

## MODULE EIGHT

# Supporting Women Working within Security Sector Institutions



## A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform Training Curriculum



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SECURITY**

## Acknowledgements

Over the last decade, Inclusive Security and DCAF have conducted dozens of training workshops with women and men in countries undergoing security sector reform processes. We wish to thank all those who have participated in these trainings, sharing their stories, their wisdom and their experience, and helped us in turn to develop the training approaches reflected in this curriculum.

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## DCAF

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) is an international foundation whose mission is to assist the international community in pursuing good governance and reform of the security sector. DCAF develops and promotes norms and standards, conducts tailored policy research, identifies good practices and recommendations to promote democratic security sector governance, and provides in-country advisory support and practical assistance programmes.

DCAF's Gender and Security Division works through research, technical advice and regional projects to support the development of security sectors that meet the needs of men, women, boys and girls; and promote the full participation of men and women in security sector institutions and security sector reform processes.

Visit us at: [www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch). Contact us at: [gender@dcaf.ch](mailto:gender@dcaf.ch).

## Inclusive Security

Inclusive Security is transforming decision making about war and peace. We're convinced that a more secure world is possible if policymakers and conflict-affected populations work together. Women's meaningful participation, in particular, can make the difference between failure and success. Since 1999, Inclusive Security has equipped decision makers with knowledge, tools, and connections that strengthen their ability to develop inclusive policies and approaches. We have also bolstered the skills and influence of women leaders around the world. Together with these allies, we're making inclusion the rule, not the exception.

Visit us at: [inclusivesecurity.org](http://inclusivesecurity.org). Contact us at: [info@inclusivesecurity.org](mailto:info@inclusivesecurity.org).

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# MODULE OVERVIEW:

## Supporting Women Working within Security Sector Institutions

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### Learning Objectives

- Participants are able to identify three challenges faced by women working within security sector institutions.
  - Participants are able to design an assessment of servicewomen's needs and priorities.
  - Participants are able to identify strategies or activities to support women working within the security sector.
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### Background Resources for Trainers

- Bastick, Megan, and Tobie Whitman. *A Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform*. Washington: Inclusive Security and DCAF, 2013. [www.dcaf.ch/Publications/A-Women-s-Guide-to-Security-Sector-Reform](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/A-Women-s-Guide-to-Security-Sector-Reform)
- Bastick, Megan. *Gender Self-Assessment Guide for Police, Armed Forces and Justice Sector*. Geneva: DCAF, 2011. [www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Gender-Self-Assessment-Guide-for-the-Police-Armed-Forces-and-Justice-Sector](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Gender-Self-Assessment-Guide-for-the-Police-Armed-Forces-and-Justice-Sector)
- Denham, Tara. "Police Reform and Gender." In *Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit*, edited by Megan Bastick and Kristin Valasek. Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN-INSTRAW, 2008. [www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Police-Reform-and-Gender-Tool-2](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Police-Reform-and-Gender-Tool-2)
- National Center for Women and Policing. *Recruiting and Retaining Women: A Self-Assessment Guide for Law Enforcement*. Los Angeles: National Center for Women and Policing, 2001. [www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/185235.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/185235.pdf)

Time	Description
5 minutes	<b>8.1 Introduction to the Module</b> 8.1.1 Facilitator Talking Points
60 minutes	<b>8.2 Why Do Women in the Security Sector Matter?</b> 8.2.1 Activity: Women in the Security Sector
50 minutes	<b>8.3 How Can Women Support Women in the Security Sector?</b> 8.3.1 Activity: Assessing the Needs of Women in the Police 8.3.2 Activity: Identifying Actions to Support Women in the Police
5 minutes	<b>8.4 Wrap Up</b> 8.4.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Points to Take Away
	<b>Adapting the Module</b> <b>Assessment Questions</b>
<b>Total Time: 2 hours</b>	

## 8.1 Introduction to the Module



### 8.1.1 Facilitator Talking Points

#### Background for Facilitator

This section introduces the purpose and learning objectives of the module.

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- We have discussed which institutions and bodies comprise the security sector, as well as what constitutes security sector reform. In this module, we look at why it is important that women work within the security sector, some of the challenges they face, and what women in civil society can do to support them.
- After this module, you will be able to:
  - Identify three challenges faced by women working within the security sector.
  - Design an assessment of servicewomen's needs and priorities.
  - Identify strategies or activities to support women working within the security sector.

#### Materials Needed

None

#### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify the purpose and learning objectives of this module.

**Time** 5 minutes

## 8.2 Why Do Women in the Security Sector Matter?



### 8.2.1 Activity: Women in the Security Sector

#### Background for Facilitator

In this activity, participants will identify advantages of having women working within security sector institutions and the challenges they may face.

Prepare two flipcharts, one labeled “police” and one “armed forces”; divide each into “advantages” and “challenges.”

#### Materials Needed

Flipchart; markers; presentation slides

#### Learning Objectives

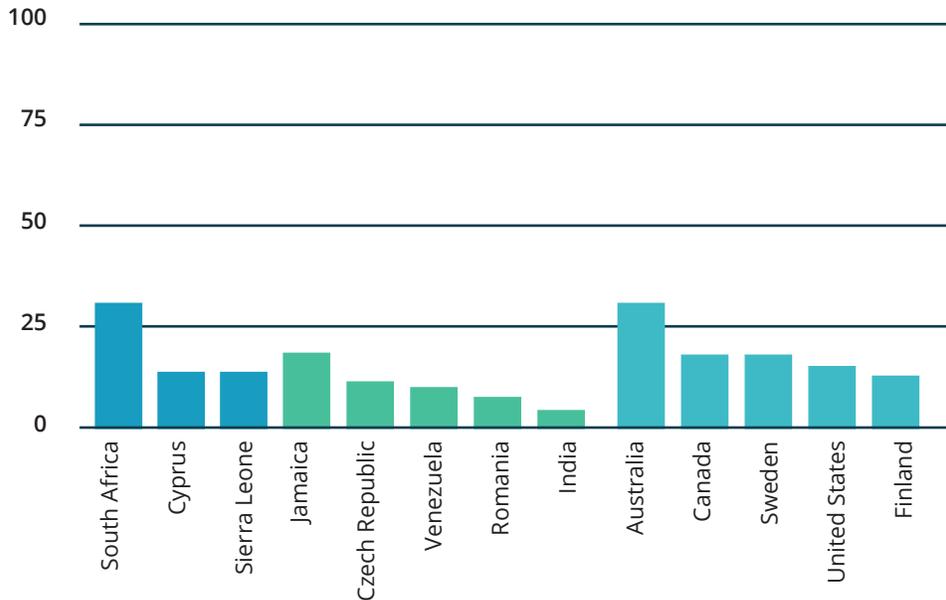
Participants are able to identify the advantages of having women working within the security sector and the challenges they face.

**Time** 60 minutes

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- Traditionally, women are underrepresented in the security sector, as compared to the general population and the workforce.
- *Show the following slide or one more appropriate to the local context.*

% of Policewomen in Selected Countries



- In many countries, women’s organizations have advocated for women’s right to participate fully in the security sector; this includes calling for the end of the discrimination and harassment of female security sector personnel.
- Turn to your neighbor and discuss the question: Has supporting women in the security sector been a priority for civil society organizations in your own context? Why, or why not? (10 minutes)

## Instructions

Distribute sticky notes.

Have participants on one half of the room list the **advantages of having women in the police**. Have participants on the other half of the room list the **advantages of having women in the armed forces**. They should use one sticky note per advantage. Use different security sector institutions—e.g., prisons, justice system, border guards—if more appropriate for your participants. (3 minutes)

Next, ask participants to list some of the challenges to success that women face when pursuing careers within the police or armed forces, respectively. (3 minutes)

Everyone should come forward and attach their sticky notes to the two previously-prepared flipcharts labeled “police” and “armed forces.” Next, group common responses together before moving on or ask the group if they see any common topics emerging.

Have everyone stand back and discuss: How does having female personnel affect the capabilities of the police and armed forces?

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## Facilitator Talking Points

- Women working within security sector institutions, whether in the delivery, management, or oversight of security services, can play an important role in helping these institutions be more responsive to the needs of the entire community. For example:
  - **Making security services more accessible to women:** There is much anecdotal evidence that women feel more comfortable speaking to other women about crimes they have suffered or their security concerns. Indeed, it has been shown in a number of countries that female victims of sexual violence are more likely to report to a female police officer or to a women’s police station than to a male officer or regular police station.
  - **Diversifying skill sets:** Studies indicate that women often bring different, useful skills and strengths to police work; they are more likely than their male colleagues to deescalate tensions and less likely to use excessive force.<sup>1</sup> In some operational contexts, simply having female personnel makes it easier to do essential tasks, such as searching women. *Ask the group, are there common barriers for women in both security sector institutions? What are the differences?*
- Women hoping to or actually working in security sector institutions often encounter challenges and barriers like:
  - **Traditional and cultural beliefs and practices:** In some contexts, the security sector is not only male dominated, it is also perceived as a place unsuited for women, and working in either the army or the police is stigmatized.

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Women and Policing, *Recruiting and Retaining Women: A Self-Assessment Guide for Law Enforcement* (Los Angeles: National Center for Women and Policing, 2001), 22–25. See also Christiaan Bezuidenhout, “Performance of female police officers in a male dominated environment: Replacing myth with reality” *Acta Criminologica* 15, no. 2 (2001): 110–118; Kim Lonsway, Margaret Moore, Penny Harrington, Eleanor Smeal, and Katherine Spillar, *Hiring and Retaining More Women: The Advantages to Law Enforcement Agencies* (Los Angeles: National Center for Women and Policing, 2003).

- **Formal, legal barriers:** women may be unable to join particular units, e.g., front line combat roles in the military, which limits their progression into higher ranks.
  - **Lack of adequate infrastructure:** Female toilets, barracks, and dormitories are often missing, particularly in countries where resources are scarce.
  - **Family-unfriendly working environments:** In most countries, women remain the main care provider at home in addition to their work outside the house. Security sector institutions often demand long, irregular hours and fail to offer flexible working arrangements, which affect women disproportionately because of their caring responsibilities.
  - **Prevalence of bullying, sexual harassment, and abuse within security sector institutions:** Both women and men can be victims of such offences. For example, the Finnish military's 2012 climate survey found that 14 percent of male conscripts and 35 percent of female conscripts had experienced sexual harassment during their service. This is often cited by women as a factor in their lack of interest in joining the security sector, and by women who decide to leave.
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## Debrief

### Facilitator Instructions

Ask participants if they have any questions or anything to add before concluding.

## 8.3 How Can Women Support Women in the Security Sector?



### 8.3.1 Activity: Assessing the Needs of Women in the Police

#### Background for Facilitator

This activity builds on the Tarastan police reform activity from Module 7 to help participants design an assessment of service-women's needs and priorities.

This activity has no debrief because Activity 8.3.2 directly builds on it and they are meant to be done in sequence.

#### Materials Needed

[Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 1](#) handout

#### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to design an assessment of servicewomen's needs and priorities.

**Time** 20 minutes

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- We are going to discuss ways that we can support women in security institutions.
- Civil society organizations can, for example:
  - advocate for the equal and fair recruitment, retention, and promotion of women within security sector institutions;
  - advocate for security sector institutions to treat the female employees with respect, equality, and dignity;
  - partner with, train, and support networks of women within security sector institutions to advance their interests.
- The first step in considering such advocacy and engagement is to understand the experiences and needs of women working in security sector institutions. One way to gain this understanding is to conduct a needs assessment.

#### Instructions

Distribute the [Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 1](#) handout (see annex) and guide participants through it.

Divide participants into groups of 4-5 people.

Explain that this activity builds on the fictional police reform scenario in Tarastan from Module 7. In that activity, participants role-played arguments for gender-responsive police reform (e.g., recruiting more women to the police service, retaining and promoting female staff, and developing a policy, processes, and training to prevent and respond to sexual harassment within the police service).

This time, participants are not employees of the police service, but members of a civil society organization that is applying for a grant to develop a project on strengthening women's participation in the Tarastan police. They want to identify the main challenges that women in the police are facing.

Each group is assigned to work on one of the three issues: recruitment, retention, or advancement. In order to assess the challenges facing women in the police in this area, use the table on the [Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 1](#) handout to list:

- Three to five questions
- All the people you would interview to answer these questions
- Three other sources of information (aside from these interviews) that will help answer your questions. (15 minutes)



### 8.3.2 Activity: Identifying Actions to Support Women in the Police

#### Background for Facilitator

This activity builds on the previous activity (Tarastan Scenario 2), in which participants assessed policewomen's needs and priorities. In this activity, participants will identify strategies or activities for supporting women within the security sector.

#### Instructions

When the groups seem ready to move on from their assessments in the previous activity, distribute the [Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 2](#) handout (see annex).

As described in the handout, this part of the activity assumes that a number of problems have been identified. Based on the information provided, have participants identify one specific challenge under their topic (recruitment, retention, or advancement) and come up with three concrete actions they could include in the project proposal to address this challenge. (15 minutes)

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#### Debrief

#### Facilitator Instructions

Invite each group to present one or two of the actions they came up with to the whole group.

#### Materials Needed

[Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 2](#) handout

#### Learning Objectives

Participants are able to identify strategies or activities to support women in the security sector.

**Time** 30 minutes

## 8.4 Wrap Up



### 8.4.1 Facilitator Talking Points: Points to Take Away

#### Background for Facilitator

This section highlights the main points of the module.

#### Facilitator Talking Points

- Women working within security sector institutions help make them more responsive to all parts of the community and more operationally effective. Being fully and equally part of security sector institutions is also women's right as citizens.
- In many countries, women in the security sector face challenges and barriers in their daily work, ranging from the lack of leadership support, family un-friendly working environments, and harassment, to disapproval from their families and communities.
- There are many ways in which civil society organizations can support women working within security institutions. For example, by advocating for the fair and equal recruitment, retention, and promotion of women within security institutions, or partnering with, training, and supporting networks of women within security sector institutions to advance their interests.

#### Materials Needed

None

#### Learning Objectives

Participants understand the main points of this module.

**Time** 5 minutes

# Adapting the Module

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## Less Time



### **8.2.1 Activity:** Women in the Security Sector **(SAVE 10 MINUTES)**

If you know your participants already prioritize supporting women in the security sector, you can skip the discussion in Activity 8.2.1.

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## More Time



### **8.2.1 Activity:** Women in the Security Sector **(ADD 10 MINUTES)**

Show videos of women in security sector institutions discussing their roles, and the challenges they face. Some examples:

- “Women Peacekeepers”: Ghanaian Army female peacekeepers, part of the United Nations Mission in Liberia. Produced by UNMILTV. (8 minutes)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=2njom-NKyUk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2njom-NKyUk)
- “Female Police Peacekeepers: In Their Own Voices”: interviews of female police peacekeepers describing their experiences in United Nations operations, what they learned, what motivates them to do this kind of work, and the impact they have had. Produced by the DPKO Police Division. (5 minutes)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_NuG0tj3BA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_NuG0tj3BA)
- “Women in NATO Forces”: Women of different military ranks share what it means to be a woman in the NATO armed forces. Hear personal accounts of the highlights and challenges women encounter when serving their countries as equals to men. Produced by NATO. (5 minutes 20 seconds)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqFygE9oNWY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqFygE9oNWY)
- “A Journey of a Thousand Miles – Peacekeepers”: Documentarians Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Geeta Gandbhir follow the stories of three Bangladeshi policewomen who served with the UN peacekeeping mission to Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake. Produced by TIIF Trailers. (3 minutes 42 seconds)

Trailer: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAR3SXSme6c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAR3SXSme6c)

Even better, invite women working in security sector institutions to speak to the trainees.

## Assessment Questions (Blank)

**Q.8.1 Women tend to be underrepresented in security sector institutions primarily because: (select one)**

- a. Women find the work too upsetting, because they are more emotional than men.
- b. Women are not interested in working in the security sector.
- c. There are a range of informal—and sometimes formal—barriers to women’s full and equal participation and advancement.
- d. Women are not strong enough to pass the physical tests to qualify.

**Q.8.2 Good ways to assess what support is needed by women working in the security sector include: (select one)**

- a. Asking the women themselves, asking human resources personnel, and reviewing existing literature.
- b. Looking at the experiences of women in the security sector one hundred years ago.
- c. Looking at the experiences of women in the security sector in countries with different cultural traditions.
- d. Looking at the needs of men working in the security sector.

## Assessment Questions (Answer Key)

**Q.8.1 Women tend to be underrepresented in security sector institutions primarily because: (select one)**

- a. Women find the work too upsetting, because they are more emotional than men.
- b. Women are not interested in working in the security sector.
- c. There are a range of informal—and sometimes formal—barriers to women’s full and equal participation and advancement.
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- d. Looking at the needs of men working in the security sector.

# ANNEX

## Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 1

You are members of a civil society organization that is applying for a grant to develop a project on strengthening women's participation in the police. You want to identify the main challenges that women in the police are facing, particularly regarding recruitment, retention, and advancement.

Complete the table below by listing, under your assigned topic of "recruitment," "retention," or advancement":

- Three to five questions
- People you would interview to answer each of these questions
- Three other sources of information (aside from these interviews) that would help answer your questions.

### TOPIC:

Question	Interviewees	Other sources of information
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

## Tarastan Scenario 2: Part 2

Your research has revealed that the police:

- Lack gender-sensitive human resource policies and operational guidance (such as to implement non-discriminatory promotional practices and family-friendly working conditions);
- Have difficulties reaching out to potential new female recruits; and
- Have no policy, training, or procedures to prevent and respond to sexual harassment within their workforce.

You also find out that:

- The police are ineffective against serious crimes, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and gun violence on the street; and
- Police resources are mainly located in the capital city, so there are very few police services provided outside the capital city.

1. Identify one challenge (under either recruitment, retention, or advancement):

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2. Develop three concrete actions for your project proposal that address this challenge:

a. 

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b. 

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c. 

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