EMERGING ACTORS IN THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA: SOUTH KOREA AND JAPAN

YEONJU JUNG AND AYAKO TSUJISAKA*

I. Introduction

The United Nations Security Council commissioned three high-level reviews on peace and security in 2015.[1] One of these was of implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the first resolution in what became known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The WPS agenda calls for the participation and representation of women in decision making, the protection of women and girls during conflict and the inclusion of a gender perspective in efforts to build peace by addressing the gendered impact of armed conflict.[2] The report that resulted from the review, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,* underlines that the changing dynamics of conflict and new security challenges have made the WPS agenda more important than ever, but also identifies continuing gaps and challenges in achieving the agenda. These challenges include the disparity between policy commitments and the finances allocated to achieve them, and the huge funding gap for projects promoting gender equality in particular.[3]

Since the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in October 2000, which has been followed by nine related resolutions, the Security Council, UN agencies, UN member states and civil society organizations (CSOs) have been promoting it as a tool for moving from exclusive to inclusive decision making and towards gender equality.[4] Knowledge of

---

[1] A new development agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was launched to succeed the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. This year was also the 15th anniversary of the Brahimi Report on Peace Operations and of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

[2] Bjertén-Günther, E. et al., 'The development of the women, peace and security agenda', *SIPRI Yearbook 2016: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2016), pp. 323–31.

[3] UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (UN Women: New York, 2015), p. 372.

[4] The 10 resolutions in the WPS agenda are UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 31 Oct. 2000, Resolution 1820 of 19 June 2008, Resolution 1888 of 30 Sep. 2009, Resolution 1889 of 30 Sep. 2010,

SUMMARY

● Since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on 31 October 2000, global efforts to promote and develop the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda have been ongoing. Thus far, however, the perspective of traditional Western donors in the global North has been at the centre of the discussion. By contrast, and despite their growing importance as donors, South Korea and Japan are often absent from the policy discussions.

This paper aims to increase understanding of how South Korea and Japan engage with the WPS agenda. It examines their legal and policy structures, as well as the two countries' financial inputs into and implementation of the WPS agenda using the three major areas of international cooperation as a framework: development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peace operations.

the WPS agenda has advanced in parallel with increased global efforts to promote it. However, the perspective of traditional Western donors in the global North has been at the centre of the discussion, and this has shaped the priorities and agenda through support for a number of Security Council resolutions.[5] Aroussi argues that the WPS framework in Western liberal democracies has been reduced to a foreign policy tool that focuses almost exclusively on women from conflict-affected societies. In addition, the perspective of states in the global South has been limited to a discourse that perceives conflict-affected or fragile societies as mere recipients of the WPS agenda.[6]

Countries that do not fit into the binary classification of traditional Western donors in the global North or fragile states in the global South, such as the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Japan, are often absent from the policy discussions and not sufficiently recognized as active partners.[7] The

South Korea and Japan reported some of the largest increases in assistance to gender equality in fragile states and economies between 2008 and 2015

UN Women global study found that South Korea and Japan, together with Portugal, reported the largest increases in assistance to gender equality in fragile states and economies between 2008 and 2015.[8] Despite their increasing levels of assistance and growing role—or established role in the case of Japan—in the fields of international development and security, their engagement as emerging actors in the WPS agenda has

been relatively unremarked in international forums.[9] Especially poorly understood is how these two north-east Asian countries, where patriarchal ideologies and conservative gender norms persist, translate and contribute to the WPS agenda. As the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325 approaches, filling this knowledge gap will be crucial to international reflection and a global review of policy and implementation, and thus to overall development, of the WPS agenda.

In this context, this background paper aims to increase understanding of how South Korea and Japan engage with the WPS agenda and the characteristics of their contributions. The paper examines the legal and policy frameworks in South Korea and Japan, as well as their financial inputs and implementation of policies in relation to the WPS agenda. According to the

Resolution 1960 of 16 Dec. 2010, Resolution 2106 of 24 June 2013, Resolution 2122 of 18 Oct. 2013, Resolution 2242 of 13 Oct. 2015, Resolution 2467 of 23 Apr. 2019 and Resolution 2493 of 29 Oct. 2019.

[5] Aroussi, S., 'National Action Plans on WPS as tools of foreign policy: reconsidering gender security in the west', ed. S. Aroussi, *Rethinking National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security* (IOS Press: Amsterdam, 2017), pp. 29–40.

[6] For more discussion on the post-colonial critique of the WPS agenda see Parashar, S., 'The WPS agenda: A postcolonial critique', eds S. E. Davies and J. True, *Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace and Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), pp. 829–39; Basu, S., 'The global South writes 1325 (too)', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 37, no. 3 (2016), pp. 362–74; Martin de Almagro, M., 'Producing participants: gender, race, class, and women, peace and security', *Global Society*, vol. 32, no. 4 (2018), pp. 395–414; and Aroussi (note 5), pp. 29–40.

[7] South Korea is still technically in a conflict situation according to the Armistice Agreement signed at the end of the Korean War. South Korea and Japan have ongoing issues around sexual violence during and after conflict. At the same time, however, as members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), both are also regarded as countries with developed economies.

[8] UN Women (note 3), p. 373.

[9] There is e.g. no discussion of Japan or South Korea in the *Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace and Security*, a detailed discussion of the WPS agenda published in Dec. 2018, despite the fact that Japan is a member of the G7, and non-G7 countries, such as northern European countries, are discussed.

principles set out in the agenda, it should be implemented both domestically and externally through foreign policy.[10] This paper, however, focuses on the role of South Korea and Japan as donors in order to identify the contributions each makes at the international level. It uses a framework to illustrate the countries' contributions to the agenda in three major areas of international cooperation on global security and development: development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peace operations.

This background paper is based on a desk review of policy documents written in Korean, Japanese and English, as well as 24 interviews with key informants that were conducted in South Korea and Japan in July 2019. The paper also examines the countries' implementation by analysing their gender-based Official Development Assistance (ODA) activities, based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender equality policy marker; and the number and proportion of women in their UN peacekeeping personnel contributions, using data from SIPRI's Multilateral Peace Operations Database.[11] Given the lack of documents on the topic written in English, this paper draws on primary sources in Korean and Japanese to help to bring new information and perspectives on South Korea's and Japan's contributions to the WPS agenda to a broader audience. Furthermore, by examining these countries' efforts as emerging actors, it contributes to the international discussion on how policies linked to the WPS agenda can be improved.

II. Implementation of the WPS agenda at the national level

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and national action plans

The WPS agenda consists of 10 UN Security Council resolutions, starting with the landmark Resolution 1325. Resolution 1325 is considered a historic achievement that locates gender centrally in multilateral action.[12] The UN has been calling for implementation of the resolution for nearly two decades. In 2004, Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary-General, asked member states to elaborate National Action Plans (NAPs) on implementing the WPS agenda at the domestic level. Since the first adoption by Denmark in 2005, NAPs have been a major policy instrument at the national level for advancing WPS implementation. As of September 2019, 82 countries—42 per cent of the UN member states— had adopted a NAP.[13] As the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325 approaches,

The WPS agenda consists of 10 UN Security Council resolutions

---

[10] It should be noted, however, that there is little agreement on the principles of the WPS agenda and much contestation over whether the agenda is or should be 'inward facing' or 'outward facing'. Shepherd, L. J., 'Making war safe for women? National Action Plans and the militarisation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 37, no. 3 (2016) pp. 324–35.

[11] The SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database provides comprehensive, reliable and authoritative data on all multilateral peace operations, both UN and non-UN, conducted around the world.

[12] Swaine, A., 'Assessing the potential of National Action Plans to advance implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325', *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law*, vol. 12 (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2010/13), pp. 403–33.

[13] Peace Women, 'List of National Action Plans', accessed Sep. 2019; 18 states have issued a second NAP and 13 have published a third or fourth.

Box 1. Key concepts and definitions

Gender equality: equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for all genders. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of all genders must be taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage all genders.[a]

Gender mainstreaming: the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes to enable a gender equality perspective to be incorporated into all policies at all levels and all stages.[b]

Gender-sensitive or gender sensitivity: Policies and practices that take account of the particularities pertaining to the lives of all genders, while aiming to eliminate inequalities and promote an equal distribution of resources, and to address the gender dimension and take it into account.[c]

Gender perspective: a way of seeing or analysing that looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles and interactions.[d]

Gender policy marker: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) tracks aid in support of gender equality and women's rights using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender equality policy marker. This is a statistical tool for recording aid activities that target gender equality as a policy objective.[e] It screens all aid activities and scores them according to three categories: (*a*) activities where gender equality is the principal or main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental to its design and expected results (coded as 2); (*b*) activities where gender equality is a significant but not principal objective (coded as 1); and (*c*) activities where aid does not target gender equality (coded as 0).[f] This paper labels these three categories as 'principal', 'significant' and 'not targeted'. A principal score is not automatically better than a significant score. Instead, the OECD recommends a twin-track approach that combines gender mainstreaming (significant) with standalone projects dedicated to promoting gender equality (principal).[g]

Human security: The concept of human security was incorporated into Japan's foreign policy following its appearance in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report in 1994.[h] Since then, human security, defined as 'a concept that pursues the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want, through their protection and empowerment', has become a key guiding principle of Japan's development cooperation policy.[i] Human-centric approaches that focus on the individual, human security and the WPS agenda share many commonalities and intersect in many respects. However, human security can be a gender-blind approach that fails to take account of the gendered nature of insecurities.[j]

UN Security Council Resolution 1325: is often divided into four pillars: (*a*) participation, by women at all levels in peace processes and security policy; (*b*) protection, of women and women's rights during armed conflict and post-conflict; (*c*) prevention, of the impacts of armed conflict on women; and (*d*) relief and recovery, which is also referred to as peacebuilding, where the specific needs and priorities of women and girls are prioritized.

[a] UN Women, Training Centre, 'Gender equality glossary', [n.d.].
[b] European Institute for Gender Equality, 'Concepts and definitions', [n.d.].
[c] European Institute for Gender Equality (note b).
[d] UN Women, Training Centre (note a).
[e] OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET), *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker* (OECD: Paris, Dec. 2016).
[f] OECD-DAC GENDERNET (note e), p. 6.
[g] OECD-DAC GENDERNET (note e), p. 16.
[h] Kurusu, K., 'Japan as a norm entrepreneur for human security', ed. M. M. McCarthy, *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Foreign Policy* (Routledge: Abingdon and New York, 2018).
[i] Japan Cabinet Office, 'Cabinet decision on the Development Cooperation Charter', 10 Feb. 2015, p. 4.
[j] Swaine, A., 'Pursuing gender security', eds S. E. Davies and J. True, *Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace and Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018).

it is expected that an increasing number of countries will adopt NAPs due to what have been called 'period effects'.[14]

The WPS agenda can also be implemented beyond NAPs through diverse existing channels. Some countries that have not yet adopted a comprehensive NAP have implemented UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the WPS agenda more broadly by utilizing existing policy instruments and devising local plans. This reflects the debate over the usefulness of creating separate

---

[14] True, J., 'Explaining the global diffusion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 37, no. 3 (2016).

action plans or incorporating elements of the WPS agenda into existing poli-cies.[15] Regional action plans, such as those of the League of Arab States and the Pacific region, are a similar form of implementation protocol.

The non-specific language in Resolution 1325 has provided room for contextualization and localization, but also contributed to different inter-pretations of the resolution and the agenda more broadly. The various interpretations of the WPS agenda have been criticized for their limitations, especially with regard to the language used.[16] For example, feminist scholars and women's rights organizations have criticized language that character-izes women as objects who are 'fragile', 'passive' and 'potential victims'.[17] Consequently, women are often viewed as 'beneficiaries' and categorized with children as a vulnerable group. This approach is more common than one which treats women as agents of change or political figures.[18] As a result, the protection pillar in the resolution has often overshadowed other pillars of the agenda, such as participation (see box 1).[19]

The WPS agenda through international cooperation

Most donor countries' WPS agendas at the national level, including their NAPs on the implementation of Resolution 1325, have been developed with an outward-looking focus on assisting fragile and conflict-affected countries. These efforts have primarily been implemented through foreign, security and development policies.[20] Such an approach is visible in the United Kingdom's NAP. Its seven strategic outcomes are related to international cooperation with a focus on security and development, in which the development and humanitarian assistance communities, as well as peace operations actors are expected to play a role.[21] This means that foreign, security and development policies are useful tools for examining a country's contribution as a donor to the WPS agenda at the global level.

In the light of the above, this paper focuses on the support provided through international cooperation. It suggests a framework for illustrating South Korea's and Japan's contributions to the WPS agenda in the three main areas of development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peace operations. These are regarded by many as among the most relevant

[15] Swaine (note 12).

[16] For more details see Alvarado Cóbar, J., Bjertén-Günther, E. and Jung, Y., 'Assessing gender perspectives in peace processes with application to the cases of Colombia and Mindanao', SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security no. 2018/16, Nov. 2018.

[17] Shepherd, L. J., 'Power and authority in the production of United Nations Security Coun-cil Resolution 1325', *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 52, no. 2 (2008), pp. 383–404; and Shepherd, L. J., 'Sex, security and superhero(in)es: From 1325 to 1820 and beyond', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 13, no. 4 (2011), pp. 504–21.

[18] Gibbings, S. L., 'No angry women at the United Nations: Political dreams and the cultural politics of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 13, no. 4, (2011), pp. 522–38.

[19] Olsson, L. and Gizelis, T. I., *Gender, Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325* (Routledge: London, 2015), p. 8; and Bjertén-Günther, E., Caparini, M. and Jung, Y., 'Delivering as one: Other multilateral mechanisms for sustaining peace', *SIPRI Yearbook 2017: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2017), p. 243.

[20] Shepherd (note 10).

[21] UK Department for International Development (DFID) et al., *UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security, 2018–2022* (DFID: London, 2018).

mechanisms for promoting the international security, peacebuilding and development agendas. They are all treated as ODA, the official definition of aid flows, albeit that national contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are counted only to a limited and conditional extent.[22] The three main areas also make a clear linkage with the pillars of Resolution 1325 (see box 1), especially with the pillars of protection, participation, and relief and recovery, but also to a lesser extent with the prevention pillar.

In order to examine South Korea's and Japan's policies on and implementation of development cooperation, this paper first examines the relevant legal and policy frameworks, and then analyses their past five years of ODA activity (both ODA grants and loans but excluding humanitarian aid) through bilateral cooperation in fragile states based on the OECD DAC Common Reporting Standard (CRS) database.[23] The gender policy markers are used to assess the degree to which gender equality was central to the projects or programmes (see box 1).

Humanitarian aid in response to humanitarian crises, which include armed conflicts, is another mechanism that tackles some elements of the WPS agenda, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) during and after war. This paper examines the relevant legal and policy frameworks, as well as humanitarian aid activities based on bilateral cooperation, including multi-bi assistance, using the past five years of data in the OECD DAC CRS database and its gender policy markers. In the case of humanitarian assistance, aid activities with regard to both fragile and non-fragile states are included.

Various limitations of using the OECD DAC CRS database should be noted. First, it should be highlighted that the gender marker is dependent on OECD member states' self-assessment and is based on their commitments, so the results of actual implementation could be different from the figures shown

Most donor countries' WPS agendas have been developed with an outward-looking focus on assisting fragile and conflict-affected countries

in the database. In addition, the extent to which actual gender-related ODA activities are reflected in the database might vary depending on the countries' experience of and expertise in reporting on gender-based ODA activities. Furthermore, when it comes to activities where promoting gender equality is a significant but not a principal objective (see box 1), the extent to which gender equality has been considered in such activities is unclear. Although guidelines exist on the coding exercise, there are likely to be variations based on subjective assessments. This also influences the overall data, as large-scale programmes such as infrastructure projects are also coded as category 1 (significant). Where activities with a large overall

---

[22] Before the launch of a technical review of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) coefficient for UN peacekeeping operations at the Development Assistance Committee High Level Meeting in 2016, the ODA coefficient was set at 7% and only included operations by civilian personnel. However, it now includes all development-related activities and associated costs linked to uniformed personnel, both police and military, and has been increased to 15%. Security-related expenditure and deployments remain separate. OECD, 'The ODA coefficient for UN Peacekeeping operations explained', OECD DAC, [n.d.].

[23] The data for 2017 was the most recent available at the time of publication so data for the period 2013–17 is analysed in this paper. Five-year data sets are used to obtain an overview and examine trends and change over time. The data is also disaggregated by fragile states based on the OECD list of fragile states. Each year's list (excluding 2017) is applied to the corresponding data for that year. The OECD did not publish a list in 2017, so the list for 2016 was applied. The OECD DAC CRS database is publicly available on the OECD website.

budget are coded as having considered gender to an unknown extent, this has the effect of making the proportion of the budget allocated to gender equality-related activities look bigger than it might actually be. Finally, the categorization of fragile states in the OECD list examines the national rather than the subnational level, and this is not necessarily the best way to measure development cooperation activities in fragile contexts. Some activity in fragile contexts might not be counted in the database, while some activity might be identified as taking place in fragile contexts when in reality it is not.

A significant increase in the percentage of uniformed women in peace operations has been identified as an objective that would improve operational effectiveness and better achieve the goals set in the WPS agenda.[24] Specialized training for peacekeepers on gender issues has also been understood as promoting the agenda. In this regard, this paper assesses two main aspects of how peace operations might contribute to furthering the WPS agenda: first, women's participation in peace operations, such as the percentage of women in the national contributions of peacekeepers, using data from the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database; and, second, how gender training has been conducted as part of pre-deployment training for peacekeepers. In order to focus on the relationship with the WPS agenda and the other two areas that are defined as ODA, this paper focuses on UN peacekeeping operations that have been mandated by the UN Security Council to implement the WPS agenda across all their activities. However, it should be noted that the data from the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database includes activities attributed not only to development purposes, but also to military and security purposes, which are not counted as ODA.

The Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus has emerged as a way of joint working on humanitarian assistance, development and peacebuilding

This approach, which focuses on the three main areas of international cooperation, is useful for identifying whether—and, if so, how—gender perspectives (see box 1) have been highlighted in a state's security and development institutions and policies. However, it should be acknowledged that this framework of three main areas of international cooperation has limitations in certain cases, especially in the distinction between development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. These are often counted together, with humanitarian assistance treated as part of development cooperation.[25] It is not always possible to make a clear distinction, however, and this distinction has become even less clear as the importance of the Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) Nexus has emerged as a new way of joint working on humanitarian assistance, development and peacebuilding in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence. This paper attempts to separate the two wherever possible and, where it is not, this is explicitly mentioned.

The fact that South Korea and Japan have different ODA histories and characters as ODA providers should also be taken into account when comparing the two. While Japan is an established donor that joined the Development

---

[24] Ghittoni, M., Lehouck, L. and Watson, C., *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations: Baseline Study* (DCAF: Geneva, 2018), p. 2.

[25] The Japanese Development Cooperation Charter, for example, identifies humanitarian assistance as part of 'development'. Japan Cabinet Office, 'Cabinet Decision on the Development Cooperation Charter', 10 Feb. 2015, p. 1.

Assistance Group—the predecessor of the OECD DAC—in 1960, South Korea is still regarded as an emerging donor and joined the DAC in 2010. Direct comparisons, especially of budget and scale, should therefore be undertaken with caution.

Finally, it should be noted that the main aim of this paper is not to compare the various policy documents with actual implementation, which is done only to a limited extent. Although comparing policies and implementation can assist with understanding trends, the time frames between the two are not always compatible. This is especially true of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, due to delay in the availability of OECD data.

III. Policies on and implementation of the WPS agenda: South Korea

South Korea has attempted to strengthen its focus on the WPS agenda since 2017, when Kang Kyung-wha was appointed the country's first woman Foreign Minister. The adoption of a NAP on implementation of Resolution 1325 in 2014 can be seen as the moment when the WPS agenda was first highlighted in South Korea.[26] Progress was at a standstill however until the new administration took office with a strong political will to invest in the area. This political will can be interpreted as part of a wider priority focus of South Korean foreign policy. Since 2017, the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has been diversifying its foreign policy priorities and approaches, such as the New Southern Policy initiative, and strengthening its multilateral cooperation in the form of development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peace operations. This is in sharp contrast to the direction of foreign policy in previous administrations, which had a clear focus on North Korea and the United States, and to a lesser extent on other bilateral issues.[27]

South Korea has attempted to strengthen its focus on the WPS agenda since 2017, when Kang Kyung-wha was appointed the country's first woman Foreign Minister

Under the new administration, the MOFA has regularly expressed a strong commitment to the WPS agenda in the international sphere. In 2018, for example, MOFA launched its initiative 'Action with Women and Peace' with the ambition of leading the agenda in the region by holding an annual international conference and supporting survivors of conflict-related sexual violence through its ODA, especially humanitarian assistance.[28]

This section reviews the legal and policy frameworks of the WPS agenda, and implementation in the three areas identified above to examine how gender has been incorporated into these areas. Table 1 (see page 10) summarizes South Korea's key legal and policy documents.

---

[26] The Government of South Korea adopted its second NAP in 2018. For the English version, see Government of South Korea, 'Second National Action Plan of the Republic of Korea for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security', [n.d.].

[27] South Korean WPS expert and women's rights activist, Interview with the author, Seoul, 2 July 2019; and South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) official, Interview with the author, Seoul, 5 July 2019.

[28] In July 2019, the South Korean MOFA hosted the first international conference as part of its 'global partnership to combat sexual violence in conflict'. South Korean MOFA, 'Action with Women and Peace initiative and advisory committee launched', Press release, 19 June 2018.

Development cooperation

South Korea is often cited as an emerging donor that plays a valued role on the global stage, with an ODA programme that builds on its own development success story. It strategically positions itself as bringing its direct knowledge and experience of development, and as a bridge between donor and partner countries. This is reflected in it putting economic development and poverty reduction at the centre of its aid policy initiatives. South Korea's ODA has increased steadily since it joined the OECD DAC, from $1.17 billion in 2010 to $2.35 billion in 2018.[29] It is now the 16th-largest ODA provider by volume.[30] Aid is provided primarily through bilateral cooperation. In 2017, 74 per cent of gross ODA was provided bilaterally.[31] ODA is also primarily focused on Asia. Half of all bilateral ODA was provided to the Asia region in 2017. The top five partner countries in 2016–17 were Viet Nam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Indonesia.[32]

South Korea is often cited as an emerging donor that plays a valued role on the global stage

South Korea is yet to refine its approach to supporting peace and security in its development cooperation. However, especially since 2018, under the new leadership at the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), a major aid governmental implementing agency that provides grants and technical cooperation under South Korea's ODA, it has broadened its focus to include providing support with peacebuilding to fragile states. The government has recently shown increased interest in engaging in peace- and development-related activities with fragile states.[33] The result has been a steady increase in the volume of ODA to fragile states, which amounted to $643 million in 2017 or 37.7 per cent of its gross bilateral aid.[34] However, strategies on peace and security, such as peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, are largely absent in the most recent Country Partnership Strategies (CPS) of the 24 priority partner countries for the period 2016–20.[35] Exceptionally, the Colombia CPS includes peacebuilding and reconciliation as one of its four focus sectors.[36] Peace and security issues are currently being considered in the preparation process for the new CPS.

Special attention is paid to gender in the legal and policy frameworks for South Korean development cooperation. Gender mainstreaming (see box 1) and support for gender equality consistently appear as fundamental declarative principles, although not as priorities in actual programming. In the 2010 Framework Act on International Development Cooperation, for example, 'improv[ing] the human rights of women' and 'achiev[ing] gender equality' are clearly listed as basic objectives of development cooperation

---

[29] OECD, 'Development aid drops in 2018, especially to neediest countries', Official Development Assistance, 2018, Preliminary Data, 10 Apr. 2019.

[30] OECD (note 29).

[31] OECD iLibrary, 'Development Co-operation Profiles, 2019: Korea', [n.d.].

[32] OECD, 'Aid at a glance charts', updated 21 Dec. 2018.

[33] Supporting peacebuilding activities is relatively new, due in part to South Korea's traditional focus on North Korea-related peace and security issues. This explains the low level of attention paid by the development community to interventions in conflict-affected settings.

[34] OECD iLibrary (note 31).

[35] The 24 CPS for 2016–20 were examined by the author. All 24 can be downloaded from the Korea Official Development Assistance website.

[36] Government of South Korea, *The Republic of Korea's Country Partnership Strategy for the Republic of Colombia, 2016–2020* (Government of South Korea: Seoul, Mar. 2017).

Table 1. Summary of South Korea's key legal and policy frameworks, and their focus on and consideration of gender equality

Law, policies and strategies	Summary of the policy documents	Level of focus on and consideration of gender
Development cooperation		
Framework Act on International Development Cooperation (2010)	• Provides the legal basis for South Korean foreign aid. • Clearly identifies poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance as the core objectives of South Korean development assistance.	Clearly identifies gender mainstreaming and support for gender equality as basic objectives.
Strategic Plan for International Development Cooperation (2010)	• Launched after joining the OECD DAC to increase policy coherence and strengthen the integrated system for providing ODA.	Mentions women's issues as a cross-cutting issue.
Medium-term Strategy on Development Cooperation (2010, 2015)	• Mandated by the Framework Act (2010). • Sets policy direction and volume of ODA for a period of five years. • The most recent makes contribution to achieving the SDGs a medium-term goal. • Aims include: (*a*) ODA to be 0.2% of gross national income by 2020; (*b*) to prioritize Asia and gradually expand to Africa; and (*c*) to expand into SDG-related sectors such as economic infrastructure, the environment, girls' education and health, and rural development.	Specific reference to women, who are highlighted as a vulnerable social group.
Assistance Strategy for Fragile States (2017)	• Devised in response to the recommendations of the 2012 OECD DAC Peer Review. • The first policy document on fragile states to establish concrete targets and shape the direction of development cooperation.	Suggests strengthening the focus on gender equality when engaging with fragile states; promoting women's participation in peacebuilding activity is also briefly mentioned as a substrategy.
KOICA's medium-term Framework for Fragile States (2017)	• Sets out the primary goals of aid to fragile states: to promote sustainable development by strengthening fragile states' responsiveness and enhancing their capacity to handle societal, political, economic and environmental risks.	Specific reference to women, who are highlighted as a vulnerable social group; mentions UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820.
Humanitarian assistance		
Overseas Emergency Relief Act (2007)	• Enacted to establish a system of humanitarian response following the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. • Includes an article on deployment of the Korea Disaster Relief Team.	Does not contain any gender- or women-specific articles.
Strategic Plan on International Development Cooperation (2010)	• Follows the OECD's recommendations on strengthening humanitarian assistance.	Women (as a vulnerable group) are central recipients of humanitarian aid.
Humanitarian Assistance Strategy (2015, 2019)	• Adopted in Mar. 2015 but currently being revised; a tentative plan was announced in July 2019. • Includes eight strategies, one of which is for improved linkages in the HDP Nexus.	Specific references to women, who are highlighted as a vulnerable social group; linked to the MOFA's 'Action with Women and Peace' initiative, especially on support to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Law, policies and strategies	Summary of the policy documents	Level of focus on and consideration of gender
Peace operations		
United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Participation Act (2013)	• Provides the legal basis for South Korean peace operations, but limited to UN peacekeeping operations. • Sets out principles for ensuring performance, and parliamentary procedures for deployment approval and the extension and termination of operations. • National Police Agency is not included.	Neither women's participation nor the gender balance of peacekeeping operations is specified.

DAC = Development Assistance Committee; HDP = Humanitarian–Development–Peace; KOICA = Korea International Cooperation Agency; MOFA = Ministry of Foreign Affairs; ODA = Official Development Assistance; OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; SDG = Sustainable Development Goal.

Source: Authors' compilation.

(see table 1). The 2010 Strategic Plan on International Development Cooperation makes reflecting the needs of women a cross-cutting issue in all eight of its focus areas. Similarly, there are specific references to women in the KOICA 2017–19 fragile states medium-term strategy and the 2017 assistance strategy for fragile states, which identify women as members of a vulnerable social group, a category which also includes children, refugees and youth (see table 1). The latter mentions women's participation in peacebuilding activities, but only fairly briefly and as a subcategory.[37] The 2017 assistance strategy for fragile states sets out five core principles. The principle on ensuring non-discrimination suggests addressing gender equality when engaging with fragile states (see table 1).[38]

Beyond the legal framework, in recent years South Korea has set out a range of initiatives in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender and peacebuilding to ensure alignment with the global agenda. As part of its support for the SDGs, in 2016 South Korea set multiannual funding targets for four initiatives under the overarching theme of a 'Better Life for All'. This included $200 million over five years for a 'Better Life for Girls' programme, which promotes girls' education and health. This was included in the CPS with several countries, such as Ethiopia and Uganda, following publication of the 2015 Medium-term Strategy for International Cooperation. Under its new leadership, KOICA has also emphasized the increased importance of the issues of gender and peace, through the establishment of implementation plans to contribute to achieving SDGs 5 and 16. This process is currently under way.

Such policies and strategies are reflected in the financial flows in South Korea's development cooperation. South Korean development cooperation activities worth $699.38 million were implemented in fragile states to support gender equality and women's empowerment in the period 2013–17. This represents 14.84 per cent of the development cooperation spent in fragile

[37] South Korean MOFA and Ministry of Economy and Finance, 취약국 지원 전략 [Fragile states assistance strategy], the 29th Committee for International Development Cooperation, Agenda 24–3, 30 June 2017.

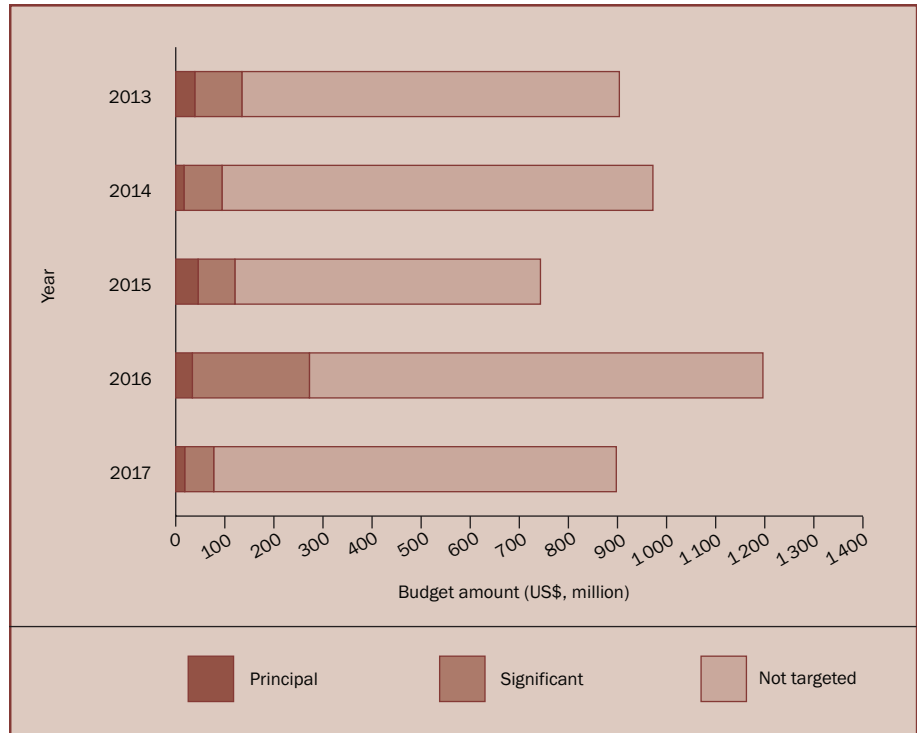[38] KOICA, 취약국 지원 중기이행전략 (2017-2019) [Fragile states medium-term strategy, 2017–2019], Seongnam, 2016.

Figure 1. South Korea's development cooperation in support of gender equality in fragile states, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

states in the same period. Of this, 3.26 per cent targeted gender as its principal objective and 11.58 per cent took a gender mainstreaming approach to the projects (see figure 1). However, the extent to which gender was taken into account in the 11.58 per cent of projects is unclear, and questions could be asked about whether gender is really being focused on in these projects. This would be in stark contrast to the policy documents, which make gender equality a major objective. The Assistance Strategy for Fragile States in particular highlights strengthening the focus on gender equality (see table 1). It would be useful to track the data on implementation since its publication to see whether this new policy document has had any effect.

In terms of regional distribution, Asia is the main partner region, followed by Africa. The highest levels of support for gender equality in fragile states were provided to Bangladesh ($116.73 million), Pakistan ($80.38 million) and Ethiopia ($60.35 million).[39] Health, transportation and storage, and education are the three main sectors supported through South Korean development cooperation in fragile states. However, figure 2 demonstrates that education and health are the key sectors for gender equality-related activities in fragile states. It should be noted that while education is the main sector supported in Asia, more has been spent on the health sector in Africa in terms of gender equality-related projects. This is distinct from the global average, which has a strong focus on the government and civil society sector.[40] The allocations

[39] Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database (see note 23).

[40] UN Women (note 3). p. 374. Based on Common Reporting Standard (CRS) purpose codes, the 'government and civil society' sector includes public sector policy and administrative management, legal and judicial development, human rights, women's equality organizations and institutions, and
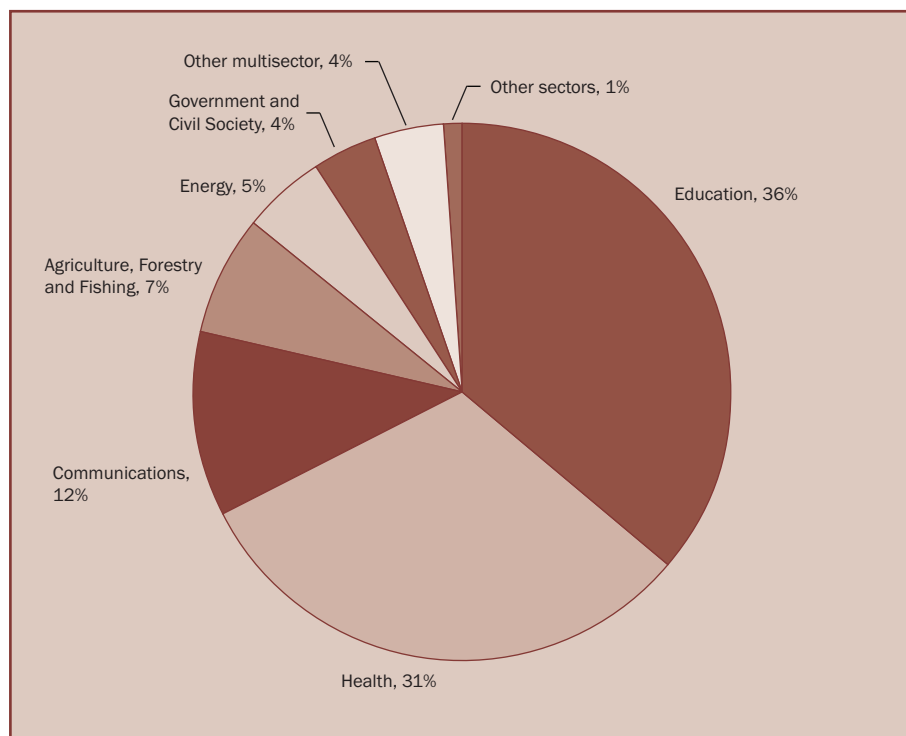
Figure 2. Proportion of South Korea's development cooperation in support of gender equality in fragile states, by sector, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

to education and health account for more than two-thirds of the total budget (see figure 2). This reflects the priorities in South Korea's medium-term strategies, which include prioritizing Asian countries and gradually expanding into African countries, and to expand ODA to SDG-related sectors such as girls' education and health (see table 1). This also reflects the Better Life for Girls initiative, which promotes girls' education and health. Since data on 2017 was the most recent available at the time of publication, it would be useful for future research to examine budget differences by sector since 2018, the year that South Korea's MOFA launched the WPS initiative.

Aid activities with a focus on gender equality in the communications sector involve either sending South Korean volunteers to educational institutions that target women or establishing e-government systems. It is notable that while only six projects in the energy sector are coded as projects supporting gender equality, the category accounts for 5 per cent of the total, while 291 projects accounting for 4 per cent of the total were coded as gender equality-related projects in the government and civil society category.

Although gender equality is not a new concept in the development cooperation field in South Korea, the increased attention on the WPS agenda initiated by MOFA has played a role in putting more emphasis on gender in its ODA overall.[41] Moreover, the #Metoo movement, an international campaign

---

ending violence against women and girls. For more details see OECD, 'DAC and CRS code lists', updated 23 July 2019.

[41] Multiple interviewees also highlighted the importance of women leaders to achieving positive change in the attention paid to gender equality issues. The Foreign Minister and the President of KOICA, for example, both have a background in the women's rights movement and have pushed the WPS agenda and for implementation of SDG 5.

against sexual harassment and sexual assault, also resulted in increased discussion of gender issues among the development and humanitarian aid community in South Korea throughout 2018. The movement, for example, created momentum for strengthening gender training for those who will work in operational contexts in development and humanitarian assistance.[42]

Humanitarian assistance

Although the proportion of humanitarian aid in its total ODA remains below the OECD DAC average, South Korea has rapidly increased the scale of its humanitarian assistance in recent years.[43] In addition, in partnership with multilateral organizations, it has widened the scope of its humanitarian aid to include countries in fragile settings. The 2018 OECD DAC Peer Review points out that these changes have not yet been reflected in humanitarian aid policy, and recommends that South Korea 'update its humanitarian strategy, and consider the scope of relevant legislation, to reflect the changing nature of its humanitarian assistance and to ensure that its humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping efforts and development co-operation are coherent and complementary'.[44] The publication of the 2019 Humanitarian Assistance Strategy is seen as a response to this recommendation as well as to the changes in the global discourse on the HDP Nexus (see table 1).[45]

South Korea has rapidly increased the scale of its humanitarian assistance in recent years

South Korean humanitarian assistance is provided through multiple channels, but usually conducted through multilateral organizations using its partnerships with the global multilateral system, especially where there is no development programme or field presence.[46] Although multilateral cooperation has shaped the major part of South Korea's humanitarian assistance, it also provides aid through bilateral cooperation, primarily in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.[47] Most of the bilateral humanitarian activity in the Middle East currently takes place in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, mainly around refugees and displaced persons in conflict-affected settings.

Since 2012, South Korea has tried to institutionalize and strengthen its governance of humanitarian assistance policies.[48] One example is the establishment of the Korea Disaster Relief Team in 2010, which consists

---

[42] Civil society expert on humanitarian aid, Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation (KCOC), Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.

[43] The Government of South Korea made enlarging the scale of humanitarian assistance a goal of the Medium-term Strategy for Development Cooperation and set a target of 6% of ODA.

[44] The OECD peer review team also points out that the act does not reflect the reality of South Korea's humanitarian aid response, which covers human-induced and protracted humanitarian crises. The act currently focuses exclusively on national or health-related disasters and large-scale incidents. See OECD, 'OECD Development Cooperation Peer Reviews: Korea', 7 Feb. 2018, pp. 20, 88.

[45] South Korean MOFA, 우리 정부의 인도적 지원 전략 개정안(안) [Government of South Korea's new strategy on humanitarian assistance], the 33rd Committee for International Development Cooperation, Agenda 33–3, July 2019.

[46] OECD (note 44), pp. 90–92.

[47] While humanitarian assistance to Asia decreased, that to Africa and the Middle East increased. Data for 2013–17 based on data from the OECD DAC CRS. In the 5-year period, South Korea provided $315 million, primarily for emergency response followed by disaster prevention and preparedness, and reconstruction relief and rehabilitation.

[48] Hong, J., 한국의 해외긴급구호 및 인도적 지원 정책의 거버넌스 구축과정과 그 복합요인 [South Korea's humanitarian policy governance-building process and its complexities], *Journal of Korean Politics*, vol. 25, no. 1 (2016), pp. 24–50.

of a rescue team, a medical team and a support team made up of personnel from both government and civil society.[49] The ministries and government agencies that participate in the Korea Disaster Relief Team published a manual in 2010 in order to strengthen cross-agency cooperation.[50] As of May 2019, the team had been dispatched to eight missions.[51]

While the 2007 Overseas Emergency Relief Act does not contain gender-sensitive language, the Humanitarian Assistance Strategy places special emphasis on women (see table 1). However, it classifies women as a vulnerable group along with children and refugees, rather than as agents of change in emergency contexts. South Korea's plan to prioritize supporting vulnerable groups such as women, children and refugees in its humanitarian assistance is also outlined in the Strategic Plan for International Development Cooperation (see table 1). This focus is in line with current policy developments in relation to fragile settings, and stresses that women and children are central objects of humanitarian aid in contexts of conflict, disaster and displacement.

The recent MOFA initiative on the WPS agenda has particular implications for the humanitarian assistance community. One of its main pillars is its use of ODA to support the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. The government is pushing this as its flagship programme, which makes South Korea a niche player.[52] It is expected to be implemented through humanitarian assistance activities and the policy initiative is already reflected at the lower policy levels. For example, as part of the policy initiative, KOICA changed its funding scheme for humanitarian CSOs in 2018. Support for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence has been made one of five funding priorities and has been promoted as a topic in CSO programming. KOICA's recent projects delivered through CSOs have focused on supporting refugee women and victims of SGBV.[53] This is also in line with the KOICA's 2017 medium-term Framework for Fragile States, which explicitly mentions UN Security Council Resolution 1820 on sexual violence against women in situations of armed conflict (see table 1). The effects of this change are expected to be seen in implementation from 2019.

In its humanitarian assistance provided through bilateral cooperation, South Korea allocated $25.78 million to projects that target gender equality between 2013 and 2017, which accounts for 8.17 per cent of its bilateral

Women and children are central objects of South Korean humanitarian assistance in contexts of conflict, disaster and displacement

---

[49] KOICA, 해외긴급구호의 법적 기반 및 운영체계 관련 주요 공여국 사례 연구 [Legal and implementation frameworks for foreign disaster relief: Case studies of main donor countries], 2016.

[50] South Korean MOFA et al., 해외긴급구호 업무 표준 매뉴얼 [Foreign emergency relief standard manual], July 2010.

[51] Among these are the earthquake in Xichuan, China, in 2008, the cyclone in Myanmar in 2008, the earthquake in Indonesia in 2009, the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the typhoon in the Philippines in 2013, the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone in 2014–15, the earthquake in Nepal in 2015 and the dam collapse in Laos in 2018.

[52] South Korean WPS expert and women's rights activist, Interview with the author, Seoul, 2 July 2019.

[53] CSO A's project on the empowerment of refugee women from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and protection from gender-based violence in Uganda in 2018; CSO B's project on psycho-social support for women in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh in 2018. KOICA and KCOC, 인도적 지원과 젠더: 여성 난민과 젠더기반폭력 이슈를 중심으로 [Humanitarian assistance and gender: a focus on refugee women and gender-based violence], Dec. 2018; and Project manager from the CSO B, Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.
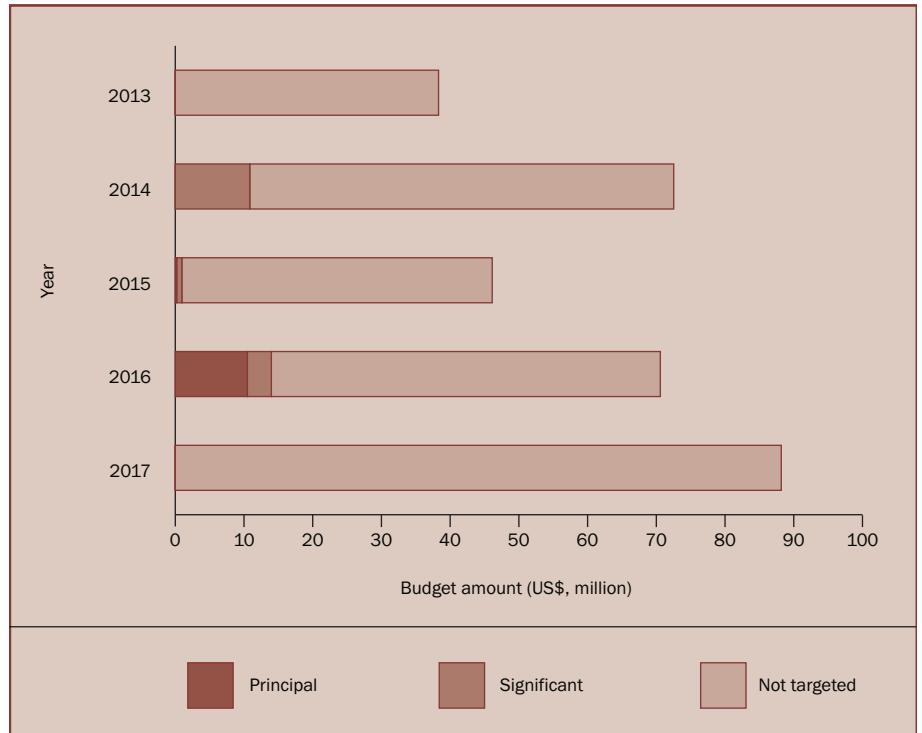
Figure 3. South Korea's humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

humanitarian assistance. Only three projects (3.39 per cent of the total budget) had gender equality as the principal objective. None of the humanitarian assistance projects in 2013 or 2017 were identified as projects supporting gender equality and women's empowerment (see figure 3).[54]

Only emergency response-related projects were designed to support gender equality.[55] None of the disaster prevention and preparedness, or reconstruction relief and rehabilitation projects did so (see figure 4). This underlines the need for incorporating an increased level of gender perspective in South Korea's humanitarian assistance projects. It also supports the finding that there is insufficient institutional capacity for planning and implementing humanitarian aid projects with a gender perspective among South Korean development and humanitarian CSOs, and thus difficulty in keeping up with international and national gender-related initiatives, which are rapidly advancing.[56] It would be useful to track this using more recent data to assess the longer-term influence of the MOFA initiative.

Even though its manual clearly indicates the need to address crosscutting issues such as gender equality and the need to understand the gendered aspects of emergency contexts, none of the Korea Disaster Relief

[54] The 3 projects are the assistance provided following the earthquake in Nepal in 2015, food assistance for Afghan and Iraqi refugees in Afghanistan in 2016, and protection and humanitarian assistance for Afghan refugee girls in Iran and Afghanistan in 2016. See the OECD DAC database (note 23).

[55] Most of the projects involve the provision of material relief assistance and services for refugees and internally displaced persons.

[56] KOICA and KCOC (note 53), Dec. 2018; and Civil society expert on humanitarian aid, KCOC, Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.
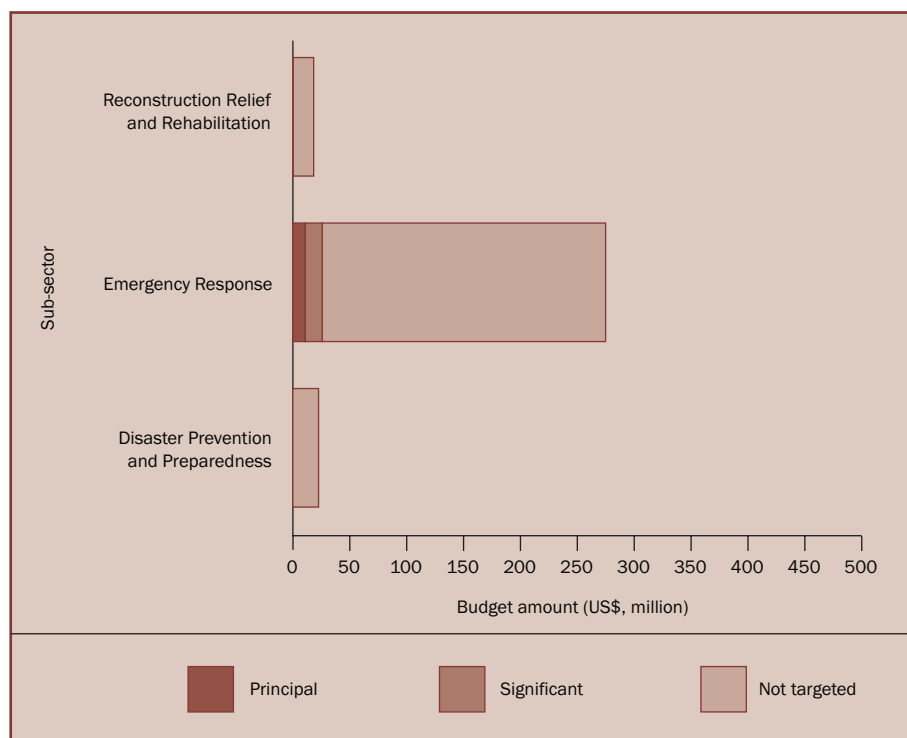
Figure 4. South Korea's humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality, by sub-sector, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

Team deployments have been coded in the OECD CRS database as gender-sensitive (see box 1).[57]

Peace operations

South Korea first participated in UN peacekeeping operations in 1993, in the second phase of the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). Since then, its contributions have shown an upward trend, apart from the period 2003–2008 when there was a dramatic decrease.[58] As of the end of June 2019, 621 military and 4 police personnel from South Korea were operating in six UN peacekeeping missions.[59] South Korea contributes troops and police personnel, but it also makes financial contributions. South Korea's assessed contributions make up 2.27 per cent of the UN peacekeeping budget in 2019–21, which makes it the 10th-highest financial contributor.[60]

---

[57] South Korean MOFA et al. (note 50).

[58] During this period, South Korea was deploying more troops to support the UN military operation in Iraq. This decrease is therefore considered to be in a large part due to a lack of available resources. Ye, M., Heo, U. and Li, Q., 'Economic development and South Korea's UN PKO participation', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, vol. 53, no. 5 (2018) pp. 666–84.

[59] The 6 missions are: the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH, 4), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO, 4), the United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID, 1), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL, 334), the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS, 275) and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP, 7). Data from the SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database (note 11).

[60] According to the South Korean MOFA's priorities plan in 2019, the Government of South Korea plans to expand its involvement in peacekeeping operations by increasing the participation of peacekeepers and through higher financial contributions. United Nations, General Assembly,
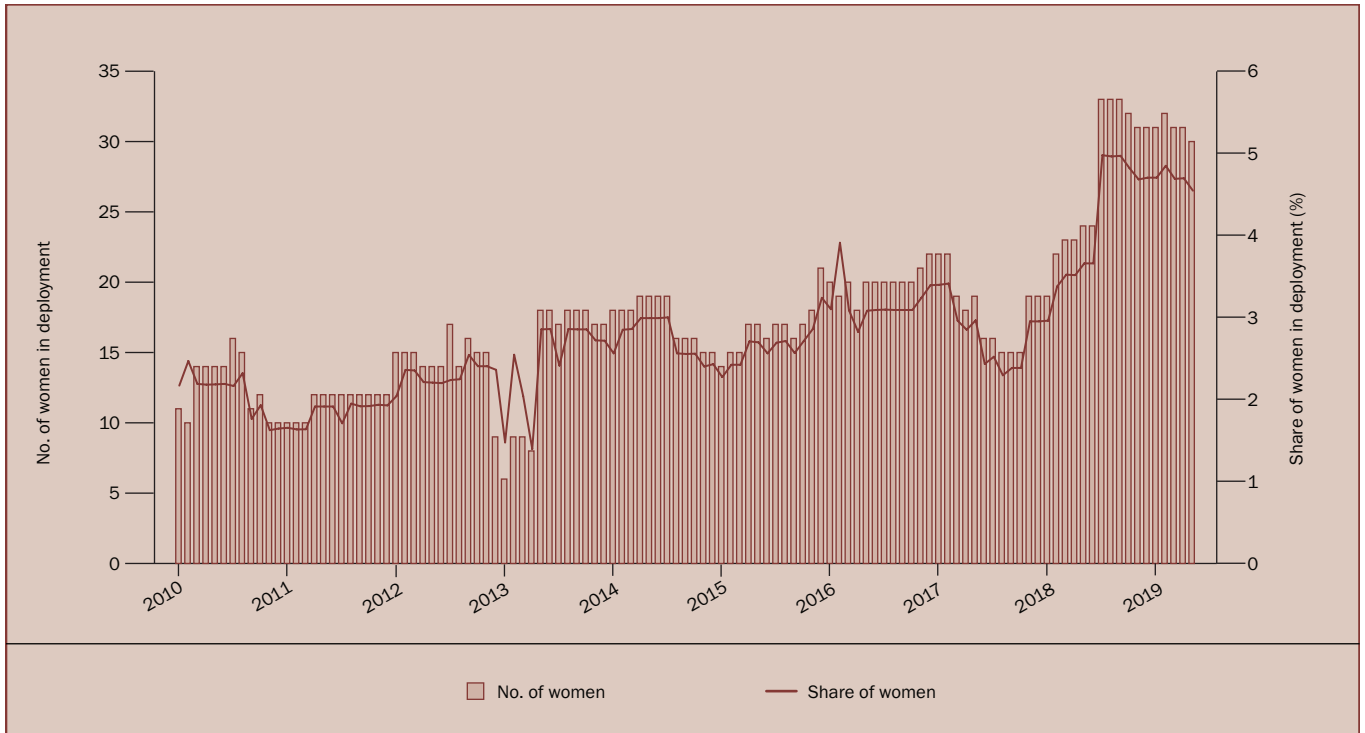
Figure 5. Number and share of South Korean women in UN peacekeeping operations, 2010–19

Note: Each bar in the chart represents the number of personnel in each month. The year marker indicates monthly data as of Jan. that year.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database.

The UN Peacekeeping Operations Participation Act sets the legal framework for South Korea's participation in peace operations (see table 1). The basic principles are set out in a generic way that allows little room for specific provisions on gender-related activities and mandates.[61] The participation of women and the gender balance of peacekeepers are not specified in the legal framework (see table 1). Its most recent NAP sets out a plan to 'increase the ratio of female personnel in UN Peacekeeping Operations' but does not include a specific target.[62]

South Korea's contributions to the WPS agenda through its peace operations can be summed up as taking the safe route. The proportion of women in its uniformed personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping operations is about 5 per cent (see figure 5), that is, 4.35 per cent for military personnel and 75 per cent for police personnel. The proportion of women police personnel represents three of the four deployed police personnel. The global average for women currently deployed in UN Peacekeeping operations is approximately 4.5 per cent for military personnel and 14 per cent for police.[63] Although the proportion of women in the South Korean military personnel

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236, Report of the Secretary-General, A/73/350/Add. 1, 24 Dec. 2018; and South Korean MOFA, 2019 년 주요업무 추진계획 [MOFA priorities plan, 2019], 13 Mar. 2019.

[61] Article 4, Basic Principles on Performing Missions: the contingent and personnel participating in peacekeeping operations shall observe international law and faithfully perform their missions within the authority and guidelines granted by the United Nations.

[62] Government of South Korea (note 26).

[63] SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database (note 11).

participating in UN peacekeeping operations is around the global average, the global average is not high, and brought down by the largest contributors to the largest operations. The proportion is therefore probably lower than that of most contributors.

Over the past 10 years, the percentage of South Korean women personnel in UN peacekeeping operations has been on an upward trajectory. One interviewee stated that South Korean peacekeeping deployments are aiming for 15 per cent and 20 per cent, the UN targets for the proportion of women military and police peacekeepers, respectively.[64] The responsibilities of women military and police personnel appear wide-ranging, and their roles in the domestic context are usually taken into the missions.[65]

South Korea's peacekeeping personnel attend gender-related courses during pre-deployment training using the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials in accordance with UN mandatory requirements. However, this does not go beyond the guidelines set out by the UN, and thus does not go so far as to mainstream gender throughout the training.[66] In the two South Korean peacekeeping training centres, gender-focused or gender-related issues are dealt with in courses on the protection of civilians, conflict-related sexual violence, the WPS agenda, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), and conduct and discipline.[67] Thus far, there have been no reported instances of SEA by South Korean peacekeepers. One interviewee shared the view that the prevention of such misconduct has been strongly emphasized, along with a disciplined approach both in the military and during pre-deployment training.[68]

Some examples of South Korean contingents' activities during missions demonstrate their gender-sensitive and women-focused activities on the ground. Since August 2018, 20 women military peacekeepers on average have been operating in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which is around 6 per cent of the total South Korean contingent of 333 personnel on average. Their activities include projects on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as carrying out vocational training for women that can lead on to employment.[69] In addition, South Korean police peacekeepers focused on gender in their work in the women and youth division of the now closed UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).[70]

[64] Former peacekeeper and South Korean peacekeeping expert, Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.

[65] Yonhap News, 여군 68년, 군에도 우먼파워⋯ 전차운전부터 비행대장·함장까지 [68-year history of women's military participation: from tank drivers to air force captains and submarine captains], 6 Sep. 2018; and Former peacekeeper and South Korean peacekeeping expert, Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.

[66] Member states are required to provide certification that all uniformed personnel have completed mandatory pre-deployment training in accordance with UN standards and specifications. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, 'Member state guidance', Core Pre-deployment Training Materials, version 2017.

[67] There are 2 peacekeeping training centres running pre-deployment training: the peacekeeping training centre at the Korea National Defence University, for military personnel, and the peacekeeping training centre at the Korea Police University, for police personnel.

[68] Former peacekeeper and South Korean peacekeeping expert, Interview with the author, Seoul, 3 July 2019.

[69] Kookbang-ilbo, 동명부대, 레바논서 '여성 권익 보호' 불 밝히다 [The Dong-Myung Unit sheds light on protection of women's rights in Lebanon], 8 Mar. 2018.

[70] Korean national police officer, telephone interview with the author, 5 July 2019.

In sum, South Korea has recently experienced a change in the landscape surrounding ODA in relation to the WPS agenda as a result of an increase in political will and new leadership at both MOFA and KOICA. However, a focus on the protection pillar of Resolution 1325 and the view of women as victims persist. In terms of sector and region, South Korean development cooperation and humanitarian assistance with a focus on gender equality are mainly provided in education- and health-related projects, and to the Asia region. The level of participation of South Korean women in UN peacekeeping operations has reached 5 per cent, which is around the global average. This demonstrates the possible gap between the expressions of political will to push the WPS agenda forward and actual implementation of the agenda in different areas.

The level of participation of South Korean women in UN peacekeeping operations is around the global average

IV. Policies on and implementation of the WPS agenda: Japan

The election of Shinzo Abe and his party to power in 2012 had major implications for implementation of the WPS agenda in Japan. Abe returned to office with a political programme to make Japan a proactive contributor to world peace.[71] His administration reformed Japan's security policy, established a National Security Council and published Japan's first National Security Strategy in 2013. In 2015 Japan's ODA Charter, its main ODA policy document, was reformulated as a Development Cooperation Charter that stresses the strategic use of development cooperation. In addition, the International Peace Cooperation (IPC) Act was amended to allow deployment of Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in frameworks other than UN peacekeeping operations. At the same time, the administration initiated a series of economic policies, dubbed 'Abenomics', in an attempt to revitalize the Japanese economy following two decades of deflation. A crucial component of Abenomics is to increase the participation of women in the workforce. Creating 'a society in which all women shine' was defined as one of the Abe administration's top priorities, and various measures, such as an Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace, have been enacted to increase women's participation in the workforce and encourage women to take leadership positions.[72]

At the same time, policies to achieve a society in which all women shine were also pursued abroad.[73] The ostensible aim was to proactively contribute to achieving world peace, although there are diverse opinions on the underlying purpose of the policies pursued.[74] In a speech at the UN General Assembly in September 2013, Abe expressed Japan's willingness to

---

[71] Iwami, T., 'Peacebuilding in Japan's foreign policy', ed. M. M. McCarthy, *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Foreign Policy* (Routledge: Abingdon and New York, 2018).

[72] Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine, すべての女性が輝く政策パッケージ [Policy package for all women to shine], 10 Oct. 2014.

[73] Gelb, J. and Kumagai, N., 'Gender equality in Japan: internal policy processes and impact, and foreign implications under Prime Minister Abe's Womenomics', ed. McCarthy (note 71).

[74] For more discussion on Abe's motives for pursuing Womenomics see Coleman, L., 'Japan's womenomics diplomacy: fighting stigma and constructing ODA leadership on gender equality', *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 18, no. 4 (2017), pp. 491–513; and Motoyama, H., 'Formulating Japan's UNSCR 1325 national action plan and forgetting the "comfort women"', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 20, no. 1 (Jan. 2018), pp. 39–53.

collaborate closely with relevant international organizations and pledged $3 billion over three years to promote women's participation and empowerment.[75] Japan has increased its financial support to relevant organizations, such as the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Trust Fund for Victims—with a special focus on victims of SGBV—at the International Criminal Court, and UN Women.[76] In 2018 its contribution of $24.4 million made it the fourth-largest contributor to UN Women.[77] Japan's first NAP was formulated in 2015, following a detailed 18-month policy dialogue between the Japanese MOFA and domestic CSOs.[78] Three annual monitoring and evaluation reports followed before the NAP was renewed in 2019. Japan has also started to provide financial support to other countries to enable them to devise their NAPs.[79] Japan has organized a World Assembly for Women annually since 2014 to discuss women's participation and empowerment at the domestic and international levels.

This section reviews Japan's WPS agenda-related legal and policy frameworks, and its implementation of development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peace operations, and how they incorporate gender equality. Table 2 (see page 22) summarizes Japan's key legal and policy documents.

Development cooperation

Japan has been one of the major providers of ODA since the late 1980s. It was the fourth-largest contributor in 2017.[80] Its ODA has been slightly increasing for several years and exceeded $11 billion in 2017 for the first time since 2006. ODA has long been one of the most important tools of Japan's foreign policy, not only serving purely 'developmental' objectives, but also serving to further diplomatic and economic aims.[81] By sector, economic infrastructure continues to receive the largest proportion of the allocation (around 50 per cent in 2016–17).[82] Geographically, Japan continues to prioritize Asia. South and Central Asia received $4.7 billion, about 33 per cent of the allocation, in 2016–17.[83] The top five partner countries were India, Viet Nam, Bangladesh,

The election of Shinzo Abe in 2012 had major implications for implementation of the WPS agenda in Japan

[75] To promote women's participation in society, to enhance its efforts in the field of health and medical care for women and to promote women's participation and protection in the areas of peace and security. Abe, S., 'Address by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations', New York, 26 Sep. 2013.

[76] Japanese MOFA, document dated Oct. 2018 provided during an interview with a MOFA official, Tokyo, July 2019.

[77] UN Women, 'Partner spotlight: Japan', [n.d.].

[78] However, modifications were made to the final version by the government without consultation with CSOs. Civil Society Working Group, 'Statement of the Civil Society Working Group on the official announcement of Japan's National Action Plan on "Women, Peace and Security"', 26 Nov. 2015.

[79] Together with the governments of Finland and Sweden, for example, it provided financial support to Jordan with formulating its NAP. Swaine, A., *Balancing Priorities: Lessons and Good Practices from Iraq, Jordan and Palestine for NAP-1325 Drafting Teams* (UN Women: Cairo, June 2018).

[80] OECD, 'Net ODA: total, % of gross national income, 2000–2017', updated 2019.

[81] Kato, H., 'Japan's ODA, 1954–2014: changes and continuities in a central instrument in Japan's foreign policy', eds H. Kato, J. Page and Y. Shimomura, *Japan's Development Assistance: Foreign Aid and the Post-2015 Agenda* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2016).

[82] OECD, 'Aid at a glance charts', updated 21 Jan. 2019.

[83] OECD (note 82).

Table 2. Summary of Japan's key legal and policy frameworks, and their focus on and consideration of gender equality

Law, policies and strategies	Summary of the policy documents	Level of focus and consideration of gender
Development cooperation		
Development Cooperation Charter (2015)	• Japan's main ODA policy document, first approved by the Cabinet as the ODA Charter in 1992, amended in 2003. • Reformulated as the Development Cooperation Charter in 2015. • Human security has been a core guiding principle since 2003. • Priority areas as set in the 2015 version are: (*a*) 'quality growth' and the eradication of poverty through such growth; (*b*) sharing universal values and achieving a peaceful and secure society; and (*c*) building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges.	Makes the promotion of women's participation one of eight principles for ensuring the appropriateness of development cooperation.
Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2016)	• Established in accordance with the Development Cooperation Charter of 2015. • Defines visions, basic principles, approaches and priority initiatives on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation.	Sets three priorities: (*a*) the promotion of women's and girls' rights; (*b*) building the capacity of women and girls to reach their full potential; and (*c*) the advancement of women's leadership in politics, the economy and other public fields.
Medium-term objectives of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (2017)	• Mandated by the Act on General Rules for Incorporated Administrative Agencies (1999). • Sets out JICA's objectives for a period of five years from fiscal year 2017.	Gender equality is mentioned in association with inclusiveness; education for girls is emphasized.
Humanitarian assistance		
Law Concerning Dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Team (1987, as amended in 2006)	• Defines the measures required for the dispatch of a Japan Disaster Relief team to a disaster-affected country in response to a request from its government or an international agency. • Applies to emergencies caused by natural or human-induced disasters, such as gas explosions and epidemics, but excludes armed conflicts.	Contains no gender- or women-specific articles.
International Peace Cooperation Act (1992, as amended in 2015)	• Enacted in 1992 to establish domestic frameworks for participation in UN peacekeeping operations, international humanitarian relief operations and international election observation missions. • Internationally coordinated operations for peace and security under frameworks other than UN peacekeeping operations were included in 2015.	Contains no gender- or women-specific articles.
Humanitarian Aid Policy of Japan (2011)	• Defines humanitarian assistance as part of efforts to ensure human security. • Assesses the situation surrounding humanitarian assistance and confirms the basic principles of humanitarian assistance.	Contains no gender- or women-specific articles.

Law, policies and strategies	Summary of the policy documents	Level of focus and consideration of gender
Peace operations		
International Peace Cooperation Act (1992, as amended in 2015)	• Enacted in 1992 to establish domestic frameworks for participation in UN peacekeeping operations, international humanitarian relief operations and election observation missions. • Internationally coordinated operations for peace and security under frameworks other than UN peacekeeping operations were included in 2015.	Contains no gender- or women-specific articles.

JICA = Japan International Cooperation Agency; ODA = Official Development Assistance.

Source: Authors' compilation.

Iraq and Indonesia.[84] The proportion of loans in its gross bilateral ODA is the largest among the loan providing DAC countries.[85] Finally, 82 per cent of gross ODA was provided bilaterally in 2017.[86]

Japan has long considered the provision of ODA to conflict-affected contexts to be one of its main instruments of peacebuilding.[87] This has been institutionalized in its foreign policy since 2001.[88] In the absence of a generally agreed definition of peacebuilding, Japan has taken a broad approach that stresses the importance of providing a 'seamless' approach to peacebuilding that ranges from 'conflict prevention, emergency humanitarian assistance in the conflict situation, and promotion of conflict termination to emergency humanitarian assistance and assistance for recovery, reconstruction, and development in the post-conflict stage'.[89] It also stresses the importance of long-term commitment.[90] Human security has been a central concept in Japan's foreign policy since the late 1990s. Peacebuilding is seen as 'a set of comprehensive measures to ensure human security' (see box 1).[91]

Japan's ODA policy documents have paid increasing attention to gender issues in development cooperation. The 2015 Development Cooperation Charter defines the 'promotion of women's participation' as one of eight principles intended to 'secure the appropriateness of development cooperation' (see table 2).[92] Following this principle, in 2016 MOFA published a Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment that defines the development strategy of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). This strategy sets out three priority areas for 15 initiatives. The three priority areas are: (*a*) the promotion of women's and girls' rights; (*b*) building the capacity of women and girls to reach their full potential; and (*c*) the advancement of women's leadership in politics, the economy and

---

[84] OECD (note 82).

[85] OECD, 'Development aid drops in 2018, especially to neediest countries', Press release, 10 Apr. 2019.

[86] OECD iLibrary, Development Co-operation Profiles, 'Japan', [n.d.].

[87] Iwami (note 71).

[88] Söderberg, M., cited in Iwami, T., 'Peacebuilding in Japan's foreign policy', ed. McCarthy (note 71).

[89] Japan Cabinet Office (note 25), p. 1.

[90] Iwami (note 71).

[91] Iwami (note 71), p. 217.
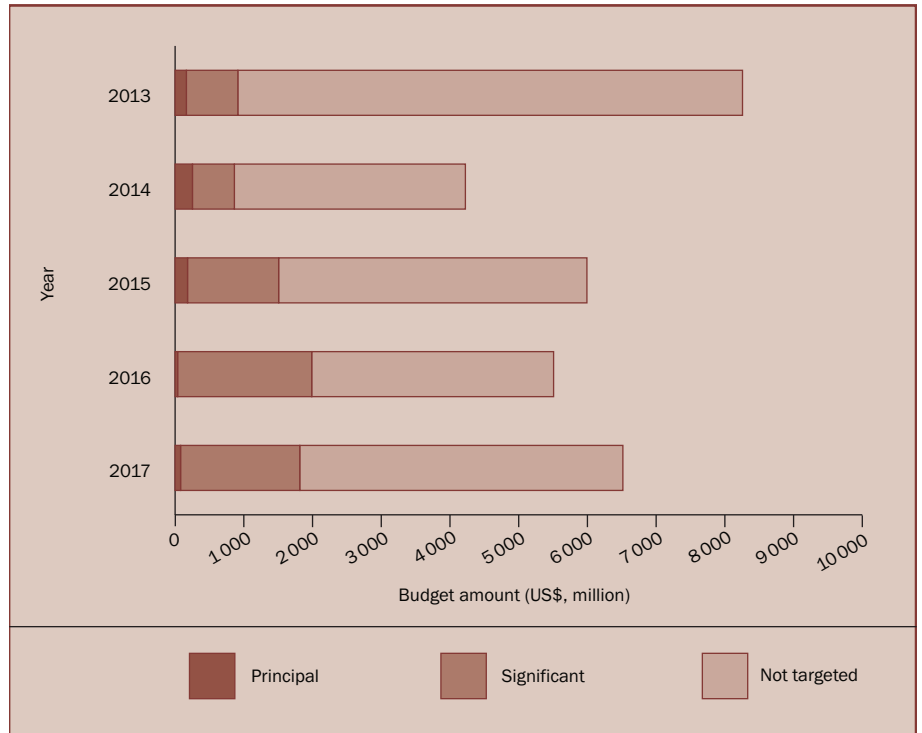
[92] Japan Cabinet Office (note 25), p. 11.

Figure 6. Japan's development cooperation in support of gender equality in fragile states, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

other public fields (see table 2).[93] JICA's 2017 medium-term objectives also demonstrate increased attention on gender equality and set the objective of increasing the share of gender equality-focused aid to 40 per cent by 2022.[94] This increased attention to women and gender-related issues contrasts strongly with the 2003 ODA Charter, in which a gender equality perspective was mentioned just once as a measure for ensuring fairness in the provision of ODA.[95]

However, gender equality is still ill-defined and the WPS agenda has not gained an elevated profile in the wider context of development cooperation. Although the term gender equality is widely used in the English version of the 2016 Development Strategy, the original document refers to gender equality only twice, in the context of international efforts such as SDG 5.[96] Elsewhere in the original document, including in the title itself, what is translated as 'gender equality' is expressed in terms such as the 'promotion of women's active participation' or 'men and women's joint participation'. Thus, it is unclear whether Japan is aiming to achieve gender equality or merely to

---

[93] Government of Japan, 女性の活躍推進のための開発戦略 [Development strategy for promoting women's active participation (author's translation)], May 2016, pp. 5–9. For the official English translation see Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment', May 2016, pp. 5–9.

[94] JICA official, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 12 July 2019; Japanese MOFA, 独立行政法人国際協力機構中期目標 [Incorporated Administrative Agencies, Japan International Cooperation Agency, medium-term objectives], 2017, p. 14.

[95] Japanese MOFA, 'Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter', 29 Aug. 2003, p. 2.

[96] Government of Japan (note 93).

promote women's participation and empowerment.[97] In addition, while the strategy clearly describes women as 'agents of change in development and society', such a view is stressed more in the area of economic development, as epitomized in the expression '...power of women as the greatest potential for growth'.[98] When it comes to conflict-related situations, by contrast, the view of women as a vulnerable group and the emphasis on their need for protection prevails.[99] The strategy only briefly refers to Japan's NAP and WPS-related topics are not focused on.[100]

It is notable that Japan approaches gender in development cooperation through a human security lens.[101] Peacebuilding is regarded as a measure for ensuring human security,[102] Japan considers gender equality and the empowerment of women to be 'indispensable for promoting human security'.[103] It also highlights the conceptual affinity between human security and the WPS agenda.[104] The second priority of the 2016 Development Strategy (see table 2), 'building the capacity of women and girls to reach their full potential', has strong similarities with the terminology of human security, which provides people 'with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential'.[105] This approach can result in women being viewed as a vulnerable group.[106]

This increased attention on gender issues and ambiguity with regard to the meaning of gender equality is observable in the financial flows of Japan's ODA to fragile states. Figure 6 shows that the size of Japan's ODA budget for projects implemented in fragile states with a focus on gender equality increased in the period of 2013–17, which reflects the growing attention paid to gender issues in policy documents. At the same time, the tendency to prioritize applying a gender perspective to projects across sectors rather than target gender equality itself as the principal objective is also notable.[107] Figure 6 shows that the proportion of projects that had gender equality and women's empowerment as the principal objective remained remarkably low (2.34 per cent), while the proportion that considered gender equality and women's empowerment but not as a main objective increased considerably after 2014 (20.89 per cent). Most of the activities related to gender equality

[97] It is worth noting that SDG 5 is to 'achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls', while the MDG 3 target was to 'promote gender equality and empower women'.

[98] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), p. 2.

[99] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), pp. 2, 5.

[100] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), p. 5.

[101] Civil society expert on gender, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 8 July 2019.

[102] Moreover, humanitarian assistance is also considered 'part of efforts to ensure human security'. Japanese MOFA, 'Humanitarian aid policy of Japan', July 2011, p. 1.

[103] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), p. 1.

[104] See e.g. Japanese MOFA, 女性・平和・安全保障に関する第2次行動計画(2019-2022) [Second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security], Mar. 2019, p. 3.

[105] UN General Assembly Resolution 66/290, 25 Oct. 2012.

[106] A Japanese MOFA official indicated a link between human security and women as a vulnerable group. MOFA official, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 10 July 2019.

[107] The OECD emphasizes that making gender equality the principal objective is not by definition better than having it as a significant objective, and recommends adopting a 'twin-track' approach that combines both. OECD, *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker* (OECD: Paris, 2016), p. 6.
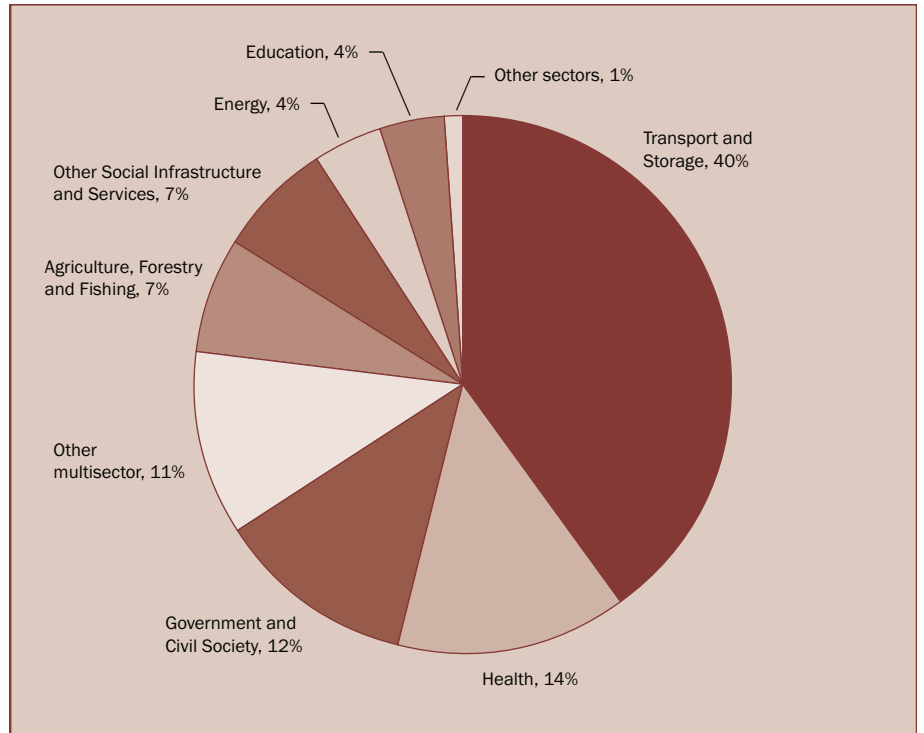
Figure 7. Proportion of Japan's development cooperation in support of gender equality in fragile states, by sector, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

were carried out in Asia and Africa and a focus on gender equality in terms of budgets was also most advanced in fragile states in the regions.

Figure 7 provides a breakdown of gender equality-focused aid by sector. Transportation and storage represents 40 per cent of all the budget with a gender focus (both principal and significant). The high share for the transportation and storage sector can be seen as demonstrating rapid progress in the implementation of the second initiative of the 2016 Development Strategy, 'promoting gender-responsive infrastructure and safe communities'.[108] This higher proportion is also understandable as each individual project has a large budget.[109] A high share for the health sector can also be interpreted as demonstrating steady progress in 'securing women's health throughout their lives'.[110] This is the fifth initiative in the 2016 Development Strategy.[111]

However, a closer look at each sector provides a different picture. Figure 8 illustrates how far gender equality has been taken into account in each sector. It shows that the health sector is the most advanced at focusing on gender equality as a primary objective, through its provision of reproductive health care or an SGBV response (15 per cent of the budget in the health sector is coded as 'principal'). The next best sector is government and civil society.

[108] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), p. 5.

[109] A gender focus in transportation projects could mean employing women staff when selecting inspection equipment or deciding on inspection procedures in a project for improving security at international airports in Bangladesh.

[110] Government of Japan, 'Development strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment' (note 93), p. 6.

[111] The Japanese MOFA announced in 2013 that Japan would prioritize global health in its foreign policy. Government of Japan, 'Japan's strategy on global health diplomacy', June 2013.
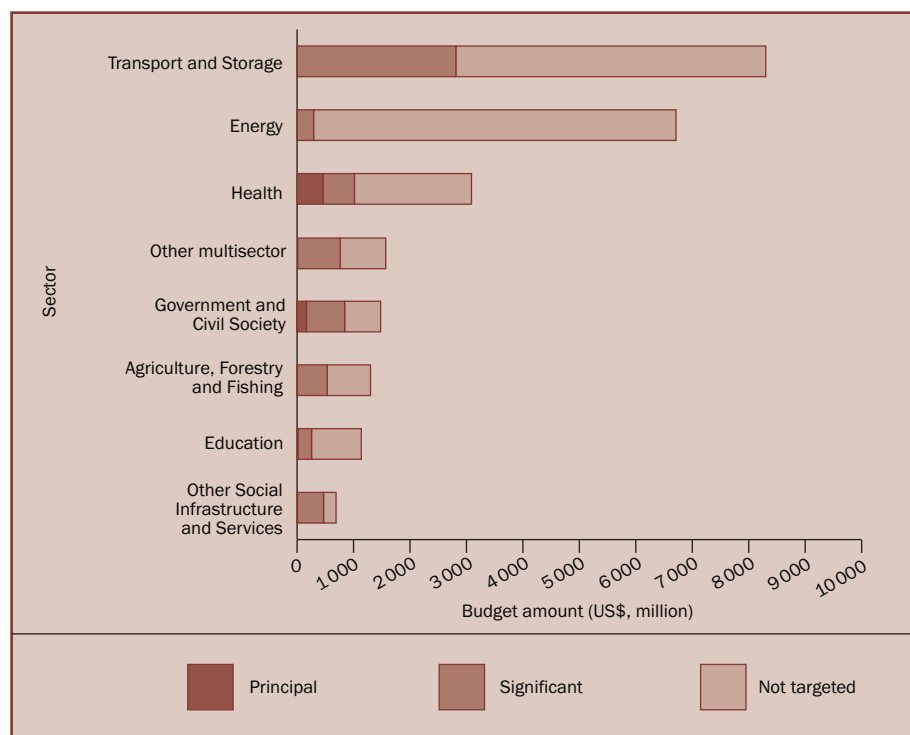
Figure 8. Japan's development cooperation in support of gender equality in fragile states, by sector, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

On the other hand, the category 'other social infrastructure and services' has been most consistent in considering gender (67 per cent of that budget is coded as significant). This result is open to question, however, since the extent to which gender was considered even if it was coded as 'significant' is unknown.

Humanitarian assistance

Japan has been one of the largest providers of humanitarian assistance for the past two decades.[112] In 2017, 63 per cent of its bilateral humanitarian aid was disbursed through international aid organizations.[113] Part of it (8.8 per cent in 2017) is disbursed to Japan-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through the Japan Platform (JPF), a partnership organization formed of NGOs, the Government of Japan and business communities that works as a funding mechanism for responding to humanitarian emergencies.[114]

The 2015 Development Cooperation Charter also discusses humanitarian assistance. On gender and women's issues in humanitarian assistance, it categorizes women as a vulnerable group but also states that greater participation is needed by 'women and the socially vulnerable' (see table 2).[115] By contrast, the 2011 Humanitarian Aid Policy does not mention gender

[112] Japan was the fifth-largest humanitarian aid donor among members of the OECD DAC in 2017, committing $845 million. OECD, 'ODA by sector', 2019.

[113] Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database (note 23).

[114] As of Oct. 2019, 44 organizations were members of the Japan Platform (JPF). JPF, 'NGO unit (JPF's member NGOs)', Oct. 2019.

[115] Japan Cabinet Office (note 25), p. 6.
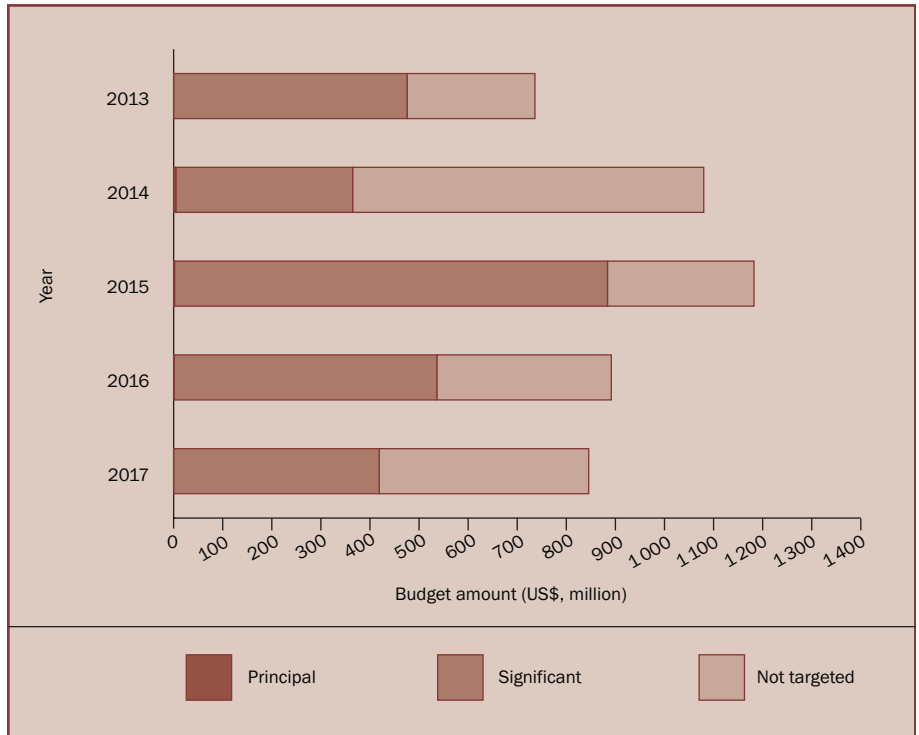
Figure 9. Japan's humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

equality or women's participation at all (see table 2). This demonstrates the gap between the NAP, which clearly calls for a gender perspective to be applied to humanitarian assistance, and the basic policy documents on humanitarian assistance.

As a country prone to natural disasters, Japan is an advocate of the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction at the global level and of the need for women's participation in it.[116] Japan is recognized as having a strong engagement with humanitarian response.[117] A distinctive feature is the integration of a gender perspective into reconstruction processes and disaster risk reduction, as well as the inclusion of natural disasters in the WPS framework.[118] From this perspective, JICA has been conducting projects to introduce a gender equality perspective into post-disaster reconstruction and disaster risk reduction, and to increase women's participation in decision making in Bangladesh, Ecuador, Myanmar, Nicaragua and the Philippines, among others.

Data on Japan's bilateral humanitarian assistance shows that gender-sensitive programming increased considerably in 2015 (74.76 per cent) but decreased in 2016 (60.14 per cent) and 2017 (49.53 per cent) in terms of

---

[116] The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, adopted at the third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015, clearly states that 'women and their participation are critical to effective disaster risk management'. United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 'Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015–2030', 18 Mar. 2015, p. 20.

[117] Trojanowska, B., Lee-Koo, K. and Johnson, L., *National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security: Eight Countries in Focus* (Australian Civil Military Centre and Monash University: Canberra, Jan. 2018), p. 28.

[118] Civil society expert on gender, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 8 July 2019; and Japanese MOFA official, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 12 July 2019.
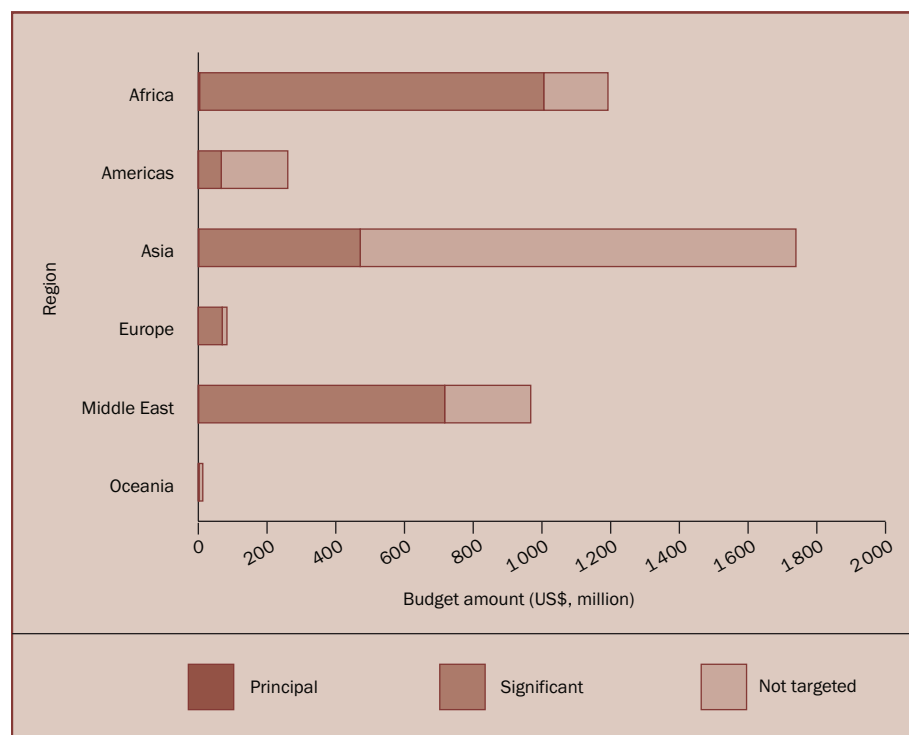
Figure 10. Japan's humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality, by region, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

both volume and proportion (see figure 9). The generally high percentages (56.57 per cent on average in 2013–17) contrast with those for development cooperation in fragile states (23.23 per cent on average in 2013–17). However, the proportion of projects that have gender equality as a principal objective (0.15 per cent on average in 2013–17) is even lower than that for development cooperation in fragile states (2.34 per cent on average in 2013–17).

Geographically, the data identifies a different trend to that for development cooperation in fragile states. Figure 10 shows that most of Japan's humanitarian assistance with a gender equality focus has been provided in Africa (84.03 per cent of the region's total aid is coded as 'significant'), followed by Europe and the Middle East.[119] In contrast to its development cooperation in fragile states, the proportion of humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality provided to Asia is relatively small (around 27 per cent).

Figure 11 shows that humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality and women's empowerment is considered most in emergency response (77.66 per cent of emergency response is coded as principal or significant), followed by reconstruction relief and rehabilitation (30.99 per cent as significant), while disaster prevention and preparedness, which is supposedly the major focus of Japan's approach to mainstreaming gender equality in humanitarian assistance, is not being taken into account to any greater extent (4.85 per cent as principal or significant).

---

[119] The 5 largest recipients of Japanese humanitarian assistance with a gender focus in 2013–17 were Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya, Niger and Mali in Africa, and Iraq, Yemen, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza, and Jordan in the Middle East. In Europe, such assistance was mostly provided to Turkey (80% in 2013–17). This paper uses the OECD classification of regions.
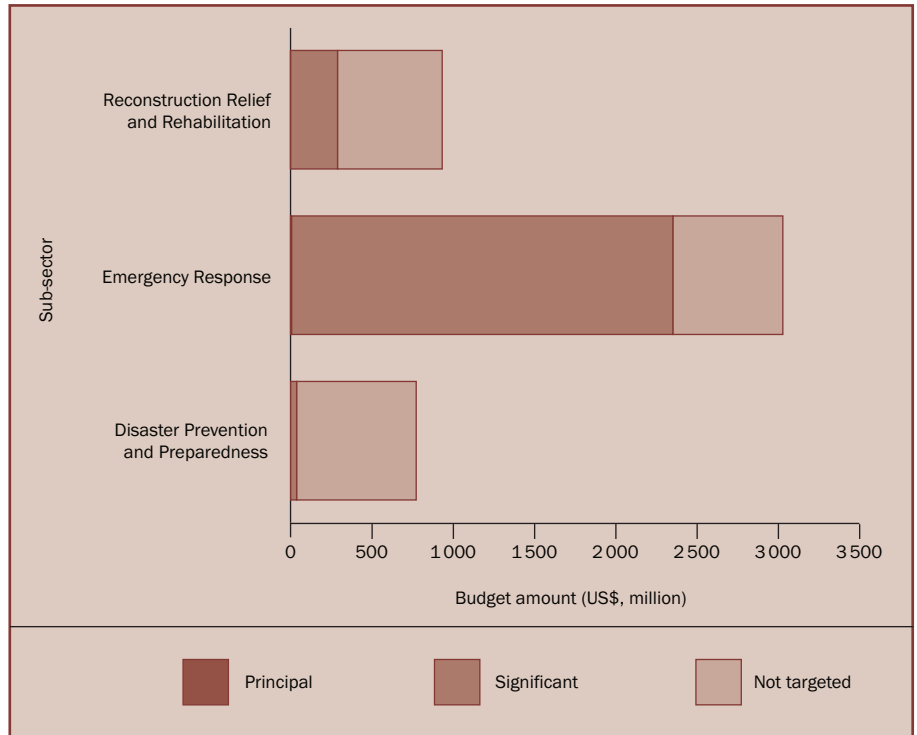
Figure 11. Japan's humanitarian assistance in support of gender equality, by sub-sector, 2013–17

Source: Authors' own calculation based on the OECD DAC CRS database.

While there is an increased focus on gender aspects among JPF member NGOs, the WPS agenda has not been systematically disseminated. Currently, 10 JPF member organizations are implementing projects that mainly target Rohingya refugee women in Bangladesh.[120] The JPF requires its member organizations to adhere to international standards.[121] However, the JPF does not have a gender policy and does not provide any gender training for its member organizations. Nor does its funding application process screen specifically for gender components.

Peace operations

Since the IPC Act was passed in 1992 (see table 2), Japan has contributed around 11 500 military, police and civilian personnel to 13 UN peacekeeping missions.[122] Since the withdrawal of engineering units from the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in May 2017, however, Japan has not had a significant presence on the ground in any UN peacekeeping operation.[123] Japan's assessed financial contribution will represent 8.56 per cent of the

[120] JPF official, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 10 July 2019.

[121] Such as the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender with Age Marker and the Core Humanitarian Standards.

[122] Japan Cabinet Office, Secretariat of the International Peace Cooperation Headquarters, 'Smile for all in the world', Aug. 2017.

[123] Four staff officers have been deployed in South Sudan and 2 staff officers are deployed in the Multinational Forces and Observers in Sinai. The latter represents the first deployment of SDF personnel outside of the UN peacekeeping operations framework, following amendment of the IPC Act in 2015.

total UN peacekeeping budget in 2019–21, which makes it the third-largest contributor after the USA and China.[124]

Although the IPC Act was amended when Japan's first NAP was launched in September 2015, the amended act makes no reference to gender or WPS-related issues. The 2015 National Security Strategy, which underpins the amended IPC Act, mentions women only three times in over 30 pages. This makes the 2015 NAP the only applicable policy paper in this field. The 2015 and 2019 NAPs set out a wide range of objectives in relation to peace operations under the pillars of participation, protection, and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance.[125]

Figure 12 shows the number and proportion of women in Japan's UN peacekeeping personnel in the period 2010–19. The most recent peacekeeping operation in which Japan deployed a high number of personnel was UNMISS in November 2011 to May 2017. Figure 12 shows that the proportion of women peacekeepers was very low throughout the period, at between zero and 2 per cent.[126] Since the withdrawal of troops, however, efforts have been made to include at least one woman among the four personnel stationed in Juba. It should be noted that the Ministry of Defense has been gradually opening up all positions to women since the early 1990s, resulting in the removal of all gender-related restrictions in 2018.[127]

Japan's contribution to peace operations is currently more financial than personnel-based, and Japan has considerably increased the financial support it provides to the WPS agenda. Japan's financial support for UN peacekeeping operations is focused on training. Japan funds the UN e-learning programme on the prevention of SEA, which was launched in 2016 and is mandatory for all categories of field personnel in all UN peacekeeping operations. It has also provided funding for capacity building for Women's Protection Advisers in UN peacekeeping operations to address conflict-related sexual violence.

Overall, there has been increased attention on gender equality in Japan's ODA. Although there is no clear policy direction specifically on the WPS agenda, efforts have been made to increase the gender equality focus in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. This is in line with Japan's domestic policies, which focus on the role of women in enhancing economic growth. Support for women's participation and empowerment through ODA—the participation pillar—has emerged primarily from the economic rather than the political sphere. An emphasis on the protection pillar is also observable, as a result of the human security discourse in the ODA field in Japan. As in South Korea, aid programmes to the health sector and the Asia region have paid the greatest attention to gender equality.

[124] United Nations, General Assembly (note 60).

[125] These ensure the participation of women in UN peacekeeping operations, election monitoring teams and bilateral cooperation missions; establish a new department to promote gender mainstreaming in relevant ministries and agencies, such as the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Defence; and strengthen the systems in place for providing inclusive support to victims of SGBV and preventing SEA, and for providing training. Japanese MOFA, 'National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security', 29 Sep. 2015; and Japanese MOFA (note 104), p. 9.

[126] The proportion of women personnel in Japan's Self-Defense Forces was 6.5% as of Mar. 2018, which represented a recent increase. Japanese Ministry of Defense, Defense of Japan, 2018: Annual White Paper, 2018, particularly chapter 3, 'Promotion of work-life balance and more active participation of female personnel', p. 403.

[127] Japanese Ministry of Defense official, Interview with the authors, Tokyo, 12 July 2019.
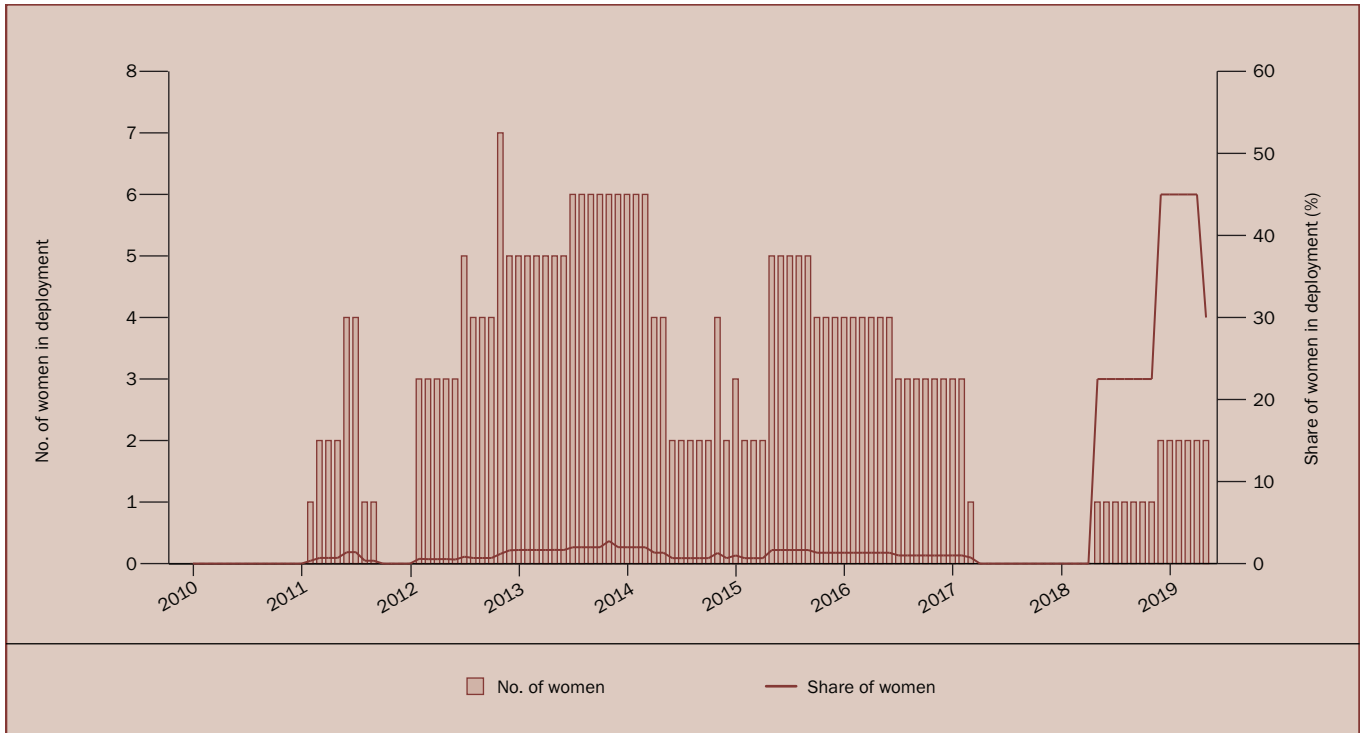
Figure 12. Number and share of Japanese women in UN peacekeeping operations, 2010–19

Note: Each bar in the chart represents the number of personnel in each month. The year marker indicates monthly data as of Jan. that year.

Source: SIPRI Multilateral Peace Operations Database.

Contributions to advancing the WPS agenda in UN peacekeeping operations have mainly been financial.

V. Conclusions

In South Korea and Japan, the WPS agenda has gradually become more visible in recent years in policy on international cooperation. Their contributions are more notable in the context of ODA where South Korea and Japan are regarded as emerging and established donors, respectively. In South Korea, a political initiative by its foreign ministry since 2017 has aimed to push the WPS agenda and make South Korea a regional leader. However, despite its relatively clear policy direction and the existence of political will, effective implementation seems to have been hampered by insufficient institutional expertise on gender to move the agenda forward. In Japan, the agenda has been promoted in the wider context of ODA and closely in line with Abe's domestic policies, which aim to establish 'a society in which women shine'. Any focused political initiative on the WPS agenda, however, has been absent. This is reflected in the rapidly increasing level of support provided to multilateral organizations working on gender equality, but a lack of coherence regarding gender equality in the legal and policy framework.

South Korea's support for gender equality through development cooperation in fragile states fell by volume and proportion in 2017 following a surge in 2016. Japan has shown steadily increasing levels of engagement with gender equality in fragile states, although gender equality is rarely the

principal objective of projects. Both countries focus on Asia and have concentrated on traditional development sectors such as social infrastructure (e.g. health and education) and economic infrastructure. This reflects the rationales and strategies behind their ODA, which stress sharing their own development experience. Despite their similarities, the WPS agenda has a different status in the development community in each country. In the case of South Korea, various recent initiatives on gender equality and peacebuilding in development cooperation have strengthened MOFA's WPS initiative, but gender-sensitivity in development activities has also been highlighted as a result of the increased attention paid to the WPS agenda. Despite the increased attention on women and gender-related issues in Japan's development cooperation, the concept of gender equality has been blurred by the use of ambiguous terms related to gender in Japanese policy and strategy documents. Women's agency in bringing about change is recognized but emphasized in the economic context rather than the political sphere.

South Korea's and Japan's promotion of the WPS agenda through humanitarian assistance demonstrate different characteristics and extents in their implementation of gender-sensitive projects. It is remarkable that although Japan has not incorporated a gender perspective into its humanitarian aid policy, Japan's humanitarian assistance has become gender-sensitive in the relief and recovery pillar to a relatively large extent. Japan is also a strong advocate of the participation of women in disaster risk prevention and reduction, although its implementation has so far been limited. In South Korea, gender perspectives on humanitarian assistance have been limited and the focus has largely been on the protection of women. However, it is notable that MOFA's recent WPS initiative has had particular implications for gender-related humanitarian assistance activities. This high-level initiative has highlighted the role of humanitarian assistance in supporting survivors of conflict-related SGBV, which is promoted by the Government of South Korea as its niche area.

In the context of peace operations, both countries' contributions to the WPS agenda have been found to be limited. This is due in part to the focus on financial contributions to UN peacekeeping operations rather than a field presence, particularly in the case of Japan. Both countries have taken a conservative approach to their contributions to UN peacekeeping operations that merely meets mandatory UN requirements. The proportion of women personnel participating in UN peacekeeping operations remains around the global average, but this is in a context in which the absolute numbers are low.

Overall, it is notable that as latecomers but niche players in the WPS agenda, South Korea and Japan have pushed ahead with flagship programmes such as supporting survivors of sexual violence and natural disaster preparedness, respectively. These findings have implications for partner countries and other actors that wish to collaborate in such sectors or in the region, as well as for the international development community seeking to coordinate the relevant assistance and advance international efforts in response to the financing challenges of the WPS agenda. How this distinctive approach—such as primary support for the education and health sectors in fragile states—contributes to the WPS agenda compared with other leading donors could be usefully explored in future research.

The limitations of their approaches to the WPS agenda are observable from a feminist perspective. The majority of their policy documents demonstrate that their approaches and priorities are focused on the protection of women—the protection pillar. Women are often categorized as a vulnerable group along with children and refugees, and described as victims or as beneficiaries. South Korea's focus on support for survivors of SGBV echoes this finding. A perspective that highlights support of women in vulnerable situations is prevailing but one that treats women as active agents with transformative potential—the key aspect of the participation pillar—is still largely absent. In the case of Japan, such a perspective exists but its incorporation into programming has been slow, and primarily focused on the economic context rather than political participation. It is also notable that Japan's driving force of human security has contributed to the former, more limited perception of women. These limitations indicate where the two countries could further develop their policies in order to advance their approaches to the WPS agenda in a way that promotes the transformative goals of Resolution 1325.

As latecomers but niche players in the WPS agenda, South Korea and Japan have pushed ahead with their own flagship programmes

This paper has provided useful insights on how South Korea and Japan approach the WPS agenda by examining their policies and implementation, but has restricted its scope to the international cooperation of the two countries with the aim of focusing on their contributions at the global level. However, in order to fully understand their approaches to the WPS agenda, it would be necessary to examine their domestic policies and implementation. This is particularly apparent since their position is distinct from the traditional position of Western donors from the global North, where WPS strategies are primarily oriented outwards to fragile states. Therefore, more research will be needed to understand how the political and financial commitments examined in this research are linked to their domestic context.

Finally, questions remain about how countries that are still struggling to achieve gender equality in their own societies should position themselves on the WPS agenda and push for gender equality in their foreign policies. Both Japan and South Korea are recognized as significant providers of aid, drawing on their own experience of industrialization, and economic and human development. When it comes to promoting gender equality through foreign assistance, however, foreign policy and assistance face challenges in justifying a norm-making approach due to the slow progress made in the domestic contexts of South Korea and Japan.[128] This could explain why the discourse has been centred on seeing women not as active agents, but as vulnerable victims. This gap between the contributions of Japan and South Korea to the WPS agenda and the status of gender in their domestic spheres needs to be further examined in their policy development processes for achieving gender equality, and addressed in their ambitions to lead the WPS agenda in the region and at the global level.

---

[128] The gender pay gaps in South Korea and Japan are the highest of all the OECD DAC countries. The participation of women in politics in both countries is also limited. As of Feb. 2019, women held 17.1% of the seats in parliament in South Korea and 10.2% of the parliamentary seats in Japan's House of Representatives (lower house). Inter-Parliamentary Union, 'Percentage of women in national parliaments', [n.d.].

Abbreviations

CPS	Country Partnership Strategies
CRS	Common Reporting Standard
CSO	Civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus
IPC	International Peace Cooperation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPF	Japan Platform
KCOC	Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDF	Self-Defense Forces
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
UNOSOM	UN Operation in Somalia
WPS agenda	Women, Peace and Security agenda

EMERGING ACTORS IN THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA: SOUTH KOREA AND JAPAN

YEONJU JUNG AND AYAKO TSUJISAKA

CONTENTS

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Yeonju Jung (South Korea) is a Research Assistant with the SIPRI Governance and Society Programme.

Ayako Tsujisaka (Japan) is a Rotary Peace Fellow at Uppsala University. She was a research intern with the SIPRI Governance and Society Programme.