

To  
Reem Alsalem,  
UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls  
UNOHCHR  
Geneva  
22 December 2023

Your excellency,

We undersigned organizations would like to update you about the adoption of the second Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 and Women Peace and Security and also request you to press on the Nepalese Government and Nepal's international partners to ensure its implementation.

Your excellency,

The government launched its second (and, it has said, final) National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (WPS) on 7 May 2023. NAP II had been long in the making. Your predecessor, excellency Dubravka Simonovic visited Nepal 19-29 of November 2018 and released a preliminary observation and recommendations, where she recommended to adopt the plan 'the adoption of the Second National Action Plan for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 should be expedited, with the provision of adequate and sufficient resources and monitoring at all levels guaranteed.'

Nepal's internal armed conflict (1996-2006) left at least 13,000 people dead and more than 3,200 missing.<sup>1</sup> Thousands more were arbitrarily arrested, detained, subjected to torture, and sexually abused.<sup>2</sup> Rape, attempted rape, threats of rape, gang rape, forced nudity,<sup>3</sup> and rape in front of one's children were the most common forms of sexual violence during that period. Pregnant women, lactating mothers, and women with mental disabilities were among many women sexually abused during this period. Further, many victims lost their life as a result of unwanted pregnancies caused by rape or during the course of abortion following such pregnancies.<sup>4</sup> Girls, some as young as 10, were targeted and subjected to multiple forms of sexual and gender-based violence. In fact, research by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) showed that more than one-third of the victims were children, with many of those victims under 15.<sup>5</sup>

Seventeen years have been passed since the signing of Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) victims of sexual violence continue to suffer in silence.

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<sup>1</sup> The TRC website could not be accessed to check for exact figures of complaints in respect of killings. The CIEDP website lists 3,288 complaints. See <https://ciedp.gov.np/en/introduction/#:~:text=Why%20was%20CIEDP%20formed%20in,prosecution%20to%20the%20accused%20ones>

<sup>2</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR), Nepal conflict report, 2012, [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Countries/NP/OHCHR\\_ExecSumm\\_Nepal\\_Conflict\\_report2012.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Countries/NP/OHCHR_ExecSumm_Nepal_Conflict_report2012.pdf), p.4.

<sup>3</sup> OHCHR, pp. 23 and 172.

<sup>4</sup> OHCHR, p. 172.

<sup>5</sup> OHCHR, p. 12.

Nepal had adopted the first National Action Plan in 2011 the first South Asian country to launch a NAP to address WPS issues after the conflict. Although NAP I helped to bring women's agenda in political participation, significant shortcomings remained, including the inability to address conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

NAP II was developed in consultation with various actors from 2020 onwards. It was adopted by the cabinet in August 2022, but its launch was delayed till May 2023 due to the elections and drawn-out negotiations on the formation of a new government.

NAP II officially runs for three years from April 2022 to April 2025 (Nepal financial years 2078 to 2081). Its overall objective is “to fully guarantee the proportional and meaningful participation and security of women in the entire process of conflict transformation and peace building.”<sup>6</sup> It further aims at “contributing to establishing a sustainable peaceful, just, and inclusive society by ensuring meaningful participation of women and children and addressing their needs and priorities so that they can enjoy equality and dignified life.”

NAP II has four pillars such as participation, aiming to increase women's participation and create a fairer and inclusive society where women's contributions are recognized and their views are heard in decision-making processes. Protection and Prevention pillar aims at internalizing gender awareness at all levels of government. Under this pillar, the transitional justice system will be made effective to address the problems related to women and girls survivors of sexual violence and rape during the armed conflict. The third pillar (Relief and Recovery) focuses on tailored programs that cater to the specific needs and capacities of conflict-affected women which will include providing them with employment opportunities and necessary skills training to help reduce the long-term impacts of conflict. Finally, the fourth pillar (Capacity Development, Resource Management, and Monitoring and Evaluation) embodies the infrastructure required for the successful implementation of NAP II. It underscores the participation of victims/survivors and stakeholders in all phases of implementation, ensuring that their voices are integral to the plan's execution.

NAP II envisions the involvement of 26 different types of government agencies at different levels (sixteen national entities, five provincial entities, four district-level entities, and local-level governments) to implement the Plan.

#### *Updates on implementation of the NAP II*

Recently, Advocacy Forum, conducted a mapping exercise, identifying the government entities entrusted with the responsibility of implementing NAP II, NGOs and victims' associations engaged in the process and the progress in its implementation to date. While it is encouraging that NAP II is aiming to address the shortcomings outlined above and has identified addressing the overall needs of women and children victimized and affected by gender-based and sexual violence during the conflict as one of its strategic objectives, Advocacy Forum's analysis raises alarm at many levels:

- There is a lack of knowledge of NAP II, including among government officials responsible for its implementation.
- The 753 local governments entities, the primary stakeholders in executing NAP II, are yet to be made fully aware of their responsibilities under NAP II and properly equipped with resources and necessary technical support.

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<sup>6</sup> NAP II, p. 11.

- The focal ministry, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), is yet to take substantive initiatives and make efforts to secure the necessary resources to ensure the NAP's successful implementation. This is likely linked to the frequent transfers of undersecretaries responsible for WPS issues. Over the past seven months, three different undersecretaries have been assigned to this role, and each has been transferred within an exceedingly short timeframe, often within a month or two of their appointment.
- Senior MoHA officials responsible for the NAP II implementation, including an undersecretary, admitted to being entirely unaware of it and appeared reluctant to engage with NGOs, despite the NAP II identifying them as key partners in its implementation.
- Similarly, officials at the provincial level, who should have been involved in the drafting of the NAP II, also were unaware of it and of the specific responsibilities for provincial authorities outlined in it.
- There are no dedicated annual and periodical plans and allocated financial resources for NAP II to date.

In terms of the NGOs and victims' associations engaged in the process and the progress in its implementation, the Conflict Victims Women's Network (CVWN) has taken the lead responsibility for engaging with the drafting of NAP II. NAP II formally recognizes CVWN as a direct implementing partner. NGOs working for the NAP II implementation have also entrusted CVWN to work as the secretariat. It was also decided to develop a membership system for organizations to be part of the secretariat responsible for overseeing the NAP II implementation process. At the time of writing, 13 organizations (CSOs and Victims' groups) have formally expressed an interest to become members of the NAP II Secretariat. Advocacy Forum, Nagarik Awaz, the Story Kitchen, Conflict Victims Women Network, Women for Human Rights (WHR), the Single Women Group, Human Rights and Justice Center (HRJC). It has been proposed that the Secretariat is developed as a collective platform to convene various entities, fostering the exchange of insights, progress reports, and the development of a collaborative strategy for the effective implementation of the action plan. Secretariat members collectively agreed to fund meetings on a rotating basis, addressing financial needs as they arise.

As part of the mapping exercise, the Advocacy Forum identified the following problems with respect to the non-governmental side of the NAP II implementation:

- The Secretariat lacks resources, coordination and cooperation from the Government entities. It has also not been able to generate wider civil society support and enthusiasm as many organizations working on the issue of WPS have been reluctant to join the secretariat.
- While there have been positive local efforts following some orientations, significant coordination gaps persist at the federal, provincial, district, and local levels between CSOs and victims' groups, but also between them and the 26 different types of government agencies at different levels, they need to work with at federal, provincial, district and local level.

In addition to government agencies at various levels and the NGOs and victims' organizations, UN Women, UNDP and other UN agencies are also engaged with NAP II. Both UN Women and UNDP played pivotal roles in the formulation of the NAP II. UN Women is pursuing a project focused on WPS in Nepal. It is internally mapping the various UN bodies in Nepal to

assess their potential contributions to the implementation of the NAP II. Collaborating with the drafting members of NAP II, UN Women has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) aimed at operationalizing the plan at both provincial and district levels. As a member of the secretariat, it is also helping the secretariat to have meetings with CSOs. It is preparing a National Level Inception Workshop for local government, in coordination with the Home Ministry, although the specific date for the workshop has yet to be determined.

The implementation of NAP II faces a challenge as Nepal's bilateral donors including embassies are yet to prioritize it. Advocacy Forum has written to several embassies<sup>7</sup> seeking information but received information only from the German and Norwegian embassy. Other donors, including Finland, Switzerland's web page state they allocating budgets for work on WPS, but not specifically on NAP II implementation to date.

### *Our request to you*

With only a year and a half left before NAP II ends, there is an urgent need for the implementing partners to step up their efforts and insert some urgency into their actions to have any chance of meeting these very ambitious but critically important objectives. Otherwise, without resources, plans and a proper coordination, NAP II is doomed to fail and women will once again be let down and their seemingly eternal wait for truth, justice and reparation for the harm inflicted on them during the armed conflict will continue.

Based on its analysis and the mapping, Advocacy Forum makes the following requests:

- Write to the Government of Nepal to develop annual and periodical plans and projected budgets for the three fiscal years in order of priority as provided for in NAP II and ensure all targets set will be met by the end of NAP II,
- Request the Government of Nepal the focal ministry, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) has a designated team for the overall implementation of NAP II and widely disseminate the NAP II document to all relevant government entities at national, provincial and local level with a request for them to report on the plans to ensure their responsibilities are delivered on in time,
- Request to urgently amend the TRC Act, and ensure it substantially addresses CRSV issues,
- Call on Nepal's funding partners to civil society organisations for the effective implementation of NAP -II.

### Organizations

Advocacy Forum-Nepal



Conflict Victims' Women  
National Network



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<sup>7</sup> Advocacy Forum wrote to Royal Norwegian Embassy, Australian Embassy Nepal, Embassy of United Kingdom in Nepal, Embassy of France in Nepal, Embassy of Finland, German Embassy Kathmandu, Embassy of Switzerland, US agency for international development.

Human Rights and  
Justice Centre



Legal Aid and Consultancy  
Center Nepal



Nagarik Awaz



The Story Kitchen



Voices of Women Media

