



Written Submission to the UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Inquiry on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Submitted by: Afro Innovation Group (UK) and the AIG-RDC Platform

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Introduction

Afro Innovation Group (AIG), a UK-registered charity, leads the AIG-RDC Platform—an umbrella of 30 grassroots civil society organisations operating across 13 provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Together, we work to promote gender justice, peacebuilding, climate resilience, and inclusive development in fragile and post-conflict contexts. Many of our local partners are women-led, survivor-centred, and embedded in communities affected by displacement and violence.

We welcome this inquiry and offer evidence from our experience as a diaspora-led, locally rooted platform actively engaged in advancing Women, Peace and Security (WPS) principles across multiple thematic areas.

1. To what extent does the UK Government integrate WPS principles across its ODA-funded programming?

AIG-UK supports trauma-informed, gender-inclusive programming through a unique model of South–North cooperation. AIG-RDC partners integrate WPS values into all areas of service delivery, including:

- Safe spaces and recovery hubs for GBV (gender-based violence) survivors
- Vocational training for women and girls affected by conflict
- WASH and community health services with embedded gender protections
- Legal and civic literacy programmes led by women

Our model demonstrates that WPS principles can be effectively mainstreamed when programmes are designed and delivered by trusted, women-led local actors.

2. What financial resources has the UK allocated toward advancing the WPS agenda? Are these resources appropriately distributed?

Despite operating in high-risk and priority contexts, local women-led organisations in DRC—including many AIG-RDC members—struggle to access direct UK aid. Funding often flows through intermediaries, diluting local accountability and reducing programme sustainability.

Recommendation: UK Aid and FCDO should develop mechanisms for direct investment in grassroots WPS actors and consortia, including multi-year funding, core support, and access to programme co-design.

3. How does the UK's current WPS National Action Plan compare to previous iterations?

While the 2023 NAP outlines an ambitious strategic framework, implementation gaps remain. Local actors in DRC report no systematic engagement or visibility within the NAP's consultation or delivery processes.

Recommendation: Future NAPs should feature structured consultation rounds with frontline women-led organisations and accountability frameworks that track funding and impact at local levels.

4. Are women's voices, particularly those from conflict-affected communities, sufficiently included in the UK's approach to WPS?

No. Despite working directly with survivors of violence, displaced women, and informal sector workers, AIG-RDC partners are not included in UK-funded WPS dialogues or reporting mechanisms.

Recommendation: The UK should fund and support participatory spaces for underrepresented women's voices to influence WPS strategy—from early warning systems to national consultations.

5. Are there appropriate accountability mechanisms to ensure WPS commitments lead to outcomes?

There is limited bottom-up accountability. Many grassroots organisations are unaware of the UK's WPS frameworks or opportunities to report progress or challenges.

Recommendation: Establish locally managed monitoring hubs to capture WPS-related progress, challenges, and impact data from grassroots partners.

6. Examples of UK-supported WPS initiatives that led to impact

AIG-RDC has implemented integrated programmes that align with the UK WPS framework, including:

- Women's Recovery and Livelihood Hubs in Kongo Central and Kasai
- Multi-sector support for 200+ women through trauma recovery, vocational skills, and legal empowerment
- Youth peacebuilding and reintegration centres led by female facilitators

These demonstrate how multi-dimensional approaches can build safety, voice, and economic agency.

7. Trends in the international WPS agenda and the UK's global role

Trends show a growing emphasis on localisation, intersectionality, and climate-linked security risks. However, many Global South women's groups remain excluded from WPS funding and diplomacy.

The UK can play a leading role by modelling inclusive WPS architecture that empowers local networks and resists tokenistic engagement.

Recommendation: UK to convene regional WPS innovation hubs in collaboration with diaspora and Southern partners.

8. What can the UK Government do to ensure long-term sustainability of WPS efforts?

Sustainability requires systemic investment in women's movements, platform governance, and shared infrastructure.

The AIG-RDC Platform operates through collective accountability and peer learning among women-led CSOs. This strengthens institutional memory and cross-regional solidarity.

Recommendation: Fund coalition-based infrastructure, training pipelines, and digital platforms to sustain WPS capabilities in fragile settings.

Closing Remarks

AIG and the AIG-RDC Platform remain committed to the advancement of Women, Peace and Security as a lived reality—not just a policy agenda. We would welcome further engagement with the Committee and its partners.

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