



**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
DEPARTMENT OF NORWEGIAN
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

SSA-O

**Appendix 1: The Customer's specification of the Assignment
(TOR)**

**Midterm Evaluation of the Norwegian Action Plan (2023-2030)
for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 — Women, Peace
and Security agenda**

Reference: 26/00317

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Appendix 1: The Customer's specification of the Assignment

This appendix must be completed by the Customer. The following sections reference provisions in the Agreement and serve as a reminder for the Customer to consider these sections.

Section 1.1 Scope of the Agreement

Background and context

In 2000, the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325¹ on Women, Peace & Security (WPS) brought to the fore women's roles and perspectives in conflict resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, humanitarian response, and post-conflict reconstruction. The government of Norway fully espouses this agenda:² "Women's participation in all matters

¹ <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/WPS%20SRES1325%20.pdf>

² <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/documents/guidelines-for-the-norwegian-foreign-service-20232030/id3041371/>

related to peace and security is crucial to international peace and security. Women must be protected against violence in conflict situations, and participation is key to protection.” The commitment of Member States to the WPS agenda are expressed in National Action Plans (NAPs): in 2025 about half of the Member States (113 in 2025) had made one. Norway was among the first countries to develop a NAP on WPS (in 2006). The NATO has also embedded the WPS agenda within its institutional frameworks, policies and strategic guidance.³

In the past 25 years, women have been increasingly involved in peace processes, experienced increased access to rights in post-conflict communities and were elected or appointed to positions of leadership.⁴ Laws and policies have changed, and survivors of gender-based violence found support. In the past five years (2020 to 2025), however, the progress has decelerated due to withdrawal of support from important donors to the UN/ multilateral system at large, which weakened its areas of engagement and influence. The gender equality and the WPS agenda have been challenged in new ways, and in early 2025 Member States reported⁵ a backlash on women’s rights in nearly a quarter of all countries seeking to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.⁶ These factors have resulted in increased discrimination, weaker legal protections and reduced funding for supportive policies and programs.⁷

A Norad evaluation from 2022⁸, focusing on Norway’s efforts in the period 2000-2020 to support pillar one of the UNSCR 1325 resolution (women’s participation in decision making in peace processes, negotiations, and in peacebuilding more generally), found that Norway exerts strong diplomatic leadership in creating awareness of the agenda, and credited Norway for creating the first networks of women mediators⁹ and for pushing for female appointments and gender parity in peace mediation and facilitation teams. However, securing genuine influence for women in peace processes has proven to be more difficult. More positive results have been achieved in priority countries where Norway has permanent diplomatic mission, resources, and dedicated personnel — than in those where they do not.¹⁰ Efforts in Colombia and South Sudan have had some success regarding women’s influence during the peace negotiations, but especially securing women’s meaningful participation in the post-agreement phase is challenging.¹¹

The staff in the Norwegian Foreign Service has been found to be knowledgeable, well informed, and to take ownership to the normative /mainstreaming, and top down/ institutional development processes regarding WPS.¹² A gender perspective is also

³ <https://www.nato.int/en/about-us/official-texts-and-resources/official-texts/2024/07/10/nato-policy-on-women-peace-and-security-2024>

⁴ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n25/236/45/pdf/n2523645.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2025/03/one-in-four-countries-report-backlash-on-womens-rights-in-2024>

⁶ https://archive.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/u1281/bdpfa_e.pdf

⁷ Facts WPS 2025: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-women-peace-and-security>

⁸ <https://www.norad.no/publikasjoner/2022/evaluation-of-norwegian-efforts-for-women-peace-and-security/>

⁹ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-conflict-resolution/id1158/>

¹⁰ <https://www.nupi.no/en/content/download/30854/1229069?version=19>

¹¹ <https://www.nupi.no/en/publications/cristin-pub/women-s-participation-and-influence-in-peace-processes-and-implementation-of-peace-agreements-in-colombia-and-south-sudan>

¹² <https://www.nupi.no/en/publications/cristin-pub/women-s-participation-and-influence-in-peace-processes-and-implementation-of-peace-agreements-in-colombia-and-south-sudan>

mandatory to all ODA funded efforts in fragile and conflict-affected beneficiary countries. Efforts made under the two agendas, gender and WPS, however, lacked coherence. In addition, WPS engagements posed enhanced risks for women human rights defenders, which have not been sufficiently acknowledged and mitigated.¹³ Norway's WPS engagements have also seen challenges in matching political ambition with adequate gender sensitivity and context analyses, in particular in Afghanistan.¹⁴

At present, Norway is implementing its fifth NAP (2023—2030),¹⁵ a multisectoral action plan that informs the areas of responsibility for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice & Public Security. In addition, the Ministry of Climate & Environment, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, and the Ministry of Culture and Equality are involved for some of the goals. The Ministry of Climate & Environment is involved for the first time as the current NAP newly includes goals related to the climate crisis. The main responsibility for efforts made to support the agenda internationally, as well as the responsibility for coordinating the work for WPS between all the involved Norwegian ministries, are placed at MFA. The ministries plan a midterm review of the NAP in June 2027 to assess whether adjustments in the plan and its implementation are necessary for the remaining period.

The MFA has matched the NAP (2023-2030) with a guideline that directs its work and that of Norad and of Norwegian Embassies into more detail.¹⁶ The guideline of the Norwegian Foreign Service defines the following thematic priorities: Peace processes and implementation of peace agreements; Security policy and operations; Humanitarian efforts, protection of civilians and protection of human rights. Integrating the WPS agenda into Norwegian peace and security efforts, strengthening women's participation, playing a leading role in the development and implementation of the WPS agenda internationally, and mutual learning with other countries working on and with WPS NAPs are highlighted as point of actions. Besides financial support to strategic WPS partners and for relevant research, the guideline mentions normative processes in multilateral forums and political dialogue and leadership as lines of action.

Women's participation in political processes and in peace and security efforts are closely related and interdependent.¹⁷ The NAP (2023-2030) adopts an intersectional gender approach: women are not perceived as a homogeneous group with a uniform set of perspectives and priorities, but, rather, as people with differing sexual orientation, ethnicity, functional ability, and religion. The NAP lines up with the ambitions of SDG 2030 5 on Equality and SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong institutions.

The Norwegian support to WPS is broad and complex, including normative work at the international level as well as targeted efforts supporting advocacy and capacity building

¹³ <https://www.norad.no/publikasjoner/2022/evaluation-of-norwegian-efforts-for-women-peace-and-security/>

¹⁴ <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/nou-2025-9/id3136337/>

¹⁵ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/documents/norways-national-action-plan-women-peace-and-security-2023-2030/id2993862/>

¹⁶ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/documents/guidelines-for-the-norwegian-foreign-service-20232030/id3041371/>

¹⁷ Norway's international efforts to support women's political participation are described more fully in the Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Foreign and Development Policy for 2023—2030: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/documents/a-just-world-is-an-equal-world/id3007548/>

programs at country level both through the MFA's and the RNE's political and diplomatic work and through ODA funded activities.

The diplomatic engagements made on the intergovernmental level involve UN, NATO, OSCE, AU, ASEAN. In recent years, Norway has explicitly utilised its strategic position in NATO and OSCE, and their role as member of the UNSC (2021-2022). Norway has dedicated ambassadors that represent Norway to AU and ASEAN and has taken on leading roles in the Global Alliance Women Negotiator Network (from 2022), UN Global Compact on WPS and Humanitarian Assistance (2021), the WPS Focal Points Network (from 2024). The "Oslo Forum" has since 2003 been organised annually by MFA and the independent Centre of Humanitarian Dialogue Switzerland — and facilitated dialogue, reflection and best practise sharing between partners of conflict, mediators, and experts.

The WPS-NAP identifies a set of WPS priority countries for Norwegian support. All beneficiary countries on the current list have their own WPS NAP, except Venezuela and Myanmar.

Overview WPS Priority Countries

Country	NAP	Top ten receivers of bilateral Norwegian ODA (2025)	Presence of RNE in the country
Afghanistan	x	x	
Colombia	x		x
Iraq	x		
Jordan	x		x
Mali	x		
Mozambique	x		x
Myanmar			x
Nigeria	x		x
Palestine	x	x	
Philippines	x		x
Somalia	x		
South Africa	x		x
South Sudan	x	x	x
Sudan	x	x	
Syria	x	x	
Ukraine	x	x	x
Venezuela			
Yemen	x		

Norwegian ODA related to WPS is extended by Norad, as well as the MFA and RNEs.¹⁸ The Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice & Public Security as well its subordinate agencies the Police Directorate and the Directorate for Civil Protection are involved as

¹⁸ <https://resultater.norad.no/bistands-tall>

agreement partners in some disbursements. At country level actions are supported and carried out by UN (UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women), international, Norwegian and local civil society organisations. Moreover, Norway plays a role of facilitator and “enabler” with the aim of creating spaces and platforms for engagement and political dialogue with authorities and civil society and supporting policy development.¹⁹ WPS engagement is also integrated in broader partnerships with UN agencies, regional organisations, global networks and NGOs.

As WPS interventions are funded via various budget chapters, integrated in different types of development projects and there is no ODA policy marker for WPS, relevant ODA disbursements can be difficult to track. A recent report²⁰ highlights that there are no results framework or systematic reporting tool in place for tracking progress and results under the WPS-NAP (2023-2030).

The current WPS NAP builds on the results and experiences achieved through the first 20 years of implementation of the WPS agenda. The period from 2020 up to today has brought about new challenges for the UN and Multilateral system. Dormant conflicts have yet again developed into wars, and the response system built up to implement the UNSC mandate has reportedly weakened. In this scenario Norway faces a new geopolitical reality where alliances are changing, something which again redefines the authority and areas of influence of the Norwegian Foreign Service. Due to heightened security risks the Norwegian government adopted a security strategy in 2025²¹ and declared 2026 as the year of total defence. Security is also a core theme in the Government’s Plan for Norway (2025-2029).²² The background for the security strategy and overall work for strengthened security and preparedness are the serious threats from Russia, the long-term challenges of a more assertive China, the weakening of binding international cooperation, and the straining of relations between the US and Europe. As underlined in the status report,²³ resistance towards WPS both creates a challenge and a window of opportunity for Norway to continue its role as a key global advocate of the agenda.

Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The evaluation shall investigate the implementation of Norway’s current WPS-NAP (2023-2030) with a primary focus on learning and continuous improvement. The evaluation is a midterm evaluation which is future oriented and utilisation focused, producing knowledge that contributes to ensuring the effectiveness and continued relevance of Norway’s WPS-NAP. In particular, results and recommendations of the evaluation will feed into the ministries’ midterm review process of the NAP in June 2027. Hence, the main purpose of this evaluation is to provide evidence that can strengthen the strategic, organisational, and implementing dimensions of the Norwegian WPS-NAP 2023-2030 for the remaining years. The evaluation will place particular emphasis on understanding what works in advancing the

¹⁹ <https://www.nupi.no/publikasjoner/cristin-pub/report-on-the-status-of-norwegian-support-to-women-peace-and-security>

²⁰ <https://www.nupi.no/publikasjoner/cristin-pub/report-on-the-status-of-norwegian-support-to-women-peace-and-security>

²¹ https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/3750a67cb19f4aac881401c5461773d8/en-gb/pdfs/national_security_strategy.pdf

²² <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/66a93755b6f04e0494d842ec64d42fd9/the-governments-plan-for-norway.pdf>

²³ <https://www.nupi.no/publikasjoner/cristin-pub/report-on-the-status-of-norwegian-support-to-women-peace-and-security>

objectives of the WPS-NAP, assessing progress towards goal achievement, and generating evidence on how concrete and meaningful progress can be made visible to inform future implementation. Evaluating the effectiveness and coherence will help to assess to what extent the objectives and priorities of the WPS-NAP 2023-2030 remain fit for purpose and offer a conducive framework for future engagements and interventions. Where needed the evaluation will provide practical advice and guidance for improvements. The evaluation will also provide insights on whether and how the implementation of the NAP is affected by the current international context marked by increasing backlash against women's rights, a global decrease in ODA, increasing military budgets and shrinking spaces for peace talks. Furthermore, the evaluation can also inform the ongoing process of developing new directions for Norwegian development aid policies, its priorities (i.e. enhanced security vs. poverty reduction) and grant management, following "Vendepunkt", in 2027. Insights may also support Norway's engagement in the UN80 reform initiative.

The experience of WPS NAP 2019-2022 led to the WPS-NAP 2023-2030 lacking an explicit Theory of Change with result indicators that actors should be obliged to include in their reporting. However, the absence of result indicators makes it now more difficult for ministries to measure progress on the goals. The evaluation results will also provide knowledge towards striking a better balance in the future in order to define and connect the different WPS interventions and ways of working for WPS with the NAP goals.

The evaluation aims at providing actionable knowledge that will enable Norwegian actors (the MFA, Norad, the other Ministries involved in the WPS-NAP, and the embassies) to identify priorities in future years. It will provide recommendations to devise a viable WPS strategy that takes into account the changes in the areas of influence of intergovernmental actors in peace negotiations and the increasing backlash against women's rights.

Evaluation object and scope

Building on the Norad evaluation from 2022²⁴, the evaluation focuses on Norway's initiatives to advance and support the WPS agenda in the period of 2020 — to present (2025/2026). The evaluation will document the effectiveness and coherence of strategic, organisational and implementing aspects of the Norwegian WPS-NAP 2023-2030.

The scope of the evaluation corresponds to the thematic priorities, action points and lines of actions described in the WPS-NAP (2023-2030) that are relevant for Norway's development cooperation, and more specifically to the thematic focus areas in the MFA's guideline directing the work of the Foreign Service and Norad: 1) Peace processes and implementation of peace agreements; 2) Security policy and operations; 3) Humanitarian efforts, protection of civilians and protection of human rights.

The evaluation will cover both ODA linked to the WPS agenda and related diplomatic and normative WPS activities of the MFA and the RNEs, providing a solid understanding of the different types of channels and tools Norway uses as well as their interconnectedness. The WPS agenda is defined by the four pillars established by the UNSCR resolution 1325: prevention, participation, protection, and relief & recovery.

²⁴ <https://www.norad.no/publikasjoner/2022/evaluation-of-norwegian-efforts-for-women-peace-and-security/>

As the MFA coordinates the overall implementation of the WPS NAP and the plan is an integrated strategy to advance the WPS agenda, the evaluation will also consider how development cooperation on WPS interacts with the implementation efforts of other ministries and parts of the NAP, and assess the coherence between WPS development cooperation and related strategies and activities.

The evaluation should strike a good balance between providing an overview over the implementation efforts and progress achieved so far by looking into more general trends and going into depth in case studies to provide nuanced understanding and interpretation. The case studies should focus on outcomes for the beneficiaries/participants of WPS activities.

For the individual evaluation questions (see sub-section Evaluation questions) the following scope is suggested: Question 1.1 should study the entire WPS ODA portfolio as well as relevant normative and diplomatic efforts by the MFA in the period 2020-2025, in addition the case studies should provide evidence to answer this question. Question 1.2 should look at ODA and relevant normative and diplomatic efforts by the MFA and RNEs in selected case study countries in the period 2020-2025 including links to relevant international initiatives (such as the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks, the WPS Focal Points Network or the Oslo Forum). Question 1.3 should study the WPS work and operationalisation of the NAP by all of the Norwegian ministries involved in the implementation of the NAP since 2023, with a particular focus on the coordination and interaction between the ministries.

Audience of the evaluation

The intended users of this evaluation are eligible personnel at the MFA, including RNEs in relevant countries, at the other Ministries involved in the implementation of the WPS-NAP 2023-2030 and/or the SCR 1325 (especially the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, furthermore the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion), at Norad, and at international and national NGOs involved in the implementation.

Additional users are multilateral organisations with which Norway interacts, government actors in partner countries, the Norwegian Parliament and the public.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation will answer the following main question. In addition, a set of sub-questions is suggested.

Question 1. To what extent and in what ways has the implementation of Norway's National Action Plan (2023—2030) on Women, Peace and Security progressed towards achieving its goals?

1.1. To what extent have Norway's ODA-funded WPS activities and the MFA's normative and diplomatic efforts achieved the goals of the current WPS NAP? Taking stock of the composition and structure of Norway's WPS ODA portfolio, which activities and

combinations of activities work, for whom, in which contexts and why? [DAC criteria: effectiveness]

1.2. How have different types of WPS interventions (ODA, diplomatic, normative) in priority countries across different levels of engagement (local/national/international) interacted and aligned in practice? [DAC criteria: coherence, effectiveness]

1.3. What effect does the coordination between the MFA and the other involved Norwegian ministries have on the implementation of the NAP and the attainment of the set goals? [DAC criteria: coherence, effectiveness]

Methodological approach

The evaluation bid will propose a methodological approach capable of producing evidence-based assessments for each of the questions. The evaluation should build on previous evaluations and reviews, relevant desk and field research, and existing statistics and administrative data. The methodological approach should be conflict and gender sensitive, adaptive and flexible — identifying and taking into account the risks involved.

Based on the evaluation questions a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis should be applied that is able to uncover both general trends, context dependencies, and underlying mechanisms. Building a Theory of Change is recommended. The Theory of Change can provide a framework for analysing progress towards the NAP goals in the evaluation as well as a framework for the intended users of the evaluation that helps them track results and understand how desired outcomes have been achieved and how to improve their WPS actions.

As a foundation for the analysis of the evaluation questions the evaluation will also include documentation and mapping of: the key stakeholders in the Norwegian WPS-NAP implementation clarifying the actor's role, target areas, and influence in the implementation, including stakeholders in WPS-Priority countries.

Furthermore, the evaluation will outline the scope of the financial contributions (ODA) to partners actions in 2020-2025. The public ODA agreement database of Norad²⁵ provides a total annual overview of contracts up to 2024/2025, and must be broken down to partnerships/ agreements that directly support focus areas and the lines of actions as described in the MFA guideline for WPS-NAP 2023-2030 by using relevant variables/information in the statistics. The final selection is in need of quality assurance from eligible persons at MFA/Embassies/Norad. In the case of identification of relevant efforts/partnerships funded from other allocations in the state budget of Norway — they should be accounted for but held separate in the mapping exercise and the statistical analysis.

The evaluation should also map relevant diplomatic and normative WPS activities of the MFA in the period 2020-2025. This will require interviews with involved staff to get a complete picture beyond what is documented in writing.

²⁵ <https://resultater.norad.no/en>

The evaluation will include at least two country case studies. The case studies will particularly feed into the analysis of question 1.1. and 1.2. and should include field missions. Based on relevance, the variety of Norwegian WPS activities, existing evaluations/research gaps and available resources at the embassies it is suggested to choose the case studies among the following countries: Mozambique, Ukraine, Philippines, South Africa, Sudan and Myanmar. One additional case study in these or other Norwegian WPS priority countries may be conducted. The case studies should represent a relevant variety of contextual conditions, geographies, as well as types and levels of Norwegian engagement and include both successful and unsuccessful interventions. Accessibility and security for data collection and field missions should also be considered. The case studies should provide an in-depth understanding of the interactions between different types of WPS interventions and between the interventions and context conditions. Furthermore, they should help explain when and why interventions are successful.

Data sources

Throughout the evaluation, the consultant is expected to identify and collect policy documents, strategic plans, reports, and other documents essential for providing valid assessments and advice. The evaluation document database includes documents that follow the programme/project cycle, such as agreements, reports and evaluations as well as country plans and reports at embassies responsible for WPS work in the selected countries for case studies. Eval will facilitate access to information and documents in the archives of MFA/Embassies/Norad. Information will be cross-checked across sources and validated, limitations to the data as well as to the methods and analytical models will be clearly stated. Interviews will involve a broad spectrum of informants and stakeholders, including fieldwork. Responsible embassies will facilitate country level research, and in relation with case studies facilitate consultant's access to strategic partners/local partners and information about the embassies' WPS work. The country /local level case studies will include observational methods for data collection.

Use of automated processes

Automated processes, including AI, may be used for document review and data analysis to improve efficiency and generate insights; any such use should be described transparently, including limitations, quality assurance, and measures to protect privacy and security of respondents, data providers, and beneficiaries. Safeguarding of sensitive information needs to be ensured at any point. Human validation of AI-supported analysis must be ensured.

General requirements

It is advised that the supplier organises the evaluation approach and method in work packages that reflect the thematic priorities of Norway in the WPS-NAP, the lines of action targeting the intergovernmental level, country level, and country/local partner level, and the strategic, organisational and implementational aspects of the evaluation object. The proposal will present the evaluation approach and data collection methods in an evaluation matrix that visualises and clarifies how the consultant understands the evaluation criteria /object / scope /objective, and how they plan to bring about informed and valid answers to the evaluation questions.

The supplier may suggest alternative approaches and methods that meet the objectives of this Terms of Reference with comparable rigour and ability to answer the evaluation questions.

Ethics, safeguarding, and independence

The evaluation shall be carried out according to the OECD DAC's evaluation quality standards²⁶ as well as recognised academic and ethical principles, including standards mentioned in *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility: Improving Learning for Results*²⁷, trauma-informed research²⁸, Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) Guidelines and safeguarding procedures, and conflict sensitivity. The supplier will engage with Gender, Ethical, Legal, Societal Aspects (GELSA) and Cultural Competency across all phases of the evaluation process. The supplier shall identify key challenges and constraints and describe how they will maintain and promote ethical standards — do no harm — and secure transparency, informed consent, integrity, respect, confidentiality, anonymity, and inclusiveness in the methodological approach, ensure safeguarding of sensitive/ security graded information. This shall be outlined in the bid and described in more detail in the inception report.

The supplier will specify how they plan to protect the rights, dignity, security, safety, and welfare of participants in the evaluation. In relation with the country case studies the methodological approach should be adapted to the specific context — be sensitive to lines of conflict, local norms, power dynamics and cultural practices. The supplier must clarify how sensitive data and information will be collected and stored in a safe manner, and how possible exclusive sensitive information will be handled in the evaluation process.

Stakeholder engagement

The MFA coordinates the implementation of the WPS-NAP. The other ministries involved are the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Culture and Equality. The WPS-NAP divides responsibility for the different goals between the ministries, allocating more responsibilities to some of the ministries (MFA, Defence and Justice) than others. In the period between 2020 and 2025 Norad, the MFA and the embassies have managed ODA agreements related to WPS.²⁹ An important shift occurred in 2024 when Norad was given significantly more responsibility for Norwegian emergency aid and human rights work.

Norway is a strategic partner of UN-Women, Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, International Civil Society Action Network, Berghof Foundation, Karama, Women's

²⁶ https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/dac-quality-standards-for-development-evaluation_9789264083905-en.html

²⁷ https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/evaluating-donor-engagement-in-situations-of-conflict-and-fragility_9789264106802-en.html.

²⁸ <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides/principles-doing-trauma-informed-research-and-program-evaluation>.

²⁹ <https://resultater.norad.no/detaljert-data>

International League for Peace and Freedom and Legal Action Worldwide. Other important CSO partners are: FOKUS, Norwegian Refugee Council — NRC, Care, International Committee of the Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Plan and Norwegian Church Aid.³⁰ PRIO, NUPI and CMI in Norway, as well as Georgetown Institute for WPS in South Africa contribute to statistics, research, status reporting and knowledge production. In addition, RNEs can have local or national agreement partners.

Detailed stakeholder mapping is not required at bidding stage, but bidders should demonstrate an understanding of stakeholder dynamics and risks. Detailed results of systematic stakeholder mapping will be presented in Deliverable 3 (see section 5.1.1 Deliverables and timeline).

The evaluation will be utilisation-focused: the bid will include a tentative stakeholder engagement plan that will be finalised at Inception Report stage. The stakeholder engagement will be carried out based on the mapping of stakeholders in Norway and in the WPS priority countries, especially those selected for the case studies. Stakeholder engagement serves to raise awareness of different perspectives, experiences, and information needs, to provide quality assurance and technical advice throughout the evaluation process and support in disseminating the evaluation results. The evaluation will adopt an inclusive and context-sensitive approach to stakeholder engagement, ensuring that a diverse range of voices — particularly those of women and affected groups (including programme participants/beneficiaries) — are meaningfully heard, while safeguarding confidentiality and maintaining the independence and impartiality of the evaluators throughout the process.

The stakeholder engagement will also serve to enhance utilisation. The supplier will be responsible for supporting effective dissemination of findings to the targeted audiences. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring that findings are accessible and usable for key stakeholders, including Norad, the MFA, the other ministries involved in the Norwegian WPS NAP, RNEs and implementing partners.

Organisation and management of the evaluation

The Independent Evaluation Department of Norwegian Development Cooperation (Eval) is responsible for the evaluation and for contracting an external evaluation team. Eval is responsible for quality assurance and oversight throughout the evaluation process. Within Eval, an Evaluation Manager will serve as primary contact point. Throughout the evaluation, Eval retains exclusive authority over the interpretation of the Terms of Reference and the approval of all deliverables, ensuring that the evaluation remains focused on producing actionable, decision-relevant outcomes. The evaluation manager and stakeholders will provide access to archives and data, ensuring easy access and navigation for efficient retrieval and utilisation of documents.

EVAL will appoint an Advisory Group to safeguard quality and independence. The Advisory Group may review the inception report, interim drafts, and final deliverables, advise on risk mitigation, and provide guidance on ethical and evaluability concerns.

³⁰ A range of Norwegian CSO actors are organised in the network Forum 1325.

The external evaluation team is responsible for implementing the evaluation and will appoint a team leader who serves as the primary contact person for EVAL. The team leader is accountable for delivering all outputs and will report to EVAL on the evaluation team's progress, including any problems or risks to timely completion, and changes in the evaluation design, as early as possible. The external evaluation team is expected to consult widely with relevant stakeholders, consolidate their input and incorporate relevant feedback into deliverables. The external evaluation team must maintain high standards of integrity and transparency. The bid must include risk management (with mitigation strategies), potential evaluability and ethical issues, and quality assurance arrangements. These will be specified in the inception report and reviewed whenever needed. All data collection tools will be submitted to EVAL for approval as annexes to the inception report. Changing circumstances may request that new tools are developed or that existing ones are altered. In such cases, the external evaluation team should submit new or altered tools to EVAL for approval.

EVAL will establish a Stakeholder Reference Group comprising representatives from key stakeholders and representing different types of stakeholders. The reference group will be informed about and provide input to key deliverables of the evaluation to help ensure validity and relevance. The group will also support the dissemination of the findings and recommendations. The consultants are expected to present advancements and findings to the Stakeholder Reference Group when asked by EVAL.

Section 5.1.1 The Consultant's responsibilities and expertise

Deliverables and timeline

Deliverables

Deliverable 1: Participation meeting with stakeholders in Oslo, hybrid or virtually, to gather information and stakeholder input for the inception report, organised by EVAL

Deliverable 2: Inception report (max 25 pages, excluding annexes)

The Inception Report will elaborate and operationalise the evaluation design (the combination of approaches, methods, and techniques), demonstrating how it will address each evaluation question with appropriate rigour and how it will deliver timely. The Inception Report

- details the supplier's understanding of the Terms of Reference
- includes the results of initial stakeholder mapping
- describes:
 - evaluation matrix
 - methodologies for data collection, analysis and validation of the results, highlighting methodologies for selecting, conducting, and using country case studies
 - (in the annexes) all tools and protocols for data collection and processing (including AI-assisted processes)

- work plan (including plans for field visits)
- Discussion of constraints and limitations, including in terms of independence of the evaluation
- risk management and ethical strategies, including a plan for how to handle issues regarding confidentiality and anonymity, the respect of do no harm principle, safeguarding of sensitive/security graded information, the protection of rights, dignity, security, safety and welfare of evaluation participants, as well as how these tools will be adapted to the context of the case study countries
- consultants' internal quality checks
- incorporates feedback from stakeholders

EVAL will review the quality of the submitted draft inception report and suggest changes if needed. Approval of the inception report is needed before moving ahead with the evaluation.

Deliverable 3: Mapping of stakeholders and scoping of ODA contributions and other WPS activities

- Includes a detailed overview of relevant stakeholders linked to Norwegian WPS ODA as well as normative and diplomatic WPS efforts, and a description of the Norwegian ODA portfolio for WPS (including descriptive statistics and a specification of how the portfolio has been defined and relevant ODA flows identified)

EVAL will review the quality of the submitted mapping and provide feedback.

Deliverable 4: Interim Report (max 30 pages excluding summary and annexes)

- The interim report serves as a first input into the preparations of the midterm review of the NAP
- Includes preliminary findings from the analysis of the WPS NAP implementation and the case studies, and if applicable the developed Theory of Change

EVAL will review the quality of the submitted draft interim report and approve it. The supplier will present results to stakeholders.

Deliverable 5: Draft Evaluation Report (max 40 pages excluding executive summary and annexes)

- Includes an executive summary of maximum 3 pages which is easy to understand for non-experts and puts the main focus on findings and recommendations
- The main part of the report includes the following: introduction or background, literature review, description of the methodology of data collection and analysis (details and tools used are presented in an Annex), results of stakeholder mapping and of review of ODA contributions and other WPS activities, findings on the evaluation questions, conclusion and recommendations (including recommendations on how the ministries can assess progress on the NAP goals, and for a possible marker for WPS related ODA)

- Annexes include references, TOR, list of consulted institutions and persons (appropriately anonymised), further details from the fieldwork, case study reports, data, tools and instruments used for primary data collection
- The supplier might be asked to present the contents of the draft evaluation report to the Stakeholder Reference Group. EVAL will provide feedback after circulation among the stakeholders.

Deliverable 6: Workshops to engage key stakeholders

- the supplier will be asked to organise a workshop to validate findings and recommendations with key stakeholders according to the stakeholder engagement plan

Deliverable 7: Final report (max 40 pages excluding executive summary and annexes)

- addresses all the comments and reflects appropriate amendments

Deliverable 8: Dissemination workshop

- The supplier will be asked to participate in workshops organised by Eval to share findings and recommendations with relevant actors and key stakeholders
- The workshop will be held in Oslo in person or in hybrid form

Deliverable 9: Databases

- The supplier will build databases including all the raw data collected, including transcripts from primary data collection, and will deliver them to Eval

Deliverable 10: Dissemination materials

- Policy Brief for external audience (1-2 pages) summarising the key messages, conclusions and recommendations in non-technical language
- Presentation materials (decks of slides and other visual formats)

Timeline

Activity	Date
Meeting with stakeholders	October 2026
Inception report draft	Nov 27, 2026
Inception report	Dec 21, 2026
Stakeholder mapping, scoping of ODA and WPS activities	January 2027
Interim report draft	March 2027
Draft of final evaluation report	May 2027
Workshop with key stakeholders	June 2027
Final report & databases	June/July 2027
Dissemination workshops & material	August/September 2027

Quality assurance

All parts of the evaluation shall adhere to recognised evaluation principles and the OECD Development Assistance Committee's quality standards for development evaluation.³¹

An independent advisory group will provide strategic and methodological guidance for the evaluation. It will advise EVAL in order to ensure the evaluation's methodological rigour, analytical quality, and effectiveness. Through this support, the group contributes to strengthening learning, accountability, efficiency, and impact, and assists the evaluation manager in enhancing the quality and policy relevance of the evaluation outputs.

The bids will include measures for Internal quality checks by the consultants. During the contract period, all deliverables will be quality checked before being submitted to EVAL.

Budget and level of effort

The estimated value of this procurement is between NOK 1.5 million NOK excl. VAT and NOK 2.5 million NOK. Proposals should be consistent with the approved indicative budget estimate and the scope set out in this TOR. Bidders should provide a clear budget breakdown, including a justification of major cost drivers, that aligns with their proposed approach and level of effort.

Required qualifications and experience

The evaluation requires a multidisciplinary team which will include international and national consultants. The team is expected to include a sufficient number of consultants/personnel to ensure the evaluation results and deliverables are provided timely and effectively. The team might include other necessary staff (e.g., enumerators, translators, method specialists). The proposal will clearly indicate how the evaluation will be organised.

Team leader

- At least a Master's degree
- At least 10 years of experience in research or evaluation in the humanitarian, peacebuilding, fragile setting, development, or public policy fields
- Proven ability to manage and lead multidisciplinary teams in a challenging environment
- At least 5 years' international experience as coordinator/head of research or evaluation teams
- Fluency in English is required
- Knowledge of the Women, Peace & Security Agenda is required

National consultants (at least one for each proposed case study required)

- Proven evaluation experience in peacebuilding or fragile settings
- University degree

³¹ https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2010/02/quality-standards-for-development-evaluation_g1ghc6e7/9789264083905-en.pdf and https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2019/12/better-criteria-for-better-evaluation_f7a307eb/15a9c26b-en.pdf

- Sound understanding of social and cultural reality of the respective case study country, in particular regarding norms affecting gender equality
- Knowledge of the political system and the relevant women's organisations, policies, and legislation in the respective case study country
- Excellent analytical skills and prior experience of both quantitative and qualitative data collection

The national consultants responsible for the case studies will be fully integrated in the design of the case studies methodology and in the interpretation and utilisation of the findings in the main reports.

Combined expertise of the team

- Advanced evaluation expertise and experience in a wide range of evaluation approaches
- Expertise in the themes of gender/women's rights and peacebuilding or security policy
- Good understanding of Norwegian Development and Foreign policy, Norwegian state bureaucracy, and political processes
- Knowledge of the social and political reality of the WPS priority countries and of the case study countries
- Very good command of Norwegian (at least one team member)
- Good working knowledge of official languages or other relevant languages in the case study countries (other than English). Relevant languages are those spoken by major participant/target groups of Norwegian WPS interventions.
- Excellent analytical, facilitation and communication skills
- Ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders
- Proven experience supporting government institutions in processes of reflection and strategic adaptation

Proposal submission and assessment

The following documents should be submitted as part of the application:

- A technical proposal outlining understanding of the assignment and proposed methodology to carry out the evaluation in line with the TOR (Appendix 1):
 - o Demonstrate understanding of breadth and complexity of Norway's WPS engagement
 - o Demonstrate understanding of the intended use of the evaluation
 - o Describe the mixed methods approach, planned data collection methods, justification of case study selection and description of case study design,
 - o Outline how the evaluation design will overall address the evaluation questions and capture both general trends and context-specific dynamics
 - o Proposed strategy to deal with absence of indicators to measure goal attainment

- The evaluation approach and data collection methods should be presented in an evaluation matrix
- Outline key analytical challenges, risks and trade-offs
- Justify fit between evaluation design and available resources
- The proposal shall also include a work plan describing the allocation of tasks within the team and the approach to meeting deliverables in line with the proposed timeline
- Furthermore, the proposal will describe internal quality assurance, arrangements to maintain confidentiality and ensure upholding of ethical standards, and risk management
- The proposal will include a tentative stakeholder engagement plan outlining key stakeholder groups, planned engagement methods and approaches to inclusivity and representation
- CVs of proposed team members and a description of their role in the evaluation (max. 2 pages per CV)
- References demonstrating experience in providing similar services, indicating names of clients, nature and scope of work.
- Financial proposal

Tenders will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Quality 80%:

Criterion 1: Quality of Approach, Methodology, and Expected Output

This criterion assesses the overall quality, coherence, and appropriateness of the proposed approach.

Criterion 2: Understanding of the Assignment and Analytical Prioritization

This criterion assesses the bidder's understanding of the purpose, context, and key analytical challenges of the assignment.

Criterion 3: Organization of the Work, Team Composition, Experience, and Delivery Capacity

This criterion assesses the suitability and capacity of the proposed team and the capability of the work plan to deliver according to the time plan and requested quality standards.

Price 20%:

Criterion 4: Price

Price will be evaluated based on the total cost of the assignment. The lowest price will receive the maximum score. Other prices will be scored proportionally in accordance with the evaluation method applied. Tenders that are priced at twice the level of the lowest-priced tender will be awarded 0 points.

If a tender appears to be abnormally low in relation to the services provided, the contracting authority reserves the right to request a written explanation of the price or costs proposed.

The evaluation shall be conducted with full professional independence. All bidders are required to disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect their impartiality in carrying out the evaluation. This includes past, ongoing, or planned involvement in the design, implementation, or funding of interventions covered by the evaluation, or other relationships with key stakeholders.

Section 7.1 Information security

If the Customer imposes further requirements as to how the Consultant is required to manage information security, this shall be specified here.

The Consultant shall specify how information security will be managed in accordance with the relevant requirements outlined in Section 1.1.

Section 7.2.2 Other obligations relating to the processing of personal data

If the Consultant will transfer personal data in such a way as described in Section 7.2.2 of the Agreement, the lawful basis for transfer shall be documented here.