



Annual report 2023

LEAP4Peace Consortium

01 June 2024

Activity number 400004358



Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Overall programme developments.....	5
2.1 Reflections on global context	5
2.2 Consortium context: events that marked 2023.....	6
2.3 Risks	9
2.4 Reflections on the Theory of Change.....	10
3. Burundi	11
4. Colombia.....	14
5. Myanmar	18
6. International Lobby & Advocacy.....	22
6.1 Context for L&A	22
6.2 GAPS global programme 2023.....	23
6.3 NIMD global programme 2023.....	25
7. Consortium	26
7.1 Partnership	26
7.2 Partnership with the Ministry and Embassies	29
7.3 Monitoring, evaluation, knowledge & learning.....	31
8. Financial overview	35
Annexes.....	38

Annex 1a: Financial Annual Report 2023

Annex 1b : Audited Reports 2023 (to follow on separate email) : BLTP, GEN, GAPS, NIMD and LEAP4Peace consolidated.

Annex 2a: Consolidated Indicators 2023

Annex 2b: Intermediate Outcome Indicators related to WRGE SCS basket indicators

Annex 3: MTR response



1. Introduction

Presented here is the annual report 2023 for the Strategic Partnership between the Women's Leadership and Participation for Peace (LEAP4Peace) Consortium and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The Consortium consists of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) including its offices in Colombia and Myanmar, the Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP), the Gender Equality Network Myanmar (GEN), and Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) based in the UK.

The main goal of LEAP4Peace is to contribute to a conducive environment for women's full and meaningful inclusion in political and decision-making processes, with the aim of sustaining peace in Burundi, Colombia and Myanmar. The LEAP4Peace programme particularly contributes to the first pillar of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda which is participation: to increase the participation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in national, regional, and international institutions; in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; in peace negotiations; in peace operations, as soldiers, police, and civilians; and as Special Representatives of the U.N. Secretary-General.

The report covers various aspects, including overall programme developments, reflections on the global context, events that occurred in 2023, risks, and reflections on the Theory of Change (ToC). The report discusses the global context marked by challenges such as declining democratic practices, an increase in authoritarianism, armed conflict, and restrictions on civic freedoms. It also highlights the slow progress in meaningful inclusion of women in peace and political processes and the necessity for this programmes and advocacy, such as LEAP4Peace, to improve effective participation strategies. It goes into detail about the events that occurred in Colombia, Burundi and Myanmar, and how they impacted the programme.

This document discusses identified risks, such as security and safety risks, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, limited engagement of political actors, and shrinking civic space. Additionally, it provides insights into the Theory of Change and the external Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in 2023, which focused on the relevance of the ToC, the program's achievements, and the partnership with relevant stakeholders.



2. Overall programme developments

2.1 Reflections on global context

The global situation continues to be marked by challenges, including a decline in democratic practices and a rise in authoritarianism. Wars, coups, and attacks on democracy have led to a loss of freedom and democratic progress, particularly destabilizing regions in Africa and Latin America, alongside ongoing repression in the programme's countries such as Myanmar.

Currently, 71% of the global population lives under autocratic rule, which is a significant increase from 48% a decade ago.¹ There is a rising tide of armed conflict, militarization, and a backlash against gender equality. Additionally, climate change and restrictions on civic freedoms are further impeding progress. Legal parity for men and women remains elusive, and a concerted, well-funded attack on human rights, especially women's, has been observed. Freedom House reports the 17th consecutive year of declining global freedom, underpinned by conflicts, coups, and governmental undermining.²

The CIVICUS Monitor reveals a hostile environment for civil society, with one-third of the global population living under restricted civic freedoms.³ Attacks on women's rights defenders are intensifying, using sexual harassment and violence, including verbal abuse, surveillance, and online violence, while targeting their personal behaviour, moral conduct, or sex lives. Sexual harassment is a prime strategy used to silence not just women's rights activists, but all outspoken women. It is used to silence their advocacy and prevent their participation in public life.

Despite this, women's growing involvement in public and political spheres is expanding. Female representation in politics is increasing but remains insufficient, with only 27 countries led by women as Head of State, only 23% of global cabinet ministers being women, and global parliamentary representation at 26.9%, facing slowdowns in progress amidst structural discrimination, and violence barriers. Nonetheless, the percentage of women in national parliaments in conflict-affected countries remains low at 23 per cent. Women's representation in local government surpasses national levels—35.5 per cent of elected seats in local deliberative bodies worldwide and 24.5 per cent of those seats in conflict-affected countries.⁴ Persistent obstacles including structural barriers, discrimination, and gender-based violence and hate hinder women's participation in politics and peace negotiation roles. Violence and intimidation discourage women's political engagement, even leading to burnout and resignations among prominent women politicians.

In 2023, women's participation in UN-led peace processes declined, constituting only 16% of total participants, a decrease from previous years. Women's groups signed only 1 of 18 peace agreements. Despite their involvement, women's roles were often minimal, and their representation in peace and political discussions remains critically low, as highlighted in the UN Secretary-General's report of October 2023. This underlines the slow progress in meaningful inclusion and stresses the need for programmes and advocacy, such as LEAP4Peace, to improve and highlight effective strategies for women's participation.⁵

Recently, gender-responsive approaches to foreign policy have gained considerable momentum, especially since Sweden adopted a feminist foreign policy (FFP) in 2014. As of August 2023, thirteen countries, including the Netherlands and Colombia, have pledged to a similar approach by declaring their feminist foreign policy. Such a

¹ https://v-dem.net/documents/44/v-dem_dr2024_highres.pdf

² https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/FIW_World_2023_DigitalPDF.pdf

³ <https://civicsmonitor.contentfiles.net/media/documents/GlobalFindings2023.pdf>

⁴ IPU Women in parliament <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2024-03/women-in-parliament-2023>

⁵ Secretary-General's annual report on women and peace and security (document [S/2023/725](https://www.un.org/8090/lr/2023/725))



policy presents many opportunities for the WPS agenda, and can potentially reposition it, providing an opportunity for WPS to refocus on structural transformation as a fundamental principle. However, there's a noticeable contrast between the growing interest in feminist foreign policies from various governments, and a global rise in militarization coupled with indifference to violations of international law in Gaza. This disparity has led to some dissonance within the WPS sector. GAPS has addressed this through a series of briefings on feminist foreign policy and WPS in 2023, and already hosted several events in 2024.⁶ Although this may not directly fall under the scope of this programme, it is crucial for GAPS and the LEAP4Peace Consortium to continue their involvement in this matter. Especially if women's political participation is seen as less important and receives inadequate attention, we must actively push back against such tendencies.

2.2 Consortium context: events that marked 2023

In 2023, our programming has been influenced by several key contextual changes that this section aims to highlight:

New opportunities in the run up to the 2023 elections in **Colombia** and the country's first NAP 1325

The socio-political context in Colombia was mainly shaped by national and regional elections in 2022 and 2023. Gustavo Petro and Francia Marquez were elected as president and vice-president respectively in 2022, making them the first left-wing, progressive government elected in the history of the country. The number of women in the Colombian parliament saw a significant increase after the last parliamentary election, with women now representing approximately 30% of the total. The appointment of Francia Marquez as vice-minister holds significant strategic importance for NIMD Colombia's relationship with the government, especially on issues related to gender as well as the work on violence against women in politics.

In what is now referred to as "Total Peace", the Peace Agenda remained a priority throughout 2023. The government remained committed to the implementation of the 2016 Final Peace Agreement and it actively engaged in dialogues with traditional armed groups like the National Liberation Army (ELN). This dialogue with the ELN and other armed groups such as FARC dissidents has not always been a fluid dialogue, and there have been multiple tensions between the parties. While attempted, the ceasefire has not been permanent, particularly with the FARC's Central General Staff. Despite progress in reaching ceasefires and entering serious negotiations, the security situation in different parts of the country continues to deteriorate.

Regional elections were held across the country for governors, mayors, and local bodies in 2023. These elections faced a highly hostile environment towards political leadership. The Electoral Observation Mission -EOM- reported a 139% rise in riots and disturbances compared to 2019. From September 2022 to October 2023, the EOM documented 653 cases of political violence, including 324 threats, 4 kidnappings, 50 attacks, and 41 assassinations.

In the latest survey by the Observatory on Violence against Women in Politics, about 80% of 250 women that participated in the survey in the last elections (candidates and campaign team members) reported experiencing multiple instances of violence throughout the electoral process. The violence included psychological (verbal abuse, intimidation), symbolic (ridicule, disqualification), sexual (rumours, harassment), economic (financial threats, property damage), digital (online harassment), and physical (attacks, kidnapping threats and homicide attempts).

In the context of political violence and party dynamics, women's political inclusion faces challenges. Women's

⁶ These were outside the scope of this program, but learnings and insights are relevant for the broader WPS work. See also: <https://gaps-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Beyond-Women-Peace-and-Security-Developing-a-Feminist-Vision-for-Foreign-Policy.pdf>



representation in recent elections was low, with Local Administrative Boards coming close to gender parity at 45.8%. However, women's representation in other positions remained below 20%. These results highlight the need for political parity as permanent affirmative action, but Congress has hesitated to legislate on this issue in recent years.

Beyond participation in electoral politics, it's important to highlight women's influence in formal and informal spaces for participation in the advancement of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In 2023, the Steering Committee for Resolution 1325 collaborated with the government to develop Colombia's first National Action Plan 1325 through participatory methods. Colombian women, in all their diversity, contributed to identifying needs and opportunities for implementing UNSCR 1325's pillars through regional and national forums and dialogues with diverse groups. NIMD Colombia provided technical and financial support for youth and women peacebuilders' meetings, while the government presented ongoing progress on Colombia's NAP 1325 during the WPS week in New York, thereby reaffirming its commitment. It is expected that this year, 2024, Colombia will finalize a detailed NAP with budget allocations and monitoring mechanisms.

Escalating conflict in Myanmar

The political landscape in Myanmar continues to be tumultuous, greatly affecting women, especially those from ethnic groups, and causing wider gender disparities. Despite holding 19% of ministerial positions in the National Unity Government (NUG), women continue to face significant challenges, such as persistent gender-based violence and increased threats to their safety exacerbated by the military coup.

The Military Regime continues to brutally crack down on all resistant groups, including youths, civil servants who have joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), media personnel, CSOs and women human rights defenders. In the face of this crackdown, many youths continue to flee to ethnic areas seeking support from Ethnic Revolution Organizations – EROs engaged in armed resistance against the Military regime since 2022. This is seen to be the last resort to restore democracy. The EROs provide training to the youth as well as provide protection to the CDMers and others who have escaped from military brutal crackdown.

On 27 October 2023, three ethnic groups launched coordinated surprise attacks on military posts, in response to 32 months of revolution sparked by the 2021 military coup. This coordinated offensive has resulted in the seizure of over 170 military outposts and three towns. Other local armed groups have joined in the resistance, leading to renewed armed conflict in different ethnic areas; and spreading throughout the country. As a result, the de facto authorities have intensified their scrutiny and crackdown on the resistance forces, specifically targeting activists and young people.

The program encountered difficulties as a result of restrictions on movement, armed violence, limited internet access, and an economic crisis. These challenges caused some activities to be postponed. The armed violence in Shan State impeded the participation and safety of women ambassadors. The lack of a suitable political dialogue platform and China's influence added further complications to the situation.

It is worth mentioning that in February 2024, the military junta in Myanmar enacted a compulsory conscription law. This resulted in thousands of young people flocking to neighboring countries, both legally and illegally which strengthens the abilities of human traffickers and transnational criminal organizations to prey upon vulnerable women and girls. This could potentially impact various WPS issues across the countries.

Burundi preparing for elections and suffering economic hardship



In the dynamic context of Burundi's democratic journey, the political landscape reveals ongoing challenges. Some progress has been seen in women's leadership, economic empowerment, and addressing gender-based violence but many challenges remain. In addition, youths voiced concerns regarding poverty, unemployment and homelessness.

The country's economic performance remains weak and subject to crisis. The economic downturn, amplified by a scarcity of foreign currency and fuel, has resulted in a sharp increase in prices for essential goods. This compounds the hardships already experienced due to the lingering effects of COVID-19, climate-related shocks, ongoing conflicts, and the war in Ukraine. These challenges are diminishing the standard of living for the people of Burundi, causing widespread frustration among the population. Especially youths voice concerns regarding poverty, unemployment and homelessness. Additionally, instability and geopolitics in the region, notably the war in eastern DRC, are spilling over into neighbouring countries, as evidenced by recent attacks in Burundi near the Congolese border. This situation escalates insecurity and undercuts stability in the region. Diplomatic relations between Burundi and Rwanda have deteriorated throughout 2023, culminating in the closure of the border in January 2024.

The impacts of these developments on women are particularly severe, as they grapple to meet basic needs such as food, security, healthcare, and education amid economic hardships. This leaves little room for active participation in political processes or peacebuilding efforts, as immediate survival concerns take precedence.

Amid multifaceted challenges, Burundi gears up for the 2025 and 2027 elections. The ruling CNDD-FDD (Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie) party is consolidating power through old tactics, endorsing dialogues, suppressing dissent, and suspending the main opposition parties' activities.

The CNL (Congrès National pour la Liberté) party hit obstacles after the Ministry of Interior did not validate its March 2023 congress conclusions. With internal turmoil and divisions, including the suspension of several deputies accused of insubordination towards party organs and hierarchical leaders, the suspended members appealed to the Minister. This led to a halt of CNL's activities. The inability of CNL as the main opposition party in Burundi, to operate and campaign will likely affect the credibility of the 2025 legislative elections.

In preparation for the elections, laws have passed reducing the number of provinces from 18 to five, communes from 119 to 42, while increasing zones and districts. This initiative, ostensibly aimed at decentralization, is viewed with skepticism by some, as they suspect underlying electoral motives behind these changes. This new structure means that political parties need to adapt and put in place new strategies for their positioning towards the elections. Most parties have done so in 2023.

The establishment of a new National Electoral Commission and proposals to amend electoral laws have been discussed by the Council of Ministers. Also the political parties are preparing for the 2025 and 2027 elections. In terms of internal party operations, most parties have held congresses that were approved by the Ministry of the Interior, except for CNL. Women's league members have used these events to propose analyses on women's positions in their parties' bodies and to ensure commitment to gender quotas in party structures.

As Burundi moves towards the 2025 legislative and municipal elections, the civic space for opposition parties is increasingly restricted. This is evidenced by the suspended activities of the CNL party and the imprisonment of another opposition leader, the President of the CODEBU (Conseil pour la démocratie et le développement durable au Burundi) party, for making critical comments about the country's governance. Human rights organizations warn that civic space is severely shrinking once again, and pressure is mounting on political parties, civil society organizations, and the media. This includes extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, and other forms of ill-treatment against journalists, activists, and political actors.



BLTP continues to operate without problems. This is partly due to the stabilization of its relationship with the government through ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, and the relatively open civic space that existed.

2.3 Risks

In 2023, there were important developments and challenging conditions in the countries that are part of the LEAP4Peace consortium. Therefore some of the anticipated risks did materialize during the year, providing insights and learnings for our programming.

- **Security and safety risks** are recurrent when working in fragile and conflict affected settings. This risk has been identified as "likely" since the Consortium operates in highly polarized political environments and in countries that are either in conflict, just emerging from conflict, or at risk of reverting back into conflict. In **Colombia**, this risk was actualized with the actions of illegal armed groups. During the School for Elected Women Candidates in Nariño, a violent incident occurred that did not directly affect the team or the participants, but one of the casualties was closely linked to the school's attendees. In response, the safety protocol was implemented, prioritizing the physical and emotional well-being of participants and the team. In **Myanmar**, both GEN and NIMD Myanmar are closely monitoring the situation. In 2023, face-to-face meetings took place outside of the country and safety protocols were established regarding travel, and both in-person and online activities.
- **Risks associated to SEAH:** Despite preventive measures, the risk associated with sexual harassment and gender-based violence, unfortunately, manifested in **Colombia**. During the Minipublic process, a complaint was lodged against one of the beneficiaries, and appropriate measures were taken to address it. The case was managed by the coexistence committee operating at the NIMD Colombia office. This committee, created specifically to handle instances of gender-based violence, operates in line with the requirements of Colombian law and the internal protocol developed within NIMD Colombia. The parties involved were heard, and the rights of the complainant were protected. The committee determined that the reported incident occurred outside of our Minipublic activities and was prior to them. Consequently, no formal process was initiated. However, the rights of the victims were safeguarded.
As a background: At NIMD Colombia, both an integrity policy and an anti-harassment policy form integral parts of employment contracts for all staff, service contracts for consultants and providers, as well as terms of reference for interventions. These policies are also included in Memorandums of Understanding. In compliance with Colombian legislation, an anti-harassment committee dedicated to addressing risks related to these issues in the workplace was established. The anti-harassment committee acts as a focal point in managing these situations in the workplace. Furthermore, NIMD Colombia has issued a protocol on harassment and gender-based violence, outlining the procedure for addressing such incidents. It applies to all individuals working with or benefiting from the services of NIMD, as well as partner organizations. To ensure everyone is well-informed, seminars were conducted to share information with staff.
- **Limited engagement of political actors and low interest in improving gender equality** was identified as a "highly likely" risk by the consortium members. This risk particularly materialized in **Burundi** in 2022, where BLTP encountered difficulties engaging the ruling party in the program's national activities. However, this was effectively mitigated in 2023. As a strategic response, BLTP persistently lobbied party members and this tactic proved successful in 2023. The party is now participating more in the activities,



and BLTP has a prominent focal point within the party. In **Colombia**, this risk materialized, especially due to the electoral process whereby the political actors had other priorities. NIMD Colombia was able to effectively mitigate this risk because of their ongoing good relationship with these actors and with other organizations. This made the signing of the “Letter of Commitment between political parties and movements to equality and non-discrimination” possible.

- **Shrinking of civic space:** In **Myanmar**, CSOs consistently face challenges. The promotion of WPS activities by women human rights defenders in communities carries significant risk. In addition, the de facto authorities persist in scrutinizing the organizational bank accounts of CSOs. Arrests of activists and instances of arbitrary detention are still common occurrences. Political parties in Myanmar are now restricted from interacting with international organizations without prior consent from the Union Election Commission (UEC), limiting the ability of democratic and civic actors to engage with international entities. This also puts them at risk as these organizations are under scrutiny for their connections with the military or the National Unity Government (NUG), potentially associating them with one group or the other. To ensure safety and prevent interference from external parties during activities, NIMD Myanmar has adopted security measures and a shift in communication to maintain impartiality and avoid affiliations with political parties. For GEN, all activities are being conducted with a low profile, without using GEN's name or the donor's in politically sensitive tasks. The years of violence and oppression have taken a toll on people's mental health. To address this, GEN has organized mental health and self-care trainings for WHRDs. Meanwhile, GEN's senior management team continues to operate remotely, working from home. As **Burundi** approaches its elections, the risk of internal divisions within political parties becomes more apparent. This can weaken opposition parties and benefit the ruling party, which may face little competition. The imprisonment of a party President and suspension of the CNL have shown that the civic space is shrinking in Burundi. Except for the disrupted planning of workshops that BLTP had with CNL, the organization has not been affected much and continues to operate successfully due to a stable relationship with the government and the relatively open space that existed.

2.4 Reflections on the Theory of Change

The strategic objective of LEAP4Peace is to contribute to a **conducive environment for women's full and meaningful inclusion in political and decision-making processes to sustain peace**. To achieve this objective, the ToC identifies two main long-term objectives: **LTO1. Women are represented in decision-making roles for peace building** and **LTO2. Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peace building**. The overall logic of the approach is summarized as: by strengthening women's capacities and skills to result in increased participation of women (pathway 1), and to work with political actors to support the implementation of strategies for gender equality (pathway 2), developing and implementing advocacy strategies for better policies based on this (pathway 3), and therefore contributing to a more supportive national and international environment for women's participation in decision-making (pathway 4) to sustain peace.

The ToC continues to serve as the primary guiding tool for our programming under LEAP4Peace. Based on the context analysis presented above, and the results of the Mid-Term Review, the ToC remains relevant, and as such, we have not made revisions to the overall ToC.

In 2023, halfway through the program, an external Mid-Term Review was conducted. This review was focused on the relevance of the LEAP4Peace ToC, including the country-specific ToCs, the program's achievements, and the partnership within the consortium. The MTR praised the adaptability and flexibility of the country-specific ToCs



and emphasized the importance of linking them back to the central ToC. More reflections on the MTR and its findings can be found in section 7.3.

The main achievements towards **long term outcome one** are:

The LEAP4Peace programme is advancing towards pathway one in all three countries by enhancing women's knowledge and skills. In **Myanmar** substantive progress has been made, where women have gained more knowledge about democratic principles and systems. However, they still require more skill-based training and support in order to effectively contribute to peacebuilding. Pathway two is especially advancing in **Burundi**, where BLTP established good relationships with relevant political actors, and **Colombia**, where NIMD Colombia engaged with the municipal councils to prepare regulations for a required gender equality commission. In addition, in **Burundi**, BLTP continued its work with the VSLA groups, promoting solidarity among members and providing economic opportunities while disseminating information on the right to participation. In 2023, the network of VSLA groups had greatly expanded. In **Myanmar**, women's knowledge of women, peace and security as well as federalism has been strengthened. They have been able to apply this new knowledge in leadership positions or in local peacemaking roles.

The progression towards **Long Term Outcome two** is slightly less than that of LTO 1, but still notable advancements have been achieved. In **Colombia**, advances have been achieved in pathway 3 through the facilitation or support of multi-actor forums aimed at promoting spaces and policies that promote the political participation of women. Similarly, BLTP in **Burundi** has completed its advocacy strategy and established a monitoring committee responsible for overseeing its implementation. Other important developments were observed in **Colombia**, where various members (representing government agencies, national and international cooperation bodies and specialized organizations) of the Observatory on Violence Against Women in Politics have confirmed their collaborative work to support the elected women in Congress to prepare and actively lobby for the approval of the legislative bill on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women in Politics. In May of 2023, this collaborative effort bore fruit as Congress passed Law 06 (Proyecto de Ley Estatutaria 006 de 2022 (Senado) - 320 de 200 (Cámara). Additionally, under Pathway 4, in **Myanmar**, GEN collaborated with various networks, particularly the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), to disseminate information to international actors working in Myanmar and advocate for the political participation of women and the promotion of gender equality with the democratic opposition in Myanmar. Moreover, GAPS has enhanced its partnerships with the other members of the consortium, particularly with GEN and NIMD Colombia, and aims to see successful outcomes in 2024.

The specific achievements and developments in the LEAP4Peace programme countries, as well as at the global and consortium level, are delved into further in the following sections.

3. Burundi

Within the context of Burundi, the Theory of Change remains relevant, a point also highlighted in the Mid-Term review. The MTR recognizes that the national ToC in Burundi does not always correspond with the program's global ToC, particularly under LTO 1. Despite these challenges, the ToC maintains its importance. It especially aims to broaden the scope for women's political participation by involving both men and women in activities and by generating economic opportunities for women.

BLTP contributes to both LTO 1 and LTO 2. Under LTO 1, the capacity of both women and men has improved, a



progress acknowledged by the MTR, specifically noting the added value of the VSLAs. While BLTP's engagement on women economic empowerment is not explicitly mentioned in the Consortium's global ToC, it has proven to have a significantly positive impact on enhancing women's livelihoods. Women, now with improved personal income, are empowered to actively participate in political events. The VSLAs have not only created networking opportunities but have also fostered unity among women across diverse political affiliations. The provincial network supporting these women has grown from 12 to 17 groups and has seen an increase in active participation, with 380 women engaging in skill-building activities, knowledge sharing, and fostering social bonds. These VSLAs, not only serve as platforms for financial empowerment through saving and borrowing but also act as spaces for discussions on political rights and advocacy.

The MTR recognized BLTP's value in involving men, as planned in the LEAP4Peace ToC. Men at local and national levels, including women's spouses, were involved, and male political party leaders collaborated with the Ministry of Interior. Local men confirmed understanding of the significance of including women in their party and sought to raise awareness among party members. However, women reported resistance from men within their parties.

In 2022, BLTP initiated an advocacy strategy, which was completed and translated into the national language in 2023. This strategy targets three core issues: (i) the inadequate representation of women in political party regulations and laws concerning women's participation in decision-making bodies; (ii) poverty; and (iii) the diminished social status of women. It's vital to highlight that this strategy draws inspiration from the Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights, and Gender's NAP 1325 (2022-2027).

Also in 2023, BLTP managed to involve CNDD-FDD in multiple activities. As the governing party, their involvement in the programme proved inspirational for other political factions. The joint meeting with the Ministry in December 2022, attended by the new National Secretary of CNDD-FDD responsible for policy-making, was crucial. It aimed to promote women's political participation to leaders of different parties. As a result, a party focal point was designated for the BLTP programme, easing communication and facilitating their involvement in planning and monitoring meetings.

As part of their contributions to LTO 2, BLTP supported various dialogues with Senate and Parliament committees on the outcomes of the advocacy strategy. Furthermore, women politicians were encouraged to collaborate with their political parties to address these obstacles and develop improvement tactics.

Moreover, BLTP succeeded in having successfully enhance the abilities of politically-active women in communication, negotiation, and public speaking. This empowerment initiative allowed female members of party leagues to have more effective internal discussions on the regulations governing their respective parties. BLTP also engaged with political offices of multiple parties, providing opportunities for female representatives to review their party's statutory documents. This led to most parties pledging to make changes beneficial to women's participation. For instance, FNL now boasts 50% female representation in their executive committee. FRODEBU has reshuffled its political bureau to include a woman, increasing the female representation within the National Executive Committee. Meanwhile, CNL appointed a female provincial president, and CDP increased the number of women on its Executive Committee.

In their Pathway 4, BLTP focused on enhancing the network synergy between CSOs, churches, women politicians, and others. A monitoring committee consisting of 10 CSOs, successfully helped finalize the advocacy strategy, proposed amendments to electoral laws and assessed the state of the strategy's implementation.



Achievements 2023:

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 1. Women are represented in decision-making roles for peace building.		
1.1. Women are aware of the risk of not asserting their political rights	# of women leaders trained 2023 target: 150 2023 result: 115	- women are being trained in the 5 new communes in the provinces of Gitega, Makamba, Cibitoke, Ngozi and Ruyigi: 100 from political parties, with 2 participants from each party 5 from communal administration 5 delegates from the communal women's forum 5 delegates from the Provincial Department of Family Development. The last two groups of women leaders were formed to monitor and supervise the VSLAs. Less women than anticipated were trained because of budget constraints due to soaring market places of food and fuel. BLTP provided support, supervision to and monitoring to the VSLA groups, of 17, of which 12 were existing ones and 5 were new.
1.2. Women are able to implement advocacy strategies	# of agreements reached 2023 target: 1 2023 result: 1	- The advocacy strategy which drafting started in 2022, was finalized in 2023 and translated into the national language.
1.3. Women are well represented in political decision-making processes	# of political actors participating who implement internal measures 2023 target:10 2023 result: 15	A workshop was held in Gitega for political party leaders to discuss and review review recommendations on women's representation in governing documents. This followed previous workshops where women parliamentarians, party representatives, and provincial administrators improved their communication and negotiation skills. Political parties, supported by BLTP, have made commitments to amend their policies to be more favorable to women, and self-assessment meetings in June 2023 revealed positive progress, with many parties incorporating gender-related amendments into their regulatory texts during congresses. At the suggestion of the Ministry of the Interior, through the joint technical committee, the workshop was extended to the 5 political parties led by women.
1.4. Women politicians use the media to inform, educate and communicate their civil and political rights in general and their right to political participation in particular	# of political actors participating in dialogue platforms 2023 target: 6 2023 result: 9	- 9 women political actors from the following parties: Ruling party, parliamentary opposition and non-parliamentary opposition parties took part in radio debates (organized by BLTP on Radio Isanganiro and then broadcast by three other radio stations with national coverage Radio Nationale, Radio Maria Burundi and Radio Rema FM) on the 3 advocacy themes, and proposed a number of possible solutions and raised public awareness. - International Women's Day: Support for Ministère de la Solidarité Nationale, de l'Action Sociale des Droits de la Personne Humaine et du Genre in the organisation of 8 March and participation in the ceremonies organised in Cibitoke Province; Ensuring the visibility of multi-party groups in Ruyigi province by involving them in International Women's Day ceremonies with awareness-raising messages -International Rural Women's Day : Delegates from 17 VSLAs participated in International Rural Women's Day celebrations in Rumonge, engaging in activities such as parades and visiting stands showcasing products from women across the country; - 16 Days of Activism: an exchange workshop in Bugarama engaged political party leaders in combating GBV, featuring presentations and panel discussions led by former MPs and female MPs on the challenges women face in politics. Media coverage was facilitated by the Ministry of the Interior's communications unit.



		-A 26 minute documentary was produced to document the project's achievements and highlight multi-party exchanges among women in politics, including interviews with political party leaders. Top of Form
1.5. Women politicians influence political and government decision-makers	# of multiparty dialogue meetings 2023 target: 4 2023 result: 4	4 Multiparty meetings were organized, including a multi-party meeting to validate the commitments and recommendations of the internal workshops, bringing together the leaders of the political parties, two multi-party sessions to strategize and propose innovative provisions for the communal law and the 2025 electoral code for gender parity; and a multi-stakeholder meeting to evaluate the implementation of the advocacy strategy by women leaders and women MPs elected in the 5 provinces.
Outcome 2. Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peacebuilding		
2.1 Government adopts policies that promote women's participation in decision-making bodies	Share of women candidates Indicator to be measured in 2025. No target identified for 2023.	Different activities held to inform and engage government but no decisions or actions were yet made. This result is expected to take place later in the programme. - Half yearly monitoring meetings of internal experts were organized, with 15 representatives from each party, including 5 provincial representatives. The evaluation covered areas like text revision, women's involvement in decision-making, and financial empowerment. For each aspect, activities, changes, verification sources, unfulfilled commitments' reasons and next steps were assessed. -Discussion and exchange with key committees of the Senate and the Parliament on the results of the study on the political place of women in the decision making process. Only one meeting took place, the other is postponed.
2.3. Political parties adopt policies that promote women's participation in decision-making bodies.	# of political actors who adopt measures and policies to enhance representation of women in their decision-making processes 2023 target: 6 2023 result: 8	8 of the 10 political parties involved in the project have adopted internal strategies to improve women's political participation. The CNDD-FDD joined the process along the way, organizing an internal meeting whose conclusions have yet to be validated by the party leadership. The CNL was unable to organize its two internal meetings like the other parties, following the government's suspension of its activities. BLTP was able to engage more than 6 political parties.
2.4. Stronger and broader alliances are built between CSOs and women's political structures/organizations	2023 target: 10 2023 result: 9	The monitoring committee, comprising 10 civil society organizations , including 6 women's groups from Burundian civil society such as the Interfaith Council of Burundi (CICB), the regional organization COCAFEM/Grands lacs, and 2 international bodies (CARE and CORDAID), provided technical input to finalize the advocacy strategy. They engaged in discussions with women active in politics to enhance women's involvement as per party commitments. Collaborating with an expert, they analyzed electoral laws, including the Constitution, electoral code, and communal law, proposing amendments forwarded by the BLTP to policymakers. Moreover, they participated in a workshop with women party leaders and MPs to evaluate the advocacy strategy's progress.

4. Colombia

The changes described in the country's context analysis have brought significant challenges for the implementation of the programme in 2023. Firstly, and in response to the electoral situation, priority was given during the first half of the year to the implementation of Democracy Training Schools for women candidates in



order to strengthen their democratic capacities.

Secondly, the progress in the development of the Colombian NAP and the opportunities, as well as challenges involved in its dissemination, implementation and localization, did not result in a change in the programme's ToC in Colombia, did require a focus on supporting the NAP. These efforts positioned NIMD Colombia and have helped NIMD Colombia gain more visibility in the country.

Then, it is important to mention that NIMD Colombia has achieved the targets in change trajectories 1 and 2, in addition to positive results in trajectories 3 and 4. Overall, Leap4Peace's theory of change has proved to be coherent and has responded efficiently to the electoral situation. All targets regarding capacity building (Pathway 1) have been achieved and surpassed, NIMD Colombia will focus mostly on pathways 2, 3 and 4 in the last 2 years of the programme.

In 2023, the program aimed to enhance women's participation in politics through democracy training schools, empowering 521 women from various sectors of which 68 were nominated as election candidates. Efforts included reinforcing gender-inclusive structures and supporting women's caucuses in Bogotá to strengthen their advocacy for gender equality. Furthermore, collaborating with the Observatory of Violence against Women in Politics had a significant influence on the approval of the Statutory Law aimed at addressing, preventing, and condemning violence against women in politics.

The Government of Petro's initiation of the WPS agenda with a NAP 1325 in partnership with civil society presented an opportunity for NIMD Colombia. They focused on two key areas for participation and support:

NIMD Colombia supported the young women's population forum with technical and financial aid, along with the National Women's Network. They focused on enhancing lobbying skills and reflecting on security and peacebuilding perspectives in alignment with UNSCR 1325. Additionally, they supported forums for women peace signatories led by MAR and CONAMU, collaborating with institutions like the UN Verification Mission and Limpal Colombia. Inputs were consolidated and delivered to allies and the National Government to contribute to the NAP.

NIMD Colombia organized an advocacy week, engaging the Leap4Peace consortium and GAPS for the National Forum on Colombia's NAP development. Strategic meetings also took place with key government entities and CSOs such as Colombia Diversa and WILPF Colombia, to offer recommendations for civil society's involvement. During the Women, Peace and Security Week in New York, Colombia's government showcased progress on NAP 1325 and their commitment to have a detailed NAP with budget allocations and monitoring mechanisms by May 2024.

In terms of international lobbying and advocacy, the NIMD Colombia director participated in the Women, Peace and Security Week in New York where the consortium held a side event where women discussed localizing the agenda through NAPs, with speakers from NIMD Colombia and other consortium member GEN.

Achievements 2023:

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 1: Women are represented in decision-making roles for peacebuilding.		
1.3. Women increase their capabilities and abilities to partake in	# of women (aspiring) leaders trained	2023 was an electoral year in Colombia, therefore there was an increase in actual participants reached, to a total of 521 political and civic women , from different backgrounds trained by NIMD to strengthen their knowledge,



politics	Target 2023: 150 Result 2023: 521	skills and democratic capacities. - Schools of Elected Women Candidates: in cooperation with ICCO, NIMD opened 2 new training processes: in Nariño and La Guajira training 100 women in total. - Democracy schools: trainings held in Bogotá, Popayán, Monteria, for a total of 99 women. - Open democracy school: for House of Representatives: 2 editions, training in total 44 women. - Youth Citizen's Assembly: 169 women - Workshop on Violence against Women in Politics in Tunjuelito: 55 women. In addition, a mentoring strategy through specialised political marketing clinics for women candidates was carried out at the Democracy school in Bogotá and the ones in Nariño and La Guajira. 14 women participated in the mentoring process. (these women are not added to the overall target to avoid double counting). 266 women graduated from the different training processes.
1.2. Women nominate themselves for decision-making positions	# of women who are willing to candidate themselves for decision-making positions Target 2023: 25 Result 2023: 160	160 women participants in the different training processes developed by NIMD have expressed their interest in running for elected office: 1 at national level, 4 at regional level and 155 at local level. Since it was election year, there were increased opportunities to develop training processes with women.
2.3. Political actors assess their status on gender equality	# political actors trained Target 2023: 1 Result 2023: 70	70 political actors have been trained. - Technical assistance provided to 5 women's caucuses in the Local Administrative Boards of the localities of: Santa Fe, Tunjuelito, Teusaquillo, Sumapaz and Chapinero. of these 5. - Technical assistance to 2 political parties: Dignidad party (workshop on adaptive leadership) and the Liberal Party (political marketing). -Support to the National Meeting of LGBTQBIQ+ candidates for local elections (as part of NIMD Colombia's participation in the Observatory of LGBTI people in Colombia - Summit of Women Candidates: , in alliance with the Legal Commission for Women's Equity (CLEM) of the Congress of the Republic Because of election year, there were increased opportunities to develop technical assistance processes for political actors such as the National Meeting of LGBTQBIQ+ candidates and the women Candidates summit.
2.2. Political actors develop internal gender equality regulations	# of political actors who adopt internal measures and/or policies to enhance representation of women in their decision-making Target 2023: 1 Result 2023: 3	Out of the 5 women Caucus, 3 (of the Local Administrative Boards of the localities of Teusaquillo, Tunjuelito and Sumapaz) that received technical assistance, built their respective action plans with the support of NIMD Colombia and the District Secretariat of Women. The work with these benches was intensified during this first semester taking into account that due to the local elections in October 2023 the composition of these benches will change.
2.1. Political actors implement internal gender-equality regulations	# of political actors who implement internal measures and/or policies to enhance representation of women in their decision-making Target 2023: 1 Result 2023: 2	2 political actors - women's caucuses of the Local Administrative Boards of the localities of Antonio Nariño and Sumapaz, presented the Draft Agreement for the creation of the Legal Commission for Women's Equity in their Local Administrative Boards. The Antonio Nariño locality bench also promoted the updating of the corporation's rules of procedure by means of the same draft agreement.
Outcome 2: Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peacebuilding		



3.3. Political actors have a safe space for discussing gender-equality issues	# of political actors participating in dialogue platforms Target 2023: 8 Result 2023: 43	A total of 43 political actors participated in the 7 multiparty dialogue spaces (for more details on the specific dialogue spaces see below)
	# of interparty dialogue meetings Target 2023: 5 Result 2023: 7	NIMD Colombia organized 7 spaces for multi-party dialogue : - 15 political parties participated in the 4 District Multiparty Gender Roundtables in Bogotá. The Multiparty Roundtable has built a gender equality agenda with concrete activities to raise the visibility of political leadership and advocacy with political parties and movements - 15 Local Administrative Boards participated in 2 spaces: the District Meeting of Women Councilors and the District Summit of Elected Women , held in the city of Bogotá. - 6 Municipal Councils, of which 7 councilors, and 6 Local Administrative Boards, of which 9 councilors participated in the National Meeting of LGBTQ+ Elected Officials .
3.2. Political actors develop joint gender equality agenda	# of agreements reached as result of dialogue platform meeting Target 2023: 0 Result 2023: 1	Because of the 2023 elections, there was a window of opportunity to place measures to prevent and address VAW in politics on the political agenda. One agreement was consolidated as a result of a meeting between the coordinators and directors of 18 political parties and movements that have been participating in the multi-party roundtables. The meeting was convened by NIMD Colombia, MOE, the Ministry of Interior, the National Electoral Council and UN Women. In the agreement, "letter of commitment between political parties and movements to equality and non-discrimination" they express their commitment among political parties and movements to equality and non-discrimination, promoting women's political participation in an environment free of violence from their political organisations.
3.1. Political actors jointly advocate for the implementation of gender equality agenda	# of advocacy initiatives carried out by political actors Target 2023: 0 Result 2023: 0	N/A
4.3. Women CSOs/feminists movements have capabilities for lobby and advocate political actors	# of women CSOs with increased L&A capacities Target 2023: 2 Result 2023: 21	In support of the National Women's Network, NIMD Colombia provided technical assistance for the Roundtable on Young Women, Peace and Security, with the aim to gather inputs for the National Action Plan 1325. 21 women's CSOs (10 formal and 11 informal) attended.
	# of women led CSOs included in the programme activities Target 2023: 2 Result 2023: 23	NIMD Colombia has included a total of 23 Women's SCOs in its activities: - Roundtable on Young Women, Peace and Security (see above): 21 women CSOs - Technical assistance to two (informal) women CSOs that were leading two sectoral Meetings of Women Peace Signatories in alliance with LA MAR (Mesa Autónoma de Reincorporación) and CONAMU (Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres). Recommendations from these dialogues were formally submitted to the government, as input to the formulation of Colombia's NAP 1325.
4.2. Women CSOs/feminists organisations develop joint gender equality agenda	# of multi-stakeholder dialogue/platform meetings Target 2023: 2 Result 2023: 4	4 multistakeholder dialogues were held: - Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Meeting between women councilors of the women's caucus and the Local Operational Council for Women and Gender (COLMYG) in Antonio Nariño. During this session, councilors conducted an accountability exercise while NIMD Colombia sensitized attendees to Violence against Women in Politics. The meeting included two women councilors from the Local Administrative Board, two professionals from the District Women's Secretariat, and 13 civil society representatives.



		<p>- As mentioned above, NIMD Colombia provided technical support to the Youth Citizen Assembly - Mini Public, involving 105 young individuals under 28 years old in its deliberative stage, aiming to develop recommendations to guarantee the opening of Colombia's political and electoral system. The assembly comprised 56 women, 48 men, and 1 non-binary person, with representation from different political parties, state entities, and civil society organizations. Moreover, 33 were members of the Youth Participation Subsystem, including representatives from the Youth Platform, National Youth Council, and Municipal Youth Councils.</p> <p>-NIMD Colombia contributed to the development of Colombia's NAP 1325 by actively participating in the Gender Roundtable of International Cooperation and providing technical and financial support to women's CSO involved in constructing the plan. Several organizations enhanced their lobbying and advocacy capacities and efforts to influence the WPS agenda, ensuring their experiences and knowledge are considered in implementing the National Action Plan committed by the National Government.</p> <p>- NIMD Colombia provided technical and financial support for two Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Spaces, aimed to construct and present inputs and recommendations from women peace signatories across various regions of the country, guiding the contents of Colombia's first NAP. Both meetings was attended by representatives from civil society organizations political parties, and executive entities, embassies, and a research centre, including high level public and political actors.</p>
	<p># of studies for evidence based L&A disseminated to political actors</p> <p>Target 2023: 1 Result 2023: 1</p>	<p>- The Observatory on Violence against Women in Politics published its first bulletin on the media coverage and compilation of cases of Violence against Women in Politics, in the midst of the 2023 electoral process in Colombia. This study was carried out with the support of the Presidential Council for Women's Equity and UN Women. The information collected covers the national level and was published on the Observatory's website for free and open consultation.</p>
<p>4.1 Women CSOs/Feminist movements effectively monitor and lobby for policy change and implementation</p>	<p># of national advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs</p> <p>Target 2023: 0 Result 2023: 2</p>	<p>Women peace signatories from diverse regions produced recommendations for Colombia's first NAP 1325 during two sectoral meetings. Two women CSOs received assistance in presenting proposals to state entities, a political party, and two embassies, These inputs were then validated in the NAP 1325 National Forum and delivered to the National Government.</p>

5. Myanmar

Despite the ongoing volatility since the February 2021 military coup, both GEN and NIMD Myanmar have maintained an adaptive approach to the program. They have successfully implemented all planned activities for 2023. NIMD Myanmar updated their gendered political economy analysis to adapt their analysis, programmes and strategies to the current situation in Myanmar.

Similar to 2022, GEN continued to prioritize Pathways 1 and 4, focusing on women peacebuilders and civil society. GEN has notably advanced international advocacy efforts through their work with the Women's Advocacy Coalition Myanmar (WAC-M), advocating for women's meaningful participation in peace processes and engaging with ASEAN, foreign governments, international donors, and CEDAW committees.

Under implementation of LTO1 in 2023, the project emphasized creating spaces for women peacebuilders to



engage in dialogue with other stakeholders. Additionally, the programme provided technical and financial support to these women, helping them improving their skills, knowledge, and commitment to meaningful participation in political and peace processes in Myanmar. Throughout the year, GEN organized two knowledge sharing forums, five capacity building workshops, and provided small grants to four local organizations represented by the women peacebuilders involved the programme.

As mentioned, GEN provided financial support to local initiatives led by women peacebuilders, offering small grants (approximately €4000 per organization) to four local organizations in conflict-affected regions of Kachin and Shan states in Myanmar. These initiatives equipped women peacebuilders with technical knowledge and skills while providing financial support for them to effectively implement interventions within their regions, leveraging the knowledge and skills gained from the project.

In 2023, NIMD Myanmar focused on empowering women peace ambassadors in Shan State by ensuring their participation and safety in relevant peace processes. Through online and in-person meetings, women alumni from various backgrounds came together to discuss topics such as the state of WPS in Shan State. These meetings helped to build trust, facilitate collaboration, and reignite enthusiasm among women leaders. The women peace ambassador network also developed a common vision, mission, and action plans to address WPS issues in Shan State. This progress showcases NIMD Myanmar's role in empowering networks and promoting peace and security in Shan State.

Under implementation of LTO 4, despite the country's situation not being conducive for CSOs to freely advocate for a supportive policy environment for women's rights and political participation, GEN continued to advocate, using a low profile. GEN's extensive international advocacy included engagements with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, UN agencies, and permanent missions like Canada and Sweden. Furthermore, GEN's outreach encompassed international donors and intergovernmental organizations. They also collaborated with the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) to emphasize the positive impact of gender equality on peace processes, through the development of NUCC's Gender Equality Position Paper. GEN also reached out to regional stakeholders in ASEAN, by organizing advocacy trips and contributing to statements of the ASEAN WPS Summit and ASEAN People Forum.

Achievements in 2023:

Gender Equality Network (GEN)

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 1: Women are represented in decision-making roles for peacebuilding		
Peacebuilders collaborate to jointly identify challenges and priorities for women's meaningful participation in democratic peacemaking process	# of women (aspiring) leaders trained Target 2023: 15 Result 2023: 15	- 15 women peace builders were trained and mobilized in 2023 through creating spaces for dialogue as well as through providing both technical and financial support. All trainings were done virtually. -GEN strengthened the capacity, knowledge and resilience: mental health and Psychosocial support, including self-care and psychological first aid; on WPS, exploring the linkages between conflict and GBV; on Gender and federalism, Women and politics, deepening understanding of current political processes; and on Early warning early response and civilian security.



		<p>GEN provided financial support to 4 local initiatives in Kachin and Shan states. These organizations—AlinYaung (ALY), Kachin State Women Network (KSWN), Kachin Women Peace Network (KWPN), and Shan Women Development Network (SWDN)—are represented by women peacebuilders who spearheaded initiatives within their respective organizations. Some of the activities, all led by women peacebuilders were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -support to humanitarian aid and mobile clinics -GBV campaigning -WPS coordination and awareness sessions in IDP camps - Engaging with religious leaders on WPS. <p>Collectively 3,500 beneficiaries were reached. These efforts also fostered the establishment of collective platforms for women leaders and peacebuilders at the local level, amplifying community voices and promoting women’s participation in political and peace processes</p>
Network of peace ambassadors are established and functional	<p># of multi-stakeholder dialogue/platform meetings</p> <p>Target 2023: 3 Result 2023: 3</p>	<p>-GEN organized two Knowledge Sharing Forums in Bangkok in 2023, attended by WHRDs and women peacebuilders from both inside and outside the country: (1) knowledge exchange forum on CEDAW and CSW was held in Bangkok. 60 women peacebuilders and WHRDs attended, marking one of the first in-person gatherings post-military coup. The aim was to assess post-coup threats to women's well-being, celebrate resilience, and support courageous individuals. Participants agreed on priority issues and recommendations for CEDAW and CSW compliance. 60 Women attended. (2) Poverty, Conflict, and Gender Forum held in Bangkok with 46 participants from various backgrounds in women's rights, gender, and conflict. Recommendations stressed flexible and conflict-sensitive donor engagement, inclusive decision-making, direct dialogues between organizations and donors, and ongoing analysis, including virtual engagements in conflict settings to minimize risks.</p> <p>- One coordination meeting among women peacebuilders across Shan and Kachin states was organized virtually.</p>
Outcome 2: Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peacebuilding		
CSOs are willing to collaborate, coordinate and participate in joint lobby and advocacy activities	<p># of women led CSOs included in the programme activities</p> <p>Target 2023: 8 Result 2023: 27</p>	<p>There were 27 women-led CSOs participating in the project activities during 2023.</p> <p>-GEN coordinates closely with the Women Advocacy Coalition-Myanmar (WAC-M) and provides coordination, technical, and financial support, as well as capacity building for its members and ensuring WAC-M plays an important role in national, regional, and international advocacy. Some of WAC-M’s achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAC-M members represented in all nine coordination committees of the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), key for NUCC policies. • WAC-M collaborated with NUG ministries on initiatives like Preventing Sexual Harassment, Exploitation, and Abuse (PSHEA). • GEN and WAC members jointly developed the Gender Equality Position Paper for NUG, promoting a more inclusive framework.
International L&A campaign to promote women’s meaningful participation in the democratic peace making processes that channels and reinforces international treaties and legislation signed by the Myanmar government	<p># of international advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs</p> <p>Target 2023: 4 Result 2023: 5</p> <p>(one regional and four international)</p>	<p>GEN undertook five major advocacy activities that held significant importance in advancing its mission.</p> <p>-Advocacy trip to Indonesia to enhance collaboration with women peacebuilders and WAC members, focusing on ASEAN post knowledge-sharing forum, hosted by AMAN Indonesia, a women’s peacebuilding organization and WASL member.</p> <p>-GEN hosted a side-event at CSW 67 in New York, with delegates from UN member states, entities, and global development actors. The event included GEN's senior management, representatives from WAC, WLB, MIP, WPN, and</p>



(CEDAW, 1325, MSDG)		<p>the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the UN in New York.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GEN took part in the 'With the Rohingya' event in Chiang Mai, representing WAC-M, contributing to the organizing team, and speaking during a session.. -During WPS Week in New York, GEN participated in advocacy events, promoting awareness and establishing GEN and WAC as global actors - 3 GEN SMT members attended Geneva Peace Week, emphasizing advocacy and collaboration with key stakeholders to raise awareness about Myanmar. <p>GEN now holds ECOSOC status at the UN, enabling them to participate more easily and engage in lobbying activities with UN agencies.</p>
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NIMD Myanmar

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 1: Women are represented in decision-making roles for peacebuilding		
<p>1.1: Peace ambassadors collaborate to jointly identify challenges and priorities for women’s meaningful participation in emerging democratic peace-making in Myanmar</p> <p>-</p>	<p># women (aspiring) leaders trained</p> <p>Democracy education Target 2023: 15 Result 2023: 24</p> <p>Women alumni facilitation skills training: Target 2023:0 Result 2023 : 24</p>	<p>-In person Democracy Education training: Due to the high demand of application, 24 women were selected and training in 2023. The training was completed in online setting and conducted weekly from December 2023 until January 2024. An in person meeting is planned to continue in 2024.</p> <p>Based on the needs assessment of the women alumni, 2 days online WPS training was facilitated. 24 alumni from Shan State attended.</p> <p>NIMD enhanced the skills and knowledge of women peace ambassadors in key areas including women's participation in politics, women's roles in peace and security, and their contributions to democratization. Furthermore, it promoted meaningful exchanges among these ambassadors in a secure setting, fostering solidarity regardless of political affiliation.</p>



<p>1.2. Network of peace ambassadors are established and functional</p>	<p># multi-stakeholder dialogue/platform meetings Target : 6 Actuals :6</p>	<p>Recurring monthly dialogue meetings for women alumni who have undergone democracy education and dialogue facilitation skills training. Five sessions took place online, while one occurred in person in Chiang Mai, Thailand.</p> <p>Notably, women leaders from ethnic political parties monitored by the State Administration Council (SAC) were able to attend the in-person meeting, marking their first gathering since the coup. These meetings were initiated in response to the demand from women alumni who expressed a keen interest in engaging with each other.</p> <p>During the in-person meeting, Head of Political Section from the Netherlands Embassy in Yangon visited and engaged with the women peace ambassadors. They exchanged insights on challenges faced and efforts in conflict resolution within their respective regions. Moreover, discussions centered on the political landscape of Myanmar, current scenarios, and shared experiences regarding how women politicians could expand their political influence in the current context.</p> <p>These gatherings were pivotal in fostering dialogue and shaping future strategies within the WPS sector in Shan State. The priorities highlighted encompass a holistic approach aimed at advancing women's substantive participation in peace-building processes. This includes addressing both structural barriers and practical strategies to promote women participation in conflict resolution and sustainable peace.</p>
<p>1.4. Network of women peace ambassadors advocate jointly for women nomination and participation in the formal peace process at various levels.</p>	<p># of advocacy initiatives carried out by political actors Target: 0 Actuals :0</p>	<p>N/A</p>

6. International Lobby & Advocacy

6.1 Context for L&A

The aforementioned global context (Reflections on Global Context, section 2.1) illustrates the increasingly volatile environment that we are navigating, characterized by polarized perspectives on gender equality and women's rights. There is a trend towards conservative politics gaining traction worldwide, resulting in a strong backlash against gender equality and a concerning increase in hostility towards the LGBTQI+ community in many contexts.

Today, women's rights are under relentless attack, particularly within situations marked by increasing conflicts, rising authoritarianism, militarization, and gender backlash. The participation of women in peace processes is significantly low. The credibility of the UN and the Security Council to safeguard and uphold these rights has been severely compromised by growing geopolitical divisions, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the appalling attack on Gaza. The dynamics within the Security Council is challenging, particularly with nations like Russia and China opposing the inclusion of human rights, gender, and WPS language in negotiations for UNSCR 2868 (a



resolution on tolerance and international peace and security). Russia has also objected to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten presenting briefings during sanction committee meetings.⁷

As previously stated in this report, the UN Secretary-General's report in October 2023, showed that women are regularly excluded from and there is still a prevalence of impunity for atrocities against women and girls. Women continue to face entrenched barriers to direct participation in peace and political processes, and women's organizations struggle to find resources, while military spending continues to grow every year. This remains the case even though there is ample evidence that women's participation contributes to more robust democracies and longer-lasting peace. The report also emphasized the need to support women's participation beyond track 1 formal peace processes and invest in local peace structures as seen in Myanmar.

The increase in violence against women human rights defenders, as seen in countries such as Myanmar and Colombia has gained more attention. Despite this attention, the problems continue to worsen. This reinforces the significance of the LEAP4Peace programme and the ongoing need for support and advocacy.

Within this context, LEAP4Peace's influencing strategy remains dedicated to fostering debate on effective ways to enhance women's political inclusion in peace processes and the central role of women's political participation in realizing commitments to the WPS agenda. This emphasizes the enduring need for advocacy and knowledge exchange to confront the limited participation of women in peace processes. Strategic engagements transpired through initiatives such as our participation in the Stockholm Forum, continuous engagement with the MFA and the annual debate on WPS at the UN Security Council, with further details provided in the sections below.

6.2 GAPS global programme 2023

GAPS has made significant contributions to the overall outcome of fostering a supportive policy environment for the representation and participation of women in peacebuilding through pathway 4. In 2023, GAPS effectively utilized the LEAP4Peace global knowledge product and summary report to present the LEAP4Peace initiative at four events. This aimed at familiarizing stakeholders with the programme's objectives and the barriers to women's participation, subsequently strengthening advocacy efforts and fostering a supportive policy environment. GAPS also enhanced advocacy skills among Consortium members through targeted capacity-building sessions and bilateral meetings. The participation of GAPS in events such as CSW and the Colombian National Forum on WPS directly benefited partners, like NIMD Colombia, by enhancing their capacity for national advocacy and input into processes such as NAP development. These initiatives significantly contributed to GAPS' strategic goal of influencing global understanding and commitments to women's participation in peacebuilding.

In 2023, the UK government published the 5th National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, which GAPS contributed to and was invited to speak at the launch. GAPS is also monitoring and supporting the government's WPS team through participation in cross Whitehall discussions. Myanmar is included but Colombia and Burundi were originally not in the eight focus countries. However, the UK has a strong focus on Colombia in their ongoing work to support NAP development in FCAS countries, where they have financially and technically supported the development of the NAP, in particular regional and thematic consultations to ensure women's participation. Even more, UK Government has recently added Colombia to their list of focus countries.

Additionally, GAPS fed into the development of the International Women and Girls Strategy, the Integrated Review, and the White Paper on International Development.

⁷ <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2023-07/women-peace-and-security-12.php>



GAPS actively participated in CSW67, networking with CSOs, decision-makers, and women rights organizations. GAPS partnered with GEN and supported their advocacy efforts, while also promoting a side event and briefing stakeholders on LEAP4Peace's work. GAPS expanded its reach by attending the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development and organized a side event on women's participation and gender-responsive leadership in peacebuilding, with speakers from NIMD Colombia and the OSCE. GAPS also organized a significant event during UN Security Council WPS week highlighting Colombia's NAP development and facilitating south-to-south exchange while advocating for LEAP4Peace's priorities. In addition, GAPS facilitated the attendance of a LEAP4Peace delegation from GEN Myanmar and NIMD Colombia during WPS Week.

In September, GAPS took part in Colombia's NAP 1325 National Forum, with Director Eva Tabbasam delivering a keynote speech and offering technical training to key government ministries. Eva also met with the 1325 civil society network, providing expertise on MEL and governance, enhancing collaboration. This collaboration, stemming from GAPS's partnership with NIMD Colombia, aimed to support the NAP process and showcase their work nationally and internationally. Through this engagement, NIMD Colombia gained a stronger foothold in the NAP process, expanding their involvement and connections within Colombia's WPS sector.

In 2023, GAPS introduced "Mind the GAPS: A Women, Peace and Security podcast," featuring six episodes covering national action plans and women's participation, with guests like Nathali Rativa from NIMD Colombia. This podcast, shared on platforms like Apple Podcasts and Spotify, provided a valuable space for global south practitioners, emphasizing women's roles in initiatives like Colombia's peace process.

Achievements in 2023 :

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 2: Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peacebuilding		
International L&A for supportive national policy environments	# of international advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs Target 2023: 2 Result 2023: 2	- Side event on women's participation in decision-making and gender responsive leadership in partnership with the FBA at the Stockholm Forum for Peace and Development. - Side event on localizing the WPS agenda with NIMD Colombia & GEN Myanmar at UN WPS week
	# of studies for evidence based L&A disseminated to political actors Target 2023: 1 Result 2023: 1	Continuous dissemination of and tracking of recommendations made in 2021 and 2022, to ensure that these were taken on board in 2023 – and are reflected in any work during 2023. - Pillars for Peace summary report disseminated at Stockholm Forum event on women's participation in decision making, attended by NIMD Colombia and NIMD. - Pillars for Peace summary report disseminated at UN WPS week event (attended by GEN and NIMD Colombia). - Pillars for Peace report and summary report promoted in Podcast episode featuring L4P Partner NIMD Colombia. Note: the CSSF learning event that was planned, did not take place. Due to delays in the new NAP publication and changes in CSSF, including its transition to the UK Integrated Security Fund, alongside delays in developing the next knowledge product, GAPS opted to suspend this activity. In 2023, discussions, concept note development, terms of reference detailing, and research consultant recruitment took place for the LEAP4Peace project, with close consultation of all consortium partners for guidance and input.



CSOs effectively lobby for policy change and implementation	# of CSOs with increased L&A capacities Target 2023: 2 Result 2023: 4	GAPS held virtual bilateral meetings with NIMD Colombia & GEN Myanmar during 2023, as well as meeting with colleagues at international fora and attending the in-person consortium workshop. Through these meetings, GAPS was able to ascertain the strategic direction of their global advocacy that would best support the L4P country partners, which helped to shape the 2024 knowledge product and plans for the second season of the podcast. Specific L&A planning was undertaken at The Hague in person meeting, and effort has been made to include partners as co-creators in IL&A.
	# of other CSOs included in the programme activities	- 1 CSO was a speaker at the side event at the Stockholm Forum for Peace and Development: OSCE - 3 CSOs were featured on the 'Mind the GAPS podcast: Womankind Worldwide, Women for Refugee Women and Women's International Peace Centre. - 2 CSOs (non-LEAP4Peace partners) were speakers at the WPS week event: WILPF Colombia, WIPC

6.3 NIMD global programme 2023

In 2023, NIMD continued to take on the responsibility of contributing to the supportive policy environment (LTO2) within the LEAP4Peace programme by collaborating with GAPS in international lobbying and advocacy efforts (pathway 4), and taking on the role of secretariat of the Consortium.

In 2023, the consortium gathered again at the Partner Week 2023 event (more on the partner week in section 7.1). This week-long gathering, organized in partnership with the Power of Dialogue (PoD) programme, NIMD's other MFA-supported consortium, provided many opportunities for exchange, learning, and training and allowed participants to have direct meetings with the MFA. During the LEAP4Peace face to face meeting, international lobbying and advocacy strategies as well as knowledge development were among the main topics discussed.

In 2023, NIMD has remained actively engaged in strengthening the alignment between its country programmes and the consortium partners, ensuring that the lessons learned are captured in line with the countries' priorities and connected to the international level. To further amplify its impact, NIMD has intensified its collaborations with organizations and networks that share similar values, with the aim to generate knowledge, document best practices, and identify potential joint actions. Further discussion on the learning agenda can be found in the next chapter.

Technical support, particularly on lobbying and advocacy and programming, has been provided to BLTP, boosting their capacity to effectively achieve their strategic objectives. NIMD has been significantly involved in international advocacy efforts, attending the Stockholm Forum and co-organizing a side event during WPS week with GAPS. Other consortium members have also participated in these events. As a member of the NAP 1325 community in the Netherlands, NIMD actively engages in policy discussions and events organized by both the MFA and WO=MEN, as well as significant policy discussions such as the Feminist Foreign Policy.

Committed to upholding the highest standards, NIMD has provided training on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) to its staff and partner organizations. Tools and steps were introduced and participants could explore experiences and how to prevent SEAH and respond to it within their specific contexts. This underscores our dedication to fostering a respectful, safe, and supportive environment for everyone in our network.



While certain learning activities, such as developing a knowledge product, have been postponed until 2024, NIMD remains dedicated to promoting gender equality and principles of WPS. In a recent assessment of the GRIPP tool, NIMD recognized areas for improvement and will continue investing further in enhancing its effectiveness and adaptability in 2024.

Intermediate outcome	Indicator target & result 2023	Description of activities, results and explanation of any variation
Outcome 2: Supportive policy environment for women's representation and participation in peacebuilding		
Networking and influencing	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WPS week side event co-organized with GAPS - Participation in Stockholm Forum - Participation in WPS events in Colombia - Lobby and network event at EU in Brussels involving NIMD Colombia - L4P consortium met with the MFA in The Hague during the partner meeting and was able to share their perspectives on women political participation and WPS
Learning to contribute to LEAP4Peace knowledge and learning agenda	NA	<p>Due to the challenges mentioned above, certain learning activities planned such as collecting successful practices on men engagement and reviewing the gender mainstreaming approach of the democracy schools have been postponed for 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner week: including one day ILA training both for LEAP4Peace and PoD partners; presentations by GEN, GAPS and NIMD Colombia; and 2 day L4P meeting focusing on international lobby and advocacy strategies, learning, and meeting with the MFA - Support to BLTP on their lobby and advocacy strategy - Contribution to knowledge product, the process started in 2023, and will continue in 2024.
Communication and visibility of LEAP4Peace results	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2023, NIMD reported its contribution to WPS, more specifically to the participation pillar, to the WPS-HA Compact and to Wo=Men regarding its contribution to the NAP 1325. -Visibility campaigns on International Women's Day, and 16 Days of Activism
Technical support to country programmes	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical support was provided on lobby and advocacy and on programming to BLTP - Training was provided on SEAH to NIMD staff and partners - Assessment of the GRIPP tool in countries where it has been implemented was done in 2023, and will require follow-up in 2024 to further assess its efficiency, its effectiveness and adaptability to different contexts.

7. Consortium

7.1 Partnership

Consortium coordination



The consortium's coordination is ensured by the LEAP4Peace Secretariat, based at NIMD, consisting of the LEAP4Peace Coordinator, Finance, and PME staff members. The Steering Committee remains the primary venue for strategic coordination, convening thrice in 2023, with two meetings online and one face-to-face meeting in The Hague during the partner week. All consortium partners, including NIMD's Country Directors from Colombia and Myanmar, participated in these meetings. Besides the Steering Committee, NIMD facilitated regular meetings with LEAP4Peace's programme managers to discuss better consortium collaboration, the knowledge and learning agenda, and lobby and advocacy plans, and has three monthly bilateral meetings with the programme managers. Despite the pandemic restrictions impeding the consortium's timely consolidation, coordination and communication issues have continuously improved throughout 2023.

The diversity in time-zones and languages among the Consortium partners continue to present coordination challenges. Meetings are predominantly in English, but the Secretariat ensures meaningful participation by offering translation services in French and Spanish. Digital tools like Menti and Google Docs also facilitate more interactive meetings, enabling participants to write, reply, and utilise simultaneous translation as required.

This has also resulted in more bilateral cooperation among consortium partners. For example, GAPS has continuously strengthened the capacity of consortium members in regards to the WPS agenda and international lobbying and advocacy:

- NIMD Colombia, with the support of GAPS, has been able to provide training sessions for the National Women's Network, focusing on the localized implementation of the WPS agenda. Moreover, NIMD Colombia has collaborated with GAPS, leveraging their expertise in NAPs from various countries, to contribute insights to the multi-actor roundtable shaping Colombia's inaugural NAP.
- Women representatives from Colombia have actively participated in advocacy events, including the WPS week in New York and the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development, through partnership with GAPS.
- Additionally, GEN, with a pre-existing involvement in WPS initiatives, has expanded its international presence by collaborating with GAPS, gaining access to a wider range of global events.
- In turn, BLTP has developed a comprehensive advocacy strategy for WPS implementation in Burundi, demonstrating a concerted effort to promote local WPS objectives.

These collaborations have provided GAPS with valuable insights into WPS advocacy efforts in various national contexts, enriching their understanding and approach. As a result, GAPS has been able to define the strategic direction of its global advocacy in order to best support the LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners. This has shaped the 2024 knowledge product and plans for the podcast's second season. GAPS and NIMD will continue to work together to identify capacity building and knowledge-sharing as highlighted by consortium members and help institutionalize these knowledge agendas within their organizations. Furthermore, the cooperation between NIMD Myanmar and GEN has further improved, and they now hold monthly coordination meetings.

The MTR recognized the consortium's added value and highlighted the tangible benefits perceived by the LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners. They particularly appreciated increased access to technical and financial resources which enhanced the knowledge of lobbying and advocacy related to the WPS agenda.

LEAP4 Peace at the Partner Week 2023

The LEAP4Peace Consortium organized a dedicated partner meeting during the broader partner week organized by NIMD in The Hague. All members joined for a meaningful exchange amongst themselves, and with the broader network of NIMD offices and partners, including the Power of Dialogue programme, the other Strategic Partnership where NIMD is a member of. The first two days of the meeting were dedicated to engaging with the



entire network, focusing on introductions and women’s political participation. On the third and fourth day, the LEAP4Peace Consortium focused on building upon and solidifying the progress made since the previous Consortium meeting in Kenya in 2022, specifically in the areas of knowledge and learning as well as international lobby and advocacy.

The first two days consisted of joint meetings between PoD and LEAP4Peace. The first day focused on diversity in politics and engaging men, while the second day centered around feminist leadership, women's political participation, and violence against women in politics. The event also covered women's participation in peace and security as well as the strength of women's networks. Various partners shared their experiences, including GEN, GAPS and NIMD Colombia, who all presented extensively on their experiences.

During the two day L4P program meeting, the current international lobby and advocacy strategy was reviewed, and joint international and national efforts were agreed upon, taking into account previous experiences and modifications in the ToC. International advocacy and lobbying priorities for 2023 (primarily the WPS week) and beyond were established. A plan was also created to implement the knowledge and learning agenda, considering the 2023 knowledge product and future consortium plans. The LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners held a discussion with the MFA gender task force regarding the wider MFA work on WPS and women’s rights, as well as the Feminist Foreign Policy of the Netherlands. Progress, challenges, and future plans were extensively discussed with the MFA focal point for the L4P program.



LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners

Southern Leadership

The Consortium Partners jointly develop and formulate the overall focus and direction of the programme, which includes budget allocation, oversight, and control. Decision-making takes place within the Steering Committee, where all partners have an equal voice and vote. Our Consortium is built upon the principles of joint decision-making, local ownership, mutual learning, equality, feminism, and anti-racism.

The Mid-Term Review reflected on the decision-making within the partnership, assessed how the partners' ownership and leadership from the South have advanced, and whether power imbalances have been sufficiently



addressed. While not all partners perceived a participatory approach to decision-making, the MTR noted that certain ministry requirements might limit options or solutions. For instance, the secretariat of the consortium resides with the lead member making it responsible for finance, reporting and risk management. This arrangement can potentially distort the power balance, making it challenging to apply the principles laid out in the programme proposal.

During the face-to-face meeting in the partner week, all the partners jointly reflected on how the consortium is applying these principles in its operation. Notably, in the beginning of 2023, significant steps towards improvement were undertaken:

- The decision-making process within the Consortium has increasingly become a collaborative effort involving all partners. Sufficient time and space has been allocated for this purpose, through Steering Committee meetings and regular bilateral meetings. These meetings not only engage the representatives from the Steering Committee but also programme managers. Relevant information such as the agenda, budget and annual plans are shared ahead of the Steering Committee meetings to all its members.
- The development of activities such as the international lobby and advocacy agenda has increasingly become a co-creation process among Consortium Partners. There has also been a prioritization alignment between the Partners, NIMD The Hague, and GAPS in the international lobby and advocacy efforts.
- In 2023, we established processes for learning collaboratively, such as developing a new knowledge product and carrying out the MTR. As a demonstration of our commitment to joint decision-making, all decisions related to the MTR in 2023 were made with the Consortium Partners. Additionally, we formed an MTR committee with representation from all Partners.

Visibility of the consortium

NIMD and the consortium partners have undertaken initiatives to increase the consortium's visibility. The lobby and advocacy activities conducted by NIMD, GAPS and GEN have all contributed to ensuring the visibility of the consortium, its contribution to WPS and its key message on recommendations and learnings to support women's political participation to sustain peace.

Additionally, key international days such as International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women, provided key platforms to increase the visibility of the consortium through key events in-country and the use of social media. BLTP in collaboration with the Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender, facilitated the participation of women in politics in event surrounding International Women's Day and the Day of the Rural Woman. In Colombia, NIMD Colombia has designed local campaigns to raise awareness against violence against women in politics and supported the work of the Observatory. The experience and communication inputs from NIMD Colombia were shared with the MFA during the 16 days of activism. Finally, even though in Myanmar the current situation does not allow to work on visibility, the activities of GEN at the international level, have ensured that the international community is aware and responsive to the realities and needs of women and girls in Myanmar.

7.2 Partnership with the Ministry and Embassies

The LEAP4Peace Consortium highly regards its positive and transparent relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, both with the Gender Task Force within the Ministry in The Hague and with the embassies and representations.

Throughout 2023, NIMD maintained consistent communication channels with the MFA, held regular meetings and provided updates on the program's progress, challenges, as well as the risks and opportunities. All Consortium



Partners participated in strategic dialogues organized by the MFA. The Consortium greatly appreciated the support and feedback and recognized the value and practicality of these exchanges. Additionally, in 2023, a face-to-face meeting took place with the MFA during the partner week. This meeting involved sessions with the Gender Task Force for extensive discussions and more focused dialogue with the program's focal point within the MFA. These engagements provided consortium members with a crucial platform to exchange insights and actively engage in political discourse relating to the WPS agenda within their respective nations and on a global level. During the UN Security Council WPS week in October, GAPS partnered with the Dutch Mission to the UN, co-sponsoring an event on localizing the WPS agenda.

Regular contact with relevant embassies is maintained by our consortium partners. The extent of this engagement varies from country to country, depending on the specific context.

In **Myanmar**, the Country Director for NIMD Myanmar regularly liaises with the embassy to discuss the political context in Myanmar and the direction of our programme. Currently based in The Hague, the Director maintains constant communication with the embassy. The Director of GEN who is presently located in New York, has also had opportunities to interact with the permanent mission of the Netherlands in New York.

In **Burundi**, BLTP keeps the embassy updated on political developments and participates in discussions with the embassy's political advisers. In September 2023, BLTP joined other civil society organizations in discussing the Dutch government's feminist policy and participated in a conference-debate and film screening as part of the 16-days of activism campaign. BLTP also had a discussion with the Director of the Department of Social Progress and the Ambassador for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, focusing on the Dutch feminist policy and its applicability to Burundian context.

In **Colombia**, NIMD Colombia held several meetings with the embassy, including with the ambassador and the senior political advisor, both before and after the elections, to share political analysis and to identify the challenges and successes of the Consortium.

Contributions to the 1325 National Action Plans and WPS Agenda

Throughout this report, across various country chapters detailing context and programme results, the diverse contributions of LEAP4Peace and its partners have been highlighted. In this section, we aim to consolidate the collective efforts undertaken in 2023

In 2023, NIMD submitted its 2022 NAP 1325 report, detailing how NIMD contributed to the commitments made as signatory of the Dutch NAP 1325 III. There has been regular contact and collaboration with Wo=Men around WPS as part of the NAP signatories network. NIMD The Hague participated in the NAP 1325 events organized by the MFA and WO=MEN.

- NIMD is INGO partner of the Rapid Response Window (RRW) of the Women, Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), where we work with women civil society organizations to support women's participation in peace. NIMD has ensured to make connections between the LEAP4Peace Consortium and WPHF, as well as between the partners of LEAP4Peace with the WPHF.
- GAPS actively engaged with government officials and provided input to ensure the NAP addressed key WPS priorities. They also spoke at the launch event, demonstrating their expertise and influence in WPS policy discussions. GAPS continues to advocate for increased support and funding to women's rights organizations in the UK and internationally for WPS implementation
- BLTP participated in the evaluation process of the 2017-2021 NAP and the consultations for the definition of the new NAP 2022-2027. BLTP contributes directly to the Burundi NAP by supporting the strengthening of women's leadership and participation in decision-making positions for the consolidation of peace.
- In Myanmar, there is no NAP. However, GEN and NIMD Myanmar do refer to the UNSCR 1325 in their



implementation and advocacy. For example, during 2023, the importance of UNSCR 1325 was discussed and shared experiences at the Knowledge Sharing Forum held in Bangkok organized by GEN. Additionally WAC-M, of which GEN is a founding member, successfully advocated for the establishment of a JCC-Gender Policy including feedback of other women networks. NIMD Myanmar contributed recommendations from the programme to the review of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) policy.

- Colombia: As explained earlier in the report, in 2023 the Colombian Government initiated a participatory process to construct the first Colombian NAP 1325, engaging women and civil society through regional and population based meetings. NIMD Colombia was involved at two fronts:
 - NIMD Colombia supported the organization of a youth women’s population forum in partnership with the National Women’s Network, strengthening advocacy capacities and reflecting on UNSCR 1325’s relevance. Additionally they facilitated forums for women peace signatories in collaboration with MAR and CONAMU, consolidating inputs for potential allies and the National Government to inform the development of the NAP.
 - NIMD Colombia organized an advocacy week and participated in the National Forum for the development of the NAP, hosting strategic meetings with national government entities and CSOs, guided by GAPS. Recommendations were made to increase civil society involvement in the NAP implementation, drawing from international expertise. GAP’s participation also provided insight from her experience in monitoring the WPS agenda.

7.3 Monitoring, evaluation, knowledge & learning

Monitoring and Evaluation

For the global **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation** processes, the main focus was on assessing the programme’s achievements and partnership through the external Mid-Term Review and the midterm outcome level indicator measurements.

Mid-Term Review

For the MTR a steering group had been established, consisting of M&E focal points of the Consortium Partners supplemented with NIMD’s LEAP4Peace Consortium coordinator and the DSH counterpart. After a call for proposals, the steering group selected the Canadian-based **Just Governance Group** to conduct the MTR. The review was done in accordance with the IOB quality standards for evaluations and focused on achievement to date and the functioning of the partnership.

The review was done through a desk study for all LEAP4Peace country projects and a partnership survey for all of the Consortium Partners and country offices involved in the LEAP4Peace programme. The desk study was supplemented by interviews with both beneficiaries of the country programme as well as programme staff and data collection in both Burundi and Colombia. This included also a substantiation of the harvested outcomes. Unfortunately, due to the political and security context, it was not possible to do interviews and data collection directly in Myanmar, but remote interviews were conducted.

The recommendations of the MTR included 1) better align the program design (including the ToC) with the barriers and activities, 2) better alignment across country programs in conjunction with the overarching ToC, 3) strengthening the engagement of men as allies in Women Political Participation programming, 4) expanding the programming on sub-national level and foster linkages between sub-national and national level politics, 5)



continue multi-stakeholder partnerships as a means to produce stronger high-level outcomes and 6) make programming tools more gender-responsive and further appropriate those tools.

See Annex 3 for the Consortium's formal response to the recommendations. Late November, as MEL focal points in LEAP4Peace, we organized a follow-up session with the outcome harvesting expert in the evaluation team to elaborate further on the recommendations to improve the Outcome Harvesting approach and build a database and dashboard for better use of the harvested outcomes.

Mid-term outcome level indicator measurements

Furthermore, in 2023 the midterm outcome level indicator measurements were conducted in-house by the country teams and Consortium Partners. Most deployed a mixed method approach, consisting of desk review, stakeholder interviews, and sometimes a brief survey. The midterm outcome measurements are a replication of the baseline studies done in the first year of the programme, using the same conceptualization and methodology. This ensures comparability to the baseline itself and documents these measurements at mid-term, with an eye to the end-term outcome level indicator measurements foreseen at the end of the programme.

The midterm outcome measurements were put on the radar of the country teams during the regional PMEL meetings in 2022. Technical support was provided in webinars at the beginning of May 2023. The data collection by the country teams was mostly done between June and July, to keep the values as close as possible to the midterm timeframe. Throughout the data collection and analysis process 1-on-1 support and Q&A sessions were organised. This resulted in a country report and a cover report for the programme as a whole, submitted on 1st November 2023.

The main findings from the midterm measurements included, first of all, incredible progress has been made compared to the baseline values, as well as huge strides towards the targets. For example, on the number of political actors who adopt measures and polices to enhance representation of women in their decision-making processes, we see a total of 16 at mid-term. So far, all of them being from Colombia but Burundi is also making significant progress on obtaining buy-in from political actors. Combined, all the LEAP4Peace countries at different levels, trained over 2131 women (aspiring) leaders as part of the LEAP4Peace programme. Moreover, 16 multi-stakeholder dialogues and platform meetings were held across the Consortium at mid-term, compared to only 6 in the first year of implementation.

Seeing as many of the mid-term targets have either been attained, surpassed, or are on the way of being reached in the coming year, many of the end of programme targets have been adjusted upwards on aggregate. In the case of Colombia, the team revised their plan for the upcoming half of the programme in such a way that would allow to focus their efforts and activities on the areas that are most needed. This shows that the progress achieved so far is well within the plan and can be built upon for a logical continuation of the program.

Regular PMEL work

Last year also saw a consolidation of the regular PMEL work, despite a year that was heavily focused on the midterm deliverables, including technical support and reflection around the Annual Reports 2022, and the development of the Annual Plans 2024, the use and design of NIMD's project management system (ProjectConnect), and fine-tuning our IATI reports in relation to reporting on the SCS/SRL result frameworks. The NIMD PMEL team in the Hague also organized an in-house training for staff at NIMD the Hague to message on the importance of MEL and generate support for MEL work.

Knowledge and learning agenda



The knowledge and learning agenda serves as an important component of the LEAP4Peace programme. This agenda helps in comprehending the obstacles to women's participation in peace processes and the ways to overcome these obstacles.

The implementation of the knowledge sharing and learning agenda had not advanced much until 2023 and though key topics had been identified, there was a lack of resources to capture data and conduct analysis on the topics. This was also recognized in the programme's Mid-Term Review. This was due to weak collaborations within the consortium until the first face-to-face meeting in Kenya. While there was learning at the individual country level, it wasn't widely shared or recognized as part of the Consortium's learning agenda.

However this changed in 2023, and the meeting during the partner week in June 2023 was a key factor in this change. The event fostered a more collaborative approach to knowledge sharing. Commitments were made to increase opportunities for sharing national experiences and working together to generate knowledge on WPS and women's political participation in conflict-affected contexts. Each country program has different learning priorities, which can complement each other. Three learning topics were identified and will be further developed in 2024. GAPS has provided support on WPS and facilitated collaboration in developing the knowledge product. NIMD has promoted learning and programming meetings, ensuring the exchange of practices and experiences.

Good practices and lessons learned

The Mid Term Review was conducted by consultants of the Just Governance Group. The report analyzed the progress towards goals of the programmes as well as partnerships within the consortium. See recommendations and response in annex 3.

- **Collaboration and coordination:** As mentioned in other sections of this report, there has been significant improvement in collaboration and coordination within the programme. Regular meetings have been held both at the level of the Steering Committee and at the level of the programmes. However, it remains challenging to ensure joint decision-making and engaging partners in all learning and advocacy spaces, partly due to budget constraints. Perhaps our ambitions have been too high. As a result, we developed a more realistic plan for 2024. Even though we initiated the process in 2023, the actual development and launch of the next knowledge product have been postponed to 2024, with GAPS taking the lead. Mutual capacity strengthening has been fostered thanks to improved engagement between consortium members, particularly during the partner week where discussions were held collaboration options. However, it remains challenging due to the varying and conflict stages as well as language barriers. Progress has been made, such as in the case of Colombia where GAPS and NIMD Colombia collaborated on the NAP 1325. Additionally, coordination has been increased between NIMD Myanmar and GEN.
- **Effectiveness of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships:** These partnerships have proven to be successful in achieving outcomes. This was also acknowledged by the MTR. A prime example of this can be seen in Colombia with the Observatory on Violence Against Women in Politics. These partnerships allow NIMD and other members to offer specific technical support, based on each individual areas of expertise and the value they bring. Another example is the case of Burundi where, as mentioned earlier, the VSLAs helped promote inter-party coexistence.
- **The strength and value of supporting women networks effectively:** Providing spaces for women leaders, activists, and peacebuilders to support their skills and networks is crucial for achieving LEAP4Peace's objectives in intervention countries. Connecting women in politics with informal women leaders and civil society is vital to further strengthen women's leadership further. Often, these alliances



were not previously encouraged. For example, in Burundi, BLTP focused on enhancing the network symmetry between CSOs, including churches, and women politicians and others.

- **More Strategic Lobby and Advocacy:**

- Key lessons from our Consortium partnerships highlight the importance of setting clear expectations and plans from the get-go in all knowledge production or international lobby and advocacy activities. This requires a commitment to improved communication and the establishment of tasks and expectations to prompt sufficient input from all partners. Partners have limited resources for international lobby and advocacy, however, GAPS has stepped in to lead this effort.
- GAPS enhanced support for national advocacy within LEAP4Peace, fostering stronger collaboration and demonstrating added value to Consortium Partners. This was exemplified in the partnership with NIMD Colombia for NAP development, both nationally and internationally. Strengthened relations, joint activities like engagement at the Stockholm Forum, and proactive communication facilitated clearer understanding of support available, paving the way for improved coordination. Efforts continue to ensure partners' needs and preferences for national-level support and alignment with global advocacy opportunities are understood and addressed effectively.

- **Adaptative programming:** NIMD developed two case studies (Colombia and Myanmar) reflecting on strategies of effectiveness of adaptive programming (as part of PoD but involving Leap4Peace country offices and consortium members). The Colombia study focused on incorporating marginalized groups' voices in policy-making, while the Myanmar study highlighted a successful communications campaign featuring program participants.

Consortium capacity building

In 2023, ongoing PMEL support by NIMD was provided to all LEAP4Peace Partners throughout the programming cycle. Mainly during reporting and planning rounds, PME officers and coordinator provided input to all partners on their M&E reporting and on outcome harvesting. Furthermore, NIMD The Hague program and knowledge staff provided additional technical support to BLTP in their lobbying and advocacy efforts, as well as in developing strategies and improving their effectiveness, through regular bilateral meetings.

As mentioned throughout the report, all consortium members received SEAH trainings in English, Spanish and French from NIMD The Hague.

Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of the programme results, the LEAP4Peace Consortium Partners applied different strategies.

The lobby and advocacy strategy in **Burundi**, was developed in such a way to ensure its sustainability. Firstly, it aligns with the country's national policies, and it is overseen by a monitoring committee composed of both national and international CSOs. Additionally, political parties have already made commitments towards this initiative. The program also utilizes economic empowerment through the implementation of VSLAs to encourage political participation proving to be effective in addressing poverty as a major barrier for women's participation. Several VSLA groups have taken steps to strategize and implement actions to ensure the continuity of their groups. These efforts were shared with other groups during the exchange visits that occurred in 2023.



In **Colombia**, NIMD ensures sustainability through various strategies. It focuses on resource diversification, and fostering collaboration between different programmes, such as Leap4Peace and PoD. Additionally, NIMD strengthens collaborative relationships with organizations such as ICCO Cooperation. Furthermore, NIMD maintains partnerships with influential institutions and operates knowledge transfer strategies. It also makes significant investments in normative and legal changes, particularly in addressing gender based political violence through its Violence Against Women in Politics Observatory.

In **Myanmar**, In Myanmar, one of the primary strategies for ensuring the sustainability of results is to closely monitor political developments and regional changes. This is important to ensure that programming effectively addresses the needs of the country and promotes trust among targeted political and civic leaders. Additionally, both NIMD Myanmar and GEN are dedicated to building the capacity, knowledge, and skills of women to participate in emerging democratic processes and advocacy efforts. GEN's expertise in working with networks, as well as being a network organization itself, guarantees ongoing opportunities for the women involved in the program to learn and engage, even in a closed and conflict-affected context.

8. Financial overview

The annual financial report outlines the budgeted versus actual expenditures for the fiscal year 2023. The total expenditure for the year was €1,057,189, which is 11% below the revised budget of €1,183,264. This report provides a detailed explanation of significant variances.

Additionally, a deduction of €5,529 was made from the total expenditure. This adjustment refers to the ineligible BLTP 2020 costs as specified in the letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 30th November 2023. This deduction was necessary for compliance. Therefore the cumulative expenditures – as audited for 2023 – are €1,051,660.



Summary per budget lines

2023				
		Revised Budget	Actuals	Variance
		2023	2023	%
	I. Direct staff costs			
IA	A. Staff costs	177.786	133.104	-25%
IB	B. Local staff costs	253.623	229.396	-10%
IC	C. Consultants and advisers	-	-	-
I	Subtotal I	431.410	362.499	-16%
	II. Other direct programme costs			
IIA1	Staff			
	LTO 1 interventions	168.255	160.093	-5%
	LTO 2 interventions	158.308	111.963	-29%
	LTO 3 interventions			
	LTO 4 interventions			
IIA	Country specific interventions	326.564	272.056	-17%
IIA3	Country specific interventions focus			
IIA4	Consortium interventions			
IIA	A. Activity costs	326.564	272.056	-17%
IIB1	Staff	149.618	142.993	-4%
IIB2	Interventions			
IIB	B. Costs of consortium partners and local	149.618	142.993	-4%
IIC	C. Activity-related travel costs	35.111	39.566	13%
IID	D. Project office costs (if applicable)	50.924	48.830	-4%
IIE	E. Equipment and investments	12.314	3.049	-75%
IIF	Staff	41.865	35.146	-16%
IIF	Interventions	69.140	70.509	2%
IIF	F. Monitoring, evaluation and auditing	111.006	105.655	-5%
II	Subtotal II	685.536	612.148	-11%
	Total of I and II	1.116.945	974.648	-13%
	III. Overheads / indirect costs			
IIIA	A. Costs of support staff	66.319	82.541	24%
IIIB	B. Not directly allocable administrative costs			
IIIC	C. Other non-allocable costs			
III	Total of III	66.319	82.541	24%
	Total of I, II and III	1.183.264	1.057.189	-11%
	Contingencies (max. 0 %)	-	-	-
	TOTAL	1.183.264	1.051.660	-11%

Minus 5,529 inelegible BLTP 2020 (see letter MoF a for approval 2022 audit report)

IA. Staff Costs: The actual staff costs were €44,682 lower than the budgeted amount due to a reduction in hours for direct staff at NIMD HQ. This reduction was in line with the Steering Committee's decision to optimize resources, counterbalance the increase in staff costs due to inflation, and reduce the number of direct staff intervening on the LEAP4Peace.

Additionally, the intense effort required for partners and country staff during the Mid Term Review conducted in 2023 further influenced this decision.

LTO 2 Interventions: The substantial under-expenditure of €46,345 was due to the postponement of planned activities to 2024, which necessitated rescheduling and reallocation of resources.



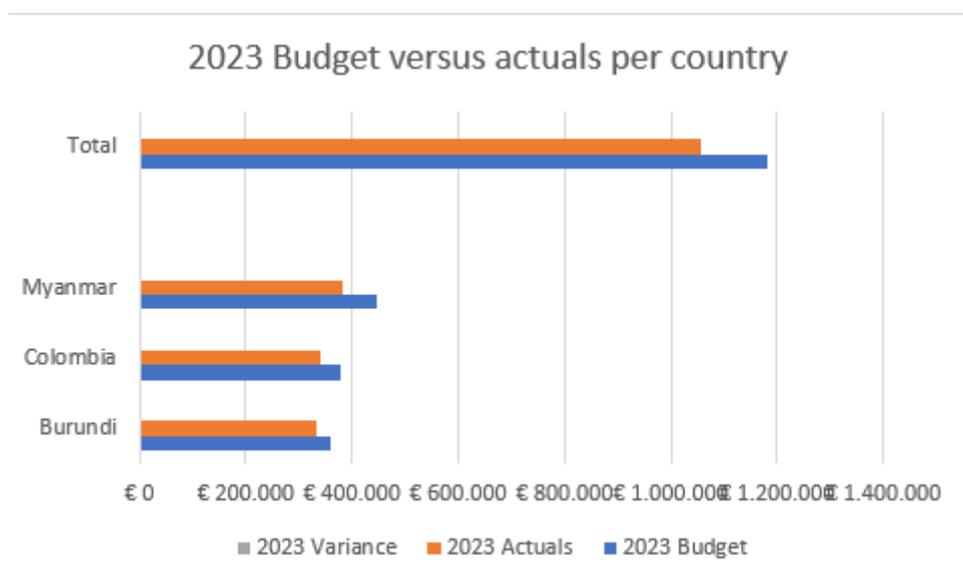
IIC. Activity-related Travel Costs: Travel costs were €4,455 higher than budgeted due to increased travel to support international advocacy plans in Myanmar and participation in WPS week in New York for GAPS and NIMD Colombia. These activities were deemed essential for achieving strategic advocacy goals.

IIE. Equipment and Investments: Equipment and investment expenditures were €9,265 lower than budgeted. The Myanmar office adopted a minimalist approach to spending on office equipment, focusing on essential items only.

IIF1. Staff (Monitoring, Evaluation, and Auditing): The PME position in the Myanmar office was vacant for three months, resulting in a €6,719 underspend.

IIIA. Costs of Support Staff: There was a €16,222 overspend on support and administrative staff costs; due to personnel putting in more hours in the preparation of and during the partner week in The Hague, and for enhanced communication efforts. These additional hours were necessary to manage increased activities, ensure effective coordination, and handle logistics especially for the partner week, but also for events in Stockholm and New York.

Summary per country



LEAP4Peace	2021-2025	2021-2023	% cumulative actuals versus 5 years budget
Countries	Budget	Cumulative Actuals	
Burundi	€ 1.541.728	€ 985.574	64%
Colombia	€ 1.541.728	€ 958.788	62%
Myanmar	€ 1.850.074	€ 1.002.261	54%
Total	€ 4.933.530	€ 2.946.623	60%

The program is on track with its financial planning, with cumulative actual expenditures at 60% of the five-year budget by the end of 2023. This aligns with the benchmark of 60% (3 out of 5 years), indicating that the program



is progressing as planned in all countries. Notably, Myanmar has caught up significantly, despite a slower start, demonstrating effective adjustments and ramping up of activities.

Summary per LTO

The following table provides an overview of the cost distribution between LTO1 and LTO2.

LEAP4Peace	2021-2025	2021-2022	2023			2021-2023	
LTO	Budget	Cumulative Actuals	Budget	Actuals	%total	Cumulative Actuals	% total
LTO1	€ 2.644.774	€ 1.066.882	€ 640.480	€ 569.845	54%	€ 1.636.727	56%
LTO2	€ 2.288.755	€ 822.552	€ 542.785	€ 487.344	46%	€ 1.309.896	44%
Total LTO	€ 4.933.529	€ 1.889.434	€ 1.183.265	€ 1.057.189	100%	€ 2.946.623	100%

The cumulative actuals for 2021-2023 show that the LEAP4Peace program is on track with its financial planning, with both LTO1 and LTO2 progressing as planned. The total expenditure aligns well with the benchmark, demonstrating effective budget management across both objectives.

Annexes

Annex 1a: Financial Annual Report 2023

Annex 1b : Audited Reports 2023 (to follow on separate email) : BLTP, GEN, GAPS, NIMD and LEAP4Peace consolidated.

Annex 2a: Consolidated Indicators 2023

Annex 2b: Intermediate Outcome Indicators related to WRGE SCS basket indicators

Annex 3: MTR response

