



RESEARCH REPORT



African Regional Organisations, Peace Agreements and Gender Perspectives

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Contents

1. Key Findings	02
2. Introduction	03
3. Women, Peace and Security and the African Union	05
3.1. Norms	05
3.2. Policy and Plans	06
3.3. Institutions	08
4. Implementing Women, Peace and Security through Peace Agreements	11
4.1. Women, Peace and Security in Peace Agreements	11
4.2. African Union Commitments to Gender Perspectives in Peace Agreements	12
4.3. Using PA-X Peace Agreement Data to Monitor African Union Implementation	25
5. Gender Perspectives in African Union-linked Peace Agreements	29
5.1. Peace Agreements Signed by African Regional Organisations and Member States as Third Parties	29
5.2. Substantive Gender References in Peace Agreements Signed by African Regional Organisations and Member States as Third Parties	36
6. Conclusions	46
Annex 1: Relevant African Union Documents	48
Annex 2: Scope, Definitions and Actor IDs for PAA-X Analysis	50
Endnotes	54

Acronyms

APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-CEVAWG	African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
AWLN	African Women Leaders Network
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CRF	Continental Results Framework
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GMAC	Gender is My Agenda Campaign
GPS	Gender Pre-Summit
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
NAPs	National Action Plans
FemWise-Africa	Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation
OSE-WPS	Office of the Special Envoy on Women Peace and Security
PA-X	PA-X Peace Agreement Database
PA-X Gender	PA-X Gender Peace Agreement Database
PAA-X	PAA-X Peace Agreement Actor Dataset
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PAPS	Political Affairs, Peace and Security
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RAPs	Regional Action Plans
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
R&R	Relief & Recovery
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STC-GEWE	Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WGYD	Women, Gender and Youth Directorate
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

1. Key Findings

- ▶ The African Union (AU) recognises peace agreements as a site for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and gender equality interventions. This recognition is found in continental, regional, and national policy frameworks, including the AU's Continental Results Framework (CRF), Regional Action Plans of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and National Action Plans (NAPs) of member states. However, implementation of policy commitments to include gender references in peace agreements is mixed.
- ▶ Between 1990 and 2025, representatives of African regional organisations including the AU, its predecessor the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), RECs, and/or AU member states signed 338 interstate and intrastate peace agreements addressing conflict in Africa as third parties (mediators, witnesses, guarantors, facilitators, or supporting actors). According to the PA-X Peace Agreement Database, 95 of these 338 (28%) peace agreements signed by African regional organisations and/or member states as a third parties include references to women, girls, gender, and/or sexual violence.
- ▶ There is extensive variation across African regional organisations when it comes to the prevalence of gender references in peace agreements bearing their signature, with the AU, ECCAS and IGAD more consistently signing agreements that include gender references compared to other regional organisations. Similarly, some AU member states are common third-party signatories to African peace agreements with gender references, whilst others are prolific third parties but have signed a smaller share of agreements with gender references. The presence of a National or Regional Action Plan commitment to gender references in peace agreements does not explain this variation.
- ▶ Both the substantiveness and frequency of gendered language varies across the 338 peace agreements included in this study. Some peace agreements contain clear commitments to women's participation and equality in governance or incorporating continental rights frameworks, whilst others leave space for parties' interpretation of gendered values or use stereotypical language of women's vulnerability to address conflict-related violence.
- ▶ Peace process data forms part of a recognised WPS data gap at the AU Commission, with patchy availability of data for gender indicators related to peace processes at both regional and member state levels in annual AU reporting mechanisms. Current AU-led initiatives aim to address this data gap, but external peace data providers can also supplement internal data collection processes.

2. Introduction

The 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) became a year of reflection and assessment of the agenda's collective progress. Passed in 2000, UNSCR 1325 was a landmark moment for the global women's peace movement, and was the first Security Council resolution to call for "all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective".¹ UN member states have institutionalised UNSCR 1325 through legislation and policy commitments, including National Action Plans (NAPs), which are an important tool by which states can demonstrate their commitment to advancing the WPS agenda, and "represent a concrete step by states to fulfil their objectives regarding UNSCR 1325".² Over the past decade, researchers have increasingly examined regional peace and security organisations as agents of both WPS implementation and norm entrepreneurship through regional policy frameworks, which often share similar structures or content with national action plans, or through institutional structures which focus on mainstreaming gender in peace and security.³

Africa is often viewed globally as a region with persistent conflicts. While Africa has struggled with conflict, it has also meant that the continent has developed some of the strongest normative and institutional frameworks to deal with conflict.⁴ The AU developed the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) to address peace and security issues on the Continent, the components and objectives of which are outlined in the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU. In addition to the PSC, the original components included an early warning system, Panel of the Wise, and Standby Force with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) being recognized for their vital contributions.⁵ It is within this broader peace and security context, and drawing on African feminist mobilization in the 1990s, that Africa has developed strong regional WPS norms and institutions, including concrete measures specifically to address women's representation and gender inclusion in peace processes.

African feminists played key – yet often overlooked⁶ – roles in the origins of WPS through the African Platform for Action adopted by the 5th Regional Conference on Women, held at Dakar from 16 to 23 November 1994,⁷ and the Windhoek Declaration with the Namibia Plan of Action on 'Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations' on 31 May 2000.⁸

In the years since Windhoek and UNSCR 1325, the African Union (AU) has become what Toni Hastrup describes as a “a site of practice, wherein knowledge and learning about the WPS take place simultaneous with efforts to implement Resolution 1325 within a very specific context”, and calls on researchers to “examine its [WPS] institutionalization within the regional context”.⁹ At the regional level, researchers have explored the AU’s institutionalisation of WPS¹⁰ and the implementation of gender mainstreaming across the AU.¹¹ However, the extent to which these mechanisms enhance the inclusion of gender perspectives in peace processes, particularly through peace agreements, is still an open question.

This report supplements existing accounts of the AU as a WPS actor, by analysing the statutes and protocols that underpin WPS in Africa, the policies and institutions aimed at implementing the WPS agenda, and how the AU monitors the implementation of WPS in peace processes through the AU Commission’s (AUC) Continental Results Framework (2018-2028) (CRF).¹² Drawing on primary sources from the AU and RECs, along with secondary literature on gender perspectives in peace agreements, and the PA-X Peace Agreements Data universe,¹³ the report explores how African regional organisations and AU member states have engaged in peace processes as third-party signatories from 1990-2025, and the prevalence and content of peace agreements that include explicit gender references.

We find distinct variation across African peace and security actors’ approaches to gender in peace agreements which they sign as third parties. Additionally, we find that gendered language varies across processes, with some processes containing clear commitments to women’s participation and equality in governance or incorporating continental rights frameworks, whilst others leave space for parties’ interpretation of gendered values or use stereotypical language of women’s vulnerability to address conflict-related violence. We also find that peace process data forms part of a recognised WPS data gap at the AUC, with patchy availability of data for indicators related to peace processes from member states and RECs in annual reporting. Current AU-led initiatives aim to address this data gap, but this report also shows how external peace data providers could supplement or support internal data collection processes.

The report should be viewed as a first look at how the AU constructs and implements WPS goals related to peace agreements, and as a contribution to an existing body of research that emphasises African norm entrepreneurship and agency on WPS.

3. Women, Peace and Security and the African Union

3.1 Norms

There is a mix of international and regional guidance that the AU draws on to formulate and support its WPS agenda. The Introduction to the CRF cites UNSCR 1325 as a foundational document for the WPS agenda and cites subsequent UNSC WPS resolutions.¹⁴ Focusing on the AU's regional guidance, Article 4(l) of the AU Constitutive Act mandates the "promotion of gender equality" as a principle of the AU.¹⁵ Subsequently, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004) reiterates many of the normative commitments that the AU had previously adopted through its Constitutive Act in addition to having specific commitment on WPS. It says the AU will "ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes...as stipulated in UN resolution 1325 (2000) and to also appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union".¹⁶

The African region also has human rights frameworks that speak directly to gender issues. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, commonly known as the Maputo Protocol, was adopted in 2003. It recalls UNSCR 1325, and it also has two articles that directly speak to peace and security. Article X sets out the "right to peace" wherein "women have the right to a peaceful existence and the right to participate in the promotion and maintenance of peace". Article X also mandates that states parties take steps to enhance women's participation in processes related to the promotion and maintenance of peace.¹⁷ Article XI sets out the "protection of women in armed conflicts" which mandates that states must uphold international humanitarian law, particularly pertaining to the protection of women and children during armed conflict.¹⁸

The AU sought to use the 25th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 to show global leadership on WPS and augment its longstanding commitments. In October 2025, African leaders gathered in Windhoek, Namibia for a summit to commemorate 25 years of the Windhoek Declaration, UNSCR 1325, and to adopt the Windhoek+25 Declaration. This Declaration was pitched as a call to action for AU member states for the next 25 years of WPS work.¹⁹ The Declaration has a number of explicit goals, including increasing training for women on mediation and negotiation, gender balance in peacekeeping missions, integrating gender perspectives across peace and security issues, and ensuring stable financing for WPS initiatives.²⁰

The AU then used the Windhoek+25 Declaration as the centrepiece of its push for WPS on the global stage with events in October 2025 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the AUC on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS), Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, outlined the Continent's Roadmap consisting of five priorities, including aiming for at least 30 percent representation of women in all peace processes, ending Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and building up women's peace platforms across Regional Economic Communities.²¹

The AU is also continuing to pursue legal frameworks that contribute to the normative construction of the WPS agenda. Notably, the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU-CEVAWG) in February 2025. This Convention addresses a broad range of violence perpetrated against women and girls, including intimate partner violence, forced marriages, and discrimination.

In addition, it addresses sexual violence in conflict and humanitarian settings.²² In line with the AU's principles on fostering participation and inclusion, African citizens and women leaders were heavily consulted during the drafting of the Convention. For example, women met in Dakar, Senegal in October 2024 for the 4th African Women Leaders Consultation on the AU-CEVAWG, which was co-organised by the AU High-Level Presidential Initiative on Positive Masculinity in Leadership to End VAWG and the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) along with the Government of Senegal.²³

3.2 Policy and Plans

While the frameworks described above provided the normative basis, the AU still needed concrete plans to implement this vision. The first AU Gender Policy and accompanying action plan was adopted in 2009. The policy makes commitments in eight focus areas. Notably for this report, commitment eight is "promoting the effective participation of women in peacekeeping and security including efforts aimed at reconciliation in post conflict reconstruction and development".²⁴ Under this commitment, there are several specific actions for the AU, RECs, and member states. These include ensuring truth and reconciliation commissions take account of gendered violence, highlighting how women and children are impacted by conflict in AU reporting, integrating gender policies into peace processes, and mobilizing women to participate in peace processes among other actions.²⁵

The subsequent AU Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) is meant to run from 2018-2028. The strategy draws on the framework created by the AU Gender Policy to fully realise AU's Agenda 2063, which is an initiative that was launched on the 50th anniversary of the regional body (2013) to transform Africa over the next 50 years. Specifically, it seeks to realise Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 that wants development to be people-driven, specifically relying on the potential of women and youth.²⁶

There are two interventions in the AU Strategy on GEWE in particular that speak more concretely to WPS goals:

- **Intervention 2.2.1** Build a continental coalition to strengthen outcomes of existing AU and global commitments to ending and penalising violence against women and girls (VAWG); promoting women's participation in peace processes; developing guidelines on reparations and lobbying for their integration into transitional justice and peace processes.

Activity 2.2.1.1 Implement AU Guidelines on Ending VAWG (including psycho-social support and cyber bullying); finalise AU guidelines on prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict; AU Continental Results Framework on UN Resolution 1325; AU Gender, Peace and Security Programme; exchange programmes for women's networks; FEMWISE & Mediators network; funding national projects to penalise violence against women.²⁷

- **Intervention 4.1.1** Mobilize political support, and fund codification of the parity principle and in national laws and policies in government institutions, legislatures, electoral laws, political party manifestos and boards (public and private) and peace processes.

Activity 4.1.1.1 Implement AU initiative/s for Women, Politics and Governance, to include high level advocacy & public platforms, training, network mobilization, professional lobbying; technical expertise; funding for candidates; development of specialised databases; financial and political support for women's participation in high level dialogues and forums.²⁸

In September 2026, the OSE-WPS published its 2026-2028 Strategic Plan for WPS, recognising that despite the AU's strong normative commitments, these commitments have not translated into tangible or impactful delivery through APSA, framed as 'conversation gap'.²⁹ The OSE-WPS Strategic Plan explicitly connects itself to the vision set out in Agenda 2063, and as sitting directly under the AU's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan for implementing Agenda 2063, and aligns the OSE-WPS's strategic objectives with some of the AU Strategic Plan's 'Moonshot' anchors.³⁰

3.3 Institutions

The AU has also sought to build structures and networks to support its WPS work. Notably, there is a monitoring mechanism. The CRF, published by the OSE-WPS in 2019, is the primary framework for monitoring and reporting on the WPS agenda from 2018-2028.³¹ It attempts to put in place specific metrics as the basis for understanding progress by the AU on implementing the WPS agenda. In addition, there are several offices and directorates that work on the WPS agenda within AU structures. The AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy on WPS is mandated to promote women's right to peace by preventing violence against women and girls and promoting their participation in decision-making and peace processes.³² The Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) Department within the AUC also has a WPS programme and aims to work collaboratively with the OSE-WPS,³³ although PAPS also hosts its own independent initiatives, such as Annual Coordination Meetings on WPS with member states.³⁴ In addition, there is the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD) that is part of the AU Commission Structure. The WGYD describes part of its mission as ensuring the implementation of the AU Strategy on GEWE.³⁵ As described in the previous section, this is a broad strategy covering all aspects of gender equality, but there are specific provisions related to WPS.

Beyond these embedded offices, there are several other structures operating across the AU ecosystem. The African Women Leader's Network was established in 2017, and "serves as a continental platform to galvanize women's leadership of Africa towards lasting peace and sustainable development in all sectors and at all levels, building on, and working with, existing women networks with the support of the African Union and the United Nations".³⁶ There is also the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa), which was created in 2017 by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and sits under the Panel of the Wise. In 2023, the Panel of the Wise created a decentralized structure for FemWise-Africa allowing for chapters through RECs and member states. ECOWAS and ECCAS have since created their own chapters (FemWise-ECOWAS and ECCAS-REFEMAC), and there are national chapters in Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, and South Sudan.³⁷ FemWise-Africa's mandate is to enhance women's meaningful roles in preventing and mediating conflicts across all negotiating tracks, and the AU held a call for applications for the second FemWise-Africa cohort in early 2025.³⁸ Other embedded committees and mechanisms that advance gender inclusion include the Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (STC-GEWE), which is comprised of ministers in charge of gender and women's affairs.

Between 2010 and 2025, the AU PSC has held at least one session every year on a WPS theme, except for 2012 (see Annex 1 for links to communiqués). In addition to these structures, there is the Gender Pre-Summit (GPS). At the 10th GPS in 2018, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Ambassador Minata Samate Cessouma, noted the institutionalisation of the GPS over the preceding 10 years, stating that "the transformation of the pre-summit on gender from a civil society platform into an institutionalized political platform of the AU is testimony to the importance of a strong partnership between the AU and civil society organisations".³⁹ The GPS brings together Member State ministers with responsibility for women's affairs, AU and REC policy makers, civil society organisations, and international partners, and is described as a forum that plays "a significant role in influencing and shaping AU policies on gender equality and women's empowerment" and is held prior to the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.⁴⁰

There are other initiatives that span multiple years that appear to be less about the shaping of policy and implementation and more about shaping norms and culture. A prominent example of this is the Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity launched in November 2021, in which Heads of State participated.

The conference website explicitly acknowledges the role of patriarchal systems in perpetuating VAWG, stating that “the persistence of VAWG is mainly associated with gender power relations reflected in well and commonly ascribed and accepted social norms, entrenched in patriarchal systems characterised by male dominance, unequal distribution of resources and power combined with social institutions that sustain gender inequality”.⁴¹ The second Men's Conference was held in November 2022 – again at the Head of State level – with the conference committing to five interventions. These included introducing domestic violence prevention training at local levels and increasing funding in programmes that reduce VAWG and discrimination against women along with commitments to develop further policies and engage more stakeholders.⁴² It is difficult to assess to what degree these initiatives have been implemented within member states as this work is ultimately done through state and community level institutions. However, conferences addressing gender norms and men's role in advancing gender equality at the Head of State level again indicates the seriousness of AU commitments to WPS.

It is also important to note that there are several distinct WPS efforts through the African RECs. There are eight recognised RECs and two RMs that are part of APSA, and the degree to which each REC engages in peace and security issues varies widely.⁴³ When it comes to WPS, several RECs have their own regional action plans that both draw on and build on international and regional WPS policy frameworks (see further Section 4.2). For example, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been particularly active around the 25th anniversary of UNSC 1325 as its regional action plan was noted in the Windhoek+25 Declaration and its Member State Namibia presided over the UNSC when 1325 was adopted.⁴⁴ In addition to publishing a WPS Regional Action Plan in 2010, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also passed the Dakar Declaration,⁴⁵ which required member states to implement UNSCR 1325 through measures under the participation, protection, relief and recovery, and prevention pillars.⁴⁶ As RECs/RMs are central components of African peace and security work through APSA, there is clearly buy-in for AU WPS frameworks at the sub-regional level. Furthermore, as peace processes increasingly become fragmented, with regional organisations and neighbouring states often serving as third party actors in peace processes,⁴⁷ there is a need to explore how RECs, along with the AU at a continental level, and member states, have engaged in WPS practice through their involvement as third parties.

4. Implementing Women, Peace and Security through Peace Agreements

4.1 Women, Peace and Security in Peace Agreements

Among the provisions of UNSCR 1325, which set out steps for all peace and security actors to integrate gender into practice, was the acknowledgement that peace agreements were an important site for gender interventions, and that negotiated agreements have differentiated impacts on persons of different genders. Specifically, UNSCR 1325 calls for:

"8. Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

- (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
- (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;
- (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;"⁴⁸

Whilst UNSCR 1325 sets out how the Security Council understands what taking a gender perspective entails, there are alternate definitions of what taking a gender perspective means, which impact how this would be implemented and monitored in practice. In a comprehensive study conducted to mark the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, Christine Bell set out four steps for taking a gendered perspective in a peace process: 1) genuine consultation of women's views on the process structure and modalities; 2) full inclusion of women in negotiations; 3) "explicitly addressing women's needs and demands in the text of any peace agreement and subsequent processes of implementation"; and 4) assessing the gendered implications of peace agreement provisions, including how they affect the gendered power relations underpinning conflict.⁴⁹

Although there have been extensive academic and policy studies on women's participation in peace processes⁵⁰ and, to a lesser extent, gender perspectives in peace agreements,⁵¹ there is less of a focus on how peace agreements refer explicitly to women, girls, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersectional+ (LGBTQI+) persons, and on gender in processes that involve particular peace and security actors operating within the international state system, such as regional organisations.

As with other aspects of the WPS agenda, the incorporation of gender perspectives in peace processes has struggled with consistent implementation over the past 25 years. In 2010, the UN Secretary General recognised that neither UN institutions nor member states were systematically implementing UNSCR 1325, and introduced an indicator framework for reporting to monitor progress.⁵² By 2015, the UNSG annual report on WPS concluded that "very few of the examined agreements reflect comprehensive gender equality or women peace and security considerations".⁵³ Ten years later, an analysis to inform the 2025 UNSG annual report on WPS noted that "peace agreements often lack references which consider the differential and intersectional needs of women, girls, and sexual/gender minorities, but they often struggle to meet other requirements set out by 1325, such as incorporating measures to support women's inclusion in peace processes and provisions expressly directed to upholding women's human rights".⁵⁴

4.2 African Union Commitments to Gender Perspectives in Peace Agreements

Despite extensive normative and institutional commitments to advancing gender equality and the WPS agenda at multiple levels of governance across Africa, in 2010, a decade after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the AU recognised that "the continent has not established measures to ensure effective assessment of and reporting on the delivery of those commitments. Indeed, over the years, Africa has developed strong, progressive and articulate policies, but implementation of these policies continues to fall well below the levels that bring about real transformation for gender equality and women's empowerment".⁵⁵

In 2014, the 476th session of the PSC moved to address this WPS implementation gap through improving the AU's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The PSC "urged the AU Commission, through the coordination of the OSE-WPS to formulate a Continental Results Framework to monitor the implementation by AU member states and other relevant stakeholders of the various instruments and other commitments on women, peace and security in Africa".⁵⁶ As noted above, the CRF for reporting and monitoring on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018 - 2028) was adopted by the PSC in 2018 and launched by the OSE-WPS at the 33rd Pre-Summit Meeting of the Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) in 2019.

The CRF has two core objectives: to "institutionalize regular and systematic monitoring and reporting" and to "strengthen accountability" on the implementation of the WPS Agenda in Africa.⁵⁷ It utilises the pillars approach of WPS, categorising 41 indicators as impacting prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery, with the addition of a fifth category of "emerging security threats". Indicators are also split according to responsibility for implementation, with 28 indicators that measure WPS implementation by AU member states and 13 indicators that measure WPS implementation by the African Union Commission.

Whilst the CRF covers an extensive range of issues across the WPS agenda, there are specific indicators which focus on peace processes, including gender references in peace agreements. This indicator is similar to measurements found in other global, regional, and national monitoring mechanisms for integrating WPS into peace agreements as peace process outcomes, with some actors including an emphasis on implementation, rather than just the existence of provisions. The CRF is not the only AU framework that includes WPS indicators relating to peace agreements: for example, the APSA Roadmap 2016–2020 also tracks impact through the existence of gender-sensitive peace agreements following AUC and/or RECs/RMs interventions.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the 2026 OSE-WPS Strategic Plan, although it does not present its own indicators as it draws on the CRF, sets out under activities and outcomes for its strategic objective "relief and recovery" that "Peace agreements, DDR and recovery frameworks carry enforceable gender provisions, and reintegration delivers measurable safety and livelihood gains".⁵⁹

However, as can be seen in Table 1, there is no universal definition across global, regional, or national action plans of what constitutes an indicator for adopting a gender perspective in peace agreements. Some monitoring mechanisms record provisions that "improve the security and status of women and girls", whilst others record the promotion of intersectional "gender mainstreaming...within the framework of the peace agreement", or "provisions on women's rights".

Table 1: Examples of indicators and actions in selected global, regional, and national reporting mechanisms for WPS implementation

Actor and Monitoring Mechanism	Pillar or Strategic Area (according to Mechanism)	Indicator or Action
United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Women and peace and security: Report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/498)	Participation, Goal: Inclusion of women and women's interests in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts	8. Percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (2022)	Prevention, Strategic Outcome 3: ASEAN sectoral bodies, institutions, and member states play an active role in contributing to global, regional and national conflict prevention, and prevention of violence, disasters, and other threats to peace and security, with the principles of the WPS agenda central to these activities	Percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls (this aligns with indicator 8 of the Secretary-General's Report on Women, Peace and Security)
United Kingdom Women, Peace and Security Action Plan 2023-2027	SO1: Decision-making Focus on inclusive peace outcomes as well as processes and push for the inclusive and full implementation of negotiated settlements that promote gender sensitive reconciliation and more inclusive structures, institutions, and processes	[draft indicator] % of peace agreements supported by the UK that secure gender provisions within the agreement or within the implementation plan ⁶⁰

Actor and Monitoring Mechanism	Pillar or Strategic Area (according to Mechanism)	Indicator or Action
First National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Republic of Colombia 2024-2034	RESULT 1.2. Equal participation and incorporation of the peace and security agenda of women in all their diversity and territorial contexts, both within and outside the country, in current and future peace and security negotiations ⁶¹	Promote the mainstreaming of gender, ethnic, LGBTI, youth, girls, older women, and women with disabilities perspectives in the development of transformation agendas for peace in the territory, within the framework of the peace agreements and processes being carried out by the government ⁶²
Norway's National Action Plan Women, Peace and Security (2023-2030)	Peace processes and implementation of peace agreements [Norwegian Action Plan does not take a pillars approach to commitments]	Take a strategic approach to promoting gender issues in negotiations and peace processes. In connection with the implementation of peace agreements, facilitate women's participation and seek to ensure that women's rights, needs and priorities are safeguarded, and that any provisions on women's rights in the agreement are implemented in practice

Source: Wise, Laura. (2026). *Peace Agreements in WPS Action Plans Dataset (PeaceAPs) [dataset]*. University of Edinburgh. School of Law. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7488/ds/8180>

Within monitoring mechanisms on the African continent, we also see different ways of recording implementation of UNSCR 1325 through peace agreements. Under the indicator explanation for the Relief and Recovery pillar, the CRF states that "Gender provisions in peace agreements are important because they ensure attention is given to women's practical and strategic needs in post-conflict recovery processes".⁶³ There is a slight ambiguity in the reporting guidance for indicator Relief and Recovery number 1. The CRF states that "Member states should provide information on these provisions", but it does not specify whether such provisions should come from peace agreements to which the Member State is a party, or whether it refers to peace agreements that have been reached as part of an AU or regional organisation led peace processes that the MS was involved in as a third party. There is no indicator for the AUC to report on gender references in peace agreements reached in AU led or co-led peace processes, which would likely have a greater capacity to report on this indicator.

Table 2: Indicator and reporting guidance for measuring the existence of gender provisions in peace agreements in Africa.

Responsible for reporting	Pillar	Indicator	Indicator or Action
AU member states	Relief & Recovery	1. Existence of gender provisions in peace agreements: a) Existence of mechanisms for implementing the gender provisions in peace agreements b) Existence of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of gender provisions in peace agreements	In reporting on this indicator, member states should provide information on these provisions, which may include quotas for women in executive and legislative bodies, and general references to measures for promoting equality and participation in political and economic processes and outlawing all forms of violence against women.

Source: *Continental Results Framework*, 23.

When trying to use the CRF to understand how effectively the AU and member states have implemented WPS, reporting limitations become apparent. These limitations impact the efficacy of the CRF as a monitoring mechanism and undermine its stated objective to "institutionalize regular and systematic monitoring and reporting". Reporting difficulties were identified early in the lifespan of the CRF. In October 2019, the AUC published a "Report on the Implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa", which was its first use of the CRF indicators to monitor the implementation of WPS on the continent, covering the period from October 2018 to October 2019. The report includes a section setting out the process of reporting using the CRF, which highlighted some initial limitations. For instance, of the 23 member states requested by the AUC to submit reports, due to their adoption of NAPs by October 2018, only nine countries submitted reports, leaving gaps to be filled through desk research, country visits, and workshops.⁶⁴ "Data collection and documentation" was also identified in a section on "Challenges to the implementation of the WPS agenda in Africa".⁶⁵

Under the relief and recovery pillar, the report includes "Existence of gender provisions in peace agreements" as one of the seven implementation parameters for the pillar, but states that "Due to data challenges on the different parameters used for this pillar, it was difficult to provide a progress report for this pillar".⁶⁶ The only peace agreement that the report identifies as having included gendered provisions during the reporting period was the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS).⁶⁷

In response to these overarching data gaps, the PSC "called member states to submit an annual report using the AU Continental Results Framework on monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the WPS Agenda".⁶⁸ In the second report of the Chairperson of the AUC on the implementation of the WPS Agenda in Africa (covering the period of January to December 2019), the AUC acknowledged that although 80% of member states submitted reporting, however,

“the lack of consolidated databases at country level complicated the assessment of the progress on implementing, monitoring and reporting using the CRF and its results. Limited consistency (ranks in security forces and nomenclature in government structures, for example) resulted in varied interpretations of the CRF by member states. Not all states provided data on all sectors; these sectors include the number and percentage of women in intelligence, prison and correctional, and foreign services. Member states' varying security statuses made it difficult for them to have consistent interpretations of the CRF, which affected the monitoring and reporting of the WPS Agenda implementation”.⁶⁹

The patchy availability of data at Member State level seems particularly acute for indicators related to peace processes, which aligns with the AUC note on data limitations resulting from member states' varying security statuses. For example, only South Sudan provided a numerical breakdown of women in conflict management roles as technical advisers, negotiators, mediators, observers and peace agreement signatories for 2019 (Indicator 10), whilst only six countries reported on the number of women's Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) participating in government-led peacebuilding processes but did not specify which processes (Indicator 11).

Regarding gender references in peace agreements, only Togo, Kenya, and Uganda provided data on instruments for implementing gender provisions in peace agreements, even though 41 peace agreements were reached in 2019 relating to conflicts on the continent (although the majority of these were local peace agreements addressing inter-group conflict).⁷⁰ Although the states provided information on tangible implementation measures, the data provided is unclear as to which gender provisions from which peace agreements are being implemented, nor which peace processes those provisions are a part of. Despite these reporting limitations, however, the AUC stated that “[data on gender provisions in peace agreements] is important data, and a lot of measures are being put in place to ensure women and girls who have been affected by conflict are rehabilitated and get an opportunity to fully participate in society”.⁷¹

As of August 2026, 36 out of 55 AU member states had produced at least one iteration of a WPS NAP. Of these NAPs, 10 included indicators relating to gender references or gendered language in peace agreements, although several were different NAP iterations produced by the same country (Table 3):

Table 3: AU Member State National Action Plans (NAPs) containing indicators relating to gender language in peace agreements.

AU Member State, NAP Dates, NAP Generation	Pillar or Strategic Area (according to NAP)	Indicator or Action
Cameroon I 2018-2020	Effect result 1: the leadership and participation of women in the process of prevention and management of conflict and post-conflict situations, construction of peace and social cohesion is increased	[activity] viii. Introduce sex specific elements in documents related to peace processes (cease-fire agreements, peace treaties, constitutions, etc.)
Djibouti I 2017	The participation of women at all levels of decision-making in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution ⁷²	1.2.1. Number and percentage of peace agreements containing specific provisions aimed at improving the security and status of women and girls ⁷³
Kenya I 2016	Pillar 3: Protection Impact Objective: Protection of women and girls against violence, which negates their safety, personal dignity, and empowerment	10.5.1 Number and type of gender-responsive agreements and declarations emerging from plural justice and dispute resolution mechanisms
Kenya II 2020-2024	Pillar 2: Prevention Objective: To enhance the prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women, girls, and vulnerable groups through gender-sensitive institutional, structural, and social transformation	d. Number of gender-responsive provisions in the agreements and declarations emerging from dispute resolution mechanisms

AU Member State, NAP Dates, NAP Generation	Pillar or Strategic Area (according to NAP)	Indicator or Action
Kenya III 2025-2029	Pillar 4: Relief and Recovery Objective: To ensure women and girls have access to and effectively engage with relief and recovery services in humanitarian settings, including periods of disaster/crisis and post-conflict recover	Gender provisions in peace agreements (DDR, climate change reparations, economic recovery) with implementation and monitoring mechanisms capturing the number of girls and women benefiting from recovery programs, including enrolment, retention and transition in education during and after conflict.
Mali II 2015-2017	Priority Area III: Protection and Rehabilitation of Survivors. 3.2 - Strengthen women's capacities in taking ownership of R1325 (2000) and related provisions, the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, and the implementation of these	Development and adoption of a gender perspective in the implementation of the peace agreement during the DDR process and post-conflict reconstruction
Mali III 2021-2025	Priority axis 1: PARTICIPATION 1.2 Peace mechanisms take into account security as well as the rights and specific needs of women ⁷⁴	Number of texts containing specific provisions aimed at improving the security and situation of women and girls ⁷⁵
Nigeria II 2017-2020	Pillar 2: PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION To increase participation and engagement of women and inclusion of women's interests in decision-making processes related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding	Gender-specific provisions in peace agreement and other political settlements. Target 2017-2020: Increased of inclusion of women's concerns in peace agreements and documents

AU Member State, NAP Dates, NAP Generation	Pillar or Strategic Area (according to NAP)	Indicator or Action
Senegal I 2011	Pillar 2: participation (integration of women and consideration of women's interests in decision-making processes relating to conflict prevention, management and resolution) Objective 5: Consideration of women and their interests in decisionmaking [sic] in connection with conflict prevention, management and resolution	Indicator 8: Number and percentage of peace agreements incorporating specific provisions aiming to improve the security and condition of women and girls
South Sudan I 2015-2020	Strategic Goal 1: Increase women's effective participation in leadership and peacebuilding and strengthen gender perspectives in the South Sudan's statebuilding and reconstruction processes	Peace agreements that are gender sensitive and that address security, social, economic and political issue

Source: Wise, Laura. (2026). *Peace Agreements in WPS Action Plans Dataset (PeaceAPs)* [dataset]. University of Edinburgh. School of Law. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7488/ds/8180>

The CRF assigned responsibility for reporting to member states: however, two regional organisations submitted reports to the AUC on regional implementation of WPS in 2019 – the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) – whilst the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) also submitted reporting.⁷⁶ None of the information presented in the 2020 AUC implementation report referred to gender-references in peace agreements reached in conflicts that involve the RECs, and information on activities under the Relief and Recovery pillar was generally limited compared to the other pillars. Commitments relating to peace agreements feature in the RAPs for the intergovernmental organisations which did report, alongside the RAP from SADC, which did not submit reporting to the AUC for 2019.⁷⁷

Table 4: Indicators relating to gender references in peace agreements in Regional Action Plans in Africa⁷⁸

Regional Action Plans and Strategies	Pillar or Section of Plan	Indicators on gender references in peace agreements (as stated)
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Guidelines on Women, Peace and Security III	2.1.4. HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW Action Point	Integrate the WPS Agenda in peace agreements
International Conference of the Great Lakes Region Action Plan on WPS I 2018-2023	Outcome 4 on Relief and Recovery Output 4.1 Women special needs and interests are identified and taken into consideration in post conflict, humanitarian, and development	4.4.1 (1) Existence of gender provisions in peace agreements.
International Conference of the Great Lakes Region Action Plan on WPS II 2021-2024	OUTCOME 1: Regional legal, policy frameworks and implementation mechanisms in place to enable women, young women and girls' meaningful leadership in conflict prevention, and Management, Political decision making and peace processes in IGAD region. OUTCOME 2: Regional laws policies and implementation mechanisms in place to promote the protection of women, young women and girls' human rights during humanitarian crisis, relief, and recovery, transitional and conflict as well as during elections.	1.3.2. Percentage of women involved in review and analysing of WPS commitments in peace agreements supported by IGAD (AU P4-1) [states that indicators are aligned with the CRF] 2.3.1. Mechanism in place to monitor implementation of gender responsive peace agreements (P4-1a and b) [states that indicators are aligned with the CRF]

Regional Action Plans and Strategies	Pillar or Section of Plan	Indicators on gender references in peace agreements (as stated)
Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security II 2023 – 2030	OUTCOME 2 - 2.3. Internal and member states capacity to empower women, young women, and girls to protect their human rights during conflict, transitional, post conflict, elections has been enhanced.	2.3.1. Mechanism in place to monitor implementation of gender responsive peace agreements (P4-1a and b) [states that indicators are aligned with the CRF]
Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security I 2018-2022	4.1 Increase the Participation of Women in the Politics and Diplomacy Sector.	4.1.5. Ensure that peace agreements are gender sensitive and respond to the different needs of women and men

Source: Wise, Laura. (2026). *Peace Agreements in WPS Action Plans Dataset (PeaceAPs) [dataset]*. University of Edinburgh. School of Law. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7488/ds/8180>

In recent years, the CRF has come under scrutiny as a monitoring and evaluation framework within the AU. A 2024 report by UN Women's East and Southern Africa Regional Office in co-operation with partners including the AU identified the CRF as one of the "main data gaps in the AUC", stating that "the AUCRF framework does not have sufficient data and data is not updated regularly".⁷⁹ As part of the Windhoek+25 Declaration to mark the 25th anniversary of WPS, and guided by the AU and SADC's Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security, participants "Recognise further the need to strengthen and review the African Union Continental Results Framework for monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the WPS Agenda".⁸⁰ In 2025, the OSE-WPS also took steps to address CRF reporting issues, hosting a high-level workshop in June "designed to revitalize" the CRF as the primary tool for monitoring the WPS implementation in Africa. As a result of the workshop, "participants advocated for a simplified, digital CRF reporting tool tailored to member states' capacities. Biennial reporting and real-time feedback loops were recommended to minimize fatigue and enhance ownership".⁸¹ Later in 2025, the PSC called on the AUC to "establish a mechanism for complementary civil society shadow reports under the CRF" to address the reporting gap and introduce greater accountability and transparency of WPS actions by the AU, RECs, and member states.⁸²

The OSE-WPS 2026-2028 Strategic Plan, published in September 2026, further reflected on CRF reporting, and the need for clear, consolidated WPS data collection processes. Under the “Accountability and Learning” strategic objective, the OSE-WPS set out that it will:

“Develop and roll out a CRF reporting toolkit and digital workflow, including agreed indicators, templates, verification protocols, and an annual consolidation process that produces an AU WPS Accountability Report for AU policy organs, with the consolidated data transmitted into the Commission's monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning arrangements and the African Union Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Tool, so that WPS results are reported through the corporate system rather than alongside it.”⁸³

Calls to move to biennial reporting, shadow reporting, and digital platforms echo reporting developments by some other WPS actors in recent years, who acknowledge the value of data-driven approaches to policy, but struggle to implement systematic reporting on a regular basis. For example, UN Women are currently developing a tool to simplify reporting by MS and other interested stakeholders through digital survey data collection on women as mediators, negotiators, and signatories,⁸⁴ whilst the UK has moved from an annual to a biennial NAP reporting cycle, with shadow reporting delivered by UK civil society through Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPs).⁸⁵ However, at this early stage, it is unclear how these reporting approaches support WPS implementation in practice.

4.3 Using PA-X Peace Agreement Data to Monitor African Union Implementation

Given the challenges in collecting data on gender provisions in peace agreements directly from AU member states and RECs, existing peace agreement datasets provide a supplementary evidence base for monitoring WPS implementation. In recent years, the UNSG annual reports on WPS to the Security Council have drawn on data from the PA-X Peace Agreement Database (PA-X) to support monitoring of Indicator 8 on gender provisions in peace agreements.⁸⁶ The University of Edinburgh publishes annual data releases of the PA-X database, which includes disaggregation of recorded peace agreements that include provisions which reference women, girls, gender, and sexual violence:

GeWom: Women, girls and gender. This is a binary variable, taking the value of 1 if any of the peace agreement provisions are specifically addressing women, their inclusion, and their rights. This includes references to girls, widows, mothers, sexual violence (or forms thereof), gender violence, UNSC 1325 or CEDAW, lactating women.⁸⁷

These gender provisions are further analysed according to the substantive issues that they address, such as gender quotas, international law, gender-based and sexual violence, relief and recovery, transitional justice, and women's roles in implementation.⁸⁸

PA-X also records metadata for each peace agreement, including information on which actors have signed agreements as primary parties or third parties based on how they are written in the agreement text. A recent extension to PA-X, the Peace Agreement Actor Dataset (PAA-X) disaggregates the signatories in these party and third-party fields to the individual signatory level of an actor being a party or third party to a peace agreement.⁸⁹ The extension supports tracking of actors across agreements, regardless of different naming conventions and references to the actors, and records information such as the type of actor and the region and country they are primarily based in. This dataset now enables tracking of actors such as African regional organisations and AU member states across agreements and processes.

In order to explore how African regional organisations signed peace agreements both prior to the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 and after the creation of the AU from 2002 onwards, we have conducted analysis for African regional organisations from 1990 through 2025. Our analysis includes the continental organisations (OAU and AU) for the periods that they existed between 1990 and 2025. It is important to note that the OAU as an organisation was much more focused on the liberation of African countries from the last remnants of colonialism and white-minority rule and upheld a norm of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states.⁹⁰ However, the OAU did conduct slightly more peace and security work in the 1990s than in prior decades, even if it was constrained by non-interference. For example, the OAU created the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution in 1993.⁹¹ Overall, conducting analysis back to 1990 helps to give us a picture of gender provisions in peace agreements prior to and after UNSC 1325, despite the OAU being a more constrained organisation than the AU in peace and security. It also includes the RECs that have a peace and security role as determined by the inclusion in the APSA and their participation in peace processes as indicated by being a signatory on at least one peace agreement in PA-X. We note that RECs are included in the analysis from 1990 through 2025, but only RECs that existed and signed peace agreements would show up in our analysis prior to 2002. In the following analysis, the OAU and AU as well as RECs are grouped into the category of African regional organisations.

The AU recognises eight RECs and two RMs under the APSA. These are the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Southern African Development Community (SADC). The two RMs that fall under the APSA are the Eastern African Standby Force (EASF) Secretariat and the North African Regional Capability (NARC). The RMs, UMA, and COMESA have not signed any agreements in PA-X and are therefore not included.⁹²

There are 55 member states of the AU, of which 53 member states are listed as actors by PAA-X as they have signed a peace agreement included in PA-X. The two member states that are therefore not included in this analysis are Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic and Kingdom of Eswatini (see Annex 2: Scope, Definitions and Actor IDs for PAA-X analysis).

The following peace agreement metadata (Table 6) demonstrates how different third-party signatories would be categorised as intergovernmental organisations in PAA-X or AU member states:

Table 6: Examples of peace agreement signatory classifications on the PA-X Actor dataset, drawing on PA-X agreement metadata.

Third Party Signatory	Actor	PAA-X Actor ID	Indicator or Action
For the African Union: Sam B. Ibok, Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission ⁹³	African Union	IGO_87	African regional organisations (2002-2025)
As Witnesses: Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas Executive Secretary of ECOWAS ⁹⁴	Economic Community of West African States	IGO_89	African regional organisations
In the Presence Of: Thabo Mbeki President of the Republic of South Africa, and Coordinator of the efforts of the Countries of the Region and the Troika of the African Union on the Comoros ⁹⁵	African Union	IGO_87	African regional organisations (2002-2025)
Ms. Adwoa Coleman, Representative Organization of African Unity ⁹⁶	Organization of African Unity	IGO_43	African regional organisations (1990-2002)
Witnessed by: His Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	Nigeria	CON_90	AU member states
Facilitators: For the Central African Republic: (Signed) His Excellency Mr. François Bozizé Yangouvonda, President of the Republic ⁹⁷	Central African Republic	CON_6	AU member states

By drawing on the PA-X Gender and PAA-X datasets, we can identify not only whether peace agreements signed by the AU, RECs, and member states included gender references, but also how those agreements address the gendered impacts of war. We can also identify which processes incorporated standalone gender references, and which processes took a more systematic gender perspective throughout the process.

An important caveat for interpretation of the following data is that we have not explored co-signing patterns across different third party actors. This means that the incidence of a third party signing an agreement, and the inclusion of a gender reference should not be interpreted as influence or causality. Further research through qualitative case studies of each peace process would be needed to identify how gendered language made it into some peace agreements and not others, or how different third parties engaged with gendered elements of a process. Additionally, we have not disaggregated third party signatories by peace agreement stage (whether an agreement is addressing comprehensive, ceasefire, pre-negotiation, or implementation stages of a peace process). This could potentially influence disparity across third parties for prevalence of inclusion of gender references, as some third parties may have primarily engaged in conflict settings that have not produced comprehensive peace agreements, which are more likely to contain gender references than other stages of agreement.

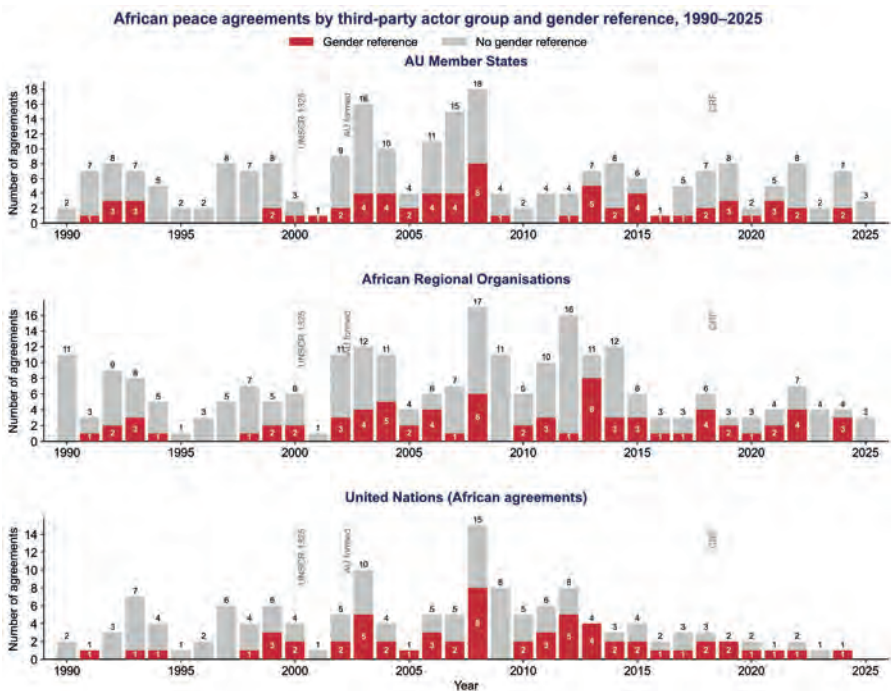
5. Gender Perspectives in African Union-linked Peace Agreements

5.1 Peace Agreements Signed by African Regional Organisations and Member States as Third Parties

The tenth release of PA-X in 2026 contains a total of 1,861 inter-state and intra-state peace agreements addressing multiple levels of conflict from 1990-2025.⁹⁸ Since 1990, PA-X records 592 peace agreements having been reached to address conflicts primarily taking place in Africa. Between 1990 and 2025, representatives of African regional organisations including the AU, its predecessor the OAU, RECs, and/or AU member states signed 338 interstate and intrastate peace agreements addressing conflict in Africa as third parties (mediators, witnesses, guarantors, facilitators, or supporting actors). 95 of these 338 (28%) peace agreements signed by African regional organisation's representatives or member states as third parties include references to women, girls, gender, and/or sexual violence. This share of gender references compares to the 21% (387 out of 1861) of peace agreements globally from 1990-2025 (including peace agreements in Africa).

References to women, girls, and gender in African peace agreements have increased over time, though unevenly (see Figure 1). Agreements signed by African regional organisations and AU member states as third parties contain few gender references before the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, after which they become more frequent and consistent, broadly mirroring wider trends in peace-agreement gender language globally.⁹⁹ The broad trajectory is consistent with the growing institutionalisation of the WPS agenda at continental and regional levels, including the adoption of the AU CRF in 2018.

Figure 1: Annual counts of African peace agreements involving AU member states, African regional organisations, or the United Nations as third parties, showing total agreements and agreements containing gender references, 1990–2025. All three panels are restricted to agreements addressing conflicts in Africa.

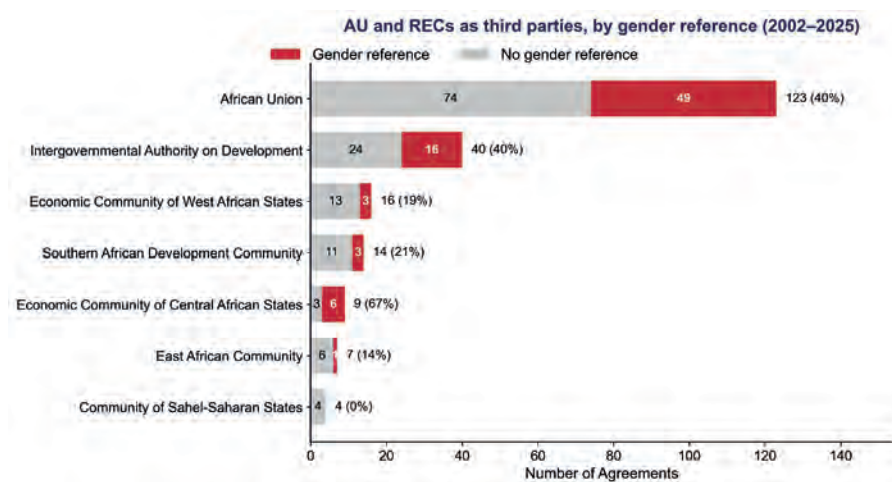


These yearly proportions should be read with care: annual agreement counts are small, so single-year spikes – several reflecting just one or two agreements – overstate the volatility. The reliable signal is the post-2000 step-change and the sustained presence from the 2010s, rather than any individual peak. Continued year-to-year fluctuation also suggests gender inclusion remains contingent on the dynamics of particular processes rather than following a linear path of institutional progress, a pattern that is also evident in the substantial variation observed across individual peace processes.

For example, the AU-led peace process between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front produced two agreements in 2022 that were signed by AU representatives, both of which included brief gender references. In contrast, peace processes for the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo led by the EAC and Angola respectively produced five peace agreements (three from the EAC-led process and two from the Angola-led process) in 2023, signed by African regional organisations and AU member states, but none of the agreements included gender references. All three peace processes were facilitated or mediated by African regional organisations, and occurred in a similar time period, but have not all produced agreements with gender references.¹⁰⁰ This could suggest differences in peace processes led or co-led by the AU and RECs, but further qualitative research of these cases would be needed to explore this supposition.

Disaggregating African regional organisations shows that the AU as a third-party signatory accounts for the majority of agreements containing gender references from 2002 to 2025 (see Figure 2).¹⁰¹ Within the RECs, ECCAS and IGAD stand out as agreements signed by these RECs most consistently implement regional commitments to gender references in peace agreements, with gender appearing in a substantial share of the agreements they sign as a third party (67% of ECCAS signed agreements and 40% of all IGAD signed agreements). By contrast, other regional organisations record much lower levels of gender inclusion in peace agreements that bear their signature. SADC and ECOWAS, despite being some of the more active regional organisations by agreement counts, reference gender in only 21% (SADC) and 19% (ECOWAS) of peace agreements that they signed as a third party, whilst none of the four CEN-SAD signed agreements included gender references from 2002-2025. This disaggregation highlights considerable variation in the extent to which gender is included across peace agreements signed by African regional organisations, and, in the case of ECOWAS and SADC, that the existence of a RAP which includes gender references in peace agreements as an indicator, does not necessarily translate to implementation. However, as co-signing practices are outside the scope of this report, it is important to bear in mind that for regional organisations that return a high share of gender references in agreements that they sign as a third party, they may not be the driving force behind the inclusion of those gender references, and further research would be required to establish causality.

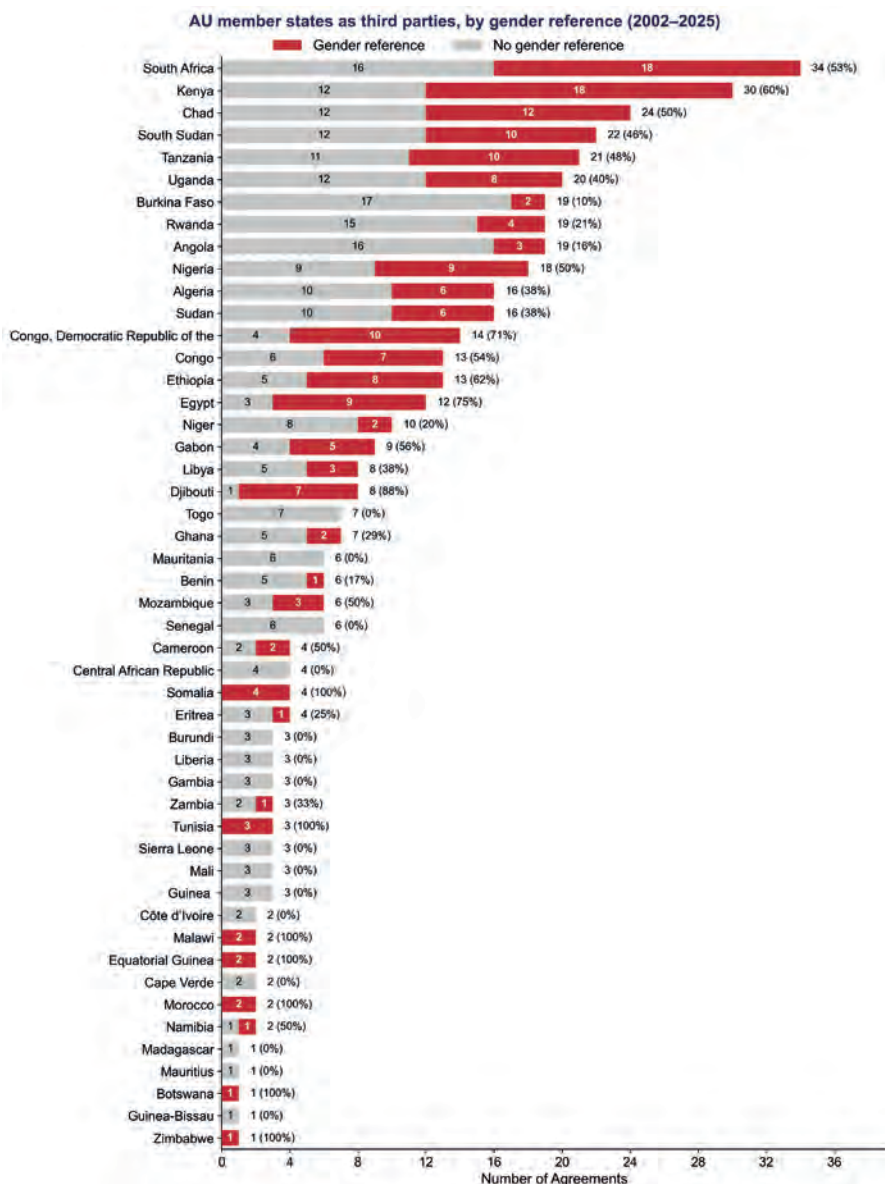
Figure 2: Disaggregated African regional organisations showing the total number of agreements signed as a third party, and the number with gender references. Note that the same agreement can appear under multiple actors.



As with African ROs, there is extensive variation across AU member states when it comes to the prevalence of gender references in peace agreements bearing their signature (see Figure 3). South Africa, Kenya, Chad, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda are all common third-party signatories to African peace agreements from 2002–2025, and all six member states have a percentage share of peace agreements with gender references varying between 40–60%. This contrasts with three other prolific member states acting as a third party where peace agreements with gender references have a much smaller share – Burkina Faso (10%), Rwanda (21%) and Angola (16%). Further variation occurs across states that have signed a smaller share of peace agreements as a third party. For example, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Egypt have a percentage share of peace agreements with gender references varying between 88–62%, but these percentage shares come from a very small number of agreements.¹⁰²

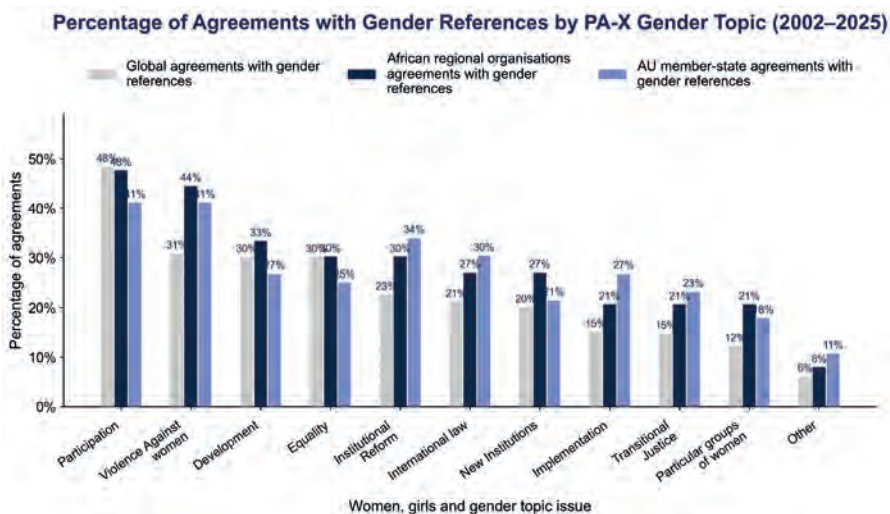
Similar to the disparity of gender references across agreements signed by different RECs, the existence of peace agreement indicators in a NAP published during the AU period does not explain why different AU member states do or do not sign peace agreements that included gender references. Djibouti, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Sudan – as AU member states with a medium to higher percentage share of gender references in agreements they sign as a party – have produced generations of NAPs which include gender references in peace agreements as WPS implementation indicators.¹⁰³ However, none of the NAPs for Chad, Uganda, or South Africa include peace agreement indicators, even though they all have relatively high percentage shares of agreements that they sign as a third party with gender references. Meanwhile, Mali and Senegal both have produced NAPs that include peace agreements with gender provisions as an implementation indicator, but none of the agreements that they have signed as a third party include gender references. Therefore, there is no clear correlation between the presence of an AU Member State NAP indicator for gender references in peace agreements, and the inclusion of gender references in peace agreements that the Member State has signed as third party.

Figure 3: Disaggregated actors from AU member states showing the total number of agreements signed as a third party, and the number with gender references.



Thematically (Figure 4), 'participation' provisions are the most common gender topics across both African regional organisation and AU member state third-party agreements with a gender reference (from 2002-2025), which matches peace agreements globally with a gender reference. However, there are several gender topics which are more prevalent in peace agreements with a gender reference signed by African regional organisations or AU member states than globally – for example, 'violence against women', 'institutional reform', and 'transitional justice'. This inclusion of gender references could be influenced by the content of agreements signed by African regional organisations and AU member states as third parties, for example, that many of their third-party agreements deal with institutional reform or transitional justice, and therefore there is space to incorporate gendered elements of those provisions. But this could also point to APSA and other continental norms on tackling violence against women, and that we can see some of these normative values filtering into peace process interventions. Without qualitative case studies tracing how specific provisions made it into peace agreements, this is speculation, but the differences both between the topics of African regional organisations and AU member state third party gender provisions and global gender provisions, and the differences between topics referenced in African regional organisations compared to AU member state third party gender provisions, such as for 'development' and 'implementation' clearly calls for further investigation.

Figure 4: Percentage of agreements with gender references per PA-X gender topic category, by agreement group (global, African regional organisations and AU member states as third parties), 2002-2025.



5.2 Substantive Gender References in Peace Agreements Signed by African Regional Organisations and Member States as Third Parties

The textual substance and strength of gender references vary across both processes and agreements. Returning to the examples of thematic areas listed in the reporting guidance under the CRF, we can explore how peace agreements signed by African regional organisations tangibly provide for “quotas for women in executive and legislative bodies, and general references to measures for promoting equality and participation in political and economic processes and outlawing all forms of violence against women”.¹⁰⁴ The CRF also highlights the importance of modalities for implementation of gender references, captured on PA-X as an implementation sub-category, which includes provisions that address women’s roles and consideration in implementation of the agreement. Qualitatively analysing the ways in which peace agreements provide for these issues highlights the variation of how parties explicitly address gendered issues, which can have implications for how they could be implemented, and demonstrates how different actors frame gender, women, and LGBTQ+ persons.

Quotas for women in executive and legislative bodies

If we review references under the PA-X Gender thematic category of participation, which includes mentions of gender quotas, effective participation, and citizenship, there is a clear variation in parties' agreed points on inclusion. These references range from agreements that contain clear commitments to specific measures to enable women's participation in political institutions, to agreements with cursory references to women as one of several identity groups for inclusion, or with flexible terms for how women will be included.

For example, peace agreements signed by African regional organisations for Burundi,¹⁰⁵ Democratic Republic of Congo,¹⁰⁶ Somalia,¹⁰⁷ South Sudan,¹⁰⁸ and Sudan¹⁰⁹ include specific and explicit references to enacting quotas or reserved seats for women in political institutions, particularly in relation to transitional institutions and commissions. The Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018) includes the following quota:

1.4.4. Provisions of the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan and ARCSS on participation of women (35%) in the Executive shall be observed. In particular, in their nomination to the Council of Ministers, Incumbent TGoNU shall nominate no fewer than six (6) women, SPLM/ A-IO shall nominate no fewer than three (3) women, and SSOA shall nominate no less than one (1) woman.

Such specific commitments can be helpful for women's groups and gender equality advocates to monitor implementation of gender references, and to hold parties and third-parties accountable if quotas are not put into practice. For example, the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) noted that, by 2023, the parties had failed to fully implement the TGoNU quota, as only 26% appointed Council of Ministers and 10% of deputy ministers were women.¹¹⁰ Specific quotas can also demonstrate whether commitments to gender equality weaken over time, particularly moving from transitional to open-ended institutions, or across different peace process stages.

This reference is qualitatively different from provisions which discuss women's inclusion, but in more vague or flexible terms, such as the following provision from the Darfur Peace Agreement in Sudan (2006):

71. Prior to the elections, and with a view to reflecting the need for unity and inclusiveness the GoS shall ensure the representation of Darfurians in the National Assembly, including the SLM/A and JEM. In this regard, not less than a total of 12 seats shall be allocated to nominees of the SLM/A and JEM. It is highly recommended that some of the nominees be women.¹¹¹

Although this gendered language in peace agreements can also be used as an inclusion 'hook' for gender equality advocates,¹¹² along with other provisions in the Darfur Peace Agreement that refer to the "fair representation" of women as being "mandatory" or an obligation of the parties, there is more space for parties not to implement these provisions, or for them to interpret what "fair representation" means in practice.¹¹³ In some contexts, such ambiguity may be strategic, whilst in others it could demonstrate the limitations of what parties were willing to commit to. Both sets of references were likely difficult for women's representatives or gender equality advocates to get incorporated in the final agreed texts, and this comparison on the specificity is not intended as a value judgement. Rather, we aim to highlight that qualitative interpretation of how AU-linked peace agreements reference gender is equally important as quantitative analysis.

Promoting equality and participation in political and economic processes

References to political and economic equality in peace agreements signed by African regional organisations vary in terms of how parties refer to either 'gender' or 'sex' as characteristics protected in law, whether they connect equality to international human rights law, and how they refer to constitutions as a means to protect equality. Agreements also vary regarding how specifically they refer to equality through the application of international law. For example, in agreements for North and South Kivu in the DRC (2008), parties agree to observe IHL and human rights standards, but do not refer to any particular treaties regarding discrimination:

Article III, Humanitarian Principles and Respect for Human Rights:

There shall be a strict observance of international humanitarian law and human rights standards, in particular: the cessation of acts of violence, extortion, exclusion and discrimination, in all its forms, against the civilian population, in particular women, children, older persons, and disabled people.¹¹⁴

In contrast, in the Naivasha agreement (2005) from the North-South Sudanese peace process, parties specifically root the equal rights of men and women within the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the Dar-Es Salaam agreement (2004) for the Great Lakes Region explicitly connects gender equality in the region to specific areas of international human rights law, as the parties commit to adopting key international and regional treaties and resolutions:

35. Adopt deliberate policies and mechanisms for promoting gender equality at all levels and in all sectors, at the national and regional levels, in accordance with the Millennium Declaration, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Beijing Platform for Action and the African Union's Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.¹¹⁶

Within intra-state processes where African regional organisations are a third-party, agreements often include references to strengthening equality between men and women within constitutions, or guaranteeing equality of citizens on the basis of multiple protected characteristics, of which 'sex' or 'gender' are commonly listed. For example, the Arusha Agreement for Burundi (2000), co-signed by representatives of the OAU and several member states, included a Charter of Fundamental Rights as part of agreed Constitutional Principles of the Post-transition constitution. Alongside references to CEDAW and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Charter also included:

3.4. All women and men shall be equal. No one may be discriminated against, inter alia, on grounds of origin, race, ethnicity, gender, colour, language, social situation, or religious, philosophical or political convictions, or by reason of a physical or mental handicap. All citizens shall enjoy equal protection of the law, as well as equal treatment under the law.

Throughout peace agreements signed by African IGOs, references to equality are variably situated across international and national human rights law, with regional human rights frameworks incorporated into agreements facilitated or supported by the OAU and the AU. This inclusion suggests that continental human rights frameworks are embedded within regional mediation practices, and that third parties draw on both continental and international human rights law in continental peace processes.

Regarding equality for LGBTQ+ persons, only one peace agreement signed by an African IGO representative as a third party includes any references to LGBTQ+, and the references in fact restrict the rights of LGBTQ+ persons and connect sexual orientation to protection of children. The Draft Constitution of the Transition for the DRC (2003) was signed by the representative of the Chairman in office of the African Union, and included the following negative references:

Article 43: All individuals shall have the right to marry a person of their choice, of the opposite sex and to create a family.

Article 44: The State shall be obliged to protect the child against prostitution, procuring, homosexuality, incest, paedophilia, sexual harassment and all other forms of sexual perversion.¹¹⁷

This reference is similar to others found in transitional peace agreement constitutions in Burundi and Zimbabwe,¹¹⁸ neither of which were signed by third parties, but it is markedly different from the 1993 South African Interim Constitution, which included 'sexual orientation' as a protected characteristic from discrimination under its human rights framework (also not signed by third parties).¹¹⁹ Beyond the African continent, only peace processes from Colombia have consistently included references to the rights and views of LGBTQ+ persons, and the majority of peace agreements globally do not include explicit references for LGBTQ+ persons.¹²⁰ The limited number of LGBTQ+ references in African peace agreements is not only globally comparable, but also not surprising given that the AU's CRF and other WPS policies, although referring to 'gender' alongside 'women and girls', appear to operate within the heteronormative binary when understanding who 'gender' applies to,¹²¹ and the fact that multiple member states criminalise homosexuality.¹²²

Outlawing all forms of violence against women

Peace agreements signed by African regional organisations that include references to violence against women generally fall into two categories: ceasefire agreements or ceasefire provisions that prohibit sexual and gender-based violence; and more substantive agreements that address violence against women beyond ceasefires.

Ceasefire references are the most common form of references to violence against women in AU-linked agreements, with variation as to the harms that they explicitly refer to. Multiple agreements include language similar to the following provision from the Khartoum Accord for the Central African Republic (2019), a comprehensive agreement with a ceasefire annexed to the accord, and was signed by the AU, the Economic Community of Central African States, and several AU member states:

2. The Parties agree that this immediate, complete, and irrevocable cessation of hostilities commits them to scrupulously refrain from: (d) Any act of violence against women and girls, or of sexual or gender-based violence.¹²³

Other ceasefire references state the 'vulnerability' of women, often alongside other groups such as children and the elderly. References to violence against women are also situated as part of broader Protection of Civilian (POC) measures. For example, a ceasefire implementation agreement between the Ethiopian National Defence Force and Tigray Armed Combatants (2022), co-facilitated by the AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa and the President of Kenya, refers to:

3. Protection of Civilians: 3.1. In accordance with Article 4 of the agreement, the protection of civilians shall be the responsibility of all federal security and regional security organs in accordance with the Federal Constitution. In this regard, the protection of civilians shall include all points enumerated under Article 4 of the agreement including: d) Ensure the safety and security of vulnerable groups including women and children.¹²⁴

Beyond ceasefire provisions, there are several agreements signed by African regional organisations which include references to violence against women as part of broader measures for transitional justice and accountability. For example, in an agreement between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the M23 (2013), supported by the ICGLR and SADC, the parties restrict an agreed amnesty from covering “war crimes, crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity, including sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and other massive violations of human rights”.¹²⁵ In the Mali-Azawad Inter-Azawad peace process, mediated by Burkina Faso and Nigeria, and supported by the AU, parties agreed to:

Establish, at the earliest opportunity, an international commission of enquiry into the war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, crimes of sexual violence, drug trafficking, and other grave violations of international law and human rights committed across the entire territory of Mali.¹²⁶

The same agreement also prohibits amnesty from being granted to “the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious violations of human rights linked to the conflict, including violence against women, girls, and children”. Another forward-looking mechanism is found in the AU-supported Sun City agreement for DRC, in which parties agree to create a National Human Rights Monitoring Unit, whose mandate will include:

- j. create a commission for the protection of women and children with the mandate to:
 - i. denounce all forms of violence specifically perpetrated against women and children, the elderly and persons living with a handicap;¹²⁷

Critical questions for further exploration of provisions addressing violence against women in AU-linked peace agreements include the implementation gap between protection commitments and the widespread, targeted use of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Gender Based Violence, and other human rights violations in contemporary conflicts, and how violence against women provisions transition from peace agreements into post-conflict human rights frameworks.

Women's roles and consideration in implementation

Despite the importance of implementation phases for consolidating gendered perspectives and women's participation, only 15% (42 of 279) of non-local peace agreements with gender references globally include references to women's roles and consideration in implementation. This rises to 21% (13 of 63) among African regional organisation third-party agreements and 27% (15 of 56) among AU member-state third-party agreements.

The implementation provisions in African regional organisation third-party agreements appear in the following peace processes: the African Great Lakes process; the CAR African Initiative (and related) process; the CAR coups and rebellions process; the DRC Second Congo War process, the Liberia peace process, the South Sudan post-secession process; the Darfur-Sudan peace process; the Inter-Togolese Dialogue, and the Uganda peace process between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Many of these agreements were signed as third parties both by representatives of African regional organisations, and representatives of AU member states.

The Uganda-LRA process is the only AU Member State third-party process in which multiple agreements reference both women's participation within implementation bodies or mechanisms, and the implementation of gender-specific references. For example, an agreement on accountability and reconciliation explicitly links implementation to the needs and views of women and girls:

Article 11. WOMEN AND GIRLS: In the implementation of this Agreement it is agreed to:

- (i) Recognise and address the special needs of women and girls.
- (ii) Ensure that the experiences, views and concerns of women and girls are recognised and taken into account.
- (iii) Protect the dignity, privacy and security of women and girls.
- (iv) Encourage and facilitate the participation of women and girls in the processes for implementing this agreement.¹²⁸

A later agreement on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) establishes a Ceasefire Monitoring Team (CMT), which includes provisions both for the CMT to "monitor the implementation of specific clauses on children, women and persons with special needs contained in this Agreement" and for the CMT to "include female members" (although it does not specify a gender balance).¹²⁹ In the Implementation Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions, however, the agreement does specify the importance of gender balance within implementation mechanisms:

36. In the appointment of members and staff of any implementation bodies envisaged by this Agreement, overriding consideration shall be given to the competences and skills required for the office, sensitivity to the candidate's knowledge of the affected areas, and gender balance.¹³⁰

The repeated inclusion of gender references relating to implementation in agreements throughout the process suggests a more embedded commitment of parties and third parties to incorporate a gender perspective, rather than standalone references in one agreement which are then not repeated or built on in later stages of the process. However, the gender perspective that the parties are operating within is one that sits firmly within a heteronormative binary, as in one of the agreements the parties state under definitions for the agreement that: "'Gender' refers to the two sexes, men and women, within the context of society."¹³¹

Only three peace agreements signed by African regional organisations include a quota or reserved seats for women's participation within an implementation body. In the African Great Lakes, parties agree to:

76. Set up a Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, mandated to prepare selected, concrete, achievable and measurable draft Protocols and programmes of action together with specific short, medium and long-term objectives; the Committee is assisted by the Regional Preparatory Committee, enhanced with representatives of the Civil Society, women, youth and other reputable experts with at least one third of women representatives; the Draft Protocols and Programmes of Action will be submitted to the Second Summit and will form with this Declaration, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region;¹³²

This provision not only includes a specific quota for women in the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC) but also sets out how the body will feed into future stages of the process, which gives an insight into how women could influence the process outcomes if they are properly supported and enabled to fully, equally, safely, and meaningfully participate in the RPC.

The Khartoum Accord for Central African Republic, guaranteed by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and facilitated by other AU member states, also includes a reference to women's participation in the agreement implementation structure. The Accord establishes a Prefectural Implementation Committee, which,

"shall be chaired *ipso jure* by the Prefect and shall be composed of a representative of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic, a representative of the internal security forces, a political leader from every signatory armed group with an active military presence in the prefecture, two representatives of every religious community (appointed by consensus by their peers or, failing that, by the Prefect) and two representatives of civil society organisations representing youth and women (appointed by consensus by the communities or, failing that, by the Prefect)."¹³³

In the IGAD-led post-succession process for South Sudan, the "Women's bloc" is assigned one representative to some of the transitional monitoring and oversight bodies, including the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), alongside "representatives of the Parties to this Agreement, other South Sudanese stakeholders, and regional and international guarantors and partners of South Sudan".¹³⁴ The JMEC was tasked with "monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the Agreement and the mandate and tasks of the TGoNU, including the adherence of the Parties to the agreed timelines and implementation schedule," with the aim of breaking deadlocks or recommending corrective action for non-implementation. This provision therefore ensures that women's representatives are not only aware of what is happening within transitional implementation and oversight bodies, but crucially that they have voting rights equal to other stakeholders.

6. Conclusions

This report builds on existing accounts of the AU as a WPS norm entrepreneur, to explore how AU institutions, RECs, and member states all engage with peace processes from a gender perspective, focusing on peace agreements as a site for WPS intervention. The focus on peace agreements draws from the AU's own continental monitoring mechanism for WPS implementation, and regional and national action plans by RECs and member states, and how those policies conceptualise how peace agreements can and should include references to women, girls, and gender. Using newly available data on peace agreement signatories, we identify representatives of the AU, RECs, and member states as third parties to peace agreements, measure the extent to which these AU-linked agreements include gender references, and analyse the gendered language agreed by parties. By doing so, we demonstrate a potential way to use third-party data providers to address the AU's gender data gap and identify peace agreement practice which demonstrates the enactment of normative commitments to WPS in some AU-linked peace processes.

We find that the AU, RECs, and some member states recognise peace agreements as a site for WPS intervention, through continental, regional, and national policy frameworks, but that there are distinct variations as to the consistency with which AU actors as third parties sign agreements that contain gender references. We also find that the gendered language used in AU-peace agreements varies across processes, with some processes containing clear commitments to women's participation and equality in governance or incorporating continental rights frameworks, whilst others leave space for parties' interpretation of gendered values or use stereotypical language of women's vulnerability to address conflict-related violence. Given the scope of the data from 1990-2025, we refrain from making a judgement as to whether the AU has or has not implemented the CRF, particularly as much of the substantive analysis draws on agreements reached prior to the CRF publication. Rather, the report should be viewed as a first look at how the AU constructs WPS goals related to peace agreements specifically, how it aims to monitor implementation, and how AU-linked peace processes have incorporated gender references, and as a contribution to existing research that emphasises African norm entrepreneurship and agency on WPS.

As stated in Section 4, local peace agreements were excluded from the analysis due to their exclusion from the PAA-X dataset of peace agreement signatories. However, the interconnection between international, national, and local peace processes is increasingly recognised in both research and policy.¹³⁵ Excluding analysis of local agreements from this report means that interesting mediation practice and innovative gendered languages in peace processes could be overlooked. For example, in the Central African Republic, 41% of peace agreements containing gender references were classified as intra-state agreements addressing local conflict, and although the agreements may not have AU-linked third parties, they are often connected to the national level transitional peace process supported by multiple third parties, including the AU, CEEAC, and neighbouring states. In South Sudan, there is a long history of local peacemaking co-ordinated by local authority figures, such as the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), and gendered language in the resultant resolutions and communiqués is commonly highly contextual and localised. Although an exploration of gender references in local agreements may not demonstrate clear links to APSA through third parties, nevertheless it would provide a further layer of how peace process parties conceptualise and include gendered language as negotiated outcomes.

Finally, as this is a first look at how gendered language is incorporated in peace agreements signed as third parties by the AU and its member states, there is clearly a need for further research to explore how such gendered language made it into those agreements. Qualitative case studies of peace processes supported by the AU, RECs and member states would be needed to identify the origin of gender provisions, and the process by which they were included within the final texts. Such research would deepen this inquiry by exploring to what extent AU-linked third parties were advocates for such provisions, or conversely, sources of opposition. Case studies would also be a more appropriate method for identifying successful strategies by gender-equality advocates for the adoption of gender references, or to explore how AU actors worked in coalition with women's groups to incorporate provisions from their agendas. Whilst our report demonstrates the potential of peace process datasets in studying regional organisations as normative actors, we are equally clear on the importance of matching such data to in-depth case literature.

Annex 1: Relevant African Union Documents

African Union Legal and Policy Documents

African Platform for Action adopted by the 5th Regional Conference on Women, held at Dakar from 16 to 23 November 1994. Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/180676>

AU Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment 2018-2028. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-52569_au_strategy_eng_high.pdf

African Union Gender Policy (2009). Available at: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/women-peace-security/assets/documents/NAPS-Website/6.Policy/2009-African-Union-Gender-Policy-AU-2009.pdf>

Continental Results Framework – Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda 2018-2028. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35958-doc-continental_results_framework_wps_.pdf

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (adopted 2003; entry into force 2005). Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter_on_rights_of_women_in_africa.pdf

Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004). Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38956-doc-assembly_au_decl_12_iii_e.pdf

Windhoek Declaration, and Namibia Plan of Action on 'Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations' (2000). Available at: https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/windhoek_declaration.pdf

Windhoek+25 Declaration: "25 Years of 1325, Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda" (2025). Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/windhoek-25-declaration-25-years-of-1325-honoring-the-legacy-advancing-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda>

Selected AU Communiqués and Reports from meetings dedicated to WPS Themes and Peace and Security, 2020-2025

Communiqué 1268th Meeting of the AU PSC held on 21st March 2025 on Women, Peace and Security in Africa. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/1268.comm-en.pdf>

Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa Reporting Period: January to December 2024. Available at: <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/10702>

Communiqué 1242nd Meeting of the AU PSC held on 31 October 2024 briefing on Women, Peace and Security interlinkage. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/1242.comm-en.pdf>

Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa Reporting Period: January to December 2023. Available at: <https://papsrepository.africanunion.org/entities/publication/1569e38c-90e1-4b7e-9987-732d5e7f329c>

Communiqué 1144th Open Session of the AU PSC held on 14 March 2023 on Integrating Women, Peace and Security agenda in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, a focus on women in cross border trade in conflict and post-conflict situations. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/1144.comm-en.pdf>

Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa Reporting Period: January to December 2022. Available at: <https://papsrepository.africanunion.org/entities/publication/80c64c81-ed64-4a3e-a927-4521ddbc8a37>

Communiqué 1063rd Open Session of the AU PSC held on 8 February 2022 on the nexus between Urbanisation, Women, Peace and Security in Africa. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/eng-communique-of-the-1063rd-psc-ministerial-meeting-held-on-8-feb-2022.pdf>

Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa Reporting Period: January to December 2021. Available at: <https://papsrepository.africanunion.org/entities/publication/bdd2b1d8-4499-4cd8-a32f-6e6c5f9b8e07>

Communiqué 1052nd Meeting of the AU PSC held on 29 November 2021 on Commemorating the 21st anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/eng-press-statement-psc-open-session-on-uncr-1325-wps-29-november-2021.pdf>

Communiqué 987th Meeting of the AU PSC held on 22 March 2021 on Women, Peace, Culture and Gender Inclusivity in Africa. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/eng-communique-for-the-psc-987th-meeting-open-session-22-march-2021.pdf>

Report on the Implementation of the Women, Peace & Security Agenda in Africa 2020, African Union. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/42544-doc-WPS_AGENDA_IN_AFRICA_REPORT_2020_ENGLISH_VERSION.pdf

Communiqué 951st Meeting of the AU PSC held on 5 October 2020 on the Implementation and Commemoration of UNSC Resolution 1325 on WPS. Available at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/eng-pr-for-the-951st-psc-meeting-virtual-open-session-on-uns-1325.pdf>

Report on the Implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa, October 2019. Available at: <https://archive.au.int/handle/123456789/6817>

Report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa Reporting Period: February 2019 to February 2020. Available at: <https://au.int/en/documents/20200210/report-peace-and-security-council-its-activities-and-state-peace-and-security>

Annex 2: Scope, Definitions and Actor IDs for PAA-X Analysis

This annex provides the scope and definitions applied for the analysis in Section 5 of this report, and Actor IDs as per the PAA-X dataset.

Underlying data is available via an accompanying excel file available at: Wise, Laura; Henry, Niamh; Nash, Kathryn; Farr, Quinn. (2026). African Regional Organisations, Peace Agreements and Gender Perspectives - Underlying Data, [dataset]. University of Edinburgh. School of Law. <https://doi.org/10.7488/ds/8186>

Scope and definitions

- African regional organisations refers to OAU + AU + RECs.
- AU member states are identified as actors where actor_region is Africa and actor_type is Country/State.
- African agreements are identified using geographic region of Africa, rather than PA-X region definitions.
- Gender reference is based on the binary PA-X GeWom indicator.
- Actor-level bar charts count actor-agreement instances. One agreement can be counted under more than one actor if multiple relevant third parties were present.
- Gender topic issues are drawn from the main PA-X topics file where category is 'Women, Girls and Gender', type is 'issue', and value equals 1.
- All statistics are descriptive.
- Counts are based on non-local PA-X agreements.
- Figure 1 restricts all three panels, including the UN, to African agreements.
- Figure 4 includes a separate global comparison group.
- The African regional organisation and AU member-state groups are restricted to African agreements.

Notes for interpretation

- Annual charts show counts per year rather than smoothed trends. Years with small totals should be interpreted cautiously.
- Percentages in the actor-level bar charts are calculated within each actor's own agreement count.
- The African regional organisation and AU member state bar charts cover 2002–2025, and therefore does not include the OAU.

Actors included under African regional organisations

PAA-X Actor ID	Actor
IGO_87	African Union (2002-2025)
IGO_542	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
IGO_535	East African Community
IGO_913	Economic Community of Central African States
IGO_89	Economic Community of West African States
IGO_312	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGO_43	Organization of African Unity (1990-2002)
IGO_349	Southern African Development Community

UN actor included

PAA-X Actor ID	Actor
IGO_49	United Nations (General)

AU member state actors included

PAA-X Actor ID	Actor
CON_255	Algeria
CON_260	Angola
CON_41	Benin
CON_267	Botswana
CON_86	Burkina Faso
CON_253	Burundi
CON_290	Cameroon

PAA-X Actor ID	Actor
CON_354	Cape Verde
CON_6	Central African Republic
CON_157	Chad
CON_485	Comoros
CON_42	Congo
CON_264	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
CON_88	Côte d'Ivoire
CON_248	Djibouti
CON_82	Egypt
CON_930	Equatorial Guinea
CON_272	Eritrea
CON_159	Ethiopia
CON_17	Gabon
CON_16	Gambia
CON_94	Ghana
CON_44	Guinea
CON_91	Guinea-Bissau
CON_172	Kenya
CON_521	Lesotho
CON_83	Liberia
CON_285	Libya
CON_481	Madagascar
CON_392	Malawi

PAA-X Actor ID	Actor
CON_93	Mali
CON_387	Mauritania
CON_482	Mauritius
CON_228	Morocco
CON_97	Mozambique
CON_13	Namibia
CON_142	Niger
CON_90	Nigeria
CON_339	Rwanda
CON_92	Senegal
CON_641	Seychelles
CON_99	Sierra Leone
CON_358	Somalia
CON_221	South Africa
CON_173	South Sudan
CON_158	Sudan
CON_353	São Tomé and Príncipe
CON_174	Tanzania
CON_85	Togo
CON_590	Tunisia
CON_176	Uganda
CON_335	Zambia
CON_350	Zimbabwe

Endnotes

- ¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/426075>
- ² Hamilton, C., Naam, N., & Shepherd, L.J. (2020). Twenty Years of Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans: Analysis and Lessons Learned. University of Sydney. Available at: https://www.wpsnaps.org/app/uploads/2020/03/Twenty-Years-of-Women-Peace-and-Security-National-Action-Plans_Report_Final_Web.pdf
- ³ See for example, Guerrina, R., and K. Wright. (2016). Gendering Normative Power Europe: Lessons of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda." *International Affairs*, 92(2), 293–312; Wright, K. A. (2016). NATO'S adoption of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: Making the agenda a reality. *International Political Science Review*, 37(3), 350–361; Trojanowska, B.K. (2025). The regionalization of Women, Peace and Security: ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum, *International Affairs*, 101(6), 2173–2191; Davies, S. E., Nackers, K., & Teitt, S. (2014). Women, Peace and Security as an ASEAN priority. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68(3), 333–355; Kirby, P., and Shepherd, L.J. (2021). Women, Peace, and Security: Mapping the (Re)Production of a Policy Ecosystem, *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 6(3), 1–25.
- ⁴ Coe, B., & Nash, K. (2023). *Regionalized Governance in the Global South* (Elements in International Relations). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ⁵ Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, 23 December 2003. Available at: <https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-relating-establishment-peace-and-security-council-african-union>
- ⁶ Shepherd, L.J. (2021). 'Listen to Women When Creating Peace Initiatives' in MacKenzie, M., & Wegner, N., (eds.), *Feminist Solutions for Ending War* (Pluto Press), 224.
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⁸¹ Press Release: AU Commission Concludes High-Level Workshop to Reinvigorate Women, Peace and Security Monitoring, African Union, 27 June 2025. Available at: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20250627/high-level-workshop-reinvigorate-women-peace-security-monitoring>

⁸² Amani Africa (2026). Fifteen Years of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at the AU Peace and Security Council. Special Research Report, 7. Available at: <https://amaniafrica-et.org/fifteen-years-of-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda-at-the-au-peace-and-security-council/>

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⁸⁴ Corporate thematic evaluation of UN Women's support to women's participation in peace processes, Independent Evaluation Service, UN Women, March 2025, 20. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/05/evaluation-corporate-thematic-evaluation-of-un-womens-support-to-womens-participation-in-peace-processes>.

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⁹⁵ Comoros, (Anjouan) 20/12/2003 Agreement on the Transitional Arrangements in the Comoros (Maroni Agreement). Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/618/>

⁹⁶ Sierra Leone 07/07/1990 Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) (Lome Agreement). Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/478/>

⁹⁷ Sudan, (Darfur) 05/05/2006 Darfur Peace Agreement. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/350/>

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¹⁰² States returning 100% share of peace agreements with gender references as a third party for less than 5 peace agreements are discounted from this comparative analysis (although they are shown in the chart) as such a small number of agreements does not demonstrate a consistent practice of implementing WPS through gender references.

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¹⁰⁴ Continental Results Framework, 23.

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¹⁰⁷ Somalia 06/09/2011 Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition in Somalia: Statement on Adoption of the Roadmap (Kampala Roadmap). Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/745/>

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¹²⁴ Ethiopia, (Tigray) 12/11/2022 Declaration of the Senior Commanders on the Modalities for the Implementation of the Agreement for a Lasting Peace Through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/2464/>

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¹²⁷ Democratic Republic of Congo 02/04/2003 Intercongolese Negotiations: The Final Act ('The Sun City Agreement'). Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/404/>

¹²⁸ Uganda 29/06/2007 Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/137/>

¹²⁹ Uganda 29/02/2008 Agreement on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, Juba, Sudan. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/685/>

¹³⁰ Uganda 22/02/2008 Implementation Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/agreements/695/>

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¹³⁵ Bell, C., Pospisil, J., and Wise, L. (Eds.). (2021). Local Peace Processes. The British Academy, London.

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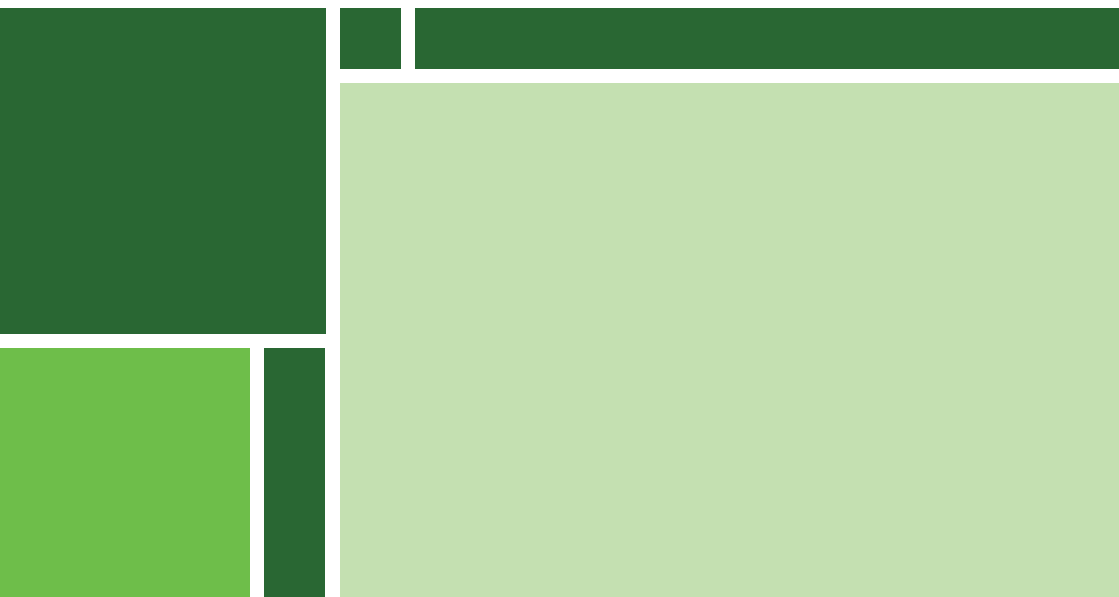
PeaceRep is a research consortium based at Edinburgh Law School. Our research is rethinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics, changing demands of inclusion, and changes in patterns of global intervention in conflict and peace/mediation/transition management processes.

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