

Policy Framework for Strengthening Civil Society

Women, Peace and Security

A framework for funding civil society organisations for 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025

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1. Strengthening Civil Society – Introduction

A strong civil society,¹ in combination with legitimate, effective government and a private sector that does business responsibly, forms the basis for a well-functioning, inclusive society. Civil society organisations often not only strengthen and echo the voice of citizens, but also represents this voice both within and beyond political processes. Through lobbying and advocacy, civil society organisations² call on governments and the private sector to take responsibility to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an inclusive way, to comply with international human rights principles and to strengthen the social contract between government and citizens. In many cases civil society organisations address injustice and unequal power relations and hold political and economic institutions accountable for their policies. Strengthening civil society contributes to an open society and strengthens democracy and rule of law.

Support to civil society is still vital, particularly given the fact that civic space is under pressure in many countries. In over a hundred countries, freedom of association, assembly and expression are severely restricted, for example through bureaucratic restrictions or use of violence.³ This affects not only civil society organisations themselves but also everything they stand for, such as their commitment to gender equality, clean drinking water, environmental protection and fighting corruption. To relieve the increasing pressure on civil society organisations, an approach is needed that is closely aligned to the local situation and which gives local organisations more say in how the Netherlands can contribute.

This new policy framework is based on the principles set out in the policy document ‘Investing in Global Prospects: for the World, for the Netherlands’.⁴ This document devotes specific attention to civil society and the role it can play in achieving the 17 SDGs by 2030. Civil society organizations play a role in achieving the SDGs by focusing on poverty reduction and representing and strengthening people’s voice in conflict, post-conflict and more stable contexts. Since civil society has an independent role, it can hold governments and the private sector accountable for sustainable, coherent and inclusive policies. Consequently, civil society can promote communication and foster relations between the public, government and the private sector.

Within the broader SDG agenda, which is the main point of reference for Dutch government policy, the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation focuses on SDG 5 in particular, since investing in women means investing in development and growth. The Minister is therefore committed to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and has identified this as a goal of all components of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (BHOS) policy and thus of all components addressed in this policy framework. The focus on SDG 5 is essential to achieving an effective, inclusive foreign policy. Gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but also a means and prerequisite for achieving the other SDGs.

Strengthening Civil Society is the overarching policy framework for the grant instruments under policy article 3 of chapter XVII of the central government budget, which are discussed below. The focus of this policy is on civic space, to make it possible for civil society organisations to make their full contribution to achieving the SDGs. This policy is based on a common vision and goal, and aims to work with greater vigour and coherence on strengthening civil society in lobbying for and advocating human rights compliance, thus contributing to achieving the SDGs.

Two grant funds fall within this policy framework: Power of Voices and the SDG5 fund. Power of Voices encompasses three instruments: Power of Voices Partnerships, the extended grants policy framework for Voice (for a period of three years until 31 December 2023) and the Accountability Fund (an instrument implemented by the Dutch diplomatic missions,⁵ specifically intended for local civil society organisations, to which this policy framework provides follow-up).

The SDG5 fund comprises the subsidy instruments Power of Women; Women, Peace and Security; the SRHR Partnership Fund and Leading from the South. The SDG5 fund underscores the Dutch government’s commitment to women’s rights and gender equality.

¹ See list of terms, annexe 1: civil society.

² See list of terms, annexe 1: civil society organisations.

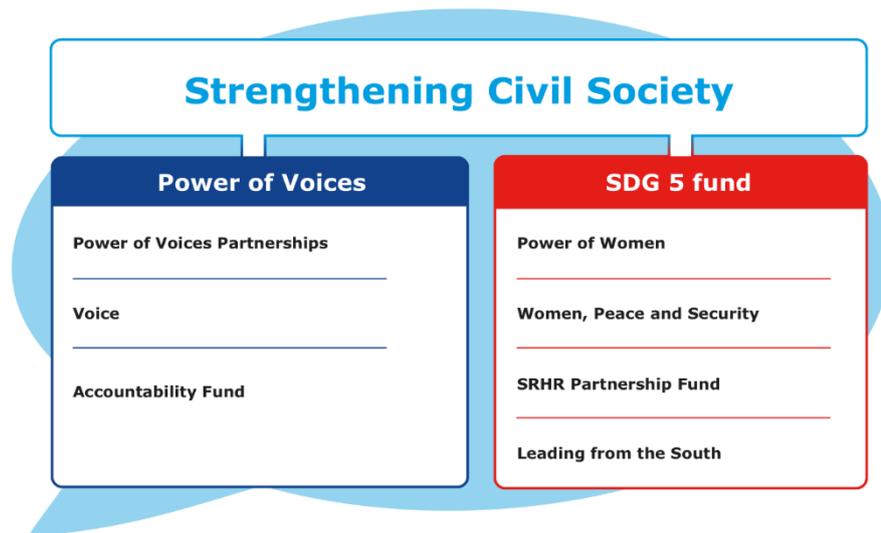
³ CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report 2018.

⁴ Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives, 2017/18, 34 952, no. 1.

⁵ Hereafter ‘embassies’ or ‘missions’.

The new framework provides follow-up to existing grant instruments in support of programmes to strengthen civil society which expire on 31 December 2020. These are Dialogue and Dissent (followed up by Power of Voices Partnerships); Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women (followed up by the Power of Women); Women, Peace and Security (formerly called *Vrouwen, Vrede en Veiligheid* in Dutch, now followed up by 'Women, Peace and Security' in English) and SRHR partnerships (followed up by the SRHR Partnership Fund).⁶

The other three grant instruments – Voice, the Accountability Fund and Leading from the South – will continue in their existing form, in view of the results achieved and the nature of their objectives. The continuation of Voice and Leading from the South is based on Mid Term Reviews. For the AFund a review to be held in 2020 can lead to adaptations. The instruments listed above have all been incorporated into this policy framework to emphasise the cohesion between them.⁷ See scheme:



Chapter 2 examines the overarching objective, policy principles and core components of the Strengthening Civil Society policy framework.

The Theory of Change on Strengthening Civil Society (annex 5 to this policy framework) describes the overarching framework. This Theory of Change also covers the Power of Voices Partnerships and is part of the policy rules of the Power of Voices Partnerships. Besides the overarching Theory of Change, there are separate Policy documents/Theory of Change attached for Power of Women; Women, Peace and Security and the SRHR Partnership Fund. These fall off course within and are an integral part of the overarching Theory of Change on Strengthening Civil Society and cannot be seen separately. These policy documents/Theory of Change have been included as an annexe to the corresponding grant policy framework and are part of the policy rules of the grant instruments.

This policy framework is also published in Dutch. In case of discrepancies or interpretational differences, the Dutch version is leading.

⁶ See Parliamentary Papers, House of Representatives, 2018/19, 34952, no.66 (Letter to parliament of 20 June 2019).

⁷ For more information go to: <https://voice.global> and www.leadingfromthesouth.org.

2. Strengthening Civil Society: policy objective, policy principles and core components

2.1. Policy objective

The main objective of this policy framework is to strengthen civil society organisations in their role of lobby and advocacy. With this, a strong civil society which stands up for citizens' needs and rights and in doing so contributes to improving the social contract between government and citizens as to an inclusive, sustainable society, is supported.

The social contract concerns the degree to which the state creates space for (or imposes restrictions) on citizens' individual and social development, and can be held to account for its actions. The role civil society can play in improving the social contract will differ from country to country. Civil society organisations in closed societies will of course need to use different strategies and interventions than organisations working in more open societies.

With this, the policy framework aims to contribute to social, political and economic development in those countries in which the programs are being implemented. For this purpose it is essential for civil society organisations to work together, for example through networks. This framework helps foster an environment in which civil society can work more effectively at local, national, regional and international level, with – importantly – a link between the different levels.

The various new grant instruments falling within this policy framework each have separate secondary goals identified in the specific grant policy frameworks applicable to them.

Organisations and/or individuals listed in international sanctions regulations are excluded from funding. Any organisation receiving funding under this framework will be required by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation to take active measures to preclude organisations and/or individuals listed in international sanctions regulations from benefiting from Dutch support in whatever form (direct, indirect, participation in workshops, etc.). This obligation will be a transferable clause in the grant decision and thus also works through to agreements with third parties.

2.2. Principles

The human rights approach and the SDGs are key elements in this new policy framework. Human rights are the foundation on which dignity and freedom are built. They form the basis for a free and open society. A smoothly functioning and inclusive society is a basis for prosperity, stability, economic growth and development. The ambition reflected in the SDGs is to improve the situation of the world's most deprived people. Given that achieving the SDGs is a worldwide goal and that many of the problems occur at local, national, regional and global level, cooperation between countries and regions is essential. Defending human rights and achieving the SDGs worldwide call for a strong civil society. This is crucial in order to strengthen and hear the voices of people who are seldom if ever heard, play little or an unequal part in society and can make little use of their rights.

Efforts under this policy framework will largely target countries in the focus regions, as well as countries that are mentioned in the BHOS policy document that have a development cooperation relation with the Netherlands.⁸ Besides this focus, it is possible to a limited extent to work in other low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries (Annexe 3). An exception is made under Power of Voices Partnerships for the themes Climate mitigation and adaptation and Trade and/or making value chains more sustainable, which can be deployed in all low-income, lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries. This will be elaborated on in chapter three of Power of Voices Partnerships.

It is essential for programmes to run in several countries at once in order to ensure connection, cooperation and synergy. Action may differ by country and/or region. Where civic space is limited,

⁸ The focus regions are West-Africa/Sahel, Horn of Africa, Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The countries in the focus regions and the countries listed in the BHOS-policy document are: Afghanistan; Algeria; Bangladesh; Benin; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Egypt; Ethiopia; Ghana; Iraq; Indonesia; Yemen; Jordan; Kenya; Lebanon; Libya; Mali; Morocco; Mauritania; Mozambique; Niger; Nigeria; Uganda; Palestine Territories; Rwanda; Senegal; Sudan; Somalia; Tunisia; Chad; South-Sudan.

interventions will aim to preserve, improve or enlarge it. In other contexts, there can be a much greater focus on the role of civil society in lobbying and advocacy. In some upper-middle-income countries, considerable experience has been gained lobbying and advocacy, resulting in a strong civil society which could play a major role in sharing experience with organisations in countries where this is not or less the case.

This framework contains a number of core components that form the principles on which policy is based and apply to every instrument falling within this policy framework. They are as follows.

- A. Civic space
- B. Lobby and advocacy
- C. More ownership by local organisations
- D. Gender equality and inclusion
- E. Strategic partnership
- F. Flexibility
- G. Mutual capacity development
- H. Innovation.

2.3. Core components

A. Civic space

Civic space refers to scope for citizens to exercise their democratic rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression. This space is open if these rights are enshrined in legislation and are respected. Civil society organisations need this space to promote the rights and interests of their constituency by participating as lobbyists and advocates in political, social and economic decision-making processes, and in debates, discussions and opinion formation.

Civic space is currently under severe pressure in more than half of the countries in the world. According to CIVICUS (2018) this manifests itself (both online as offline) in:

- Polarisation of the political landscape;
- Undermining of democratic institutions by authoritarian leadership;
- Increasing attacks on journalists who reveal corruption and public discontent;
- Increasing attacks on human rights defenders and activists, including environmental activists;
- Increasing restrictions on online freedom and manipulation of the internet and social media;
- Restrictive legislation and a heavy administrative burden on civil society organisations;
- Repression of civil society organisations, often with government support.⁹

For these reasons, civic space plays a more central role in this new policy framework than in its predecessors.

In countries where civic space is under pressure, preservation, improvement and enlargement of this space must be a component of programmes to be funded within the framework. This is essential not only to strengthen civil society as a goal in itself, but also to achieve the SDGs. Shrinking civic space has a negative impact not only on civil society organisations themselves, but also on everything they stand and work for. By working closely together at both national and international level, civil society organisations can give each other support and backing in the face of adversity and advocate better conditions for their work. Regional networks and global movements play a significant role here. By means of diplomacy, the Netherlands can contribute through its missions and by strengthening international networks that advocate for more democracy and civic space. The Minister also wants to work with the strategic partners¹⁰ to defend online civic space and to also guarantee human rights online.

The reality is not just that civic space is shrinking and under pressure, but that the recognition that civil society receives and its scope for lobbying and advocacy differ from one country, theme and type of organisation to the next. In some countries the space may be shifting, so that some groups have less space while others gain more. In order to identify the space that exists in a specific situation, analysis is needed of the space available for the proposed programme and how it will be preserved and/or enlarged.

⁹ Source: <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/state-of-civil-society-report-2018>.

¹⁰ See list of terms, annexe 1.

Social movements¹¹ play a special role with regard to civic space. Their network structure and informal nature enable them to operate more easily in situations where civic space is limited. The size and composition of social movements fluctuate and they seldom have a strong, central leadership, making them more difficult to suppress. Social movements' strength is their ability to mobilise groups of people behind a common goal. By taking collective action, a movement may claim certain rights, contest or reform repressive power structures, and challenge notions underpinning inequality. Social movement can be active at every level, from local to international.

B. Lobby and advocacy

Lobby and advocacy is shorthand for various instruments and strategies that can be used to exert influence on political leaders, businesses and social actors. Their aim is to promote the interests of a specific group, movement, organisation or network in order to tackle the structural causes of poverty, inequality and injustice and to lastingly improve policy.

This entails influencing decision-makers' agendas, social and political debate, decision-making procedures, policy and legislation, norms and values, and existing practice with a view to bringing about social change. In this way, civil society plays a political role. How civil society works on lobby and advocacy is strongly dependent on the type of organisation, the local, national, regional and/or global context, and the space available to influence policy and work with other actors. Lobby and advocacy efforts can take place at various levels: local, national – including in the Netherlands – regional and international. Linkage between these levels is often needed for a sustainable impact. Lobby and advocacy are not linear processes, and it often takes time to achieve results. For groups that have unequal opportunities, are excluded from participating in society and/or are repressed, it is essential to query and change existing power relationships. This entails challenging the root causes of exclusion and marginalisation and launching a process of political, social and economic change.

A degree of legitimacy is crucial for lobbying and advocacy. Civil society organisations that have little or no legitimacy will have difficulty bringing about the changes they seek among decision-makers, their constituency or the public at large. Civil society organisation may acquire legitimacy from various sources, including their constituency, their expertise, their independence, the services they provide and their religious beliefs, and also from normative frameworks such as international human rights agreements. Within this policy framework, it is of crucial importance that civil society organisations have a clear vision of what legitimacy entails in representing their constituency.

C. More ownership by local organisations

Power relationships play a role at various levels and in various ways. They exist in the consortia,¹² between the consortia and local partners and between the local partners themselves. Within a consortium, power relationships are related to who takes decisions, who receives and manages funding, who plans programmes, and who is involved in formulating a programme and deciding what form participation takes. The allocation of tasks and responsibilities between the Dutch and other partners in the consortium is significant. Power relationships also play a role in how partners work together with local partners outside the consortium. The question here is what role these partners play and how much say they have in designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and where necessary adapting the programme.

Power relationships at consortium level and with local partners can be significantly changed and adapted by the consortium itself; they are accordingly part of the power analysis. However, power relationships built into the society or context in which the programme is being implemented are usually beyond the consortium partners' control. Since they impact the programme they need to be identified.

Unequal power relationships may be caused by differences in capacity, where one organisation is the knowledge provider and the other its recipient. In the past, this was frequently the case in relationships between organisations in high-income countries and organisations in low-income, lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries. However, over the past several decades the capacity of organisations and movements in the latter countries has increased. The activities in the by the Minister subsidized various programmes implemented in the past few years have contributed to this (see Dutch results reporting for 2017-2018).¹³

¹¹ See list of terms, annexe 1.

¹² See list of terms, annexe 1.

¹³ See <http://www.dutchdevelopmentresults.nl/Home>.

More control and ownership for local civil society organisations is a major step towards establishing relationships on an equal footing and promoting the role of civil society. It increases their legitimacy and thus their ability to play a more independent role in their specific context. More ownership and control by local organisations also ensure that programmes can be embedded more effectively and more sustainably in the local context. For example, it enables support for local processes of change that contribute to achieving the SDGs and to compliance with undertakings made in human rights agreements. The policy framework therefore encourages partnerships where local organisations have ownership and control.

Ownership and control by local civil society organisations from low-income, lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries should be made visible with a description of the roles and responsibilities of these partners in formulating and implementing the programme and in decision-making processes within the consortium. After all, genuine ownership is often only possible if it is guaranteed right from the start. This means that decision-making on goals, responsibilities, implementation, funding and distribution of resources is a joint responsibility, shared equally by every organisation in the partnership. This may lead to a different role for Dutch organisations working with local organisations, one that focuses more on innovation, linkages and lobbying at international level.

In this set-up, the Dutch organisations working with support of this policy framework can work complementary and support wider, worldwide processes of change, because they can also be active in international forums and can thus influence the international agenda. To fulfil this role, they have to keep track of Dutch and international policy and maintain contact with other national and international civil society organisations. They have a role to play in strengthening capacity for monitoring and evaluation, financial accountability and substantive reporting.

D. Gender equality and inclusion

Women's rights and gender equality are a cross-cutting theme in this policy framework. By promoting women's rights and gender equality, Dutch policy aims for equal rights, opportunities and outcomes for women and men, girls and boys. Development is only inclusive and sustainable if everyone has the opportunity to benefit from it and no one is left behind. This means actively involving people with a disability, LHBTI people and religious and ethnic minorities. Gender equality, women's rights and inclusion are thus closely interconnected. In all these cases, what matters is everyone's right to equal social, economic and political participation in society.

To achieve this, societies need to enable equal access for all to goods, opportunities, tools and rewards. This does not mean that there are no differences between individuals, but that every individual, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, wealth, family background, age, social position and disability, must have and benefit from equal opportunities and rights. Specific measures or guarantees are sometimes needed to ensure that planned interventions have no negative impact on women and girls.

Inclusion entails engaging with groups in decision-making processes that have been structurally excluded from participating in them. The problem analysis accompanying the programme proposal should therefore devote attention not only to dimensions of inequality and discrimination that affect structurally excluded groups but also to the impact of planned interventions on these groups. Explicit attention must also always be devoted to the specific position of women and girls and youth in general, regardless of the theme or target group. The analysis should also show how the programme will contribute to guaranteeing the rights of excluded groups. Gender equality and inclusion are integral components of this policy framework and should as such be addressed in the application. This means applicants should flesh out how they will put these principles into practice, and how the applicant or consortium will guarantee and account for results on gender equality and inclusion.

An individual's identity is made up of multiple elements, e.g. female and disabled, or member of an indigenous people and gay/lesbian. For this reason, gender equality and inclusion are clearly related to intersectionality. This term assumes that individuals who are members of interest groups, movements and organisations often face several problems and challenges. Their position in society is not one-dimensional. A focus on a single factor may work restrictively and prevent the intervention from being effective. Intersectionality also has implications for convergences between organisations and/or movements which share the same goals but whose primary thematic aims differ.

E. Strategic Partnership

Partnerships

The main principles and features of a partnership are reciprocity, complementarity, autonomy and shared goals. Organisations' proven qualities, past results and strategic potential of the organisations in a consortium serve as the basis for selecting a consortium as a partner for the Minister and for shaping the partnership. Both the consortia selected and the Minister have their own networks, experience, qualities and instruments. Within the partnership, each partner has its own responsibilities, identity and autonomy to act. A partnership does not necessarily imply that the partners are always in agreement, but that the consortia and the Minister can call on each other to intervene or exercise restraint in response to events. Within a partnership, cooperation is not always possible or necessary on every issue. Dissent is part and parcel of a partnership in dialogue; it keeps partners focused, and friction can produce the energy needed to bring about change. The departure point is the purpose of the partnership to which the parties have committed, though situations may also arise in which they do not work in concert.

Strategic

A partnership between a consortium and the Minister as part of the grant instruments under this policy framework is more than a grantor/grantee relationship. The selected consortia will work with the Minister to achieve a jointly defined strategic goal. The strategic element of a partnership comprises the way specific parties work together and the added value their partnership produces in achieving shared goals. The assumption is that cooperation leads to results that the partners could not achieve separately. Learning and benefiting from each other's qualities enhances scope to achieve the agreed goals. Pooling expertise and capacity can prove to be an effective way of creating added value. The ministry of Foreign Affairs' role in the partnership relates not only to finance but can also add value to the following:

1. Diplomatic support through its missions, both bilateral as multilateral (expressing Dutch political and/or policy priorities, (ministerial) travels, access to foreign governments and/or (multilateral) institutions/fora, facilitating/organising/attending meetings, advising (for example on local legislation), troubleshooting;
2. Access to (inter) national networks;
3. Access to knowledge, expertise, and (government) information (including Multi Annual Country Strategies);
4. Facilitating of monitoring (including field visits), learning and evaluation (internal and external);
5. Facilitating annual strategic policy dialogues.

The involvement of various departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, where possible, of Dutch embassies is a crucial element of the partnership. The extent of their involvement will vary from one partnership to the next, depending for example on capacity, alignment with Multiannual Country Strategies or other thematic priorities. Exact definition of the strategic character will be defined in close cooperation between the consortium and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

F. Flexibility

Flexibility is a major principle underpinning this policy framework, and it has several dimensions. It is closely linked to working with a Theory of Change, which is a flexible planning instrument. The Theory of Change describes the outcomes of the proposed programme and the process by which they will be achieved, including the assumptions on which this process is based. If during implementation it becomes apparent that certain assumptions are not correct, certain interventions are not leading to the envisaged results or contexts are changing radically, the interventions or strategies will need to be adapted, though continuing to be informed by the outcomes and objective set out in the Theory of Change. Flexibility also requires a reliable risk analysis which, in view of the changing context in which civil society works, will have to be reviewed on a regular basis in order to enable prompt identification and mitigation of new and changing risks. The flexibility that applies to the relationship between the Minister and the strategic partners must also characterise the relationship between the consortium partners and local partners.

G. Mutual capacity strengthening

Capacity strengthening is a learning process in which every partner contributes expertise and knowledge and develops them further. The aim is empowerment: enabling individuals and groups to stand up for their own rights and interests. This joint process aims to improve cooperation, while at the same time strengthening the consortium and local partners in areas such as lobbying and advocacy and improving practical capacities and skills in, for instance, financial and other management. Ideally, requirements for financial accountability, monitoring and evaluation imposed

by the consortium on local partners should be no stricter than or any different from those used by the Minister vis-à-vis her strategic partners. If local partners cannot meet any or all of the requirements for financial accountability and reporting, a good alternative must be sought, which must be agreed with the Minister. In this way, capacity strengthening can help find solutions.

Mutual capacity strengthening can take place at various levels: internally within the (local) partner organisation and/or consortium, in consultation with the Minister, in consultation with local partners and target groups, or with other actors at country, regional or global level. A learning agenda should be an integral part of programmes to be funded under this policy framework and thus of monitoring.

H. Innovation

In this policy framework, innovation is regarded as both creating new ways of working and introducing improvements or adjustments on the basis of lessons learned. This means that organisations need to be able to adapt to a changing context, for example through digitalisation¹⁴. Innovation thus goes hand in hand with flexibility and adaptability.

Innovation also means investing in social change and inclusion through the application of new (digital) technologies and new types of partnership and funding. Innovation may also result from new relationships with companies, or more informal groups, movements and organisations that are often left out of the picture. Experimentation with new ways of working will be encouraged in this situation, so that lessons can be learned from them.

¹⁴ Digital Agenda for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (June, 2019).

3. Women, Peace and Security 2021-2025

A. Introduction

The grant instrument *Women, Peace and Security* has a budget of EUR40 million and a duration of five years, beginning on the 1st of January 2021.¹⁵ A maximum of 8 consortia will be selected under this grant instrument.

With the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) women's rights and gender equality were embedded for the first time in the international peace and security agenda. UNSCR 1325 recognises the important role of women in achieving peace and security; as peacemakers, leaders within local communities, breadwinners. The resolutions¹⁶ that followed UNSCR 1325 also recognised the adverse impact of sexual violence on peace and security in a country. These resolutions consider sexual violence a tactic of war and a war crime which must be prosecuted in every case. Also, these resolutions call for protecting women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

UNSCR 1325 calls upon UN member states to develop National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 (NAP1325). The Netherlands has had such a NAP1325 since 2009. In its current and third NAP1325, Dutch ministries, knowledge institutions and civil society organisations have further specified how UNSCR 1325 will be implemented. This grant instrument contributes to the further implementation of the NAP1325. With the *Women, Peace and Security* (WPS) grant instrument, the Minister aims to strengthen civil society organisations so that they are capable of lobbying and advocacy, with a specific focus on further implementing NAP1325. To this end, a Policy Document Women, Peace and Security has been developed that is based on 1) UNSCR 1325 and the nine resolutions that followed it 2) the Theory of Change of the Dutch NAP1325 (2016-2020) and 3) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 5 and 16. The overarching objective of the Women, Peace and Security grant instrument reads: *To contribute to an enabling environment for women's and girls' participation and empowerment in conflict and post-conflict environments, so they can meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, protection, relief and recovery.*

In order to be eligible for a grant under the grant instrument *Women, Peace and Security* an application needs to focus on SDG5 and at least one of the sub objectives of the Policy Document Women, Peace and Security (Annex 7), which are:

1. Enhanced protection of women and girls in conflict and post conflict environments;
2. Decrease of harmful gender norms which are obstacles to sustainable peace
3. Creating equal leverage in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery

These three sub objectives are elaborated in greater detail in the *Policy Document Women, Peace and Security*.¹⁷

Parties that may be eligible for a strategic partnership

Only consortia¹⁸ of civil society organisations (CSOs) are eligible to become the Minister's strategic partners under *Women, Peace Security*. A consortium consists of several consortium partners, one of which acts as the lead party and one or more consortium partners.

Consortium partners may be:

- CSOs with their head office in a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country, with proven quality and an established track record in the area of Women, Peace and Security. Such a CSO may take the role of lead party or consortium partner;
- Dutch CSOs that at the time of application are signatories to the third Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 (NAP 1325), with proven quality and an established track record in the area of Women, Peace and Security. Such a CSO may take the role of lead party or consortium partner;
- International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) based in a high-income country other than the Netherlands, with proven quality and an established track record in the area of Women, Peace and Security. Such an INGO may not take the role of lead party.

¹⁵ The exact grant ceiling and method of distribution will be published following the selection of the recipients.

¹⁶ Resolution numbers (and years): 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2010); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013) 2242 (2015) 2467 (2019) and 2492 (2019)

¹⁷ See annexe 7

¹⁸ See Glossary in annexe 1.

Each consortium partner must have a legal personality.

Each consortium must include at least one consortium partner from a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country and one consortium partner from the Netherlands. The consortium partner from the Netherlands must be a signatory to the third Dutch NAP 1325 at the time the application is submitted.

Applications must be submitted by a lead party on behalf of the consortium. The lead partner may either be a Dutch CSO, which should be a signatory to the third Dutch NAP1325 at the time of application, or a CSO from a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country. If the application is approved, the lead party is the grant recipient and, as such, bears full responsibility for implementation of the proposed activities and compliance with the obligations in respect of the grant decision and partnership agreement.

A CSO is only eligible for one strategic partnership in the role of lead party under *Women, Peace and Security*. If multiple applications are submitted with the same organisation as lead party, only the first application received will be processed and any application(s) submitted later will be rejected. However, a CSO acting as lead party for one consortium may additionally be a consortium partner in one other consortium under *Women, Peace and Security*. If an organisation is not a lead party for any application, it may be a consortium partner in one or two consortia. If an organisation takes part in more than two consortia for which applications are submitted, only the first two applications submitted will be processed, and any application(s) submitted later will be rejected.

Acting as lead party or consortium partner for an application in a strategic partnership under *Women, Peace and Security*, however does not preclude involvement of these CSOs in consortia, both as lead party or as consortium partner, under the other grant instruments within the policy framework Strengthening Civil Society¹⁹ provided that the applicable requirements under these grant instruments are met.

Women, Peace and Security focuses primarily on grants to programmes that focus on lobbying and advocacy and (mutual) capacity strengthening (see Chapter 2) around this theme. Including a service delivery component in the project is not by definition excluded from a grant, provided that it serves the primary commitment to lobbying and advocacy and (mutual) capacity strengthening around the theme of *Women, Peace and Security*. In that case, the lead party must provide an additional explanation in the Theory of Change, which explains how the proposed service delivery component relates to the primary commitment to lobbying and advocacy and (mutual) capacity strengthening. In stage 3 (as set out below in B. Assessment and selection procedure and criteria), the degree of commitment to service delivery will be coordinated jointly between the alliance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Applications for participation in a strategic partnership under *Women, Peace and Security* should be submitted online at the latest at 12.00 CET on 12 March 2020, using the model application form stipulated by the Minister and made available online in the online application form and provided with the documents stated therein.²⁰ Applications received after 12.00 CET on 12 March 2020 will be rejected without being processed.

¹⁹ Power of Women, the SRHR Partnership Fund and the Power of Voices Partnerships.

²⁰ Applications submitted by email will not be processed. Submitting applications by post is not recommended, but if submitting an application online proves impossible, it may be sent by post to: Taskforce Women's Rights and Gender Equality (TFVG), Social Development Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PO BOX 20061, 2500 EB The Hague. If an application is sent by standard post instead of registered post, the sender bears the risk of it being received late or not at all. Applications sent by post (apart from those using a 'postage paid' envelope) and postmarked on a date before the application deadline are considered to have been submitted on time, provided they are received no later than one week after the deadline for applications has passed. Applications sent by mail using a 'postage paid' envelope are considered to be submitted on time if they are delivered on time to the Ministry. An item is not considered received until it has been recorded by the Ministry's mail department. Incoming mail is not recorded in the evenings or at weekends.

Geographic scope

Women, Peace and Security includes a list of countries where applications have to focus on in order to be eligible for a strategic partnership c.q. subsidy, the so-called *Women, Peace and Security*-countries. Programmes need to take place in one or more *Women, Peace and Security*-countries (and in case of a regional proposal up to two countries neighbouring that country) in order to be eligible for a subsidy under *Women, Peace and Security*.

The *Women, Peace and Security* country list is as follows:²¹

1. Afghanistan
2. Burundi
3. Colombia
4. Democratic Republic of the Congo
5. Iraq
6. Libya
7. Mali
8. Myanmar
9. Palestinian Territories
10. Somalia
11. South Sudan
12. Sudan
13. Syria. Given the situation in Syria, grant instruments from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are not open for projects involving activities that will physically take place within Syria. Activities geared to the situation in Syria should take place outside the country.
14. Yemen

In order to be eligible for a strategic partnership c.q. subsidy under the grant *Women, Peace and Security*, the consortium needs to submit a country-specific, a regional or a multi-country proposal:

- A country-specific application focuses on one of the countries listed above;
- A regional application focuses on up to three countries, including at least one *Women, Peace and Security*-country and up to two countries neighbouring it, where activities will be conducted using the same programmatic approach as in or for the benefit of this *Women, Peace and Security*-country. The substantive link between the countries selected must be established;
- A multi-country proposal focuses on up to three *Women, Peace and Security* focus countries, where activities will be conducted using the same programmatic approach in or for the benefit of all three countries. The substantive link between the countries selected must be established.

B. Assessment and selection procedure and criteria

The provisions of the General Administrative Law Act, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2016 are fully applicable to the assessment of applications under *Women, Peace and Security* 2021-2025. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the above legislation and pursuant to the criteria set out in this grant policy framework.

Applications for a strategic partnership grant are assessed in three stages, resulting in a decision on which consortia are eligible for a strategic partnership and grant award.

1. The first stage consists of a check against the threshold criteria.
2. The second stage consists of an assessment of the quality of the consortium's *Theory of Change*, its vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed countries, and the quality of the track record of the consortium and the consortium partners.
3. The third stage consists of an assessment of the consortium's comprehensive programme proposal and budget.

²¹ This list combines the focus countries of the *Women, Peace and Security* 2016-2019 grant instrument, the country list of the *Peace and Security for All (PS4A)* grant framework, and countries where the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict (<https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/report/s-2019-280/Annual-report-2018.pdf>) has established that state and non-state actors are guilty of rape and other forms of conflict-related sexual violence.

In the first stage, applications are assessed against the threshold criteria listed in the threshold check. The threshold criteria are criteria which an application must in any case meet in order to be eligible for a grant.

An application that meets all the threshold criteria goes on to the second stage, where it is assessed on the basis of the quality criteria given in this chapter. If one or more threshold criteria are not met, the application is discarded and rejected.

For the first two stages of assessment, applications must include the following four parts:

1. The Theory of Change that forms the basis for the consortium's pursuit of its intended goal in the intended strategic partnership. The Theory of Change contains a (proposed) choice of country/countries based on the countries mentioned under Geographic Scope, and describes reasons for this choice of country/countries.
2. A description of the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed country/countries, including the manner in which the consortium's structure will include mechanisms that guarantee that these local organisations have a voice.
3. A track record describing the consortium's experience with the proposed theme and in the proposed countries.
4. A partnership agreement signed by the lead party and all the other consortium partners.

Applications by consortia of CSOs seeking to enter into a strategic partnership with the Minister must (sufficiently) satisfy (minimum of 650 points) the following criteria:

1. Threshold criteria;
2. Criteria relating to the quality of the consortium's *Theory of Change*. A maximum of 550 points may be awarded for the *Theory of Change*. Applications are assessed as satisfactory if they receive 355 points or more²²;
3. Criteria relating to the quality of the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed country/countries. For the description of the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed country/countries a maximum of 175 points may be awarded on this part. Applications are assessed as adequate if they receive 120 points or more;
4. Criteria relating to the quality of the consortium's Track Record. A maximum of 275 points may be awarded for the Track Record. Applications are assessed as adequate if they receive 175 points or more²³.

In order to be eligible as a strategic partner, a consortium must attain at least satisfactory scores on each of the three parts mentioned above: the Theory of Change, a description of the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed country/countries and the Track Record. If one or more of the parts turn out to be of insufficient quality, the application will be discarded and rejected.

If an application in the qualitative assessment achieves fewer than 650 points, the application will be discarded and rejected.

No more than eight applications that meet the quality criteria may be selected for stage 3. However, if fewer than eight applications meet the quality criteria, fewer than eight will go on to this stage. If more than eight applications meet the quality criteria, the eight applications with the highest scores in the qualitative check will go on to stage 3. Taking into consideration Article 8, third paragraph, sub c of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree, account will be taken of the need for a balanced distribution of the *Women, Peace and Security-countries* in selecting the applications.

The applications of consortia that are not selected will be rejected.

An external advisory committee monitors the quality, consistency and objectivity of the assessment procedures of all the grant instruments falling under the Strengthening Civil Society policy framework.²⁴

²² If the application includes a service delivery component, 30 additional points can be obtained under the Theory of Change part. A calculation method will be used to compensate for the difference in the maximum number of points that can be obtained between applications with and without a service delivery component.

²³ If the application includes a service delivery component, 20 additional points can be obtained under the Track Record part. A calculation method will be used to compensate for the difference in the maximum number of points that can be obtained between applications with and without a service delivery component.

²⁴ The Power of Voices Partnerships, *Power of Women*, the SRHR Partnership Fund and *Women, Peace and Security*.

Stage 1: Threshold check

The threshold criteria are criteria which an application must in any case meet in order to be eligible for a grant. The threshold check will be carried out by Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff. Applications that do not satisfy all threshold criteria will be rejected and will not be considered further.

Please note: statutes and/or annual reports must be submitted in Dutch, English, French or Spanish. If statutes and/or annual reports are not available in above mentioned languages, the lead party must take care of a certified translation.

D.1.a: *The application has been submitted on behalf of a consortium by a lead party which is a CSO established either in the Netherlands, in which case it is a signatory to the third Dutch National Action Plan 1325 at the time of application or in a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country (included in the OECD DAC country list, appended as annexe 3 to these administrative rules).*

'CSO' means: a not-for-profit organisation with a public interest, which possesses legal personality under civil law, is not connected to a public authority either de facto or under its constitution, and has not been established by a public authority or, after constitution by a public authority has been fully privatised.

An organisation 'established in the Netherlands' means: an organisation founded in the Netherlands under Dutch law and having had its registered office in the Netherlands for at least three years as of 1 January 2019.

A 'signatory to the third Dutch NAP1325' means: a Dutch CSO which is at the time of application signatory to the third National Action Plan 1325.²⁵

An organisation 'established in a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country' means: an organisation that has its registered office in one of the countries listed in annexe 3 and is established there under that country's prevailing laws.

Explanatory note:

This must be clear from the lead party's statutes and from a partnership agreement signed by the lead party and all the other consortium partners which has been concluded with a view to entering into a strategic partnership with the Minister under *Women, Peace and Security* and conducting activities using this grant.

Signatories to the third National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 need to be mentioned *at the time of application* as a NAP1325-signatory on www.nap1325.nl

D.1.b: *The consortium on whose behalf the lead party has submitted the application consists of CSOs, including at least one CSO established in a low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income country (included in the OECD DAC country list in annexe 3 to these administrative rules) and at least one CSO established in the Netherlands which is a signatory to the third Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 at the time of application; CSOs established in the Netherlands having had its registered office in the Netherlands shorter than three years also need to be signatory to the third National Action Plan 1325.*

Explanatory note:

This must be demonstrated by enclosing a copy of the statutes of the lead party and of all the other consortium partners.

Thus, each consortium must include at least one CSO established in the Netherlands, which is a signatory to the third Dutch National Action Plan 1325 at the time of application. Such a CSO may take the role of lead party or consortium partner.

A CSO established in the Netherlands which is a signatory to the third National Action Plan 1325, and having had its registered office shorter than three years in the Netherlands as of 1 January 2019, may take part in a consortium as a consortium partner, but not as a lead party.

²⁵ For more information on the Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, see www.nap1325.nl

International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) established in a high-income country other than the Netherlands may take part in a consortium as a consortium partner but not as lead party.

Signatories to the third National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 need to be mentioned *at the time of application* as a NAP1325-signatory on www.nap1325.nl

D.1.c: *Each CSO may participate in no more than two consortia on behalf of which applications for a strategic partnership with the Minister under Women, Peace and Security are submitted, and may act as lead party in only one of the two consortiums.*

Explanatory note:

A CSO is only eligible for one strategic partnership in the role of lead party under *Women, Peace and Security*. If multiple applications are submitted with the same organisation as lead party, only the first application received will be processed and any application(s) submitted later will be rejected. However, a CSO acting as lead party for one consortium may additionally be a consortium partner in one other consortia under *Women, Peace and Security*. If an organisation is not a lead party for any application, it may be a consortium partner in one or two consortia. If an organisation takes part in more than two consortia for which applications are submitted, only the first two applications submitted will be processed, and any application(s) submitted later will be rejected.

D.2: *The application must include a partnership agreement signed by both the lead party and all the other consortium partners which has been concluded with a view to entering into a strategic partnership with the Minister under Women, Peace and Security and conducting activities using this grant, laying down at least:*

- *how each of the consortium partners will contribute to the consortium's activities (its role, task and responsibilities);*
- *how decisions are made within the consortium;*
- *how costs and risks are shared among the consortium partners;*
- *how the consortium partners will ensure that the lead party fulfils the obligations towards the Minister in respect of the grant, including responsibility for the joint aggregated reports (including IATI-compliant reports).*

Explanatory note:

This must be demonstrated by producing a partnership agreement signed by the lead party and all the other consortium partners meeting above mentioned requirements.

D.3: *Both the lead party and the other consortium partners work on women's rights, gender equality and/or inclusive development in low-income, lower-middle-income and/or upper-middle-income countries (see annexe 3) in cooperation with CSOs established in these countries.*

Explanatory note:

This must be demonstrated on the basis of the goals of the lead party and all other consortium partners, mentioned in the statutes and/or annual reports. Please specify the passage and/or page number you are referring to.

D.4: *With regard to the areas of work indicated under D.3 and with regard to the in the application country/countries, the lead party has at least three years of experience in capacity strengthening of CSOs in the area of Women, Peace and Security in at least one of the in the application proposed countries as of 1 January 2019.*

Explanatory note:

This must be demonstrated in the statutes and/or annual reports. Please specify the passage and/or page number you are referring to.

D.5: *The lead party must demonstrate that, in the 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2018 period, annually at least 25% of the consortium's total annual income came from sources other than grants and/or contributions derived directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

Explanatory note:

In the 2016-2018 period annually at least 25% of the consortium's total annual income came from sources other than grants and/or contributions derived directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including missions). This criterion applies to the consortium as a whole. Consequently, if the lead

party or one of the consortium partners derived less than 25% of its total annual income from sources other than grants or contributions derived directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this may be offset by (an)other party (parties) in the consortium. This must be demonstrated by the last three annual accounts (2016-2018) of all consortium partners or reference to the relevant pages in the annual reports if the annual accounts are included in these reports.

Total annual income in 2016: EUR, of which not from MFA: EUR

Total annual income in 2017: EUR, of which not from MFA: EUR

Total annual income in 2018: EUR, of which not from MFA: EUR

D.6

A. The maximum remuneration of individual management and board members of a lead party or other consortium partner established in the Netherlands must not exceed EUR 189,000 per calendar year for a 36-hour working week, as from the start of the period for which the grant is being requested.

This amount includes:

- 1. the total of periodically paid salary, profit shares and bonus payments;*
- 2. taxable fixed and variable expense allowances;*
- 3. payments made at set times of year, such as holiday pay, 13th month's salary, the employer's share of pension contributions, etc.*

B. This criterion also applies to consortium partners (other than the lead party) established in other EU member states. For consortium partners (other than the lead party) established in EU member states that do not use the euro, the amount of EUR 189,000 is converted into local currency using the Ministry of Foreign Affairs corporate rates (annexe 4) as at 1 January 2020.

C. With reference to the data on purchasing power published by EUROSTAT (comparative price levels 2018),²⁶ the following income ceilings apply to partners (other than the lead party) established in the following countries:

- Norway NOK 2.490.214;*
- Switzerland CHF 278.675;*
- Japan YEN 20.617.531;*
- US/Canada USD 205,350.*

D. From the start of the grant period, the maximum remuneration of individual managers and board members of a lead party or other consortium partner established in any other countries must be in reasonable proportion to the seniority of their position and to the organisation's geographical location, size and complexity.

Explanatory note:

Re A+B+C+D

The lead party must specify the remunerations (including allowances) of managers (including the CEO) and board members of its own organisation and of all other consortium partners, as of the start of the grant period:

Job	Total of periodically paid salary, profit shares and bonus payments	Taxable fixed and variable expense allowances	Payments made at set times of year, such as holiday pay, 13th month's salary, employer's share of pension contributions, etc.	Working hours per week

²⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114&plugin=1>

For consortium partners (other than the lead party) established in EU member states that do not use the euro, and for lead parties and other consortium partners from countries outside the EU, other than the countries under C., the euro is converted into local currency using the Ministry of Foreign Affairs corporate rates (annexe 4) as at 1 January 2020.

Re A+B+C

The lead party must specify the remuneration (total of periodically paid salary, taxable fixed and variable expense allowances, and other payments made at set times of year) paid to individual management and board members of the lead party and other consortium partners established in the EU, Norway, Switzerland, Japan and/or the US/Canada, and the number of working hours per week for which the remuneration is paid (see also **Please note**, below).

For Dutch and other organisations that fall within the scope of the Top Incomes (Standardisation) Act (WNT) a reference to the WNT notification submitted digitally to the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations will suffice, unless this data is no longer valid as at 1 January 2019 due to a change in remuneration.

Re D

The lead party must specify the remuneration (total of periodically paid salary, taxable fixed and variable expense allowances, and other payments made at set times of year) paid to individual management and board members of the lead party and other consortium partners established outside the EU, Norway, Switzerland, Japan and/or the US/Canada. Explain why these amounts are in reasonable proportion to the seniority of their position and to the geographical location, size and complexity of the organisation(s) in question.

Please note:

The maximum remuneration is linked to the remuneration of the Director-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who falls under the collective labour agreement for Dutch civil servants, under which a 36-hour working week constitutes full-time employment. If a management or board member is employed for less than 36 hours per week, the maximum remuneration of EUR 189,000 is reduced in proportion to the part-time factor and is equal to: their weekly number of working hours divided by 36, multiplied by EUR 189,000. If a management or board member is employed for more than 36 hours per week, the maximum remuneration remains EUR 189,000. If the part-time factor is included in the grant application, this will be used to calculate the prorated maximum remuneration. If no part-time factor is provided, it will be assumed that the remuneration is paid for a 36-hour working week.

D.7.a: *The lead party must be capable of proper financial management and its expertise must ensure effective and efficient implementation of activities like those for which grant funding is sought.*

Explanatory note:

The lead party should demonstrate this by submitting one of the following with the application:

- o Valid PARTOS ISO-9001 certification; *or*,
- o If the organisation has a positively assessed Organisational Risk and Integrity Assessment (ORIA): a completed ORIA update form (annexe 2c), referring to the activity number of the grant obtained *or*, if the application was ultimately rejected on grounds other than lack of organisational capacity, to the application to which the positive assessment applied; *or*,
- o If the organisation has a valid, positively assessed COCA (drawn up after 1 April 2017): a completed ORIA update form (annexe 2c), referring to the activity number of the grant obtained *or*, if the application was ultimately rejected on grounds other than lack of organisational capacity, the application to which the positive COCA applied; *or*,
- o A fully completed ORIA (annexe 2a).

D.7.b: *The lead party demonstrates that it and all other consortium partners have an integrity policy and procedures for implementing that policy. This integrity policy and these procedures should serve*

to prevent as far as possible any sexual misconduct and other serious forms of inappropriate behaviour towards employees and other individuals during the implementation of the proposed activities by the lead party, the other consortium partners and other parties they involve in the activities, and in the event of such incidents ensure that they are investigated and appropriate measures are taken to put an end as promptly as possible to the misconduct or inappropriate behaviour and mitigate the consequences. These procedures must be structured in a way that guarantees prompt reporting of any such incidents to the Minister.

Explanatory note:

The lead party should demonstrate this by submitting one of the following with the application:

- For the lead party and all consortium partners with a positively assessed ORIA: a reference to the activity number of the grant obtained or, if the application was ultimately rejected on grounds other than lack of organisational capacity, the application to which the positive assessment applied; *or*,
- For the lead party and all consortium partners without an ORIA: a completed ORIA Integrity Update form (annexe 2b), to be submitted in English.

D.8: *The application must focus on SDG 5 and on at least one of the (sub-)objectives of the 'Policy document Women, Peace and Security (annex 7)', namely:*

1. *Enhanced protection of women and girls in conflict and (post) conflict situations;*
2. *Decrease of harmful gender norms which are obstacles to sustainable peace*
3. *Creating equal leverage in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery*

Explanatory note:

This is demonstrated in the Theory of Change.

D.9.a: *An application is country-specific or regional or multi-country.*

D.9.b: *A country-specific application focuses on only one Women, Peace and Security-country, a regional application focuses on at least one Women, Peace and Security-country and up to two neighbouring countries, and a multi-country application focuses on a maximum of three Women, Peace and Security-countries.²⁷*

Explanatory note:

This is demonstrated in the Theory of Change.

Stage 2: Assessment of the quality of the Theory of Change, the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed countries and the quality of the Track Record

Strategic partners that have passed the threshold criteria are selected based on the substantive criteria as indicated in this paragraph for the qualitative assessment of the Theory of Change, the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed countries and the Track Record.

This substantive assessment is carried out by an assessment committee consisting of members of staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and (an) external expert(s).

Stage 2: qualitative check criteria

The qualitative check in stage 2 is conducted on the basis of three sets of criteria:

1. Criteria for assessing the Theory of Change;
2. Criteria for assessing the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed countries;
3. Criteria for assessing the track record.

1. Theory of Change

1.1. Theory of Change

²⁷ Afghanistan, Burundi, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Palestinian Territories, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Yemen. Activities geared to the situation in Syria should take place outside the country. See Geographic Scope.

In order to assess the quality of the Theory of Change, the lead party and the other consortium partner(s) must draw up a Theory of Change, consisting of a graphic representation and a narrative of no more than 4,000 words (in Verdana 9 font and single line spacing). The *Theory of Change* should be written and submitted in English or Dutch.

The *Theory of Change* should be based on the core components and policy principles mentioned in chapter 2 and the Policy Document *Women, Peace and Security* (annexe 7) and includes:

- A clear problem analysis resulting in a strategic objective of the program, focusing on at least one of the three sub objectives of *Women, Peace and Security*, mentioned under criteria D.8, and setting out the different intermediate steps needed to achieve this objective from a human rights approach.
- an analysis of the underlying assumptions that link up the intermediate steps leading to achievement of the strategic objective of the programme;
- a limited number of quantitative indicators for process-, impact- and outcome indicators (quantitative) and/or descriptions (qualitative);
- An explanation of the choice of country/countries based on the problem analysis, in line with the premises set out under 'Geographic scope';
- a gender-sensitive contextual-, actor- and conflict analysis, taking account of:
 - the available civic space for the proposed programme and the (innovative) way in which this space will be safeguarded and/or expanded;
 - intersectionality (see chapter 2) and the consequences of the proposed programme for various (marginalised) groups in society;
 - social, economic and political (and if relevant: environmental) (risk) factors that could either impede or foster gender equality;
 - If the selected *Women, Peace and Security*-country has a National Action Plan 1325: a short explanation how the Theory of Change is related to this NAP 1325;
- an analysis of the organisations and groups that are relevant to the programme;
- If the project includes a service delivery component: an explanation on how the proposed service delivery component supports the the primary focus on lobby and advocacy and (mutual) capacity strengthening (see Chapter 2) around the theme of *Women, Peace and Security*;
- the grant amount requested in order to carry out the proposed interventions and a justification thereof.²⁸

1.2 Criteria

The quality of the Theory of Change is assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The extent to which there is a clear problem analysis concerning one or more of the Women, Peace and Security sub objectives, mentioned under criteria D.8, resulting in a single strategic objective of the programme;
2. The extent to which the relationship between assumptions, planned interventions and results is logical and well-reasoned, and the way in which these results contribute to the strategic objective of the programme;
3. The extent to which the Theory of Change contributes to and links to at least one of the three sub objectives of *Women, Peace and Security*;
4. The extent to which these results can be realistically achieved during the five-year grant period, and the way in which the goal will be pursued of ensuring lasting results;
5. The extent to which there is a clear gender-sensitive contextual-, actor- and conflict analysis, taking sufficiently into account:
 - the available civic space for the proposed programme and the (innovative) way in which this space will be safeguarded and/or expanded;
 - intersectionality (see chapter 2) and the consequences of the proposed programme for various (marginalised) groups in society;
 - social, economic, political (and where relevant: environmental) factors that could either impede or foster gender equality;
 - If the selected Women, Peace and Security-country has a National Action Plan 1325: the objectives and principles which are mentioned in this specific NAP 1325;
6. The extent to which the choice of country/countries follows logically from the problem analysis;
7. The extent to which the consortium has insight into the organisations and groups that are most important for the programme, and can illustrate this using an actor analysis;

²⁸ This indicative amount may in no way be viewed as binding.

8. The extent to which the consortium can clearly explain its reasons for working with these specific organisations and groups in order to achieve the strategic objective, reflecting on their:
 - o Legitimacy;
 - o Added value;
 - o Complementarity.
9. If the project has a service delivery component: the extent to which the service delivery component is supportive to the primary focus on lobby and advocacy and (mutual) capacity strengthening around the theme of *Women, Peace and Security*;

2. The consortium's vision on working with local organisations

2.1 Vision

In order to assess the quality of the consortium's vision of working with local organisations in the application proposed countries, the lead party and the other consortium partner(s) must draw up this vision in the form of a narrative of no more than 1,200 words (in Verdana 9 font and single line spacing). The vision must be written and submitted in English or Dutch.

This vision should include:

- An analysis of the main power relations at various levels between the consortium partners and local partners and groups, taking account gender and inclusion;
- A description of the consortium's plans for addressing these power relations so as to ensure that local partners and groups from the in the application proposed country/countries have a voice in designing and implementing the programme;
- A description of the way in which learning together and innovation will be given a place in the partnership.

2.2 Criteria

The quality of the consortium's vision on working with local organisations in the in the application proposed country/countries will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The extent to which there is a clear analysis of the main power relations at various levels between the consortium partners and local partners and groups;
2. The extent to which the various local partners and target groups are assured an equal say in decision-making processes on:
 - o roles and responsibilities;
 - o mutual rights and obligations;
 - o selection of partners;
 - o budget allocation;
 - o programme design (including the Theory of Change and monitoring and evaluation);
 - o programme implementation;
3. The extent to which learning and innovative ways of working within the consortium and with the local partners are a structural part of the partnership.

3. Track record

3.1 Track record

The lead party and the other consortium partner(s) must draw up a track record in the form of a narrative of no more than 2,500 words (in Verdana 9 font and single line spacing). The *Track Record* must be written and submitted in English or Dutch.

The Track Record must briefly set out two case studies, citing verifiable sources where possible, from the three years preceding 1 January 2019, drawn from the experience of different individual consortium partners, the consortium as a whole and/or parts of the consortium. Each case study must include:

- o The results achieved in the area of lobby and advocacy²⁹ and mutual capacity strengthening³⁰ around the theme of *Women, Peace and Security* during the three years preceding 1 January 2019;
- o At least one of the *Women, Peace and Security* countries where the lead party and/or other consortium partners were active which are relevant to the application;

²⁹ In line with the policy document *Women, Peace and Security (Annexe 7)* this refers to point 2 and point 3 under 'three specific approaches'

³⁰ In line with the policy document *Women, Peace and Security (Annexe 7)* this refers to point 1 under 'three specific approaches'.

- The knowledge that the lead party and other consortium partners have of the theme which the consortium's *Theory of Change* addresses;
- The way in which the partners have worked together with the actors concerned;
- The way in which the lead party and/or other consortium partners regularly reviewed their *Theory of Change* or other planning instrument, and how this did or did not lead to programme modifications;
- The way in which a gender-sensitive conflict analysis was conducted and what its main components were;
- In elaborating and implementing the programmes, the attention paid to the specific needs of (marginalized) groups relevant to the programmes, including excluded groups, and the specific interventions addressing their needs;
- The way in which the sustainability of the programmes' results was ensured;
- The lessons learned in the area of Women, Peace and Security and the use made of these lessons;
- The lessons learned in the area of lobbying and advocacy and (preferably reciprocal) capacity development, and the use made of these lessons
- In case the case study included a service delivery component: the knowledge of the lead party and/or other consortium partners with regards to service delivery

3.2 Criteria

The quality of the track record is assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The extent to which the consortium and/or the consortium partners show that they have demonstrable expertise in the area of lobby and advocacy³¹ and mutual capacity strengthening³² around the theme of Women, Peace and Security, and are capable of achieving the intended results;
2. The extent to which the consortium and/or consortium partners have knowledge of and have worked effectively with relevant actors (government, business, civil society organisations and social movements) in the in the application proposed country/countries and the extent to which they have efficiently cooperated with relevant actors;
3. The extent to which the consortium and/or consortium partners were focused on learning and on exchanging knowledge and experience with the actors involved;
4. The extent to which the consortium and/or consortium partners effectively integrated the gender-sensitive conflict analysis into the implementation and intended results, and how this was reflected in the allocation of the financial budget;
5. The extent to which obstacles to opportunities for optimal participation in society by (marginalized) groups and women and girls and youth were identified and addressed and/or removed;
6. The extent to which the consortium and/or consortium partners ensured transparency concerning their actions, and the way in which they reported on their actions to local partners, government, supporters, financiers and any other relevant actors;
7. The extent to which the sustainability of results was ensured and the specific measures taken if necessary to do so.
8. If the project includes a service delivery component: the extent to which the consortium or (one or more) consortium partner(s) has/have experience and expertise in the area of service delivery

Stage 3: Process after selection and elaboration of the programme proposal

Elaboration of the Strategic Partnership and linkage with MACS and results frameworks

An overview of the alliances selected as a potential strategic partner, including the themes and an overview of the proposed countries, will be shared, after phase 2, with the thematic and regional departments, as well as the embassies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the same time, the Multi-annual Country Strategies (MACS) (for the countries which have such a strategy) can be requested by the potential strategic partners and will be made available by the regional departments. Through this information sharing, expectations regarding involvement in these strategic partnerships should be charted as early as possible. This information is important for the further implementation and elaboration of the program proposals.

Consortia that have been selected as potential strategic partner are invited to further elaborate on the strategic partnership in consultation with the relevant thematic department, regional department

³¹In line with the policy document *Women, Peace and Security (Annexe 7)* this refers to point 2 and point 3 under 'three specific approaches'

³² In line with the policy document *Women, Peace and Security (Annexe 7)* this refers to point 1 under 'three specific approaches'.

and the involved embassies, to formulate a joint strategic goal and to make agreements on roles, responsibilities, expectations and ambitions. Agreements will be made in joint consultation with regard to the connection of the Theories of Change, result frameworks and the countries proposed in the application. Making changes to this proposed country list is possible in joint consultation.

The degree of intensity of cooperation between the strategic partners and the Ministry depends on the current (policy) agenda and is also determined by pragmatic considerations, such as available capacity of the strategic partners and the Ministry and the number of partnerships per country.

The embassies' involvement and its intensity will be defined for each strategic partnership and per country, depending amongst others on their capacity and the extent to which the application corresponds with their MACS.

Where the theme of the application is a good policy match, the embassy may become more strategically involved in implementation. Where the theme corresponds little or not at all with the embassy's priorities, there will be little actual involvement in the activities, but the embassy should nonetheless be kept informed of the consortium's activities.

At the beginning of stage 3, the degree of commitment to service delivery will be coordinated jointly between the alliance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The service delivery activities should serve the lobbying and advocacy activities and contribute to the long term objective; it cannot be a stand-alone activity.

Financial resources

The definitive total grant ceiling and the allocation of resources over the different consortia will be announced within a month of the potential strategic partners being selected (see section C. of this chapter). This results in the maximum budget allocated to each alliance, of course subject to a positive outcome of the assessment of the full program proposal and budget to be worked out by the alliance.

Grants will be allocated on the basis of the quality of the application and the consortium's revenues over the past three years. This may mean that the application with the highest score will not necessarily be given the highest grant amount.

For each consortium, the minimum grant amount is EUR 0.8 million a year and the maximum grant amount EUR 1,2 million a year. The duration of the grants and thus of the programmes is five years. The partners will draw up a definitive programme and budget on the basis of the grant amount awarded. After stage 2, a budget format and criteria for the assessment of the full program proposal will be shared with the selected potential strategic partners.

Programme proposal

The selected consortium is always responsible for drawing up and implementing the programme proposal. The proposal must be submitted no later than 12.00 CEST on 16 October 2020. It should include the outline of an annual plan for the first year, including a budget and liquidity forecast, as well as a multiannual plan and a multiannual budget. If applicable, the completed questionnaire of the Partos ISO 9001 certification can be requested.

Being selected as a potential strategic partner is no guarantee of a grant award. A grant will only be awarded if the programme proposal proves to be of sufficient quality (satisfies sufficiently the criteria for assessing the quality of the programme proposal). The quality of the program proposal is assessed on the basis of criteria to be determined; in any case with regard to the elaboration of the Theory of Change presented in the application, a satisfactory risk analysis and mitigating measures, a results framework in compliance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the logical connection between the intended results and the budget. If the quality of an elaborated proposal proves to be insufficient, the application will be rejected. The rejection of a programme proposal will not lead to any of the previously (stage 2) rejected applications becoming eligible for a grant.

C. Timetable

The following timetable applies to the *Women, Peace and Security* application and selection process:

- Any questions about this document or other matters related to the drafting of an application should be sent by email to sdg5-wps@minbuza.nl no later than 17.00 CET on 11 December 2019, after which the questions will be anonymised and the answers published on <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ontwikkelingssamenwerking/documenten/beleidsnotas/2019/11/28/beleidskader-versterking-maatschappelijk-middenveld> no later than 17.00 CET on 18 December 2019.
- Applications for a strategic partnership under *Women, Peace and Security* may be submitted from 16 December 2019 until 12.00 CET on 12 March 2020 via the online application form provided by the Minister.
- Applications for *Women, Peace and Security* will first be checked against the threshold criteria. All the threshold criteria must be satisfied, otherwise the application will be rejected and not assessed further.
- Applications that satisfy all the threshold criteria will go on to the next stage, stage 2, the qualitative check.
- Based on the results of the qualitative check, a decision will be made on the potential strategic partners no later than 29 May 2020.
- Between the announcement of the selection and 16 October 2020 the potential strategic partners should design their comprehensive programme proposals, which must be received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs no later than 12.00 CET on 16 October 2020.
- No later than December 2020, strategic partnership agreements will be signed with, and grant award decisions issued to, consortia whose programme proposals prove to be of sufficient quality (that is, which have attained satisfactory scores on the criteria relating to the quality of proposals). Both the strategic partnership agreement and the grant decision are addressed to the lead party of the consortium, whereby the lead party acts on behalf of the entire consortium.
- The new programmes will start on 1 January 2021 and have a duration of five years, until 31 December 2025.