

# STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN POLICING

Compendium of Institutional  
Policies, Programs and Initiatives  
Across the Globe

2023



**National Law School  
of India University**

**B E N G A L U R U**



The National Law School of India University was established in 1986 to pioneer legal education reform and anchor the transformation of the Indian legal system through research and policy interventions. It is dedicated to the realization of core constitutional values through a vital democracy committed to freedom and social justice and has been engaging with comprehensive legal system reform over the last three decades. As a result, NLSIU has unique credibility and legitimacy to shape this field. It works closely with the legal profession, the courts and the executive branch of government. This has included working on key legislation that has shaped India's development, whether it be laws ushering in economic liberalisation, technology policy or social welfare and justice. NLS has played a significant role in legal reform throughout its history, including criminal justice reform through contributions to the Malimath Committee Report and the Prevention of Atrocities Act. Its specialised research centers have been repeatedly called upon to shape laws and improve implementation in intellectual property, child rights, and environmental laws, among many others. NLS faculty and vice-chancellors have been members of key government advisory bodies and international fora across a diverse range of issues of pressing concern.

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# STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN POLICING

Compendium of Institutional Policies, Programs and Initiatives Across the Globe

2023

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For more information on the women in police project at NLSIU, see <https://www.nls.ac.in/projects/role-of-women-in-karnataka-police/>.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AFP</b>	Australian Federal Police
<b>AIM</b>	Action, Innovation and Modernization (Canada)
<b>APS</b>	Accelerated Promotion Scheme (Sierra Leone)
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>BAME</b>	Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (United Kingdom)
<b>BPWN</b>	Bangladesh Police Women Network
<b>CMF</b>	Comisaría de la Mujer y la Familia (police stations for women and family)
<b>CNP</b>	Cambodian National Police
<b>CMO</b>	Civil Military Operations
<b>DCAF</b>	Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces
<b>DEI</b>	Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
<b>DFID</b>	Department of International Development (United Kingdom)
<b>DIG</b>	Deputy Inspector General (Bangladesh)
<b>EE</b>	Employment Equity (Canada)
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUPOL COPPS</b>	EU Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support or
<b>GAD</b>	Gender and Development (The Philippines)
<b>GBA Plus</b>	Gender Based Analysis Plus (Canada)
<b>GSC</b>	Gender Steering Committee (State of Palestine)
<b>IAWP</b>	International Association of Women Police
<b>ICHR</b>	Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution (Canada)
<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
<b>LGBT+</b>	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans persons
<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan

<b>NPCC</b>	National Police Chief's Council (United Kingdom)
<b>NZP</b>	New Zealand Police
<b>PA</b>	Palestinian Authority
<b>PCP</b>	Palestinian Civil Police
<b>PPWN</b>	Palestinian Police Women's Network
<b>PCW</b>	Philippine Commission on Women
<b>PNP</b>	Philippine National Police
<b>PRP</b>	Police Reforms Programme (Bangladesh)
<b>PSED</b>	Public Service Equality Duty (United Kingdom)
<b>PSO</b>	Police and Protective Service Officers (Australia)
<b>PWC</b>	Police Woman Committee (Singapore)
<b>RCMP</b>	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
<b>SLP</b>	Sierra Leone Police
<b>SPF</b>	Singapore Police Force
<b>UAV</b>	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WAN</b>	Women's Advisory Network (New Zealand)

# Message from The Vice Chancellor

## National Law School of India University

The National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, was established to advance the constitutional project of building a democratic republic bounded by the rule of law. The University delivers on this purpose by educating the next generation of lawyers, undertaking pioneering research and crafting social and policy interventions grounded in core constitutional values. The constitution commits us to the successful transformation of a colonial police institution established for regime maintenance to one that is diverse, inclusive and serves common people. This revolutionary institutional transformation of policing requires several interventions. This Compendium of Institutional Policies, Programmes and Initiatives towards 'Strengthening the Role of Women in Policing' is a key contribution to a wider intervention on integrating women in policing underway at the University.

In the last two decades there has been an explosion of research on women and policing around the world. While early work focused on how women were policed, recent work has emphasized the role of women as police. While governments in India are committed to ensuring that one-third of the police institution comprises women, current data suggests that the figure is close to 12 per cent. As we bridge this gender gap, we must recognize that the successful inclusion and integration of women into the police will require the kinds of policies and programmes set out in this compendium that documents the rich global experience in this field.

Devyani Srivastava leads several initiatives and teams that research and intervene in policing in India. The substantive collaborations these teams have developed with the police administration in several states has allowed us to develop an empirically grounded appreciation for the immense challenge that the inclusion of women in policing poses. Devyani and Roshni have carefully put this compendium together as a resource that actors in the field can readily draw from as they work through these challenges. A big congratulations to both of them for publishing this compendium, and we look forward to their sustained engagement and contribution to this field.

**Prof (Dr) Sudhir Krishnaswamy,**  
**Vice Chancellor, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru**

# Message from The Director

## International Association of Women Police

The International Association of Women Police (IAWP) is a vibrant, dynamic and diverse organization with a global reach. Our members, who represent more than 70 countries and 27 affiliate organizations, form a strategic network of global resources working together in our mission to strengthen, unite and raise the capacity of women in policing internationally.

We represent the interests of policewomen internationally. Our aim is to see a world where police reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and where human rights are protected.

Research has long established the critical role women in policing play in building, restoring and maintaining trust with the communities we serve. It is known that women in policing use less force and less excessive force; are named in fewer complaints and lawsuits; are perceived by the communities as being more honest and compassionate; result in better outcomes for crime victims, particularly sexual assault cases; and make fewer discretionary arrests instead seeking alternative resolutions.

As we work to make our police institutions more inclusive and representative of the communities served, it is imperative that we ensure police policies and culture intentionally support the success of women officers throughout their careers. Only with proper internal assessment can we ensure that policies and culture reflect gender sensitivity and inclusion. Hiring of more female officers is but the first step. Retaining and training these officers for effective and successful careers as well as preparing them for advancement is essential. Our association is available to provide critical opportunities for training, mentoring, collaboration and networking. Enormous advantages can be gained by learning from our women police colleagues and there is great power in many people working together in unison for a common cause.

**Deborah Friedl,**  
**President, International Association of Women Police**

# Message from Dr Meeran Chadha Borwankar Indian Police Service *(Retired)*

Police being the most visible symbol of governance must represent the populace it serves. The need for diversity in law enforcement agencies, thus, is vital for enlisting participation of all segments of the society and responding to their requirements. Presence of women in uniform has gradually gained acceptance nationally and internationally, yet there are only a few efforts to systematically study their induction, retention and service conditions.

Union government and most states in India have reserved up to 33 per cent seats for women in police. They currently make nearly 12 per cent of Police and Central Police Military Forces (CPMFs) in the country. A detailed study of their working conditions and levels of satisfaction along with evaluation of women police in other countries would be immensely beneficial. Good practices being followed by different states in the country and across the globe and their replication would aid in gender inclusion.

Therefore, information about how women in other countries are coping with in a predominantly male profession, how the system is utilizing their services, is of immense value to the police department and all stake-holders. It would be interesting to study whether women police leaders have established efficient networks and contributed to enhanced service delivery through formal and informal grids. The instant anthology has touched various such topics of concern.

I congratulate Devyani Srivastava, Roshni Kapoor and the National Law School, Bengaluru, for developing the compendium of institutional policies being implemented by different countries to strengthen the participation of women in police. Information from nine countries Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, New Zealand, State of Palestine, Sierra Leone, South Africa, United Kingdom and the ASEAN region is meaningfully compiled for policy makers to appreciate what is happening in other parts of the world and for practitioners to replicate some of the good practices at their level. Based mainly on review of secondary resources on internet, academic papers and policy decisions, the compilation collates global strategies regarding gender equality, respect and mainstreaming in police.

I am sure the compendium will serve as a valuable collection of common procedures and standards and facilitate cross learning and discussions.

**Dr Meeran Chadha Borwankar,  
Indian Police Service (Retired)**

# 01 ABOUT THE COMPENDIUM

## Background

Worldwide, the policy framework<sup>1</sup> governing gender equality in policing has made important gains over the past two decades. From evolution of targeted international instruments and standards to implementation of national gender policies, strategies and action plans, practical policy tools towards advancing women’s equitable role in policing are available. These measures stand out for being more comprehensive, context-specific and realistic, with due emphasis on systemic reform and gender mainstreaming to achieve cultural changes in police institutions.

Despite these efforts, challenges persist on the ground. For one, women remain very much underrepresented in policing. As of 2020, women comprised between 5 per cent to 30 per cent of the police across the globe<sup>2</sup>. The table below offers a glimpse into the range that prevails. 25 per cent representation is posited as a crucial take-off target for women as this is where they stop being a minority and begin to emerge as a critical mass necessary to drive change<sup>3</sup>. The figures indicate that while some countries have surpassed 25 per cent, most remain below 20 per cent.

Notably, there is no police institution in the world that has achieved gender parity. While women form close to half of every society’s population, this diversity is far from represented in the police. Moreover, representation of women in senior leadership and decision-making positions remains limited despite examples of women having risen to become police chiefs. Absence of and/or delayed attempts at implementing holistic policy measures for addressing systemic bias in deployment and promotions, inadequate

	Country	% Women
1	Latvia	37.4
2	Lithuania	36.12
3	Guyana	29.04
4	United Kingdom	28.61
5	Trinidad and Tobago	24.77
6	Serbia	23.22
7	Belgium	21.75
8	Malta	19.29
9	France	19.03
10	Singapore	18.08
11	Croatia	17.62
12	Slovakia	16.98
13	Barbados	16.44
14	Finland	16.29
15	Czech Republic	15.73
16	Poland	15.40
17	Chile	15.12
18	Denmark	14.43
19	Mexico	13.56
20	Slovenia	13.30
21	El Salvador	12.78
22	Honduras	10.34
23	Albania	9.60
24	Montenegro	9.34
25	Paraguay	7.97
26	Portugal	7.47
27	Bosnia and Herzegovina	7.31
28	Italy	7.13
29	Kazakhstan	6.86
30	Algeria	6.35

*Table 1: Percentage of women in police in 30 countries<sup>7</sup>*

support facilities, persistent harassment concerns, and in some countries, restrictive cultural norms are among key factors contributing to the proverbial glass ceiling for women in the police.

Moreover, even where the share of women has increased, persistent concerns about policing being a masculine domain, and discrimination and harassment of women within, continue to impede women's progress<sup>4</sup>. In the United Kingdom (UK), for instance, research from 2018 points to at least one third of senior women officers, within a particular sample, experiencing sexual harassment. Scholars in the UK have also noticed the retreat of a certain style of punitive policing, marked by a focus on community policing and evidence-based practice. Community-oriented policing was understood to be more conducive for the progress of policewomen; its retreat, with the likely resurgence of combative-style policing, could slow down the growth of women. Similarly, a review of sexual harassment<sup>5</sup> in the Victoria Police Service in Australia not only found wide-scale prevalence of sexual harassment but further

situated causes of sexual harassment as entrenched in police culture itself.

These experiences make it clear that increasing the share of policewomen alone will not yield positive outcomes. If police services are to fully experience the benefits of a gender diverse organization, institution-wide commitment and robust decision-making processes that value continuous assessment of progress are critical.

This compendium puts together a set of institutional policies and strategies drawn from countries around the world with a view to highlight different ways in which police institutions are working to achieve equality between policemen and women. The focus is on women in the first instance, recognizing that gender equality goes beyond women and requires measures aimed at members of all genders. The compendium rests on the belief that as a large government employer in any country, steps the police take towards women empowerment are bound to have spillover effects on integration of other diverse groups and communities as well.

Although progress on the ground remains slow and ridden with challenges, documenting and engaging with the evolving policy framework is important for several reasons. Policy formulations are indicative of both police leadership and government's intent towards gender equality at any given point. They activate real steps and benchmarks to reach gender diversity, as a crucial goal for improving policing overall. Also, policy frameworks can act as an important resource for mobilizing opinion and support across stakeholders including the government, police officers and the public. As police institutions around the world face concerted pressure to be gender-responsive, knowledge of measures being tried around the world can offer insights into innovative ways for overcoming identified barriers to equality.

## Aims and Objectives

This compendium's objectives include:

- To assist police institutions fulfill their obligations towards gender equality in policing;
- To inform research and policy

discussions on strengthening women's role in policing particularly for countries that are in the initial stages of formulating gender strategies and action plans;

- To encourage further research, monitoring and critical engagement with the institutional measures.

In examining institutional measures, the focus is limited to highlighting the principles, standards and processes laid down, be it of gender policies, strategies, action plans or mechanisms constituted for monitoring progress. It does not delve into implementation.

**Relevant definitions** (drawn from Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, 2001)<sup>6</sup>

**Gender** refers to the social attributes, opportunities and relationships associated with being male and female that are learned through socialization processes and are context and time specific. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.

**Gender equality** "refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights,

responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration – recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a ‘women’s issue’ but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.”

## Case Studies

Institutional strategies and initiatives from countries across the globe are featured in this compendium. The countries covered include: Argentina; Australia; Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region; Bangladesh; Canada; New Zealand; Sierra Leone; State of Palestine; South Africa; and the United Kingdom. These have been selected with a view to draw from multiple national contexts to highlight different ways in which police institutions can become more diverse and representative. The examples demonstrate efforts not only of increasing the number of policewomen

but also of changing organisational and management culture to value diversity, equality and inclusion. We consciously stay away from presenting “best practices” as we recognize and uphold the value of solutions rooted in specific national and cultural contexts. While the compendium provides guidance in the form of examples and checklists which borrow from good practices in different contexts, what may be relevant will differ across time and place and require context specific adaptation. Moreover, the compendium focuses on practices and processes that reflect a gender perspective understood as a way of seeing or analysing which looks at the impact of gender on people’s opportunities, social roles and interactions.

## Target audience

Within police institutions, this resource is aimed at senior officials, gender units and relevant officials who are interested in integrating a gender perspective into policy and operational aspects of police services. While police institutions are a key audience for this tool, it can be

used by a wider audience of civil society, research and advocacy organisations, researchers and organisations aiming to improve policing and gender equality.

## Methodology and Limitations

The compendium is based mainly on a review of secondary literature and resources. It relies on global policy and normative frameworks that often guide efforts at gender mainstreaming. It builds on this with referencing of research on gender equality and policing, including published academic articles, gender policies and strategic plans from police services across the world, and policy and advocacy material produced by civil society and development organisations. The study builds on data sources available in English due to language limitations of the research team. We acknowledge that there could be country specific data, or other material, which is available in a language other than English which could not be incorporated in this research.

# 02 CASE STUDIES





# ARGENTINA<sup>8</sup>

## Police in Argentina: Key Facts

- Argentina has several police institutions at the federal and provincial levels<sup>9</sup>. There are four at the federal level: Federal Police of Argentina (Policía Federal Argentina - PFA), Airport Security Police (Policía de Seguridad Aeroportuaria - PSA), Coast Guard of Argentina (Prefectura Naval Argentina) and National Gendarmerie (Gendarmería Nacional - border patrol)<sup>10</sup>. These come under the authority of the Ministry of Security.
- Each province and the capital city, Buenos Aires, has its own police.
- As of 2015, women made up 38 per cent of the Airport Security Police (PSA), 23 per cent of non-commissioned officers in the Federal Police (PFA), 18 per cent in the Gendarmerie and 9 per cent in the Coast Guard<sup>11</sup>.
- As of 2021, Buenos Aires City Police, of the capital city, had 41 per cent women.

This compendium mainly draws upon research led by Professor (Prof) Kerry Carrington, former head of the Center for Justice at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia, along with other scholars who have closely examined the rise and impact of women police stations in Argentina<sup>12</sup>.

Representation of women in policing in Argentina has had a chequered journey. Women first entered the police in 1947 in 'female detachment units' where they were responsible for "surveillance of women accused of minor crimes and contraventions<sup>13</sup>." In 1956, when

the military dictatorship took over power, women were removed from all public offices, including the police. Over 30 years later, the end of military dictatorship in 1988 led the country to establish its first women-led police station or the Comisaría de la Mujer, subsequently renamed as Comisaría de la Mujer y la Familia (CMF) which translates to Police Stations for Women and Family. Staffed and led mainly by policewomen, CMFs have proliferated across the country in the past 35 years since their establishment and have contributed to a significant rise in the representation of women in policing.

*Source: <https://www.globalissues.org/news/2015/03/25/20786>*



# Police Station for Women and Family, Buenos Aires

(Comisaría de la Mujer y la Familia -CMF)

Argentina is among several countries across the global south to have women-led police stations set up to respond to gender-based violence. CMFs were constituted not only to improve the police's institutional response to family and domestic violence against women, but equally for their potential to re-build public trust in the police organisation whose reputation stood badgered due to its documented role in perpetuating state terrorism during the military dictatorship. The capital city of Buenos Aires saw its first CMF in 1988.

Prof Carrington and others point out that the spread of CMFs was slow at the beginning. Between 1988 and 2010, Buenos Aires had just 37 CMFs. From 2010 onwards, they grew rapidly in number, prompted by legislative reforms that expanded the role of women in policing. Key among the reforms

include the introduction in 2009 of the *Comprehensive protection law to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women* (Law No.26485) and the inclusion in 2012 of femicide as a separate offence in the criminal code. These legislations led to the constitution of 91 additional CMFs, taking the total number to 128 by 2018, and 131 by 2021.

In terms of the impact of CMFs on the rise of women police officers, two features stand out. First, CMFs have a much broader mandate than the traditional police stations in that they serve as a “gateway for integrated services in policing, legal support, counselling, and housing and financial advice to help address the multidimensional problems that survivors of domestic and sexual violence typically experience<sup>14</sup>.” Accordingly, the staff serving at CMFs are also drawn from diverse fields including police, social workers, psychologists and lawyers. Providing information about gender violence, even when the victim may not seek formal legal proceedings,

constitutes a large part of the CMFs role. In fact, the 2009 national law requires CMFs to undertake a range of preventive work in order to raise public consciousness about gender violence. This work can include “collaborating with religious organizations, women’s groups, schools, hospitals, neighbourhood and community groups<sup>15</sup>.” Prof Carrington and the others have identified three broad preventive strategies CMFs have used<sup>16</sup>: working with women and their families (including perpetrators) to prevent re-victimisation and increase access to justice; to partner with the community to prevent violence by addressing cultural norms that sustain violence against women; and working with other organisations to implement specific measures for preventing gender violence.

The second notable feature of the CMFs is that they have a separate command hierarchy within the Ministry of Security. They are headed by a separate commissioner, who since 2015 has been designated the same rank and

level as the other 12 commissioners, or heads of units, reporting directly to the minister. This means staff serving in the CMF have their own zone and station-level sub-commander and commanders they report to, thereby allowing women to follow a separate career path. Prof Carrington’s research suggests this has “opened a new job market for women and improved promotion prospects of women in policing.”

In other words, serving in the CMF seems to provide ample scope for women to take on challenging roles, get recognized and rewarded for good performance and reduce dependancy on other policing roles in order to grow in their career. While a more detailed analysis of CMFs structure, organization, functioning and training will provide greater clarity on their impact on women police, these two factors alone – broader mandate and a separate command hierarchy – point to strategies with significant advantages to women’s participation and contribution to policing.



# AUSTRALIA

## Police in Australia: Key Facts

- Australia consists of one national police institution, the Australian Federal Police, as well as separate state police institutions.
- The Australian Federal Police (AFP) was formed in 1979 under the Australian Federal Police Act, 1979, and is responsible for enforcing Commonwealth law and protecting Commonwealth interests across the country.<sup>17</sup>
- Each of the six federated states (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia) plus the Northern Territory maintains a separate police institution responsible for policing at the state and local levels.
- According to 2019 AFP data, there are a total of 6695 staff in the police. 2537 or 38 per cent of the total workforce are women. Men represent 4156 or 62 per cent of the workforce<sup>18</sup>.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/AusFedPolice/posts/we-celebrate-the-women-of-the-australian-federal-police-today-on-international-w/328725405960457/> (right)

The political leadership in Australia envisions 50 per cent representation of women in all workforces including the police. Police institutions in the country have adopted a range of strategies towards achieving the targets. Some of the strategies are examined below.

## Diversity Audit of the Australian Federal Police

In 2016, the Australian Federal Police commissioned an independent review of its organizational culture with the aim of “informing and supporting

the development of AFP’s long term diversity and inclusion strategy with a focus on gender<sup>19</sup>.” At the time, women were less than 20 per cent of sworn uniformed staff and only 15 of 84 senior leaders were women<sup>20</sup>. Andrew Colvin (Australian Police Medal (APM); Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)), who was the Commissioner of Police at the time, remarked;

**“The data is clear, and so is the need for action”**

The review involved an assessment of the challenges facing women in the service, taking gender as “just



the starting point, not the end game” because “women make up over half of the Australian population<sup>21</sup>.” Getting it right for women was considered crucial for benefits to flow to other underrepresented communities.

This is important, first, because the goal of gender diversity is situated within a broader diversity and inclusion commitment that recognizes the value of “diversity of gender, of culture, of skill, of education, of thought” to transform the AFP into a national organisation reflecting the society it serves. Second, the goal of gender diversity and equality was linked fundamentally to improving police capability by tapping into diverse skills, talent and experiences within the workforce. In the words of Andrew Colvin:

**“Diversity is not simply a human resource aspiration for the AFP, it is a capability necessity<sup>22</sup>.”**

The review culminated with a comprehensive report with a series of recommendations to overcome

the “impediments to attracting and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce” and assist the AFP to build a more inclusive organization. Notably, the police leadership accepted all recommendations:

**“As Commissioner I accept each of the recommendations in this report. I commit to ensuring that each of them is implemented. My leadership team and I are unified in our resolve to deliver on these outcomes for the AFP<sup>23</sup>.”**

## Key Recommendations from the Independent Review

### “Cultural Change: Gender Diversity and Inclusion in Australian Federal Police”

The report of the review put forward recommendations under six principles :

#### **Principle 1: Successful and sustainable reform depends on strong and courageous leadership.**

- Establishing ownership of the Commissioner and the Executive Leadership Committee on findings from the project, and steering cultural changes and reforms within the organisation.

- Establishing a Cultural Reform Board that is chaired by the Commissioner, is gender balanced; and is representative of leaders from across functional areas or cultural reforms.
- Implementing personal leadership action plans; and fostering a culture of respect for difference among colleagues and other members.

#### **Principle 2: Talent promotion requires challenging the biases and assumptions underpinning the traditional view of merit and ensuring effective performance management.**

- Ensuring recruitment teams, promotion panels and the candidate pools are gender-balanced.
- Ensuring all staff on extended leave, including parental and career leave, are notified of promotion and other relevant opportunities.
- Ensuring leaders at all levels are held accountable for the culture, health and wellbeing of their teams and functional areas, including in relation to effectively managing staff and appropriately responding to unacceptable behaviour such as bullying and sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.

#### **Principle 3: Increasing the number of women requires increasing opportunities.**

- Ensuring a sustained recruitment campaign for women Police and Protective Service Officers (PSO).
- Developing flexible career paths

for employees across Police, PSO and unsworn roles in the AFP.

- Ensuring a gender balance in key operational roles (for example, Senior Investigator, Office Manager, Case Manager/Officer, Counter Terrorism, Serious and Organised Crime); and selecting candidates for all acting up opportunities.
- Creating opportunities for training members who have taken extended leave to facilitate their reintegration, including those who have taken leave to further their professional development and those who have taken time out for caring responsibilities.

#### **Principle 4: Flexible work practices are a key capability driver.**

- Adopting a ‘Flex by Default’ approach across the organisation.
- Training supervisors to manage flexible workers and teams.
- Providing proper infrastructure for employees to work flexibly (e.g., remote access, laptops, mobile phones) and people management systems.
- ‘Stay in touch’ and return to work plan for members on extended leave.

#### **Principle 5: Sexual harassment, sexual abuse and bullying damages individuals, divides teams and undermines capability.**

- Establishing a specialised and independent Office in the AFP to provide support to complainants and to investigate and address sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

**Principle 6: Adequate resourcing and regular monitoring and evaluation is essential to measuring and sustaining progress.**

- Progress on cultural reform and the implementation of the recommendations should be measured through a systematic metrics.

The recommendations led to numerous transformations in the Australia Federal Police aimed at addressing the underrepresentation of women. AFP started holding recruitment drives targeted only at women. It held its first such drive in 2017 that involved targeted marketing campaigns including extensive use of social media to attract women recruits, and organising interactive sessions with the police leadership where concerns of women applicants regarding career opportunities could be addressed<sup>24</sup>. Additionally, AFP also took other complementary steps in order to make a positive difference including:

- Trialing de-identified promotion/recruitment processes whereby applications are submitted without name and gender specified to address and minimise unconscious bias;
- Reviewing entry-level recruitment process to ensure there are no

unintended barriers for female applicants;

- Mandating gender balance in selection panels;
- Reviewing position titles, applicant information packs and job descriptions prior to advertising to assess for gendered and inclusive language;
- Creating an applicant register of interest to maintain contact with candidates interested in policing and protection roles;
- A refreshed approach to testing the cognitive ability of applicants for entry-level positions by providing more regular opportunities for candidates to complete the testing in more locations across Australia.

Reports indicate that these efforts have yielded positive results. While the overall representation of women in the AFP has increased from 35 per cent in 2016 to 38 per cent in 2019, females in leadership positions has increased from 24.1 per cent in 2015 to 33.6 per cent in 2019<sup>25</sup>.

## Gender Equality Strategies and Action Plans by State Police Institutions

States have either developed broader diversity and inclusion strategies, such as the “New South Wales Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2020-2023” which specifies measures for achieving gender equality<sup>26</sup>, or have specific gender strategies and action plans for achieving their targets, such as the “Equal, Safe and Strong: Victoria Police Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2030”. In both cases, intersectionality is strongly emphasised as a way to recognize the layers of discrimination based on different characteristics that may limit and/or harm a person.

### The Gender Equality Act 2020, Victoria, Australia

The Gender Equality Act came into effect on 31 March 2021 in Victoria and commits defined entities to work towards achieving gender equality through workplace audits, gender action plans and regular monitoring and impact assessments. The Victoria Police

gender strategies and action plans are rooted in the principles of the Gender Equality Act.

Victoria Police’s 10-year strategy is accompanied by the Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2024, the first of three action plans, to support the implementation of the gender strategy. A strong feature of the action plan is the governance framework it suggests for driving the implementation of the gender strategy<sup>27</sup>. The framework consists of three mechanisms:

- Gender Equality Outcomes Committee consisting of senior leaders that meet quarterly to “oversee progress, monitor accountability and strengthen a shared sense of ownership to gender equality outcomes”
- Gender Equality Outcomes Working Group consisting of senior managers from command and departments that will meet quarterly to “advise on progress against milestones and identify opportunities for alignment and collaboration across the organisation”

- Command/Departmental Working Group chaired by each senior manager to drive the implementations of their actions with their project owners.

## Dedicated webpages on women in police

State police institutions in Australia actively use their websites to promote awareness of their gender diversity goals and progress achieved. The websites include dedicated pages on women in policing where information about the police institution's gender strategies, action plans as well as other initiatives and promotional material are easily accessible. The pages have several noteworthy features. They contain messages from police chiefs articulating personal reflections on the importance of gender diversity. Shane Patton, Chief Commissioner, Victoria Police has this to share:

**“In over 40 years of policing, I have never been asked how I would balance my parenting responsibilities with my policing duties. I have never been told I was promoted solely because of my gender. Nor have I ever been made to feel unsafe because of persistent and unwanted attention by my manager. Throughout my career I have had the benefit of working with many outstanding women in Victoria Police. Since becoming Chief Commissioner, I have been able to reflect on how very different our experiences have been<sup>28</sup>.”**

Another interesting feature is a timeline marking 100 years of women in policing within the respective police institutions<sup>29</sup>. This is a powerful way of communicating the contribution of women in policing but also highlighting

the gaps that remain, both in policies and practice. The websites also contain special videos and articles showcasing the work of women officers. In 2021-22, South Australia Police developed a series of videos to address misconceptions around women in policing and highlight the work of women leaders<sup>30</sup>. Similarly, Tasmania Police showcases the work of longest serving female officers and female inspectors<sup>31</sup>.

Such measures play a crucial role in conveying the intent of the leadership in supporting women and the value accorded to their work in service.

## Australasian Council of Women and Policing Inc.

The Australasian Council of Women and Policing Inc. is an independent body comprising of members from the community as well as men and women from within police institutions working

to improve women in policing<sup>32</sup>. It was formed in 1997 as an outcome of the First Australasian Women in Policing Conference that was held in Sydney in 1996. The body focuses on improving policing services provided to women, improving opportunities and outcomes for women within policing and participating in the global network of women in policing. The body organises various initiatives such as the Annual National Excellence in Policing Awards; Conferences on Australasian Women and Policing; and publishing the Journal of Women and Policing.

A forum that brings together like-minded individuals working towards a common goal can play an important role in building knowledge of, and mobilising support and understanding for, improving the role of women in policing. By facilitating regular sharing of information, ideas and experiences, the forum provides a platform that encourages professional and personal development.



# ASEAN Region

## Police in ASEAN: Key Facts

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) consists of ten countries: Brunei; Cambodia; Indonesia; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Myanmar; The Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; and Vietnam.
- Policing varies considerably across the region in terms of its history, organizational structure and practices. Most of the ASEAN countries have a centralised national police institution functioning under the concerned government ministry. Vietnam remains the only country where its police, the People's Public Security of Vietnam, is part of its armed forces, the Vietnam People's Armed Forces.
- Women constitute between five to 20 per cent of the law enforcement agencies across ASEAN.

	Country	Percentage of women in law enforcement
1	Indonesia	6
2	Cambodia	8
3	Myanmar	13
4	Vietnam	15
5	Thailand	16
6	Brunei	17
7	The Philippines	17
8	Malaysia	18
9	Singapore	19
10	Lao's People Democratic Republic	20

*Table 2: Percentage of women in law enforcement in ASEAN countries (as of 2020)<sup>35</sup>*

ASEAN region is witnessing increased commitment towards improving gender diversity in law enforcement, both at the regional as well as individual country level. A 2020 report titled "Women in law enforcement in the ASEAN region" put together by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with cooperation from each member state police institution, reinforces the interest on issues surrounding women in policing<sup>34</sup>. The report is the first attempt

to highlight the current status of women police in the region. It presents a comparative assessment of both the barriers that continue to prevent women from playing an equitable role as well as good practices and initiatives aimed at overcoming the challenges and promoting the role of women in policing. Select such measures are highlighted below.

## National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2017-2022<sup>35</sup>

The Philippines is among the few countries in the region (Indonesia being the other) to have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) on Women, Peace and security. It has had two NAPs so far, the latest being from 2017-2022. The second plan included specific commitment towards improving the status of women in security sector institutions, seen as vital for expanding women's role in the peace process and post-conflict development. Action Point 5 under the goal of empowerment and participation in the NAP included the

following specific measures:

1. Policy and comprehensive programmatic design formulated for the recruitment, training, deployment, and career-pathing of women in the military and the police.
2. Enabling institutional mechanisms for the strategic maximization of women's contribution in the security sector created.
3. Increased number of women in decision-making positions in the military and the police.
4. Increased number of women in leadership positions specific to in civil-military operations (CMO) and community-police relations (CPR).
5. Increased number of women participating in international committees and inter-state initiatives (e.g. UN Peacekeeping, ASEANAPOL, INTERPOL etc.) related to gender, conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and human trafficking.

Recent examples of women being promoted to leadership positions in the Philippines National Police are indicative of how policy frameworks such as the NAP can encourage, and drive, institutional reforms. Former police chief, General Dibold Sinas who served as the chief from November 2021 till May 2022 was given orders to have more women in higher positions in the police organization<sup>36</sup>. This led to women being given key positions such as police station chief and city police director, among other leadership roles.

### The Magna Carta of Women, 2009, Republic of the Philippines<sup>37</sup>

The Magna Carta of Women, 2009, is an extensive legislation that provides a holistic framework for the protection, promotion and realization of women's rights and equality in the Philippines. It provides definition of terms such as gender equality, substantive equality, gender mainstreaming and temporary special measures that can guide strategic planning and interventions at different levels within state agencies and civil society. It recognizes the state as the primary duty-bearer in upholding and respecting women's rights and in ensuring protection to women against any form of discrimination. It further elucidates various rights of women that

includes the right to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes in government in order to fulfill their role as agents of development and nation-building.

Sec 9 (a) specifically calls for an incremental increase in the recruitment and training of women in the police (among other state agencies) till women constitute 50 per cent of the total personnel.

Section 15 further elaborates:

*"The State shall pursue appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination of women in the military, police, and other similar services, including revising or abolishing policies and practices that restrict women from availing of both combat and noncombat training that are open to men, or from taking on functions other than administrative tasks, such as engaging in combat, security-related, or field operations. Women in the military shall be accorded the same promotional privileges and opportunities as men, including pay increases, additional remunerations and benefits, and awards based on their competency and quality of performance. Towards this end, the State shall ensure that the personal of women shall always be respected.*

*Women in the military, police, and other similar services shall be provided with the same right to employment as men on equal conditions. Equally, they shall be accorded the same capacity as men to act in and enter into contracts, including marriage.*

*Further, women in the military, police, and other similar services shall be entitled to leave benefits such as maternity leave, as provided for by existing laws."*

## Gender policies, strategies and action plans by police institutions

Apart from UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans, some police agencies have also developed specific policies and frameworks for promoting gender equality. The Cambodian National Police, for instance, has a policy framework for promoting gender equality and has established a Gender Working Group. The police have worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Cambodian National Council of Women to develop five-year action plans, with an indicator that specifically refers to increasing the recruitment of female officers<sup>38</sup>.

These measures have been effective in driving higher recruitment of women in the police. In 2019, a high-ranking male officer from the training department said that women comprised approximately 20 per cent of officers in police training in Cambodia<sup>39</sup>.

**Women leaders would better understand the situation of**



Cambodia law enforcement officials at Slem Reap Workshop on Gender and Violence Against Women. Source: <https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/cambodia/2012/11/child-sex-tourism-crimes/story.html>

female police officers and the hardships of women police officers. The female leaders would share the sentiments of the other female subordinates' female officers. They would understand better the needs of female police officers. For example, if women have limited knowledge they will be sent for training. They would give women more opportunities to do field work and narrow the gap between women and men police officers (female officer, Cambodia)<sup>40</sup>.

## Gender and Development Focal Points, Philippine National Police

In 2003, the Philippines National Police Commission, a constitutional body mandated to administer the Philippine National Police (PNP)<sup>41</sup>, laid down guidelines for establishing Gender and Development (GAD) mechanisms within the PNP<sup>42</sup>. The guidelines provide for the PNP to constitute GAD Focal Points at the national, regional and provincial levels comprising of senior ranking police officers to be assisted with a Technical Secretariat for carrying out

various functions. The Focal Points are mainly responsible for identifying and addressing gender issues and concerns affecting their respective jurisdictions, and coordinating with other stakeholders to implement targeted action plans.

Their responsibilities include:

- Developing and delivering gender sensitivity programs;
- Addressing the concerns of women police personnel;
- Mainstreaming gender concerns in all PNP programs/activities;
- Ensuring the participation of both women and men in the PNP development agenda;
- Ensuring prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace;
- Conducting gender sensitivity training; and
- Ensuring equal opportunities for policewomen.

Having a multi-tiered structure within the police institution, with responsibility for implementing the objectives of gender equality as identified in various national laws and policies, is fundamental to achieving gender-responsive police services. The GAD guidelines are a

promising example with relevance across jurisdictions particularly on ways to institutionalise gender mainstreaming within police services.

## Technical collaborations to promote gender mainstreaming in police

As of 2021, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) is collaborating with the Philippine National Police (PNP) for intensifying gender mainstreaming programs and improving the capacity of the police in providing gender-responsive services to women and girls<sup>43</sup>. Through this collaboration the PCW will also provide technical assistance to the PNP on gender and development programs such as gender analysis, training of trainers, budgeting, and workshops with experts on matters related to gender inclusion.

In a press brief, the executive director of the PCW mentions<sup>44</sup>:

**“With this partnership, PCW commits to work with the PNP to ensure that gender issues of both men and women police officers, including non-commissioned officers and non-uniformed personnel, and of course the general public, especially women and girls are brought to the mainstream and addressed accordingly. We are honored to be working with a committed agency such as PNP towards gender equality and women’s empowerment”.**

*PCW Executive Director Atty. Kristine Rosary E. Yuzon-Chaves*

## Institutional push towards increasing women in leadership positions

Poor representation in senior positions remains a gap. As the 2020 report points out, ASEAN is yet to see a female police chief. The highest-ranking woman officer

is mostly in the middle management positions, where too, they are greatly outnumbered. Concerted efforts are underway at least in some countries to promote women police leaders.

In Singapore, the police institution encourages managers at different levels to support women officers avail of different opportunities in order to advance their careers. For instance, women police have benefitted from opportunities available to pursue higher studies and attain specialised degrees. This has helped recognize talent among women officers who may be denied such opportunities in the normal course, knowingly or unknowingly. Illustratively, a female officer has been at the helm of developing robotics and unmanned systems capabilities to augment police operations, an effort that subsequently led to the setting up of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) unit in 2019. It is worth noting that the Singapore Police has seen a 50 per cent increase in number of female officers in leadership positions since 2011 and 21 per cent increase in specialist units such as the traffic police, police coast guard, special

operations Command and the security command<sup>45</sup>. Women today are also holding important strategic planning posts within SPF, such as the major security events division responsible for overseeing major national events<sup>46</sup>. In 2018, Florence Chua became the first female deputy commissioner (Intelligence and Investigation) along with serving as the concurrent director of the criminal investigation department<sup>47</sup>.

In Cambodia, a strong institutional push resulted in an increase in the number of women promoted to positions such as deputy heads of units and departments<sup>48</sup>. Similarly, in Indonesia, female officers shared the positive impact of the women empowerment programme established under the human resource department<sup>49</sup>.

## Community outreach measures

Police institutions have taken different initiatives by way of encouraging women to join the police. The Philippines National Police conducted a public

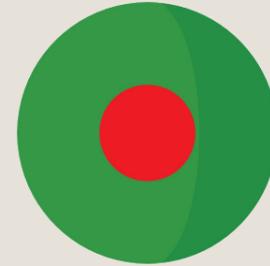
survey to assess the level of interest among women in the community to join the police<sup>50</sup>. The survey showed that the PNP was receiving a high number of applications from women, much more than the institution had the capacity to absorb. The positive results of the survey contributed towards the legislative proposal to increase reservation of women in police recruitment, training and education to 15 per cent for an initial five-year period, and thereafter to 20 percent<sup>51</sup>. The Singapore Police Force holds a one-day reception especially for women students<sup>52</sup>. It provides an opportunity for pre-university students to learn about the careers in the SPF. Students get an opportunity to learn the everyday functioning of the police by visiting different branches of the police. They also get an opportunity to interact with women police officials and learn about their first-hand experience.

## Women’s associations and networks

Associations and networks of women in law enforcement are beginning to take shape in the ASEAN countries. The

Singapore Police Force has constituted a Police Woman's Committee (PWC) headed by a senior female officer. Little is available in the public domain about its constitution and impact but the Singapore Police Force highlighted the role of the PWC in serving as a voice for women officers while marking 70 years of women in policing in 2019<sup>53</sup>. Its purpose includes serving as a forum for women officers to share their concerns and experiences and spearheading activities to better support women officers.

In Lao People's Democratic Republic and Vietnam, women's unions play a crucial role in supporting women's career advancement. In these countries, the unions form part of government structures and are national entities with institutional branches, including police branches. As the 2020 report (women in law enforcement in ASEAN region) points out, "these structures provide opportunities for women to gain access to leadership positions and develop management skills in administrative or policy fields<sup>54</sup>."



# BANGLADESH

## Police in Bangladesh: Key Facts

- Bangladesh Police is responsible for policing in the country. There is only one police institution.
- Women began working in the Bangladesh Police in 1974 after independence.
- As of August 2021, there are 13,402 policewomen in Bangladesh, constituting 7.10 per cent of the institution<sup>55</sup>.
- Bangladesh is among the top contributors of female police officers to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations<sup>56</sup>.
- As of October 2022, 150 female officers are working across four UN peace keeping operations including Darfur, Mali, DR Congo and South Sudan.

In Bangladesh, increasing the representation of women in policing has formed part of a broader national effort aimed at improving policing overall. The government of Bangladesh instituted a Police Reforms Programme (PRP) in 2006 with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Kingdom’s Department of International Development (DFID)<sup>57</sup>. Initially implemented from 2006-2009 followed by a second phase from 2009-2014, the objectives of the PRP were:

**“Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Bangladesh Police by supporting key areas of access to justice; including crime prevention, investigations,**

*Source: <https://www.bpwn.org.bd/>*



**police operations and prosecutions; human resource management and training; and future directions, strategic capacity and oversight”.**<sup>58</sup>

The PRP recognized gender equality as a strategic goal and identified a series of measures such as the development of a gender policy, promotion of gender awareness training, and institutionalised support mechanisms such as the Bangladesh Police Women Network, for achieving increased representation of women in the police institution. The efforts led to a sharp rise in the percentage of women in Bangladesh Police, from 1.87 per cent in 2007 to 4.63 per cent by 2013 to 7.10 per cent by 2021. Of these measures, this section

focuses on the BPWN as it stands out as among the most organised professional networks supporting the growth of women in the police.

## Bangladesh Police Women Network (BPWN)

Constituted in 2008, the BPWN aims to provide leadership for achieving national and global objectives for women’s development through capacity building and professional skill development of women police. An important feature of the network is its written constitution available in English and Bangla (national language) that defines its structure, goals and functions<sup>59</sup>. Having a written constitution lends greater credibility and sustainability to the network’s efforts. In fact, the multi-tiered structure laid down for “efficient management and supervision of the work of the network” further testifies to efforts at institutionalising the platform. The structure includes:

- The General Council, consisting of all policewomen in Bangladesh

Police who serve as members of the network, that shall meet at least once a year and where members can submit and discuss proposals for work to strengthen women police in the country;

- The Executive Council consisting of 33 members elected from among the General Council that is responsible for management of the network’s functions;
- The Advisory Council consisting of police officers of the rank of additional inspector general of police (all officers of this rank), joint secretary (Police) of the Ministry of Home Affairs, joint secretaries of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and of the Ministry of Social Welfare, and police women officers as stipulated.

Over the years, the network has made consistent efforts at supporting and strengthening the role of women police in the country through various initiatives, such as<sup>60</sup>:

- Setting up range and divisional coordination committees to facilitate better communication across the rank and file;

- Holding regular consultations and workshops with women police to facilitate information sharing, understand service-related challenges and identify solutions;
  - Promoting awareness about the role and contribution of women police through regular interactions at the police training institutes;
  - Instituting a special award known as the “Bangladesh Police Woman Award” with the support and initiative of the Bangladesh Police to recognize the role of women police;
  - Conducting welfare activities such as blood donation and distribution of aid in flood affected areas;
  - Holding regular legal awareness sessions on violence against women;
  - Serving as a platform for facilitating the growth and training of women police through affiliation with and participation in international training institutes and programs;
  - Conducting awareness programmes in schools and universities;
  - Engaging with the police and political leadership for providing facilities such as daycare for women police;
  - Engaging with the police leadership to push for deployment of women police in varied operational roles;
  - Developing and maintaining a database of women police in the country;
  - Holding national conferences bringing together women police from different units across the country to facilitate a collective dialogue;
  - Creation of a dedicated BPWN helpline number to address specific concerns and grievances of women police.
- Beyond Bangladesh, the BPWN is also playing an active role in the growth and promotion of the International Association of Women Police (IAWP) that works to support the role of women police globally. Several senior women officers from Bangladesh have served/ are serving as regional coordinators of the IAWP. The BPWN continued

operating despite the UNDP-led PRP coming to an end in 2015, which ended the financial support for BPWN. In 2021, the network put out its strategic plan 2021-2023 which identifies financial sustainability as one of its core priorities.

## Bangladesh Police Women Network Strategic Plan 2021-23<sup>61</sup>

The 2021–2023 Strategic Plan defines the network’s goal to address gender inequalities within the police institution by increasing participation, representation, contribution, and progression of women. The strategic plan lays down several key interventions for the network under five broader strategic aims, as shown below:

	Strategic Aims	Action points/targets for BPWN
1	<b>To maximise the contribution of women within Bangladesh Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify gender focal points within every police unit to strengthen BPWN’s presence beyond Dhaka</li> <li>• Advocate for development and implementation of gender sensitive guidelines for Bangladesh Police</li> <li>• Identify decision making bodies within the Bangladesh Police with no female representation and push for “a seat at the table”</li> <li>• Monitor and push for maintaining gender-disaggregated data within the force on a range of issues</li> <li>• Push for a Deputy Inspector General (DIG) post to be created for Gender Affairs</li> <li>• Establish a network of male peer to peer champions to raise awareness of gender issues</li> </ul>
2	<b>To increase the representation of women in Bangladesh police, across all ranks and departments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for female representation in recruitment committees</li> <li>• Highlight women police role models to attract more women</li> <li>• Advocate for gender equality training to be delivered to all officers</li> <li>• Advocate for zero tolerance policy of harassment</li> <li>• Implement senior leadership training for all women in higher ranks</li> </ul>

3	<b>To support the development and progression of women throughout Bangladesh Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver professional skills training to all women police</li> <li>• Push for separate funding for BPWN under the Bangladesh Police annual budget and a coordinator position to support delivery of outcomes</li> <li>• Develop mentoring programs for women within Bangladesh Police</li> <li>• Develop links with other women police networks internationally</li> </ul>
4	<b>To promote an appropriate working environment for women within Bangladesh Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for uniform, infrastructure and equipment for policewomen that is “fit for purpose”</li> <li>• Implement specific guidelines for expectant mothers, breastfeeding, flexible working and menopause</li> <li>• Advocate for work-life balance guidelines for police officers</li> </ul>
5	<b>To maximise the contribution of BPWN in supporting Bangladesh Police to provide a gender responsive policing service, thereby improving the safety and security of women and girls within communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for Bangladesh Police to include gender as a core strategic objective</li> <li>• Carry out gender impact assessments on strategic plans and policies of Bangladesh Police</li> <li>• Advocate for improved content on gender based violence to be included in police training at all levels</li> <li>• Encourage women officers to actively conduct awareness sessions for women and girls on gender based violence</li> </ul>

It also acts as an important stepping stone for fulfilment of Bangladesh’s commitment toward Bangladesh National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security (2019–2022), in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 over a 3-year period.

Supporting the strategic program, Dr. Benazir Ahmed BPM (BAR), former Inspector General of Bangladesh Police who retired in September 2022, remarked that the strategic plan’s aims will strengthen women’s position within the Bangladesh police, maximise their potential and promote an appropriate working environment<sup>62</sup>. He went on to assert:

**“Women police officers of Bangladesh Police shall be more inspired, confident and**

**dedicated to serve through the implementation of this strategic plan.”**

To conclude, the BPWN provides a strong foundation for future progress. Its constitution defines its goals and objectives whereas the strategic planning process provides a roadmap on how the goals are to be achieved and evaluated. Its multi-tier administrative structure and regular training programs are geared towards deepening understanding of and support for gender equity across rank and file. Through continued support of the police leadership and adequate financial resources, it can drive institutional and cultural reform of the police institution to improve equity internally and deliver gender responsive police services to everyone in the country.



# CANADA

## Police in Canada: Key Facts

- The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is Canada's national police institution that delivers law enforcement and investigative services at the federal level as well as in eight provinces<sup>63</sup>. Ontario and Quebec provinces have their own police, as does Newfoundland province but the RCMP provides contract policing in many communities in Newfoundland.
- In Canada, women began regular policing duties in 1974.
- RCMP got its first female commissioner in 2006<sup>64</sup>.
- As of 2021, women constituted 22.4 per cent of the total police strength<sup>65</sup>.

Gender mainstreaming in Canada, too, is part of broader strategic efforts on diversity and inclusion aimed at addressing systemic bias and implementing equitable and inclusive workplace practices within the police. These efforts have included deeper assessments and audits of the internal culture and governance of police institutions in Canada; development of equity, diversity and inclusion strategies and time-bound action plans; and creation of dedicated units for coordinating efforts and monitoring progress against targets laid down. These provide robust policy and institutional frameworks within which gender mainstreaming initiatives are located and need to be understood. This section focuses on the initiatives of Canada's federal police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), on gender mainstreaming.

## Gender and Respect Action Plan 2013, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)<sup>66</sup>

One of the early initiatives of the RCMP on gender mainstreaming was its Gender and Respect Action Plan released in 2013 (hereafter the 2013 action plan). It laid down specific actions for addressing concerns around harassment of and discrimination against women at workplace within the RCMP. It was an outcome of problems identified within the RCMP's internal culture by several studies including a government-appointed Task Force in 2007<sup>67</sup> along with other internal RCMP surveys<sup>68</sup>. It set out 37 actions for the RCMP to take under eleven broad themes and also

specified measures for monitoring their progress. Some of the main themes and action points are re-produced below:

Themes	Action points
<b>Addressing harassment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish new policies and guides</li> <li>• Reduce average length of complaints through new central oversight and administration of process</li> </ul>
<b>Building respectful workplaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize forums at national and provincial levels for discussion of employee issues</li> <li>• Establish Respectful Workplace programs</li> <li>• Update the Harassment at Workplace training</li> <li>• Establish a confidential process for employees to raise concerns or seek advice</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring transparency and objectivity in promotions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit selection rationales for fairness and consistency</li> <li>• Define “fit” and educate managers on its use</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting work life balance more effectively</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote work life balance options</li> <li>• Implement a mechanism for backfilling employees on parental leave</li> </ul>
<b>Recruiting targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment target of 35 per cent for women in the coming two financial years, and 50 per cent thereafter until the goal of 30 per cent female representation is achieved</li> </ul>
<b>Attracting women from diverse backgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus recruiting efforts for employment equity groups</li> <li>• Conduct advertising targeting individuals from EE groups</li> </ul>
<b>Assisting applicants in joining the force</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific outreach to applicants from employment equity groups</li> </ul>

Ten years since, the 2013 action plan is recognized as “an important step in the RCMP’s long journey towards culture change<sup>69</sup>.” Key takeaways of the action plan is its acknowledgment of the need for modernizing internal administrative policies and procedures, such as on recruitment and promotions, as a way to prevent gender bias, as also its equal emphasis on improving the informal culture of RCMP alongside targeted measures to increase female participation at various levels. Such multi-pronged approaches are central to gender mainstreaming.

## Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) within RCMP

In 2017, the RCMP created a dedicated unit known as the Action, Innovation and Modernization (AIM) unit for implementing Gender Based Analysis Plus within the institution<sup>70</sup>. The unit serves as a knowledge hub and is responsible for developing, coordinating and monitoring GBA plus initiatives within the RCMP in support of its equity, diversity and inclusion strategy<sup>71</sup>.

### What is Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus)

Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus or GBA+) is an analytical process adopted by the Government of Canada in 1995 to advance gender equality in Canada as part of its commitment under the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action. GBA Plus “provides a rigorous method for the assessment of systemic inequalities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives<sup>72</sup>.” It is a process that helps to understand how a particular issue or initiative impacts different people and accordingly put in place measures to mitigate barriers to

accessing or benefitting from the initiative. In doing so, it serves in the “development, implementation and monitoring of federal initiatives.”<sup>73</sup> The “plus” in GBA Plus stands for all intersection identity factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, and disability to reflect a broader diversity-sensitive approach as part of the GBA framework. Specific online training courses and modules have been developed to assist government departments implement GBA plus analysis to advance gender equality.

Specifically, the unit is responsible for a) providing centralized support and advice on the application of GBA Plus; b) liaising with government departments including the Department of Women and Gender Equality, central agencies and broader GBA Plus networks in Canada; c) involving subject matter experts in providing dedicated support to priority programs and initiatives; d) coordinating with focal points set up in each division or business line within RCMP to strengthen horizontal GBA Plus support; and e) engaging in activities to promote GBA plus training and awareness across the organization.

The unit’s role in coordinating GBA plus integration across programs within RCMP is particularly noteworthy. Each

program is required to report on a) whether the program collects sufficient data to enable it to monitor and/or report program impacts by gender and diversity, and b) actions being taken to enable future monitoring or reporting of program's impacts by gender and diversity along with timelines. This allows for systematic monitoring and review and creates a centralized repository that can further facilitate cross learning.

As of 2022, different divisions and business lines within RCMP were at different stages of integrating GBA plus in their work. For example, the Sensitive and Specialised Investigative Services, whose mandate includes overseeing gender-based violence crimes, reported that it is implementing a more automated, accurate and accessible reporting mechanism within the case management system specific to online child sexual exploitation investigations as a way to enhance its means of collecting statistics related to the crime types that fall within its mandate. Similarly, the National Cybercrime Coordination Unit reported that they would be able to provide advanced GBA plus statistical

data for their unit by 2023-24. The Technical Investigation Services Branch on the other hand reported that they do not currently have mechanisms in place to collect this data and have asked the support of the AIM unit in reviewing their policies in order to bring them in line with GBA plus practices.

Six years following the creation of the AIM unit, the varying pace at which RCMP divisions are implementing GBA plus initiatives is indicative of the time it takes to drive institutional reforms in the police.

## Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

**“Harassment and discrimination have no place in the RCMP work place. Every one of our employees should feel confident they will be treated with dignity and**

**respect by their colleagues, managers and leaders.”**

*Commissioner of RCMP<sup>74</sup>*

Building on its efforts to foster organizational culture change, the RCMP took an important step in June 2021 of establishing an Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution (ICHR). The ICHR is a “centralized, independent unit, staffed by public servants, whose primary mandate is to facilitate the resolution of work place harassment and violence occurrences for RCMP employees, as well as other individuals working in RCMP work places, and ensure ongoing compliance with the Canada Labour Code’s Work place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations introduced in January 2021<sup>75</sup>.” The ICHR also offers support to victims of work place harassment, promotes awareness about the importance of respectful work place, delivers specialized training, and monitors the implementation of the investigators’ recommendations.

Notably, all investigations into occurrences of harassment and violence that the RCMP receives are carried out

## Definition of Harassment and Violence

The Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution defines harassment and violence as:

**“Harassment and violence means any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct, or comment<sup>78</sup>.”**

by external third party investigators. The RCMP recognizes this as fundamental to ensuring impartiality and to instilling confidence among its employees of their concerns and allegations being addressed in a fair and transparent manner<sup>76</sup>. The ICHR has entered into agreements with other government departments such as the Procurement and Public Services Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat to gain access to qualified investigators.

Within a year, by June 2022, the ICHR had already received 615 notices of occurrences including those pending from previous years before the center was established. Of these, 58 per cent were of abuse of authority, which

included behavior such as managers belittling, mocking or using inappropriate language with the employees or generally creating an environment where employees could not contribute ideas during meetings. The next most common complaint type was of discrimination at 43 per cent. This includes treating some members, particularly female members, differently. 29 per cent complaints were of interpersonal department which

includes behavior such as humiliating, demeaning, embarrassing comments or actions of bullying, spreading rumors, gossiping and intruding on a person’s privacy. Finally, allegations of sexual harassment made up 12 per cent of the complaints received. (Table 3)

To deal with the volume of complaints in a timely and effective manner, the RCMP has recognized the need to

Type of Complaint	Percentage of complaints
<b>Abuse of authority</b>	58%
<b>Discrimination</b>	43%
<b>Interpersonal department</b>	29%
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	12%

*Table 3: Types of complaints of harassment received by the Independent Center for Harassment Resolution, Royal Canadian Mounted Police<sup>79</sup>*

increase its investigation capacity in consultation with diverse stakeholders. Equally noteworthy is its efforts towards implementing restorative and preventive practices, such as providing management and employee training on creating respectful work places or training on informal dispute resolution, in order to prevent occurrences from happening in the first place. ICHR defines it as a “trauma-informed” approach driven by the aim of “providing a safe space for

the victims of work place harassment and violence, with a focus on the needs and experiences of those who access the resolution process<sup>77</sup>.”

Such an approach is aimed at tackling the attitudes, habits and assumptions that lie at the root cause of work place harassment and violence and can offer useful insights to police institutions across jurisdictions in ways to modernize their internal culture.



# NEW ZEALAND

## Police in New Zealand: Key Facts

- New Zealand Police is the main law enforcement institution of New Zealand. There are 12 police districts nationally which are administered from the police headquarters.
- As of 30th April 2021, women comprised 35.8 per cent of all New Zealand Police staff (including civilian) and 23.5 percent of the constabulary staff<sup>80</sup>. By 2022, the share of women in the constabulary had gone up to 25 percent.
- Women first joined the New Zealand Police in 1941, marking 75 years in 2016.

For the New Zealand Police, gender diversity forms a part of its broader goal of diversifying workforce capabilities and capacity that is recognized as fundamental to achieving policing outcomes, both now and in the long term. Being one of the largest employers in the country with around 12,000 employees<sup>81</sup>, it recognizes the operational benefits of a diverse workforce in enhancing its own abilities and in deepening public trust that lies at the heart of policing by consent.

**“A more diverse workforce isn’t just the right approach, it is the only long term approach.”**

*New Zealand Police Four Year Plan (2017/18 – 2020/21)*<sup>82</sup>

*Source: <https://www.police.govt.nz/news/release/building-and-strengthening-women-blue>.*



## New Zealand Police Four Year Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21

New Zealand Police’s latest four year plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 lays down several measures for improving gender diversity within the police. These include:

- Reiterating the recruitment goal of having 50 per cent of all recruits being women<sup>83</sup>.
- A thorough review of the recruitment processes that consists of three phases: attraction, selection and training<sup>84</sup>. Improvements have been planned

for each phase. In order to attract the right people to meet its diversity targets, campaigns that position a police career as one that “meets the aspirations of people who care about their community, and want to make a positive difference<sup>85</sup>” have been identified. Similarly, a thorough review has been planned of the selection process and the onboard training programmes to identify and remove unnecessary delays or disincentives and make the processes quick and efficient.

- Utilising the services of the Women’s Advisory Network to “help, develop, support and empower women within police so that they are able to participate, contribute and thrive<sup>86</sup>.” This involves identifying and challenging barriers to recruitment, retention or development of women, establishing channels for staff to give feedback and suggestions, and putting in place measures for challenging perceptions and behaviours.
- Institute programmes on unconscious bias in its training for

appointments and promotions<sup>87</sup>.

- Implementing its plan to reduce and remove differences in gender pay levels (see below for more details)<sup>88</sup>.
- Targeted training programmes for female senior leaders have been planned in order to enable women realise their full potential and move up within the organization<sup>89</sup>.

### National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015-2019

New Zealand developed its first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in 2015<sup>90</sup>. Developed jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Police and the Ministry for Women, the four-year NAP laid down several measures and actions for improving representation of women in peace and security governance at all levels. Although the plan focuses mainly on WPS commitments in relation to international peacekeeping and assistance missions, it adds weight to the overall policy commitments nationally towards increasing women’s participation and deployment at senior levels within New Zealand Police. This is recognized as a key indicator of progress towards strengthening recruitment, promotion, deployment and other human resource support programmes across all government agencies associated with peace and security.

## Campaign marking 75 years of women in police

In 2016, New Zealand Police marked 75 years of entry of women in police. The police institution recognized this anniversary by “celebrating the achievements as well as the diversity of the current women in the New Zealand Police, and recognising women who have now retired but who played an integral role in shaping our current organisation<sup>91</sup>.” It put out a range of information including rank-wise statistics on the share of women, a detailed timeline of the progress made by policewomen over 75 years, profile of women from diverse backgrounds, women in leadership roles, and an image gallery of policewomen over the years. Different events and activities, such as a relay through the districts, were organised involving the community over a course of five weeks<sup>92</sup>.

The occasion was also used to announce two specific initiatives, namely:

- Women in Blue reality show:

The police showcased a reality television show titled “Women in Blue” based on the lives of eight policewomen as part of its recruitment strategy to attract talent from diverse backgrounds<sup>93</sup>. Presented from the lens of policewomen themselves, the idea of the show was to offer insights into “life on the frontline in a modern policing environment.” It served as a platform to promote police recruitments in creative ways; for instance, it allowed viewers to win a chance to ride along the stars of the show by visiting a specially created website that explained police recruitment procedures.

- Police Women’s Advisory Network (WAN): The other initiative was establishing a police women’s advisory network led by senior women officers and created for the purpose of supporting the recruitment and development of women. The idea of the WAN was first discussed in 2013 at the inaugural Women Commissioned Officer’s forum<sup>94</sup>. It involved

setting up of a governance unit at the national level to coordinate its activities and oversee the creation of WANs in each district, along with three other service centers -including the Royal NZ Police College, Police National Headquarters, and Police Communications. Each unit was required to prepare an action plan with ways to meet the objectives of the network. Another position, the ‘Strategic Advisor: Women’s Development’ was created to coordinate the implementation of initiatives identified by the WAN governance unit. The WAN has been involved in running initiatives such as mentoring programmes, leadership forums and women’s development days. In September 2021, Prue Kapua, the president of the Maori Women’s Welfare League became the independent chair of the WAN<sup>95</sup>.

The range of initiatives carried out as part of the 75-years campaign, some of which still continue till date (such as the working of WAN), stand out for

communicating a clear message, that the police requires and values women. The impact of the campaign is evident as the New Zealand Police has recorded a significant increase in the share of women. By June 2022, it reached a constabulary (non-civilian staff) workforce of 25 per cent women<sup>96</sup>. The increase in the share of policewomen is taking place at a remarkable pace.

**“It took us 50 years to reach 10 per cent constabulary women, then another 25 years to reach 20 per cent. It has taken us just four years to go from there to 25 percent”.**

At this rate of recruitment, the department claims to reach 40 percent in 10 years’ time.

Notably, this institutional experience reveals the length of time it takes, a fourth of a century, to bring up women’s representation in the police even through a sustained effort. It is to the New Zealand Police’s credit that women have reached the ‘critical mass’ point.

## New Zealand Police Gender Pay Gap Action Plan 2020-2021

In 2017, New Zealand pledged to seek pay equity for women in the public service as a catalyst for widespread change. This prompted the New Zealand Police to introduce the Gender Pay

Gap Action Plan 2020-2021<sup>98</sup>. The action plan aims to address differences in gender pay levels in the police. It refers to actions required to be taken in eight focus areas, namely increasing women’s recruitment, promotion and development; increasing participation of women in specialist groups; incorporating flexible programmes of work; mitigating bias; equal pay; routine review and consulting with networks to identify persistent challenges and emerging issues.

Focus	Action Points
<b>Recruitment and Attrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue work to achieve constabulary recruitment targets of 50 per cent women and 25 per cent Māori, 9 per cent Pacific and 15 per cent Asian;</li> <li>Monitor attrition rates to ensure equity across all genders and ethnic groups, and respond if there is a disparity;</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow availability and access to development for women in police with a focus on Māori, Pacific and Ethnic women;</li> <li>Support and enable promotion of women affected by historic lower promotion rates (constabulary women with longer service levels;</li> <li>Improve access and support development of Police employees (nonconstabulary);</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of women in specialist groups, and increase Māori, Pacific and Ethnic representation in specialist groups;</li> </ul>
<b>Flexible working</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver flexible working programmes of work;</li> </ul>
<b>Mitigating bias</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the Be Fair work programme;</li> </ul>
<b>Pay Equity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify any internal pay equity issues through organisational networks and make recommendations to address these;</li> <li>Work with other agencies to reach a resolution to the state sector pay equity claim for administrative work;</li> <li>Respond to any future pay equity claims that include police as a respondent;</li> </ul>

The gender pay gap action plan is an example of progress that can be achieved when political and police leaders work together towards a common goal.

Focus	Action Points
<b>Engage and Enable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with diverse networks to identify emerging issues and enable our people to contribute to solutions;</li> </ul>
<b>Review and Re-report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routinely review and respond to emerging issues;</li> <li>• Publish action plan internally and on external website;</li> <li>• Report to the Police Organisational Capability Governance Group six-monthly on progress.</li> </ul>



# SIERRA LEONE

## Police in Sierra Leone: Key Facts

- Sierra Leone Police is the national police institution of the Republic of Sierra Leone and functions under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is responsible for law enforcement and crime investigation throughout the country.
- As of 2012, Sierra Leone Police had 17 per cent women, among the highest in West Africa<sup>99</sup>.
- Sierra Leone Police appointed its first female Deputy Inspector General of Police in 2020.



*Source: <https://www.thesierraleonetelegraph.com/sierra-leone-gets-its-first-female-deputy-head-of-police-force/>*

Sierra Leone offers an example of efforts at gender mainstreaming in a post-conflict society. The country went through a brutal civil war between 1991 and 2002 that formally ended with the signing of a peace agreement in 1999 and finally with the holding of democratic elections in 2002. Following the war, the country embarked on a comprehensive security sector reform process under the guidance of the United Nations and with support of the United Kingdom government. The reform process involved a complete overhaul of the police system that initially focused on a revised rank

structure, restructuring of police divisions and police stations, revamping police training, and the creation of new units and bodies with the mandate to embed principles of democratic policing including transparency, community partnership and accountability as the bedrock of policing in the country. Gradually, from 2007 onwards, the reform process extended its focus to include efforts to make police system more gender-sensitive and inclusive. Although challenges persist, Sierra Leone stands out in the region for having adopted several policies on gender mainstreaming and the prevention of sexual harassment, towards an enabling work environment for women in the security services.

## Gender Mainstreaming Policy, 2008

The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) developed its gender mainstreaming policy with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and adopted it in 2008 with the aim of:

**“promoting equality of opportunity for women and men in Sierra Leone Police, and eliminating unlawful gender-based discrimination, harassment and abuse within the SLP force<sup>100</sup>.”**

The policy emphasizes the goal of gender equality not only to fulfil constitutional obligations, but also to improve policing. It sees harnessing the capacity of both men and women as necessary to build an efficient police service. Although the policy does not specify any target in terms of women’s representation, it aims to increase women’s share such that it “adequately reflects the population of Sierra Leone<sup>101</sup>.” Some of the specific provisions identified for achieving gender equality are:

- All recruitment to be open to both men and women and to be conducted in line with an equal opportunities policy;
- Recruitment panels to have proportionate numbers of men and

women;

- Scholarships to be made available to women officers to acquire further educational qualifications;
- Every deployment should aim to have both women and men personnel;
- Transfer policies should offer the same opportunities for men and women personnel;
- Mentoring program for junior women personnel to be established;
- Association of women police officers to be constituted with all women personnel as employees;
- Annual training program on equal opportunities and gender equality in the workplace to be delivered to all SLP personnel and employees.

In terms of monitoring the implementation of the policy, the Assistant Inspector General of the Professional Standards was held responsible for submitting quarterly reports to the police leadership.

During the initial years of its implementation, concerns were raised

over the policy, especially from within the police institution, as it was seen as favouring women and being unfair to men.<sup>102</sup> It was also criticized for gaps in implementation. This is indicative of gaps in how equality measures are often perceived and (mis)understood across rank and file, and reiterates the importance of instituting processes, such as interactive workshops, regular dialogue series and other creative forms of communication, that help facilitate reflection and conversations about the importance of equality, both as a democratic value and for achieving policing goals. An institutional gender policy offers a hook around which such initiatives can be centered.

## Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Sierra Leone Police was among the first in the region to adopt a policy on sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment in 2008<sup>103</sup>. Developed with the assistance of the UN, the policy seeks to:

**“ensure the SLP has a work environment free of sexual exploitation and sexual harassment and their behaviour towards the population is consistent with the high standards of conduct expected of them at all times on and off duty. It affirms the SLP’s commitment to fulfilling its mission of being a ‘Force for Good’<sup>104</sup>.”**

The policy applies to all SLP personnel as well as contractors, consultants and volunteers and places a responsibility on all actors to report incidents of harassment to a designated official.

Unfortunately, the policy is not available in the public domain but research from 2012 points to several gaps in its provisions and implementation<sup>105</sup>. The procedure for filing complaints, conducting inquiries and other broader steps for implementing the policy are not clearly specified. It is pointed out, for instance, that the ad-hoc committee of senior officials to be appointed to review complaints received may not

be best suited considering it is likely to be dominated by men. Also, while supervisory officers are held responsible for maintaining a safe environment, no accountability measure is laid down for when they fail to do so.

Taking account of these gaps, the SLP in 2016 announced the constitution of a special unit within the police complaints division to investigate reports of sexual abuse and harassment particularly at the police stations<sup>106</sup>. It also announced creating a pool of trained “Special Gender Officers” to address issues of discrimination and abuse at police posts. Such measures indicate SLP’s intent of strengthening the institutional framework for responding to gender discrimination and harassment within the institution.

## Accelerated Promotion Scheme

Another interesting step taken by the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) was the introduction of the Accelerated Promotion Scheme (APS) in 2005<sup>107</sup>.

Adopted as a temporary measure, the APS was brought in to increase the representation of women in the middle management positions in the SLP. It provides for the rapid promotion of college-educated female personnel to the rank of sergeant or inspector after having completed six months training at the police college. As part of the training, recruits are required to spend time in each major police department on a rotational basis. The scheme has been controversial and has met with mixed results<sup>108</sup>. While senior female officers see the scheme as crucial for bridging the gap between men and women in strategic and decision-making posts, the majority of the male personnel, as well as non-graduate female personnel, see it as discriminatory. In terms of numbers, the scheme has been able to add less than 20 female graduates by 2012-2013, eight years after its introduction. It is unclear whether the scheme remains in force.

## Sierra Leone Police Female Staff Association

Finally, the Sierra Leone Police Female Staff Association established in 2007 is seen as another important driving force in pushing for women's growth in policing. A report published by the Geneva-based research organization, the Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) in 2012 explains the organization, activities and the achievements of the association<sup>109</sup>. All female police personnel automatically become its members on completing training. The association has a national body, as well as bodies in each region, and is governed by a constitution that lays down positions and roles of the executive and the secretariat. Notably, all positions are elected, with elections taking place every two years. Meetings are held every month where SLP policies and procedures related to gender, disciplinary issues, or other concerns facing women personnel, are discussed. Activities of the association

have mainly included conducting awareness programs, events and trips. It has also provided welfare payments to its members in instances of death or a wedding in the family. An important feature of the association is that male officers, who serve as division representatives, occasionally attend the meetings in their jurisdiction. Even if infrequent, men's participation in female-centred associations is an important factor to increase their awareness of issues female personnel face.

Once again, although the association struggles with lack of funding and limited autonomy in terms of decision-making, it is seen as having played an important role in mobilizing female staff, generating unity across different regions and raising awareness about gender issues across the institution.



## STATE OF PALESTINE

### Police in State Of Palestine: Key Facts

- The Palestinian Civil Police as it exists today was constituted in 1994 with the signing of the Oslo agreement<sup>110</sup>. It administers law enforcement duties in territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority, namely West Bank and the Gaza strip.
- As of 2015, women constituted 3.75 per cent of the Palestine Civil Police<sup>111</sup>.

The State of Palestine represents a unique example of institutional reform in the context of a society that has been fighting for independent statehood for decades and that continues to be governed by a transitional regime. The Palestinian Authority (PA) that governs the West Bank and the Gaza strip was created in 1993 under the Oslo Accords for a period of five years with the understanding that it would advance the process of creating an independent Palestinian sovereign state. Palestine's security agencies, including the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) as it exists today, were also created under the Oslo agreement. As the conflict over Palestine's statehood remains unsolved and with Israel exercising control over

territories governed by the Palestinian Authority, security-related activities in Palestine are driven largely by the existential threat it faces. Nevertheless, there have been consistent efforts, led and supported by international and regional actors, to strengthen democratic governance of the security forces so they can be effective and accountable. Notwithstanding the many hurdles that have hindered the reform measures, it is noteworthy that gender equality has been central to reform from the very beginning.

The Palestinian Civil Police sees the goal of building a gender-sensitive police institution as fundamental to ensuring safety of men and women, as well as

*Source: <https://www.palpolice.ps/specialized-departments/212378.html>*



meeting national and international commitments towards combating discrimination against women.

**“In the Palestinian context, the need for a gender-sensitive police institution doubles as a basis for ensuring personal security for both men and women, and their enjoyment of all human rights, as a response to national and international commitments towards combating discrimination against women, especially those resulting from Palestine’s accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and those related to the implementation of Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on women and peacemaking, which urges increasing the participation of women in the security sector and at the level of decision-making, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action**

**1995 regarding activating the political participation of women”<sup>12</sup>.”**

It further recognizes that when police institutions reflect the diversity in society and are accountable to the people, they are better able to fulfil the tasks entrusted in them of contributing to rule of law.<sup>13</sup> These principles underpin institutional measures the Palestinian police has put in place over the past two decades to achieve gender diversity and responsiveness.

## Gender Unit, Palestinian Civil Police

One of the first decisions taken by the police leadership to address gender concerns was the constitution of a Gender Unit within the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) in 2011. As elaborated in the PCP Gender Strategy 2016, the then chief of police, Major General Hazem Atallah, constituted the unit “with a view to enhancing and developing gender and enhancing its positive concept, as well as improving the police services

and their quality<sup>114</sup>." It is made up of a director and 11 unit coordinators from various police directorates in the governorates (administrative divisions within the State of Palestine) and reports to the assistant chief of police for human resources within the police organizational structure. Two years later, in 2013, the chief of police approved the establishment of a Gender Steering Committee to further strengthen the work of the unit<sup>115</sup>. This Committee comprised of deputy heads of prominent PCP specialised administrations. Although shortage of dedicated funds, resources and full-time staff have constrained the unit's work, it has been involved in some initiatives to promote awareness and understanding of gender issues both within the police and among the public.

### Roadshow to increase awareness on gender

Following the adoption of the Police Gender Strategy (see below), the Gender Unit of the PCP organised a six-month long communications campaign aimed at deepening understanding of gender balanced police services<sup>116</sup>. The campaign included two parts, the first targeted at police personnel with the

campaign team visiting each police district in the West Bank and giving briefings to police leaders on ways to realise equal opportunities for men and women in the service. The second part of the campaign was geared towards wider public engagement.

## Palestine Civil Police Strategic Plan 2014-2016

In 2014, the PCP framed its Strategic Plan 2014-2016. The plan incorporated strengthening gender principles within the organisation. It aimed to enhance gender incorporation tools such as raising awareness, building a conducive environment, enforcing equal opportunities and addressing gender gaps in recruitments. The PCP Strategic Plan 2014-2016 also provided the basis for developing specialized units in the PCP, such as the Family Protection & Juveniles Unit and the Gender Unit. Incorporating gender principles and goals into its overall strategic plan is indicative of the PCP's intent to develop a gender-responsive police organization.

## Palestinian Civil Police Gender Strategy, 2016-2018

In 2016, Palestinian Police developed its first Gender Strategy with technical support from UN bodies including UN Women and the UNDP. It was developed as part of the UN Women and UNDP's Joint Programme "Sawasya" Phase I (2014-2017) aimed at strengthening rule of law, gender justice and human rights and was for a short period of three years, from 2016 to 2018<sup>117</sup>.

The Gender Strategy has several notable features. It was an outcome of a participatory planning approach spread over several phases and involving members of the police as well as other relevant government institutions at each stage<sup>118</sup>. A gender analysis was first carried out in the preparatory phase that helped situate institutional strengths and weaknesses within the larger political context, as well as the status of broader police reforms. The general directions pointed out in the analysis helped develop the vision,

mission and objectives identified in the strategy. The strategy also presented a list of definitions of concepts related to gender, diversity and inclusion<sup>119</sup>.

This is an important component of the strategy as it offers the foundation for developing and strengthening a shared understanding of gender among police officers at all levels, particularly in the lower ranks who often miss out on specialised learning.

### Women in Police Accountability Systems

Among the most notable feature of the gender strategy is the recognition of the need to involve women in police accountability systems<sup>120</sup>. This is in line with the criteria of gender mainstreaming in post-conflict societies identified by the UN Women. It involves measures such as enhancing the participation of women in oversight mechanisms responsible for reviewing police work; expanding the mandate of complaints mechanisms to deal with issues related to gender-based discrimination; and instituting mechanisms to ensure consultation and dialogue between the PCP and the general public, particularly women. The strategy recognizes that women's participation in the three oversight bodies – Bureau for Grievances and Human Rights, Police Security Administration and the PCP Inspector General's Office – is practically non-ex-

istent and accordingly commits to the following measures<sup>121</sup>:

- Ensure at least 5 per cent women representation in the PCP internal oversight mechanisms;
- Train 20 female police members in internal oversight and complaint follow-up mechanisms;
- Develop a guide on gender-based complaints and follow-up mechanisms.

Finally, the strategy lays down activities against each of its five strategic objectives, along with a set of performance indicators to measure progress, and a timeline for implementation. The strategic objectives were identified to address institutional gaps highlighted through the gender analysis, such as insufficient recruitment of women officers and staff, low participation and morale of women, under-performance of the Gender Unit, lack of women occupying leadership positions, and lack of gender-disaggregate data among others. Main activities identified are as follows:

- **M**ainstreaming gender concepts in the PCP: This includes media awareness, circulation of the gender strategy within different branches of the PCP, training

gender units' staff, holding periodic review meetings, etc.

- **B**uilding police capacities from a gender perspective: Developing training curriculum on gender, organising training of trainers and training course workshops, arranging for international exchange for the trainers to learn about comparable experiences in the field of training in gender, etc.
- **E**mpowering the PCP from a gender perspective: Recruiting women to the PCP with a numerical increase of 10 per cent per year, adopting a fixed quota of 30 per cent for women in replacements, training women of senior ranks in leadership, management and communication skills, etc.
- **I**ntegrate gender issues into PCP policies and work mechanisms: Evaluating review of PCP budgets, restructuring the Gender Unit, holding consultations with administrations and directorates on the gender strategy, preparing a guide on integrating gender into the PCP administrations' implementation plans, etc.

- **S**trengthening partnerships with supporting institutions concerned with gender issues: Developing project proposals in line with the PCP gender strategy, mapping of government institutions and civil society organizations supporting gender issues, holding conferences for donors and international institutions supporting gender issues to fund the PCP gender strategy, etc.

In 2017, this three-year strategy paved the way for a longer five-year strategy, also developed with support of the UN bodies along with the EU Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support or EUPOL COPPS<sup>122</sup>. While launching the strategy on 23 February 2017, Major General Hazem Attallah, Chief of the Palestinian Civil Police "stressed the police's belief in the importance of having more women accessing their services, and their commitment to provide responsive services to the needs of the different segments of the society, enhancing trust and credibility of the institution. Believing in the positive role of women in all sectors, PCP considers

women as key partners in efforts to achieve security in the Palestinian society as stressed by their historical role along with men towards independence and freedom<sup>123</sup>."

## Palestinian Police Women Network

The latest institutional measure on gender by the Palestinian Civil Police is the constitution of the PPWN – the Palestinian Police Women's Network (PPWN), inaugurated as recently as January 2023<sup>124</sup>. Steered once again by the EUPOL COPPS in collaboration with the UN Women and the PCP, 25 female PCP officers are among the founding members of the PPWN. It is now working to finalise its annual action plan and simultaneously explore independent funding possibilities in order to emerge as an effective and sustainable forum.



# SOUTH AFRICA

## Police in South Africa: Key Facts

- The South African Police Service (SAPS), as it exists in post-apartheid, was constituted under the South African Police Service Act, 1995, following the adoption of the interim Constitution in 1994 that created a democratic and unified South Africa<sup>125</sup>.
- Women first joined the SAPS in 1972, marking 50 years of women in policing in 2022<sup>126</sup>. As of 2022, women constitute 38 per cent of SAPS<sup>127</sup>.



*Source: <https://www.facebook.com/SAPoliceService/photos/today-is-international-womens-day-it-is-a-global-day-celebrating-the-social-econ/1301194833240789/>*

In South Africa, the issue of women's representation in public service was recognized as a key component of efforts at strengthening democracy. For the South African Police Service in particular, addressing the legacy of apartheid and decades of racial injustice meant making a conscious effort at creating a more equitable and representative organization reflecting the demographics of the country. It involved measures that sought to address both gender and racial barriers in an intersectional manner, towards equality and better relations between men and women, as well as white and black women, within the SAPS.

## Affirmative Measures on Gender Representation

SAPS has adopted a 30 per cent numeric goal in all operational levels and claim to have embarked upon the following measures to achieve it<sup>128</sup>:

- 40 per cent of all training is reserved for women in order to improve their mobility to middle and senior positions;
- 70 per cent of all places in the Emerging Leadership Programme is reserved for women in order to broaden the pool of women leaders in the SAPS;

- All senior appointments are monitored to ensure that they are in line with the South African Police Service Employment Equity Plan numeric goals;
- All recruitment and promotion drives are monitored to ensure that business units reach their numeric targets.

Research points to significant strides made by SAPS in increasing women’s representation. Within a short span of 13 years, from 1995 to 2008, women’s share in SAPS nearly doubled from 11.5 per cent to 21 per cent<sup>129</sup>. The rate of increase has maintained its pace with women reportedly constituting 38 per cent of SAPS as of 2022<sup>130</sup>. Diversity within women has also improved. In 1995, white women constituted 53 per cent of all female officers, and black women made up 36 per cent. By 2004, this had reversed with black women constituting 52 per cent of all female officers.

On the occasion of 50 years of women in policing in the country, Prime Minister Bheki Cele remarked:

**“Greater female empowerment in the organization is ‘not a negotiable and must be realised’<sup>131</sup>.”**

## South African Police Services (SAPS)- Women’s Network Programme

Launched in 2003, the South African Police Service’s Women’s Network is a leading example of a professional forum within the police developed for increasing gender representation and ensuring gender equality<sup>132</sup>. The network was constituted by merging previously existing gender structures constituted within SAPS across all the nine provinces. These gender structures were originally constituted for the purpose of working towards achieving gender equality within the police by encouraging women to join in large numbers and spreading awareness among police officers of SAPS’s internal policies to prevent sexual harassment.

The network identifies its objectives to be as follows<sup>133</sup>:

- To provide a strong support network structure for women employees in the SAPS;
- To facilitate the career advancement of women through leadership training programmes;
- To develop an assertive cadre of women leaders capable of independent thinking, thereby contributing to quality service delivery;
- To market career opportunities for women in all occupational categories and at all levels in the SAPS in an attempt to develop a fully representative workforce; and
- To align women’s network activities to government initiatives with a view to improving the overall quality of women’s lives.

The network further seeks to:

- Forge strong bonds between women in the SAPS;
- Ensure that women in leadership positions help mentor those at lower levels; and
- Ensure that women see themselves as equal to their male

counterparts. This will enable them to establish cooperation between all employees, thereby improving service delivery.

Once the gender structures were merged to constitute the SAPS Women Network, Women Network Champions were nominated to “facilitate all activities that highlight contributions of women towards the strategic objectives and budgetary programmes of SAPS<sup>134</sup>.” These champions were the main focal point on gender within the service and were responsible for liaising with all internal and external stakeholders with the aim of supporting and expanding the role of women in policing.

The champions were further required to prepare annual plans to indicate both internal and external activities they would undertake towards women’s empowerment, and submit quarterly reports on progress made. This is an important strategy to deepen women officers’ knowledge and ownership of the network’s goals. None of these plans, however, are made available on the police website. Consequently, the extent to which the network continues

to strategise towards common goals remains unclear.

## Principles of the SAPS Women Network

It is interesting to note that the SAPS Women's network lists amongst its principles that it also promotes a safe, confidential and collaborative space of listening and healing<sup>135</sup>. Apart from pushing of organisational targets and gender quotas, it also offers a space for gendered and discriminatory experiences to be acknowledged and addressed. The SAPS Women's network website states that by being receptive to and accommodating different personalities, the network allows for free exchange of ideas between women at all levels. It provides a platform for addressing personal and professional issues, which must be dealt with sensitively and confidentially.



# UNITED KINGDOM

## Police in United Kingdom: Key Facts

- The United Kingdom consists of three legal entities: England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. There is no single national police institution. England and Wales has 43 police institutions; while Scotland and Northern Ireland each have a single institution.
- Women constitute 34.03 per cent of the police workforce in the UK as of December 2021<sup>136</sup>.

In the United Kingdom (UK), efforts towards improving gender equality in policing are embedded within a broader diversity agenda. The Policing Vision 2025, developed by the National Police Chief’s Council<sup>137</sup>, upholds the need to ensure police services are representative of different “skill sets, knowledge and potential, and behaviours and values” in order to meet policing outcomes<sup>138</sup>.

**“Our vision is that by 2025 policing will be a profession with a more representative workforce that will align**

*Source: <https://www.npcc.police.uk/our-work/violence-against-women-and-girls/>*



**the right skills, powers and experience to meet challenging requirements.”<sup>139</sup>**

This vision is rooted in the legislative framework brought in with The Equality Act 2010 which merged previous anti-discrimination laws into one holistic legislation and provides protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services. The Act also introduced the Public Service Equality Duty (PSED) that applies to all public bodies<sup>140</sup>. It requires public bodies to take steps towards eliminating

discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different people when carrying out their activities<sup>141</sup>.” The Equality Act and the PSED have directly influenced policy and actions to promote inclusion and equity in the police.

## National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2025<sup>142</sup>

One of the main strategies developed under the purview of The Equality Act is NPCC’s Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2025 (DEI strategy). The DEI strategy provides an overarching framework to enable greater workforce diversity and effective service delivery across communities. It specifies actions required by police services across three areas:

**1. Organization:** This includes actions towards enhancing internal transparency in decision-making, creating an inclusive culture where people

feel confident to disclose their characteristics, collection and analysis of diversity data, formal and informal support networks, easing recruitment for people from different backgrounds, and ensuring retention of the employees.

- 2. Communities:** This includes developing effective engagement strategies, building better relations by addressing hate crimes compromising principles of diversity, equality and inclusion and enabling collection and analysis of community data.
- 3. Partners:** This includes working in partnerships for better implementation of joint strategies that focus on enhancing a ‘whole system’ approach towards service delivery and tackling disparity.

A Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Committee chaired by an appointed chief officer has been constituted to develop and deliver the strategy, and report on progress. The NPCC has also developed a toolkit to enable chief constables (heads of police institutions) provide leadership

and drive cultural change to meet the objectives of the DEI strategy<sup>143</sup>. Actions required under key components such as leadership and culture, recruitment, retention, progression, wellbeing and fulfillment and exit from service with dignity are specified in the toolkit along with the authority/person responsible for its implementation and a provision for sharing updates on action taken.

These elements of the diversity strategy underpin initiatives towards improving gender equality across police institutions in the UK.

## HeForShe Campaign

Among the most notable measures adopted by police institutions across the UK for improving gender equality is joining the HeForShe campaign. This is a global initiative led by the United Nations that aims to mobilize men and people from all genders “to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality<sup>144</sup>.” Each police institution in the UK has signed up for the initiative. It has provided a platform for UK police institutions to

make commitments to improving gender representation at all levels, address the link between gender inequalities and violent crimes, and share best practices.

Since 2019, the campaign has released four annual Gender Equality in UK Policing reports<sup>145</sup>, latest being in 2022, that present examples of measures being taken by police institutions across UK to meet their commitments towards gender equality. These provide a wealth of information on good practices and represents a useful resource for police institutions to learn from one another. Below we highlight a few such measures, along with a mention of the name of the police institution and the year in which the example was included in the annual reports :

- **HeForShe Ambassadors and support networks:** Through appointing HeForShe ambassadors, tactical leads, champions, allies, and creation of internal support groups and networks, police institutions are working to organise discussions and mobilize support and understanding of gender equality goals and concerns.

These networks are identifying areas for development and facilitating targeted development opportunities particularly to increase representation of women at senior levels. Examples include:

- » Hertfordshire constabulary held a series of webinars in 2020-21 with male officers to allow for frank debate on how they can serve as HeForShe ambassadors;
- » Metropolitan Police’s HeForShe team launched an anonymous recording platform “Signa” to enable officers and staff share examples and concerns of sexist and misogynistic behaviour to the police leaders (2022).
- **Positive action programmes:**
  - » Quiet positive action programmes aimed at identifying eligible individuals and supporting them through the recruitment process, taking into account general perceptions that tend to construe women as having been taken in only because of the additional support available (Northamptonshire Police, 2021);

- » Pre-application and study skills workshops to support promotion processes (North Wales Police, 2021);
- » Inclusion workshops for frontline supervisors focused on “increasing knowledge, skills and motivation to improve inclusivity and reduce unacceptability, incivility and derogatory behavior” (North Wales Police, 2021);
- » Constituting Positive Action teams that work together with human resources and other departments to develop and implement targeted training, mentorship programmes and workshops aimed at addressing difficulties women face and “inspiring, encouraging and supporting female development” (Kent Police, 2020);
- » Career coaching programme for female officers to support them through the promotion process (Hertfordshire Constabulary, 2022).
- **Targeted female health programmes**

- » Introduction of a menopause support group to help staff overcome challenges presented through the menopause process (Avon and Somerset Constabulary, 2022);
- » Introduction of five days miscarriage leave, brought in with the purpose of breaking the taboo around baby loss and facilitating greater support to employees (British Transport Police, 2022);
- » Development of guidebooks on in vitro fertilization (IVF) and other fertility treatments (Greater Manchester Police, 2022);
- » Formation of a working group focusing on endometriosis, a condition that affects female reproductive organs, to deliver targeted information sessions around the condition within the institution (Merseyside Police, 2022).
- **Measures aimed at cultural changes within the police institution**
  - » Development of inclusive

- leadership programme focused on improving understanding of issues around disparity and bias in the organization and the role of leadership in influencing culture and changing behaviour (Devon and Cornwall Police, 2022);
- » Conducting a national inclusion week to hold events and talks around diversity and showcase the work of HeForShe ambassadors to new recruits (Essex Police, 2022).

Joining this campaign reflects an acknowledgment at the highest police leadership levels across the UK of the cultural change needed within police institutions in order to truly embrace diversity and inclusion, and the crucial role leaders can play in driving the change.

**“HeForShe has emphasized diversity and inclusion as an operational policing initiative. Police forces recognise how gender inequalities in society affect crimes such as domestic**

**and sexual abuse... It has provided a great catalyst with shared values of fairness and justice, to develop a better understanding of all genders and inequalities<sup>146</sup>”**

*Giles York QPM, Chief Constable, Sussex Police (2019)*

**“...HeForShe creates a clear link between gender inequalities and gender-based violence and the work being undertaken by forces to eliminate this will continue<sup>147</sup>”**

*Carl Foulkes, Chief Constable, North Wales Police (2021)*

The four annual reports reflect the progress policing in the UK has made on pushing for gender equality. The first two reports reflect a focus on improving women’s representation in the police and highlighted select practices being adopted by different police institutions across the UK. The fourth and the latest report not only covers measures taken by every single police institution in the UK but also indicates greater emphasis on cultural changes needed in police services by way of tackling underlying

factors sustaining and perpetuating gender inequality. By 2022, the HeForShe campaign had adopted three additional goals for UK policing: focusing on gender imbalances in the middle management levels where men continue to overdominate; addressing sexism and misogyny in police culture; and joining the HeForShe Alliance led by the UN that involves partnerships across business, non-profit and academia for accelerating progress towards gender equality<sup>148</sup>.

## Flexible working in police institutions

Another notable policy framework in the UK with significant benefits for women employees is regarding flexible working. In UK, working part-time in the police is a well-practiced norm. A report by the College of Policing notes that in 2011 nearly 6 per cent of all police officers worked part time; and 93 per cent of them were women<sup>149</sup>. It recognises that since women are the principal carer within a family, caring responsibilities are likely to disproportionately impact career growth of female officers and staff.

To help accommodate the needed balance between personal and professional life for police officers in the UK, including women’s different care giving responsibilities, the definition and provisions under flexible work in the UK police have been elaborated under the strategy. The different ways in which work can be structured to accommodate officers who have care giving responsibilities include:

- **Part time working:** Fewer hours than for the standard working week
- **Job Sharing:** One full time job divided between 2 or more workers
- **Term Time Working:** Set periods away from work in school holidays
- **Compressed Hours:** Shorter week of longer days
- **Staggered hours:** Normal hours with a number of starting and ending times
- **Flexi time:** Flexible hours with fixed core times
- **Zero hours:** Working arranged as required from a bank of staff on standby
- **Home working:** Working from home on an occasional basis

Flexible working arrangements is seen as a vital strategy for retaining valuable officers and staff, diversifying recruitment, reducing recruitment and training costs and improving general morale of employees.

## Representation of LGBT+community in police<sup>150</sup>

Research on employment discrimination suggests that actual or perceived discrimination based on sexual orientation may be a factor negatively affecting hiring, firing, and promotion.<sup>151</sup> In order to address this discrimination faced particularly by the LGBT+ group, UK’s National Police Chief Council established a reserved portfolio for LGBT+ in the police service. Along with the equal protection under the Equality Act of 2010, the NPCC LGBT+ portfolio serves as an added intervention to protect the intersectional discrimination faced by the LGBT+ community in UK. Through the following interventions, the NPCC LGBT+ Network sets a precedence in making the police more gender inclusive:

- **Role Models:** Considering that police and security institutions have had a history of male dominance, the NPCC LGBT+ Network challenges this norm by featuring role models from the LGBT+ community.
- **Resources:** The website offers range of publicly accessible resources that comprises of research, tool kits, guidance documents, manuals, annual reports and anecdotes on LGBTQ+ inclusivity. For instance, ‘Inclusivity’ – a guide that is published on the website dwells into understanding the experiences of BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic- including, African, Middle Eastern, indigenous and mixed-race identities) trans people.
- **Intersectional Working Group:** A notable aspect of the LGBT+ Police Network is its focus on

noting intersectional challenges for gender inclusivity. It notes that gender exists along with multiple identities (race, class, faith, nationalities) and that identities are inter- connected. It has been formed with the aim to address gaps in representation of more marginalised LGBT+ identities such as Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) LGBT+ people, LGBT+ people living with disabilities, LGBT+ people of faith and so on.

- **Networks:** The LBGT+ Police Network draws its strengths from grassroots and non-geographic networks. There are ‘regional networks’ managed by employees, constables and volunteers from each respective police services. There are also inter-departmental networks such as Police Superintendents’ Association that mirrors the vision of the LGBT+

# 03

## CONCLUSION:

### Key Lessons, Gains and Continuing Challenges

The policies and initiatives featured in this compendium reveal the range of measures being taken by governments and police institutions to increase the representation and active participation of women in policing. Although national socio-political contexts differ substantially, there are several similarities in the measures being adopted, indicating a reliance on common strategies across contexts towards the goal of gender inclusion. Further, the case studies of Palestine, Sierra Leone, and South Africa, are particularly encouraging in revealing that both situations of ongoing, as well as transitions from, violent conflict have not prevented police institutions from addressing gender equality within. In fact, post-conflict transitions have yielded lessons for gender inclusion in

transforming policing. Drawing from the country examples, we conclude the compendium by highlighting key policy trends and developments, the opportunities and lessons they offer for anchoring reform and the persistent challenges they throw up that require closer attention.

## Impact of consolidation at the international level

To begin with, developments at the international level led by the United Nations have influenced the growth of institutional commitment to increasing women's share in policing. This is reflected in the consolidation of the policy framework led by the mandates of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) and its nine successive resolutions<sup>152</sup>. To implement the resolutions, 104 countries have adopted a National Action Plan to date<sup>153</sup>. These plans outline "a government's approach and course of action for localizing action on the Women, Peace

and Security Agenda" and serve as important guidance for state authorities in protecting and promoting women's equal rights, particularly in relation to ensuring women's meaningful participation in securing peace and security including through active roles in decision-making processes. The case studies reveal the number of countries, as wide-ranging as the Philippines to New Zealand, that have framed National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security which have led to the framing of benchmarks for recruitment of women and gender inclusion provisions in policing.

The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, further strengthen countries' commitment towards achieving gender equality<sup>154</sup>. The Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that are designed to end poverty, hunger and discrimination against women and girls. Goal 5 that focuses on gender equality, and Goal 16 on building just and strong institutions, are particularly relevant. Together, these combine to provide a clear push

for gender-sensitive reform in security services, as well as ensuring gender equality in peace, security and justice processes.

These international frameworks are pushing policy changes at national levels, evidenced by the growing number of countries taking steps to articulate, affirm and advance the importance of policewomen.

## Setting Representation Targets Or Quotas within Institutional Frameworks

Institutionalising quotas and/or targets for recruitment of women into the police has emerged as a common, and effective, practice across countries. A visible leap in women's representation through this route seems to result when the target/quota is set within the rubric of an action plan or gender strategy, and complemented with concerted efforts and setting of benchmarks in recruitment processes, and in some

cases, also the middle management ranks of the police.

In Australia, the national target of 50 per cent gender representation led the Australian Federal Police in 2016 to commit to concrete steps for achieving the target in a timebound manner. Notably, this was preceded by the police commissioning an independent review of its organisational culture, which produced a report with recommendations geared to surpass impediments to diversity and inclusion.

The incremental journey of greater women's representation in the New Zealand Police exposes the long duration, and with it, persistent commitment, needed to meet quotas. A silver lining that the New Zealand experience highlights is how representation can rapidly increase, after reaching a certain mass point. While it took 75 years to reach 20 per cent representation, it took only four years from there to get to 25 per cent by 2022. With a speedy progression course set, the police institution is striving to reach 40 per cent in ten years, with a policy benchmark in their latest strategic plan

of 50 per cent of all police recruits to be women. It is a reality that genuine representation of women across a police organisation, of a critical mass point, is a goal that can be achieved only over a long term; the time needed must be recognised by policymakers, and not dismissed as a deterrent.

The South African Police Service has set a goal of 30 per cent women's representation at all operational levels of the police. To reach this, the police service has carved out high percentages of reserved places for women in police training and special internal leadership programmes, as well as have instituted a system to monitor the achievement of the 30 per cent benchmark. As the case study indicates, SAPS nearly doubled women's presence from 11.5 per cent to 21 per cent in 13 years, from 1995 to 2008. As of 2022, women make up about 38 per cent of the police, revealing that the rate of increase is steadily being maintained.

The Philippines, Singapore and Cambodia give examples of police institutions taking specific initiatives to

promote women into police leadership positions. The Singapore Police Force has seen a 50 per cent increase in number of female officers in leadership positions since 2011 and 21 per cent increase in specialist units such as the Traffic Police, Police Coast Guard, Special Operations Command and the Security Command. In the Philippines, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2017-2022 led to women being given key postings such as police station chief, city police director and in specialist crime units. The 2009 Magna Carta of Women, a specialist law dedicated to women's rights in the Philippines, has set a benchmark of 50 per cent representation of women in the police; and is driving higher recruitment of women. In 2019, Cambodia had achieved 20 per cent representation of women officers in the police training department. These experiences reveal that very targeted measures focused on specific rungs of the police, rather than necessarily tackling representation across the entire rank structure, are also effective at incremental, but visible, inclusion of women at levels where they are in lesser numbers. This may be a good strategy

to adopt in contexts where there is less political will to take on gender inclusion head-on, but rather approach it incrementally.

Sierra Leone presents an interesting case study in which stakeholders have taken the route of a more aspirational, less measurable, gender mainstreaming policy. This policy does not lay down a target for women's representation, but still binds the police to increase women's representation in the police to be proportionate to women's numbers in the country's population. It is a case of laying down a benchmark even if in the absence of firm numerical targets. Like some of the South East Asian countries above, Sierra Leone too adopted a targeted initiative to increase women's presence in middle management positions of the police through its accelerated promotion scheme.

## Independent Assessments and Gender Audits

Independent reviews, gender audits and self-assessments have served as a basis for police institutions to develop targeted strategies and action plans in order to enhance gender diversity and equality within. The 2016 independent assessment of policies and practices commissioned by the Australian Federal Police led to stronger development of the police's long-term diversity and inclusion strategy. The police leadership was receptive and accepting of all the recommendations. In Canada, a 2007 government-appointed task force undertook an extensive review of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and recommended wide ranging reforms to its governance, culture and accountability. The issues and reforms identified by the task force informed RCMP's Gender and Respect Action Plan released in 2013 that kickstarted its long journey towards cultural change. In ASEAN countries, the exercise led by UN Women-INTERPOL-UNODC in

partnership with respective police institutions, is the first to provide a baseline on the status and challenges facing policewomen in the region.

A notable feature of these exercises is the focus on identifying cultural barriers to gender equality within police institutions, going beyond gaps in recruitment, promotion and other service-related issues. There is an explicit recognition of the need to address factors that support and/or encourage bullying, harassment and unequal treatment of women in order to meet the full potential of the police institution. Consequently, creating respectful workplaces, as in Canada, has gained salience alongside administrative reforms in policies and procedures. Another crucial feature is the ownership of the police leadership in driving cultural change. The words of Andrew Colvin, former commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, are instructive in this regards: "many of our challenges are cultural. They are our challenges, created by us, and they will be changed by us." The openness and response of police leadership is a key factor in giving meaning to such independent reviews.

Another important value of these exercises is the platform they provide in giving voice to the lived experiences of police personnel, particularly women in the context of gender mainstreaming, and placing concerns shared at the forefront of discussions on solutions. A consultative process itself is reflective of change in the way things are done in hierarchical environments such as the police, and can go a long way in motivating institutional reforms.

## Gender Equality Strategies and Action Plans

Development of targeted gender strategies remains among the most common approach to guide integration of women in police services. These documents recognize the importance of policewomen, and importantly often set measurable benchmarks, in the form of accompanying action plans, to reach and track women's greater representation and equitable participation in policing. In doing so, they represent an important source for the

rank and file of the leadership’s vision and goals, while providing a blueprint for leadership and the police institution as a whole to actually achieve those goals. When disseminated effectively, including in local languages, and made easily accessible, they can be helpful in mobilizing opinion and support for gender equality within the police. The very fact of a police institution overseeing a process of drafting and releasing a specific gender strategy, or a broader inclusion strategy with gender as a strand, is significant in the visible institutional commitment it accords to gender equality.

While the case studies lay out the details of specific gender policies and plans, some interesting innovations and insights from police department initiatives are summarised here, relating to the framing and implementation of strategies and action plans.

A logical and valuable arm of any action plan, supporting the enforcement of a gender strategy, are in-built mechanisms to steer implementation. In Australia, the Victoria Police’s 10-year gender

strategy, accompanied by the Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2024, the first of three action plans, to support the strategy’s implementation contains three mechanisms with specific mandates to implement, review and monitor gender equality outcomes. They are in the form of internal committees and working groups, led by a range of police leaders and senior managers. That these are contained within the police will only increase a sense of ownership and responsibility among a wider group of police personnel to reach the goals of the strategy and plan.

Bangladesh presents the unique experience of a policewomen’s network – the Bangladesh Police Women Network – as the author of gender strategy plans for the police, in furtherance of a commitment to a national action plan on women’s rights and equality. The BPWN collaborates with international experts, bringing lived experiences as policewomen in tandem with international policy expertise. This approach seems to hold strong potential for gender strategies and action plans that are realistic as well as aspirational,

measurable based on ‘in-house’ knowledge, while perhaps also striving for new unrealised provisions.

While New Zealand is also a proponent of gender strategy planning processes, a useful practice relating to action plans is the New Zealand Police’s initiation of a Gender Pay Gap Action Plan 2020-21. In line with a larger framework of reaching pay equity between genders in public services, the New Zealand Police introduced this action plan specifically to address differences in pay levels within the police. The recognition that a systemic problem like pay inequity cannot be subsumed within a larger gender strategy, or within a purely labour rights framework, but needs its own blueprint, enhances the journey to gender equality. From a policymaking perspective, this stands out as a unique initiative in carving out a specific area of concern and attending to it.

In Palestine, the police developed a gender strategy through a participatory, consultative approach. A significant feature of the strategy, particularly relevant to a conflict setting, are the

provisions on involving policewomen in police accountability systems. A 5 per cent target of women’s representation on police oversight bodies is laid down. Even if not a high target, the value of setting it, and taking institutional steps to intertwine gender inclusion with police accountability systems, speaks volumes in a context of police reform in a situation of ongoing conflict. Also from a policymaking perspective, it is a reminder that gender inclusion can be a pathway to other areas in policing in urgent need of reform.

For countries like the United Kingdom and New Zealand that have statutory frameworks and special equality legislation, gender strategies form part of their broader diversity planning and strategizing. There is a growing recognition that gender-based discrimination is not the only form of discrimination. Other social identities such as race, class, caste, religion, age create further layers of discrimination. Discrimination needs to be looked at as a relative disadvantage and any initiative aimed at promoting women in policing should not further exacerbate existing

and interlinked inequalities.

Further, the gender policies have evolved from focusing only on increasing the number of women in the police to addressing gender concerns more broadly, and the effect of masculinity in particular, on the policing subculture<sup>155</sup>. This reflects a recognition that any effort to promote gender equality requires both engagement of men and women, but also an examination of gendered practices and roles that are expected and promoted within the institution of policing.

A more recent development with regards to policy framework on women in policing are critical reflections emanating particularly from the Global South. Researchers from countries like India<sup>156</sup>, Kuwait<sup>157</sup>, and Argentina<sup>158</sup> are increasingly challenging the universality of policy approaches that are drawn mainly from the western countries and that see gender integration as the formal goal of any police organization. In other words, women's progress in policing is measured by the extent to which women and men are given equal

roles. By contrast, scholars studying the experiences of women in police across non-western contexts have questioned the linear view of progress, that women's entry will gradually result in integration, and argue instead for greater accounting of different cultural milieus in which women find themselves, and wherein expansion of women's role in policing may take different forms, such as the case of gender-segregated units in Argentina. Although these new insights require deeper research to test application across jurisdictions, they have important implications for the future direction of policies aimed at expanding the contributions of women in policing.

While the process of developing strategies itself provides an opportunity to foster dialogue and reflections on issues related to gender inequality, sustaining this momentum poses continuous challenge for police institutions. This is particularly difficult in contexts where institutional reform is driven by international donors, like in Bangladesh for example. External donors may provide an initial spurt of funds and thereby forward movement but the

reality is that this financial support is finite. National actors need to consider this from the beginning, and take steps to ensure the longevity of gender inclusion processes. This will inevitably require concerted efforts at building political will for reform and gender inclusion in policing.

## Policewomen-run networks

Networks and associations run by policewomen stand out as another common approach in the institutional journeys towards gender inclusion in policing. Bangladesh, Australia, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, Palestine, and South Africa all have such networks. Their importance must be recognised, particularly in enabling forums for policewomen to come together, share and brainstorm ideas, and importantly support each other, within a platform seeking to shape and influence policymaking on gender inclusion. Not just within the police institution, such forums also provide an opportunity for women to network with women officers from other countries, promote

knowledge about good practices, and enable technical expertise through participation in specific training programs and workshops. Without these organised networks, there are dangers of policewomen simply being singular 'subjects' in discussions and framing of policies about them, but without their voices, experiences or insights comprehensively coming together. These networks probably allow policewomen to play a part in setting the agenda, and not simply being objects of study.

## Communication and outreach

An effective communication strategy around specific institutional goals and values is central to raising awareness and building support for change, both within the police as well as among the public. In this, messages put out by the police leadership, such as through policy briefs, reports, press briefings and/or interviews, on the importance of gender diversity for police institutions can be a powerful way of projecting institutional commitment. When done regularly and consistently across all forums, be

it internal decision making platforms or in external engagements with stakeholders, it helps give direction and define norms and values around which officers and leaders down the rank can align with.

In the same way, running campaigns marking historic milestones in the journey of policewomen, like in the case of Australia and New Zealand, maintaining dedicated pages on police websites showcasing the contribution of women officers, developing promotional videos and holding interactions with women students all help promote knowledge of policing work and present policing as a valuable and viable career option. The UK has taken a step forward by joining the HeForShe global movement and assigning officers as ambassadors or champions of gender equality in policing, thereby committing greater institutional resources towards achieving inclusive workspaces. Without such measures that help ensure regular and meaningful flow of information, the lethargy, and at times resistance to change, will be hard to overcome and policy implementation is likely to remain superficial.

The case study of Sierra Leone is instructive in this regards. Its accelerated promotion scheme, geared to increase women's presence in middle management, was seen as "discriminatory" by policemen. A degree of pushback from male police is to be expected, particularly in the early stages of targeted gender inclusive policies, and stresses the need for addressing it through effective messaging from the leadership. It is important that it is dealt with well as soon as it arises. Superficial lip service to appease men, who make up the majority of police forces, will expose a lack of genuine commitment to gender inclusion. Paying no heed, or a neglectful response from leadership, may cause festering feelings of resentment, and in turn affect individual and institutional relationships between policemen and women. In fact, pushback presents an opportunity for police leadership to reaffirm their commitment to gender inclusion, clarify that it is seeking to get to equality and not 'displace' men, and importantly communicate to male police that their support is a necessary part of the process.

## Segregated units

Segregated units for policewomen remain a popular policy measure in many parts of the world. The case study of Argentina, the only country with separate units featured in this compendium, throws up the possibility of such units contributing to expansion, rather than sidelining, of women's role in policing. What is noteworthy in the case of Argentina is the creation of separate command structure for the CMFs (police stations for women and family) that has opened up newer possibilities and avenues for promotion for women police. They are not solely dependent on traditional policing roles and positions in order to have fulfilling careers. This is not the case in most other jurisdictions with similar units, lending weight to concerns over policewomen being relegated to select roles only and being kept away from varied experiences necessary for professional growth. Nevertheless, given the popularity of segregated units wherever they are established, their potential in becoming effective policing units with the added benefit of enabling meaningful growth of policewomen merits further study and assessment.

## Collaboration with other national bodies

Finally, collaboration between the police institution and other state agencies can play a pivotal role in accelerating change towards gender equity. A promising example is the collaboration between the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) on Gender and Development programs that illustrates the strengths of bringing national focus to strengthening the institution of police. Effectively responding to a rapidly changing external landscape necessitates tapping into a more diverse group of people. This can come through external collaborations, welcoming in creative ideas and breaking away from traditional control models which might limit participation<sup>159</sup>.

To conclude, the range of policies, strategies and initiatives featured in this compendium reflect the importance police institutions are increasingly according to gender diversity and equality within. It bears reiteration that

despite varying national contexts, reliance on common approaches, be it gender policies, action plans, womens' networks or designating champions/focal points within the institution, illustrate their usefulness across jurisdictions. In developing such approaches, a crucial requirement is following a consultative process, both internally with the rank and file and externally with experts, so that the measures remain grounded in lived realities and there is greater ownership and understanding within the institution of the need for reform. Regular communication by the police leadership and spaces for dialogue on the importance of gender diversity for better policing and ways in which it can be improved is just as important as enhancing suitable facilities, infrastructure and resources in order to achieve sustained reform.

# Annexe I

## Guiding Questions for Institutional Self Assessment

The Gender and Security Toolkit, 2019, published by DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR and UN Women, includes a matrix of guiding questions that can help police institutions assess how to better integrate a gender perspective and contribute to gender equality (CHECK PDF FOR FOOTNOTE). The matrix is reproduced below:

Questions to be addressed	Examples of data to be collected and analysed	Examples of steps for improvement
Are there policies and procedures in place that set out clear standards of nondiscrimination, rights protection and equality?	Does the law concerning policing include human rights, equality and nondiscrimination as core values?	Put in place codes of conduct, policing laws or standard operating procedures that emphasize non-discrimination, rights protection and equality. Develop standard operating procedures for GBV crimes
	Do codes of conduct specify diversity, equality, rights protection and nondiscrimination?	Put in place clear disciplinary procedures for sexual or genderbased discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse
	Are disciplinary codes clear on punishments for sexual or genderbased discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse?	Integrate gender considerations into all operational procedures.
	Are gender considerations integrated in operational procedures for all policing functions?	Develop standard operating procedures for GBV crimes
	Are there specific standard operating procedures for GBV crimes?	
Are policing policies and procedures monitored for gender responsiveness?	Are sex-disaggregated crime and complaints data available?	Put in place data management system to collect and analyse sexdisaggregated data, including crime statistics.
	Have gender audits or institutional assessments been conducted?	Encourage internal and external oversight mechanisms to focus on gender, including GBV, when monitoring police performance.
		Conduct regular gender audits/assessments to identify areas for improvement.

Are policing organizations conducting research and learning about gender inclusion?	Has research on GBV, gendered security needs/ experiences or gendered policing experiences been commissioned?	Work with external bodies to undertake preliminary research on gender and policing to prompt interest.
	Is available research on GBV, gendered security needs/ experiences or gendered policing experiences being used in developing policies and procedures?	Document consultations with associations for female and LGBTI personnel and civil society groups on specific issues.
Are recruitment processes tailored to target women and LGBTI people?	Are recruitment processes including job descriptions, job advertisements, selection criteria and records of interview panels monitored and analysed with a focus on gender and diversity?	Set gender and diversity targets for recruitment.
	Are associations for female and LGBTI personnel and civil society groups engaged in recruitment?	Task human resources and/ or gender specialists with reviewing recruitment processes and updating procedures.
		Develop programmes to reach out to and support potential applications from women and underrepresented groups.
Are there obstacles or deterrents to female or LGBTI personnel to remain or advance within the police service?	What is the percentage of women and men at each rank and in each type of role?	Implement human resources support, career development opportunities and advancement processes with respect to gender and diversity. 9 Launch initiatives to encourage the institutional culture to value diversity
	Are retention and advancement monitored and analysed with a focus on gender and diversity?	Put in place family-friendly initiatives and flexible work practices.
	What types of complaints are lodged, internally and externally, by women and men?	Conduct regular consultations with female and LGBTI personnel to identify improvements.
		Launch initiatives to encourage the institutional culture to value diversity.
Are there safe spaces for women and LGBTI personnel to support each other, seek out mentoring and jointly advocate?	What institutional support systems are in place for women and LGBTI personnel?	Support women and LGBTI officers to establish associations or networks.
		Establish mentoring schemes.
		Conduct regular consultations with female and LGBTI personnel to identify improvements.

Is discrimination, bullying, harassment or abuse within the police common, downplayed or tolerated?	What is the prevalence of formal and informal complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or abuse?	Demonstrate leadership commitment to an inclusive institutional culture.
	What are the barriers to men, women, LGBTI personnel and other groups making complaints?	Put in place robust, zero-tolerance policies against discrimination, bullying, harassment and abuse. Conduct regular institutional climate assessments and consultations with female and LGBTI personnel.
Is the police service oriented towards crime prevention and community security?	How do policing charters, governing legislation and organizational policies speak to crime prevention and community security?	Advocate for a community policing approach as part of wider police reforms.
	What is police leadership commitment to crime prevention and community security?	Integrate greater interaction with communities, for instance through community-police forums, telephone hotlines for complaints, feedback and suggestions, or partnering with civil society
	How do men, women, girls, boys, LGBTI people and other groups within communities view the police?	
Is there a clearly understood and utilized process for responding to GBV, including homophobic and transphobic crimes?	Are policies/protocols outlining GBV procedures in place and consistently followed? What complaints are received from citizens or NGOs regarding GBV response? 9	Put in place clear policies/ protocols for GBV response, consulting with survivors', women's and LGBTI groups.
	What percentage of officers have completed relevant training, and how effective is it?	Monitor compliance with policies/protocols' process and timelines
	What have external oversight bodies found and recommended as regards police response to GBV?	Consider use of dedicated police stations/units to provide more tailored services and co-ordination.
		Evaluate and improve training and mentoring on GBV response policies/protocols.

Are any specialized police services (units, desks or stations) to deal with VAWG, homophobic and transphobic crimes accessible, used and effective?	What percentage of VAWG, homophobic and transphobic crimes are reported to police and to specialized police services (compared to sources such as crime statistics and independent research)?	Consider establishing and re-sourcing gender units/ desks/ stations.
	How many specialized police services are in each major population centre and region? 9 What are the rates of successful police investigation, prosecution and conviction?	Training specialized staff.
	What are the barriers to reporting to specialized police services?	Conduct community awareness raising about VAWG, homophobic and transphobic crimes and reporting pathways. Work with police prosecutors, public prosecutors and judiciary to strengthen cases brought for prosecution
How effective are internal and external control and oversight mechanisms in monitoring and promoting gender equality?	How do existing internal and external control and oversight mechanisms integrate a gender perspective?	Train staff of control and oversight bodies on gender equality and how to apply gender analysis in their work.
	What percentage of complaints made to these bodies are from women, men, LGBTI people and other groups?	Work with control and oversight bodies to undertake specific monitoring and reporting on gender issues
What social norms around gender (including masculinity) does the police service support or perpetuate?	How are men, women and LGBTI people respectively depicted within and by the police service?	Conduct public awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes (including of police).
	How prominent are men, women and LGBTI people in police engagement with the public?	Develop gender and diversity champions and role models.
		Implement gender awareness programmes within the service.
		Work with men and boys in communities to promote healthy masculinities.
	Consider perpetrator behaviour change programmes.	

# ENDNOTES

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