Ministry of Women and Child Affairs

Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on
WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

2023 - 2027

MID-TERM REVIEW

Supported by

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Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on

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FOREWORD

It is with a sense of reflection and renewed commitment that the Mid-Term Review of Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP on WPS) is presented. This report represents a critical juncture in our national efforts to advance the WPS Agenda and to ensure that women are meaningfully included in peacebuilding processes and interventions across the country.

Sri Lanka's adoption of the NAP on WPS in February 2023, grounded in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and its subsequent resolutions, reflects our recognition of the vital role women play in sustaining peace and rebuilding societies affected by conflict. Sri Lanka's own history has underscored the importance of sustainable and inclusive peacebuilding and the NAP on WPS was developed as a framework to take this forward as a national priority.

Importantly, this Mid-Term Review directly responds to the recent Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) during its review of Sri Lanka in February 2025. The Committee emphasised the need for Sri Lanka to strengthen the implementation of its WPS commitments and ensure that these are translated into action at the community level. This review, therefore, reflects our willingness to prioritise and advance these recommendations.

Progress is visible. Awareness of the WPS Agenda and its importance has grown across government sectors, alongside efforts that have built the capacities to monitor and report on the NAP on WPS interventions. Notably, there is strong

progress under Thematic Priority 01 on 'Legal, Policy and Institutional Reforms' and Thematic Priority 05 on 'Economic Empowerment of Women' where nearly half of all activities are underway. Overall, as of April 2025, at least 18% of NAP on WPS activities are ongoing or have been completed.

Yet, challenges persist. Whilst there have been commendable efforts to initiate programmes under the six Thematic Priorities, progress has been impacted by insufficient resource allocation, the need for stronger institutional mechanisms resilient to change, and uneven coordination among stakeholders.

However, there are promising signs of progress. The enactment of the Women's Empowerment Act in 2024 and the establishment of the National Commission on Women represent steps in the right direction. These developments provide a firm foundation for sustained and focused advancement of the WPS Agenda.

This report is both a mirror and a mandate. It reflects our current trajectory and calls on all actors—government institutions, civil society, development partners, and our communities—to recommit to gender equality and sustainable peace. We must strengthen coordination mechanisms, allocate adequate resources, and ensure that women, particularly those from marginalised communities, are empowered to lead and shape their future.

I extend my sincere appreciation to UN Women for their technical support in facilitating this review and for their continued partnership in advancing the WPS Agenda in Sri Lanka. I also thank the NAP on WPS Core Steering Committee, members of the six Thematic Committees, government institutions, civil society, and the Development Division of my Ministry, whose insights have contributed to this review.

I trust this Mid-Term Review serves as a renewed call to action for all stakeholders, as we chart a more effective path forward. Together, let us work towards a Sri Lanka where peace is sustained and where every woman and girl can live in dignity and security.

Thank you.

Mrs. Tharangani Wickremasinghe
Secretary
Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Sri Lanka

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to the Mid-Term Review

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Sri Lanka's National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (NAP on WPS) 2023–2027 was conducted in line with the following:

- **Objective:** Ensure implementation of the NAP on WPS remains aligned with its core objectives, fostering accountability and continuous improvement. Assess progress towards outputs at the midpoint (2025) and identify remaining actions required for completion by 2027.

- **Scope:** The MTR covers the implementation of the NAP from adoption to the first quarter of 2025.

- **Methodology:** The MTR used a desk review of the NAP, including reports, content analysis of stakeholder inputs, assessments of cost estimates, policy alignment checks with international conventions to which Sri Lanka is a signatory, such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and contextual analysis of external factors. This multi-source approach evaluated both the quantitative and qualitative progress of the NAP on WPS.

Progress Assessment

As of the first quarter of 2025, the implementation status across the Thematic Priorities is as follows:

- **High implementation:** Thematic Priority 01 shows a strong start, with 47.8% of activities initiated. Thematic Priority 05 leads overall in activity initiation, with 50.0% of activities underway, reflecting proactive engagement.

- **Moderate implementation:** Thematic Priority 04 demonstrates moderate progress, with 20.0% of activities initiated and another 20.0% ongoing; however, nearly half (46.7%) remain not started. Thematic Priority 06 also reports moderate progress, with 36.4% of activities initiated, 18.2% ongoing, and 45.5% yet to begin.

- **Low implementation:** Thematic Priority 02 has the highest proportion of activities not started or not reported (66.7%), highlighting critical gaps. Similarly, Thematic Priority 03 shows 60.0% of activities as not started, underscoring the urgent attention required.

In summary, the MTR identified that Thematic Priorities 01 and 05 demonstrate progress; Priorities 04 and 06 require accelerated efforts; and Priorities 02 and 03 face significant delays, necessitating targeted support to address implementation gaps.

Implementing Agencies were required to submit cost estimates within the NAP framework for budgeting the activities outlined in the NAP on WPS. Submission status at the time of the MTR compilation included:

- **Complete submissions:** One lead ministry (with estimates covering its sub-agencies) and one independent agency submitted full cost estimates.

- **No submission required:** Two lead ministries stated that no additional funding was needed, as activities were already included within national budget provisions.

- **Partial submissions:** Six lead ministries and two independent agencies provided incomplete estimates, omitting certain activities or thematic areas.

- **No submission made:** Three lead ministries and two independent agencies did not submit any cost estimates, highlighting gaps in financial planning and reporting.

The review identified incomplete, partial, and missing submissions across agencies, highlighting gaps in financial reporting and alignment.

Challenges

The review identified the following key challenges to the implementation of the NAP on WPS at the midpoint:

- **Political transitions:** Reassignment of responsibilities during political transitions, often without sufficient handovers, delayed implementation and resulted in a loss of institutional memory.

- **Financial constraints:** Inadequate financial allocations and broader economic constraints hindered the initiation and implementation of activities.

- **Reporting and data gaps:** The lack of supporting documentation, misalignment of reporting with indicators, and the absence of sex- and location-disaggregated data limited accurate assessment of implementation progress.

- **Implementation costing:** Uneven progress in preparing cost estimates by Implementing Agencies affected the availability of resources and overall

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implementation progress.

- **Insufficient oversight and coordination:** Despite the establishment of coordination bodies, operational challenges and weak integration with national planning limited their effectiveness.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed to address the identified challenges and support timely implementation of the NAP on WPS:

- **Strengthen institutions:** Establish mechanisms for structured knowledge transfer during transitions, complemented by periodic reviews. Provide training during the onboarding of new Focal Points.

- **Improve financial planning and budgeting:** Develop costed implementation plans and ensure their alignment with national fiscal cycles and policy priorities.

- **Enhance monitoring, evaluation, and reporting:** Implement an evaluation framework aligned with the National Evaluation Policy. Ensure all data is disaggregated by sex, geography, and other relevant categories. Verify that all progress reports are accompanied by supporting documentation.

- **Adapt implementation to changing contexts:** Establish mechanisms to ensure the NAP on WPS is responsive to socio-political and contextual changes, and to reassign implementation responsibilities when institutional mandates change.

- **Prioritise pending activities:** Prioritise pending needs assessments and baseline data collection in areas where information is lacking, to enable implementation of activities that have not yet been initiated.

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBSL	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil society organisation
DCS	Department of Census and Statistics
FHH	Female-headed household
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
IACAC	Inter-Agency Coordination and Assessment Committee
IDP	Internally displaced person
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MBC	Mediation Boards Commission
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAP	National Action Plan
NAP on WPS	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
NCW	National Committee on Women
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSPD	National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities
ONUR	Office for National Unity and Reconciliation
PWD	Person with disabilities
RDD	Regional Development Department
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDR	Supporting Effective Dispute Resolution

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SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Sri Lanka CERT	Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WBSL	Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka
WDO	Women Development Officer
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Formulating the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

Sri Lanka's NAP on WPS was formulated in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which underscores the critical role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, and post-conflict reconstruction.[1] Its formulation was also supported by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)[2] and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[3] which served as a key foundation for the NAP.

The development of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) began in 2019 with funding from the Government

of Japan and technical support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Women and Child Affairs[4] recognised the need for inter-ministerial collaboration on the NAP on WPS. In September 2019, a meeting was held to brief key ministries and secure their support for advancing the NAP.[5]

To ensure broad-based ownership among other government ministries, non-governmental entities, and the general public,[6] provincial-level consultations were conducted across all nine provinces. These included a range of stakeholders, such as state officials, civil society organisations (CSOs), survivors of conflict, and

marginalised women.[7] The issues and proposed actions outlined in the NAP were largely shaped by the input from these consultations.[8]

The NAP is structured around three key objectives:[9]

- **Increase meaningful participation of women** in all aspects of like, including peace and security, by creating new opportunities while protecting their rights, safety and well-being, particularly during and after conflict, disaster, and pandemics.

- **Build and strengthen the capacities of communities and government institutions** to promote social cohesion, prevent violence and crime, and support women and girls affected by crises.

- **Advance gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by ensuring inclusive, responsive, and participatory decision-making at all levels.

Further, within this NAP, several key concerns have been addressed in a manner that encompasses the WPS Agenda through six thematic areas:[10]

1. Legal, policy and institutional reforms

2. Addressing the impact of displacement experienced by women

3. Addressing concerns of military and police widows, women ex-combatants and female-headed households

4. Women's protection and security

5. Economic empowerment of women

6. Promoting women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, decision-making and politics

The NAP advances eight SDGs: ending poverty, ensuring healthy lives and well-being, promoting quality education, achieving gender equality, fostering economic growth, building resilient infrastructure, reducing inequality, and promoting peaceful

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1   United Nations Security Council (2000), S/RES/1325 Security Council Resolution on Women and Peace and Security. Available at: https://peacemaker.un.org/en/documents/sres1325-security-council-resolution-women-and-peace-and-security (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

2   United Nations General Assembly (1979), 34/180 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

3   United Nations (1995), Fourth World Conference on Women, 4–15 September 1995, Beijing, China. Available at: https://www.un.org/en/conferences/women/beijing1995 (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

4   At the time of developing the NAP, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs was known as the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs, and Dry Zone Development.

5   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2023–2027, "Process of Formulating the National Action Plan and Findings of the Consultations", p. 18. Available at: https://childwomenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

6   Ibid.

7   Ibid.

8   Ibid.

9   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2023–2027, "Objectives of the National Action Plan", p. 15. Available at: https://childwomenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

10   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, "Process of Formulating the National Action Plan and Findings of the Consultations", pp. 18–24. Available at: https://childwomenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

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and inclusive societies.[11]

The NAP on WPS was approved by Sri Lanka's Cabinet of Ministers on 27 February 2023 and launched on 08 March 2023, on the occasion of International Women's Day.[12]

Roles and Responsibilities in Implementing the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

Lead Ministries

A total of 18 Lead Implementing Agencies were designated to execute the commitments of the NAP on WPS, supported by identified sub-agencies. At the mid-term review (MTR) stage, a shift in Implementing Agencies was recorded following the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2024.

Table 1 below presents an overview of the renaming and restructuring of ministries during the recent political transition. It is noted that some of the NAP activities had not been formally reassigned to the corresponding ministries at the time of the MTR and therefore remain pending reallocation.

TABLE 1. Updates to ministry names referenced in the NAP on WPS.

Original name of the ministry (as per the NAP on WPS)	New name of the ministry
Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment	**Ministry of Women and Child Affairs**
	Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security, and Community Empowerment (New ministry created)
Ministry of Education	**Ministry of Education** (No change)
Ministry of Defence	**Ministry of Defence** (No change)
Ministry of Public Security	**Ministry of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs** ('Parliamentary Affairs' added to the portfolio)
Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government	**Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government** ('Home Affairs' removed)
Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms	**Ministry of Justice and National Integration** ('Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms' replaced with 'National Integration')
Ministry of Health	**Ministry of Health and Mass Media** ('Mass Media' added to the portfolio)
Ministry of Mass Media	(Absorbed into the **Ministry of Health and Mass Media** above)
Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies	**Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development** ('Economic Stabilization and National Policies' replaced with 'Planning and Economic Development')
Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment	**Ministry of Labour** ('Foreign Employment' removed and transferred to a new ministry)
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism (New ministry)
Ministry of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure Development	(No longer listed as a Lead Ministry in the new structure)
Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)	**Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)** (No change)
Department of Manpower and Employment	**Department of Manpower and Employment** (No change)
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL)	**Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka** (No change)
Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL)	**Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL)** (No change)
Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team (Sri Lanka CERT)	(Absorbed into the newly established **Ministry of Digital Economy**)
Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman)	Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) (No change)
Women Parliamentarians' Caucus	**Women Parliamentarians' Caucus** (No change)

Coordinating Bodies

Two multi-agency and multi-stakeholder coordinating bodies–the National Core Steering Committee and the Inter-Agency Coordination and Assessment Committee (IACAC)–were established to fulfil key monitoring and evaluation responsibilities related to the implementation of the NAP on WPS.

11   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, "Monitoring and Evaluation", p. 92. Available at: https://child-womenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

12   United Nations Sri Lanka (2023), Sri Lanka adopts first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Available at: https://shorturl.at/ZE2rx (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

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REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY 2025

Objective and Scope of the Mid-Term Review

The MTR was conducted in line with the following objectives and scope:

Objectives:

- To ensure that, at its midpoint, the NAP remains aligned with its core objectives by fostering accountability and continuous improvement in implementation.

- To identify progress made, highlight existing gaps, and offer recommendations to relevant Implementing Agencies and other non-state actors to support effective delivery by the 2027 endline.

- To support evidence-based recommendations for decision-making aligned with the guidelines of Sri Lanka's National Evaluation Policy (2024), thereby optimising resource allocation and strengthening institutional capacity.

Scope:

- The MTR covers the reporting and monitoring of the NAP on WPS from its adoption up to the first quarter of 2025.

Methodology

The MTR employed a desk review as its primary methodological approach, analysing the reporting and implementation progress of the NAP on WPS. The review assessed progress based on data available in the report templates completed by Implementing Agencies, which documented NAP activities, their indicators, challenges and issues, and resource allocation.

In order to capture an array of experiences, challenges, and best practices related to the documentation of implementation progress, a content analysis was conducted, reviewing additional qualitative

inputs from relevant stakeholders and Implementing Agencies, such as the Core Steering Committee, IACAC, and NAP Focal Points.

A review and comparison of the cost estimates obtained from relevant Implementing Agencies was conducted to assess financial allocations and determine their contribution to progress at the mid-term point.

In instances where relevant, the review encompassed an analysis of pertinent national and international policy frameworks and commitments

relevant to the implementation of the NAP on WPS. The review situated the implementation progress of the NAP within external contextual factors, examining how political, economic, and social developments influenced

reporting and implementation.

This multi-source approach provided a midpoint assessment of both quantitative and qualitative aspects of NAP implementation.

Limitations

The progress of the NAP for the MTR was assessed primarily on the basis of self-reported data from the Implementing Agencies, which may affect the accuracy and completeness of the assessment.

First, the depth of reporting varied across ministries, with some submissions lacking sufficient detail or supporting documentation, hindering validation. As a result, the reported values may underrepresent the actual achievements on the ground, leading to an underestimation of actual progress.

Second, inconsistencies in reporting were observed, attributed in part to changes in Focal Points within ministries. Furthermore, despite the standardised reporting frameworks, differing interpretations of guidelines affected progress measurement.

While CSOs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represented within the coordination bodies were invited to submit their contributions to this report, their lack of contribution may have resulted in an understatement of implementation progress.

The Implementation Framework

Sri Lanka's NAP on WPS stipulates that a robust monitoring and evaluation framework is essential for effective implementation, accountability, and efficient use of resources to achieve its outcomes.

To operationalise this, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MoWCA) developed a progress-tracking sheet for lead ministries with technical support from UN Women. This tool

enables quarterly monitoring of NAP activities, tracking accomplishments, means of verification, budgets, and timelines, with progress measured against a 2022 baseline. It also identifies both state and non-state supporting agencies. The template further provides space to report challenges in cases of no or limited implementation and to identify possible mitigation measures to address these challenges.

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The tracking document was shared with Ministries and their designated Focal Points in February 2024, with an updated template issued for 2025 reporting. Implementing Agencies were also given access to a dedicated folder for uploading supporting documents related to project implementation.

2023–2025: Environmental Factors that Affected the Implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

The first half of the NAP's implementation period was influenced by a range of external factors that impacted Sri Lanka's economic, social, and political context:

- **Economic crisis and COVID-19:** The NAP's adoption and early implementation occurred as Sri Lanka was recovering from its worst economic crisis in decades, which peaked in 2022 and caused shortages, inflation, and fiscal instability—limiting government capacity. The impacts of COVID-19 further affected vulnerable groups. Austerity measures introduced by the Government to manage the crisis also restricted NAP implementation progress.

- **Gendered impact:** The economic and health crises affected women and men unequally, with women experiencing greater job losses, increased unpaid care duties, and reduced access to healthcare and social protection. These challenges created added barriers to advancing the NAP's aims of empowering and protecting women and girls.

- **Institutional capacity and coordination challenges:** Institutional capacity constraints, such as staffing shortages, and coordination gaps among Implementing Agencies, affected the implementation of the NAP.

- **Social and cultural factors:** Deep-rooted social norms and cultural attitudes continued to influence gender roles and limit women's participation in peace and security processes as well as in the formal economy.

- **Environmental and security context:** Although not a primary focus, environmental issues, such as climate-related disasters, were recognised as increasingly impacting vulnerable populations, including women and girls.

Additional contextual factors and their implications for the implementation of specific NAP activities are explored in detail in the analysis section.

MIDLINE ASSESSMENT OF NAP PROGRESS BY THEMATIC PRIORITY

Thematic Priority 01:

Legal, Policy and Institutional Reforms

Thematic Priority 01 focuses on legal, policy, and institutional reforms, with strategic objectives centred on enhancing gender sensitivity and promoting women's participation. Key objectives include amending existing legislation to be gender-sensitive, revising institutional practices to encourage women's engagement, increasing state involvement in providing services to women at the grassroots level, and improving gender sensitivity and language parity within state institutions. Additionally, it aims to sensitise state officials to gender-related concerns and raise awareness among women at the grassroots level on available state services and how to access them.

Progress in Implementation

Figure 1 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 01, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

47.8% Initiated
17.4% Ongoing
13.0% Completed
21.7% Not started/ No reporting
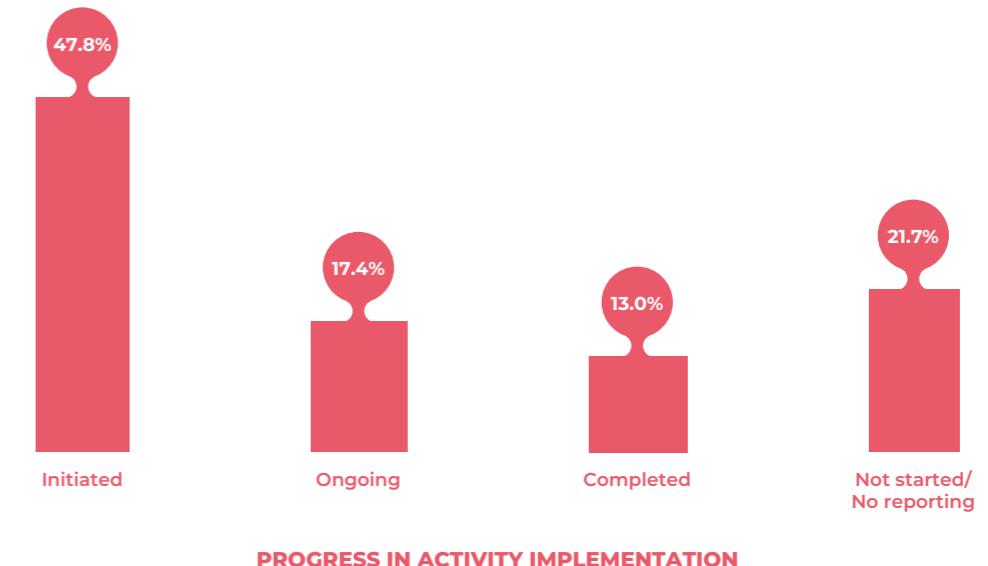
FIGURE 1. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 01.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 1: Legal and policy reforms to ensure protection of women against gender-based violence and discrimination

The NAP **Activity 1.1** aims to amend discriminatory provisions contained in personal and territorial laws in line with Article 2 of CEDAW and Article 12 of the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Justice reported that the amendment to the Kandyan Law Declaration and Amendment Ordinance was presented and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 17 April 2023. This amendment aimed to provide widows married under Kandyan Law the same inheritance rights as those under general law. However, as renewed approval is required from the incumbent government, the progress of this activity remains ongoing.

The Provincial Council Election Act No. 2 of 1988 is a legislation enacted by the Parliament to establish the procedures

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for electing members to Provincial Councils. Under **Activity 1.2**, the NAP called for its amendment to guarantee a minimum of 25% representation of women. The Provincial Council Elections (Amendment) Act No. 17 of 2017 was passed by the Parliament in 2017. This amendment introduced a quota for women candidates, requiring that at least 25% of candidates nominated for Provincial Council elections be women. The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government also reported the implementation of the amendment as completed.

Activity 1.5 proposes the digitalisation of data pertaining to sexual violence. The Ministry of Public Security reports that the data system, developed and maintained with financial support from The Asia Foundation, was operational in 2022. However, due to a lack of resources, the data system is now inactive. Thus, in 2023 and 2024, the Children and Women Bureau resumed manual storage of data collected by police stations, reversing the progress from 'completed' back to 'initiated.'

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to expedite court processes in a gender-sensitive and responsive manner through a survivor-centred approach have not yet been developed under **Activity 1.6**. However, preparatory work on operational procedures has commenced with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Security. Currently, a committee has been appointed, and its first discussion was held in 2024.

Under **Activity 1.8**, the Ministry of Defence and the Disaster Management Centre are tasked with reviewing the gender sensitivity of national frameworks related to disaster management and risk reduction. The National Disaster Management Plan 2023–2030 was approved by Cabinet in April 2023.[13] The Ministry reported that inclusivity was taken into account in its preparation, with particular attention paid to gender-based vulnerabilities, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the needs of other vulnerable communities.[14] No further reviews of national frameworks have been reported under **Activity 1.8,** leaving its progress ongoing.

Focus Area 2: Institutional reforms towards gender-inclusivity, with gender-responsive budgets, and personnel with increased capacity to accelerate the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Sri Lanka

13   Daily FT (2024), Cabinet clears National Disaster Management Plan 2023-2030 for Parliament Approval. Available at: https://www.ft.lk/news/Cabinet-clears-National-Disaster-Management-Plan-2023-2030-for-Parliament-approval/56-758205 (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

14   Disaster Management Center (2023), National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) 2023-2030. Available at: https://www.dmc.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1180&Itemid=283&lang=en (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

Activity 2.1 focuses on implementing mechanisms to ensure that both digital systems and the infrastructure of state institutions are accessible to women in a gender-sensitive manner. The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government reported the development of two guidelines to advance this activity. In addition, according to the ministry, 75% of women are utilising online state systems, while 35% of government offices are reported to have premises accessible to persons with disabilities. These indicators are categorised as ongoing; however, the lack of information on the approach and supporting documentation limits the ability to verify this classification.

Activity 2.2 aims to recruit or assign a sufficient number of capable and gender-sensitive Women Development Officers (WDOs) to address cadre gaps. The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government stated that two policies had been adopted to enable the recruitment of WDOs, rendering progress ongoing. However, the second indicator under **Activity 2.2**, which relates to the number of WDOs recruited, remains without reported data.

Activity 2.4 calls for the introduction and implementation of regulations to facilitate trilingual fluency within schools, led by the Ministry of Education. Concerning the number of available digital language modules in English, Sinhala, and Tamil, the ministry reported 1,570 in Sinhala, 600 in Tamil, and 320 in English at the end of 2024. This constitutes an increase of 70 in Sinhala (4.6%) and 30 in Tamil (5%) digital language modules since the baseline in 2022. However, pending reporting on the remaining four indicators under this activity leaves its overall progress at the initiated stage.

Activity 2.5 seeks to ensure that all administrative departments and offices provide trilingual services (Sinhala, Tamil, and English). The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government reported this activity as completed, indicating that 100% of administrative departments offer trilingual services. However, this information was not accompanied by documentation to support further analysis.

Activity 2.7 tasks the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka with recruiting university students and recent graduates for three-month internships, providing them with a week of intensive training on the Commission's work, and utilising their skills to raise awareness about that work. While the implementation of this activity is ongoing, the Commission has not reported against the indicator measuring the number of districts in which awareness-raising has taken place. Instead, it stated that 138 awareness programmes were conducted in 2024 (with 20 male and 118 female participants). Due to the lack of sufficient funding, the programmes could not be implemented across all districts.

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The indicator for **Activity 2.8** aims to measure the number police stations able to respond to and record complaints in both national languages. The Sri Lanka Police reported 607 such stations in 2024, which corresponds to the total number of currently active police stations.[15] Based on this, **Activity 2.8** to "ensure capacity for bilingual service provision at all police stations" is classified as complete. However, no supporting documentation was submitted to substantiate this classification.

Activity 2.9 concerns the recruitment of police officers conversant in sign language or the provision of sign language training to selected officers. In 2024, the Sri Lanka Police reported that no officers had been recruited to meet this requirement. However, two sign language training sessions had been conducted, reaching 85 officers, whereby this activity can be classified as initiated. The Police also reported a lack of participation of officers in the sign language trainings offered.

Activity 2.10 focuses on gender parity in recruitments and promotions of the Tri Forces and the Police. The 2022 baseline recorded 169 recruits in the Sri Lanka Infantry, 21 recruits in the Women's Sri Lanka Infantry, 2,217 recruits as Police Constables, and 205 recruits in the Police Constables - Disability Division. In 2024, recruitment included 242 Sri Lanka Infantry officers, 1,437 Police Constables, and 39 Police

Constables in the Disability Division, according to the Ministry of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs. However, the information was not presented in a sex-disaggregated manner. Furthermore, the ministry stated that due to national security concerns, these figures could not be disclosed, rendering the measurement of progress against the activity's indicator unfeasible.

Concerning gender parity in promotions, the baseline indicated that 42 women and 265 men were promoted in 2022. In its 2024 progress update, the Ministry reported 1,028 women and 7,781 men being promoted. This represents a 2,347.62% increase in women's promotions and a 2,836.36% increase in men's promotions to higher ranks. This increase cannot be further contextualised due to the lack of supporting information. Moreover, the National Police Commission is in the process of revising certain amendments to recruitment and promotion procedures. Once approved, promotions are expected to proceed in line with these revisions.

In 2022, women comprised 23% of Army recruits, 34% of Navy recruits, and 33% of Air Force recruits. In 2023, there was a significant increase in women's recruitment across all branches, rising to 41% in the Army, 56% in the Navy, and 78% in the Air Force. However, by 2024, the Army recorded a sharp

decrease in recruitment to 15%, while the Navy and Airforce decreased to 32% and 76% respectively. Overall, 2023 marked the highest recruitment percentages for women officers, while 2024 showed a mixed trend.

Activity 2.11 aims to strengthen the complaint mechanism through the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) and raise awareness amongst women on how to access their services. In 2022, 1,246 complaints were recorded. By 2024, the Ombudsman reported receiving 978 complaints, reflecting a 21.51% decrease compared to 2022. These proceedings fall under the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration Act No. 17, Section 20. Although this activity is classified as ongoing, the inconsistencies in the sex-disaggregated data limit the analysis of the complaint mechanism's effectiveness.

Additionally, the Ombudsman stated that no trainings were conducted with women, though an awareness-raising campaign was carried out on the occasion of International Women's Day in 2023. As a result, the progress of this activity is classified as ongoing.

Activity 2.12 entails ensuring that women police officers are sufficiently

recruited and stationed in all police stations, retained in service, and provided with equal opportunities in promotions and decision-making capacities within the police force. According to the Ministry of Justice, the recruitment of women police officers remained consistent in both 2022 and 2024. The percentage of women stationed at each police station showed a slight increase from 2022 to 2023 and remained stable in 2024. Additionally, the number of women serving in the top three official ranks of the police remained unchanged at 11 in both 2022 and 2024. Overall, the data indicates stability in the recruitment and stationing of women police officers, suggesting that this activity has been initiated.

Activity 2.15 calls for the inclusion of a module on gender in the induction programme for all public officials, and the development of internal advocacy campaigns on the WPS Agenda. The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government reported that one gender sensitisation training was conducted in 2025 with 80 officers, 56 of whom were public officials (not disaggregated by sex). This activity is thus classified as initiated.

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15   Sri Lanka Police (N/A), History. Available at: https://www.police.lk/?page_id=211 (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

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Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 01:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Political transitions and other delays: Legal and policy reforms initiated by the Ministry of Justice (under **Activity 1.1**) were reported as delayed due to previously approved amendments requiring reapproval from the incumbent Cabinet of Ministers. In other cases, delays were also experienced due to pending policy and guidance reformulation at the ministerial level (see **Activity 2.10**).	**Streamline Focal Point handover:** Facilitate an effective handover process between NAP Focal Points to ensure continuity and enable activity implementation to proceed without disruption following political transitions.
Lack of financial resources: Lack of resources not only hinder the initiation of NAP activities (see **Activity 2.7**) but can reverse the progress already achieved. For example, under **Activity 1.5**, despite the development of a data system on sexual violence, the system was not maintained or updated.	**Mobilise resources effectively:** Formalise funding mechanisms to initiate, maintain, and restore the implementation of activities (see **Activities 1.5** and **2.7**). As a first step, it is recommended to prepare accurate cost estimates for each activity to inform resource mobilisation efforts.
Incomplete documentation of progress: Some of the information provided lacked supporting documents. This absence made it challenging to evaluate the information or measure progress effectively as it complicated the assessment of whether the submitted information met indicator requirements. Similarly, the failure to report on the procedures followed to reach the indicated progress was an obstacle to identifying best practices.	**Provide supporting documentation:** Supplement the reporting with supporting documents on the progress achieved to allow for a more in-depth analysis of current and future implementation of NAP activities, and to support the identification of further recommendations and best practices.
Challenges in implementation classification: The progress reported by ministries did not match the information required by the indicators, making it difficult to assess and classify the degree of implementation.	**Enhance indicator-based reporting:** Implementing Agencies should direct their questions to the lead line ministry to ensure that the latter provides information that directly addresses each indicator, enabling accurate assessment and classification of implementation progress.
Lack of sex-disaggregated data: Certain figures were reported without sex-disaggregation, which undermined the analysis.	**Address data gaps:** Gather sex-disaggregated data to strengthen reporting against indicators.
Misalignment between activities and current efforts: A discrepancy between the current activity focus and the actual efforts being undertaken indicates a need to revise activity descriptions to better reflect ongoing initiatives and current priorities.	**Adopt proposed reformulations:** The Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government proposed revising **Activity 2.3** by shifting its focus from the recruitment of sufficient Tamil-speaking officers to align with current efforts to support Sinhala-speaking officers to learn Tamil and vice versa.
Limited access to gender expertise: With regard to the review of national frameworks (see **Activity 1.8**), Lead Implementing Agencies reported that a lack of data and limited access to gender expertise through consultancies hindered the effective implementation of the activity.	**Expand access to gender expertise:** Enhance access to specialised gender expertise through consultations with pertinent ministries, CSOs, and NGOs.

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Thematic Priority 02:

Addressing the Impact of Displacement Experienced by Women

Thematic Priority 02 focuses on addressing the impact of displacement experienced by women. The strategic objectives include supporting the implementation of existing policies, responding to the needs of internally displaced persons and refugee

returnees through a gender-sensitive approach, enhancing gender sensitivity in disaster management, and strengthening awareness of the issues faced by conflict-affected individuals, particularly women.

Progress in Implementation

Figure 2 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 02, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

66.7%

22.2%

0.0%

11.1%

Initiated   Ongoing   Completed   Not started/ No reporting

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION
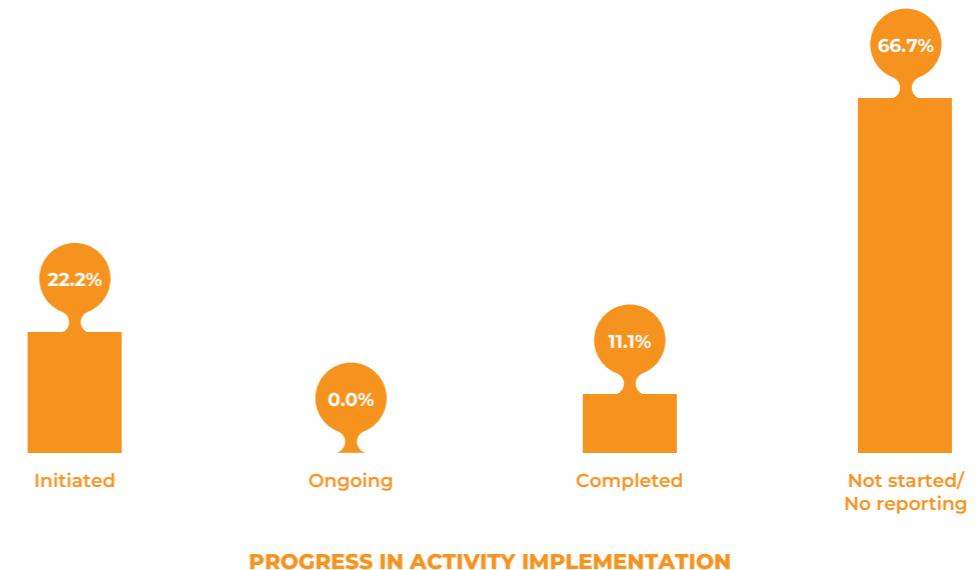
FIGURE 2. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 02.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 3: Service delivery to women affected by conflict and disaster related displacement agenda in Sri Lanka

Activity 3.1 calls for the implementation of the National Policy on Durable Solutions for Conflict- Affected Displacement in a gender-inclusive manner. The Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) marked this activity as completed, reporting the full implementation of the policy. The original policy states: *"[...] the State commits to a comprehensive age, gender and diversity sensitive approach to the development and implementation of assistance interventions to the displaced, refugee returnee and other displacement-*

affected persons." [16] Although considered completed, no supporting documentation was provided to assess the gender-inclusive implementation of the policy.

Under **Activity 3.3**, the MoWCA is expected to assess livelihood capabilities and needs of women affected by conflict-related displacement and provide support in accessing livelihoods. Although no assessment was conducted to inform the training, in 2023 the ministry offered a training to 15 women to improve their skills for livelihood generation, thereby initiating the activity's implementation.

The Ministry of Education stated that **Activity 3.6**, which calls for the provision of education facilities to women and girls affected by conflict-related displacement, is not applicable within the present context. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, internal displacement in Sri Lanka since the adoption of the NAP was primarily caused by disaster events, such as floods and wet mass movements, rather than conflict.[17] Consequently, the implementation of the activity has not yet been initiated as it is determined to be inapplicable in the present context.

Focus Area 4: Safe and accessible safe house facilities for people affected by natural disasters

Activity 4.2 focuses on the development and adoption of SOPs for the provision of necessities in camps and temporary shelters established for internally displaced persons (IDPs) during natural disasters. The Disaster Management Centre presented the National Disaster Management Plan (2023-2028) as the guiding framework for developing these SOPs, suggesting the initiation of this activity's implementation. The plan adopts an inclusive approach that prioritises vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 02:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Lack of reporting: The absence of reporting in this thematic area may be linked to the noted increase in internal displacement caused by disasters rather than conflict. However, this remains speculative due to the lack of detailed explanations for activities classified as non-reported.	**Consideration for the next NAP:** The formulation of the next NAP should take into consideration the evolving context of Sri Lanka, particularly as it relates to Thematic Priority 02.
Limited implementation: Activity 3.3 is classified as not initiated, primarily due to its alleged limited relevance within the current national context.	**Report on context dependency:** As highlighted by the Ministry of Education in relation to **Activity 3.3**, the applicability of NAP activities can vary depending on the country context. To improve the accuracy and relevance of reporting, justifications should be provided outlining each activity's relevance within the current political, economic, and social environment.

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16   Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs (2016), National Policy on Durable Solutions for Conflict-Affected Displacement. Available at: https://sinhala.srilankabrief.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/NATIONAL-POLICY-ON-DURABLE-SOLU-TIONS-FOR-CONFLICT-AFFECTED-DISPLACEMENT-April-7-3rd-Draft.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

17   Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (N/A), Country Profile: Sri Lanka. Available at: https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/sri-lanka/ (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

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Thematic Priority 03:

Addressing Concerns of Military and Police Widows, Women Ex-Combatants and Female-Headed Households

Thematic Priority 03 focuses on addressing the concerns of military and police widows, women ex-combatants, and female-headed households (FHHs). The strategic objectives include identifying, prioritising, and addressing the needs of these groups; evaluating

and gender-sensitising existing laws and policies; adopting or regularising payment and compensation schemes; catering to their ongoing psychosocial needs; promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities; and sensitising relevant officials to improve services for these women.

Progress in Implementation

Figure 3 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 03, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION
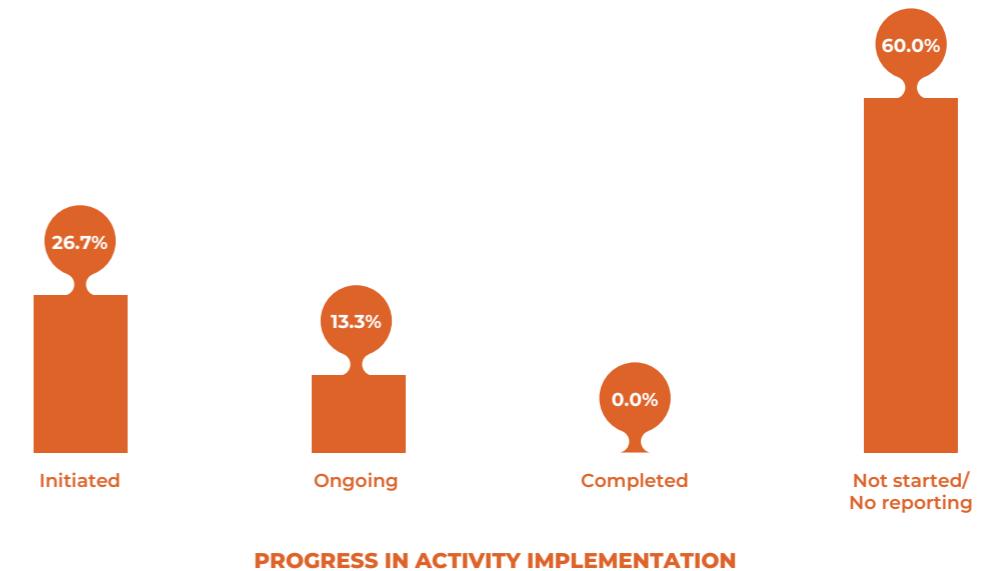
FIGURE 3. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 03.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 5: Addressing concerns of military and police widows, women ex-combatants and FHHs

Activity 5.1 calls for a review of systems to ensure effective and consistent administration of entitlements to

military and police widows. According to reporting by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs, this activity is ongoing as steady progress has been made since the baseline year of 2022.

In 2022, a review identified multiple existing provisions, including monthly salaries, allowances, compensation, dependent allowances, land allocations, and housing assistance projects for widows of police officers who died in

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the line of duty or due to conflict-related causes.[18] However, as per the Ministry of Public Security, the review also revealed gaps, such as the lack of fixed allowances for widows of officers killed in violent acts in 1988/89 and the absence of monthly salary and fixed allowance provisions for widows of officers who died while enforcing law and order.

As per the review in 2023, allowance payments had continued according to existing circulars, and data was collected on violence against women ex-combatants and police widows to assess the challenges they experience. In 2024, the Ministry of Public Security sought Cabinet approval for fixed allowances and monthly salaries for widows of officers who died by violent acts (in 1988/89) and in law enforcement duties. The Ministry of Defence had continued to review policies as needed and reported that 85% of the recommendations from 2022 aimed at improving the livelihoods of war widows had been implemented.

Further action in 2024 included the issuance of IGP RTM No. 508 in June 2024, which directed all police divisions to collect complaint reports from ex-combatants and female-headed households. This indicates ongoing efforts to address the identified challenges and adapt support mechanisms for widows and vulnerable women linked to conflict-affected communities.

Activity 5.3 requires the adoption of measures to improve the quality of life and enhance the decision-making capacities of military widows residing in *Ranaviru Gammana*.[19] It is reported that 27 military widows benefitted from various forms of assistance provided, including 6 medical aids, 5 housing loans, 1 self-employment loan, and 15 disaster grants, with a total estimated value of LKR 3,890,000. However, assistance had not been limited to the residents of *Ranaviru Gammana,* and therefore this activity is considered initiated. In future, efforts must be made to disaggregate data to correspond with the activity indicator.

The progress described under **Activity 5.4** appears to align more closely with **Activity 5.3** above. The Ministry of Defence reported that several new financial measures had been adopted to enhance the status and livelihood of military widows,[20] which had reached 92 women. However, it was not specified whether these women were military and police widows, women ex-combatants, or female heads of households. As **Activity 5.4**

focuses on ensuring gender sensitivity of surveillance measures in place for women ex-combatants, future reporting should address the corresponding indicators to effectively document progress.

Activity 5.5 concerns establishing effective grievance handling mechanisms and introducing psychosocial counselling for women ex-combatants, to aid them with reintegrating into society more effectively and with confidence. This activity has been initiated as the MoWCA reported that in the fourth quarter of 2024, a programme was conducted in Jaffna with the participation of 95 women. Due to concerns about participants' safety and protection, it was suggested that future programmes should be designed ensuring confidentiality for the beneficiaries.

Activity 5.7 involves conducting an assessment of the status quo and income-generating capacity of women ex-combatants, followed by recommendations to relevant authorities to strengthen their economic empowerment. According to the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, this assessment was carried out in 2024 across 13 districts, leading to the rehabilitation and community integration of 2,265 ex-combatants. The programme was implemented in the districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Ampara,

Batticaloa, Gampaha, Kandy, Puttlam, Nuwara Eliya, and Matale. Of these ex-combatants, 283 received support to begin self-employment ventures, and 42 were given assistance to initiate agricultural activities. This activity is consequently classified as ongoing.

Activity 5.9 aims to adopt and incorporate an inclusive definition for FHHs prior to the adoption of the NAP on FHHs. The MoWCA indicated that a number of observations had been received from the Ministry of Finance regarding the NAP on FHHs, marking this activity as initiated. The National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment[21] is now in place, and matters concerning FHHs are expected to be addressed through this action plan.

Activity 5.11 proposes conducting a study to assess the specific requirements of wives of fishermen who have disappeared at sea, and using the findings to develop recommendations for providing socio-economic support. The Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka (WBSL) under the MoWCA reported the completion of two programmes in 2024, providing assistance to 24 women-headed households with the support of District and Divisional Secretariats. However, the nature of these programmes and their contribution towards achieving the indicators corresponding with **Activity 5.11** were not disclosed, showing only early signs of implementation.

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18   Provisions are outlined in the following circulars: Public Administration Circulars No. 21/88 and 22/93, Ministry of Defense Circular No. 01/2021, Pension Circular No. 02/2014, Land Commissioner General's Department Circular No. 2021/01, and the housing construction assistance projects 'Api Venuwen Api' and 'Meth Sewana'.

19   Ranaviru Gammana are villages dedicated for war heroes and their families.

20   Measures adopted include disbursements under the 'Ranaviru Diriya' self-employment development loan totaling LKR 9.3 million, 'Viru Sahana' housing loans amounting to LKR 16,155,000, medical aids worth LKR 390,461, skill development loans of LKR 700,000, and distress grants for death cases (exclusively for female candidates) totaling LKR 270,797.72.

21   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment, National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Available at: https://srilanka.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/sri_lanka_national_policy_gewe_english.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 03:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Insufficient financial resources: The lack of adequate funding was reported four times as a challenge to the implementation of activities under this thematic area.	**Mobilise resources:** As a first step, it is recommended to prepare accurate and complete cost estimates for each activity to inform resource mobilisation efforts and support implementation.
Misaligned activity reporting: The reported information under certain activities corresponded more closely to the descriptions of other activities. Due to insufficient detail in the current reports, these entries could not be accurately reassigned.	**Ensure reporting accuracy:** To improve the accuracy of progress reporting, Implementing Agencies should carefully align reported information with the most relevant activities based on their descriptions. This may require coordination with lead ministries if their reporting aligns better with activities falling under another Implementing Agency's purview.
Safety concerns: Concerns over the safety of women ex-combatants were raised in relation to the delivery of **Activity 5.5**, although the specific security issues were not disclosed.	**Enhance safety measures:** Considering the reporting under **Activity 5.5**, it is recommended to explore gender-sensitive protection and mitigation measures to address participants' specific vulnerabilities.

Thematic Priority 04:
Women's Protection and Security

The strategic objectives of Thematic Area 04 include inquiring into and addressing issues of violence (including sexual violence), associated displacement, and other conflict-related contexts; educating and raising awareness among members of the tri-forces, police, and other authorities on preventing and addressing sexual violence in both conflict and post-conflict contexts; and increasing facilities and allowances provided to elderly women, women with disabilities, and other vulnerable or marginalised groups of women in society.

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Progress in Implementation

Figure 4 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 04, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION
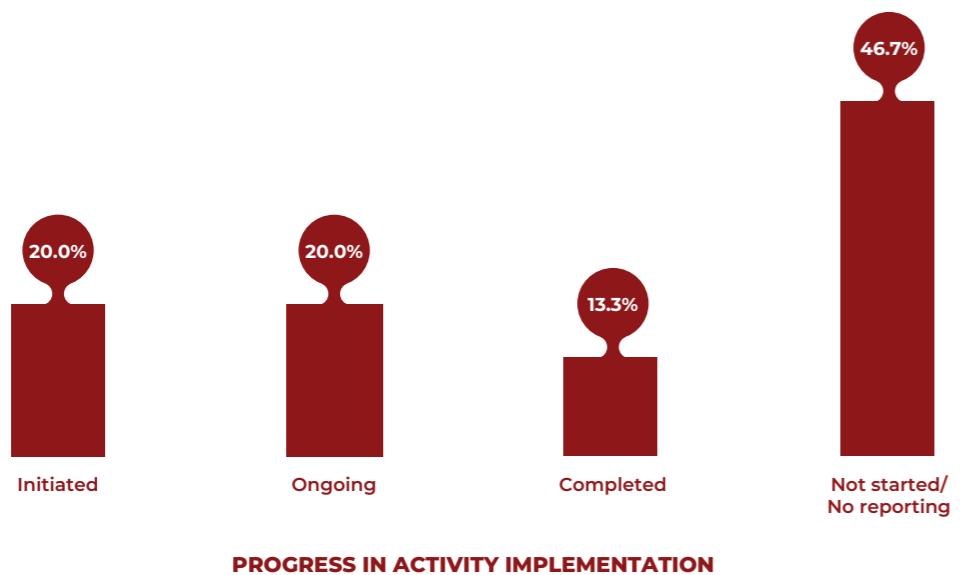
FIGURE 4. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 04.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 6: Protection of women and girls against violence, including sexual violence

Activity 6.2 proposes the development of a Code of Conduct/Ethics to guide tri-forces and police officers on the relevant laws, policies, and mechanisms to prevent sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict contexts. In 2023, the Ministry of Defence reported that the existing Tri Services Act already includes provisions to ensure such violations do not occur. However, there is no supporting documentation to corroborate the inclusion of policies aimed at preventing such incidents, rendering this activity initiated. It is proposed that the ministry undertake a revision of the existing code of conduct, to be completed by 2026.

Under **Activity 6.5,** the MoWCA has taken the initiative to strengthen existing livelihood programmes for women earning low incomes and for the elderly. To this end, in 2023, 631 women were reported to have benefitted from projects corresponding with this activity. However, the information available was not disaggregated by category of beneficiaries (e.g., elderly, heads of households), making the classification of this activity 'initiated'.

As part of **Activity 6.6**, which is ongoing, the MoWCA and the Department of Probation and Child Care Services are tasked with providing career guidance and social integration skills to girls and boys between the ages of 16–18 as they prepare to leave children's homes. In line with this, one training programme was conducted in 2023 and another in 2024, reaching 12 and 8 girls, respectively. However, there is currently no information on how many of those who received the training secured employment within six months.

Activity 6.8 aims to establish a special unit to investigate cybercrimes, harassment, and hate speech, with a particular emphasis on discrimination based on gender, ethno-religious identity, or political affiliations. Between 2023–2024, Sri Lanka CERT established a separate unit with officers dedicated to investigating cybercrimes. Throughout 2024, officers attached to CERT prepared, revised, and submitted plans to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) seeking financing for a fully-fledged cybercrimes unit that would allow civilians to safely report issues related to online security, privacy violations, and gender-based violence experienced via social media and the interweb. CERT has also taken steps to seek cabinet approval for this initiative, which is an ongoing process.

Under **Activity 6.10**, the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) is tasked with the responsibility of implementing programmes to capacitate caretakers of persons with disabilities (PWDs) on how best to provide care, safeguard the rights of PWDs, and support their psychosocial wellbeing, based on a needs assessment. While the assessment is pending, interventions corresponding to the respective indicators are ongoing. In 2023, four programmes were implemented, reaching 400 participants, while in 2024, this increased to 20 programmes and 1,938 participants at a national level. These programmes were funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and implemented in collaboration with the MoWCA, the district secretariats, and the divisional secretariats. Corresponding to the indicator on the number of persons providing care accessing psychosocial services, it is reported that 156 individuals were reached in 2022, followed by 154 in 2023 and 115 in 2024. The data for 2024 is sex-disaggregated, which is a commendable practice that should be sustained in future reporting. It is noted that **Activity 6.9,** which precedes this, requires the undertaking of a needs assessment to inform subsequent activities being implemented. As this has not yet been completed, it is recommended that the activity be prioritised.

Activity 6.11 is a follow-up to the previous activity and focuses on

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ensuring measures are adopted for the well-being of persons providing care for PWDs. The NSPD reported that 156 individuals were reached during the 2022 baseline period, utilising LKR 4.06 million in funds. In 2023, the number of individuals who benefitted was recorded as 154, followed by 300 programmes implemented in 2024 that reached 175 individuals across the country. Although a number of programmes were reported to have been implemented, details of the measures undertaken were not provided within the reporting. The activity is consequently classified as ongoing.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, together with the NSPD, are responsible for **Activity 6.12**, which entails conducting awareness programmes for both private and public sector employers and job seekers, highlighting the need to create more employment opportunities for women with disabilities. Progress on this activity remains ongoing. Reportedly, awareness programmes have been conducted annually since 2022, with funding from JICA, reaching 241 participants in 2022, 113 in 2023, and 204 in 2024. When accounting for the total number of programmes conducted in line with this activity, it is reported that 50 programmes were conducted in 2023, while 22 programmes were conducted in 2024 in each district, reaching a total of 1,935 participants. As part of this activity, a number of public and private sector organisations were to be sensitised,

and this was completed, with 23 programmes conducted in 2023 and 14 programmes completed in 2024. While a detailed breakdown of how many programmes were undertaken specifically for state and non-state entities is not available, some of the non-state entities included the Chamber of Commerce, CEF, and other private companies. In addition to the previously identified government bodies, the Department of Social Services, and its provincial affiliates, and the Department of Manpower and Employment were noted stakeholders in contributing to achieving the respective indicators pertaining to this activity. Some of the challenges identified in implementing this activity include the lack of updates from job seekers and employers on employability status after recruitment, as well as the considerable time required to persuade the private sector to recruit PWDs. In response to this, it is suggested that a survey should be undertaken to identify employment opportunities available for PWDs.

The Ministry of Health has been tasked with implementing **Activity 6.13,** which entails conducting sensitising programmes for state officers to recognise and respect the rights of trans persons, their security, and broader social cohesion. Progress on this activity is determined to be initiated, as the National STD/AIDS Control Programme has been informed to include state officials in existing programmes on LGBTIQ+ awareness. However, it is noted that the interventions already underway do not

correspond with the indicators in the NAP, leaving room for improvement

and further engagement in the remaining implementation period.

Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 04:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Lack of disaggregated data: Certain reported figures are not disaggregated, which limits the ability to effectively analyse progress against the stated indicator (see **Activity 6.5** and **6.12**).	**Address data gaps:** Ensuring the disaggregation of data by both sex and location, where relevant, would strengthen the assessment of progress against indicators linked to key activities within this thematic area.
Absence of supporting documentation: In cases where supporting documentation has not been shared, it is challenging to validate the reported information (see **Activity 6.2**).	**Submit supporting documentation:** Supplementing the reporting by submitting supporting documents on the progress achieved would allow for a more in-depth analysis of the current and future implementation of NAP activities and enable the identification of further recommendations and best practices.
Mismatch between progress reporting and indicators: The progress reported by ministries does consistently align with the information required by the indicators, rendering the assessment and, by extension, classification of the degree of implementation, difficult (see **Activity 6.13**).	**Seek clarification:** The Focal Points of Implementing Agencies are encouraged to seek clarification on completing the monitoring template and interpreting the indicators to ensure greater consistency and accuracy in reporting.

Thematic Priority 05:

Economic Empowerment of Women

The strategic objectives of Thematic Priority 05 include ensuring women at the grassroots level have access to financial literacy, credit facilities, and leadership opportunities in cooperatives and economic networks. This is expected to be facilitated through the regulation of microfinancing entities, as well as the alteration of existing practices, and the implementation of existing rules through the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. This thematic area also focuses on educating and raising awareness amongst women with regard to the management of their finances and the disadvantages of serial borrowing via microcredit or microfinance.

Progress in Implementation

Figure 5 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 05, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

THEMATIC PRIORITY 05

| Initiated | Ongoing | Completed | Not started/ No reporting |
| 50.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 50.0% |

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

FIGURE 5. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 05.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 7: Protection of women and their households from the pervasive threat of microfinance practices

Activity 7.1 entails the undertaking of a pilot survey covering all districts to ascertain the pervasiveness of microcredit issues, the level of indebtedness, and its impact on women's financial, mental, and physical security. The findings from this survey are to be utilised to address the identified issues. WBSL reported that one survey was undertaken in 2020, followed by a corresponding project implemented in 2022. However, findings or recommendations from the completed survey have not been shared for further analysis in terms of identifying location-specific issues. It is reported that undertaking a national survey is challenging and requires the support of multiple stakeholders,

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including state actors such as CBSL, the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), and Cooperative Societies, and non-state actors. The activity is noted as initiated. With the relevant stakeholders identified, progress is expected in the next reporting period.

Activity 7.2 entails compiling a report on the current loan interest rates maintained by microfinancing institutions and women's ability to access loans at competitive rates. **Activity 7.3** is centred on adopting and implementing the Draft Microfinance and Credit Regulatory Bill. Progress on implementation is yet to begin, as responsibility for these activities needs to be transferred to the Department of Supervision of Non-Bank Financial Institutions (DSNBFI).

As the key focus of **Activity 7.4**, WBSL is tasked with conducting a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme for WDOs on financial management to educate women at the grassroots level. It is reported that four ToTs were undertaken in 2023, and 40 ToTs were completed in 2024 in the districts of Moneragala and Ampara on the subject of digital marketing. It is further reported that the Regional Development Department (RDD) of CBSL is in a position to support the implementation of two ToT programmes annually as part of their Financial Literacy Roadmap of Sri Lanka (2024–2028) initiative which coincides with this activity. This activity is consequently classified as initiated.

CBSL together with WBSL is responsible for conducting awareness-raising and skills development campaigns for women at the village level on financial management and literacy in all districts as part of **Activity 7.5**. It is reported that several initiatives were implemented in collaboration with RDD, as part of the Financial Literacy Roadmap of Sri Lanka initiative. However, details such as the number of programmes conducted and their locations have not been shared, rendering this activity initiated. It is also noted that progress on activities implemented related to the corresponding indicators will be reported with a one-quarter delay due to practical considerations. Going forward, the importance of establishing a post-intervention assessment is recognised, and technical assistance has been sought to support this process.

For the implementation of **Activity 7.6** which entails raising awareness on how to make informed decisions on microfinance, highlighting the potential advantages and disadvantages and the registered institutions, through a trilingual media campaign, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and CBSL reported that the activity was initiated. However, there are no supporting documents pertaining to the progress of the respective indicators. It is further noted that CBSL requires a Focal Point from the MoWCA to coordinate with the Department of Communications (of CBSL) for future implementation.

Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 05:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Redistribution of responsibilities: In the case of three activities (see **7.2, 7.3** and **7.7**), the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development identified an alternative department to take responsibility for the implementation of the respective activities.	**Collaborate effectively:** Whenever responsibilities for activities are transferred or redistributed between departments or agencies, it is important to foster greater collaboration and clear communication during the handover process.
Need for technical assistance to measure progress: It is recognised that support is needed to accurately measure the progress of implemented activities (see **Activity 7.5**).	**Seek technical assistance:** Engage relevant ministries, CSOs, or NGOs to provide technical assistance in the implementation of NAP activities.

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Thematic Priority 06:

Promoting Women's Participation in Peacebuilding, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Decision-Making and Politics

Thematic Priority 06 focuses on promoting women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, decision-making, and politics. The strategic objectives include conducting and promoting peacebuilding activities, engaging more women as decision-makers at all levels of governance, increasing women's political participation, and involving women more equitably in peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities. Additionally, it aims to encourage political parties to pledge the achievement of gender balance in their party representation.

Progress in Implementation

Figure 6 below illustrates the reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 06, classifying them as initiated, ongoing, completed, or not started/no reporting.

THEMATIC PRIORITY 06

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION
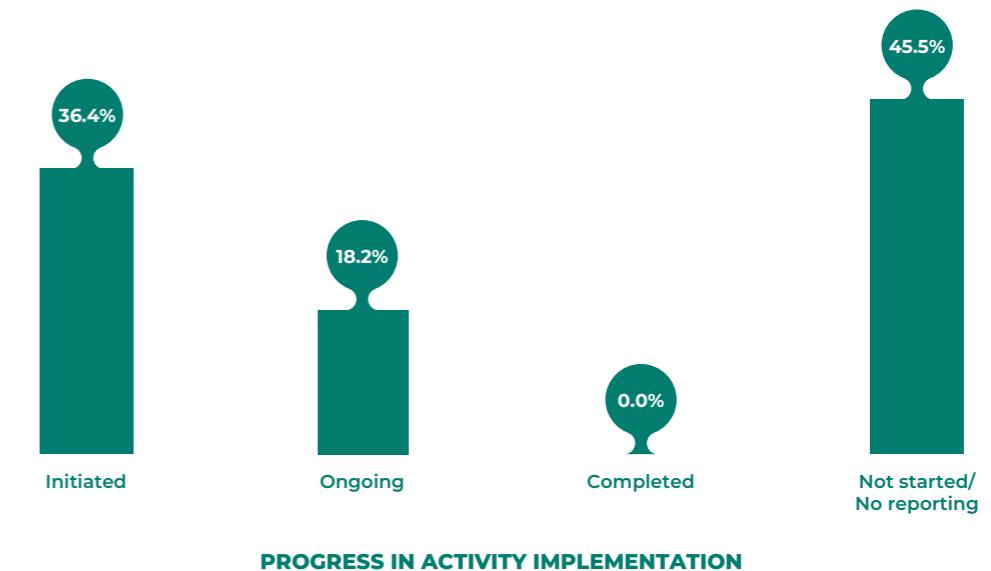
FIGURE 6. Reported progress of activities under Thematic Priority 06.

Below is a detailed account of the reported progress for activities identified as initiated, ongoing, or completed.

Focus Area 8: Peacebuilding, peacekeeping and promoting harmony amongst communities of Sri Lanka

As part of **Activity 8.1**, ONUR is tasked with conducting divisional-level peacebuilding activities to promote social cohesion through the meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Implementation is ongoing, with co-existence societies established at both village and divisional levels, alongside bilingual programmes aimed at promoting interaction between communities. It is reported that 100 peacebuilding programmes were organised across the country, reaching 3,800 women, while 1,019 women were represented in the people-centric boards established at the Grama Niladhari Division in 2025. This activity is consequently classified

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as ongoing. However, there is a lack of supporting documents to verify details on the content of the trainings or programmes conducted, as well as the geographic locations in which they took place.

Focus Area 9: Promoting women's political participation and involving more women in decision-making positions

Activity 9.1, which is ongoing, advocates for more women in leadership and management positions, particularly in marginalised and underprivileged sectors and/or communities. Progress on this activity is ongoing with WBSL reporting that, as of 2023, 150 women (across 25 districts) held leadership positions in the District Women's Federation, 1,896 women were in leadership roles among 316 Divisional Women's Federations, and 12,822 women held leadership positions in the Women Action Societies. In 2024, the number of women in leadership positions within the Women Action Societies declined to 1,936. There is no evidence to verify whether the reported figures correspond to women in leadership positions from underprivileged sectors, nor is there information explaining the reasons for the decline in women's leadership roles between 2023 and 2024. Therefore, in forthcoming reporting, it would be beneficial to include additional information in reporting the progress of this activity's implementation.

Building on **Activity 9.1,** NAP **Activity 9.2** seeks to facilitate women to take up leadership and decision-making positions at community-level structures, societies, and associations. Reporting by the MoWCA was provided for 2023, suggesting the activity's initiation, but has not continued since. Consequently, the indicator on the percentage increase of women in leadership positions cannot be reported on at this stage. It is expected that this information will be provided in the subsequent reporting period, enabling the completion of this activity.

Under **Activity 9.3**, the Mediation Boards Commission (MBC) is required to ensure and promote fair representation of women in mediation boards through the adoption of an Extraordinary Gazette. However, due to concerns regarding the insufficient number of women nominees and the potential implications for the administration of mediation boards, the MBC has decided not to pursue this Gazette.

As part of **Activity 9.4**, the MBC has been tasked with ensuring that all mediation boards receive training on gender-responsive mediation. While there was no reporting against the corresponding indicators, it was noted that the current training content incorporated a component on gender-responsive mediation, although it was not administered as a separate module. Furthermore, it is reported that Mediation Training Officers received specialised training on gender

equality as part of the Supporting Effective Dispute Resolution (SEDR) project[22] with the assistance of The Asia Foundation, and therefore, the progress of this activity is recorded as initiated.

Activity 9.5 entails developing a national network of women mediators and promoting cross-national and cross-regional exchanges. MBC reports that cross-regional, experience-sharing interventions were undertaken for the first time in 2024 as part of the SEDR project, with the participation of the chairpersons and mediators of the mediation boards. It was, however, noted that these interventions were not conducted exclusively for women mediators. Consequently, this activity is classified as initiated. Reflecting upon this, it is recommended that future reporting on interventions

disaggregate participant details by sex and district to facilitate more accurate reporting of progress against the corresponding indicator.

Activity 9.7 aims to formalise and strengthen inter-party networks of women in politics at the national and subnational levels to ensure support and mentorship. With this objective, the National Committee on Women (NCW) had conducted 11 programmes in 2024, reaching 499 women in the districts of Kandy, Trincomalee, Kurunegala, Galle, Anuradhapura, Ratnapura, Matale, Jaffna, Colombo, Vavuniya, and Badulla. However, supporting documents pertaining to the content of the trainings were not shared, and therefore it was not possible to assess future interventions necessary to complete this activity. As a result, this activity remains initiated.

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22   The SEDR project is a four-year project that seeks to enhance the effectiveness and availability of dispute resolution mechanisms in Sri Lanka and foster social cohesion and more inclusive community–state engagement. The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council of Sri Lanka in collaboration with The Asia Foundation.

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Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the implementation of Thematic Priority 06:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Limited supporting documentation: Where supporting documentation was not shared, it was challenging to confirm the reporting or provide recommendations for future implementation (see **Activity 8.1, 9.1** and **9.7**).	**Submit supporting documentation:** The submission of supporting documents on the progress achieved would allow for a more in-depth analysis of the current and future implementation of NAP activities and support the identification of further recommendations and best practices.
Lack of disaggregated data: A lack of disaggregation by sex, geographic area (district or divisional secretariat division), or sectors of community-level participation hindered accurate assessment of the reported information and corresponding progress (see **Activity 8.1** and **9.5**).	**Provide disaggregated data:** For interventions targeting common groups or implemented across multiple locations, participant details should be systematically documented. Incorporating disaggregated data would enable a more detailed analysis of both current and future implementation, with particular emphasis on tracking progress against indicators. It would also assist in the development of relevant recommendations for future implementation.
Challenges in implementation classification: The progress reported by ministries did not match the information required by the indicators, making it difficult to assess and classify the level of implementation.	**Foster collaboration:** Where activities are related or overlap with existing programmes, efforts should be made to identify synergies and expand ongoing interventions, thereby reducing the need for additional resources (**Activity 8.2** in relation to **Activity 8.1**).

Comparison of Activity Implementation

Figure 7 compares the percentages of activities initiated, ongoing, completed, and not started across the six thematic areas, highlighting where efforts have been proactive and where additional focus is needed to advance NAP implementation for 2025–2027.
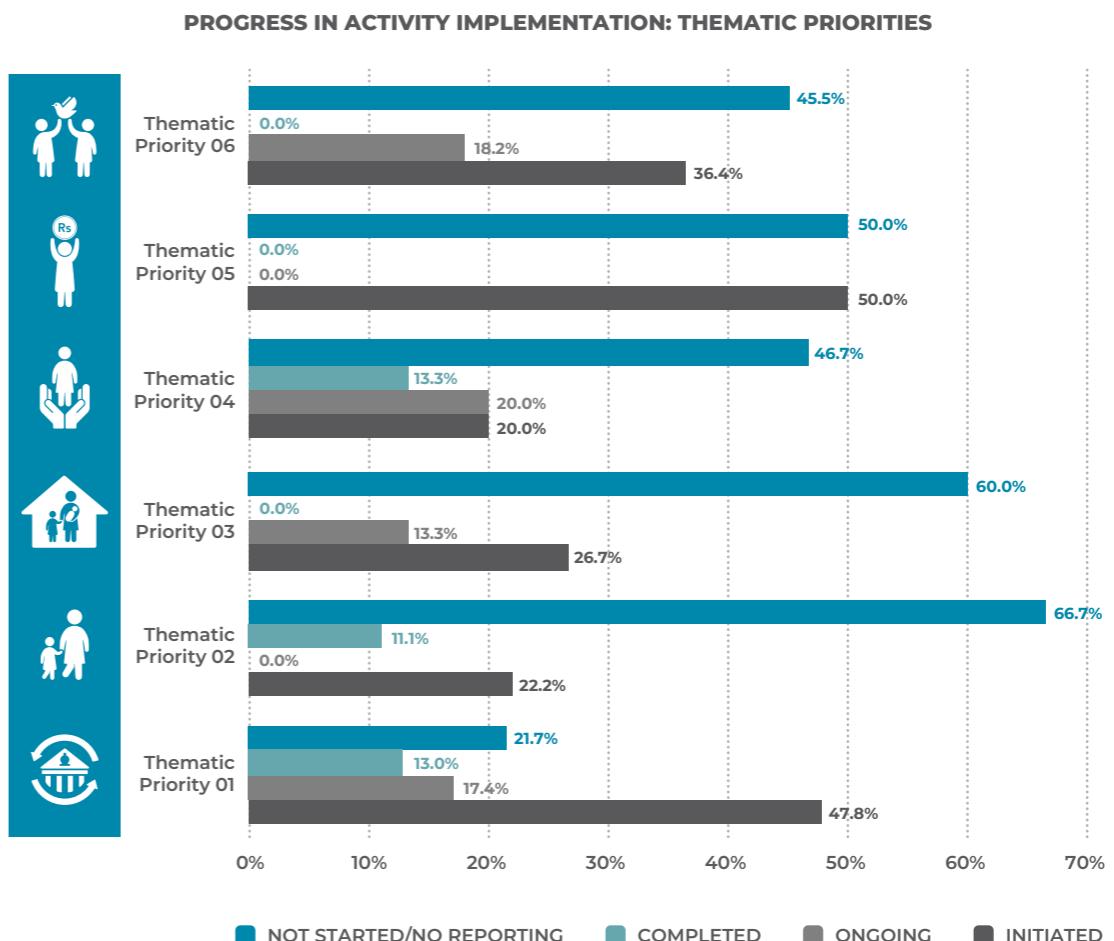

FIGURE 7. Progress in activity implementation based on thematic priority.

As of the first quarter of 2025, the implementation status across the Thematic Priorities varies as follows:

· **High implementation:** Thematic Priority 01 has a high percentage of initiated activities (47.8%), indicating strong initial efforts. Thematic Priority 05 leads in initiated activities (50.0%), demonstrating proactive engagement.

· **Moderate implementation:** Thematic Priority 04 exhibits moderate initiation (20.0%) and ongoing efforts (20.0%), yet a notable portion of its activities

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remain uninitiated (46.7%). Thematic Priority 06 shows moderate initiation (36.4%) and ongoing efforts (18.2%), with a significant percentage of activities not started (45.5%).

- **Low implementation:** Thematic Priority 02 has the highest percentage of activities not started or with no reporting (66.7%), highlighting a substantial gap in action. Thematic Priority 03 also shows a high percentage

of projects not started (60.0%), indicating a need for increased focus.

In summary, Thematic Priorities 01 and 05 show progress with higher project initiation rates. Priorities 04 and 06 demonstrate moderate implementation and need further action. Priorities 02 and 03 lag significantly, highlighting the need for increased focus and support to close implementation gaps.

Ranking of Implementation Progress by Thematic Priority

Table 2 below provides a ranking of the thematic priority areas based on the progress reported and assessed.

Rank	Thematic Priority	
1	Thematic Priority 01	Initiated: 47.8% Ongoing: 17.4% Completed: 13.0% Not started/No reporting: 21.7%
2	Thematic Priority 05	Initiated: 50.0% Ongoing: 0.0% Completed: 0.0% Not started/No reporting: 50.0%
3	Thematic Priority 06	Initiated: 36.4% Ongoing: 18.2% Completed: 0.0% Not started/No reporting: 45.5%
4	Thematic Priority 03	Initiated: 26.7% Ongoing: 13.3% Completed: 0.0% Not started/No reporting: 60.0%
5	Thematic Priority 04	Initiated: 20.0% Ongoing: 20.0% Completed: 13.3% Not started/No reporting: 46.7%
6	Thematic Priority 02	Initiated: 22.2% Ongoing: 0.0% Completed: 11.1% Not started/No reporting: 66.7%

ASSESSMENT OF COORDINATING BODIES

Core Steering Committee

The Core Steering Committee,[23] composed of 20–25 members representing senior officials from key ministries, national agencies, law enforcement, and civil society organisations, is tasked with consolidating and coordinating all monitoring and evaluation efforts. It is expected to meet tri-annually and its primary function is to ensure quality and accountability, with the Secretary of the MoWCA serving as Chairperson, communicating decisions to the relevant committees for implementation.

Alignment with Terms of Reference

Although efforts have been made to review progress and address challenges, the Committee's overall performance has not fully met the expectations set out in its Terms of Reference (ToR). Challenges remain in maintaining systematic oversight, ensuring cohesive coordination across agencies, establishing robust monitoring frameworks, and driving resource mobilisation efforts. To accelerate the effective implementation of the NAP on WPS, it is essential to reinforce the operational capacity, leadership role, and accountability mechanisms of the Core Steering Committee.

Number of Meetings and Frequency

As per the ToR, Core Steering Committee meetings should have been held on a quarterly basis. Between August 2023 and April 2025 only four meetings were convened (see Figure 8). Details of the meetings convened are provided below:

- **August 2023 (1st Meeting):** The inaugural meeting gathered 23 participants and laid the foundation for the Committee's functioning by reviewing the ToR and mapping out the inter-agency coordination framework.

- **March 2024 (2nd Meeting):** The second meeting focused on formalising the IACAC, discussing strategic alignment, and outlining progress monitoring systems.

- **July 2024 (3rd Meeting):** This meeting emphasised the importance of budget integration, donor coordination, and institutional reporting. A hybrid format was proposed to sustain attendance levels.

- **April 2025 (4th Meeting):** The fourth meeting was pivotal in addressing implementation challenges, disaggregated budgeting, and grassroots inclusion. It reinforced the MoWCA's leadership in aligning progress with national and international obligations.

REPRESENTATION IN CORE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
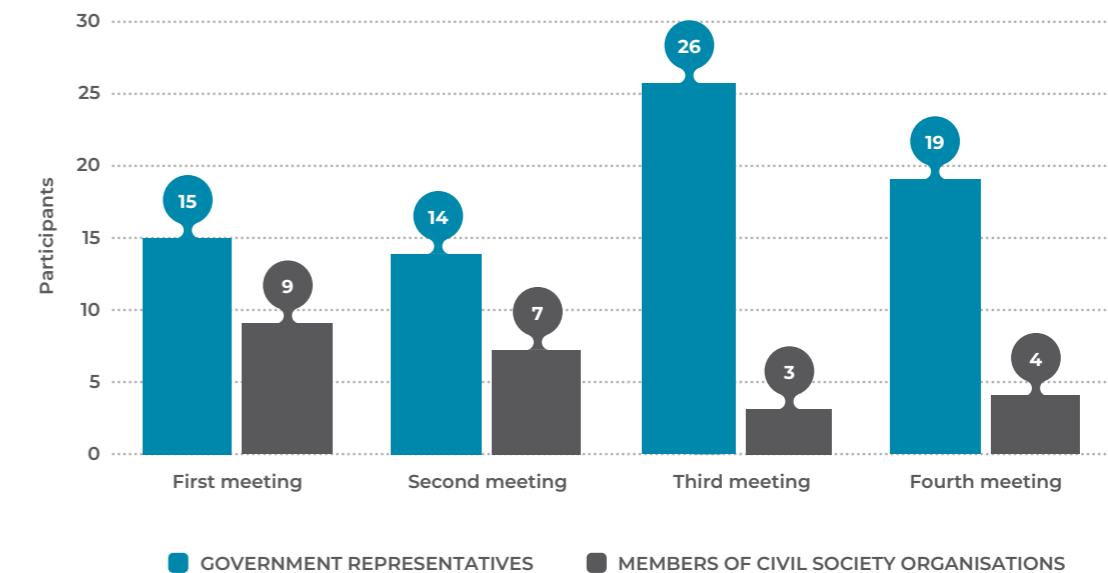
FIGURE 8. Participation in Core Steering Committee meetings.

Government participation has remained relatively strong and stable across these meetings. The first and second meetings recorded 14 government representatives each, demonstrating a baseline level of commitment. Notably, government participation peaked at the third meeting with 26 representatives—nearly double that of earlier sessions—indicating a possible shift in institutional priorities or the inclusion of additional line ministries and departments. Although there was a slight decline in the fourth meeting (19 participants), government presence overall remained high, suggesting continued institutional interest.

In contrast, CSO participation has been less consistent and shows a declining trend. From 9 representatives in the first meeting, numbers dropped to 7 in the second, then to a low of 3 in the third meeting, before rising slightly to 4 in the fourth. The sharp drop in the third meeting highlights a concerning imbalance and potential absence of critical community perspectives. The disparity between government and CSO representation suggests a need for deliberate efforts to ensure meaningful civil society involvement.

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23   Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, "Core Steering Committee", p. 96. Available at: https://child-womenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August, 2025).

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Key Conclusions and Outcomes

The Committee's meetings progressed from initial planning to substantive discussions on monitoring progress, mobilising resources, and aligning policies. Increased participation reflected stronger institutional engagement, while clearer priorities and responsibilities helped structure coordination. Though progress has been gradual, these advances have enhanced the Committee's role as a multisectoral platform for gender-responsive peacebuilding and security.

Throughout its convenings, the Steering Committee has made several important decisions aligned with the ToRs:

- **Strategic oversight**: Reviewed NAP progress updates (presented by the MoWCA), identified implementation bottlenecks, and provided guidance for overcoming challenges such as budgeting, reporting delays, and stakeholder engagement.

- **TOR alignment and committee structure**: During the initial meetings, the ToRs were clarified, defining the Committee's advisory role and composition. The necessity of thematic subcommittees and Focal Points from each line Ministry was reinforced.

- **Resource mobilisation and budgeting**: Members emphasised multi-year budgeting to better align with donor cycles and proposed submitting NAP activities for inclusion in national and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework budgets.

- **Inter-agency coordination**: The second and third meetings stressed thematic alignment for the Inter-Agency Coordination and Assessment Committees (IACACs) and proposed scheduling their meetings ahead of Steering Committee sessions to ensure feedback loops.

- **Monitoring and accountability**: The Committee instructed that NAP progress reports should reflect clear annual breakdowns of activities, disaggregating those requiring financial allocations from those that do not.

- **Inclusion and equity**: The fourth meeting further integrated gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive recommendations. Civil society inputs highlighted the need to tailor implementation to the specific realities of war widows, displaced women, and women with disabilities.

Despite these decisions and recommendations, challenges remain in sustaining momentum, ensuring regular reporting, and fully institutionalising the coordination mechanism within all relevant ministries.

Challenges and Recommendations

Detailed insights into the challenges experienced during the Core Steering Committee meetings, along with recommendations to strengthen its structure, reporting, and coordination mechanisms, are given below.

Challenges	Recommendations
Irregular meeting frequency: Meetings were not held consistently, which disrupted coordination and timely updates.	**Establish a regular meeting schedule:** Establish a consistent schedule for Core Steering Committee meetings in line with the ToR (once every four months) and communicate it in advance to all members. Align these meetings with progress reporting cycles to promote accountability and timely updates from all agencies.
Low or inconsistent participation: Key representatives from ministries and CSOs did not consistently attend or engage in meetings.	**Strengthen follow-up and accountability mechanisms:** Develop a systematic follow-up process that includes reminder emails, phone calls, and coordination visits to ensure nominated members attend meetings and submit required documentation. Maintain an attendance and submission tracker for better accountability.
Delays in progress reporting: Ministries/sub-agencies struggled to submit reports on time, impacting monitoring and review.	**Designate and equip dedicated Focal Points:** Assign dedicated Focal Points within each ministry or Implementing Agency who are trained and equipped to understand reporting requirements. Continue providing a standardised reporting format and training sessions to assist in timely data collection and compilation.
Inadequate integration with budgetary planning: NAP activities were not consistently reflected in institutional or national budgets.	**Integrate the NAP into budgeting and planning frameworks:** Organise technical workshops with planning and finance units of relevant ministries to support the integration of NAP activities into annual budgets and broader national planning frameworks (e.g., Public Investment Programme [PIP]). Emphasise activity costing and multi-year budget forecasting.

Limited awareness of the NAP among field officers: Many field-level officers were not adequately informed about the NAP or their roles in its implementation.	Enhance awareness at sub-national levels: Roll out structured awareness campaigns and orientation programmes at district and divisional levels targeting WDOs, local authorities, and CSOs. Distribute user-friendly guidance materials in local languages to enhance understanding and engagement with the NAP.
Turnover of Focal Points: Frequent transfer of Focal Points, coupled with the absence of a structured handover or debriefing process, affected continuity in implementation.	Improve knowledge transfer and onboarding processes: Implement a system to record and transfer knowledge from outgoing to incoming Focal Points. Maintain an updated Focal Point registry and provide orientations for these individuals.

Inter-Agency Coordination and Assessment Committee (IACAC)

The IACAC[24] serves as a mechanism to foster political will, advocacy, and public awareness necessary for achieving the objectives of the NAP on WPS. Each Lead Implementing Agency is responsible for forming a Coordination and Assessment Committee comprising five to ten members, with representation from the lead Implementing Agency, additional state actors, non-state actors, and relevant ministries to ensure inclusive oversight. Committees are required to meet quarterly.

Up to the midpoint of the NAP implementation, the IACAC has made progress in fulfilling its functions to support the NAP's execution. However, enhancing its operational effectiveness will be essential to ensure full compliance with its ToR and to strengthen the implementation of the NAP in the coming years.

While initial efforts were made to establish coordination structures and introduce reporting mechanisms, the actual performance of these core functions has been uneven. Notably:

- **Thematic coordination and oversight:** Although Thematic Committees were conceptualised, operationalisation across all priority areas has been limited. Structured thematic discussions and regular follow-ups have not occurred as envisaged.

- **Monitoring, data collection, and thematic reporting:** Digital platforms such as Google Sheets and Forms were introduced to collect progress data; however, comprehensive compilation of thematic reports—critical for strategic oversight—has been sporadic and largely dependent on external technical support rather than internal committee-driven processes.

- **Stakeholder engagement and accountability:** While participation of ministries and sub-agencies was initially mobilised, maintaining active and consistent engagement from both government and civil society actors remains a challenge. Regular institutional reviews, as stipulated in the ToRs, have been limited in scope and frequency.

In practice, much of the operational and coordination responsibility was undertaken by UN Women in collaboration with the MoWCA. For the IACAC to more effectively contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the NAP on WPS, there is an urgent need to strengthen its operational capacity and leadership, and to clarify its members' responsibilities.

Number of Meetings and Frequency

As outlined in the ToR, IACAC meetings should have been held on a quarterly basis. Between August 2023 and April 2025, only two meetings were convened.

The first round of thematic meetings in May 2024[25] saw the participation of approximately 66 individuals across all six thematic areas (Figure 9), while the second round in March 2025[26] engaged around 42 participants (Figure 10).

Attendees included representatives from key government ministries, CSOs, and UN Agencies, with each providing technical support and strategic guidance. In addition, independent experts and academics also contributed thematic insights.

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24 Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (2022), Sri Lanka's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, "Inter-Agency Coordination and Assessment Committee", p. 93. Available at: https://childwomenmin.gov.lk/frontend/files/Downloads/Plans/WPS/National%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Women,Peace%20and%20Security%20(2023-2027)%20English/NAP_ENG_FINAL_2023%20(1)%20(1)%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed on 28 August 2025).

25 These meetings were held on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of May 2024.

26 These meetings were held on the 4th and 5th of March 2025.

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REPRESENTATION IN THE FIRST SERIES OF IACAC MEETINGS
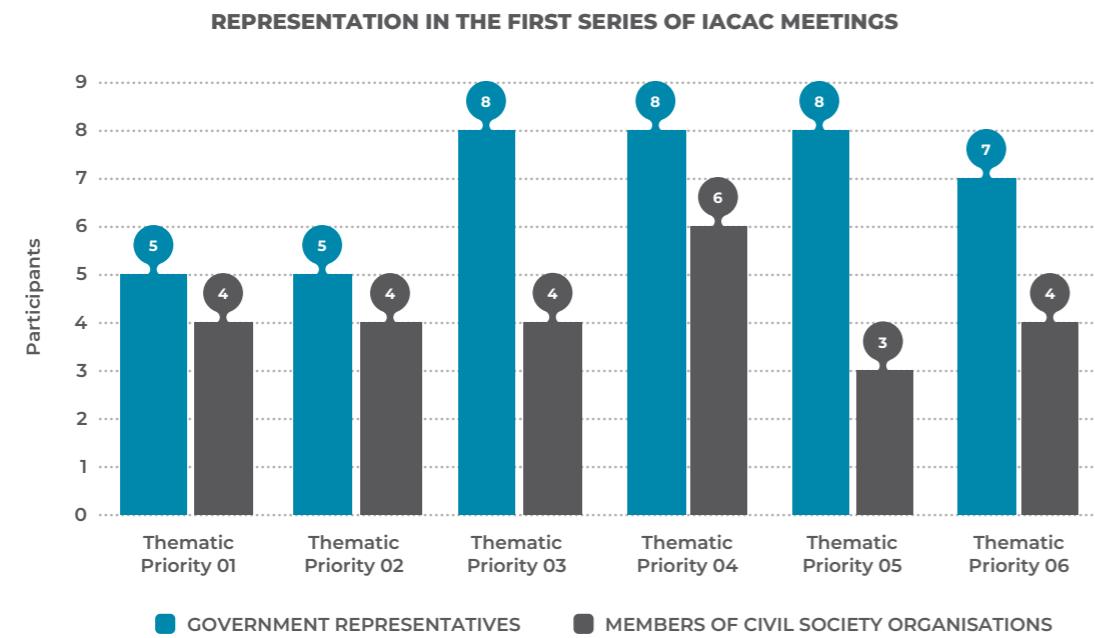
FIGURE 9. Participation in the IACAC meetings held in May 2024.

**REPRESENTATION IN THE SECOND SERIES OF IACAC MEETINGS**
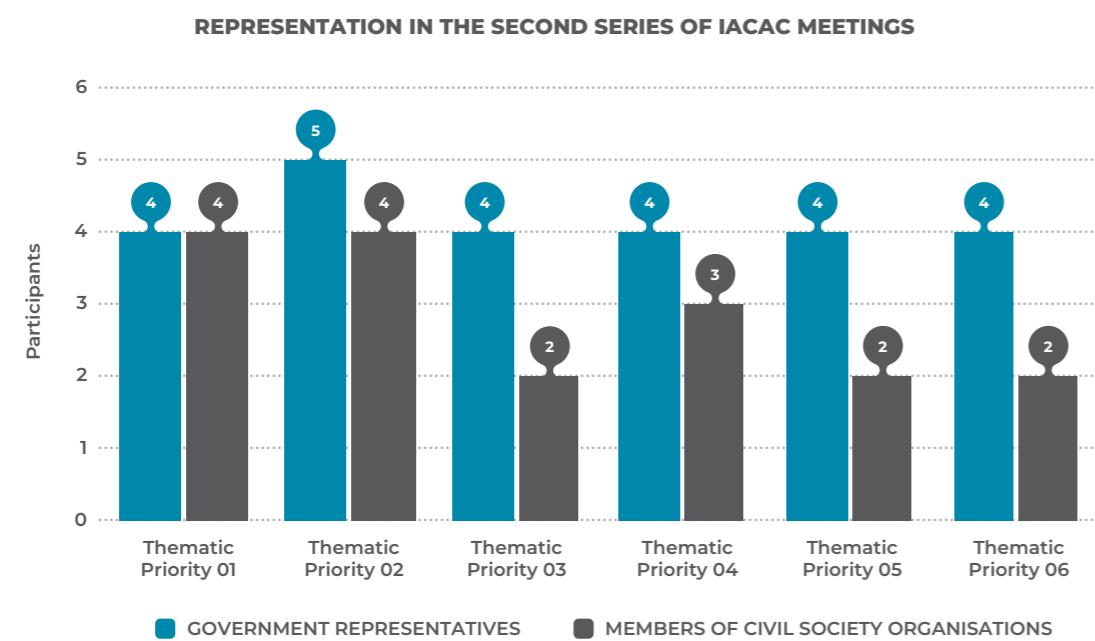
FIGURE 10. Participation in the IACAC meetings held in March 2025.

Key Outcomes and Conclusions Reached

During the first round of IACAC meetings, participants engaged in a comprehensive review of the ToRs for each of the six thematic areas. The key outcomes and conclusions are given below.

- **Reporting framework:** A significant outcome was the introduction of a standardised tracking sheet to streamline progress reporting, with plans to transition to Google Forms for easier access and real-time updates. Participants strongly emphasised the necessity of mandatory coaching and mentoring visits to all 11 lead ministries, aimed at supporting documentation and budget estimation. A decision was also made to give IACAC members direct access to the progress tracking sheets to ensure accountability.

- **IACAC function:** Core roles and responsibilities of IACACs were clarified, including data collection, baseline tracking, biannual reporting, and inter-agency coordination. Several members highlighted the urgent need for capacity-building sessions to effectively use the tracking sheet, adhere to the identified set of responsibilities, and fulfil their committee functions. Additionally, chairpersons were nominated or confirmed for each thematic area.

- **Further action:** The meetings concluded with broad consensus on the importance of institutionalising the IACAC framework, reflecting strong stakeholder commitment. However, discussions revealed gaps in technical capacity within certain committees, which could hinder progress if unaddressed. While the coordination processes were largely in line with the ToRs, there was a clear call for stronger facilitation mechanisms, improved accountability, and ongoing support to maintain momentum in implementing the NAP.

The second round of IACAC meetings, held on 4–5 March 2025, focused on reviewing the thematic progress updates for the years 2023 and 2024. Progress was categorised into three groups: completed updates, updates pending due to financial constraints, and those requiring further clarification.

- **Thematic reports:** Draft thematic reports were presented, with feedback requested ahead of submission to the Core Steering Committee. To address inconsistencies in reporting, coaching support was provided to agencies. In a move to improve coordination, WhatsApp groups were established for each thematic area.

- **Cost estimates and NAP budgeting:** Budgetary gaps were identified by the IACAC in several activities, prompting ministries to

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begin estimating costs.

- **Progress in reporting:** These discussions highlighted that while overall progress tracking had improved since the first round, reporting remained inconsistent across agencies.

- **IACAC coordination:** The creation of digital coordination tools, such as WhatsApp groups, was seen as a positive step towards more responsive communication and engagement. Additionally, there

was a strong consensus on the urgency of meeting reporting timelines, especially in relation to international obligations such as CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. Cross-agency collaboration, including partnerships with civil society and international actors, was identified as essential to addressing technical gaps and ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of the IACAC mechanism moving forward.

Challenges and Recommendations

A detailed overview of the challenges encountered during the meetings of the IACAC for the NAP (2023–2025), along with recommendations, are given below.

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Inconsistent participation: Key agencies such as the Department of Project Management and Monitoring (DPMM), the Legal Aid Commission, and the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) were often absent or unresponsive.	**Conduct regular virtual follow-ups:** Conduct regular virtual follow-ups every 3–4 months to support accurate and timely reporting.
Data entry gaps: Some ministries lacked updated entries due to Focal Point turnover or technical difficulties.	**Ensure mandatory coaching and orientation for Focal Points:** Make coaching and orientation visits mandatory for all Focal Points and ensure follow-up on absentees.
Funding gaps and unclear costing: Several activities are yet to be funded, and cost estimations are still pending.	**Encourage completion of costing templates and donor engagement:** Systematically monitor, assess, and ensure the completion of accurate cost estimates to reinforce donor engagement and enhance resource mobilisation.
Lack of subject expertise: Some thematic areas lacked dedicated experts for technical validation and guidance.	**Include subject-matter experts:** Engage subject-matter experts in each thematic area to strengthen analysis and reporting quality.
Fragmented collaboration: Activities overlapping across thematic areas lacked coordination.	**Strengthen inter-thematic linkages:** Strengthen inter-thematic linkages through joint review meetings and information-sharing mechanisms.
Limited visualisation of progress: There is difficulty in understanding the overall implementation status.	**Develop a visual dashboard:** Develop a simplified visual dashboard to track thematic implementation and status updates.
Representation gaps: There is a need for wider stakeholder representation, including regional actors.	**Promote gender and geographic diversity in committee representation:** Ensure gender and geographic diversity in future committee nominations and consultations.

NAP ON WPS BUDGETING: REPORTING ON FINANCIAL COST ESTIMATES

To support the implementation of the NAP on WPS, the MoWCA initiated a range of measures to gather financial cost estimates from lead ministries and sub-agencies. With technical support from UN Women, a prioritisation workshop was held on 14 February 2024 to help stakeholders identify and articulate funding requirements for key interventions. These efforts were complemented by focused group discussions, regular correspondence via email and letters, and individual discussions with institutional representatives. While these efforts led to several submissions, the overall outcome did not fully meet expectations.

Assessment of Cost Estimate Reporting

Overview of Cost Estimate Submissions by Agencies

The mid-term review recorded the status of cost estimate submissions for NAP on WPS activities by agency (see Figure 11). The details are given below.

STATUS OF COST ESTIMATE SUBMISSIONS BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

- PARTIAL SUBMISSION
- NO SUBMISSION MADE
- COMPLETE SUBMISSION
- NO SUBMISSION REQUIRED
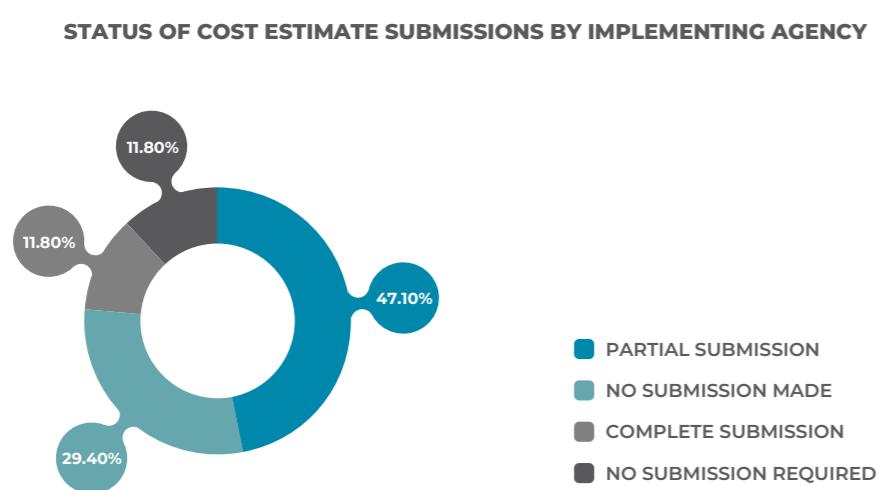
FIGURE 11. Status of cost estimate submissions by agencies.

- **Complete submissions**: Only one lead ministry submitted a comprehensive cost estimate that also covered its respective sub-agencies. Among the independent agencies, one submitted a complete set of cost estimates.

- **No submission required**: Two lead ministries clearly stated that they did not require additional financial allocations, as their planned activities were already covered under the national budget.

- **Partial submissions**: Six lead ministries provided partial submissions. Two independent agencies also submitted estimates covering only certain relevant activities or thematic areas.

- **No submission made**: Three lead ministries and two independent agencies did not submit any cost estimates.

Further Observations on the Submitted Cost Estimates

- **Lack of standardisation**: The varied scale of submissions pertaining to the estimated cost of implementing the NAP-related activities across agencies also points to inconsistencies in cost estimation practices, potentially influenced by differences in technical capacity, degree of familiarity with the NAP, availability of existing financial allocations, and strategic planning processes.

- **Lack of detailed breakdown:** For activities divided into multiple interlinked indicators, no itemised budget breakdown was provided. This could undermine resource mobilisation efforts.

Reasons for Non-Submission or Partial Submission of Cost Estimates

A number of Implementing Agencies—both lead ministries and independent entities—either submitted partial information or did not submit cost estimates at all. Closer examination of the context and institutional dynamics revealed several possible reasons for these gaps:

- **Existing budget allocations through national or sectoral frameworks**: As the necessary resources were already secured under the national budget or existing sectoral programmes, some Implementing Agencies indicated that they did not require separate budget allocations.

- **Overlapping donor-funded programmes**: Certain Implementing Agencies were already engaged in ongoing projects supported by bilateral or multilateral development partners, many of which may already address themes aligned with the NAP. As a result, these agencies may not see the immediate need to request separate funding.

- **Competing institutional priorities**: NAP-related activities are not viewed as a primary responsibility relative to the agency's core mandate. Ministries and agencies may prioritise programmes that are directly tied to sectoral deliverables, regulatory obligations, or political imperatives, thereby limiting the resources and attention allocated to the NAP.

- **Capacity and technical gaps**: The process of developing cost estimates aligned with NAP indicators require technical understanding of gender-responsive budgeting, as well

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as coordination with multiple departments within an institution. Agencies with limited capacity in these areas faced challenges in preparing submissions.

- **Timing and alignment issues**: The cost estimation exercise did not always align with internal budget planning cycles, which could lead to missed opportunities for timely integration of NAP -related activities.

- **Unclear roles and responsibilities**: Implementing Agencies required clearer guidance on their specific roles in implementing the NAP, including which outcomes they were accountable for and how these link to budget lines.

Challenges and Recommendations

A detailed overview of the challenges identified in relation to the cost estimates and budgeting of the NAP, along with corresponding recommendations, is given below.

Challenges	Recommendations
Inconsistent submissions: While a few agencies provided complete submissions, others either did not submit any or provided only partial information, indicating uneven capacity or prioritisation.	**Introduce cost validation mechanisms:** Establish an inter-agency cost review committee to assess and validate submitted budgets, ensuring coherence, avoiding duplication, and confirming alignment with NAP commitments.
Lack of standardisation: Inconsistent formats and cost breakdowns made data consolidation challenging. There is a need for a uniform cost estimation template.	**Develop a standardised costing template:** Introduce a uniform template for all agencies that clearly aligns each budget item with a NAP outcome and indicator.
Limited understanding of WPS budgeting: Some agencies showed gaps in linking budget lines to concrete WPS activities, often reflecting general programmes with no correlation to specific WPS indicators or objectives.	**Provide capacity building on gender-responsive budgeting:** Conduct focused training sessions for planning and finance officers within all relevant ministries to improve understanding of WPS-specific costing and integration of the WPS Agenda into national frameworks.
Delayed integration with national planning cycles: The timeline of cost estimation did not always align with national budgeting and planning frameworks, affecting timely resource allocation.	**Assign Focal Points for financial reporting:** Designate Focal Points in each Implementing Agency responsible for collecting, validating, and submitting cost estimates as per guidelines. **Synchronise with budget calendars:** Ensure future cost estimation cycles are initiated in alignment with the national and sectoral budget preparation calendars.

CAPACITY-BUILDING SESSIONS

The capacity-building sessions were designed to enhance institutional readiness and coordination for the implementation of the NAP on WPS. These sessions aimed to build the technical capacities of Focal Points and officials from lead and sub-Implementing Agencies by familiarising them with the specific activities outlined in the NAP. A key objective was to introduce participants to standardised reporting mechanisms and provide training on their application. In addition, these interventions provided a platform to discuss operational challenges. The initiative was supported by UN Women and organised in close collaboration with the MoWCA.

Delivery of Capacity-Building Interventions

Figure 12 below illustrates the distribution of organisations that participated in the capacity-building sessions. Eleven lead ministries and four independent agencies completed the capacity-building training. Approximately 90.5% of the Implementing Agencies successfully received capacity-building support, while 9.5% of the organisations did not receive it during the assessment period.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

9.5%

90.5%

■ CAPACITY BUILDING RECEIVED
■ CAPACITY BUILDING NOT RECEIVED
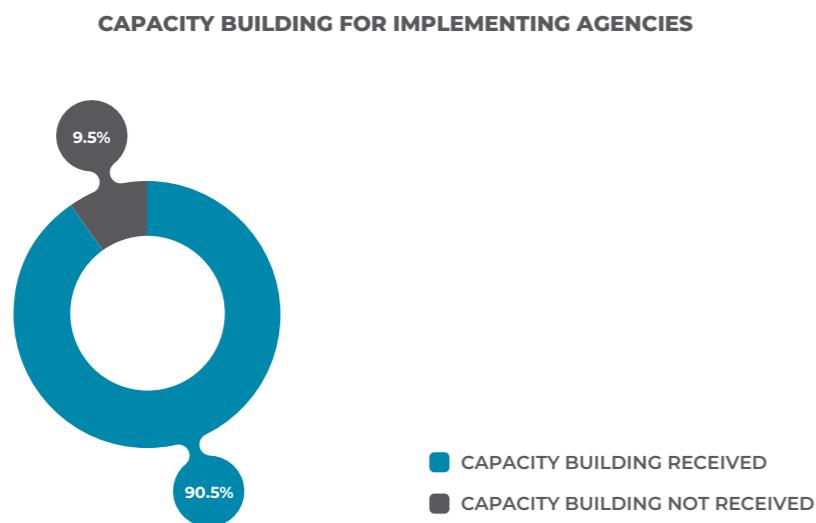
FIGURE 12. Distribution of Implementing Agencies by receipt of capacity-building support.

Overview of Participation in Capacity-Building Interventions

Between July 2024 and March 2025, a total of 15 capacity-building sessions were conducted across selected ministries, engaging 126 participants overall. The MoWCA and the Ministry of Defence each participated in three sessions, with 17 and 29 participants reached, respectively. The ministries of Education, Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs, Public Administration, ONUR, and the Ministry of Digital Economy attended two sessions each, with participant numbers ranging from 7 to 36.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms, the Ministry of Health and Mass Media, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Manpower and Employment, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, and the CBSL each attended one session, collectively engaging a total of 17 participants.

Several institutions did not participate in any capacity-building sessions during the reporting period. This was largely attributed to internal scheduling conflicts, shifting ministry priorities, and delays in the appointment of dedicated NAP Focal Points.

Following the Parliamentary elections, capacity-building sessions were organised for the newly appointed Focal Points from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Digital Economy,[27] and ONUR.

It is also noteworthy that the Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security, and Community Empowerment was newly established after the Parliamentary elections. The officers now serving in this ministry were previously attached to the MoWCA and had already participated in capacity-building sessions. Therefore, no additional post-election training sessions were held for this ministry.

While the series of capacity-building sessions made significant strides in strengthening institutional capacities, further outreach and targeted training efforts will be essential to engage ministries that were not reached as administrative structures continue to evolve.

Assessment of Capacity-Building Interventions

Pre- and post-intervention assessments were administered to participants who took part in the capacity-building interventions in order to determine their effectiveness and impact. These self-administered surveys were deployed at the Focal Points Meeting in December 2024 and during subsequent capacity-building sessions. The assessments ascertained the respondents' level of awareness of and engagement with the NAP (see Figure 13), in addition to determining if any additional support

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27   Formerly, Sri Lanka CERT.

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was needed to better engage with the provision of progress updates on the implementation of activities corresponding with the respective government agencies.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE NAP ON WPS
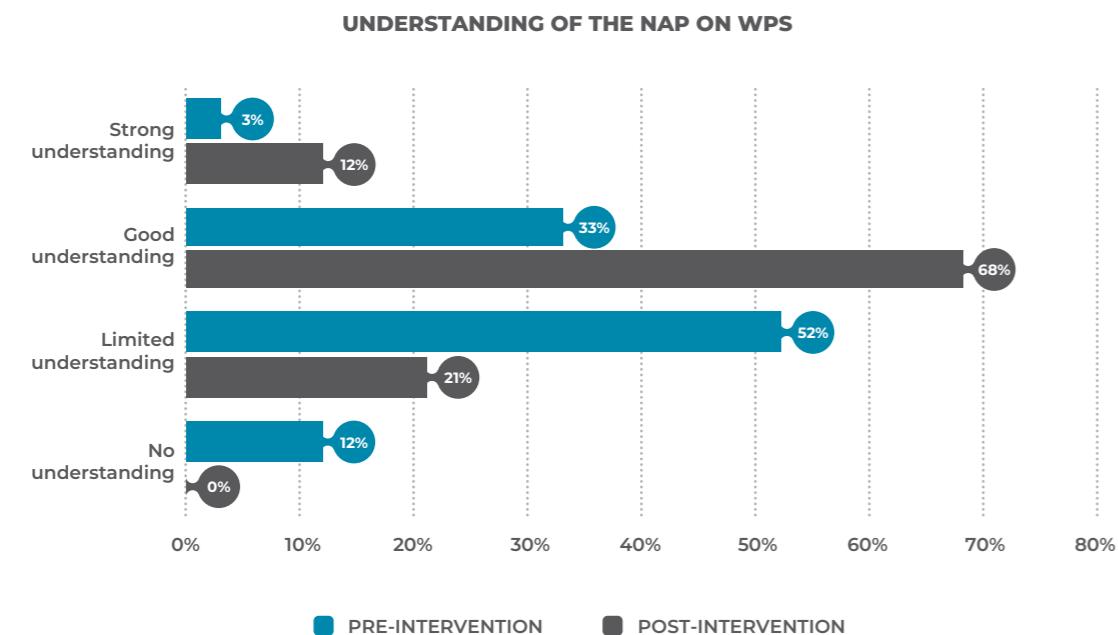
FIGURE 13. Understanding of the NAP among participants of capacity-building interventions.

For a majority of the respondents (76%) attending the Focal Points Meeting in December 2024 and the subsequent capacity-building interventions, these engagements represented their first exposure to the NAP on WPS. The proportion of respondents indicating a 'good understanding' of the NAP on WPS increased from 33% to 68% between the pre- and post-evaluations.

Although the digital progress tracking sheet was shared with all Implementing Agencies in February 2024, the assessments reflected that respondents had low levels of confidence in providing the updates

to monitor implementation progress. This was attributed to difficulties in collating the necessary information from sub-agencies, as well as the fact that many Focal Points were newly appointed and therefore had limited understanding of the content and expectations. Following the capacity-building interventions, it was possible to record an overall improvement in respondents' confidence to report on progress pertaining to activities (Figure 14). It is recommended that agencies experiencing implementation and/or reporting challenges be provided the necessary training support.

**CONFIDENCE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR THE NAP ON WPS PROGRESS TRACKER**
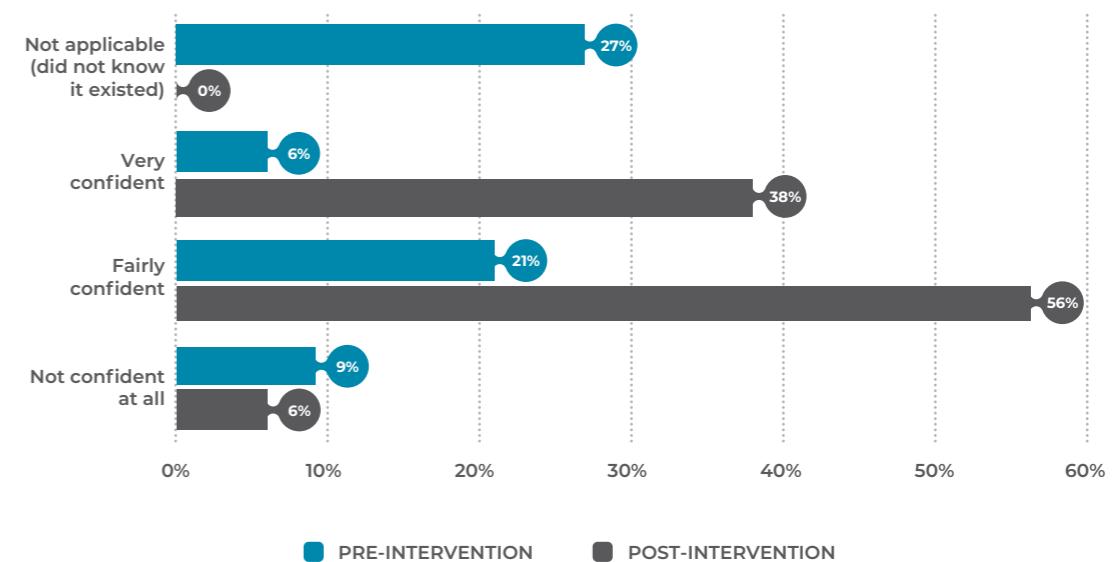
FIGURE 14. Participant confidence levels in reporting to the NAP WPS progress tracker before and after interventions.

As part of the survey, respondents were asked if they were "responsible for providing updates to the NAP". The purpose of this question was to determine if participants would contribute to ensuring long-term engagement. However, during the assessment, only 42% of the surveyed respondents identified themselves as responsible for reporting. Certain respondents further indicated that

alternative representatives should be identified to attend future meetings as they were not in a position to provide the necessary information. Therefore, it is recommended that participants for NAP-related programmes be carefully nominated, ensuring they possess a clear understanding of the NAP's purpose and the authority to access the information required to deliver quarterly updates.

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Challenges and Recommendations

The following challenges and associated recommendations have been identified concerning the delivery of capacity-building sessions:

Challenges Identified	Recommendations
Delays in receiving information: Slow reporting progress was attributed to delays in obtaining information from relevant sub-departments, compounded by low levels of awareness.	**Appoint sub-Focal Points:** Appoint sub-Focal Points representing the departments within each respective ministry assigned to achieve key indicators. This will facilitate easier access to the necessary information.
Limited attendance from key institutions: Some key ministries did not attend any sessions, possibly indicating low prioritisation of NAP activities or the lack of designated Focal Points.	**Ensure appointment of Focal Points:** All Implementing Agencies must formally assign and capacitate dedicated Focal Points for NAP reporting and monitoring.
Uneven participation across agencies: While a few ministries were consistent in their participation, others had minimal engagement, contributing to inconsistent data quality and unstable commitment to WPS implementation.	**Conduct follow-up orientations for non-attendees:** Regular follow-ups and orientations should be conducted for institutions that missed the capacity-building sessions.
Technical capacity gaps: Difficulties encountered in using the digital tools (Google Form), indicate a need for practical, hands-on training.	**Monitor engagement:** Develop a simple dashboard to track participation and follow up with low-performing agencies.

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of the MTR, this section reflects on the key findings, challenges, lessons learnt, and recommendations identified thus far in the implementation of the NAP on WPS. This review highlights both the progress made and the persistent gaps that remain, offering critical insights into how these limitations can be addressed. These reflections are intended to guide actions that will ensure the intended outcomes are realised by the conclusion of the implementation period in 2027.

Implementation Progress

Thematic Priority 01 records the strongest progress, with 13% of activities completed, 17% ongoing, and 48% of activities initiated. Notable achievements include efforts to advance gender equality through legislative reforms, particularly the enforcement of the women's representation quota in Provincial Councils. Thematic Priority 02 has shown limited progress, with 67% of activities yet to be initiated–attributed, in part, to the changing context. Data shows that Thematic Priority 03 has made moderate progress, with welfare and livelihood programmes implemented for identified vulnerable groups of women. However, the lack of sufficient supporting documentation hinders the ability to accurately assess the extent of intervention progress. Thematic Priority 04 records encouraging progress in the implementation of selected interventions, particularly in providing support to caregivers of persons with disabilities. Under Thematic Priority 05, activities have been initiated with a focus on the economic empowerment of women through financial literacy and capacity-building initiatives. However, there is room for improvement, as 50% of activities have not been initiated or reported on. Thematic Priority 06 shows ongoing progress in relation to women's leadership and peacebuilding programmes. Despite the provision of initial guidance and technical support to Implementing Agencies, the quality of cost estimate submissions varied and did not meet expected outcomes. Only two Implementing Agencies (12%) submitted completed cost estimates, while the majority (47%) provided only partial submissions.

Challenges

The MTR revealed several challenges that have hindered the effective implementation of the NAP. Political transitions and reassignment of officers responsible for implementing and reporting NAP-related activities have contributed to delays and the loss of institutional memory, particularly in the absence of structured handovers. Financial resource constraints, stemming from inadequate budget allocations and broader fiscal limitations of the State, further restrict initiation and sustained implementation of activities pertaining to the NAP.

Accurate assessment of progress remains difficult due to reporting inconsistencies and the absence of supporting documentation. Additionally, the lack of disaggregated data by sex and location, where relevant, complicates the evaluation of progress against activity indicators. Instances of reported actions not aligning with intended indicators further limit the ability to ascertain implementation progress effectively.

Despite initial guidance, cost estimate submissions for the implementation of activities remain inconsistent. These challenges are attributed to limited technical expertise in gender-responsive budgeting, unclear institutional mandates, and misalignment with national fiscal cycles.

Finally, while oversight and coordination structures have been established in line with the guidelines of the NAP on WPS, operational challenges persist, including irregular meetings, gaps in representation, and limited integration with broader national planning frameworks.

Recommendations and Lessons Learnt

To ensure sustained progress in the implementation of the NAP on WPS, it is recommended that funding allocations be formalised through costed implementation plans. Additionally, improved inter-ministerial coordination and the establishment of mechanisms for knowledge transfer during handovers are imperative to minimise disruptions in implementation.

Where applicable, all reporting data should be disaggregated to clarify reach, outcomes, and alignment with the respective activity indicators, with data recorded at the point of implementation.

Future iterations of NAPs on WPS should include adaptive mechanisms that can respond to evolving contexts. Activities should be reviewed periodically, and revisions justified based on changes in socio-political and environmental realities to ensure the NAP remains responsive to the needs of the target population. Where institutional mandates have changed, coordinating bodies should collaborate to identify appropriate Implementing Agencies and reassign responsibilities accordingly.

To optimise existing oversight and coordination structures, regular meetings to review NAP progress

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should be institutionalised, and NAP activities should be integrated into the overall plans of Implementing Agencies. Furthermore, Focal Points should receive adequate training upon onboarding to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to contribute effectively towards the achievement of the outcomes of the NAP on WPS.

In light of the current progress on cost estimates, capacity-building interventions should be initiated, with a focus on gender-responsive budgeting and the use of standardised costing templates.

Next Steps

As the NAP enters its final stages, establishing a clear evaluation framework aligned with the National Evaluation Policy is crucial for a comprehensive and credible endline assessment. Pending needs assessments should be prioritised to allow sufficient time for the development of interventions informed by their findings. This includes collecting baseline and updated indicator values where data is missing or pending, ensuring all data is disaggregated by sex, geography, and other relevant variables. Progress updates should be accompanied by supporting documentation such as photographs, budgets, attendance lists, and activity completion reports. Institutional memory must be preserved through structured onboarding for new Focal Points and officials, supplemented by periodic reviews of ongoing progress. These measures will contribute towards a comprehensive endline review and inform the design of a stronger, more responsive iteration of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.