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## Assessing progress on women's inclusion in peacekeeping in Latin America

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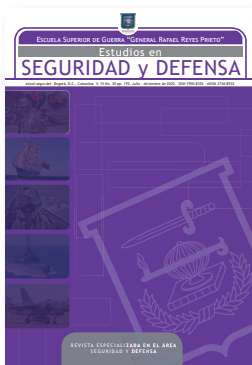
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## Assessing progress on women's inclusion in peacekeeping in Latin America<sup>1</sup>

Evaluación de los avances en la inclusión de la mujer en el mantenimiento de la paz en América Latina

Avaliando o progresso na inclusão das mulheres na manutenção da paz na América Latina

### ABSTRACT

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000 signaled the UN Security Council's commitment to promoting gender inclusivity in peace and security agendas. Twenty years after it was signed, progress on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) goals has been uneven, varying across issue areas

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and regions. This paper assesses the progress that Latin America has made in the inclusion of women in peacekeeping and evaluates the importance of the adoption of National Action Plans (NAPs) in reaching these goals. It concludes that while NAPs are important towards achieving WPS goals regarding peacekeeping, they are not sufficient.

## RESUMEN

La adopción de la Resolución 1325, en octubre de 2000, señaló el compromiso del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU de promover la inclusión de género en las agendas de paz y seguridad. Veinte años después de su firma, el progreso en los objetivos de la agenda de mujeres, paz y seguridad, ha sido desigual y varía según las áreas temáticas y las regiones. Este documento examina el progreso que ha tenido América Latina en la inclusión de las mujeres en el mantenimiento de la paz y analiza la importancia de la adopción de Planes de Acción Nacionales (PAN) para alcanzar estos objetivos. Concluye que, si bien los PAN son importantes para lograr los objetivos de la agenda, en relación con el mantenimiento de la paz, no son suficientes.

## RESUMO

A adoção da UNSCR 1325 em outubro de 2000 sinalizou o compromisso do Conselho de Segurança da ONU em promover a inclusão de gênero nas agendas de paz e segurança. Vinte anos depois de sua assinatura, o progresso nas metas da Agenda para Mulheres, Paz e Segurança tem sido desigual, variando entre as áreas temáticas e regiões. Este artigo avalia o progresso que a América Latina fez na inclusão das mulheres nas operações de paz e avalia a importância da adoção de Planos de Ação Nacionais (PANs) para alcançar essas metas. Conclui que, embora os PANs sejam importantes para alcançar os objetivos da Agenda para Mulheres, Paz e Segurança em relação à manutenção da paz, eles não são suficientes.

## INTRODUCTION

Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) policies emphasize the critical participation and representation of women in peacekeeping and peace negotiation processes. It has promoted various women's rights issues and facilitated increasing peace agreement outcomes for pressing international security challenges. To fulfill the goals outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325), countries have been encouraged to create National Action Plans as a first step towards including WPS in their own institutions. For example, Chile was the first Latin American country to adopt a NAP in 2009, while Colombia has yet to adopt its own but has instead established WPS oriented goals. Following the adoption of UNSCR 1325, Colombian organizations such as *Corporación Humanas* monitor the compliance of the Colombian government to the resolution to ensure accountability (UNAA, 2020). Twenty years after its adoption, the region has made progress in implementing the core tenants of UN Resolution 1325, particularly in peacekeeping, but much work remains to be done. This paper assesses the progress the region has made in the inclusion of women in peacekeeping and evaluates the importance of the adoption of National Action Plans in reaching these goals.

To assess the impact of UNSCR 1325 in peacekeeping operations (PKO) and of NAPs, this paper first describes existing WPS guidance and its importance. The paper then examines how the adoption of National Action Plans can contribute to the advancement of the WPS agenda in peacekeeping operations. NAPs have become a successful indicator for some Latin American countries in WPS implementation, however the presence of a NAP itself is not enough to encompass the region's need to implement more WPS policy-oriented agendas. Finally, the paper addresses the gender imbalance in peacekeeping and military personnel in Latin America and outlines the region's significant progress in gender inclusivity throughout its peacekeeping operations. The paper concludes that NAPs are necessary but by themselves are insufficient to advance WPS goals. A final section of the paper presents recommendations for how Latin American countries can draft more policy driven agendas intended to increase Women, Peace, and Security goals.

## UNSCR 1325 AND PEACEKEEPING

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000 signaled the UN Security Council's commitment to promoting gender inclusivity in peace and security agendas. The resolution includes the following four pillars: participation, protection, prevention,

and the relief and recovery of women globally (Payne, 2020). The objective of the resolution is to “mainstream” gender in UN institutions and peacemaking processes of all governments regarding conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding (Pratt, 2013). It affirms that women are essential in peacemaking while calling attention to dismantling the power structures of a male-dominated field. The resolution highlights that the diversity of women in international security should be and can be as impactful as the participation and inclusion of men.

UNSCR 1325 does not label the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes as a requirement but instead is written as a call to reform the gender imbalance that persists in international security, which has disproportionately excluded the role of women and the protection of women in armed conflict. Subsequent resolutions were established to strengthen the four pillars outlined in UNSCR 1325 (Table 1). UNSCR 1820 was adopted in 2008 as a supplement to the principles stated in UNSCR 1325. It attempts to address the legacy of sexual violence in international peacekeeping operations. UNSCR 1820 was considered a breakthrough as the first UN Security Council recognition of sexual violence as a war crime (Willett, 2015). The Resolution calls for the Security Council to mobilize peacekeepers in protecting targeted women from gender-based violence. Recognizing sexual violence as a war crime further prompts action from peacekeepers to protect women in conflict zones. Resolutions 1888 and 1889 were adopted in 2009 to build upon the provisions of Resolution 1820. UNSCR 1888 calls for the deployment of a team of experts to situations where sexual violence in armed conflict took place. It also calls for an investigation on all reports of sexual violence committed by civilians and military personnel (SC 2009, p. 4). Moreover, Resolution 1889, calls for a wholistic approach when addressing sexual violence by requesting the United Nations ensure all UN bodies and civil society “to assess the particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations” (SC, 2009, p. 3).

**Table 1.** United Nations Security Council Resolutions Relating to UNSCR 1325

United Nations Security Council Resolutions Relating to UNSCR 1325	
RESOLUTION (YEAR)	SUMMARY
UNSCR 1820 (2008)	Recognizes sexual violence as a weapon of war, which constitutes as a war crime and crime against humanity.
UNSCR 1888 (2009)	Calls for leadership to address conflict related sexual violence and deployment of Team of Experts where the cases of assault occurred.

United Nations Security Council Resolutions Relating to UNSCR 1325	
RESOLUTION (YEAR)	SUMMARY
UNSCR 1889 (2009)	Focuses on increasing the participation of women in post-conflict building process.
UNSCR 1960 (2010)	Creates a “naming and shaming” mechanism, which consists of reporting sexual assault cases that occurred in conflict zones.
UNSCR 2106 (2013)	Operationalizes current WPS initiatives, aiming to further improve WPS rather than introducing new avenues for policy.
UNSCR 2122 (2013)	Affirms an “integrated approach” to sustainable peace and sets out to create methods for combating the limited representation of women in peacekeeping operations.
UNSCR 2242 (2015)	Encourages the assessment of current WPS agendas implemented and acknowledges civil society as an important pillar to involve in WPS- driven agendas.

**Source:** (WILPF, 2020)

**Note:** UNSCR 1325 spearheaded a wave of WPS driven resolutions. These resolutions have strengthened the WPS initiatives that were adopted in response to UNSCR1325.

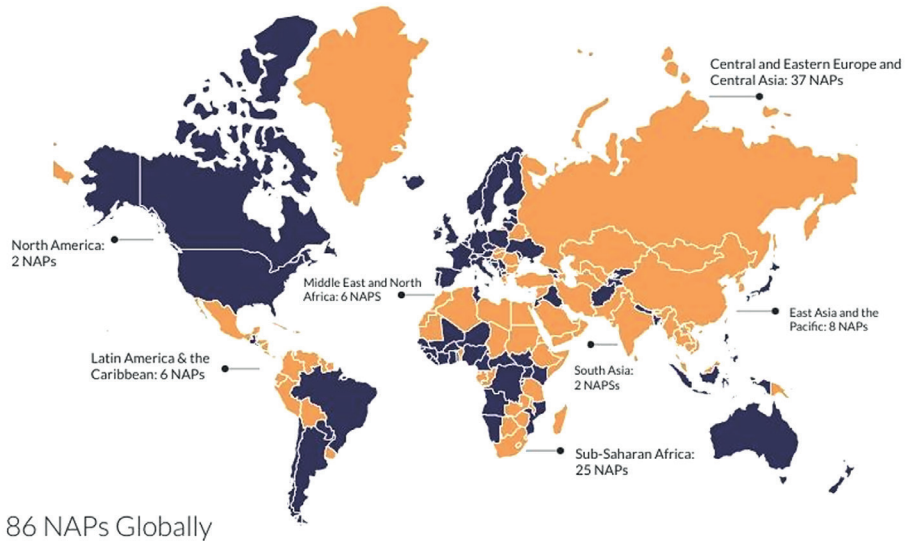
From 2010 to 2013, further resolutions were adopted to support UNSCR 1325. In 2010, Resolution 1960 was adopted by the Security Council to establish “monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements? on conflict-related sexual violence” (SC, 2010, P. 4). This resolution is recognized for its “naming and shaming” provision, which encourages the UN Security Council to include in their reports information on parties that are “credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape” (SC, 2010, p. 3). To complement UNSCR 1960, in 2013, Resolution 2106 was adopted in accordance with Resolution 1888. UNSCR 2106 calls for further deployment of Women Protection Advisors and for these roles to be assessed to ensure that Advisors are appropriately trained and deployed to oversee the prevention of gender-based violence (SC, 2013). In 2013, Resolution 2122 strengthened the requirements to include female peacekeepers in peace processes. Compared to other resolutions, UNSCR 2122 emphasizes female leadership and requests that the UN Secretary-General conduct a global study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 to capture the advantages and disadvantages of women’s rights concerns covered by the Resolution (Miller, Pournik & Swaine, 2014). Finally, Resolution 2122 was adopted in 2015, which established the Informal

Experts Group to call for improved Security Council working methods on Women, Peace, and Security (UN Women, 2020).

Although the intention of inclusion of women in peacekeeping operations is addressed in UNSCR 1325, the effectiveness of its implementation is dependent upon the conditions of a nation’s civil society, institutional governance, and participation in international peacekeeping. Despite the codification of WPS in 2000 along with subsequent resolutions, in 2020 there was a persistent, widespread gender imbalance favoring male personnel in UN forces: women constitute less than 4 percent of the roughly 100,000 strong UN forces (Crawford & Macdonald, 2013). To address this gender imbalance, National Action Plans (NAPs) for WPS are widely accepted as an indicator of increasing women’s participation in peacekeeping but the connection between the two has been understudied. This paper presents an initial exploration of the connection between NAPs and female participation in peacekeeping in Latin American countries.

## WPS AND NAPs

**Figure 1.** UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans Globally



**Source:** (WILPF, 2020).

**Note:** The countries in yellow signify that they have not adopted a National Action Plan. Whereas the countries in purple have adopted a National Action Plan.

NAPs can signal the region's political willingness to address the four pillars of the UNSCR 1325 agenda, though they are not the only indicator of progress in this issue area. Latin America has lagged in adopting National Action Plans but despite this, several Latin American countries have achieved noteworthy progress without a NAP. As of May 2020, 86 countries have adopted a National Action Plan with Europe and Africa producing the most NAPs (Figure 1). These regions have recently hosted peace operations as a result and are now including gendered approaches to their national defense and security forces. In addition, European and African states are also developing domestic laws that emphasize the protection of women's rights; working to eradicate violence and discrimination based on sex; strengthening the role of women organizations; and creating a space for women in the global arena (Miller, Pournik & Swaine, 2014).

## WPS, NAPs AND LATIN AMERICA

National Action Plans provide a blueprint for how a country plans to move forward in adopting Women, Peace, and Security measures that addresses their respective priorities and difficulties in implementing UNSCR 1325. National Action Plans allow each nation to develop a coherent WPS response that best fits their political, economic, and social conditions. Hence, the make-up of a NAP will differ across Latin American countries. Although a NAP is not the sole indicator of a region's overall performance in Women, Peace, and Security, these pieces of legislation can signal the region's potential to address the four pillars of the UNSCR 1325 agenda. Whereas the region in general tends to lag in developing National Action Plans, some countries have been leading the process. Chile, for instance, was the first in advancing WPS agendas, such as UNSCR 1325, in Latin America. Chile was the first Latin American country in the region to adopt a NAP under President Michelle Bachelet's leadership in 2009 (WILPF, 2020). Few Latin American countries have created a NAP (Table 2). Notably, two out of the six countries that have adopted NAPs did so while a woman was president of the country. While this does not imply causation, it may suggest that representation at the highest levels of leadership matter for the adoption of a NAP. Chile, for example, used UNSCR 1325 as a foundation for embedding a policy framework that highlighted the importance of the protection and promotion of women's rights. This, combined with their active engagement and membership with the UN Security Council, participation in various peacekeeping missions, and recognizing the disproportionately low number of women in its armed forces prompted the government to begin working on a NAP (Gobierno de Chile, 2015). Although the Chilean government began drafting their NAP in 2008, it was during a period of female leadership at



the highest level that pushed for the official adoption of the NAP by President Michelle Bachelet in 2009, the first NAP of the region.

**Table 2.** NAPs Adopted in Latin America

UNSCR 1325 NAPs Adopted in Latin America		
YEAR	COUNTRY	PRESIDENT AT TIME OF ADOPTION
2009, 2015	Chile	Michelle Bachelet
2015	Argentina	Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner
2015	Paraguay	Horacio Cartes
2017	Guatemala	Jimmy Morales
2017	El Salvador	Salvador Sanchez Ceren
2017	Brazil	Michel Temer

**Source:** (WILPE, 2020)

**Note:** Only 6 Latin American countries have adopted a NAP

In Latin America, six countries have adopted National Action Plans to date (Figure 1). Chile adopted a NAP in 2009, followed by Argentina in 2015. Uruguay committed to developing its first ever NAP during a WPS commitments pledging event in 2019 (Giannini & Lotte, 2014). The National Action Plans vary widely in scope and goals. Chile’s 2009 NAP, for example, explicitly mentions peacekeeping, prioritizing the technical capacity of public officials (Gobierno de Chile, 2009). It’s second NAP (2015) specifically includes “advancing the representation and participation of women in peace consolidation processes” and “advance a gender perspective in all peace building activities” as objectives (Gobierno de Chile, 2015, p. 23). El Salvador’s NAP more specifically guarantees the participation of women in UN peacekeeping missions. While both NAPs address participation in PKO, their focus differs. The plans also differ in the activities listed as necessary to achieve the objective: whereas Chile’s plan focuses on training and education, El Salvador’s plan focuses on the need to extract (“systematize”) lessons learned from the experience of Salvadorian female peacekeepers (Shephard, 2017). The adoption of a National Action Plan in 2017 was a step forward for El Salvador to integrate a gendered approach to its security sector, especially amongst their UN peacekeeping forces and the National Civil Police. Due to El Salvador’s history of inequality, violence, and gang-related criminal structures, their NAP provided a foundational element in monitoring civic insecurity of girls and women (Shephard, 2017).

A notable portion of El Salvador's NAP is the adoption of reparation measures to grant women and girls a place in Salvadoran society (Shephard, 2017). The Salvadoran government utilizes NAPs to assimilate WPS goals into its civil society and political institutions.

Despite progress at the national level, the region lacks a unified response to strengthen the WPS agenda. Given that Latin American peacekeepers have gradually increased in contributions to PKO overall, support and coordination across countries in the region is vital, and female peacekeepers play a crucial role. Additionally, country-level NAPs are not only not enough to address the gender imbalance in peacekeeping operations, but they are also insufficient to prevent sexual based-violence. NAPs lack accountability measures to address *how* Latin America and the global community can apply UNSCR 1325 in their respective countries, to then have the capacity to address WPS on a regional level. While NAPs are framed as concepts of empowerment, it is not made clear in the resolutions how such concepts are expected to translate into practice (Miller, Pournik & Swaine, 2014). NAPs should therefore not be the singular tool used to advance UNSCR 1325 but should be complemented by subsequent national policies. NAPs alone do not include adequate oversight structures, monetary allocations, or the means of measuring progress towards the goals of the plan. Hence, a regional response to promote UNSCR 1325 in Latin America is needed. However, 1325 NAPs signal an important tool of democratic social change and stability, asserting the importance of including women equally in all aspects of women security and protection (Miller, Pournik & Swaine, 2014). Once a regional framework is adopted, Latin American countries must also adopt enforcement and accountability measures at a local level to ensure that the resolution's goals can be incorporated into a common norm and standardized practice. The region must not only signal and report their compliance to the UNSCR 1325, but also work to consistently internalize these WPS goals into their governments (Crawford et al., 2014). NAPs have provided a foundation for some Latin American countries to develop goals that align with UNSCR 1325.

## MILITARY PERSONNEL IN LATIN AMERICA

The adoption of NAPs, while significant, does not fully explain differences in female participation in peacekeeping. The participation of women in peace processes is linked to their involvement in the military and police forces (Donadio, 2008). Low rates of female inclusion in military and police forces are then reflected in low rates of female inclusion in peacekeeping. A National Action Plan might eventually affect PKO participation if it expressly includes plans to increase female recruitment and retention across the security and defense forces.

The limited number of women represented in Latin American military and police forces is then proportionally reflected in the lagging representation of women in the peacebuilding sector. In Latin America, women constitute less than 10% of military personnel, apart from Argentina and Uruguay in which women comprise 11.63% and 16.09% respectively (Giannini & Lotte, 2014). These rates are generally reflected in the limited number of female peacekeeping personnel stationed at UN peacekeeping missions, even those with a higher proportion of peacekeepers representing Latin American countries. For example, in MINUSTAH (the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti) representation of female peacekeeping personnel is consistently low, despite the involvement of many countries in the region (Donadio, 2008). Out of the total peacekeepers deployed in MINUSTAH from 2005- 2017, 1.48% were female (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020).

Many service academies throughout the region have only started admitting female students within the last 30 years, precluding female service members from careers lengthy enough to achieve the highest ranks in their respective branches. Several Latin American countries have not yet fully incorporated women into all branches and specialties of their armed forces (Table 3). As more service academies admit female students, eventually there will be more opportunities for female graduates to reach high ranking positions, such as Special Observers or Special Envoys.

**Table 3.** Incorporation of Women into different Branches of Military Training

Incorporation of Women in Branches of Military Training			
COUNTRY	LEVEL OF ACCESS		
	Army	Navy	Air Force
Argentina	Total	Total	Total
Bolivia	Total	Total	Total
Brazil	Partial	Partial	Partial
Chile	Partial	Partial	Partial
Colombia	Total	Total	Total
Cuba	Partial	Partial	Partial
Ecuador	Partial	Partial	Partial

Incorporation of Women in Branches of Military Training			
COUNTRY	LEVEL OF ACCESS		
El Salvador	Partial	Partial	Partial
Guatemala	Partial	Total	Total
Honduras	Partial	Total	Total
Mexico	Partial	Total	Partial
Nicaragua	Total	Total	Total
Paraguay	Partial	Partial	Partial
Peru	Partial	Partial	Partial
Dominican Republic	Partial	Partial	Partial
Uruguay	Total	Total	Total
Venezuela	Total	Total	Total

**Source:** Atlas Comparativo de la Defensa en América Latina y Caribe (RESDAL, 2016, p. 46)

**Note:** “Partial” and “total” describes the level of access and opportunity for women to ascend to higher ranking positions in each armed force institution in Latin America and the Caribbean. The level of access differs within each country.

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 marked an important milestone in the process of giving female military personnel access to higher-ranking positions in the chain of command (Donadio, 2008). For most countries in the region, military academies began accepting women after 2000, as a result, there are currently very few women who have achieved the rank necessary to act as a military observer in peacekeeping missions, though this appears to be changing over time (Giannini, 2012). Bolivia has granted access to women in the professional corps since 1979–1985 (Giannini, 2012). Presumably because of this training, Bolivia has surpassed other countries in the region in its contributions of female troops to PKO. The changes that allowed for this result were achieved prior to the adoption of a NAP and indeed predate the adoption of UNSCR 1325, suggesting that while helpful, a NAP is not a necessary precondition to achieving inclusion of women in PKO.

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS FROM LATIN AMERICAN

In addition to changes in military training overall, Latin America has worked to incorporate WPS into Peacekeeping Training Centers (PTCs). At these centers there is increasing availability and institutionalization of courses and seminars addressing gender and the role of women in peacekeeping as a result of UNSCR 1325 (Abdenur et al., 2018). The training centers have led to collaboration across the region, sharing curriculum design while deepening their understanding of each other's practices. For instance, Brazil's CCOPAB collaborates on curriculum design with Argentina and Chile (Abdenur et al., 2018).

Overall, Latin American countries are important contributors of personnel for peacekeeping operations (Abdenur et al., 2018). It is precisely the region's increased involvement in peacekeeping operations that has sparked discussion about its low participation of women in the field. UN Peacekeeping involves more than just military oversight but demands diversified personnel to reflect the gender issues that can arise during conflict. Between 2008 and 2017, female UN Peacekeeping personnel increased from 1360 to 3145 and the proportion of women in the military increased from 1.9% to 3.9% (Smit & Tidbald-Lundholm, 2018). These low numbers are reflected in Latin America's armed forces as well. However, as noted by Crawford, Lebovic, and Macdonald (2015), "the evidence indicates nonetheless that some UN members—by reason of their democratic and rights-observant governance—are peculiarly prone to contribute at least a small number of female personnel to UN operations" (p. 41).

The MINUSTAH offers the largest example of peacekeeping contributions by Latin America. By June 2008, 4,040 of the mission's 8,997 military troops were from Latin America, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay (Crawford et al, 2015). As the mission expanded, the total female personnel hovered around 2%. Latin American troop contributions specifically were about 2.5% female (Giannini, 2012). Most recent data details an increase in female Latin American troops — 4.2% of peacekeepers were female by 2017 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2020).

Though MINUSTAH is Latin America's most important effort, countries in the region are further engaged abroad as well. In 2018, 16 of 20 Latin American countries were contributing to 14 ongoing UN Peacekeeping missions with a total of 2,230 police and military (Abdenur et al., 2018). These high rates of overall participation are not mirrored in rates of female participation. Currently, in UN operations, women comprise 8.4% of Latin American police forces, 3.9% of military experts, and 4.3% of military troops (Giannini & Lotte, 2014).

The rise of women personnel in military operations, where women are now a part of work areas that include committees, services, and peacekeeping missions, is vital to maintain peace and security in conflict zones (Barriga, 2020). Colonel Lourdes Barriga, a Peruvian UN peacekeeper from MONUSCO (the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in 2005, emphasizes the importance of women peacekeepers on the ground to assist in cases of sexual assault for women and children. Barriga reflects on her time as a UN peacekeeper and mentions that the participation of military women on the ground allowed “local women to have better support and an improved sense of security”, additionally, “military women [...] contributed to the improved protection of women and children” despite only having one woman assigned to each Verification and Monitoring Team, each of whom were tasked with reporting and assisting in gender cases (Barriga, 2020, 215-219). Major Karina Lazo, the first female officer to have graduated from the Military School of Chorrillos in Peru to participate as a military observer in a United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission also reflects on her peacekeeping mission at the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic in 2016. As a member of the Female Engagement Team (FET) she recounts “these female officers patiently sought to interact with the women of the communities and earn their trust, which illustrates the importance of female staff” (Lazo, 2020, 2929-232).

Both Barriga and Lazo have witnessed the impact of female personnel in the peacekeeping missions. Their experience in the field further validates the need for more women peacekeepers and the opportunities for trust building that are missed with their absence.

## NAPS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Though they have not been linked directly to increased female PKO contributions, there appears to be a correlation between the regions more aggressively adopting NAPS and demonstrated success in the representation of women in UN peacekeeping personnel. Within Latin America, the relationship does not appear to be present at the country level (table 4) Some countries that have not adopted NAPs have percentages of female troops that exceed those of countries that do have a NAP in place. Peru, for example, has committed 37 women peacekeepers, 15.7% of their total contributions, despite not having a NAP. In contrast, Brazil adopted a NAP in 2007, yet women still account for only 3.9% of its peacekeepers.

**Table 4. Number of Women from Latin America in Peacekeeping Operations**

Female peacekeeper contributions by Latin American countries													
Country	NAP Year	OCTOBER 2010 (7 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)				OCTOBER 2015 (3 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)				OCTOBER 2020 (13 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)			
		Total Peacekeepers	Female Peacekeepers	Percentage Female peacekeepers	Total Peacekeepers	Female Peacekeepers	Percentage Female peacekeepers	Total Peacekeepers	Female Peacekeepers	Percentage Female peacekeepers	Total Peacekeepers	Female Peacekeepers	Percentage Female peacekeepers
Argentina	2015	1,013	51	5%	369	41	11.1%	278	24	8.6%			
Belize		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%			
Bolivia		235	15	6.4%	22	2	9.1%	29	6	20.7%			
Brazil	2017	2,271	16	0.7%	1,229	15	1.2%	280	12	4.3%			
Chile	2009, 2015	538	10	1.9%	415	12	2.9%	6	0	0%			
Colombia		35	2	5.7%	16	1	6.3%	4	1	25%			
Costa Rica		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%			
Cuba		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%			
Ecuador		89	0	0%	10	0	0%	11	6	54.5%			
El Salvador	2017	101	8	7.9%	209	5	2.4%	285	28	9.8%			

Female peacekeeper contributions by Latin American countries											
	OCTOBER 2010 (7 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)			OCTOBER 2015 (3 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)			OCTOBER 2020 (13 ACTIVE PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS)				
Guatemala	2017	320	20	6.3%	223	17	7.6%	176	22	12.5%	
Honduras		12	0	0%	59	0	0%	12	4	33.3%	
Mexico		0	0	0%	5	0	0%	14	7	50%	
Nicaragua		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	
Panama		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	
Paraguay	2015	94	0	0%	122	5	4.1%	31	3	9.7%	
Peru		398	4	1%	195	11	5.6%	233	37	15.9%	
Dominican Republic		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	7	2	28.6%	
Uruguay		2,462	105	4.3%	1,452	93	6.4%	1,477	84	57.1%	
Venezuela		0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	

**Source:** Data are from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2020)

**Note:** The table outlines the percentage of female peacekeepers in UN missions from respective Latin American countries. Although there is a rise of female representation in peacekeeping operations, the number of women in UN missions is limited.



As suggested by the table above, the WPS framework is underdeveloped in Latin America relative to other UN member states that have undergone processes of institutional transformation to meet the goals of WPS. While NAPs don't conclusively lead to an increase in female participation in peacekeeping, their adoption signals a country's understanding of the gender imbalance in international security agendas and a willingness to address it. In addition to NAPs, there are other ways to signal commitment to the inclusion of women in security and defense. Colombia, for example, does not have a NAP, yet its 2016 peace agreement included 100 provisions on gender issues, addressing accountability and the improvement of women's rights in Colombia (Goldscheid, 2020). Regional initiatives such as the Colombia example can provide a model for Latin America in implementing more WPS-aligned practices in its UN peacekeeping operations.

While this paper suggests there is a relationship between NAPs and contributions of female personnel to PKOs, further research is needed to understand the role that NAPs play in promoting WPS in countries in the region. Research of this sort faces many challenges, including problems of data availability related to institutional unwillingness to disclose the number of female personnel in police, military, and peacekeeping forces limits UNSCR 1325. Since there is a lack of data, research regarding Women, Peace, and Security falls short when attempting to identify recent and up-to-date findings. Consequently, if there is no public pressure to produce research studies about WPS, countries will not have access to the knowledge needed to implement effective NAPs nor the motivation to adopt WPS agendas. Accessible data will allow countries to craft policies that are tailored to their specific situation. Importantly, it will also help countries identify achievable targets across defense and security sectors, including contributions of female personnel to PKO.

Latin American countries must adopt a NAP that not only responds to the demands of UNSCR 1325 but develop a series of policies that will internalize WPS agendas in their respective government institutions. NAPs can mandate enforcement and accountability measures to ensure international WPS goals, suggested by UNSCR 1325, are followed through in addition to local WPS initiatives. By pushing implementation at a local level, NAPs facilitate the recruitment of more women into local police forces and government institutions (Jacevic, 2019). Eventually, this will create a pipeline for more female representation in peacekeeping operations and peace processes once women have the access to these positions. While operational challenges may arise when developing a NAP, a unified response within the region can assist with the implementation of resources to execute WPS goals. Additionally, an "inclusive design process" outlined in a NAP, which can involve cooperation efforts between government ministries and agencies to enforce UNSCR 1325 measures, can relieve potential bureaucratic, financial, and operational difficulties as well (Jacevic, 2019).

NAPs demonstrate a significant milestone for the six Latin American countries where they have been adopted, however as mentioned previously, the lack of support and intergovernmental cooperation limits their potential to execute WPS goals to the fullest. The countries that have a NAP demonstrate more initiative in implementing UNSCR 1325, particularly the participation pillar as demonstrated by their number of female personnel in peacekeeping operations. However, it is important to note that although some countries may not have an NAP, political willingness to incorporate the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 is expressed through other policy avenues. In short, NAPs appear to be an important but not sufficient condition for progress on the inclusion of women in peacekeeping in Latin America.

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