MOWIP Methodology Explainer 6

Developing effective recommendations based on MOWIP findings

In this Explainer, we discuss how assessment teams can best support security institutions in TPCCs having undergone a MOWIP assessment to develop effective recommendations based on the MOWIP findings.

<u>Introduction:</u> The findings from MOWIP assessments are most valuable when they are used to inform effective, evidence-based recommendations aimed at fostering gender equality and women's meaningful participation within security institutions and in the context of deployment to UN peace operations. Indeed, the necessary foundation for advancing meaningful changes in gender equality and women's participation in peace operations is to realize those changes within the security institution. As such the recommendations from each national MOWIP report constitute represent an integral element of realizing transformative interventions.

> ✦ *MOWIP Tips & Lessons Learned #1:*
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> *Remember that MOWIP recommendations are most effective when they are **used to inform action**. One way this can be done is by encouraging the security institution to use the MOWIP recommendations to inform a project proposal to be submitted to the Elsie Trust Fund[1]. Project proposals should aim "to address specific barriers identified in a Barrier Assessment", such as a MOWIP assessment.*

The below sections aim to describe MOWIP recommendations and what makes them most effective; to provide guidance regarding when and by whom MOWIP recommendations should be developed, and to whom they should be addressed; and to explain the process of developing MOWIP recommendations. The final section provides a summary of the key takeaways of this document. This Explainer also provides a set of tips and lessons learned based on DCAF's experience.

1. What are effective MOWIP recommendations?

An effective recommendation is built on three components: an objective (**what** you want to change), an actor (**who** can make that change), and an action (**how** that actor can make that change happen).

There are many ways to achieve an objective, and it will likely take multiple actions from multiple actors. In other words, there may be several "hows" and "whos" for each "what", and they should be as specific and narrow as your contextual knowledge allows. For recommendations to be as specific as possible, it is good practice to only include one "what" per recommendation.

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[1] Please refer to the Elsie Initiative Fund website for more information on funding modalities: https://elsiefund.org/funding-types/

The recommendations should usually name the department or institution (e.g., Ministry of Interior or Human Resources Department) rather than individuals. However, in some instances, you may want to name a specific individual in your recommendation. This is particularly the case when you know that the specific individual is the key decision maker for the issue at hand (e.g., Minister of Defense, Police Commissioner, Provincial Governor, a specific parliamentarian).

Determining the "who" in each recommendation depends on the institutional environment and the key decision makers in this context. When it comes to MOWIP assessments, the relevant "who" can be actors at the institutional, national, regional and/or international level. Indeed, recommendations can also be addressed to departments or institutions under the umbrella of the United Nations or relevant regional organizations like the African Union.

Box 1: Examples of strong recommendations.

Example 1: [**who**] The Defence Ministry should [**what**] establish mechanisms to increase women's participation in security institutions, including [**how**] a quota for thirty percent women among new recruits, childcare services, and professional development to encourage women's promotion to high-level positions.

Example 2: The national government should **[what]** expand strategies for women's recruitment into the security sector. Specifically, **[who]** the Ministry of Interior should focus on women's recruitment into the police, targeting widows and victims of war. This can be achieved by **[how]** creating open houses at which women police officers can share experiences with interested women candidates and establishing special recruitment campaigns targeting women in high schools and colleges.

Example 3: [who] The Human Resources Department should **[what]** commit to effectively preventing and responding to harassment in the workplace by **[how]** developing an anti-harassment policy and providing a series of training to decision-makers and personnel on bystander intervention.

Example 4: [who] The Director of the National Police should **[what]** contribute to a healthy work environment where hazing and bullying are not tolerated by **[how]** speaking out publicly against these types of behaviours, role modelling positive forms of behaviours, and encouraging colleagues and other decision-makers to take part in training opportunities on these topics at least twice a year.

Example 5: [who] The UN Department of Peace Operations should **[what]** strengthen processes to ensure deployed peacekeepers have the necessary skills, knowledge, and mindset to take actions consistent with gender equality and WPS mandates by **[how]** including interpersonal skills alongside tactical and operational skills within the deployment criteria.

Recommendations may be developed along four complementary axes: **policies**, **training and professional development**, **practices**, and **organizational culture**. Developing recommendations that address and leverage these four types of complementary interventions ensures that the ensuing initiatives will be holistic and systemic.

- The aim of **policy** interventions is to strengthen the security institution's policy framework (i.e., the set of documents adopted officially by the institution that defines the course and/or principles of action of this institution) by reviewing or revisiting existing policies and/or by developing and adopting new policies that aim to enable women's meaningful participation and gender equality, and/or to overcome existing impediments to women's meaningful participation.

- The aim of **training and professional development** interventions is to build knowledge and awareness within the security institution on gender equality, as well as the skills and competencies needed to advance gender equality and inclusion internally and in the operations of the institution[2]. Such interventions can also include training and professional development opportunities aimed at advancing women's capacity and readiness to participate in a variety of in-country and in-mission tasks, projects, responsibilities, and programming.

- The aim of **practice** interventions is to support the implementation of policy and/or advance practical discretionary interventions intended to mitigate the negative impact of gender roles and social exclusion. This also includes the implementation of policy and/or practical discretionary interventions intended to engage more women in projects, tasks and programming in-country and in-peace operations, as well as preventing behaviours and comments that could be understood as harassing, bullying, or discriminatory.

- The aim of **organizational culture** interventions is to bring the attitudes and values of the security institution personnel (and leadership) into greater alignment with gender equality and inclusion[3].

> ⚜ *MOWIP Tips & Lessons Learned #2:*
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> *Note that in the MOWIP methodology, issue areas 9 (gender roles) and 10 (social exclusion) are cross-cutting, meaning that they influence and shape barriers and opportunities in all other institutional issue areas. As such, recommendations that aim to address barriers in issue areas 1 to 8 should also consider **addressing root causes** that may be related to gender roles, gender norms, gender stereotypes, the gender protection norm, and/or gendered dimensions of the institutional culture and group dynamics.*

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[2] Please refer to DCAF's policy brief "Saving the world, one gender training at a time" for more detailed guidance on leveraging gender training to affect transformative institutional change: https://www.dcaf.ch/saving-world-one-gender-training-time

[3] Please refer to DCAF's policy brief "Organizational culture reboot" for more detailed guidance on effective interventions targeted organizational culture of security sector institutions: https://www.dcaf.ch/organizational-culture-reboot

This Explainer is from the DCAF Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP) methodology. More info: www.dcaf.ch/mowip Contact elsie@dcaf.ch

2. <u>When and by whom should MOWIP recommendations be developed?</u>

While some recommendations may be put forward by the assessment team in the draft report based on their expertise and experience, the final set of recommendations should be developed jointly with representatives of the assessed security institution during the validation process. Indeed, these recommendations need to be endorsed by the institution undergoing the MOWIP assessment. The validation process and the development of recommendations is a critical stage to establish institutional ownership of the findings and buy in for the recommendations.

While recommendations can be pre-drafted early in the validation process for consideration by the representatives of the security institution, they should be fleshed out and finalized during or after the validation workshop. There are two ways to go about it:

- Throughout the validation workshop, at the end of each section. We call a section a time dedicated to discussing and validating one issue area or several intertwined issue areas.
- Towards the end of the validation workshop or at another subsequent workshop altogether (depending on stakeholders' time availability), once all the issue areas have been discussed and validated.

The second option is most recommended, as it would enable workshop participants to have a comprehensive overview of the opportunities and barriers to women's participation within the institution, thereby enabling the development of holistic and informed recommendation.

Thinking carefully about who should be involved in the development of the recommendations is also critical. It is useful to have a mix of high-level decision-makers (who will be in a position to endorse, adopt and implement the recommendations) and mid-level practitioners (members of the institution that are involved in the day-to-day work and have a better sense of what is practical and realistic). It is also helpful to have allies present (sympathetic decision-makers, or people who have been involved in the assessment, such as members of the Working Group, who have the greatest awareness of the process, or representatives of women's professional associations or gender divisions).

MOWIP Tips & Lessons Learned #3:

Assessment teams may explore strategies to embed the recommendations in broader organizational reform or strategic planning processes (institutional level), or in other normative processes related to gender equality and women's participation (national level).

> *For instance, inviting members of the national Women, Peace and Security community (civil society organization or academics e.g.) to participate in the development of the recommendations or consulting them in the process can help embed MOWIP recommendations in national or sectoral 1325 Action Plans.*

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3. How should MOWIP recommendations be developed?
    a. *Identifying the key stakeholders*

Assessment teams may consider conducting a **stakeholder mapping** prior to the validation workshop, to identify the key stakeholders that should be invited and/or the stakeholders to whom recommendations should be addressed. This involves internal stakeholders within the security institution as well as other government institutions (the line ministry for example). As noted previously, this may also include external stakeholders from civil society or academia, even if only for specific elements of the recommendation process (e.g. a University can support academic coursework or on-going research, civil society may serve as a key bridge to the 1325 NAP). This mapping exercise can build on the stakeholder mapping done by the assessment team at the beginning of the assessment process (see section 3.4 of the MOWIP methodology, on p.61-62).

This involves making a list of relevant persons, groups and institutions with an interest or concern in women's participation and gender equality, at the institutional, national (and potentially regional and international) levels.

Consider their level of influence relative to the topic of gender equality and women's participation (low, medium or high) and their stance or previous actions they have taken on the topic.

Indicate which of the following categories each stakeholder falls into, using coloured pens:

- Target (someone you seek to influence) – circled in blue
- Partner (someone who supports the change you seek) – circled in black
- Spoiler (someone who opposes the change you seek) – circled in red
- Neutral (someone who does not feel strongly either way) – circled in green

Use lines, circles and arrows to indicate how the stakeholders relate to each other. Also identify what your relationship with them is (if any).

Determine how and to what extent these actors can act to implement the change you want to see. When thinking about the "how," the solution must be actionable and within the power of the actors to implement.

A common mistake is delivering recommendations to someone who does not have the power or capacity to take action. For example, if you believe there should be more women police officers at the district level, you might develop recommendations for the local police chief— but what if the decisions about hiring quotas are made by the provincial governor or police commissioner? This would mean you have addressed your recommendations to the wrong actor. Careful research about ''who'' within those institution(s) makes ''what'' decisions is essential.

    b. *Drafting the recommendations*

During the validation process, there are two ways to develop recommendations: You can first identify the "who" using the stakeholder map and then brainstorm what actions those actors can take (how) to advance the "what"; or you can first identify what needs to happen (how) in order to achieve your "what" and then brainstorm "who" has the power to take those actions.

Box 2: Template for developing recommendations	
Problem/barrier: The barrier we identified that we want to address, and the issue area(s) to which the barrier pertains.	
Objective: The change we want that can be influenced through policy; practice; training and capacity building; and/or organizational culture. **What** needs to happen to address the barrier?	
Who has the ability to take action? What specific action should they take to support our objective (**how)**?	**Who** (individual/institution/organization/department): **How** (the action we want them to take):
	Who (individual/institution/organization/department): **How** (the action we want them to take):
	Who (individual/institution/organization/department): **How** (the action we want them to take):

Your recommendations should always be as specific, realistic, and relevant as possible.

- **Specific**: Words like "sensitize" and "empower" are vague and should be broken down into more clearly defined, measurable terms. Recommendations that refer to a state of mind or a process like "empower" are almost impossible to measure. Process goals like "empowerment" and "awareness-raising" are long-term and elusive. You want to be as concrete as possible about who, what, where, and when. Imagine signposts—or indicators—along the way of what an empowered / aware woman does and put that language in your recommendation. Also, watch out for words that can be interpreted in a variety of ways (e.g., accountability, transparency, etc.) and be as specific as possible about what change you want to see.
    - For example, "establish a program to empower women" could be changed to "establish a program that equips women with knowledge and advocacy skills relating to security sector reform."

- **Realistic**: Changing attitudes and behaviour is a long-term process. Try to be realistic about what actions you expect policymakers to take.
  - ➢ For example, it may not be strategic to advocate for a woman to head the military if all senior ranking officers are men. It may be more realistic to call for programs that coach women for promotion into senior leadership. Realistic recommendations also reflect the limits of available funding and staff.

- **Relevant**: The "how" of your recommendation should advance your objective (what) and your objectives (what) should advance your goal. It's important to make sure that recommendations support the desired change. Also remember that the targets of your recommendations must have the power/influence to take the action you want to see.

🔸 *MOWIP Tips & Lessons Learned #4:*

*In order to take a holistic approach to effecting sustainable change, it is advisable that the recommendations be presented as '**packages'** (a set of recommendations to be considered for implementation jointly in pursuit of transformative change). Each package should include a combination of:*
- *short-term ('low-hanging fruit') and **long-term activities** (focused on root causes of discrimination);*
- *activities designed to **remove specific barriers** – while simultaneously addressing the **cross-cutting issue areas** more broadly; and*
- *activities that **target women** (e.g. accommodation) and activities that **target all the personnel** in the largely male-dominated institution (e.g. gender coaches, bystander intervention training for all staff to prevent sexual harassment, assault, and rape).*

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4. Summary of key takeaways

MOWIP recommendations are most effective when they are developed and used to inform action.

Effective MOWIP recommendations should include three components: an objective (what you want to change), an actor (who can make that change), and an action (how that actor can make that change happen).

Recommendations may be developed along four complementary axes: policies, training and professional development, practices, and organizational culture.

MOWIP recommendations should be developed jointly with representatives of the assessed security institution, towards the end of the validation workshop, once all the issue areas presented in the report have been discussed and validated.

A common mistake is delivering recommendations to someone who does not have the power or capacity to take action. To avoid this, consider doing a stakeholder mapping prior to the validation workshop.

Recommendations should always be specific, realistic, and relevant.

5. <u>References</u>

➢ [*Module 14, Developing Recommendations for Security Sector Reform, in A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform Training Curriculum, DCAF and Inclusive Security.*](#)
➢ [*MOWIP methodology.*](#)
➢ [*Ghana Armed Forces MOWIP Report*](#)