

The Building Integrity Programme and Gender

“Corruption affects us all. It is costing us not only our money, but also equal opportunities and sadly, even lives. If we want men and women to contribute equally and to their full potential to peace and security, we will have to ensure that our security institutions are transparent and inclusive, merit-based and responsive to the security needs of the entire population. Inclusive security is better security.”¹



¹ Ambassador Marriët Schuurman, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security.

The Building Integrity programme

The Building Integrity (BI) programme aims at strengthening transparency, integrity and accountability in the defence and security sector. The programme, which was established in 2007, is aimed at developing individual and institutional capacity and is supported by a number of practical tools and elements. At the Chicago Summit (2012), the NATO Heads of State and Government agreed that priority should be given to developing a systematic and sustainable approach to education and training. It was also agreed that BI should take into account and support NATO's operations and should develop tailored programmes to support capacity building in the Afghan National Security Forces and in South Eastern Europe. At the Wales Summit (2014) BI was revalidated as a key component of the Defence Capacity Building Initiative (DCBI). The number of nations taking part in the programme and contributing expertise continues to grow and develop taking into account NATO's agenda.

Transparency, integrity, and accountability in the defence and security sector are ensured through the democratic representation of the population. Corruption is a security risk – it undermines public trust and confidence, wastes resources, and limits the commanders' ability to achieve operational objectives. Corruption affects the whole society and the needs and interest of an entire population matter - not only just half of it. It is therefore essential that both men and women are included in anti-corruption decision-making and that gender is taken into account in assessing risks and in developing strategies to reduce corruption and promote good governance in the defence and security sector.

Both BI and NATO's support for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) are cross-cutting and require an innovative and flexible approach. They contribute to NATO's crisis prevention and conflict management. The two initiatives have developed a close synergy, trading best practice and sharing expertise.

The Women, Peace and Security agenda aims at increasing female participation in decision-making, the enhancement of women's rights and the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence in conflict situations. Women often experience conflict differently from men and can thus offer valuable insights and input in conflict prevention, peace-building and post-conflict decision-making. In the same vein, corruption may produce disparate impact on women and men. The former may face hardship in gaining access to public services, such as healthcare, or become subject to sexual exploitation as a form of corruption. Because of these experiences, women are often able to provide a more critical point of view to decision-making. Female staff working as civil servants or as military personnel may also experience corruption in their day to day work. Their perspective is an essential component to strengthening transparency, accountability and integrity in the defence and security sector.

The revised NATO/EAPC Policy and Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, endorsed by over 50 Ally and partner² nations in 2014, set ambitious targets for Allies and partners to reduce barriers for active and meaningful participation of women in all NATO policies, efforts and activities. Noteworthy, the Action Plan specifically tasks the integration of a gender perspective into the BI programme. Considerable progress has been made to mainstream the Women, Peace and Security into the NATO policy framework, directives and working mechanisms.

² Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, The Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*.

*Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

The BI Programme has integrated a gender perspective into its methodology and development of practical tools. A gender balance is always taken into account when deploying BI mobile teams and experts. Conferences and seminars are used as opportunities to raise awareness, hence increase participation, on the importance of the gender perspective within the BI programme.

What have we done so far?

- The BI Programme has integrated gender into its practical tools and elements including an emphasis on gender balance with our subject matter experts. Furthermore, gender and UNSCR 1325 were taken into account in the updating of the BI Self Assessment Questionnaire, which now incorporates gender-sensitive questions, and the Peer Review Process.
- A gender expert provided by Iceland continues to provide advice and support in developing and updating BI tools and practices.
- To ensure that a gender perspective is taken into account in providing advice to nations, the latter are encouraged to nominate both men and women to the BI Pool of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Gender Balance is taken into account in composing NATO Peer Review team.
- The BI Conference conducted in Monterey, USA on 25-28 February 2013 recommended a further mainstreaming of gender into BI tools.
- A seminar on “Women’s Role in Reducing the Risk of Corruption and Promoting Good Practices in the Defence and Security Sector” was conducted 8-9 March 2013 at NATO HQ and recommended that this topic be addressed in further detail including conduct of regional events.
- A regional seminar on “Women’s Role in Building Integrity and Promoting Good Practices in the Defence and Security Sector, Experience from South Eastern Europe” was held in Montenegro on 25 September 2013.
- A gender module has been incorporated into the “Defence Leadership in Building Integrity” course, which takes place at the NATO School in Oberammergau. The next course will be held on 2-6 November 2015.



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