

A Comparative Analysis:  
**Gender Self-Assessment Methodologies**

— applied in —

**Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine**





## A Comparative Analysis:

# Gender Self-Assessment Methodologies applied in Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine

Between 2019 and 2021, the National Police services of Honduras, Colombia and Ukraine undertook a Gender Self-Assessment (GSA) to better understand how gender-related issues impact how police function externally and internally. Each of the GSAs were guided by the DCAF Self-Assessment Guide for the Police, Armed Forces and Justice Sector<sup>1</sup> – a comprehensive tool for assessing the gender responsiveness of a security sector institution – and supported by DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance. The GSAs contributed to significant learning and informed the development of Gender Action Plans – essential ‘road maps for change’ towards gender-responsive policing.

This learning paper is intended for all security sector institutions, particularly police services, armed forces and justice sector institutions, and donor agencies which are interested in or are currently planning to undertake or support gender-sensitive reforms of their institutions. It comprises part of a DCAF series of papers which share insights on cross-regional and cross-thematic security sector governance and reform issues.

The paper describes the background and rationale for conducting a GSA, including key methodological aspects and underlying principles. It analyzes the gender profiles of the national police services in Honduras, Colombia and Ukraine, other relevant statistics related to gender and security in each country, and the incentives and institutional drivers for conducting the assessments. Finally, it summarizes key insights and lessons related to the methodology and the factors likely to influence both the process and eventual outcomes of GSAs, including:

- The value of the GSA in developing institutional expertise and providing a robust evidence base for future reforms
- The crucial role cross-departmental senior leadership working groups can play in validating the methodology, approach and conclusions of the GSA, and ultimately ensuring systematic implementation of recommendations
- The importance of understanding and capitalizing on the enabling environment, from institutional mandates for gender mainstreaming to the role of international commitments and partnerships
- The need to ensure adequate time and resources will be available to consult widely with key stakeholders, to gradually develop support for the process, and to conduct a thorough assessment
- The potential of GSAs to open pathways for broader improvements to security sector governance and to advance new initiatives in underexplored areas, including the role of masculinities in the security sector and the impact of stereotypical gender norms on male, as well as female, security sector personnel

# 1. Background and rationale for conducting a GSA

**Take Away Points:** The GSA is a tool for assessing the gender responsiveness of security sector institutions (particularly police services, armed forces and justice sector institutions). Its unique features are:

- A GSA is an internally-led and internally-owned process, responding to the need for internal examination of policies and practices to:
  - Increase the likelihood of leadership buy-in and sustained action for change;
  - Decrease the likelihood of findings being dismissed, since the methodology and data is validated by institutional leadership at every stage;
- GSAs provide a foundational evidence base for leadership to act by highlighting areas of specific concern and promoting gender-sensitive reforms that:
  - specifically address the differentiated security needs of women and girls, men and boys;
  - promote positive, inclusive institutional policies, practices and cultures; and
  - create pathways for further strategic reform processes that support security sector reform consistent with principles of democratic governance.

## 1.1 What a Gender Self-Assessment is:

The GSA is a tool for assessing the ‘gender-responsiveness’ of a security sector institution, by which we mean the extent to which an institution meets the different security and justice needs of men, women, boys and girls, and promotes the full and equal participation of men and women.

The self-assessment guide, developed by DCAF and publicly available, leads the user through an eight-stage process to conduct an assessment of a security sector institution, create an action plan to move the organisation forward, and monitor and evaluate implementation.

The assessment collects information across 16 dimensions of gender responsiveness, grouped into the following six themes with the intention of being comprehensive:



**A GSA requires internal examination not just of key national/international legislation and institutional policies pertaining to gender and gender equality, but of how readily understood, and practiced, these respective commitments, laws and procedures are by security sector personnel.** Accordingly, the methodology is adapted to the specific country and institutional context, including being implemented in phases, or with particular emphasis on specific topics.

The assessment process produces a report that provides robust evidence base of how gender-responsive an organisation is, including its key strengths and institutional challenges. The GSA report forms a baseline for discussion and action by leaders and decision makers across the institution, resulting in a **Gender Action Plan** – an essential road-map for change, with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

## 1.2 Key methodological aspects and principles underpinning the GSA:

### ➤ Process oriented methodology that builds internal capacities:

The GSA methodology is process-oriented, and designed to build internal capacities. To undertake a GSA, institutions should have basic assessment expertise and/or the capacity to undertake data collection and understand concepts of gender and sex discrimination, **but do not need to be gender experts**. Indeed, close collaboration with external gender experts guides the adaptation of the methodology to the context while preserving integrity of the process and outcome.

One of the overarching aims of this methodology is to build the capacity and expertise of internal stakeholders on the gender responsiveness of their given institutions, initially through training (in preparation of GSA implementation) and subsequently, through their involvement in data collection, analysis and validation; and in developing a Gender Action Plan for implementation.

### ➤ Internally-led and internally-owned process:

Unlike other approaches to gender analysis and gender audit, a GSA is typically led by a **working group** of leaders and key decision makers established **within** the institution who steer the assessment process, thereby ensuring implementation.

Working group members are actively engaged at every stage, from data collection and analysis through to validation and presentation of findings and recommendations. This mechanism of actively engaging senior leadership/key decision makers in the process increases the likelihood of buy-in and action for change, and decreases the likelihood of findings being dismissed – **as the methodology and data is validated by leadership at every stage**.

A key feature of institutional ownership is that discretion of the level of disclosure of the process and its findings rests within the institution. Beyond anonymizing interviews to minimize the risk of backlash, the methodology also permits leadership to publicize the report in its entirety, a public version, or not at all in preference to publishing its Gender Action Plan or other roadmap for implementation.

### ➤ Flexible, adaptive, locally relevant:

The GSA tool contains sample questions for institutions to use and suggested data collection techniques, ranging from document review to key informant interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions and site visits. Importantly, it is the working group that adapts the GSA to the local context, including which data collection techniques to use, and context-specific issues to address.

Depending on internally agreed assessment goals and the time and resources the working group has available, GSAs can be undertaken entirely independently or by enlisting an external agency with technical expertise, such as DCAF, to support the process (see below for the different spectrums of DCAF's engagement in the GSAs conducted with the National Police services of Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine).

### ➤ Intention to contribute to transformational impact

When taken in combination, the above methodological aspects and principles that underpin a GSA are intended to contribute to transformational impact, because the institution-wide assessment results identify the reforms needed to achieve gender-responsivity. Covering 6 themes and 16 dimensions, the outcome of a GSA is a **comprehensive baseline for leadership to act**, offering a definite shift in approach to participatory gender analysis.

## 2. Gender and security profiles of the National Police of Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine

### Take Away Points:

- Consistent with other security institutions around the world, men continue to dominate the National Police Forces of Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine both numerically and in terms of proportion of leadership positions held
- Globally, women account for only 13% of all officers and recorded progress towards parity increased by only 3 percentage points over the past 13 years.
- Pervasive levels of violence against women and girls makes it an imperative that law enforcement agencies (and other security sector institutions) are gender-responsive

### 2.1 Gender diversity and gender equality – national and global comparisons

**Table 2.1.1: National police statistics for Colombia (CNP), Honduras (PNH) and Ukraine (NPU)<sup>2</sup>**

Police force	2020		
	# of police	# female police	% female police
Colombia (CNP)	165,628	18,406	11.1%
Honduras (PNH)	18,000	3,600	20%
Ukraine (NPU)	133,399	35,145	26.4%

According to The World’s Women 2020: Trends and Statistics Portal,<sup>3</sup> globally, women account for only 13% of all officers and recorded progress towards parity increased by only 3 percentage points over the past 13 years. Consistent with institutional commitments to pursue gender parity, both the National Police of Honduras (20%) and Ukraine (26.4%) feature an above global-average representation of women.

**Table 2.1.2: Global Gender Gap Index (GGI)<sup>4</sup>**

GGI	2021	2016	2021 GGI Rankings <sup>5</sup>
Colombia	0.725	0.705	Colombia ranks 59th (out of 156 countries) globally and 15th (out of 26 countries) in Latin America. Women are 27% less likely than men to have equal opportunities: this is a slight decrease on the previous year (2020 GII score of 0.758), which implies that gender equality has slightly worsened. Across the four categories, it scores the weakest in political empowerment, with a score of 0.216.
Honduras	0.72	0.648	Honduras ranks 67th (out of 156 countries) globally and 18th (out of 26 countries) in Latin America. Women are 28% less likely than men to have equal opportunities, based on a 2021 GGI score of 0.72. There was no change in the GGI score compared to the previous year. Political empowerment is its weakest category, with a score of 0.18.

Ukraine	0.714	0.721	Ukraine ranks 74th (out of 156 countries) globally and 14th (out of 26 countries) in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. Women are 29% less likely than men to have equal opportunities, based on a 2021 GGI score of 0.714. This represents a nominal decrease in comparison to the previous year (2020 GII score of 0.721), which implies that gender equality has slightly worsened. It scores the weakest in the category of political empowerment, with a score of 0.147. <sup>6</sup>
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As indicated by the International Gender Gap Index Report 2021, all three countries have seen positive improvements in total scores over the past 5 years (since 2016) but continue to score the weakest in political empowerment. Interestingly, while Ukraine has the lowest global ranking of the three countries, the NPU has the highest proportion of female personnel (26.6%).

Given the gender gap in political empowerment is broadly reflected in the underrepresentation of women in top leadership positions, **understanding the barriers to and factors that promote women's equal participation and leadership is a key contribution of a GSA.** Women's equal participation and leadership in political and public office are also essential to achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

## 2.2. Violence Against Women and Girls

*"Violence against women is endemic in every country and culture, causing harm to millions of women and their families, and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic." (Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General).<sup>7</sup>*

**Globally, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life.<sup>8</sup>** Violence against women and girls is pervasive and endemic across the world: it reflects entrenched structural inequalities and gender biases, norms and accepted behaviours that undermine universal access to security and justice. Gender-responsive law enforcement, and other security sector institutions are **essential to ending cycles of impunity for violence against women and girls; and to effectively respond to the differentiated security needs of diverse individuals and groups.**

*"404 women lost their lives in 2019, 74% of this figure is due to femicide, but only 22 cases were prosecuted and reached a sentence. Simple math shows 94.5% impunity." (Quote from Honduras GSA interviewee).*

**Femicide is high across all three countries.** Of the three, Honduras has the highest rate of approximately 7.8 per 100,000 (7th in the world, 2018); Colombia's is second highest at 4.2 (19th in the world, 2018); and Ukraine's was 1.9 (50th in the world, 2019).<sup>9</sup> All three countries have legal frameworks enshrining gender equality, and to combat certain forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence. Nevertheless, the statistics tell us that **targeted and evidence-based reforms across all institutional dimensions are necessary to achieve gender-responsive policing.**

### 3. Origins of the GSA in Colombia, Honduras and Ukraine

**Take Away Points:**

- Political will: securing high level political endorsement (of known gender advocates in government) was an essential first step in initiating the GSAs of the National Police services of Honduras and National Police of Ukraine
  - This can be catalysed by broader socio-political processes, such as, for example, gender commitments in peace processes (Colombia) or sectoral commitments under the National Action Plan for the Women Peace and Security agenda (Ukraine)
- Institutional accountability on gender mainstreaming: the GSA of the Colombia National Police was very much initiated and driven by UNIPPEP, the entity with designated responsibility for gender mainstreaming.
- The international community’s focus/attention on gender and security is a critical enabler of institutional action. The GSA of the NPU was a product of an enabling environment created by the continuous support of the Government of Canada to gender-integration within Ukraine’s Security Sector

#### 3.1 How they came about in each country - institutional motivations and those of international donors supporting GSAs.

**Honduras:** Pre-existing interest in a GSA was consolidated through the support from the Vice minister for prevention into a concrete initiative with the aid of DCAF. The Vice Minister (a known champion of gender equality), **secured requisite political endorsement** to initiate the process of the GSA. Once the relative merits of implementing the GSA were then discussed with the PNH, the Vice Minister for Prevention assisted in ensuring ongoing support. Agreement to implement was **formalised** via a written instruction from the Office of the Director General (DGPN), which governs the National Police of Honduras. Engagement by a male DCAF ex-military gender expert with police leadership provided a critical opportunity to **challenge assumptions about gender** being a women’s issue and the value of their participation and leadership. The GSA was then led by a Working Group convened by the Head of the Gender Unit and the Director of Modernisation. **Lobbying and advocacy to secure political buy in of a known gender champion was the essential first step in initiating the GSA of the PNH.**

#### Origins of GSAs in Honduras





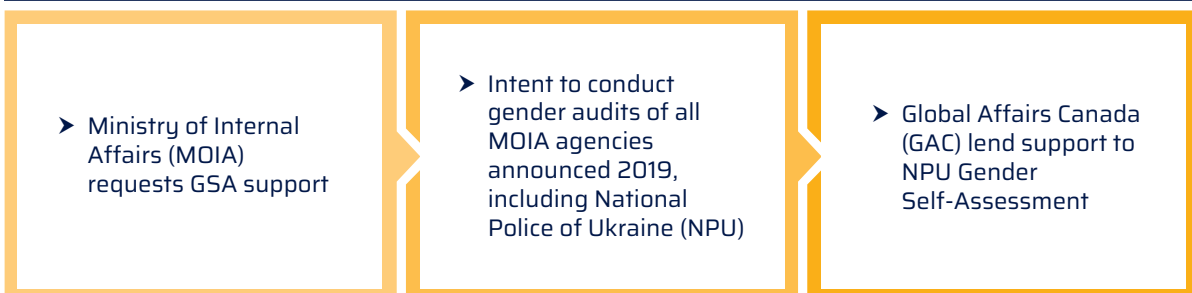
**Colombia:** DCAF started to work on providing gender-support to the police during the implementation of the peace accord in rural areas for the purposes of improving access to security. After the GSA was translated into Spanish, DCAF was able to present the value added of the GSA. Following this, a request for support was issued by the Police Unit for the Construction of Peace (UNIPEP), whose mandate includes gender mainstreaming within the CNP. Although several Departments of the CNP were engaging on gender (initiating projects to address gender inequality and discrimination), gender analysis of the ‘whole institution’ had not taken place. UNIPEP recognized the GSA could augment institutional accountability on gender mainstreaming and consolidate institution-wide learning on gender. **This was an internally driven request, in line with UNIPEP’s divisional mandate to support gender mainstreaming within the CNP and execute institutional accountability on gender mainstreaming.**

### Origins of GSAs in Colombia



**Ukraine:** the GSA was initiated upon the request of a Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA), who is firmly committed to advancing gender-responsive security sector reforms and promoting gender equality goals. The Deputy Minister’s intent to conduct gender audits of all MOIA agencies, including the NPU, was announced in 2019, and was well received by the international community. Global Affairs Canada (GAC) thereby decided to support the NPU Gender Self-Assessment as it intersected with GAC’s aim to provide support to Ukraine as part of its Feminist Foreign Policy approach. **This GSA was a product of an enabling environment created by the continuous Government of Canada support to gender-integration within Ukraine’s Security Sector.**

### Origins of GSAs in Ukraine



In each context, gender and security increasingly matters to the international community – keen to hold recipient country governments to account for the human rights records of security forces and for the upholding of key international and national commitments on gender equality. Political leaders are cognizant of this fact and recognize the need for partnership and strategic alignment with international donor priorities. **Pragmatically, the GSAs of the CNP, PNH and NPU would not have gone ahead without the support and encouragement of international donor partners, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Colombia), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Honduras), and Global Affairs Canada (Ukraine), whose resourcing of the GSAs averaged USD152k.**

## 4. Insights and lessons learned on undertaking a GSA from each of the participating institutions

### Take Away Points:

- Allow adequate time for dialogue and advocacy within the institution ahead of undertaking a GSA to secure political buy-in and shared understanding of the assessment (purpose, rationale, outcomes, expected involvement).
- Enlist the support of gender champions (male and female) – key to influencing other decision makers and communicating the benefits of gender-responsive policing.
- Secure the highest-level authorization – confirming institutional commitment to implementing the process and to acting on its recommendations.
- When establishing working groups ensure cross-departmental and leadership representation i.e. decision makers from major departments are around the table.
- Building knowledge and capacity of the working group members to enable their active and constructive engagement in gathering and analyzing data to nurture ownership.
- Do not underestimate the time and resource (human, financial, and technical) requirements, including for Working Group members. A GSA needs to be initiated with adequate resourcing in place.

### 4.1 Comparative summary of data collected, timeframes and outputs

#### 4.1.1 Summary table of GSAs per country:

	Colombia (CNP)	Honduras (PNH)	Ukraine (NPU)
Timeframes	GSA: 12-months GAP: 3-months	GSA: 12-months GAP: 2 months	GSA: 18-months GAP: in process
# of documents reviewed	152	73	200
# of KIIs within institutions	23	38	10
# of Focus Groups with personnel	10 119 participants (61F;58M)	7 35 participants (20F; 15M)	10 145 participants (71F; 74M)
# of Civil society consultations	8	9	2
# of surveys conducted	132,389 12.5% (F) 87.5% (M)	11,220 18.87 % (F) 80.27 % (M) .73% preferred not to say 0.13% LGBTQI	19,569 26.9% (F) 73.1% (M)

Geographic reach/ coverage	5 (of 8) regions	18 (of 18) regions	5 (of 24) regions
Working group composition and frequency	6 core members	Up to 25	28 senior police officers and civil servants.
	33% female	50% female	21% female
	Ranks from Patrol Officer up to Lieutenant Colonel	Ranks from Inspector up to Commissioner	Chaired by the Deputy Minister of MOIA High ranking/senior officials
	Met frequently	Met frequently	Met less frequently
Key outcomes/ results (max 3):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clear leadership intent to act on findings and recommendations of the GSA.</li> <li>➤ GSA has resulted in the development of a Special Work Plan (2021 - 27), aligned to the sectorial 'Gender Mainstreaming Public Policy of Uniformed Law Enforcement Personnel 2018 - 27 of the Columbia Ministry of Defence.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agreement to create a gender policy for the first time based on the GSA Action Plan.</li> <li>➤ Targeted gender training and new avenues to integrate gender in operational and planning seminars.</li> <li>➤ Inclusion of gender in strategic planning processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GSA and GAP still underway</li> </ul>

Across all three institutions, a considerable amount of quantitative data gathered through document review, and particularly the questionnaire/survey, was complemented through valuable qualitative data gathered from focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Focus groups were conducted with police personnel from diverse departments and ranks, and were deliberately segregated by gender given the sensitive nature of topics discussed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with departmental heads/senior leaders/decision makers, as well as with civil society organizations. Survey response rates varied across the institutions, but provided **essential snapshots of experiences, opinions and behaviours across rank, sex, age, years of service and geography. None of the institutions** chose to deviate from or exclude any of the themes or dimensions.

At a technical level, the police intranet systems of the CNP and NPU proved to be excellent tools to disseminate surveys and collect data in a systematic and structured manner. The NPH did not have an intranet system, making it more challenging to administer surveys, particularly during the pandemic.

## 4.2 Critical points of difference in methodology

**Level of DCAF engagement:** A key point of difference between the GSAs implemented across the three institutions was the level of DCAF engagement. In Ukraine, at the request of the Deputy Head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who initiated the NPU-GSA, DCAF's engagement was substantial. In comparison, while DCAF's translation of the GSA guide into Spanish was catalytic, the level of DCAF's engagement throughout the GSAs of the CNP and PNH was lower. Clearly, when considering DCAF's spectrum of engagement, there are pros and cons to consider.

Pros of greater implementation by institution	Cons of greater implementation by institution
Predictably rigorous assessment given expertise and experience in conducting gender self-assessments	Potentially less sense of local ownership of the process and product
Trust in the results and findings (DCAF nationally/internationally renowned)	Less individual capacity built within institutions, increasing the risk of loss of momentum
Comprehensive reporting	Greater internal resistance to share sensitive documents and data (to an external agency)
Donor management and update	Potentially shorter-term resources and commitment

### 4.3 Variables that make the specific process of Gender Self-Assessment appropriate

#### 4.3.1 Sufficient funds and time:

it is important not to under-estimate the time and resource commitments required to undertaking a GSA. The Covid-19 pandemic unquestionably impacted the timeframes for completion of the GSAs across the three institutions, which took between 12 to 18 months (on account of the pandemic), as opposed to the initially estimated 6 to 9 months. **GSAs should only be initiated with adequate time and resourcing in place.** The frequency with which working group participants meet, the allocation of sufficient time for staff and personnel to participate in focus group discussions and key informant interviews, and adequate resourcing of activities must all be considered. This includes, for example, logistics for travel and accommodation for site visits and focus groups, funds for interpretation, access to reliable internet, and technical assistance for administering surveys.

#### 4.3.2 Willingness and ability to provide documents for review:

Document review of institutional policies, procedures and protocols pertaining to gender and gender equality (e.g. whether relating to recruitment and hiring practices; national legislation on GBV; or how sexual harassment complaints against officers are logged/recorded) is a critical component of the GSA. A total of 200 documents alone were reviewed as part of the GSA for the NPU, and subsequently triangulated with the qualitative data findings from surveys, focus groups and key informant interviews. While not every institution holds electronic data files or shared intranet systems (making document gathering and collation across departments more challenging), institutions must nevertheless be willing and able to provide documents for review.

#### 4.3.3 Leadership commitment to implement and keep to task:

As previously highlighted in Section 3, political will in Honduras and Ukraine was an important means of initiating GSAs in the first place; and authorization to undertake a GSA was given at the highest levels of leadership - across all three institutions. Beyond this, based on the experience of the GSAs of CNP, PNH and NPU, ongoing political will and leadership commitment is a necessary aspect of a GSA. It assists with navigating institutional bureaucracy, overcoming internal recalcitrance and ensuring implementation, including survey participation, and attendance of personnel for interviews and focus group discussions FGDs.

## 4.4 Critical success factors

### 4.4.1 Local ownership over process and findings is essential:

As referenced above, all three institutions enlisted the support of DCAF and external agencies when undertaking GSAs (albeit at different levels). Depending on the internal capacities and resources of an institution, it is entirely pragmatic to engage external providers for e.g. to provide methodological support and assistance designing surveys, undertaking data collection and analysis. Nevertheless, **maintaining institutional ownership of the process and contextual relevance remains critical.**

The range of effective steps and measures undertaken across the three GSAs with respect to this, included:

- The appointment of local experts who were acquainted with the institution, with police internal dynamics and the local context. In Honduras, for example, the DCAF Field Office team included a male, ex-police lead coordinator for the GSA; and the DCAF office is located on police premises.
- Working group members (rather than external partners) lead the presentation of findings and updates across the institution.

### 4.4.2 Composition of a motivated working group with sufficient seniority and rank to validate GSA findings and recommendations:

Experience shows a tendency of seniors (of male-dominated institutions in particular) to relegate gender-related tasks to female employees who, on account of structural and institutional barriers, are often junior staff with limited decision-making powers.

In the context of the three institutions, the composition of the working groups tasked with implementing the GSA was important. The over-representation of women in the working groups of the PNH and CNP was not a problem per se, as female representatives were motivated to see change (possibly based on their own gender experiences of discrimination). On the other hand, the high proportion of senior ranked representatives on the NPU-GSA working group (79% male), facilitated continued leadership buy-in and validation of the process and outputs. In the CNP, this was achieved through a working group coordinator who was a senior member of staff.

### 4.4.3 Training the Working Group – in advance of GSA implementation:

As referenced earlier, to undertake a GSA, Working Group members do not need to be gender experts. Training on core concepts of gender as relevant to the institution, delivered at the start of the process, is vital to increase Working Group knowledge on gender (individual and collective) and their ability to articulate to others, the merits and benefits of undertaking GSA. **In the case of the CNP, the inclusion of Working Group members with strong existing gender credentials as co-facilitators of trainings proved effective in strengthening ownership. In Honduras, receiving additional training to gain gender competence was perceived as a benefit more broadly.**

## 4.5 Possible challenges and risk mitigation strategies

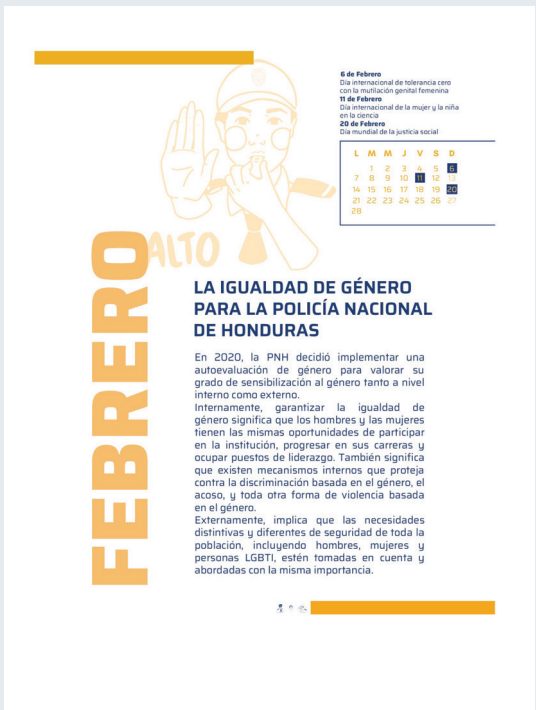
### 4.5.1 Unintended negative consequences:

Institutional assessments of any kind can be divisive/uncomfortable, requiring critical introspection of institutional policies and procedures that have the potential to expose flaws and uncover uncomfortable findings. Gender-related assessments are particularly contentious and divisive, given that they highlight structural inequalities and power imbalances in deeply hierarchical institutions, typically dominated and shaped by men. This is why leadership endorsement, accompaniment and validation of a GSA at the highest levels, and some public dissemination to promote institutional commitment, is so important. Without clear gender champions and leadership commitment to act, 'red flag' findings (e.g. pertaining to harmful institutional gender bias, stereotypes or harassment) may well be shelved or discounted.

#### 4.5.2 Completion of a GSA should not be seen as an end goal/product:

A GSA is the starting point and should only be undertaken if the leaders and key decision makers of the institution have strategic intent to initiate change in response to GSA findings and recommendations. In all three countries, a Gender Action Plan, outlining a roadmap for implementation, was part of the GSA design and planning process. Like the GSA, this broad commitment can be tailored to the institutional context: in Honduras, there is now a process to create a Gender Policy for the PNH based on 'Lines of Action' from the GSA: this is intended to **align the findings and recommendations with the institutions' strategic plans**, rather than have these appear separately in an action plan that is not a transversal responsibility.

The box below demonstrates another example of how continuing momentum from a GSA can generate innovative pathways to integrate gender and promote gender equality:



Upon completion of the GSA with the National Police of Honduras, DCAF led efforts to develop contents in an accessible format that could be used by staff regularly and as part of their everyday activities. Based on the core findings and recommendations emerging from the GSA, an illustrated diary was developed to present key facts and messaging on:

- Laws, policies, and protocols for gender equality
- Main barriers to gender equality in Honduras and within the institution
- “Pioneers” and leaders advancing gender equality
- Best practices relevant to advancing gender equality

In December 2021, the diary was printed and distributed to one hundred staff. Leadership within the PNH expressed interest in including gender sensibilisation training as part of promotion courses for staff, and in training trainers within the National Police to continue to deliver gender courses.

## 5. Value of the methodology with respect to outcomes.

Based on the experience of the three institutions, there was clear value in the methodology with respect to the following outcomes:

- GSAs are a means of equipping leaders and gender allies with the necessary tools and information to advance change:

A GSA is comprehensive, enabling depth of inquiry of the gender-responsiveness of an institution across multiple areas, encompassing:

- Institutional obligations to gender equality under national, regional and international laws and the extent to which obligations are met in practice;
- How institutional policies, procedures and coordination address gender issues;
- The robustness of complaints, investigation and disciplining mechanisms to combat gender discrimination, gender-based violence and sexual harassment;

- Whether an institution has the staff capacity, systems and infrastructure needed to provide adequate gender-responsive services for the population, and respond to and prevent gender-based crime effectively;
- How gender equality is promoted within the institution, from proactive recruitment practices through to non-discriminatory HR systems;
- The institutional culture of the organisation, ranging from its leadership commitments to gender equality through to gender divisions of labour and engagement with the community.

In combination, this provides a powerful evidence base for leaders, decision-makers and gender allies within institutions to act.

*In the case of Columbia, GSA took place as part of the internal reforms within the police, which aim to develop a more transparent, accountable and inclusive Police force. From the outset, CNP High Command recognized the value of the GSA, and oversaw the GSA and Special Gender Work Plan from start to finish.*

➤ **Evidence base and springboard to new initiatives/collaborations and further research:**

The depth and breadth in the data gathered by GSA offers significant opportunity to advance new initiatives and further research, especially in under-unexamined aspects of gender-sensitive security sector reform, such as understanding masculinities in the security sector and the impact of stereotypical gender norms on male, as well as female, security sector personnel.

*In Honduras, the GSA opened-up several opportunities to include gender in new avenues, such as: strategic and operational planning seminars; Honduras-led international webinars on lessons learnt from gender self-assessments on a regional and international level, and further on the response to GBV during COVID across Latin America; communications campaigns, training of external control agencies; local training of police, judges and prosecutors and inclusion of gender within strategic planning, as well as with community policing data analysis by the sub-secretariat.*

*In Colombia, opportunities were created to exchange lessons learnt on GSAs and share experiences among countries at regional and international level on peacebuilding, gender and policing.*

➤ **Platform to demonstrate institutional commitments to gender-sensitive reform:**

Conducting a GSA is a first step in transforming into a gender-responsive security sector institution - one that meets the different security needs of men and women and promotes the full and equal participation of men and women. A GSA is a means of helping institutions meet obligations under national and international law, including UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and (though not legally binding) Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16 (on gender equality, peace and justice, respectively).

*For the PNH and CNP, GSAs have informed Gender Action Plans or more integrated roadmaps for implementing systemic and sustainable change for both institutions, which have secured the backing of international partners supporting gender-sensitive security sector reform.*

## 6. Pathways from a GSA

Notwithstanding institutional adaptations, there are still some well-evidenced pathways for GSA recommendations to improve gender-responsiveness. The table below illustrates a few key outcomes that might emerge as a means to implement GSA recommendations. For further details, please consult the DCAF Gender and Security Toolkit (Tools 1 & 2).

Theme	Implementation pathways
Performance effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Comprehensive mandatory gender-specific training modules</li> <li>➤ Gender is integrated throughout all training curricula</li> <li>➤ Disaggregating data by sex, age, and other characteristics, including on gender-based crime</li> <li>➤ Training, resourcing and empowering internal gender experts, including specifically on gender-based crime</li> </ul>
Laws, policies and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explicit guarantees and commitments to gender equality including with respect to gender-based discrimination and GBV, consistent with international definitions and obligations</li> <li>➤ Comprehensive gender strategy or policy</li> <li>➤ Clear responsibilities and operational plans under 1325 National Action Plans</li> <li>➤ Gender-responsive budgeting to ensure integration of gender and active promotion of gender equality</li> <li>➤ full and complete SOPs for domestic violence and other types of gender-based crime</li> </ul>
Accountability and oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recruitment, promotion, vetting and disciplinary frameworks that guarantee individual accountability in relation to gender equality</li> <li>➤ Clear complaint mechanisms and specialized protocols and units to investigate gender-based violations and sexual harassment by staff and ensure accountability</li> <li>➤ Coordinated internal oversight mechanisms, including protections for 'whistle-blowers'</li> </ul>
Institutional culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mentoring, leadership training and other operational training programs explicitly accessible for women</li> <li>➤ Specific procedures for reporting, monitoring and investigating complaints regarding gender discrimination and sexual harassment by personnel</li> <li>➤ provision of psychological support for officers seeking assistance for sexual harassment or discrimination</li> </ul>
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collection of gender-disaggregated personnel statistics</li> <li>➤ Including gender equality in hiring processes, and amending job descriptions to better reflect the spectrum of skills required</li> <li>➤ Management commitments and responsibilities for promoting gender equality</li> <li>➤ Procedures to ensure adequate and safe infrastructure and equipment for women</li> <li>➤ Gender-responsive policies and practices to promote work-life balance for all staff</li> </ul>
Community relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Creating and maintain partnerships with civil society organizations to enhance capacity and responsiveness</li> <li>➤ Inclusive design and implementation of public consultations to ensure diverse participation</li> <li>➤ Specialised expertise in community policing teams</li> </ul>



## Definitions:

**Gender:** refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, attributes and norms that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and learned through socialization processes. They are context- and time-specific and changeable. Gender is part of the broader sociocultural context, as are other important criteria for sociocultural analysis such as class, race, disability, poverty level, ethnic group, sexual orientation, age and so on – which may in some cases be more important than gender (DCAF, 2019:6).

**Gender analysis:** is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect women, men, girls and boys and persons with other gender identities and different backgrounds in a given policy area, situation or context (DCAF, 2019: 13).

**Gender equality:** is a fundamental human right, and a goal to which governments and international organizations have committed. Promoting gender equality is therefore a part of the mandate of security and justice sector institutions. Gender equality can also be understood as “the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person’s sex in opportunities, the allocation of resources or benefits, or in access to services (DCAF, 2019: 12).

**Gender perspective:** is a way of seeing or analysing which looks at the impact of gender on people’s opportunities, social roles and interactions. This way of seeing is what enables one to carry out gender analysis and subsequently to mainstream a gender perspective into any proposed program, policy or organization (UN Women, Gender Equality Glossary)

**Gender sensitivity:** aims to understand and take into account the societal and cultural factors involved in gender-based exclusion and discrimination in the most diverse spheres of public and private life. (European Institute for Gender Equality)

**Security Sector Reform (SSR):** is the political and technical process of improving state and human security by making security provision, management and oversight more effective and more accountable, within a framework of democratic civilian control, rule of law and respect for human rights. (DCAF, 2015)

**Gender-sensitive Security Sector Reform:** implies an inclusive reform process that accounts for the different gender roles applied to men, women, boys and girls in the relevant context. It is a reform process that promotes gender equality through ensuring that the security needs, experiences and perspective of all groups of the population are adhered to equally when SSR is being planned and implemented (Kjall, 2016:2 and DCAF, 2019: 2141-).

## Endnotes

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1. Megan Bastick, *Gender Self-Assessment Guide for the Police, Armed Forces and Justice Sector* (Geneva: DCAF, 2011) <https://www.dcaf.ch/gender-self-assessment-guide-police-armed-forces-and-justice-sector>
2. Based on 2020 figures provided by DCAF Field Offices (FO).
3. The World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics Portal, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD): <https://worlds-women-2020-data-undesahub.arcgis.com/pages/violence-against-women-and-the-girl-child>
4. The Global Gender Gap Index examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories: i. Economic Participation and Opportunity; ii. Educational Attainment; iii) Health and Survival; and iv. Political Empowerment. The highest possible score is 1 (equality) and the lowest possible score is 0 (inequality).
5. [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf)
6. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021/in-full/economy-profiles>
7. <https://www.who.int/news/item/092021--03-devastatingly-pervasive-1-in-3-women-globally-experience-violence>
8. <https://www.who.int/news/item/092021--03-devastatingly-pervasive-1-in-3-women-globally-experience-violence>
9. [https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IHR.PSRC.FE.P5?most\\_recent\\_value\\_desc=true](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IHR.PSRC.FE.P5?most_recent_value_desc=true)



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