social Security Board, Belize*, September 2, 2022. <https://www.socialsecurity.org.bz/registration-eligible-persons/>.

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF, “Joint Launch of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Programme,” February 17, 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/belize/press-releases/joint-launch-sexual-violence-prevention-and-response-programme>.

<sup>17</sup> “Promoting Equality, Putting an End to GBV in the Belizean Military,” *Our Circle*, accessed June 18, 2023, <https://ourcirclebze.weebly.com/promoting-equality-putting-an-end-to-gbv-in-the-belizean-military.html>.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The Belize Crime Observatory collects sex-disaggregated data on gender-based violence.<sup>18</sup> This information is publicly available online, making it possible to observe the trends of gender violence in Belize and assist policymakers in creating more effective policies and strategies against this phenomenon.

## Recommendations

For the Belize Government:

- Adopt a WPS National Action Plan (NAP) based on the new Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and following the National-Gender Based Violence Plan of Action;
- Update the National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action of 2010 to meet current and updated goals and strategies to achieve them;
- Update the Revised National Gender Policy of 2013, upload it on their official publications, and give maintenance to the webpage to access information.

For the Belize Defense Force:

- Evaluate strategies to increase the number of female recruits and address gaps in institutional policies and practices (e.g., family leave, childcare, sexual harassment policies, promotion opportunities) that often impact the recruitment of women and their decision to remain in the force;
- Evaluate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse programming for protecting military personnel within the ranks and make the data publicly available;
- Deploy trained Gender Advisors or Gender Focal Point officers;
- Ensure sex-disaggregated data is collected, analyzed, and made publicly available;
- Maintain an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to improve decision-making and resource allocation.

For the Belize Police Force:

- Consider appointing a Gender Advisor and Gender Focal Point officer;
- Ensure effective sexual harassment and abuse policies for protecting police personnel within the ranks are in place and require gender-sensitive and GBV training for all law enforcement officers;
- Collect sex-disaggregated data and make the data publicly available;
- Maintain an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to improve decision-making and resource allocation.

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<sup>18</sup> “Belize Crime Observatory, Gender-Based Violence” *Belize Crime Observatory*, “Inform, Interpret, Influence, “ January 30, 2023, <https://bco.gov.bz/gender-based-violence/#:~:text=On%20this%20page%2C%20we%20present,the%20same%20period%20in%202021.>

## Bolivia - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Bolivia does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

While Bolivia does not have an official NAP, it has made significant strides to advance the WPS agenda and develop comprehensive strategies to address the challenges faced by women in the country. The government's commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming is reflected in its declaration of 2022 as the "Year of the Cultural Revolution to Dismantle Patriarchy for a Life Free from Violence Against Women." National institutions and mechanisms have been established to support women in the ranks and counter discrimination, gender harassment, and gender-based violence (GBV). More attention is needed in establishing work-life integration policies for security institutions, such as maternity and paternity leave and family leave. The military and national police forces have comprehensive monitoring and evaluation tools to assess progress in gender equality initiatives and programs. Nevertheless, developing an official WPS NAP could solidify Bolivia's standing as a progressive regional leader, driving positive change and fostering greater gender equality and security.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Bolivia is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Bolivia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment and is a signatory of the American Convention on Human Rights "Pact of San José, Costa Rica."

At the national level, Bolivia's constitution, adopted in 2009, recognizes women's rights and promotes gender equality. Article 8, Section 15 obligates the state to take all necessary measures to prevent and eliminate GBV and designates power to the president to create ministries and enact laws that promote gender equality.<sup>1</sup> In January 2022, after conducting years of analysis on the factors contributing to gender inequality, the Bolivian government announced that 2022 would be the "Year of the Cultural Revolution to Dismantle Patriarchy for a Life Free from Violence Against Women."<sup>2</sup> The government followed up with comprehensive laws to criminalize various forms of GBV and the provision of services for women and girls who are victims of domestic and intimate partner violence, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, and femicide.<sup>3,4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Constitución Política del Estado," February 7, 2009," *Organization of American States (OAS)*, [https://www.oas.org/dil/esp/constitucion\\_bolivia.pdf](https://www.oas.org/dil/esp/constitucion_bolivia.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Viceministerio de Comunicación, "El 2022 será el "Año de la Revolución Cultural para la Despatriarcalización por una Vida Libre de Violencia Contra las Mujeres," January 6, 2022, <https://www.comunicacion.gob.bo/?q=20220106/33510#:~:text=%E2%80%93El%20Gobierno%20Nacional%20declar%C3%B3%20que,se%20recopilaron%20en%20gestiones%20pasadas>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Gaceta Oficial De Bolivia, *Decreto Supremo Numero 4650*, (2022), <http://www.gacetaoficialdebolivia.gob.bo/app/webroot/archivos/DS4650.pdf>.



Foreign policy documents, including the Bolivia Foreign Policy Plan and the Plan for Economic and Social Development 2021-2025, also support the government's policy of dismantling patriarchy and call for strengthening regulatory frameworks to address and dismantle the structural causes of violence against women.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the country has established institutions and mechanisms to promote gender equality and women's rights:

- The Ministry of Justice and Institutional Transparency has a Directorate of Gender Equality (*Dirección de Igualdad de Género*) that is responsible for coordinating and implementing policies and programs related to gender equality, the promotion of women's rights, and the elimination of gender-based discrimination;
- The National Council of Women is under the Ministry of Justice and Institutional Transparency. It advises the government on policies and strategies to promote gender equality and women's rights. The Council brings together representatives from government agencies, civil society organizations, and women's rights advocates to ensure cohesion and proper implementation;<sup>6</sup>
- The "Multisectoral Plan to Dismantle Patriarchy and Promote Women's Right to Practice the Right Way of Living" also advocates for women's rights by implementing policies and coordinating initiatives.<sup>7</sup>

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

Several policies are in place that testify to the political commitment of the military to implement WPS principles. The "Strategic Plan to Dismantle Patriarchy and the Prevention of Violence Against Women" identifies the military and police as principal actors in preventing violence against women and advancing gender equality.<sup>8</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

The most recent Institutional Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Defense 2016-2020 cited goals and quotas to increase the participation of women in all ranks of the Bolivian armed forces. The government has worked closely with UN Women and the Bolivian Ministry of Justice to recruit more women.<sup>9</sup> The government set a goal of increasing the number of women in the armed forces to 8.65% by 2020.<sup>10</sup> This goal was surpassed; as of 2021, women accounted for an estimated 10% of the armed forces.<sup>11</sup> Current projections estimate that by 2025, women will make up 11.7% of the total military force, though that

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<sup>5</sup> Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan Estratégico Ministerial 2021-2025*, (2022), [https://cancilleria.gob.bo/webmre/sites/default/files/PEM\\_FINAL.pdf](https://cancilleria.gob.bo/webmre/sites/default/files/PEM_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Madeline Hislop, "Bolivia's President declares 2022 'The Year of the Cultural Revolution to Eliminate the Patriarchy'," *Women's Agenda*, September 26, 2022, <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/bolivias-president-declares-2022-the-year-of-the-cultural-revolution-to-eliminate-the-patriarchy/>.

<sup>8</sup> "El 2022 será el "Año de la Revolución Cultural para la Despatriarcalización por una Vida Libre de Violencia Contra las Mujeres," Office of the Vice-Minister for Communications, January 6, 2022, <https://www.comunicacion.gob.bo/?q=20220106/33510>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 99.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 45.

<sup>11</sup> Ibeth Carvajal, "Mujeres en las FFAA: Desde 2006 sube de 42 a 1.433 la cantidad de féminas militares," *La Razón*, 2022, <https://www.la-razon.com/sociedad/2022/08/07/mujeres-en-las-ffaa-desde-2006-sube-de-42-a-1-433-la-cantidad-de-feminas-militares/#>.

number will likely be higher due to these efforts.<sup>12</sup> Women in Bolivian security forces face other challenges as well, including corruption, abuse of power, and mistreatment of women officers by their male counterparts.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of the Bolivian Police Corps (PNB), women comprise 16.25% of officers. The PNB likewise does not have official policies linked to the WPS agenda. However, as part of the government's plan to dismantle patriarchy, the PNB was identified as a leading actor in combatting GBV and violence against women. According to the Strategic Institutional Plan for Bolivian Police 2016-2020, a strategic objective is to equip police with training, equipment, and infrastructure to protect women from violence.<sup>14</sup>

For the armed forces and the police, all positions of all ranks are open to women, and the principles of WPS, though not specified as such, are integrated into military programming, strategy, and planning.

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

According to publicly available documents, GENADs are currently serving in the PNB. They are fully trained and serve at senior levels. Information on whether the Bolivian armed forces retain GENADs or Gender Focal Points (GFPs) was unavailable.

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

In adhering to the government's overall strategy of decolonization and dismantling patriarchy, the armed forces and national police receive specialized training and education on these principles. According to government sources, 4,240 armed service members received specialized training with "a focus on decolonization, dismantling patriarchy, and the fight against racism and discrimination."<sup>15</sup> Various police units received specialized training on best practices for addressing gender-based violence and crimes against women and combatting human trafficking, which disproportionately affects women and girls.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

The Ministry of Defense instituted a Gender Equity program to prevent GBV, raise awareness of the issue, and encourage more women to consider careers in the military and defense institutions. This program allows for the gradual increase of women in military service and has created a more equitable work environment for women.

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

In 2016, the Ministry of Defense established several mechanisms, measures, and policies to ensure the recruitment and retention of women in the armed forces. These included a series of anti-harassment protocols in the workplace, manuals for gender units, and an inspection guide to ensure proper implementation.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid; *La Razón*.

<sup>13</sup> "Plan Estratégico," p. 41.

<sup>14</sup> Policía Boliviana, "Plan Estratégico Institucional 2016-2020", 2019, <https://www.policia.bo/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PLAN-ESTRATEGICO-INSTITUCIONA.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, "Rendición Pública de Cuentas Inicial Gestión 2023", 2023, Page 16, <https://www.mindef.gob.bo/sites/default/files/informe23.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "In Dialogue with Bolivia, Experts of the Human Rights Committee Welcome Training Courses to Prevent Excessive Use of Force, and Ask about Judicial Independence," March 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/dialogue-bolivia-experts-human-rights-committee-welcome-training-courses>.

Despite progress, there are documented cases of gender violence and discrimination in the military. Between 2019 and 2021, the General Directorate of Human Rights and Intercultural Affairs in the Armed Forces received 340 cases of violations of human rights and gender violence and discrimination. According to the most recent publicly available information, 168 patients were registered in 2019, 91 in 2020, and 81 in 2021. The reduction by year in the number of complaints by women is likely attributable to the implementation of Law 348 (called “the law that grants women a life free of violence”)<sup>17</sup> and various gender initiatives by the armed forces, which establishes four ways to report harassment: complainants can report directly to the Ministry of Defense, Force Commanders, the supervisor in their unit, or a designated person in their larger military unit. Under these initiatives, victims receive psychological, legal, medical, and social work support and are encouraged to report their complaints to the Public Ministry and Special Force to Combat Violence.<sup>18</sup>

Women police officers in Bolivia likewise face sexism, harassment, and abuse by male colleagues. Women make up an estimated 16.25%, or 6,500, of the 40,000-person police force and have, historically, been undervalued. Recognizing this problem, the Ministry of Government launched the “Mujer Policia y FELCV Digna” program in 2021, spearheaded by Lt. Colonel Jannet Montecinos.<sup>19</sup> The program aims to investigate complaints of sexism and verbal or physical harassment against women police officers by their colleagues.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Family Policies*

Bolivia has maternity and family leave policies for women and men. Women are entitled to 90 days of maternity leave, broken down into 45 days before the expected due date and 45 days after the child’s birth. Men receive three days of paid paternity leave. There are no provisions for parental leave.<sup>21</sup>

#### *Equipment and Facilities*

Information about equipment and facilities for women in security forces is not publicly available.

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

Despite the absence of a WPS NAP, the Bolivian armed forces and the national police have developed comprehensive tools for monitoring the success of various gender equality initiatives and programs. The Gender Council, established by the Ministry of Defense, developed measures and mechanisms to evaluate gender equality progress, both in the rate of women graduating from Bolivia’s Military College and in the recruitment and promotion of women in the military. GENADs serve in the police force under Lt Colonel Montecinos to monitor and evaluate the “Mujer Policia y FELCV Digna” program and identify gaps in implementing gender equality principles.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> “Mujeres En Las FFAA: Desde 2006 Sube de 42 a 1.433 La Cantidad de Fémimas Militares,” *La Razón*, August 7, 2022, <https://www.la-razon.com/sociedad/2022/08/07/mujeres-en-las-ffaa-desde-2006-subde-42-a-1-433-la-cantidad-de-feminas-militares/#:~:text=El%20n%C3%BAmero%20de%20mujeres%20es,la%20carrera%20militar%20en%20provincias.&text=En%2015%20a%C3%B1os%2C%20la%20cantidad.los%20militares%20en%20territorio%20nacional>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> “Unidad de Género de La Policía Atendió 27 Denuncias de Agresiones a Uniformadas,” *Comunidad de Derechos Humanos*, July 18, 2022, [https://comunidad.org.bo/index.php/noticia/detalle/cod\\_noticia/12912](https://comunidad.org.bo/index.php/noticia/detalle/cod_noticia/12912).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> UN Women, Bolivia: Legal Frameworks for Women’s Economic Autonomy and Empowerment In Ibero-America and the Caribbean, [https://www.segib.org/wp-content/uploads/Web\\_Anexo\\_Bolivia-1.pdf](https://www.segib.org/wp-content/uploads/Web_Anexo_Bolivia-1.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> “Unidad de Género de la Policía atendió 27 denuncias de agresiones a uniformadas,” *Comunidad de Derechos Humanos*, July 18, 2022, [https://comunidad.org.bo/index.php/noticia/detalle/cod\\_noticia/12912](https://comunidad.org.bo/index.php/noticia/detalle/cod_noticia/12912).

## Recommendations

For the Government of Bolivia:

- Adopt a robust WPS NAP that aligns with national gender plans and policies and engage with civil society actors, women's rights groups, and other key stakeholders throughout the NAP development process;
- Adequately fund sexual and gender-based violence training in security forces;
- Incorporate gender-responsive budgeting to track progress in training, programming, and institutional capacity building related to gender mainstreaming goals in the security forces;
- Evaluate institutional policies and practices (e.g., family leave, childcare, promotion opportunities, hostile work environment) that work to recruit, promote, and thus retain women in the military and police forces.

For the Armed Forces of Bolivia:

- Clarify and adequately resource maternity, paternity, and family leave policies specific to the armed forces and police;
- Appoint GENADs and GFPs to support leadership and staff, provide technical expertise, and ensure effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in security institutions;
- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data and integrate it into the monitoring and evaluation process to encourage goals of increasing women's participation in security fields;
- Mandate gender-sensitive, GBV, and anti-harassment training for service members in all ranks.

For the Bolivian Police Corps:

- Provide adequate support and resources to conduct gender-sensitive, GBV, and anti-harassment training for police officers in all grades;
- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data and goals and integrate them into the monitoring and evaluation mechanism to improve decision-making and resource allocation;
- Revise institutional policies and practices that will improve the recruitment, promotion, and thus retention of women in the police force.

## Dominica - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Dominica does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Despite electing the first woman Prime Minister in the Caribbean in 1980, Dominica faces challenges in direction and transparency to implementing gender mainstreaming initiatives in its government and the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force (CDPF). Dominica has no military forces, though it is a member of the Regional Security System (RSS), a regional security alliance in the Caribbean. Given the scarcity of publicly available information and data in regional and international bodies before 2022, it is unclear whether the Dominican government is committed to adopting a NAP.

Regarding gender equality at the civil society level, Dominica established the Bureau of Gender Affairs to build partnerships for gender-related programming. Dominica has adopted a National Gender Policy, but little public information is available to evaluate programmatic initiatives and their effectiveness, including whether such programming extends into the CDPF. Dominica's commitment to adopting the WPS agenda and its principles is thus an open question, but there is much room for improvement. The government should be encouraged to commit the political will and the necessary resources to adopt legal measures and policies to advance gender equality and the WPS principles in the security forces.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Dominica is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). It signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) though not the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, gender equality is mentioned twice in the national constitution of Dominica, which was revised and updated in 2014.<sup>1</sup> Few domestic or foreign policy documents are made publicly available. There is no mention of WPS or women's security more broadly in official national or foreign policy documents made publicly available.

The primary government ministry that works on issues of gender is the Bureau of Gender Affairs, which develops partnerships for gender-related programming within civil society.<sup>2</sup> No documents made publicly available by the Bureau identify the national police as actors or collaborators in gender equality initiatives or in gender-based violence (GBV) prevention programs. The Bureau is the primary governmental partner executing Dominica's 2006 *National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality in the Commonwealth of Dominica (NPAP)*. This plan signaled the government's shift in focus from "women's empowerment" to "gender equality."<sup>3</sup> The document further outlines that the Bureau has the responsibility

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Dominica, "Dominica 1978 (Rev. 2014) Constitution." *Constitute Project*, 2014, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Dominica\\_2014?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Dominica_2014?lang=en).

<sup>2</sup> Dominica Bureau of Gender Affairs, accessed June 22, 2023, <https://genderaffairs.gov.dm/>.

<sup>3</sup> International Labor Organization (ILO), "Gender at Work in the Caribbean Country Report: Dominica," accessed June 22, 2023, p. 13, [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/---sro-report\\_of\\_spain/documents/publication/wcms\\_651946.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/---sro-report_of_spain/documents/publication/wcms_651946.pdf).

to institutionalize gender mainstreaming, develop gender-responsive policies, and ensure policy implementation at various government agencies.<sup>4</sup>

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

Following the NPAP adoption, Dominica’s government adopted the National Gender Policy in 2006, which promotes gender equality, sustainable development, and social justice.<sup>5</sup> Little information about recent initiatives or programming is made publicly available, though this does not necessarily indicate the absence of efforts to fulfill the National Gender Policy. There is some indication that the Bureau of Gender Affairs is active though struggles to implement gender mainstreaming across ministries and government agencies because of a lack of resources.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, recent data that would aid in understanding strategies, plans, or practices related to gender equality in civil society and in institutions such as the national police are unavailable, as Dominica does not regularly report on gender-related data to the same degree as other countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

### *Gender in the Ranks*

The Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force (CDPF) website states that the force has 444 active personnel.<sup>7</sup> The Dominica police force is recruiting women and expects to increase its forces above 500 police officers. In 2021, it recruited 14 females out of 53 recruits (26%), and in 2022, the Dominican police inducted 51 new trainees, 25% of whom (13) were women.<sup>8</sup> Dominica has no military forces.

### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

No current data were available.

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The Bureau of Gender Affairs conducted police training on gender sensitization and analysis and gender violence and human rights training.<sup>9</sup>

### *Work Environment*

Women in the Dominican police force continue to struggle on many fronts. Despite progress over the past decades—by 2016, women constituted 12% of the police force and served in every police department—

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Bureau of Gender Affairs.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force, website, <https://nationalsecurity.gov.dm/divisions/commonwealth-of-dominica-police-force>.

<sup>8</sup> “Dominica police force welcomes its largest graduating class,” *Dominica News Online*, April 5, 2022, <https://dominicanewsonline.com/news/homepage/homepage-carousel/dominica-police-force-welcomes-its-largest-graduating-class/>; “53 police recruits to commence six-month training in an effort to increase manpower in Dominica,” September 9, 2021, <https://emonewsdm.com/53-police-recruits-to-commence-six-month-training-in-an-effort-to-increase-manpower-in-dominica/>.

<sup>9</sup> Commonwealth of Dominica Report on Two Areas of Achievement and Challenges in Respect to the Brasilia Consensus, presented at the Twelfth Session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, September 17, 2013, p. 6, [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/dominica\\_report\\_-\\_xii\\_crm.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/dominica_report_-_xii_crm.pdf)

promotional opportunities are limited and tend to favor men, women have less managerial support and little to no female mentors, and institutional sexism remains an ongoing concern.<sup>10</sup>

Success will depend on the leadership's capacity to change policy and practice—by integrating gender mainstreaming and WPS principles in central directives and guidance documents, promotions to leadership ranks, training and education opportunities, and creating a positive climate and environment of trust and respect for all officers.

#### *Family Policies*

In Dominica, women are entitled to receive 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. Men receive two days paternity leave. There is no legal requirement for parental leave.

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

Dominica has not adopted legal protections against sexual harassment. Incidents of sexual harassment are addressed—though not adequately—via the Sexual Offences Act. The Act is currently under review and will reportedly be revised to respond to sexual harassment cases fully.<sup>11</sup> No information is publicly available to identify whether the national police force has or enforces anti-harassment or abuse policies. Domestic laws that criminalize rape (including spousal rape) of men and women exist.<sup>12</sup> However, no sexual harassment legislation allows for civil remedies or criminal penalties for harassment in the workplace, schools, or public spaces.<sup>13</sup>

#### *Equipment and Facilities*

No information is publicly available.

#### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

No information is publicly available.

#### **Recommendations:**

The Dominican government should act to build a comprehensive strategy to integrate gender equality and the principles outlined in the WPS agenda across government and society and commit the political and financial resources to sustain it.

For the Government of Dominica:

- Develop a WPS NAP to identify priorities, responsibilities, and resources to advance gender equality and women's full participation and advancement in the security sector;
- Ensure adequate budgeting and staffing for the country's Bureau of Gender Affairs to allow for effective gender mainstreaming in government institutions, policies, and practices;
- Collect gender-disaggregated data relating to gender equality indicators, including violence against women and girls, and regularly publish the results;

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<sup>10</sup> "Police Force Sexism: Women continue to be sidelined in one of the last bastions of male dominance—the police force," *The Sun*, September 24, 2020, <http://sundominica.com/articles/police-force-sexism-5881/>; "Dominica police force to recruit more female officers," *Dominica News Online*, November 25, 2020, <https://dominicanewsonline.com/news/homepage/news/dominica-police-force-to-recruit-more-female-officers/>.

<sup>11</sup> Bureau of Gender Affairs.

<sup>12</sup> "Gender at Work."

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



- Implement a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that is independent, transparent, and includes civil society in every stage of the process;
- Regularly participate in voluntary national reviews as part of UN conventions on women's rights and work with UN committees to promote gender equality programming.

For the Commonwealth Dominica Police Force:

- Develop strategies and policies to recruit, train, and promote increased women's participation within the police force;
- Ensure effective sexual harassment and abuse policies for protecting police personnel within the force are in place and require gender-sensitive and GBV training for all law enforcement officers;
- Ensure sex-disaggregated data is collected, analyzed, and made publicly available;
- Engage with government agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure transparency and adequate monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in gender mainstreaming initiatives to meet local community concerns.

## El Salvador - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

El Salvador adopted its first WPS NAP in 2017 (2017-2022), developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women, and the Implementation Committee and Technical Monitoring Committee.<sup>1</sup> In March 2022, El Salvador presented its biannual National Action Plan: Women, Peace, and Security 2022-2024 (*Mujeres, paz y seguridad 2022-2024*) to strengthen further the implementation of the WPS agenda in the country.<sup>2</sup>

### Overall Assessment

El Salvador's 2017-2022 NAP outlined a series of indicators and objectives and has established a biannual WPS National Action Plan (NAP) for 2022-2024. Alongside several other documents related to gender, El Salvador shows strong signs of prioritizing the implementation of WPS principles, which speaks to the political will demonstrated by the country. Institutionally, the security sector leadership signaled its commitment to gender mainstreaming and implementing WPS principles by appointing Gender Advisors (GENADs) to serve in the El Salvadoran military and police forces.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, El Salvador is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). It signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) though not the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, El Salvador's foreign policy includes gender equality as one of its main pillars, and the government has developed policies that support actionable programs.<sup>3</sup> The Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (*Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer*, or ISDEMU) is the most important national gender institution. It is a significant actor responsible for formulating, executing, and monitoring compliance with the National Policy for Women, promoting legislative initiatives on women's issues, and championing the participation of civil society, women's organizations, and local communities in their work.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Government of El Salvador, "National Action Plan 'Women, Peace and Security,'" *Peace Women*, June 2017, [https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/El%20Salvador%20NAP%202017-2022%20\(English\).pdf](https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/El%20Salvador%20NAP%202017-2022%20(English).pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "El Salvador Presenta Estrategia Nacional de La Resolución 1325, Compromiso Internacional Sobre Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad," *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de El Salvador*, May 27, 2022, <https://rree.gob.sv/el-salvador-presenta-estrategia-nacional-de-la-resolucion-1325-compromiso-internacional-sobre-mujeres-paz-y-seguridad/#>.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Realiza Jornada de Trabajo Con Entidades de Gobierno Para Fortalecer El Libro Blanco de La Política Exterior," *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de El Salvador*, February 10, 2022, <https://rree.gob.sv/cancilleria-realiza-jornada-de-trabajo-con-entidades-de-gobierno-para-fortalecer-el-libro-blanco-de-la-politica-exterior/>.

<sup>4</sup> Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer, accessed June 18, 2023, <https://isdemu.gob.sv/>. The ISDEMU was created at the initiative of the executive branch by legislative decree on February 29, 1996.

In 2017, the National Civil Police of El Salvador (PNC) adopted an implementation plan that engages all government agencies in meeting WPS objectives.<sup>5</sup> Documentation indicates that the government is prepared to allocate resources and personnel towards WPS implementation, supported by a GENAD and an additional budget allotment.<sup>6</sup> El Salvador's government website, where most information about its policies is publicly available, reflects the government's commitment to transparency.

For the Armed Forces of El Salvador, the National Action Plan 2017-2022 supports the active participation of women in the armed forces and calls on the government to increase the number of women serving and integrate a gender perspective in institutional structures. It also obliges the government to educate and contribute to gender training in the national police and the armed forces.<sup>7</sup>

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

The principles of WPS are mentioned in key security documents. The Institutional Policy for Gender Equality in the Justice and Public Security Sector 2018-2027 establishes lines of action to increase gender equality.<sup>8</sup> The Operation Manual of the Armed Forces contains sections on gender violence and gender equality.<sup>9</sup> These documents also note the responsibility to protect vulnerable persons (women and children). Before adopting its first WPS NAP, the El Salvadoran government passed the "2011 Special Comprehensive Law for a Life Free of Violence for Women," guaranteeing institutional responsibility to protect.<sup>10</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

In July of 2021, the El Salvadoran government announced the addition of 1046 new members (857 men and 189 women) to the military forces.<sup>11</sup> With the 2021 addition, the army now stands at 20,100

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Security and Justice, "Política Institucional de Equidad e Igualdad para las mujeres y hombres en el Ramo de Justicia y Seguridad Pública," El Salvador, 2018-2027, *Academia Nacional de Seguridad Pública*, 2017, <https://www.ansp.gob.sv/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pol%C3%81tica-de-Equidad-e-Igualdad-para-hombres-y-mujeres.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> ANS Gender Unit (Unidad de Género ANS), *Academia Nacional de Seguridad Pública*, October 28, 2021, <https://www.ansp.gob.sv/unidad-de-genero/>.

<sup>7</sup> UN Peace Women, "National Action Plan for Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security," 2017-2022, p. 22, [https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/El%20Salvador%20NAP%202017-2022%20\(English\).pdf](https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/El%20Salvador%20NAP%202017-2022%20(English).pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Instituto Salvadoreño Para El Desarrollo De La Mujer, "Ley de Igualdad, Equidad y Erradicación de la Discriminación contra las Mujeres", April 8, 2011, <https://isdemu.gob.sv/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/LIE.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Cuellar Mendoza, Ricardo Antonio, Mariano Mendoza Lara, and Elvira Ramirez. "Manual de Capacitación En Promoción de La Salud Sexual y Sv Reproductiva y Prevención Del VIH, Sida e Infecciones de Transmisión Sexual." *UNFPA El Salvador*, 2009. <https://elsalvador.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Manual%20Soldados.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> UN Women Global Database on Violence against Women, "Law for a Life Free of Violence against Women," <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/el-salvador/2011/law-for-a-life-free-of-violence-against-women--2011->

<sup>11</sup> Julio Montes, "El Ejército salvadoreño será el más grande de Centro América", *defensa.com*, July 22, 2021, <https://www.defensa.com/centro-america/ejercito-salvadoreno-sera-mas-fuerte-centro-america>

members. The government aims for a goal of 40,000 members by 2026.<sup>12</sup> It is unclear whether the government has set a goal for the gender composition of this force.<sup>13</sup>

The gender distribution in the National Police is as follows:<sup>14</sup>

	Women	Men	% Women
Administration	1,602	4,256	27.35
Operative	3,169	19,241	14.14

The gender distribution in rank within the National Police is as follows:

	Women	Men	% Women
Commissioner	20	116	14.71
Sub Commissioner	16	116	12.12
Inspector Chief	5	93	5.10
Inspectors	14	161	8.00
Sub Inspector	52	544	8.72
Sergeant	104	1497	6.50

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

In 2015, the El Salvadoran armed forces created an Institutional Gender Unit (UGI) equivalent to a GENAD. The responsibilities of this unit and its Focal Points are laid out in the Operation Manual published in 2021.<sup>15</sup> The head of the gender unit in the El Salvador police force, Coralia Elizabeth Cuellar, received special gender training before her appointment.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

<sup>12</sup> Voice of America (Voz de América), “Gobierno de El Salvador incorpora a 1.450 nuevos militares como parte de su Plan Control Territorial”, April 7, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1q9hPIB-y4>

<sup>13</sup> “El Salvador Aims to Double Size of Military within Five Years,” *Janes Information Services*, September 16, 2021, <https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/el-salvador-aims-to-double-size-of-military-within-five-years>.

<sup>14</sup> Transparency Portal, “Detalle de Plazas Ley De Salario y Contrato”, 2021, <https://transparencia.pnc.gob.sv/download/detalle-de-plazas-de-ley-de-salario-y-contratos-2021>

<sup>15</sup> National Ministry of Defense (Ministerio Nacional de la Defensa), “Manual de Organización, Funcionamiento Del Ministerio de la Defensa Nacional,” April 2021, <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/mdn/documents/448097/download>.

<sup>16</sup> “Academia Nacional de Seguridad Pública,” *Portal de Transparencia - El Salvador*, December 5, 2022, <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/13/officials/8107>.

The education and training material of the police at the junior-, mid-, and senior levels have integrated WPS principles.<sup>17</sup> Police personnel receive special training on the protection of vulnerable persons from sexual violence and exploitation. Pre-deployment, they receive training on the protection of the rights of vulnerable persons, cultural awareness, gender perspective, the regards of international law, and specific gender norms in the operational area.

#### *Anti-harassment and Abuse Policies*

In terms of anti-harassment and abuse policies within the security forces, there is a code of conduct but no sexual harassment or sexual exploitation prevention program.

#### *Work Environment*

The work environment and labor rights, such as maternity leave, are regulated by legal requirements observed in labor legislation.<sup>18</sup> In El Salvador, a woman is entitled to 16 weeks of paid maternity leave. Men receive three days of paternity leave at 100% of regular pay.<sup>19</sup> There are also family leave policies for the military and human resource policies for the National Police.

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

Government institutional indicators have been used for transparency and to identify areas for improvement.<sup>20</sup> Each institution has its transparency site that publishes constant updates, changes, and notes on the status of different task areas and ministerial documents. Likewise, civil society organizations participate in WPS reviews, including the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), working alongside the national police to evaluate the professional level of the institution, its reach, and its budget based on statistical analysis.<sup>21</sup>

The PNC collects sex-disaggregated data mainly for transparency, which are publicly available in the Police Management Results Report (*Informe de resultados de la gestión policial*).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Portal de Transparencia, *ibid.* “Capacitaciones Con Enfoque de Genero 2021,” *Unidad de acceso a la Información Pública*, February 8, 2022, <https://transparencia.pnc.gob.sv/download/capacitaciones-con-enfoque-de-genero-2021>; Pedro Menjivar, “17 Capacitados En El Curso de Formadores Policiales En Equidad e Igualdad de Género,” *Academia Nacional de Seguridad Pública*, November 11, 2021, <https://www.ansp.gob.sv/17-capacitados-en-curso-de-formadores-policiales-en-equidad-e-igualdad-de-genero/>; Policía Nacional Civil de El Salvador, “Policía Nacional Civil Marco Institucional,” *Policia Nacional Civil*, June 1, 2023, <https://www.pnc.gob.sv/marco-institucional/>.

<sup>18</sup> Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública.

<sup>19</sup> PwC, “Social Security Contributions/Benefits,” El Salvador, (last reviewed July 18, 2023), <https://taxsummaries.pwc.com/el-salvador/individual/other-taxes>; BPL, “Labor Obligations El Salvador 2022,” p. 3, <https://www.blplegal.com/blp-web-2021/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Labor-Obligations-El-Salvador-2022.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Policía Nacional Civil de El Salvador, “Plan Operativo Anual Institucional 2023,” *El Salvador Transparency Portal*, December 2022, <https://transparencia.pnc.gob.sv/download/plan-operativo-anual-2023-version-publica?wpdmdl=4925&refresh=644f35e5c4b451682912741>; Karla Maria Molina Ciriani, “El Salvador: Ruta crítica de atención de la violencia contra las mujeres, con énfasis en la violencia sexual y el feminicidio,” *ORMUSA*, 2020, page 7-8. <https://ormusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/INVESTIGACION-RUTA-CRITICA-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Laura Andrade and Carmen Guevara, “La Policía Nacional Civil En El Salvador: Evaluando La profesionalización Del Cuerpo Policial Civil,” *Investigaciones UCA* 1 (1):250-51, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.51378/iuca.v1i1.6905>.

<sup>22</sup> Policía Nacional de Colombia, “Informes Anuales de Gestión,” <https://www.policia.gov.co/informes-de-gestion/informe-anual-gestion>

## Recommendations

For the Government of El Salvador:

- Engage with civil society organizations to adopt the second iteration of the national WPS NAP;
- Restore adequate funding from the general budget for programs advancing gender equality and the WPS agenda;
- Continue training on gender-based and WPS principles for the military and the national police;
- Make results of sex-disaggregated data available to the public.

For the National Civil Police of El Salvador:

- Explicitly prohibit sexual harassment, exploitation, and assault in the National Police Code of Conduct;
- Ensure effective sexual harassment and abuse policies for protecting police personnel within the ranks are in place and require gender-sensitive and GBV training for all law enforcement officers;
- Maintain an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to improve decision-making and resource allocation.

For the Armed Forces of El Salvador:

- Draft and adopt a gender implementation plan and incorporate inclusive language in institutional policy, manuals, protocols, and directives;
- Ensure effective sexual harassment and abuse policies for protecting police personnel within the ranks are in place and require gender-sensitive and GBV training for service members at all ranks;
- Address gaps in institutional policies and practices, such as promotion policies, that can adversely affect the recruitment and retention of women in the military;
- Include more information on pre-deployment training on WPS towards the military in documents made available on the government's transparency portal.

## Grenada - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Grenada does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Though lacking a WPS NAP, Grenada demonstrates a strong political commitment to the principles of gender equality. Various government policy documents, the creation and maintenance of offices that support women's inclusion, and Grenada's frequent participation in regional and international gender and human rights reviews are evidence of national and political will to implement WPS principles. Grenada has taken proactive measures by developing multiple strategies and plans to address these areas of improvement. Grenada published a Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) 2014-2024 and the Domestic Violence Act of 2010. Grenada's strengths are its political commitments to advancing gender equality, addressing violence against women and girls at all levels of society, identifying strategic domestic and international partners to achieve these commitments and its overall transparency and active engagement in regional and international gender and human rights assessments. Nevertheless, high levels of violence against women and charges of sexual harassment and assault in the national police force indicate that more can be done.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Grenada is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Grenada signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has not signed the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Grenada was one of only 45 countries that chose to participate in the Voluntary National Review process for the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (2022). The review document proposed several action plans prioritizing SDG goals, including Goal 5: Gender Equality.<sup>1</sup> Grenada also developed a comprehensive national review in 2019 tracking the progress of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which highlighted priorities, achievements, and challenges in implementing gender equality fully.<sup>2</sup>

At the national level, the government of Grenada has also enacted several laws and regulations that promote gender equality and protect women's rights.<sup>3</sup> The Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) 2014-2024 is a comprehensive framework that emphasizes increasing women's participation and leadership at

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Grenada, "Grenada's first Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals presented to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and CARICOM Affairs*, July 2022, p. 39, <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20Grenada%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment, "Comprehensive National Review on Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action," *CEPAL*, May 2019, [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/grenada\\_comprehensive\\_national\\_review\\_to\\_beijing\\_25\\_may\\_2019.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/grenada_comprehensive_national_review_to_beijing_25_may_2019.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> "Voluntary National Review," p. 39.



all levels of decision-making, gender-sensitive training in the public and private sectors, and establishing a Gender Management System with monitoring and evaluation procedures and Gender Focal Points to coordinate and guide the process.<sup>4</sup> The country has also developed several concrete mechanisms in government ministries, including the Gender-based Violence Unit in the Division of Gender and Family Affairs, formerly the Domestic Violence Unit.<sup>5</sup>

Rates of violence against women remain high in Grenada and are of particular concern for government agencies. In the past decade, several protocols were implemented to reduce violence against women and girls, including the National Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Protocol and the Strategic Action Plan to Reduce GBV.<sup>6</sup> On June 28, 2023, the Grenada government announced the establishment of a digital platform designed to collect and analyze data on gender-based violence to inform and support better decision outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

### **Institutional Policy and Practice**

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

Police exercises, operations, and activities reference the principles of WPS and gender equality.<sup>8</sup> Grenada does not have a standing military force, though it is a member of the Regional Security System (RSS), a regional security alliance in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, the government has prioritized the strengthening of WPS principles and addressing women's security, including combating human trafficking, addressing violence against women, and developing policies to address climate crises.<sup>9</sup>

Like many other countries in the Caribbean, Grenada has experienced grave impacts of climate change, particularly drastic changes in rain patterns, warming ocean temperatures, a rise in sea levels, and an intensification of hurricanes and tropical storms. These effects have impacted nearly every sector of the country, with women and girls bearing the brunt of climate crises and disasters. Grenada has taken a proactive role in examining the gendered impacts of climate change and developing gender-responsive disaster recovery.

GEPAP, the National Climate Change Policy, 2017-2021, and the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NAP) for Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique each signal a significant shift in how Caribbean countries view the implementation of the WPS agenda.<sup>10</sup> These national action plans will mainstream gender in traditionally underrepresented sectors and will build the resilience of communities to disasters, assist communities in adapting to adverse impacts of climate change, and support the creation of a green

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<sup>4</sup> Government of Grenada, Ministry of Social Development and Housing, *Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan* (GPAP), 2014-2024, 2014, [https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2014\\_gender-equality-policy-action-plan\\_grd.pdf](https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2014_gender-equality-policy-action-plan_grd.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Voluntary National Review, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Development Program, "Spotlight Initiative Grenada and UNDP Launch Data System to Help Fight Violence Against Women and Girls," June 28, 2023, <https://www.undp.org/barbados/blog/spotlight-initiative-grenada-and-undp-launch-data-system-help-fight-violence-against-women-and-girls>.

<sup>8</sup> "Comprehensive National Review on Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action," p. 70-71.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> EnGenDER, "Gender Inequality of Climate Change and Disaster Risk in Grenada", *UN Women*, November 2021, [https://wrds.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/EnGenDER\\_Gender%20Inequality%20CC%20DRR%20Brief\\_GrenadaF\\_20220203.pdf](https://wrds.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/EnGenDER_Gender%20Inequality%20CC%20DRR%20Brief_GrenadaF_20220203.pdf).

economy.<sup>11</sup> Future iterations of national action plans in the region will likely prioritize climate change as a significant security risk rather than as a traditional security indicator.

#### *Gender in the Ranks (Police)*

The Royal Grenada Police Force currently has 940 officers, with 130 positions (13.8%) held by women—a number that has not substantially changed since 2012. Reportedly, the RGPF has 318 rank officers, which includes front-line supervisors, middle and senior managers, and executives.<sup>12</sup> All positions are open to women in the Royal Grenada Police Force, although women report that there are cultural and institutional limitations to service, including gender-based discrimination and harassment of female officers.<sup>13</sup>

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

The Grenada government has appointed Gender Focal Points (GFPs), and an Inter-Ministerial Council of Gender Focal Points was launched in 2019. Many of Grenada’s national gender plans and policies have created GFP positions to identify and implement gender-responsive interventions. The GEPAP provides a description of GFPs and a detailed list of responsibilities, such as promoting gender mainstreaming, providing gender analyses, and collecting, analyzing, and disseminating gender-disaggregated statistics.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

In recent years, troubling reports have emerged of sexual harassment and abuse by male police officers against women police officers in the Royal Grenada Police Force. These allegations have emerged from junior officers alleging harassment and abuse by senior or superior-ranking officers.<sup>15</sup> The official Police Act does require anti-harassment or abuse policies or training in the police force. However, in May 2022, the RGPF passed a new “zero-tolerance” harassment policy to address growing concerns over harassment within the RGPF.<sup>16</sup> The sexual harassment policy was printed in the Grenada media as a public service, which outlined what constitutes sexual harassment, the procedure for submitting complaints, and disciplinary measures as prescribed by the Police Act, among other details.<sup>17</sup>

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

According to government documents, police officers receive gender-sensitive training.<sup>18</sup> The 2022 sexual harassment policy states that all RGPF members will receive sexual harassment training upon entry into the police force and through annual refresher courses and that the RGPF will conduct regular data collection and monitoring and evaluation of the policy.<sup>19</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

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<sup>11</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization, “Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014 – 2024,” <https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC181376/>.

<sup>12</sup> “Overview of the Royal Grenada Police Force,” *Royal Grenada Police Force*, <https://rgpf.gd/index.php/about-us/overview>; the *Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) 2014-2024* reported that in 2012, 130 of the 970 police officers in 2012 were women, a total of 14.4%. See Government of Grenada, *Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) 2014-2024*, June 10, 2014, pp. 87-88, [https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2014\\_gender-equality-policy-action-plan\\_grd.pdf](https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2014_gender-equality-policy-action-plan_grd.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> “Sexual Harassment Policy in RGPF,” *The New Today*, May 21, 2022, <https://www.thenewtodaygrenada.com/local-news/sexual-harassment-policy-in-rgpf/>.

<sup>14</sup> *Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>15</sup> *New Today Grenada*, Sexual Harassment Policy.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> “Comprehensive National Review Beijing Declaration.”

<sup>19</sup> *New Today Grenada*, Sexual Harassment Policy.

Policies regarding maternity and family leave in the Grenada Royal Police Force have not been made publicly available; however, all women employees in Grenada receive a minimum three-month maternity and family leave.<sup>20</sup> Paternity leave is not provided.

Specific equipment, including properly fitting uniforms, is provided to women officers of the Royal Grenada Police Force, as required by the official Police Act.<sup>21</sup> There is no publicly available information on gender-specific facilities.

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

While not specific to the WPS agenda, several monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been developed and expanded to assess the progress of various laws, institutions, and other entities that work toward gender equality. The first and largest of these mechanisms is the National Machinery for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Division of Gender and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment (herein: Gender Machinery).<sup>22</sup> The Gender Machinery oversees the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality principles, develops plans for gender mainstreaming in all levels of society, and oversees the Inter-Ministerial Council of Gender Focal Points. This Council serves as another critical mechanism to achieve gender parity. The role of these Gender Focal Points is to promote, facilitate, and monitor gender responsiveness in their ministries, departments and statutory bodies, and the sectors in which they operate.<sup>23</sup>

The GEPAP provides a guide for identifying gender-responsive interventions and monitoring their implementation. Gender mainstreaming is the primary strategy for implementing the GEPAP, and to date, the Inter-Ministerial Council of Gender Focal Points has hired 30 Gender Focal Points (25 females and five males) and 23 alternates (17 females and six males) to represent various ministries, departments, and selected statutory bodies.<sup>24</sup> Gender will be mainstreamed in disaster management, climate change, and natural resource development.

The government works directly with civil society organizations to participate in voluntary country reviews and implement strategies to advance its various goals. According to the 2022 Voluntary Review of the SDGs, "progress towards our national goals and the SDGs require a whole-of-society approach, inclusive of Government Agencies, Civil Society, the Private Sector and the Grenadian citizens."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, Grenada's first-ever long-term National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2020-2035, was drafted with input from several civil society stakeholders and its citizens, and many of Grenada's other NAPs offer

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<sup>20</sup> "Maternity Benefit," *National Insurance Scheme Grenada*, <https://www.nisgrenada.org/maternity-benefit/#:~:text=Maternity%20Allowance%20is%20paid%20for,works%20while%20on%20maternity%20leave.>

<sup>21</sup> "Search Term: 'Police.'" *Laws of Grenada*, Accessed June 22, 2023, [https://laws.gov.gd/index.php?option=com\\_edocman&view=search&filter\\_category\\_id=1&filter\\_search=police&show\\_category=1&Itemid=180&limitstart=100.](https://laws.gov.gd/index.php?option=com_edocman&view=search&filter_category_id=1&filter_search=police&show_category=1&Itemid=180&limitstart=100.)

<sup>22</sup> Elaine Henry-McQueen, "Gender Mainstreaming in National Action Plans in Grenada," *Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment Grenada*, [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/presentations/gender\\_mainstreaming\\_in\\_national\\_plans\\_in\\_grenada.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/presentations/gender_mainstreaming_in_national_plans_in_grenada.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> "Comprehensive National Review Beijing Declaration."

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> "Grenada's First Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals Presented to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development," *United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, July 2022, <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20Grenada%20Report.pdf>; "Voluntary National Review Grenada," p. 5; "Grenada Country Report Third Round," *Organization of American States*, November 21, 2017, pp. 7, 10-11, <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2017-Grenada.pdf>.

opportunities for civil society engagement. The level of transparency demonstrated by the government of Grenada and its willingness to engage directly with civil society and regional and international bodies in promoting gender equality is commendable.

### **Recommendations**

At the national level, Grenada demonstrates significant commitment towards achieving gender equality and including women and civil society groups in implementing the principles of the WPS agenda. It remains committed to eliminating violence against women, advancing women's engagement in government, and understanding and mitigating the effects of climate change on women and girls. However, the Royal Grenada Police Force, with the government's support, should improve its commitment to gender equality as part of the WPS agenda and consider gender equality as central to its mission.

For the Government of Grenada:

- Adopt a WPS NAP, aligning with national plans, frameworks, and policies, and engage with key stakeholders and local communities to advance in integrating gender equality and WPS principles in Grenada and its security forces;
- Direct the national police to amend its gender strategy and policies in response to existing sexual harassment charges to eliminate hostile work environment discrimination, in coordination with Gender Focal Points, the Gender Machinery, and other relevant government ministries;
- Continue to review gender-sensitive policies and training designed to prevent sexual harassment, abuse, or gender discrimination;
- Commit the funding and staff to support the collection of sex-disaggregated data.

For the Royal Grenada Police Force:

- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data on the number of women in the Royal Grenada Police Force and their ranks and positions;
- Maintain an effective monitoring and evaluation system to ensure effective implementation of gender integration and mainstreaming policies;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of sexual harassment training and ensure that annual refresher courses continue.

## Guyana - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Guyana does not have an official WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

In recent years, Guyana has become a nation that reflects a growing commitment to advancing gender equality and WPS principles in its institutions, policies, and practices. Efforts on several fronts have advanced the WPS agenda, including expanding the promotion, placement, hiring, and integration of women into the Guyana Defense Force (GDF) and the Guyana Police Force (GPF) and developing local and regional partnerships to ensure full implementation of the WPS agenda. Nevertheless, issues revolving around gender stereotyping and sexual harassment in security forces persist, despite regular training on the topic. Future action by security institutions should reinforce the need to respond to gender-based violence and address discrimination against women in the police and defense forces.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Guyana is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Guyana signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has not signed the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Through its national laws and regulations, the Guyanese government signaled its commitment to the principles of gender equality and WPS. One-third of political candidates in Guyanese elections must be women.<sup>1</sup> The Guyanese constitution prohibits sex- and gender-based discrimination, and women are expressly guaranteed equality under the law.<sup>2</sup> There is a Gender Affairs Bureau and Sexual Offenses and Domestic Violence Policy Unit under the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.<sup>3</sup> The Ministry also provides leadership training for women interested in participating in local or national politics through the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute. Guyana has participated in regional organizations, such as the OAS, to strengthen women's political leadership and implement gender equality programming.<sup>4</sup>

Notably, the Guyana Defense Force (GDF) has shown its commitment to the WPS agenda through the development of relationships and partnerships with regional security actors, including USSOUTHCOM, USNORTHCOM, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the U.S. Department of Defense, affirming its commitment to implementing the principles of WPS. In August 2022, Guyana hosted the inaugural Caribbean Women, Peace, and Security Conference in Georgetown, Guyana.

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<sup>1</sup> "Government of the Republic of Guyana, "Guyana National Report: The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Of the Fourth World Conference On Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action 1995)," accessed June 15, 2023, [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/comunicacion\\_26\\_guyana.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/comunicacion_26_guyana.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> "Guyana's Constitution of 1980 with Amendments through 2016," *Constitute Project*, 2016, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Guyana\\_2016.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Guyana_2016.pdf?lang=en).

<sup>3</sup> "Social Services," *Ministry of Human Services and Social Security*, accessed June 15, 2023, <https://mhsss.gov.gy/socialservices.html>.

<sup>4</sup> "Overview of OAS Country Programs/Projects," *Organization of American States*, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.oas.org/OOCP/default.aspx?lang=en>.

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

Over a decade ago, women in the GDF and the GPF faced rampant gender discrimination and barriers to recruitment and promotion. Previous GDF policies banned women from serving in the combat arm/front line units and sought to “significantly reduce [the] recruitment of women.” Additionally, women were subject to promotional repercussions if found to be pregnant or had had an abortion.<sup>5</sup>

However, the security landscape in Guyana is in transition. In recent years, under the guidance and leadership of GDF Chief of Staff Brigadier Godfrey Bess, the GDF has stepped forward to advocate for women’s rights and representation in the armed forces. Guyana’s leadership in implementing WPS principles can be attributed, in part, to the myriad of partnerships with local civil society organizations, regional governing and security bodies, and international agencies. These partnerships have aided the GDF’s gender mainstreaming efforts, predominantly through training and education programs. For example, Guyana co-hosted a 2021 workshop on WPS with the Florida National Guard, specifically focusing on improving operational effectiveness through gender mainstreaming and incorporating a gender perspective into peace and security efforts.<sup>6</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

The GDF has approximately 4,150 service members.<sup>7</sup> Information on the percentage of female service members was unavailable. As of 2022, the highest-ranking woman currently serving in the GDF is a Lieutenant Colonel.<sup>8</sup> The current GDF leadership is committed to the full integration of women in the force and has moved to open more positions to women that were previously closed to them.<sup>9</sup> In terms of police officers, data on women in the GPF are unavailable. As of 2022, the highest-ranking woman serving in the GPF is a police commander.<sup>10</sup>

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The GDF signaled its commitment to gender mainstreaming by opening up previously male-only military training and exercises to women. In 2022, Brigadier Bess ordered the integration and participation of servicewomen in the “infantry rifleman course,” later renamed to “infantry soldier course.”<sup>11</sup> Since then, servicewomen have access to the “Platoon Commanders Course,” which includes the following areas of study: skill-at-arms, drills, minor staff duties, open and close country warfare, internal security, method of

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<sup>5</sup> Gary A.R. Best, “Organizational Analysis of the Guyana Defense Force,” *Guyana Defense Force*, September 2009, GDF-Organisational-Analysis-Book.pdf (mil.gy), <https://www.gdf.mil.gy/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/GDF-Organisational-Analysis-Book.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Embassy in Guyana, “Women, Peace and Security Workshop,” August 4, 2021, <https://gy.usembassy.gov/women-peace-and-security-workshop/>.

<sup>7</sup> Guyana Defence Force, website, <http://www.gdf.mil.gy/about/#:~:text=It%20numbers%20about%204150%20soldiers,the%20incumbent%20President%20of%20Guyana.>

<sup>8</sup> Geraldine Cook, “A Woman Warrior in the Guyana Defence Force,” *Dialogo Americas*, September 15, 2022, <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/a-women-warrior-in-the-guyana-defence-force/>.

<sup>9</sup> “Army to deploy first contingent of female soldiers to border locations,” August 8, 2021, <https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/08/08/army-to-deploy-first-contingent-of-female-soldiers-to-border-locations/>;

<sup>10</sup> Isanella Patoir, “With only birth paper in hand, Denise Griffith started journey to become lone female Commander,” *NewsRoom*, March 8, 2022, <https://newsroom.gy/2022/03/09/with-only-birth-paper-in-hand-denise-griffith-started-journey-to-become-lone-female-commander/>.

<sup>11</sup> “GDF lauded for advancing women’s inclusion,” *Guyana Chronicle*, August 31, 2022, <https://guyanachronicle.com/2022/08/31/gdf-lauded-for-advancing-womens-inclusion/>.



instructions, leadership studies, military law, physical training, military service, information technology, and military ethics, among others.<sup>12</sup>

GDF and GPF forces received gender-responsive training in collaboration with regional partners. In recent years, women from the GDF and the GPF participated in WPS workshops developed by the U.S. Department of Defense. The Guyana Gender Affairs Bureau, in collaboration with the Women and Gender Equality Commission (WGEC), created a series of gender-responsive training and hired several Inter-Ministry Gender Focal Points for gender planning and mainstreaming for all sectors of society.

The GPF lags behind the GDF in implementing the WPS agenda. However, the GPF has taken actionable steps to increase women's representation over the past few years by integrating a gender perspective into police practices. Like the GDF, the GPF developed regional partnerships for collaboration on gender-sensitive training, including joint training conferences. In 2019, the GPF participated in the International Association of Women Police (IAWP) 57th Annual Training Conference, designed to strengthen the capacity of women in policing internationally.<sup>13</sup> Most recently, the Community Relations Department of the Guyana Police Force, the Diversity Committee of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Women's Chamber of Commerce hosted an inaugural Women in Law Enforcement Summit. The conference sought to address difficulties faced by female law enforcement officers.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

The GDF and the GPF have collaborated with regional partners to improve women's work environments and gender mainstreaming policies from the top down. For example, following the 2021 WPS conference in Guyana, the GDF improved infrastructure, including restrooms and lodging facilities, to accommodate women and reduce possible health hazards.<sup>15</sup> In 2022, the GDF deployed their first rotation of women in border security missions, positions that had previously been reserved for men.<sup>16</sup> Since this policy change, 50% of border operations have included servicewomen.<sup>17</sup> GDF servicewomen are also receiving training as paratroopers, positions previously reserved for their male counterparts.<sup>18</sup>

Additionally, GDF service women have access to childcare centers while at work, ensuring they retain their rank and remain eligible for promotions.<sup>19</sup> During the COVID-19 pandemic, police and army officers (among other frontline workers) received additional childcare assistance to support the financial burdens of

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<sup>12</sup> "GDF Platoon Sergeants' Course, Commander Course commence," *Guyana Chronicle*, August 16, 2021, <https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/08/16/gdf-platoon-sergeants-course-commander-course-commence/>.

<sup>13</sup> "Female Police officers benefit from training at IAWP conference in the US," *Guyana Chronicle*, October 4, 2019, [https://guyanachronicle.com/2019/10/04/female-police-officers-benefit-from-training-at-iawp-conference-in-the-us/?fbclid=IwAR30Gv5iYOR\\_Enb-34Y13XifolRFFj0\\_Mf9L5CBa\\_Kb1ti5d8UmB\\_PkSzQw](https://guyanachronicle.com/2019/10/04/female-police-officers-benefit-from-training-at-iawp-conference-in-the-us/?fbclid=IwAR30Gv5iYOR_Enb-34Y13XifolRFFj0_Mf9L5CBa_Kb1ti5d8UmB_PkSzQw).

<sup>14</sup> Ahillya Shiv, "The Opening Ceremony Of The 'Women In Law Enforcement Empowerment Summit 2023-Gather. Collaborate. Grow,'" *Ministry of Home Affairs*, <https://moha.gov.gy/the-opening-ceremony-of-the-women-in-law-enforcement-empowerment-summit-2023-gather-collaborate-grow/>.

<sup>15</sup> Zach Sheely, Sgt. 1st Class, "Guard incorporates women, peace and security initiatives, *U.S. Northern Command*, March 28, 2022, <https://www.northcom.mil/Newsroom/News/Article/Article/2988796/guard-incorporates-women-peace-and-security-initiatives/>.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Guyana Chronicle*, "GDF lauded."

<sup>18</sup> Geraldine Cook, "A Woman Warrior."

<sup>19</sup> Television Guyana, Inc., "Guyana a leader in women, peace and security matters" *Facebook*, August 30, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=450782437067546>.



the pandemic on families and parents. Women in Guyana are eligible for 13 weeks of maternity leave. The law does not provide for paternity leave.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

Sexual harassment and assault are illegal under Guyanese law, though a 2017 USAID report noted that “one out of every six women reporting ha[d] experienced” some form of GBV.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, there is high-level support to address this persistent problem. The head of the GDF, Brigadier Bess, stated his firm commitment to providing a safe environment for all GDF employees and to have GDF members improve their knowledge of sexual harassment and assault.

To address violence against women, the Guyanese government created a National Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Violence (NTFPSV) in 2010, focusing on combatting GBV nationwide, including domestic violence. Last year, the GPF partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Guyana’s Ministry of Human Services and Social Security to re-commence COPSQUAD2000, an initiative aimed at building the GPF’s capacity to respond adequately to GBV cases.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, the GDF works closely with civil society organizations to address GBV and sexual harassment both in and outside the GDF.<sup>23</sup>

#### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

The GDF and the GPF work closely with civil society organizations, regional bodies, and international actors on projects related to gender mainstreaming, which provide avenues for monitoring and evaluation.

Guyana does not report data regarding the gender makeup of the GDF or GPF.

#### **Recommendations**

For the Government of Guyana:

- Engage with civil society and women’s organizations, among other stakeholders, to draft and implement a WPS NAP that enhances and supports government efforts to advance gender equality and WPS principles;
- If not yet available, extend its commitment to comprehensive gender training by requiring police and defense personnel to complete regular gender sensitization/gender awareness training;
- Encourage collaboration between the GDF, GPF, and the Department of Gender Affairs on policies for equitable treatment of female service members;

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<sup>20</sup> International Labor Organization, “Conditions of Work and Employment Programme,” Guyana, [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.sectionReport1?p\\_lang=en&p\\_structure=3&p\\_year=2011&p\\_start=1&p\\_increment=10&p\\_sc\\_id=2000&p\\_countries=KE&p\\_countries=GY&p\\_print=Y](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.sectionReport1?p_lang=en&p_structure=3&p_year=2011&p_start=1&p_increment=10&p_sc_id=2000&p_countries=KE&p_countries=GY&p_print=Y).

<sup>21</sup> USAID, “USAID/Eastern and Southern Caribbean Community, Family and Youth Resilience (CFYR) Program,” USAID, 2017, [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00X3FH.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00X3FH.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> “UNFPA recommences Gender-Based Violence Awareness Training for GPF Officers,” UNFPA, February 8, 2023, <https://dpi.gov.gy/unfpa-recommences-gender-based-violence-awareness-training-for-gpf-officers/>

<sup>23</sup> “GDF signs MoU to improve soldiers’ understanding of sexual harassment, assault,” *Guyana Chronicle*, October 27, 2021, <https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/10/27/gdf-signs-mou-to-improve-soldiers-understanding-of-sexual-harassment-assault/#:~:text=CHIEF%2DOF%2DSTAFF%20of%20the,sexual%20assault%20and%20domestic%20violence.>

- Publish and make publicly available all data and initiatives relating to gender representation and gender mainstreaming efforts.

For the Guyana Defense Force:

- Create gender-sensitive recruitment practices that ensure equal opportunities for women regarding training, career progression, and promotion;
- Appoint trained and qualified GENADs and GFPs into security forces;
- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data on women in the GDF.

For the Guyana Police Force:

- Create gender-sensitive recruitment practices that ensure equal opportunities for women regarding training, career progression, and promotion;
- Make available sex-disaggregated data on women in national police forces and statistics relating to the gender makeup of active-duty officers and civilian employees;
- Continue existing measures to combat gender-based violence in the police force

## Haiti - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Haiti does not have a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Haiti has significant work ahead to implement the WPS agenda effectively. Despite principles of gender equality present in the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF), a national gender equality plan, and an action plan on violence against women, there are considerable gaps in translating the obligations in international and regional treaties and conventions to which Haiti is a signatory to legal and institutional arrangements at the national level. The cycles of instability and violence Haiti continues to experience have stunted efforts to integrate gender equality and WPS principles into Haitian society and institutions generally and in its security forces in particular. Haitian civil society, human rights and women's rights organizations, and the international community strive to construct the necessary frameworks to promote and protect women's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations. Gender-based violence is both a driver and symptom of state insecurity. The Haitian government must commit the political will and resources and act to protect women, girls, and at-risk groups from all forms of violence in the current crisis.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Haiti is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Haiti signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has yet to sign the Optional Protocol of CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, the Haitian constitution provides women with several protections, including the right to equal working conditions, high-level educational access, and equality before the law. While Haiti does not have a NAP, it has adopted a Gender Equality Policy 2014-2034 (*Politique D'Égalité Femmes Hommes*).<sup>1</sup> Central national security documents do not directly mention the WPS agenda or its principles. Goals set in the Haitian constitution include a requirement for 30% female employment across all industries, especially public service.<sup>2</sup> This quota remains out of reach since Haiti has restrictive laws and fewer legal provisions supporting gender equality.

The Haitian government established the Haitian Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) in 1994 (post-Beijing Conference) with the goals of developing gender representation in government and countering violence against women.<sup>3</sup> The ministry aided in the publication of the "Politique D'Égalite" in 2014, with textual implications for a subsequent report in the future. No such report was produced at the time of writing (June 2023), and the MCFDF lacks the political commitment from Haiti's

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), "Politique D'égalité Femmes Hommes 2014-2034," December 2014, <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/hai157333.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> "Haiti's Constitution of 1987 with Amendments through 2012." Constitute Project. Accessed June 12, 2023. [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Haiti\\_2012?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Haiti_2012?lang=en).

<sup>3</sup> "Le Ministère à La Condition Féminine et Aux Droits Des Femmes (MCFDF)," Global Database on Violence Against Women- Haiti, accessed June 12, 2023; <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/haiti/1994/mcfdff>.

top leadership to carry out its mandate. The “Politique D’Egalite” represents a step towards action on WPS but does not provide many avenues for concrete action thus far. The report itself notes the gap between legislated equality for women and the practiced experiences of Haitian women.<sup>4</sup> A ten-year National Plan to Combat Gender-Based Violence was passed in 2017, helping establish an Office to Combat Violence Against Women and Girls. Again, serious gaps remain in legislation to protect women against sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>5</sup>

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

The Haitian government, through the Office of National Coordination of Women’s Affairs (CNAF), created an action plan to support female police officers, who currently compose 11.78% of the police force.<sup>6</sup> However, the CNAF’s plan to help female police officers has not yet been implemented. A GENAD was appointed by the Directorate General and assigned to the senior national police staff. There are 24 GFPs, distributed through ten departments and one base. Training is incomplete for an unknown number of them.

### *Gender in the Ranks (Police)*

Service	Men	Women	% Women
National Police <sup>7</sup>	12,351	1649	13.35
National Police Senior Women		17	
Officers Deployed	8,408	92	1.09

The Haiti National Police (HNP) is the de facto security force in the country. It is severely understaffed and ill-equipped. Numbers of officers are in flux; resignations, dismissals, and deaths have led to varying estimates, given that the tally includes those individuals who died and who have left their posts.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding gender in the ranks, the HNP has failed to reach the Haitian constitutional requirement for 30% of positions on the force to be held by women, with only 11.78% of posts filled.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the ratio of women deployed to total deployment in security-related operations (92:8,500) is abnormally low relative to the number of women in the force (1,649:12,351), possibly indicating an internal reluctance to use women in security operations or a lack of training for female officers.<sup>10</sup> No explicit gender-based limitations

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations (OCHA), ReliefWeb, “Background Briefing to the Executive Board, 2018, ‘Operational Response at Country Level: Haiti’,” 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/background-briefing-executive-board-2018-operational-response-country-level-haiti>

<sup>6</sup> WIIS “Latin America and the Caribbean WPS Assessment Tool- Haiti” *Note: Haiti calculates personnel to include deaths and abandonments. The actual number may vary.*

<sup>7</sup> *Note: The National Police calculations includes members who died or abandoned post.*

<sup>8</sup> The UN reported (April 2023) that the impact of the current violence, in terms of resignations, dismissals, and deaths, has brought the numbers down from 14,772 to around 13,200 personnel. See “As Haiti Slides into Violence, Its People ‘Cannot Wait Any Longer’ for Assistance, Foreign Minister Tells Security Council,” United Nations, press release April 26, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15266.doc.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> WIIS “Latin America and the Caribbean WPS Assessment Tool- Haiti.”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

on women's participation in law enforcement exist. There is some expectation for growth in female representation in national police leadership in the coming years.<sup>11</sup>

The Haitian Armed Force was officially disbanded in 1995 following a period of military coups and was re-established in 2017. It plays a very limited role.<sup>12</sup> The army is not internationally recognized and, with no international standing, does not have official military-to-military contact with the U.S. military.

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) assisted in integrating WPS principles into HNP training and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) appointed throughout the country.<sup>13</sup> Police service members receive training on protecting vulnerable populations from sexual exploitation and violence each time they conduct training. A 2022 report noted that police academy graduates received training in gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive practices.<sup>14</sup> Civil society organizations, both national and international, also conduct gender training.

### *Work Environment*

Females in the formal sector receive 12 weeks of maternity leave (which does not meet the 14-week standard of the International Labor Organization). There is no paternity leave.<sup>15</sup> Expanding the length of paternity leave should be considered as it may correlate with lowered maternal mortality rates.<sup>16</sup> Women of all ranks have expressed concern over the lack of gender-appropriate uniforms and equipment and sex-separated housing or bathrooms.<sup>17</sup> The HNP overlooks women in the HNP both in deployment and promotion opportunities. The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) and other international partners work with the HNP to recruit and promote more women, in line with objectives set out in the 2017-21 Haitian National Police Strategic Development Plan.<sup>18</sup>

### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

Violence against women is a severe problem. Incidents of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls continue to climb at an alarming rate. Women are regularly subjected to high levels of sexual harassment in the workplace and schools.<sup>19</sup> According to reports, legislative efforts to pass an anti-

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Evens Sanon, "Haiti PM turns to military for help in fighting gangs," *Associated Press*, March 17, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/haiti-activate-military-gangs-bb05bdc98d0c7fafdcbbce5743223ed>.

<sup>13</sup> DCAF (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), "Gender Training for Security Sector Personnel," p. 4, <https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Practice%2BNote%2B12.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Government of Canada, "Helping to establish a National Police Academy in Haiti," May 2022, [https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/stories-histoires/2022/establish-national-police-haiti\\_creation-academie-police-haiti.aspx?lang=eng](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/stories-histoires/2022/establish-national-police-haiti_creation-academie-police-haiti.aspx?lang=eng).

<sup>15</sup> World Bank Group, p. 22.

<sup>16</sup> "More Paid Leave for Fathers Could Improve Mothers' Postpartum Health," Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, June 6, 2019, <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/hsph-in-the-news/paternity-leave-postpartum-health/>.

<sup>17</sup> WIIS "Latin America and the Caribbean WPS Assessment Tool- Haiti."

<sup>18</sup> BINUH reported that "the rate of Haitian policewomen increased from 9,39 percent in the 25th promotion to 21,34 percent in the 30th promotion." See "BINUH: Police Supports the Sensitization of Female Students To Apply in the Police," August 19, 2020, <https://binuh.unmissions.org/en/binuh-police-supports-sensitization-female-students-apply-police>.

<sup>19</sup> World Bank Group, "Haiti's Untapped Potential: An assessment of the barriers to gender equality," 2023, p. 22, <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/4b69af839b59351a5d7a245d71a57c13-0370012023/related/Haiti-Gender-Assessment-report-Summary.pdf>.

GBV law have failed, and a national GBV plan for 2017-2027 has not been implemented.<sup>20</sup> In terms of the HNP, documents used for police training purposes include notes on protecting vulnerable populations from sexual violence. There is currently a sexual abuse/exploitation/harassment program for National Police personnel provided by the CNAF.<sup>21</sup>

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

The Haiti National Police Force does not have a monitoring and evaluation system. The police collect sex-disaggregated data; however, the processing system runs slowly due to a lack of budget and equipment. Data is collected and recorded by hand, though not publicly reported.<sup>22</sup>

### **Recommendations**

The ongoing crises in Haiti have overwhelmed the capacity of the Haitian government and security forces to control the violence and deliver essential services to its citizens. The root causes of extreme violence have deeply gendered dimensions. Data consistently show that high levels of gender inequality between men and women more than double a country's chances of being a fragile state. It is thus of utmost importance that the Haitian government make every effort to mainstream gender perspectives and the principles of the WPS agenda outlined in its four pillars (participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery) into policies, practices, and institutions in the Haitian police force.

### **Recommendations**

For the Government of Haiti:

- Commit the political will to lead in advancing gender equality and the principles of the WPS agenda in its security force and institutions;
- Increase financial support for the Haitian Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights;
- Strengthen relationships with local communities, civil society, and human rights and women's organizations to build workable and sustainable programs that support WPS principles and protect women, children, and at-risk populations.
- Continue support for the CNAF's plan to recruit and promote more female police officers;
- Mandate sexual harassment and SGBV training in the Haitian National Police.

For the Haitian National Police:

- Implement the CNAF's plan to recruit and support female police officers and publish the details;
- Open all positions in the HNP to women;
- Complete Gender Focal Point training for GFPs who have not already completed the training;
- Broaden the accessibility of training for women in the HNP and mandate gender-sensitive training (e.g., SGBV, sexual harassment prevention) for all police officers and force personnel;
- Communicate a concrete goal for more equitable promotion policies and increase female representation in HNP leadership;
- Encourage transparency by digitizing sex-disaggregated data on police operations and allow public access to the data outside of audits;
- Provide uniforms and equipment fitted for female bodies.

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<sup>20</sup> OCHA ReliefWeb, "Addressing gender-based violence in Haiti (June 2023)," June 2023, p. 1, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/addressing-gender-based-violence-haiti-june-2023>.

<sup>21</sup> WIIS "Latin America and the Caribbean WPS Assessment Tool- Haiti."

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

## Honduras - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Honduras has not developed a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Honduras' international commitments to the WPS agenda are reflected in national legislation and the Plan of Gender Equality 2010-2022. However, the government's efforts toward integrating WPS principles focus predominately on the National Police, and there is not enough public information regarding the Honduran military to evaluate progress in integrating gender equality and WPS principles in its institutions, policies, and practices. In short, WPS values have not fully landed in the Honduran national security institutions.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Honduras is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Honduras signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has yet to sign the Optional Protocol of CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which, in part, works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, support for gender equality and WPS principles is present in key national plans and documents. One plan with a focus on gender equality is the "National Women's Policy: Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras: 2010-2022" (*Política Nacional de la Mujer. II Plan de Igualdad y Equidad de Género de Honduras 2010-2022*).<sup>1</sup> A second plan is the "National Action Plan against Gender Violence 2014-2022" (*Plan Nacional Contra la Violencia Hacia las Mujeres, 2014-2022*).<sup>2</sup> It is relevant to observe that the time period in both documents expired in 2022, and no further updates have been reported at the time of writing. The National Action Plan Against Gender Violence also presents other documents and legislation related to the issue of gender equality.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, Honduras established an Institute for Women (*Instituto Nacional de la Mujer*) as a department regarding women and gender equality.<sup>4</sup> Government concern regarding levels of sexual harassment influenced the decision to elevate the Institute for Women to a cabinet-level secretariat in March 2022. However, the Institute did not receive adequate funding levels, nor was there a commitment to provide adequate GBV-domestic violence training to police and other government agencies.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Política Nacional de la Mujer, II Plan de Igualdad y Equidad de Género de Honduras 2010-2022", *Instituto Nacional de la Mujer*, December 12, 2018, [https://siteal.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sit\\_accion\\_files/hn\\_0315.pdf](https://siteal.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sit_accion_files/hn_0315.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> "Plan Nacional Contra La Violencia Hacia Las Mujeres 2014-2022," *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, January 6, 2014, <https://consensomontevideo.cepal.org/es/node/1845>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> "Oficina Municipal de la Mujer," accessed June 18, 2023, <https://sgomm.inam.gob.hn/index.php/el-inam/>.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State, *2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Honduras*, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/honduras/>.



The Gender Equality and Equity Plan references the police but does not specify the Honduras Ministry of Defense (MoD) as a principal actor. In 2016, the MoD created the Unit of Human Rights and Gender Equality and has aided in the creation of gender units for all the branches of the armed forces.<sup>6</sup>

In terms of the Police Forces, Honduras has the “Organic Law of the Secretary of State in the Office of Security and the National Police of Honduras” (*Ley Orgánica de la Secretariade Estado en el Despacho de Seguridad y de la Policía Nacional de Honduras*), which aims to promote professional opportunities for women and bans gender discrimination.<sup>7</sup>

With the appointment of a gender advisor (GENAD), there has also been budget and personnel allocated towards the WPS implementation.

### **Institutional Policy and Practice**

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

WPS principles are integrated into major directives and guidance documents and referred to within the 2017 *Ley Orgánica de la Secretaría de Estado en el Despacho de Seguridad y de la Policía Nacional de Honduras*, which expresses anti-discrimination guidelines and equal opportunities for women.<sup>8</sup> Insufficient public data is available to determine whether WPS principles are integrated into military operational planning processes.

In regards to a gender advisor (GENAD) appointed for the military, there is the Directorate of Human Rights and Gender Equity (*Dirección de Derechos Humanos y Equidad de Género*) the MoD. There is also a gender advisor (GENAD) appointed to the national police with the police gender unit.

#### *Gender in the Ranks*

Publicly available information on numbers and rank in the military and police forces is unavailable. A 2020 study on the Honduran civilian police force reported that as of 2017, the police force had 14,950 members. No sex-disaggregated data was available, but estimates were that women constituted 20% of the police force and 24% of new recruits in 2020.<sup>9</sup>

There is not enough publicly available information regarding whether all of the positions in the military are open to women. For the National Police, all policing jobs are open to women, including law enforcement special operations jobs and units.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> “Boletín Informativo enero-marzo 2022 Derechos Humanos de las FFAA”, *Secretaria de Defensa Nacional* March 2022, <https://sedena.gob.hn/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Boletin-DDHH-de-las-FFAA.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> “Ley Orgánicade La Secretaría de Estado En El Despacho de Seguridad y de La Policía Nacional de Honduras,” *Instituto de Acceso a la Información Pública*, 2017, [https://portalunico.iaip.gob.hn/portal/ver\\_documento.php?uid=OTQxNzAzODkzNDc2MzQ4NzEyNDYxOTg3MjM0Mg==](https://portalunico.iaip.gob.hn/portal/ver_documento.php?uid=OTQxNzAzODkzNDc2MzQ4NzEyNDYxOTg3MjM0Mg==).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Washington Office on Latin America, *The Honduran National Police: Evaluating the Professionalization of the Civilian Police Force.*” August 2020, p. 6, 15, <https://www.wola.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/HN-Police-ENG-8.28.pdf>. Source cited in the report: *Mujeres invisibles y acosadas en la Policía Nacional de Honduras. Contracorriente.* June 22, 2019, <https://contracorriente.red/2019/06/22/mujeres-invisibles-y-acosadas-en-la-policia-nacional-de-honduras/>.

<sup>10</sup> WIIS “Latin America and the Caribbean WPS Assessment Tool - Honduras.”

In terms of troop deployment, Honduras is one of only three countries in this study to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping operations. As of May 31, 2023, 11 male and 7 female members of the Honduras armed forces are deployed.

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The Secretary of Security reported the existence of learning tools, including a Training Workshop for Gender Trainers and the Workshops on Gender Equality, available for the police and the citizens.<sup>11</sup> The amount of personnel trained is not recorded.

Within the MoD, a relevant educational effort was observed in 2022 when the Ministry began the editorial project “Incorporating Women in the Armed Forces” to highlight the role of women in the armed forces.<sup>12</sup> Recognizing the role of women is vital to encourage the next generations to join the Armed Forces of every country in the world, and is encouraged by the writers of this report.

There is evidence that the cadets get training in human rights during their courses, the CAMFFAA for the soldiers, the Combat Leader Course (LICOMB), the basic course (CIBFFAA), and the intermediate course (CIMFFAA).<sup>13</sup> However, there is not enough publicly available information specifically about gender training in Honduras’ MoD. In the case of the Police Forces, there are legal provisions that promote professional development opportunities for female police and bans against gender discrimination.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

The national law states that there are human resource policies for the military and the national police, as well as childcare and family leave available. However, on average, maternity pay in Honduras is quite modest compared to the rest of Central America, with only 10 weeks provided; four before the due date and six after.<sup>15</sup>

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

In regards to monitoring and reporting, there is a monthly report (*Rendición de cuentas del sector público de Honduras, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional*), in addition to an evaluation by the *Tribunal Superior de Cuentas*.

It is also important to mention that there is no sex-disaggregated data made available regarding the monitoring and reporting of WPS principles.

### **Recommendations**

To further pursue WPS objectives, it is recommended that the Honduran government:

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<sup>11</sup> Producción de Productos por Categoría Programática, *Republica de Honduras Secretaria de Finanzas 2022*, [https://api.iaip.gob.hn/api/public/serve\\_archivo/?idarchivo=MTYyNzYyNQ==](https://api.iaip.gob.hn/api/public/serve_archivo/?idarchivo=MTYyNzYyNQ==).

<sup>12</sup> Boletín Informativo, Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Boletín Informativo, Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Victor Anaya, “Which Central American Country Gives Workers the Most Paid Time Off and Maternity/Paternity Leave?”, *Central America Stories*, February 10, 2023, <https://www.centralamerica.com/investing/business/paid-time-off-in-central-america/#:~:text=The%20country%20grants%2015%20days,%20meanwhile%20is%20three%20days.>

- Draft and implement a WPS NAP and include specific objectives regarding gender equality in other governmental strategic plans.
- Allow for more information on gender and WPS principles to be available to the public.
- Mention and/or train military personnel towards the principles of WPS in important missions and pre-deployment operations.
- Include women in the Armed Forces decision-making positions.
- Make sure the budget goes directly towards training and education on the WPS principles, as well as the appointed GENAD.
- Include mention of gender or women in the Functions of the Foreign Ministry of 2023 and the Defense Ministry as well.

## Jamaica - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Jamaica does not have a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Jamaica shows real progress towards gender equality and WPS goals in its security forces. The Jamaican government adopted national policy frameworks on gender equality, worked towards increasing women in its security forces, and continued to address central issues related to important institutional policies and practices that support women's advancement in its military and police forces, such as gender-based violence and sexual harassment prevention programs and addressing better work environment conditions. However, more can be done to address ongoing concerns about harassment in the security forces and to ensure that institutional policies support the continued advancement of women in the field of peace and security.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Jamaica is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Jamaica signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has yet to sign the Optional Protocol of CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment and is a signatory of the American Convention on Human Rights "Pact of San José, Costa Rica" (OAS).

At the national level, national security documents contain references to WPS principles, though mainly through a focus on work against GBV and sexual abuse.<sup>1</sup> The Jamaican Constitution prohibits gender-based discrimination.<sup>2</sup> Though Jamaica has yet to adopt an official WPS NAP, it has an active 10-Year National Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence in Jamaica (2017-2027) focused on the elimination of GBV, led by the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Justice. It adopted a National Policy for Gender Equality in March 2011.<sup>3</sup> The Bureau of Gender Affairs resides in the National Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport.

On October 13, 2021, the Jamaican House of Representatives approved the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Protection Act (LPPAS) (also known as the Sexual Harassment Act) 2021, which covers employment-related sexual harassment issues in the workplace, schools, and other institutions.<sup>4</sup> The Jamaican government hired sexual harassment investigators and offered sensitization sessions for Jamaican

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<sup>1</sup> "A New Approach: National Security Policy for Jamaica," Organization of American States (OAS), 2013, <https://www.oas.org/csh/spanish/documentos/National%20Security%20Policy%20-%20Jamaica%20-%202007.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Jamaica Constitution of 1962 with Amendments through 2015, 2015, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Jamaica\\_2015.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Jamaica_2015.pdf?lang=en).

<sup>3</sup> [s://jis.gov.jm/10-year-action-plan-eliminate-gender-based-violence-launched/](https://jis.gov.jm/10-year-action-plan-eliminate-gender-based-violence-launched/).

"National Policy for Gender Equality." Bureau of Women's Affairs (Gender Affairs), 2011, <https://www.nlj.gov.jm/files/u8/NPGE-JA-FINALwCover21311.pdf>; Chris Patterson, "10-Year Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence Launched," *Jamaica Information Service*, December 7, 2017, [http](http://)

<sup>4</sup> "Grange welcomes passage of sexual harassment legislation," Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport, October 21, 2023, <https://mcges.gov.jm/index.php/gender/item/804-grange-welcomes-passage-of-sexual-harassment-legislation>.

businesses. The government agreed to hire gender focal points for various government offices. The Sexual Harassment Act went into effect on July 3, 2023.<sup>5</sup>

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF), founded in 1962, is one of the largest military forces in the Caribbean, consisting of an infantry Regiment, Reserve Corps, Air Wing, and Coast Guard. Its primary duties include defending against aggression and internal civil unrest, restoring law and order, search and rescue, counter-narcotics operations, and humanitarian relief.<sup>6</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

Apart from the Jamaica Defense Reserve Force, the Regular Force has just over 2,500 officers and soldiers. Women constitute approximately 20% of the JDF.<sup>7</sup> The JDF continues its commitment to increasing women in its ranks; in 2022, the JDF inducted 58 females into the regular force out of 256 new members (22.4%).<sup>8</sup> As of July 2023, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) comprised 12,300 officers. It continues to expand its force, with a target of 15,000 by the end of 2023. It accepted 1,300 recruits in 2021/2022 and signaled its intent to hire an additional 1,250 recruits in 2022/2023.<sup>9</sup> Data on the percentage of women police officers were unavailable.

### *GENADs and GFPs*

There are established Gender Focal Points within the JDF and JCF. As part of The Sexual Harassment Act (2021), 18 Gender Focal Points were appointed to assist in mainstreaming gender in public-sector bodies.<sup>10</sup>

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

WPS principles are implemented in the training of junior-level personnel, but not in basic training.<sup>11</sup> The JDF has sponsored domestic violence prevention and intervention workshops for its personnel.<sup>12</sup> Mid-level military personnel must complete “fraternization/sexual policy” [sic] programming as part of the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid; Alicia Smith, “Sexual harassment law to take effect July 3, 2023,” *Jamaica Observer*, June 23, 2023, <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/sexual-harassment-law-to-take-effect-july-3/>.

<sup>6</sup> “The Jamaica Defence Force,” Office of the Prime Minister, [https://opm.gov.jm/opm\\_agency/jamaica-defence-force/#:~:text=The%20JDF%20is%20mandated%20to,Search%20and%20Rescue%20\(SAR\)%3Bn](https://opm.gov.jm/opm_agency/jamaica-defence-force/#:~:text=The%20JDF%20is%20mandated%20to,Search%20and%20Rescue%20(SAR)%3Bn).

<sup>7</sup> “The JDF,” Jamaica Defence Force website, [https://www.jdfweb.com/the-jdf/#:~:text=The%20Regular%20Force%20has%20seven,Support%20arm%20%E2%80%93%20a%20Logistics%20Battalion](https://www.jdfweb.com/the-jdf/#:~:text=The%20Regular%20Force%20has%20seven,Support%20arm%20%E2%80%93%20a%20Logistics%20Battalion;); “JDF Focuses on Recruiting More Women,” Jamaica Defence Force website, <https://www.jdfweb.com/news/jdf-focuses-on-recruiting-more-women/>.

<sup>8</sup> Mickella Anderson, “256 Individuals now Members of the JDF,” *Jamaica Information Service*, September 25, 2022, <https://jis.gov.jm/256-individuals-now-members-of-the-jdf/>.

<sup>9</sup> “JCF on track to surpass recruitment target for fiscal year,” *Our Today*, February 11, 2023, <https://our.today/jcf-on-track-to-surpass-recruitment-target-for-fiscal-year/>; Rochelle Williams, “328 New Constables Join The Police Force,” *Jamaica Information Service*, September 15, 2022, <https://jis.gov.jm/328-new-constables-join-the-police-force/>.

<sup>10</sup> Jamaica Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport, “Sexual Harassment Act takes effect July 3,” June 14, 2023, <https://mcges.gov.jm/index.php/gender/item/962-sexual-harassment-act-takes-effect-july-3>.

<sup>11</sup> “Jamaica National Service Corp,” *Caribbean Military Academy*, accessed June 19, 2023, [https://caribbeanmilitaryacademy.edu.jm/jnsc\\_1.php](https://caribbeanmilitaryacademy.edu.jm/jnsc_1.php).

<sup>12</sup> “Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Workshop,” *Jamaica Defence Force*, 2020, <https://www.jdfweb.com/domestic-violence-prevention-and-intervention-workshop/>.

intermediate training.<sup>13</sup> Senior-level military personnel do not have to complete any WPS-adjacent training.<sup>14</sup> A major new outcome arising from the passage of the Sexual Harassment Act in 2021 is the development of a gender certification for the JDF, in keeping with the National Policy for Gender Equality.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

The JCF is currently in the process of undergoing significant changes to its structure. According to the Minister of National Security, these changes are part of a more substantial commitment to make necessary investments and build a strong organization. These commitments include improving the infrastructure of police precincts, providing adequate resources for recruiting and training 1,500 new applicants yearly, and training officers on how to adequately address gender-based violence, among other crimes.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

In 2019, the JDF and JCF announced the creation of sexual harassment policies for their security forces. Specific guidelines were established, and broader definitions of what constituted vulnerable groups were included.<sup>17</sup> The JCF sexual harassment policy was subsequently published in a Jamaican newspaper.<sup>18</sup>

The Jamaica Defence Force's official policy is that "any form of sexual harassment, be it verbal or non-verbal, physical, written, visual or graphic, is unacceptable conduct, will not be tolerated, and will be punished severely."<sup>19</sup> The JDF also has a policy prohibiting relationships between servicemembers (Personal Relationships and Fraternalisation Policy).<sup>20</sup> In recent years, however, there have been numerous reports of sexual harassment and abuse by servicemen in the JDF.<sup>21</sup>

#### *Family Policies*

The Jamaican government provides women with three months paid maternity leave and 20 working days' paternity and adoption leave with pay for fathers and adoptive parents.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> "Jamaica National Service Corp," *Caribbean Military Academy*, accessed June 19, 2023, [https://caribbeanmilitaryacademy.edu.jm/jnsc\\_2.php](https://caribbeanmilitaryacademy.edu.jm/jnsc_2.php).

<sup>14</sup> "Jamaica National Service Corp (JNSC)," *Caribbean Military Academy*, accessed June 19, 2023, <https://caribbeanmilitaryacademy.edu.jm/jnscschool.php>.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, "Sexual Harassment Law."

<sup>16</sup> Angus, Garfield, "JCF an Employer of Choice – Minister Chang", *Jamaica Information Service* (June 12, 2023), <https://jis.gov.jm/jcf-an-employer-of-choice-minister-chang/>.

<sup>17</sup> Jamaica Defence Force, "The JDF Sexual Harassment Policy: In Summary," <https://www.jdfweb.com/news/the-jdf-sexual-harassment-policy-in-summary/#:~:text=The%20JDF%20Policy%20position%20on,and%20will%20be%20punished%20severely>.

<sup>18</sup> Erica Virtue, "Editors' Forum | Forces have tough stance on sexual harassment - One 'no' is allowed – Meade," *The Gleaner*, March 17, 2019, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20190317/editors-forum-forces-have-tough-stance-sexual-harassment-one-no-allowed-meade>; "Sexual harassment protocol in Jamaica Constabulary Force," *The Gleaner*, March 17, 2019, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20190317/sexual-harassment-protocol-jamaica-constabulary-force>.

<sup>19</sup> Jamaica Defense Force, "JDF Sexual Harassment Policy."

<sup>20</sup> Jamaica Gleaner, "JDF officer implicated in sexual misconduct scandal asked to resign," December 15, 2022, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20221215/jdf-officer-implicated-sexual-misconduct-scandal-asked-resign>

<sup>21</sup> Jamaica Gleaner, "Women cling to hem of incoming army chief," September 24, 2021, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20210924/women-cling-hem-incoming-army-chief>.

<sup>22</sup> "Jamaica Grants Paternal, Adoptive Leave to Public Workers," *AP NEWS*, January 4, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/jamaica-andrew-holness-san-juan-9a27ad5a0e9a22b8c25c1679fb09e54b>; "Family Matters – Paternity & Adoption Leave," *Jamaica Information Service*, February 27, 2023, <https://jis.gov.jm/information/get-the-facts/family-matters-paternity-adoption->

### *Equipment and Facilities*

In 2019, the National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, assured that the Government would invest in improving infrastructure at police stations to create facilities and working conditions suitable for men and women of the JCF.<sup>23</sup> As of 2023, the infrastructural updates, including bathrooms and barracks, have been completed.<sup>24</sup> The UN previously noted resource allocations for WPS implementation at the Jamaican Ministry of National Security, which has invested in policing infrastructure.<sup>25</sup> Regarding equipment, female JDF servicemembers receive appropriately fitted uniforms. Regarding uniform equipment, female JDF servicemembers receive appropriately fitted uniforms.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Jamaica's National Policy for Gender Equality 2011 commits the Jamaican government to develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to collect and disseminate information to all stakeholders, including ministries and civil society. However, the results are not publicly available.<sup>26</sup>

### **Recommendations**

For the Government of Jamaica:

- Adopt a WPS NAP that complements national-level gender efforts to advance gender equality and gender mainstreaming in its security forces.
- Continue to ensure that military and police personnel at every rank receive sexual harassment and abuse prevention and gender sensitivity training;
- Commit to gender-responsive budgeting to track progress in training, programming, and institutional capacity building related to gender mainstreaming goals in the security forces.

Recommendations for the Jamaica Defense Force:

- Implement WPS principles into the basic training of military personnel at all ranks to improve gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender perspectives;
- Assign GENADs and GFPs to senior military command level to improve gender considerations in strategic and logistical actions within the JDF;
- Continue utilizing the Defense Board for the review of complaints related to sexual harassment and assault.
- Commit to collecting and publishing sex-disaggregated data to guide the monitoring and evaluation process and improve decision-making and resource allocation.

Recommendations for the Jamaica Constabulary Force:

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[leave/#:~:text=Effective%20January%201%2C%202023%2C%20biological,and%20adoption%20leave%20with%20pay.&text=In%20addition%20to%20these%20new,40%20to%2060%20working%20days.](#)

<sup>23</sup> Chad Bryan, "Infrastructure at Police Stations to be Improved," Jamaica Information Service, February 26, 2019, <https://jis.gov.jm/infrastructure-at-police-stations-to-be-improved/>

<sup>24</sup> 2023 WIIS Assessment Tool, *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Shanique Riley, "Infrastructure at Police Stations to Be Improved," *The Ministry of National Security*, September 9, 2019, <https://www.mns.gov.jm/you-are-here-home-%C2%BB-infrastructure-police-stations-be-improved-infrastructure-police-stations-be>.

<sup>26</sup> Jamaica Policy for Gender Equality, p. 32.



- Evaluate sexual harassment and GBV programming to address ongoing concerns of sexual harassment in the JCF;
- Commit to collecting and publishing sex-disaggregated data to guide the monitoring and evaluation process and improve decision-making and resource allocation;
- Ensure personnel serving as Gender Focal Points are appropriately trained to support senior leadership in gender mainstreaming and advancing gender equality in the ranks.

## Saint Kitts and Nevis - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

St. Kitts and Nevis does not have a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

St. Kitts and Nevis shows some political will but requires a more significant commitment to progress toward achieving gender equality and the principles of the WPS agenda. Institutionalized anti-female policies reflect significant cultural barriers towards integrating a gender perspective and balance into security conversations: departmental documents and messaging signal slow integration of women into security forces. Violence against women continues to be a severe and pervasive problem. There is a need to actively commit the political will and resources to integrate a gender perspective into domestic police and military forces to ensure comprehensive considerations of gender-related issues, specifically as they relate to all forms of gender-based violence.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, St. Kitts and Nevis is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). It signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Optional Protocol of CEDAW. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, some advancement is evident. The St. Kitts and Nevis National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) was launched in 2018 to provide the institutional framework to empower women and advance gender equality.<sup>1</sup> In early 2022, the government approved the St. Kitts and Nevis Gender Equality Policy and accompanying Action Plan.<sup>2</sup>

While the political will to advance policies that benefit women is evident, the requisite commitment to transform political will into actional policies is urgently needed. For example, the St. Kitts and Nevis military has made progress toward prohibiting sexual harassment, but no national-level prohibition of workplace sexual harassment exists.

### Institutional Policy and Practice

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

The St. Kitts and Nevis government established the Department of Gender Affairs to advance gender equality. The Department runs several gender-based programs, including gender sensitization and mainstreaming training for children under age 12.<sup>3</sup> Information on what training is offered for security forces is unavailable. The most recent restructuring of domestic police policy does not mention sex or

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<sup>1</sup> Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, *Responses to UNSG's Report on Women's Economic Empowerment*, 2020, <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/65/MS%20Inputs%20Review%20Theme/St%20Kitts%20and%20Nevis.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "St. Kitts and Nevis strengthening response to gender-based violence," *St. Kitts and Nevis Information Service*, October 12, 2022, <https://www.skni.gov.kn/2022/10/12/st-kitts-and-nevis-strengthening-response-to-gender-based-violence/>.

gender and only refers to women twice, and WPS principles are not integrated into military or police planning processes.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Gender in the Ranks*

The St. Kitts and Nevis Defense Force (SKNDF) comprises two units of approximately 300 personnel: the infantry and the Coast Guard. It works closely with the Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force (RSCNPF). There is no publicly available data regarding the gender composition of either force. Data regarding the gender composition of the RSCNPF were unavailable. The Central Committee of the Police Welfare Association does require that women hold three of the twelve elected member positions.<sup>5</sup> There are no other known gender quotas or goals regarding force integration.

As part of its move to ensure gender equity, the St. Kitts and Nevis police force announced during a meeting in August 2022 its intention to study whether women have adequate opportunities to advance in the police force. High-ranking officials admitted that the police force has few women in its higher ranks. It is unclear whether any recommendations followed.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

The St. Kitts and Nevis government noted in a 2018 report that it trained 116 Gender Focal Points (GFPs). However, it did not provide information about the distribution of the GFPs.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The St. Kitts and Nevis Department of Gender Affairs offers gender mainstreaming and sensitization training and domestic violence workshops for many sectors of society. Thus far, security practitioners are not required to take them.<sup>8</sup> The Department offered training on the Domestic and Sexual Violence Complaints and Response Protocol, adopted in November 2018, to address the country's high level of domestic violence.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

While there is no evidence that women are barred from working as practitioners in the security field, there are significant indicators of widespread barriers to women in the workplace. Legal restrictions have been put in place barring women from working in factories and specific fields, including mining and construction, water, and energy.<sup>10</sup> Legally banning women from these male-dominated fields perpetuates gender-based stereotypes and hampers efforts to achieve gender equality, essential for promoting peace,

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<sup>4</sup> Delano F. Bart, "The Police Act, 2002," *Saint Christopher and Nevis The Police Act 2002*, 2002, <http://stkittsnevis.net/pdf/policeact.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Bart, "Police Act."

<sup>6</sup> "Government to review opportunities in St Kitts and Nevis police force to ensure gender equality," *SKNNews*, August 27, 2023, <https://sknnews.com/saint-kitts-nevis/government-to-review-opportunities-in-st-kitts-and-nevis-police-force-to-ensure-gender-equality-27569153/>.

<sup>7</sup> Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, Country Report, The Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis 2013-2018, Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), 2018, p. 13, [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Saint\\_Kitts\\_and\\_Nevis.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/64/National-reviews/Saint_Kitts_and_Nevis.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> "Department of Gender Affairs," *Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs*, Accessed June 13, 2023, <https://socialdevelopment.gov.kn/gender-affairs/#1602013335783-2538f772-6b90>.

<sup>9</sup> Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, "Responses to UNSG Report."

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State, 2022 Country Report.

security, and sustainable development. Regarding maternity leave, women have 13 weeks of maternity leave paid by the government. St. Kitts and Nevis does not have paternity leave or parental leave.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

No law explicitly addresses the problem of sexual harassment. Incidents of sexual harassment and abuse fall under the jurisdiction of the Protection of Employment Act.<sup>12</sup> Previous statements to the United Nations indicated potential issues regarding human and/or sex trafficking in immigrant communities in the nation; no further documentation has been made available.<sup>13</sup> The St. Kitts and Nevis military does have a sexual harassment policy.<sup>14</sup> No similar policy is known to exist for the police force.

#### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

Sex-disaggregated data for military or police operations are reported. The prime minister commissioned an upcoming review of gender equity to examine the rates of women in the police force and the barriers that prevent women from joining the force. There is currently no publication date for this report.<sup>15</sup>

#### **Recommendations**

St. Kitts and Nevis is the smallest sovereign state in the Americas in size and population. Its police and defense forces are small, and the country's extensive security and defense role—illegal drug and gun trafficking, disaster relief and response, and humanitarian relief—in the Eastern Caribbean strains resources. Integrating women in security forces strengthens institutional effectiveness and achieves operational goals at the strategic, tactical, and operational goals. Developing a NAP with assistance from the UN, civil society, and women's organizations will produce a comprehensive whole-of-government approach that will lead to sustainable policies and practices to integrate gender equality and WPS principles in its security forces.

For the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis:

- Engage with civil society groups and women's rights advocates, among other stakeholders, to draft and implement a WPS NAP to advance gender equality and WPS principles in security forces;
- Prioritize the collection and publication of sex-disaggregated data in the security forces;
- Finalize and publish the pending review of gender equity in the St. Kitts and Nevis police force;
- Promote gender integration by increasing the funding of the Department of Gender Affairs;
- Mandate gender-sensitive training and GBV/sexual harassment and assault prevention training for all police and defense forces at all ranks and grades;

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<sup>11</sup> International Labor Organization, St. Kitts and Nevis Maternity Protection - 2011, [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.sectionReport1?p\\_lang=en&p\\_structure=3&p\\_year=2011&p\\_start=1&p\\_increment=10&p\\_sc\\_id=2000&p\\_countries=KN&p\\_print=Y](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.sectionReport1?p_lang=en&p_structure=3&p_year=2011&p_start=1&p_increment=10&p_sc_id=2000&p_countries=KN&p_print=Y).

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of State, 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Saint Kitts and Nevis, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/saint-kitts-and-nevis/>.

<sup>13</sup> "Experts of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Commend Saint Kitts and Nevis on Adopted Policies, Ask about Women in Agriculture and Human Trafficking," *OHCHR*, October 13, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/10/experts-committee-elimination-discrimination-against-women-commend-saint-kitts-and>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> "Upcoming Review to Examine Gender Equity in the Police Force," *Saint Kitts and Nevis Consulate in Toronto*, August 17, 2022, <https://skncgtoronto.gov.kn/2022/08/17/upcoming-review-to-examine-gender-equity-in-the-police-force/>.

- Remove barriers to employment opportunities and recruit more women in the security and defense field.

For the Royal St. Kitts and Nevis Police Force:

- Prioritize integrating mandatory gender-sensitive and GBV training programs at all ranks in the security forces;
- Draft and publish a sexual harassment policy for the police force, if such a policy is lacking;
- Collect and publicly report sex-disaggregated data to support more effective planning and integration of gender equality and WPS principles in its force;
- Open all positions in the police force to women and prioritize promoting women to leadership positions;
- Revise institutional policies and practices (family and maternity/paternity leave, promotion, child care) to support women in the force.

For the St. Kitts and Nevis Defense Force:

- Create a gender equity review and publish the findings upon project completion;
- Develop and integrate mandatory gender-sensitivity training and sexual harassment and assault prevention training for all service personnel and ranks;
- Ensure
- Revise institutional policies and practices (family and maternity/paternity leave, promotion, childcare) that support women in the defense force and open all positions to women.

## Saint Lucia - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Saint Lucia does not have a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

St. Lucia shows some progress toward realizing the WPS agenda. Recent government-led action toward gender mainstreaming shows positive growth toward integrating gender perspectives in the police force. St. Lucia has no standing military force. However, St. Lucia has no comprehensive national gender policy nor a national action plan to respond to sexual- and gender-based violence. The St. Lucien government provides little information on the status of gender mainstreaming in the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force (RSLPF), nor data on gender-relevant training and sex-disaggregated data on the RSLPF and its forces. High-level commitment to the development and funding of such initiatives and to a reassessment of current institutional policies and practices is lacking. St. Lucia should consider the adoption of a WPS NAP that identifies the RSLPF as a principal partner and outlines specific strategies and measures for gender mainstreaming in the force. Current institutional policies related to recruitment and promotion should be revised and funding provided to provide needed facilities and equipment to retain women in the force.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, St. Lucia is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). St. Lucia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has not signed the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, St. Lucia shows moderate political will, such as addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and other forms of discrimination against women. The St. Lucian constitution guarantees fundamental rights regardless of sex, and sex-based discrimination is illegal.<sup>1</sup> St. Lucia has partnered strategically with regional partners, including the UN, OAS, and others, to advance gender-responsive initiatives in recent years. In 2020, St. Lucia became the first Caribbean nation to meet UN standards for measuring victimization, including metrics regarding GBV, strengthening capacities to respond to GBV and other forms of violence and discrimination against women.<sup>2</sup> However, no national strategic action plan on gender-based violence is currently in effect.<sup>3</sup>

Saint Lucia does not have a comprehensive national gender policy. However, there is some indication that the Department of Gender Relations is in the final stages of a National Gender Equality Policy and Strategic Plan.<sup>4</sup> It did develop a National Adaptation Plan 2018-2028, a ten-year process to address priority cross-

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 1.01 Constitution of Saint Lucia, December 31, 2006, Government of St. Lucia, <https://www.govt.lc/constitution>.

<sup>2</sup> "UNODC supports Saint Lucia in generating data on victimization and safety," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, July 3, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2020/July/unodc-supports-saint-lucia-in-generating-data-on-victimization-and-safety.html>

<sup>3</sup> UN Women, Saint Lucia, <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/caribbean-gender-portal/saint-lucia>.

<sup>4</sup> "The Gender Agenda," *The Voice*, August 17, 2020, <https://thevoiceslu.com/2020/08/the-gender-agenda/>.

sectoral adaptation measures that, according to the Plan, will integrate gender mainstreaming in all sectors.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the lack of a chapter outlining the gender mainstreaming strategy or a detailed presentation on its implementation suggests that gender mainstreaming is not a top priority in the government's 15-year development plan.

## **Institutional Policy and Practice**

### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

The National Adaptation Plan 2018-2028 does not reference the WPS agenda but does highlight a variety of gender considerations with the aim of “decreasing gender-based vulnerabilities, promoting gender equality in decision making and ensuring that the implementation of adaptation measures does not impose an additional burden to women in particular.”<sup>6</sup> The government of St. Lucia has empowered the Bureau of Gender Relations, the government ministry dedicated to gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender perspectives, to act on these measures.<sup>7</sup>

According to the St. Lucia government, existing protocols such as those mentioned above (CEDAW, Beijing Platform, and the Belém do Pará Conventions) guide the RSLPF.<sup>8</sup> Based on reports submitted to the OAS and in national reviews of the Belém do Pará Convention, RSLPF strategy, policy, and planning documents incorporate fundamental WPS principles.<sup>9</sup>

### *Gender in the Ranks*

The RSLPF reported in 2021 that its force consisted of approximately 1,000 officers.<sup>10</sup> Data regarding the gender makeup of the RSLPF are not publicly available. Women are not barred from any position or promotion in the ranks. The current RSLPF police commissioner is Crusita Descartes-Pelius, the first woman to serve in that position.<sup>11</sup> St. Lucia has no standing military force, though it is

### *Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points*

Reportedly, the St. Lucian government appointed Gender Focal Points to monitor and guide gender mainstreaming in their respective departments.<sup>12</sup>

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

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<sup>5</sup> Government of Saint Lucia, “Saint Lucia’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP),” 2018–2028, 2018, Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development, <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents/Parties/SLU-NAP-May-2018.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> “Saint Lucia’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP),” p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> “Saint Lucia Bureau of Gender Relations,” *Saint Lucia - Access Government*, accessed June 14, 2023, <https://www.govt.lc/ministries/education/gender-relations>.

<sup>8</sup> “Saint Lucia Country Report Third Round,” *Organization of American States Inter-American Commission of Women Follow-Up Mechanism to the Belem do Para Convention*, November 21, 2017, p. 7, <https://belemdopara.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FinalReport2017-SaintLucia.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Perry Stanislas, “The changing perceptions of St. Lucian policing: how St. Lucian police offices view contemporary policing,” *Police Policy and Practice*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2021, p. 341.

<sup>11</sup> “Prime Minister announces historic appointment of female Police Commissioner,” Government of Saint Lucia website, <https://www.govt.lc/news/prime-minister-announces-historic-appointment-of-female-police-commissioner>; “St. Lucia has a new police commissioner,” *Caribbean News Global*, March 1, 2023: <https://www.caribbeannewsglobal.com/st-lucia-has-a-new-police-commissioner-2/>.

<sup>12</sup> “The Gender Agenda.”



Police complete a curriculum including GBV through the Training School. The Division of Gender Relations facilitates the domestic violence sensitization training module for police recruits.<sup>13</sup> Officers are required to complete gender sensitivity training if attached to a “Vulnerable Persons Team,” though it is unclear whether other officers also receive this training.”<sup>14</sup> The Department of Gender Relations trained public officials in gender-based analysis and gender budgeting and planning. Most recently, in September of 2022, 24 officers received training in addressing domestic and intimate partner violence perpetrated against LGBTQI+ individuals, signaling a significant shift in the representation of gender mainstreaming initiatives.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Work Environment*

The St. Lucia government pays for 13 weeks of maternity leave, regardless of age, nationality, or marital status. St. Lucia also provides five days of paternity leave.<sup>16</sup> No publicly available data regarding equipment provided to women or appropriate facilities for women are available. A 2021 study of St. Lucian policing identified institutional weaknesses in promotion procedures, insufficient resources, and effective police recruitment that harm police performance, morale, and retention.<sup>17</sup>

#### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

There is no publicly available data on anti-harassment or abuse policies within the RSLPF.

#### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

St. Lucia’s National Adaptation Plan requires collecting and assessing gender-disaggregated data to ensure proper implementation of various targets in the plan. However, there is no requirement to make this data publicly available. While it is not published, there is internal sex-disaggregated data collected regarding police operations. However, efforts to systematically collect data are constrained by a lack of resources, qualified personnel, and sustained support from government leadership.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Recommendations**

For the Government of Saint Lucia:

- Lead in committing the political will to adopt a WPS NAP, integrating stated national implementation goals and objectives to advance gender equality and gender mainstreaming in government institutions, policies, and practices.
- Commit the necessary resources and staff to support the Bureau of Gender Relations in implementing stated gender mainstreaming goals and objectives.
- Strengthen data collection efforts that contribute to better decision-making and resource allocation;

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> “Saint Lucia Country Report Third Round,” p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> “2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Saint Lucia,” *US Department of State*, 2022: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/saint-lucia/>

<sup>16</sup> Government of St. Lucia, Collective Agreement Between the Government of Saint Lucia and the Saint Lucia Civil Service Association, for the period April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2022, pp. 11-12, <https://www.govt.lc/media.govt.lc/www/resources/legislation/csa-collective-agreement-2019-2022.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Perry Stanislas, “St. Lucian policing,” pp. 346, 350.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Development Program, “Advisory Note 02: Sex- and Age-disaggregated Data (SADD),” Barbados and Eastern Caribbean, September 2022, <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/ADVISORY%20NOTE%20-%20%20SADD.pdf>.

- Ensure that sex-disaggregated data is collected, integrated into an effective monitoring and evaluation system, and made publicly available.

Recommendations for the RSLPF:

- Revise strategies to recruit more women and address gaps in institutional policies and practices—family leave, childcare, and equal promotion opportunities—that can improve recruitment and retention rates.
- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data regarding police operations to promote transparency and ensure adequate responses to the needs of vulnerable communities;
- Develop policies to prevent and address sexual and gender-based harassment and abuse;
- Require gender- and LGBTQI+-sensitive training for all officers and staff.

## Saint Vincent and the Grenadines - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has not adopted a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has made progress towards achieving the key elements of WPS in the absence of an official NAP. Proportionate representation in government, various social gender mainstreaming programs, and broad maternity and family leave policies are indicators of positive progress toward WPS goals. Shortcomings in gender mainstreaming within the Royal Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force (RSVGPF) and in the recruitment of women signal the need for improvement and future engagement. Given the recent emergence of diverse social, economic, and cultural initiatives, it is reasonable to surmise that the government recognizes the WPS agenda as a priority; consequently, the government is well-positioned to develop an official NAP and a comprehensive WPS strategy in the foreseeable future.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). Bolivia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though it has not signed the CEDAW Optional Protocol. It is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a moderate but advancing level of political will to implement the WPS agenda. Gender equality and WPS language appear in major foreign policy statements, including a 2020 statement on WPS by H.E. Inga Rhonda King, the then-permanent representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> The speech reflected the government's public support for the principles enshrined in the WPS agenda, including greater support for women in security sector reform, tracing gender data, applying an "anti-colonial-intersectional gender analysis" to Security Council work, and eliminating sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>2</sup>

### Institutional Policy and Practice

#### *Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

In the past decade, a majority of gender equality initiatives in the country were developed in the legislative and judicial sectors to prevent and remediate discrimination against women, ensure women's access to judicial systems, and provide legal protections for women. The St. Vincent and Grenadines government established a Gender Affairs Division to address gender-based violence (GBV) and has partnered with civil society organizations to strengthen government accountability for ending violence against women.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Statement by H.E. Inga Rhonda King Permanent Representative United Nations Security Council Open Debate: 'Women and Peace and Security: Investing in Women in Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding,'" *Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations*, October 21, 2020, <http://svg-un.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Statement-2.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 4-5. H.E. King noted that the St. Vincent and the Grenadines' permanent mission staff was 85% women with an all-female leadership team.

<sup>3</sup> "The Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Local Government, Gender Affairs, Family Affairs, Housing and Informal Settlement - Gender Affairs," The Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development,

Evidence suggests that the Gender Affairs Division remains very active in gender mainstreaming initiatives, partnering with various government agencies, civil society organizations, private sectors, and regional organizations.<sup>4</sup> However, the RSVGPF is not a principal partner for the Gender Affairs Division, making it challenging to identify the institutionalization of WPS principles within the force. There is no evidence whether the RSVGPF offers anti-harassment or abuse training or policies.

### *Gender in the Ranks*

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has no regular military forces, though it is a member of the Caribbean Regional Security System (RSS), a regional security alliance. Instead, the RSVGPF is the internal security apparatus in the country.<sup>5</sup> No demographic data are available regarding the makeup of the RSVGPF. Women do face hurdles in pursuing a career in the police force. It is currently unknown if women are prohibited from any posts based on sex or gender.

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The RSVGPF training manual includes guidance regarding human trafficking, developed in partnership with the Gender Affairs Division.<sup>6</sup> Information on current training beyond existing gender mainstreaming or WPS training in the RSVGPF is unavailable.

### *Work Environment*

The work environment for policewomen in the RSVGPF has proved challenging. Among 100 RSVGPF recruits from early 2022, up to forty-six female recruits had to resign due to a lack of childcare options.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, the RSVGPF has not yet built facilities to accommodate women in training centers or stations.<sup>8</sup> In 2022, the St. Lucian prime minister stated that the RSVPF would restrict the number of women recruits because of a lack of physical facilities at the training school that can accommodate additional women recruits but also because childcare responsibilities often interfere with female officers' schedules.<sup>9</sup>

### *Anti-Harassment and Abuse Policies*

Evidence points to ongoing concerns in the country about the level of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Civil society organizations have argued that current governmental efforts to combat GBV and harassment of women are insufficient in addressing the root problems that lead to the abuse of women and

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Local Government, Gender Affairs, Family Affairs, Housing and Informal Settlement, accessed June 13, 2023, <http://mobilization.gov.vc/mobilization/index.php/gender-affairs>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Military and Security Forces," *Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook*, accessed June 13, 2023, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/saint-vincent-and-the-grenadines/#military-and-security>. The RSVGPF units include the Coast Guard, Special Services Unit, Rapid Response Unit, Drug Squad, and Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit. The police force reports to the minister of national security, a portfolio currently held by the prime minister.

<sup>6</sup> "SVGPF Looking at Ways to Combat Human Trafficking," *Searchlight*, November 27, 2012, <https://www.searchlight.vc/news/2012/11/27/svgpf-looking-at-ways-to-combat-human-trafficking/>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Melissa Wong, "Limit to hiring of female police recruits, SVG PM explains why," *Loop Caribbean News*, January 6, 2022, <https://caribbean.loopnews.com/content/limit-hiring-female-police-recruits-svg-pm-explains-why>. To note: the RSVPF, the only security force in the country, reports to the minister of national security, a portfolio held by the prime minister.

girls.<sup>10</sup> In the past, women in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reported having difficulty reporting incidents of domestic violence with the police, citing “contempt and hostility” by individual force members.<sup>11</sup> However, the U.S. Department of State’s most recent 2022 Human Rights Report noted improvement in how police forces have handled cases of reported GBV.<sup>12</sup>

### **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

There is no known reporting of sex-disaggregated data for RSVGPF operations.

### **Recommendations**

For the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

- Adopt a WPKS NAP and align gender mainstreaming strategies with those of the Gender Affairs Division as a top priority at all levels of society;
- Establish a permanent relationship between the RSVGPF and the Gender Affairs Division;
- Work closely with the RSVGPF to require gender-responsive training at all levels of rank and grade to counter GBV and harassment in the security forces;
- Create Gender Advisor (GENADs) and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) positions to ensure the proper implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives;
- Commit to more transparency in government by collecting sex-disaggregated data on numbers, ranks, and institutional policies and practices and making them publicly available.

For the Royal Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force:

- Create gender-sensitive recruitment practices that ensure equal opportunities for women regarding training, career progression, and promotion;
- Collect and report sex-disaggregated data and integrate it into an established monitoring and evaluation system to improve decision-making and resource allocation;
- Expand training centers and older police stations to include facilities for female officers and ensure the availability of fitted and comfortable uniforms for female service members;
- Provide childcare options to active-duty service members and civilian staff to remove boundaries for workforce integration;
- Promote transparency by publishing data regarding the gender demographics of active service members.

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<sup>10</sup> “Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 2022 Human Rights Report,” *U.S. Department of State*, [https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/415610\\_SAINT-VINCENT-AND-THE-GRENADINES-2022-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf](https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/415610_SAINT-VINCENT-AND-THE-GRENADINES-2022-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid; The Eleventh Session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2010, <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/stvincentandgrenadines.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of State, “2022 Human Rights Report,” pp. 6-7.

## Suriname - Summary Report

### WPS National Action Plan (NAP) Status

Suriname has not developed a WPS NAP.

### Overall Assessment

Suriname demonstrates a political commitment to advancing gender equality and has taken concrete action to implement the principles reflected in the WPS agenda. Though it has not yet adopted a WPS NAP, it has developed a network of national plans and strategies that show progress in addressing the security of women and girls in Suriname. The government has outlined a 15-year Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 and has an active Bureau for Gender Affairs that works across government agencies and with local and international partners. Still, much can be done to move from policies to action. The government should provide sustained funding for the Bureau of Gender Affairs and recruit more women into the security forces. Training sessions on gender-related issues are available, but all security force personnel regardless of gender or rank should receive the training. Finally, the Suriname government should release public data on institutional policies and practices of the national police and defense forces to highlight its advancements in gender equality.

### National Importance/Political Will

At the international level, Suriname is a signatory of important international conventions and initiatives advancing gender equality and women's political, economic, and social advancement, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Belém do Pará Convention). It signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) but has not signed the CEDAW Optional Protocol. Suriname is also a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), which works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

At the national level, the Suriname constitution ensures equal opportunity regardless of sex and forbids sex discrimination.<sup>1</sup> Suriname has made real progress in the past several years. Government institutions, bureaus, and policies are in place to protect and promote women and advance gender equality, including the Bureau of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035.<sup>2</sup> The government's reasoning for passing a 15-year-long strategy was that the goals established in the policy document incorporate Suriname's international and regional obligations to gender equality and women's empowerment, which are better coordinated and addressed over a more extended period of time.<sup>3</sup>

### Institutional Policy and Practice

*Strategy, Plans, and Policy*

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<sup>1</sup> "Suriname 1987 (Rev. 1992) Constitution." *Constitute Project*, 1992.

[https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Surinam\\_1992?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Surinam_1992?lang=en).

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Home Affairs, Bureau of Gender Affairs, "Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035,"

<https://gov.sr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/3-juli-engelse-printversie-gender-vision-policy-document-2021-2035-1.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Republic of Suriname, National Review Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +25, August 2019, p. 45, [https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/informe\\_beijing25\\_suriname\\_final\\_0.pdf](https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/informe_beijing25_suriname_final_0.pdf); for a detailed chapter on activities related to government efforts at advancing gender equality up to 2018, see The Republic of Suriname, *Suriname: Progress report on the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus 2013-2018*, 2018, pp. 44-51, [https://crpd.cepal.org/3/sites/crpd3/files/national\\_report\\_suriname.pdf](https://crpd.cepal.org/3/sites/crpd3/files/national_report_suriname.pdf).

Suriname’s Bureau of Gender Affairs promotes gender equality, advises the Suriname government on gender issues and rights, and monitors the implementation of policies and programs to advance gender equality in the country. The government published a Gender Plan of Action 2019 and 2020 and a Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035, which lays out Suriname’s gender policy over 15 years.<sup>4</sup> One of the identified priority areas is gender-based violence (GBV) and eliminating violence against women and girls.<sup>5</sup> Police material does include information on the responsibility to protect the vulnerable from sexual violence.

### *Gender in the Ranks*

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>
<b>Armed Forces<sup>6</sup></b>	400	5600	7.14

According to 2019 figures, the size of the Surinamese Armed Forces (SAF) stood at 2,500 and the Suriname Police Force (KPS) at 1,500.<sup>7</sup> Women constitute 7% of the SAF and almost 22% of its officer corps.<sup>8</sup> In May 2021, Lieutenant Colonel Lea Hynes-Parris became the first female Inspector General of the Armed Forces.<sup>9</sup> The Surinamese Minister of Defense is a woman, Krishnakoemarie Mathoera (Krishna), who served 34 years in the Suriname police force.<sup>10</sup> Minister Matoera signaled that progress toward gender mainstreaming and gender integration is a top priority for her ministry. Information about the percentage of women in the KPS was unavailable, although a 2016 report disclosed that men outnumbered women in the police force by a ratio of 4:1.<sup>11</sup> In terms of grade levels, the government reported in 2017 that women are well-represented in the KPS and in leadership positions (superintendent, department heads), but the government provided no numbers or grade levels.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> “Women Raise Their Voices in Suriname.” *Catalyste+*, November 28, 2022, <https://www.catalysteplus.org/our-impact/impact-stories/women-raise-their-voices-in-suriname/>.

<sup>5</sup> Republic of Suriname, *National Review Implementation*, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Geraldine Cook, “Suriname’s Defense Force Strengthens the Role of Women,” *Diálogo Américas*, April 7, 2022, <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/surinames-defense-force-strengthens-the-role-of-women/#:~:text=Minister%20Mathoera%20said%20one%20of,percent%20of%20the%20entire%20force.>

<sup>7</sup> Scott B. McDonald, “Suriname at a Crossroads,” Center for International and Security Studies (CSIS), Washington, D.C., August 1, 2019, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/suriname-crossroads>.

<sup>8</sup> Geraldine Cook, “Suriname, Strengthening Border Protection from Illegal Activities,” *Diálogo Américas*, September 21, 2022, <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/suriname-strengthening-border-protection-from-illegal-activities/>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Marcos Ommati, “Krishna Mathoera, Minister of Defense of Suriname: ‘Being a Woman Should Never Be an Obstacle to Be Successful or to Do the Extraordinary’,” *Diálogo Américas*, August 31, 2021, <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/krishna-mathoera-minister-of-defense-of-suriname-being-a-woman-should-never-be-an-obstacle-to-be-successful-or-to-do-the-extraordinary/>.

<sup>11</sup> Suriname Bureau of Gender Affairs, “Situation Analysis of Women and Men in Suriname: Public Participation,” p. 2 (data through 2016), <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Caribbean/Attachments/Publications/2018/Factsheet%20UNGEI%20Public%20Participation%20final%20English.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Suriname Country Report, Third Round, Follow-Up Mechanism, Convention of Belém Do Pará (MESECVI), November 27-28, 2017, paragraph 62, <https://belemdopara.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FinalReport2017-Suriname.pdf>.



## Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points

The Bureau of Gender Affairs established a gender management system in 2001 that consists of Gender Focal Points (GFP) serving in different ministries to assist in the monitoring of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan into the policies and programs of their respective ministries. GFPs also received training in gender equality and gender mainstreaming.<sup>13</sup> Data about GENADs or GFPs in the SAF and SPF were unavailable.

### *Training, Education, and Exercises*

The Bureau of Gender Affairs previously held stakeholder-driven workshops to gather community knowledge regarding gender mainstreaming and priorities in promoting gender equality for various government offices. The KPS created training modules regarding domestic violence and a special police unit in partnership with external groups to provide GBV training.<sup>14</sup> Approximately 30% of police officers were trained in handling domestic violence.<sup>15</sup> However, the female-to-male composition in training sessions appears less representative. In 2017, the Ministry of Justice and Police offered training sessions on gender-related issues, but only 20 (13%) of the 154 participants were men.<sup>16</sup> Information about training modules offered in the SAF was not available.

### *Work Environment*

All positions in the Suriname armed forces and police force are open to women. The SAF upgraded facilities to support its female servicemembers.<sup>17</sup> In 2019, the Suriname government revised the Adoption of the Family Employment Protection Act (2019) to provide paid maternity leave for at least 16 weeks and eight days of paternity leave.<sup>18</sup>

## **Monitoring/Reporting and Evaluation**

In a 2019 report, the Suriname government stated that the Bureau of Gender Affairs established a project to improve the collection and management of sex-disaggregated data to capture measurable gender indicators to assess the impact of gender initiatives over time. In 2017, the Bureau collected sex-disaggregated data on violence against children and presented them to Parliament, though the findings were not publicly available.<sup>19</sup>

## **Recommendations**

For the Government of Suriname:

- Adopt a WPS NAP, drawing from existing national strategy and implementation plans and engaging with key stakeholders to complement and advance gender equality and the WPS agenda in the security forces;

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<sup>13</sup> Republic of Suriname, *National Review Implementation*, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Suriname, *National Review Implementation*, p. 28; Catalyste+; “Inter-American Commission of Women National Report, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Guicherit, H., *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*, <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2FPPrICAqhKb7yhskcAJS%2FU4wb%2BdIVicvG05RxG8XlpwfdVOi3B%2F3G9O7%2ByGEwxqWPPbCuKeFXIrUIsEs9OaacNHtkQLM1vNDxd2oZY6IirMlpkvZqBoVIJi7sZ48iwVacuUmg%2FFrbYfgeeQ%3D%3D>.

<sup>16</sup> Republic of Suriname, *National Review Implementation 2019*, p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Geraldine Cook, “Strengthening Border Protection.”

<sup>18</sup> Republic of Suriname, *National Review Implementation 2019*, p. 44.

<sup>19</sup> ECLAC, *ibid*.

- Provide sustained financial and staff resources for the Bureau of Gender Affairs and monitor and evaluate the government's gender strategy and policies;
- Commit to more transparency in government by collecting sex-disaggregated data on numbers, ranks, and institutional policies and practices and making them publicly available;
- Commit to gender-responsive budgeting for programs and initiatives to ensure sustained progress.

For the Suriname Armed Forces:

- Require gender-sensitive training (e.g., sexual harassment, GBV, gender mainstreaming) for all personnel in all ranks of military and police servicemembers and personnel;
- Clarify and extend institutional policies and practices (family leave, childcare, appropriate facilities and equipment, hostile work environment) that work to recruit, promote and retain women in the police and military forces;
- Collect and publish sex-disaggregated data and integrate into the monitoring and evaluation process to improve decision-making and resource allocation and make them publicly available.

For the Suriname Police Force:

- Improve access and require domestic violence handling training for active-duty officers to ensure the capability to act for the protection of vulnerable populations;
- Gender-sensitive training (e.g., sexual harassment, GBV, gender mainstreaming, gender awareness) should be mandated for all police and military servicemembers at all ranks;
- Make publicly available sex-disaggregated data and SPF policies on gender issues related to policing to ensure transparency and accountability.