

# Protection Framework For Action



The Protection Framework consists of a pledge, the brief Protecting Women Peacebuilders: The Front Lines of Sustainable Peace, the Operational Guidance to Establish and Enhance the Protection of Women Peacebuilders and the Action Tool. This action tool accompanies the operational guidance to indicate the recommendations you implement and your commitments to additional recommendations. Please complete the action tool by checking off one of the following boxes. If you have questions or would like to request a briefing from ICAN, please contact [melinda.homes@icanpeacework.org](mailto:melinda.homes@icanpeacework.org).

- ☒ Select this box if you already implement this recommendation and provide a description of your activities;
- ☐ Select this box if you commit to implement this recommendation with a description of your proposed timeframe and activities;
- ☐ Select this box if you cannot implement this recommendation with a description of the barriers which prevent it

## Building a Legal and Political Safety Net for Women Peacebuilders

*What to do*

### 1 Build mutually beneficial relationships with women peacebuilders; networks can serve as a form of protection.

*How to do it*



- 1.1 Include the recognition and safety of women peacebuilders explicitly in the mandate of gender and WPS focal points, where they exist, including those in government ministries and foreign and multilateral missions.

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- 1.2 Conduct regular bilateral consultations with women peacebuilders, their organizations, and their networks to understand their work and the risks and threats they face.

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- 1.3 With their consent, attend women peacebuilders' events and observe their activities to become familiar with their work and to fulfill vetting requirements.

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- 1.4 Facilitate collaboration between WHRDs and women peacebuilders by ensuring inclusive criteria for participation where possible and mutual reinforcement of their work.**

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**Support the development of security sector policies and procedures to clarify roles and responsibilities and strengthen coordination mechanisms to respond to threats against women peacebuilders.**

- 2.1 Establish and facilitate open channels of communication with the security sector, including local liaison officers and protection specialists, and referral mechanisms that are accessible to women peacebuilders.**

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- 2.2 Develop Minimum Security Operating Standards (MSOS), designed to establish standard criteria for security arrangements to ensure the safety of women peacebuilders.**

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**Highlight the risks and threats women peacebuilders face, giving priority to their analysis as they are experts on their own situation.**

- 3.1 Incorporate the expertise of women peacebuilders in context analyses, particularly those focused on conflict, stabilization, humanitarian response, development, and violence prevention.**

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**3.2 Conduct joint risk assessments with women peacebuilders and co-design and implement mitigation strategies.**

**3.3 Leverage convening power to foster alliances between women peacebuilders and other stakeholders (including state entities, multilateral organizations, and civil society) to raise awareness of and enable robust responses to threats.**

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**3.4 Engage technology companies to educate them about the online threats and attacks faced by women peacebuilders and to enhance protocols for limiting, reporting, and when appropriate, removing harmful online content.**

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**Revise existing international and national laws, policies and guidelines for the protection of human rights and women human rights defenders to:**

- Explicitly include women peacebuilders;
- Ensure provisions are gender-responsive; and
- Address the specific risks associated with the nature of women's peacebuilding work.

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## 4.1 Include the rights and security of women peacebuilders explicitly in the mandate of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and ensure that they are empowered to:

- Monitor and report on the situation of women peacebuilders, specifically;
- Coordinate the state's response to threats against them; and
- Periodically evaluate the efficacy of the state's response.


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## 4.2 Regularly engage international human rights treaty bodies to raise concerns about the safety of women peacebuilders and report on threats and violence against them.

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## 4.3 Develop implementation plans for policies and guidelines, where needed, to inform national legislation and enable change in practices.

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## Enact legislation institutionalizing WPS policies and practices, including provisions for the protection of women peacebuilders that include allocation of resources, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms.

## 5.1 Develop an inclusive consultative process to draft WPS legislation in close collaboration with women peacebuilders, policymakers and parliamentarians.

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**5.2** Map the relevant laws, policies and practices to identify key entry points, source material and key stakeholders.

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**5.3** Identify or develop example language for use in legislation and share best practices for gender responsive policymaking and budgeting.

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**5.4** Write inclusive, consultative processes into legislation, such as regular staff briefings by women peacebuilders, as well as implementation plans, monitoring mechanisms and reporting requirements.

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**6** **Revise existing laws that aid in the criminalization, prohibition, or stifling of women peacebuilders and their work, particularly counterterrorism laws.**

**6.1** Advocate bilaterally and within global and regional coordination bodies to ensure that international and national counterterrorism laws and policies enable peacebuilding and protect women peacebuilders.

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- 6.2 Engage authorities responsible for implementing Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML/CTF) rules to familiarize them with women peacebuilders, their organizations and activities in order to prevent and redress limitations on their work.**

## Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Threats to Women Peacebuilders

- 7 Establish protection guidelines and protocols for engagement with women peacebuilders to reduce risk and enable response to threats as they arise.**

- 7.1 Designate a protection focal point within each organization or entity (e.g., embassy, mission, ministry) to coordinate responses in the event of an acute threat. This could be the WPS or gender focal point, or a security or protection officer, depending on the structure and staffing of the organization.**

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- 7.2 Conduct regular bilateral consultations with women peacebuilders, their organizations, and their networks to understand their work and the risks and threats they face.**

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- 7.3 With their consent, attend women peacebuilders' events and observe their activities to become familiar with their work and to fulfill vetting requirements.**

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**7.4** Respect confidentiality, unless explicitly waived.

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**7.5** Maintain contact to provide support in case adverse consequences arise.

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**7.6** Inform women peacebuilders of the applicable guidelines and protocols and share related documents so they know what to expect.

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**8**

**Accompany women peacebuilders as they seek protection from and justice for threats against them.**

**8.1** Provide physical accompaniment, as needed, including hosting woman peacebuilders in the organization's premises (i.e., embassy, mission, residence, office).

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**8.2** Monitor the status of investigations and prosecution of perpetrators of threats and inform women peacebuilders of the progress of the cases.

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8.3

**In the case a woman peacebuilder is detained (by state or non- state actors) and/or prosecuted:**

- Monitor the conditions of her detention and treatment and provide legal, political, financial, and moral support, when possible, to her and her family.
- Monitor the case closely, advocate for due process at a minimum and negotiate release if possible.
- Vouch for her and her work, as needed.


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8.4

**Coordinate protection efforts with all stakeholders on the ground including, as appropriate: government ministries; diplomatic missions; humanitarian and development organizations; UN protection clusters; UNOHCHR country offices, special procedures and visiting delegations.**

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**Support building the capacity and capability of law enforcement actors and the state to coordinate and enhance their response to threats and evaluate the efficacy of the response.**

9.1

**Train law enforcement, including local police, and the judiciary on the protection needs of women peacebuilders, off and online, to inform risk assessments, design of security arrangements, and prosecution of perpetrators.**

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9.2

**Exchange good practices to improve response, investigation and prosecution of specific threats and security incidents against women peacebuilders.**

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9.3

Strengthen inter-agency and inter-sectoral coordination to streamline exchange of information, learning, and collaboration to protect women peacebuilders.

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**Support building the capacity and capability of women peacebuilders and their organizations to conduct risk assessments, develop security plans and protocols, and mitigate and respond to threats in order to increase their safety and resilience.**

10.1

Support women peacebuilders to identify, strengthen, and where needed, develop collective protection mechanisms for individuals, families, and organizations at the local, regional and national levels.

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10.2

Support the development and provision of gender responsive security and protection training for women peacebuilders, including physical security, digital security, and well-being.

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10.3

Facilitate the development of comprehensive mechanisms to communicate accurate threat information in real-time, between local communities, security actors, and other relevant stakeholders.

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**Recognize and show appreciation for women peacebuilders and their work.**

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11.1

Credit women peacebuilders publicly to raise the profile of their work, if deemed safe and beneficial to do so after consultation with and approval by them.

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11.2

Build and leverage strategic relationships with the media to raise the visibility and recognition of women peacebuilders.

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11.3

Establish and give awards to women peacebuilders who would benefit from public recognition.

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11.4

Champion and support women peacebuilders using low-profile approaches, or by elevating them and their work generically as a group, as needed to avoid exacerbating risk to individuals.

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## Security for Women Peacebuilders at the Peace Table and in International Spaces

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Consider and mitigate risks to women peacebuilders when designing peace processes, briefings, and other international events.

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12.1

Consult women peacebuilders to inform determinations about where, with whom, and how the proceedings will be conducted (i.e., choice of venue, selection of participants, and participation guidelines).

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12.2

Share objectives, background of all participants, and participation guidelines with women peacebuilders in advance.

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12.3

Facilitate access to visas, negotiating with the host country for the least restrictive provisions.

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12.4

Ensure that women peacebuilders are provided security arrangements commensurate with those afforded other briefers, delegates or participants, at minimum:

- Dedicate a budget line to fund the security of participating women peacebuilders.

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12.5

Facilitate proxy representation or virtual participation if women peacebuilders are unable to attend in person due to security risks.

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## 13 Develop gender responsive security guidelines for engaging women peacebuilders as briefers, delegates and participants.



13.1 Conduct event specific risk assessments with women peacebuilders to inform security guidelines and arrangements.

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13.2 Establish a clear duty of care, specifying who will be responsible for each task during events.

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13.3 Facilitate secure communications in line with current best practices, including use of encrypted devices and platforms as needed.

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13.4 Facilitate secure transportation as needed and in coordination with security experts (e.g. armored vehicles, private car service, daytime travel itineraries).

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13.5 Provide physical accompaniment, as needed.

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**Establish and implement rules of engagement for the proceedings to ensure respectful communication and treatment of women peacebuilders, both off and online.**



**14.1** Conveners should set ground rules and discuss them in advance, confirming the agreement of all participants.

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**14.2** Conveners and facilitators must have the authority and accountability mechanisms to enforce them.

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**Ensure women peacebuilders' participation is adequately funded to alleviate economic insecurity, which exacerbates risks and vulnerabilities.**

**15.1** Provide flexible funding for women peacebuilders to use as they see fit to facilitate their safe participation.

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**15.2** Remunerate women peacebuilders for their contributions and expertise.

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**Sustain support for women peacebuilders and their participation following the proceedings.**

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16.1

Support women peacebuilders to report back to their communities on the proceedings and their outcomes in order to reinforce their credibility.


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16.2

Disseminate copies of outcome documents and agreements to key stakeholders.

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16.3

Monitor for breaches of protocol, both off and online, and enforce agreed rules of engagement.

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## When Emergency Assistance and Relocation of Women Peacebuilders is Necessary

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Facilitate emergency support to women peacebuilders in the form of physical accompaniment, political advocacy, financial grants, and security arrangements, as needed.

17.1

Conduct a security assessment jointly with the woman peacebuilder under threat to determine her specific needs.

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**17.2** Dedicate funding to enable rapid response to acute threats.

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**17.3** Establish diplomatic dialogue and advocate with relevant authorities or actors to:

- Mobilize law enforcement and security actors to take action; and
- Defuse threats, if the source of the threat is reachable.

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**17.4** Communicate solidarity with and support of women peacebuilders, by issuing public statements and sharing women peacebuilders' messages, in coordination with them and their networks.

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**Revise and expand existing emergency response mechanisms for WHRDs to address gaps in assistance available to women peacebuilders and establish new mechanisms where appropriate.**

**18.1** Ensure women peacebuilders can meet eligibility criteria, given the often low-profile and unofficial nature of their work.

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**18.2 Conduct security and needs assessments with women peacebuilders under threat to tailor responses.**

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**18.3 Include the family members of women peacebuilders in security arrangements and relocation options. Included family members should be determined by women peacebuilders themselves, and not based on external definitions of who qualifies as immediate family.**

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**18.4 Connect women peacebuilders with international organizations, networks, and diaspora communities to facilitate their transition and enable continuation of their work.**

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**18.5 Maintain contact and periodically reassess needs and risk, to determine whether and when it is safe for her to return home.**

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**Expand sustainable options for temporary relocation of women peacebuilders within their country and abroad.**



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19.1

**Support the development of peer-to-peer emergency response and relocation initiatives within existing national and international networks of women peacebuilders, and provide sustained aid to support their interventions.**


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19.2

**Develop visa policies and procedures to allow women peacebuilders to relocate abroad temporarily without having to resort to asylum:**

- Expand existing visa categories, such as humanitarian, student, and business programs, to apply to the various and distinct circumstances of women peacebuilders under threat.
- Consult states that have established or adapted such visas, for example Ireland's Facilitative Visa Procedure, Spain's Program on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, and the UK's response to Hong Kong's new security law, which provide precedents.
- Ensure visa and border officers are trained to recognize women peacebuilders and are familiar with the threats they face.

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ACTION TOOL

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Additional space for details