

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN THAILAND

Photo: UN Women/Pornvit Visitoran.

Women, Peace and Security Context of Thailand

Thailand has ratified and committed to a number of international instruments promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, through the adoption and implementation of its national laws and policies. These include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, in 2000, and subsequent UNSCRs on women, peace and security (WPS). The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017 guarantees gender equality in Article 27, gender-responsive budgeting in Article 71, and women's role in politics and decision-making in Article 90. In addition, the Gender Equality Act 2015 was passed to prohibit discrimination based on gender. It also includes recognition of the diverse gender and sexual identities, including male, female and LGBTQ+.¹

Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, and to ensure the protection and participation of women, including in conflict-affected settings, Thailand has localized and implemented UNSCR 1325 by prioritizing full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and by integrating the WPS agenda into both existing or newly developed national laws and policies, especially those related to women and gender.

At international level, Thailand has been a longstanding, dedicated and active UN Member State and major contributor to UN Peacekeeping Operations. In 2020, Thailand submitted a written statement to the UN

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs for a consultation on full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding, highlighting the following:

- Thailand recognizes the importance of greater participation of women in all stages of the peace process and encourages the inclusion of the WPS agenda in policies and programmes for the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence before, during and after armed conflict;
- Thailand recognizes that linking the WPS agenda, SDG 5 (gender equality), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong Institutions) is essential to the promotion of a culture of peace and prevention;
- Thailand emphasizes the role of women as effective agents of change, justice makers and key players in achieving the SDGs. Thailand currently deploys 14 female peacekeepers in three peacekeeping operations;
- Thailand supports the strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels as critical to the successful implantation of peace processes, especially in addressing the underlying causes of conflict in countries where the UN operates;
- Thailand recognizes the priority of gender-mainstreaming efforts in the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)'s Gender Strategy across the UN's broad range of peace agendas;
- Thailand ensures the participation of women in its peace operations in other countries.

1. LGBTQI+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and other gender diverse people

UN Women's Support to Advance WPS in Thailand

Over the past decade, UN Women has played an instrumental role to advance WPS in Thailand. This began with supporting national workshops and consultations, followed by development of the policy/normative framework on the WPS agenda and the establishment of institutional mechanisms for multi-stakeholder engagement to coordinate and implement the WPS agenda linked to national development priorities. UN Women has also provided dedicated technical support to the Royal Thai Government, civil society and women's groups to expand the space for inclusive participation and empowerment of women in promoting social cohesion, conflict prevention, resolution and recovery. UN Women has a strong track record of consistent support to civil society and women's groups in rolling out policies on WPS at the national and local level.

National Level

Since 2012, UN Women has supported a series of consultations with both government stakeholders, especially the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWF) of the MSDHS, and non-government stakeholders. These were held nationally and locally to seek cooperation and possible entry points from stakeholders at both levels for the advancement of the WPS agenda, to build effective partnerships with responsible government agencies and other relevant actors, and to empower women leaders and young people to build resilient, cohesive and peaceful communities in the Southern Border Provinces (SBP). As the lead UN agency promoting the WPS agenda, UN Women has been actively working for the localization of UNSCR 1325 through the **development of the national policy and normative framework**. This

resulted in the development and implementation of the [Measures and Guidelines on Women, Peace and Security](#), in which UN Women is specified as the lead support agency.

Local Level

Linked to the effort at the national level, **UN Women has played a key role in supporting national counterparts to establish an institutional mechanism to advance the WPS agenda in Thailand**, including through the empowerment of women and inclusive participation of multiple stakeholders, such as civil society and women's organizations. The Coordination Centre for Children and Women in the Southern Border Provinces (CCCW-SBP) was established by the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC) in cooperation with the MSDHS and in partnership with UN Women and UNICEF after the National Consultation on Women's Leadership and Peace and Security organized in 2018². UN Women has continued to support various activities in partnership with the DWF and the SBPAC, through a close collaboration with CCCW-SBP, which provides a mechanism for multi-stakeholder engagement to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the SBP. The CCCW-SBP is operated and driven by active participation of women and youth groups, in close collaboration with government partners, particularly SBPAC and security sectors in the SBP.

The most promising factor linked to potential socioeconomic development in the SBP is the remarkable expansion of civil society and women's organizations and their networks, which support community-based initiatives. UN Women has consistently played a key role in supporting these efforts over the past decade. These organizations and initiatives have responded to the immediate humanitarian needs of the conflict and crisis, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. UN Women supports government and civil society partners in the SBP to promote social cohesion and sustainable peace by linking peace and development, with a particular focus on WPS, women's economic empowerment, digital literacy, awareness-raising on preventing and ending violence against women, disaster management and humanitarian action. It combines campaign and advocacy work to empower women to participate and lead in peace and security decision-making through engagement with national and local stakeholders.



Photo: UN Women/Panya La Jitja

2. Information received from Thailand on follow-up to the concluding observations on its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports, 24 April 2020, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/asiaregion/pages/thindex.aspx>

In close partnership with the Royal Thai Government and the participation of women's groups and civil society organisations through the CCCW-SBP, UN Women continues to provide technical support to localize the WPS agenda at the central and local level as follows:

- Assess implementation of the Measure and Guideline on Women Peace and Security and support further development of the WPS policy framework to localize the WPS agenda;
- Provide technical support to facilitate implementation of the WPS agenda at all levels through capacity-building and awareness-raising of government and non-government organizations on WPS;
- Develop tools and mechanisms to monitor implementation of the WPS policy framework;
- Strengthen CCCW-SBP and its institutional capacity for coordinating and implementing the WPS agenda in the SBP among multi-stakeholder groups;
- Advocate for gender equality and expand the space for participation and empowerment of women in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery in Thailand, and in the SBP in particular.

WPS policies and mechanisms in Thailand

The **Measure and Guideline on Women, Peace and Security** was developed by the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWF) of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) in collaboration with multi-stakeholders, and approved by the National Committee on Policy and Strategy for the Development of the Status of Women in November 2016 for the implementation period of 2017-2021 with the following objectives:

- To protect women's rights from conflict situations equally and equitably;
- To promote the role of women in peacebuilding and security;
- To increase the roles of civil society organizations (CSOs), religious leaders, the general public, community leaders and the mass media in the protection of women and their rights as well as in the rehabilitation of women affected by conflict situations;
- To establish conflict management/resolution mechanisms and peace processes for internal and international security.

The Measure and Guideline focuses on five measures: 1. Prevention, 2. Protection and recovery, 3. Capacity-building,

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4. Empowerment and participation of public and private sectors, CSOs and women, and, 5. Promoting the development of mechanisms to advance the WPS policy framework.

The **Coordination Center for Children and Women in the Southern Border Provinces (CCCW-SBP)** was established in 2019 by the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC) in cooperation with MSDHS and in partnership with UN Women and UNICEF, with the UN agencies offering technical advice and necessary resources. The CCCW-SBP is a Government-CSO joint coordinating mechanism on women and children's issues in the SBP. It is also mandated to coordinate implementation of the Measure and Guideline.

The **Sub-Committee on the advancement and monitoring of the Measure and Guideline on Women Peace and Security** was established in 2020 by the Committee on the Promotion of the Development of the Status of Women to advance and monitor the implementation of the Measure and Guideline. Sub-Committee members include the DWF, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Health, Bureau of the Budget, the Royal Thai Police, National Human Rights Commission, SBPAC, and Internal Security Operations Command.

Key partners of UN Women

- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Public Health
- Budget Bureau, Office of The Prime Minister
- The Royal Thai Police
- Office of the National Human Right Commission of Thailand
- Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre
- Internal Security Operations Command
- The Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces

UN Women Thailand Governance and WPS Team

Ryce Chanchai

ASEAN Governance Peace and Security Specialist/
Regional Programme Lead
ruangkhaio.chanchai@unwomen.org

Naruedee Janthasing

Programme Analyst
naruedee.janthasing@unwomen.org

