



DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY

Security Through Global Partnerships



Women Peace and Security: Workshop Report



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Defense Security Cooperation University
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How does implementation of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) framework in security cooperation promote U.S. national security and advance the pursuit of peace? If a partner nation wants to know what’s in it for them—why should they implement the United Nations’ Women Peace and Security framework and how does doing so in partnership with the United States advance their national security objectives—what do we say? The papers and discussion in this workshop were meant to help answer such questions.

Within professional military education (PME) and the security cooperation (SC) community there is need for scholarship that can inform the work of policy makers, practitioners, and other scholars on what American WPS is. With some 103 nations having adopted action plans on WPS, each within its own national legal and cultural context, there is need to understand how Department of Defense implementation of the U.S. WPS Act of 2017 interacts with other national and regional plans and policies on the subject. And there is need for scholarship on how such interaction on WPS can and has catalyzed U.S. partnerships and alliances. This is the “so what” question that spurs so many scholars and practitioners of WPS on.

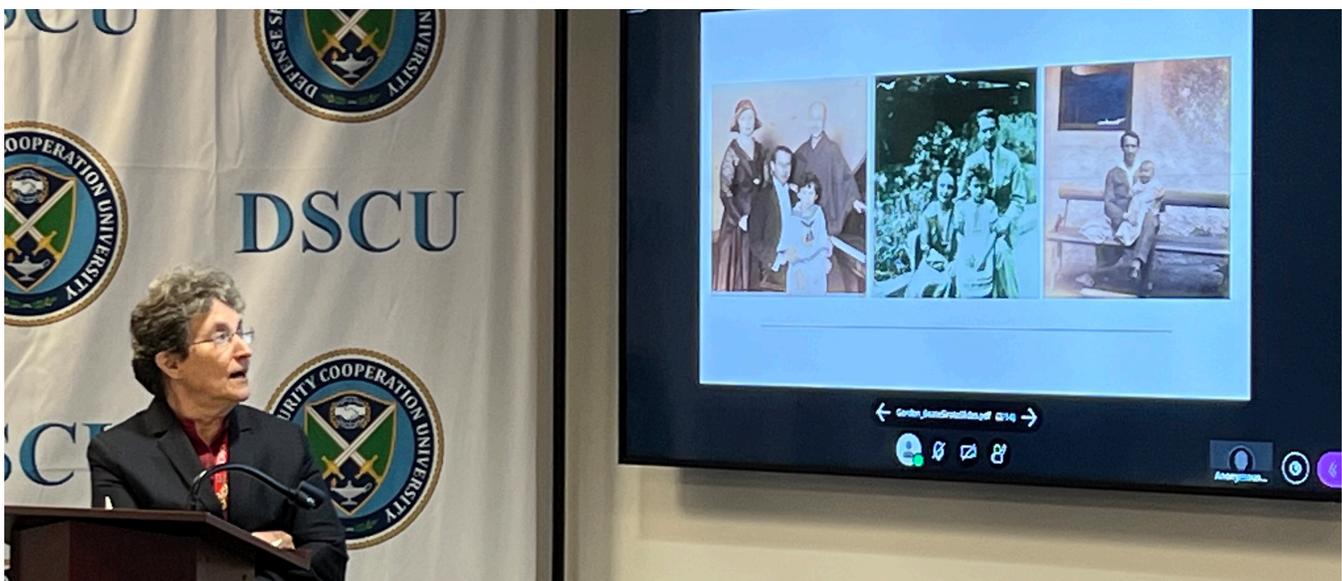
I. Keynote and guest speakers.

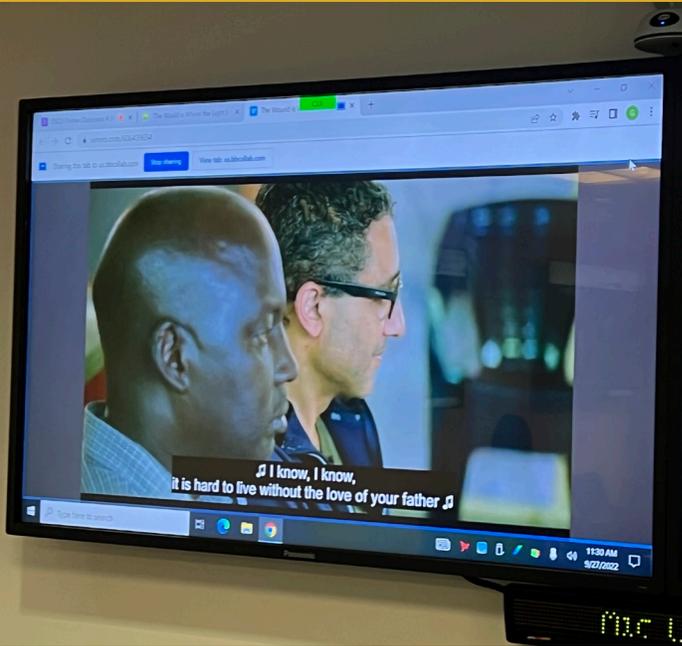
Guest speakers gave diverse perspectives to workshop participants, who work mainly and sometimes full-time in the DoD WPS space. Congressman Waltz gave the group a legal and political perspective, putting the issue in the context of competing demands and expectations from his American constituents and bipartisan relationships on the Hill. Dr. Sabine Lee’s presentation about survivors of sexual violence, including by peacekeeping personnel, highlighted the third DoD WPS objective, focused on protecting the human rights of partner nation women and girls. Professor Nicole Gordon’s talk reminded the workshop that while DoD WPS implementation is recent, we stand on the shoulders of women and men who came before us.

- **Legal and Congressional perspective.** Congressman Mike Waltz (R-FL), the co-chair of the House WPS Caucus, gave the keynote address, sharing his personal and professional view of WPS. He said he founded the WPS Caucus with Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) due to his experience as a Green Beret in combat where he saw how important women are to the security of nations. He said that he assures his

constituents that their daughters are safer from terrorism at home when girls are safer from it abroad. Rep. Waltz cited various examples of the ways in which DoD is implementing WPS effectively in partner nations, which was a tribute to many of the workshop participants who had designed, planned, and/or implemented those successful operations. The Congressman’s talk was recorded for use in training and education at DSCU.

- **Protection perspective: children born of war.** The UN Security Council adopted two resolutions (2016, 2019) that include children born of sexual violence in conflict as part of the WPS agenda. The Council recognizes that the issue severely affects the ability of States to achieve peaceful resolution of disputes and that lack of resilience creates threats to peace and security. Participants viewed a sneak peek of the film, “The Wound is Where the Light Enters,” about 15 adult children born of wartime rape by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in N. Uganda. The film’s technical director, Professor Sabine Lee, editor of *Children Born of War: Past, Present, Future*, from the University of Birmingham (UK) gave a talk about the subject of children born of war (CBOW). Dr. Lee said that CBOW are too often overlooked as a group of victims and survivors of wartime sexual violence. She asked the workshop to think of the children as a security issue and not just a humanitarian issue. She explained how these adult children all over the world are uniting to become peace builders. She networked with several participants to enhance future research and collaboration.
- **Historical and personal perspective.** Law professor Nicole Gordon went into detail about how the U.S. worked with Japan’s leaders to include women’s voting rights and gave participants a memorable example of the power of one woman’s “seat at the table” in negotiations—which is the foundational purpose of the WPS agenda. Gordon’s mother, Beate Sirota, was General Douglas MacArthur’s translator and she was the main reason that MacArthur was able to get women’s voting rights into Japan’s post-war constitution. Born in Vienna in 1923, Sirota emigrated to Japan with her family in 1929, where she became fluent in the language and immersed in the culture. Gordon’s own experience with language proficiency as well as her mother’s (she had competence in six languages) drove home the value of language proficiency in cultural competence and security cooperation, along with the benefits of humility in negotiations.





II. Purpose, Format, and Findings

The host of the workshop, the Defense Security Cooperation University, conceived of the annual PME WPS gathering as an event that would launch an effort to take a rigorous, scholarly look at the ways in which implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Act of 2017 advances U.S. national security objectives through security cooperation.

The workshop was undertaken in a day and a half of panel presentations, which included three guest speakers bringing outside perspectives to the conversation and concluded with a “roundup” discussion. Presenters were mainly from the WPS professional military education academic forum, which is a network of PME faculty working in Women Peace and Security, meeting quarterly, and sharing research and pedagogy.

Fourteen scholars presented twelve papers in four panels, after having submitted draft papers a week before the workshop so that other panelists could prepare a robust, dynamic, interactive discussion. Each panelist was allotted 15 minutes for presentation and then engaged participants in discussion. The hybrid format, via Blackboard Collaborate, allowed the security cooperation workforce and WPS network around the world opportunity to participate. There were 65 participants, evenly split between in person and online attendance.

Workshop Questions and Themes

The Department of Defense released its Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan for the WPS Act of 2017 in 2020. The plan has three objectives of which two identify implementation of DoD’s statutory requirements through security cooperation.

- Defense Objective 1 (DO1): The Department of Defense exemplifies a diverse organization that allows for women’s meaningful participation across the development, management, and employment of the Joint Force.
- Defense Objective 2 (DO2): Women in partner nations meaningfully participate and serve at all ranks and all occupations in defense and security sectors.
- Defense Objective 3 (DO3): Partner nation defense and security sectors ensure women and girls are safe and secure and that their human rights are protected, especially during conflict and crisis.

Although DO1 is not directly related to security cooperation, workshop participants advance this objective, along with the two security cooperation-focused themes, and so a good deal of the discussion focused on integration of women into U.S. security cooperation activities. They paid special attention to an intermediate defense objective associated with it: “WPS principles are appropriately reflected in relevant DoD policies, plans, doctrine, training, education, operations, resource planning, and exercises.” Most notably, discussion probed the challenges the U.S. faces in implementing WPS while not having a ready workforce with experience doing this kind of work in the U.S., such that it is difficult to model WPS implementation with partners in the security cooperation realm.



The workshop examined both theoretical and practical aspects of WPS. Key themes included:

- Specific cases of successes and failures – what the implementation of WPS looks like in practice, the factors that affect its implementation, and how it advances U.S. and partner shared objectives;
- The role of the WPS Act of 2017 and how we implement that law with a diverse set of stakeholders at home and abroad;
- American values and the liberal international order – the role of WPS as a core element of the United States’ value-based approach to our national security policy;
- Strategic or great power competition – how it is changing our implementation of WPS and how WPS affects that competition.

Examining WPS within this strategic context, workshop participants also emphasized the continuing importance of WPS to concepts of integrated deterrence, defined as “incorporating [U.S.] efforts across domains and the spectrum of conflict to ensure that the Department [of Defense] closely cooperates with the rest of the government and our allies and partners on the most critical security challenges.” Some 388 million women in the world live in extreme poverty, many of them in the fragile and conflict affected states which the United States seeks to help stabilize and, in some cases, partner with. As one guest speaker who specializes in conflict-related sexual violence noted, the trauma and complex trauma citizens suffer due to the intersection of poverty and violence is just one of the many challenges women in conflict affected nations face as they try to help their families and communities. Another guest speaker, who focused on the historical case of post-war Japan, advised that much humility and sobriety are needed as we here in Washington study, analyze, and prescribe what is needed to help women and these nations secure a better and more secure future in partnership with the United States. The workshop was a worthy effort and its participants, and their institutions, rose to the challenge of taking it on.

A Multidisciplinary Approach. A review of the literature on Women, Peace, and Security shows the need for a body of work examining the U.S. WPS agenda, and the integration of WPS into security cooperation in particular. The workshop papers are part of that body of work. Whereas many works on WPS are framed in feminist IR theory, the workshop took a multidisciplinary approach which allowed for gaining wider perspectives, investigating at various levels of analysis, and comparing which disciplines had the most explanatory power. Paper authors used systems thinking, alliance theory, constructivism, and military concepts, among other frameworks, to analyze, explain and predict effects of WPS implementation on national security with a view to understanding which might provide the most useful frameworks for understanding, teaching, and training the DoD workforce.

Findings. The workshop found that recording more cases and lessons learned is essential in future research. Such examples serve other important purposes for improving DoD implementation of WPS including enhancing classroom instruction, improving qualitative measurement and analysis, helping gender advisors and SCOs to design WPS activities, advocating the utility of WPS during key leader engagement, and much else. Several panelists provided case studies and offered best practices, lessons learned, and recommendations for improvement.

Panelists also assessed the challenges associated with integrating WPS into security cooperation planning, both in terms of stakeholders and analysis. With respect to the former, some panelists found that messaging to stakeholders on “impact” was more persuasive than messaging on “norms” or values. Yet others found the opposite. There is need for examinations of when one is preferred, to which stakeholder, in which situation. With respect to the latter, there was discussion about the value of a gender analysis, which is now required by law (NDAA), yet there was no consensus on who should perform such analysis, at what level, and for which situations to advance security cooperation. More engagement with the security cooperation workforce is needed, including those who directly advise partners.

There is need to make sure prescriptions are realistic within the constraints of the bureaucracy and practicable for implementers. More refinement of what “wins” can catalyze a nation’s WPS progress and integration into security goals is needed. More attention to what expected outcomes and successes look like should be investigated. The value of WPS in enhancing SC monitoring and reporting was addressed, such as when an all-woman contingent of military police deployed to Liberia and helped increase the reporting of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). More work on how WPS enhances reporting would be beneficial to the overall effort. Some key themes that were not addressed in panel papers should be sought out, such as those in the prevention of violence area, including civilian harm mitigation, international laws of armed conflict/humanitarian law, and human rights.

III. Panel and paper synopses

The importance of history and analysis. The 2022 WPS PME forum began with a welcome by DSCU President Celeste Gventer who complimented the participants for engaging in scholarly discussion and debate. Dr. Gventer and her team recently stood up a Research, Analysis, and Lessons Learned Institute within the university to promote innovative learning and scholarship. She said WPS is key to that effort. This was followed by a workshop overview by DSCU WPS Advisor, Dr. Susan Yoshihara. Dr. Yoshihara observed that one of the key reasons for PME is to examine why military superiority has not historically always led to strategic success. Dr. Yoshihara cited the 2020 Joint Staff PME Guidance, which states that, “We cannot simply rely upon mass or the best technology. In the future, that technology may be in the hands of our opponents. Our job is to learn how to apply our capabilities better and more creatively.” Dr. Yoshihara observed that China’s bringing the U.S. to a stalemate in Korea and preventing escalation in Vietnam, as well as the Taliban’s resurgence in Afghanistan, are examples of how the U.S. cannot rely on economic and political superiority in the future to bring about military victory. She observed that after the Vietnam War, American PME institutions looked to historical cases to make sense of the war’s outcome.

In this spirit, the workshop began with a historical example of a central WPS idea – how women’s participation in society, politics, and government contributes to lasting peace and post-conflict transition. Historian Dr. Grace Hoffman (DSCU) looked at the case of 1945- 1952 Japan, in which the United States persuaded the conquered Japanese to include women’s civil and political rights in its constitution, thanks in no small

part to a young woman named Beate Sirota, who was General MacArthur's interpreter and an entrepreneurial part of the post-war constitutional negotiations with the Japanese leadership. Dr. Hoffman showed ways in which the post-war period was unlike current security cooperation contexts where nations are not conquered but must be courted, but also showed similarities. She will continue to examine similarities and key differences as her research progresses.

Rising complexities in strategic competition. Dr. Susan Yoshihara (DSCU) identified four eras of U.S. promotion of civil and political rights since 1946. She argued that both the strategic context and codification in the WPS Act of 2017 had profound influence on the American Way of WPS. Dr. Yoshihara's preliminary conclusions showed several ways in which implementing WPS in the new era of strategic competition would be much more difficult due to increased tensions and complexities in internal and external social and political relationships. She argued for clarity of messaging with internal and external stakeholders, harmony and not syncretism with allies, contrast with Russia and China's approach, and managing rather than resolving inherent tensions with international approaches to WPS.

The importance of case studies and lessons learned. Mr. Nick Tomb (ISG/DSCU) examined how the incorporation of WPS principles in U.S. security cooperation engagements advances operational effectiveness and healthy civil-military relations, resulting in more legitimate, reliable partners. Mr. Tomb addressed the rise of terrorism in Africa and the need to build capacity in partner nations for irregular warfare, an area where women can play a critical role. He provided a case study on an Institute for Security Governance (ISG) seminar series designed to build the institutional capacity of the Ghana Armed Forces to conduct Civil-Military Operations along its northern border, illuminating the pivotal role that women can play in this effort. Mr. Tomb noted that Ghana is an experienced and willing WPS partner that maintains the largest proportion of women in peacekeeping among the top-10 personnel-contributing countries.

Major Maia Molina-Schaefer (West Point) presented lessons learned and best practices from her efforts to advance the meaningful participation of women in the Nigerien security forces during her tour as Office of Security Cooperation Chief in Niger. Lessons included the need for framing WPS objectives within the larger security context. Other best practices shared included: creating country-level WPS security cooperation strategies, tying WPS objectives into institutional development, developing stakeholder buy-in, leading by example, promoting WPS events/successes, coordinating and integrating inter-agency WPS efforts, and monitoring & evaluating successes of program implementation. In the Nigerien case, the objectives that Major Molina-Schaefer identified and monitored included: 1) recruitment increase, 2) professionalization of military schools, 3) attaining cultural change in the armed forces and civilian sector, 4) strategic advocacy for WPS, 5) inter-agency coordination, and 6) formal funding for WPS SC programs.

Both Dr. Graham (GWU) and Dr. Burchard (IDA) used case studies to inform their papers on gender advisors and exercises and training, respectively (see following section).

Assessment, measurement, and transparency. Panelists looked at key assessment, monitoring, and evaluation issues associated with WPS – before, during, and after engagement. Jen Taylor (IDA), who oversees the Congressionally mandated barriers assessment, looked at how to assess whether countries are ready to include WPS objectives in SC engagements. Ms. Taylor said the preliminary study assumes that showing “impact” and effectiveness was more persuasive and effective in moving partner nations to engage on WPS than talking about “normative” or values issues, which might put partner nation interlocutors on the “back foot.” Participants asked her to investigate whether this was true in all cases or in cases where nations are more accepting or less accepting of WPS. Participants asked that the barriers assessment look at a “gradient” of barriers to women's participation, such as lower and higher education, STEM education,

graduate education and so on. Participants asked how the study would account for barriers due to sexual harassment and assault and the level of accountability for the same. Participants noted that the existence of trauma and complex trauma is also a barrier and that such barriers are impactful and hard to measure.

Dr. Shirley Graham (GWU) looked at how gender advisors are shaping security cooperation in countries and presented shared lessons learned. Her paper showed findings from qualitative research interviews conducted with five gender advisors in 2020-2021 who had worked in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Niger, and the Sahel (four women and one man). Dr. Graham examined perspectives and experiences of the advisors, and offered some initial findings to improve the role of gender advisors, including: making visible their achievements in SC, highlighting their innovations and systematizing official turnovers to successors, improving overall training and especially that of senior leaders who employ gender advisors, ensure that partner nations know what a gender advisor is—and isn't. She emphasized the value of gender analysis in alerting commanders to security issues that were previously invisible to the majority-male contingents who are not trained to pay attention to gender. She gave examples from U.S. missions in Afghanistan.

Dr. Stephanie Burchard (IDA) examined best practices in integrating WPS into military exercises and in evaluating the effectiveness of these efforts. She identified three main areas of effort for WPS integration that can be applied to exercises, trainings, and conferences: agenda/curriculum development; event execution; and event impact assessment. After using this approach at the exercise SILENT WARRIOR 22, Dr. Burchard said, the event resulted in the most participation from women military members, leaders, panelists, and speakers in the event's history. Workshop participants urged her to further examine specific outcomes of increased women's participation for security cooperation. Generally, participants pushed for a distinction between measuring outputs and outcomes. The participants also engaged on how exercises could help DoD identify future candidates for IMET opportunities to study in the United States in one of the U.S. PME institutions, or to identifying future leaders in WPS. Dr. Burchard said she did collect data showing that the exercise made stronger ties to the United States and sent the message that "women matter." Participants asked whether such gains diminish over time and how they can be sustained, and how PME can help sustain them. The workshop engaged in a discussion about how the idea and terminology around "gender" is "culturally fraught" in some places and that in other places "gender is weaponized." Participants discussed what could be done about it and acknowledged the need for more research.

U.S. Stakeholders: Defense Objective 1 (D01)

Two key presentations reviewed the status of efforts to integrate WPS principles into relevant DoD policies, plans, doctrine, training, education, operations, resource planning, and exercises. Drs. Lauren Mackenzie, Claire Metelits, and Brad Wineman (Marine Corps University) provided an example of innovations in PME, describing how their university implemented, revised, and institutionalized a WPS scholars program, named for LGEN Lori Reynolds, USMC (Ret.). Of note was an effort to integrate WPS into MCU military exercise and wargames. Participants asked how a PME professor can help those in DoD or other policy making positions who are "too busy to capture lessons learned" and other data. Participants also urged the workshop to ensure that they consider all levels of PME, and especially enlisted PME. They noted that the way WPS is "pitched" to enlisted training and officer training should vary, as well as who the training should come from to be most authoritative (peer or senior enlisted v. officer instructor). This might also vary depending upon the culture of the service or military department in which the training is delivered.

Dr. Saira Yamin, who leads the WPS program at the U.S. Naval War College, is responsible for the integration of WPS across all programs of the college. She proposed ways to leverage education and training to catalyze U.S. security cooperation in the strategic context. This included: increased recruitment of partner nation women into PME, regional security cooperation joint initiatives, trainings, mentorship programs, and interagency initiatives, geographic combatant command-led exercises in multiple domains including humanitarian assistance and disaster response, countering terrorism and violent extremism, maritime security and governance, and DoD Regional Center executive education program prioritization of WPS.

Dr. Lisa Babin (Army University) gave a scholarly preview of the lessons learned from employing WPS advisors during Operation Allies Welcome in support of U.S. Northern Command. The six-month operation comprised eight safe havens on domestic military bases for some 73,000 Afghan guests who arrived after the fall of Kabul in August 2021. Dr. Babin argued that because there was no analysis before the operation that took the complexity of the population and especially women into account, the DHS, State, and DoD implementers were caught off guard to find many of them were women and many of those were mothers expecting babies. She further explained that when rudimentary analysis was done (not standardized) by gender advisers at each of the eight safe havens, performance improved, with the government able to seek support from non-governmental organizations to provide baby formula, vitamins, and other lifesaving goods. Dr. Babin argued for an adaptation to the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) that would help commanders be ready for future contingencies: systems thinking. During the discussion, participants debated if or how DoD could realistically be expected to adopt such an approach. Some participants identified ways WPS considerations could be easily added to MDMP, and others noted that systems thinking is already a part of planning in many cases (and WPS principles could be incorporated there as well). This led to another key takeaway: the need to pay attention to making prescriptions realistic within the constraints of the bureaucracy.

U.S. Stakeholders: Defense Objectives 2 and 3

Dr. Barbara Salera (DSCU) used surveys and interviews to take stock of how the requirements of the WPS Act of 2017 are being perceived by security cooperation stakeholders and new gender focal points and advisers. She found areas in which WPS implementation was seen as an “ancillary” duty rather than a full-time area of concentration in the manner of other security cooperation specialties. She also noted that survey respondents were concerned that WPS was not taking into account partner nation’s political will. She found that in practice, much WPS implementation seemed to be based on the assumption that “random acts of WPS” would lead to sustained change.

Jeanne Giraldo (DSCU) examined the way WPS activities are designed within the overall security cooperation planning process. She made initial recommendations about how to nest WPS activities within country plans and regional priorities. Ms. Giraldo had just completed a series of working meetings with combatant command WPS or gender advisors on their FY23 WPS proposals. A key finding of that experience was that a partner nation’s political will was a central consideration of planning. She said that DoD’s approach should move away from “one-off” regional workshops or a WPS modules integrated into another SC events and toward more sustained capacity building efforts. However, Dr. Salera’s interview findings from students and WPS practitioners indicated the need for more work and documentation of how WPS is integrated into SC activities in a way that contributes to a shared, common framework that could be the basis for assessment, planning, design, monitoring, evaluation and learning.



One key finding of the FY23 WPS planning effort was the challenge posed by the relative lack of WPS SC implementers. Developing programs with a lasting effect will require the identification of more providers who bring additional tools to the table (e.g., State Partnership Program mentoring and Institute for Security Governance and institutional capacity building methods) and country plans that create a shared understanding of the partner nation (PN) baseline, U.S. and partner nation shared objectives for WPS, and how implementers will work together (with one another and the partner) to achieve the shared objectives. Documenting what has worked and what hasn't (and why) in WPS SC activities to date – executed by the United States or other countries – will contribute to effective programming. Workshop participants echoed the need to align WPS with country, regional, and strategic priorities and move away from “women’s hour” in engagements. They argued for integrating the issue of women’s contributions throughout engagements, whether they are port visits, workshops, mobile training, or multi-year activities.

Roundup and Next Steps. The two-hour roundup session gave participants online and in person a chance to ask more questions of the paper authors and get updates from each other on their areas of work. Participants got an update from an OSD representative on the status of the first DoD Instruction on WPS and what they can expect from it. There was back and forth on how pragmatic discussions of WPS should be, versus keeping the focus on “the right thing to do.” Online participants discussed how to get enlisted PME training and education to integrate WPS. The roundup conversation broadened the event beyond the academic workshop format and into a discussion among practitioners eager to address practical matters. Many of the participants were interested in DO1—modeling and employing WPS within DoD. Workshop organizers ensured that these issues could be discussed given their importance to participants, noting that our challenges may be illustrative of those that our partners will face.

There was a discussion about gender analysis (required by NDAA for activities within certain security cooperation activities) and request for more guidance from OSD on who should perform it and why. The group discussed the need to think of security cooperation in terms of mission areas – e.g. maritime, counter violent extremism, counter trafficking in persons, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief – and how WPS principles (especially the integration of WPS into operational planning) could advance mission effectiveness. In addition to the need for more analysis of case studies, there was a call for PME forum members to investigate better analytical frameworks to integrate WPS into SC in the future.

The workshop added value in several ways. For many of the participants it was the first time they were able to network in person with the WPS community of interest. Several participants said that networking and information sharing was a priority since they are often the only or one of a few WPS experts in their command. The workshop provided practitioners a way to engage personally with those conducting research, and gave researchers timely and frank feedback from practitioners. The workshop was the first of its kind at DSCU and highlighted the university’s research role, recently institutionalized in the Research and Lessons Learned Institute. The event provided feedback on the university’s technology and facilities for future workshops. It took advantage of, and exercised, DSCU’s academic capacity and its position as a nexus of SC scholarly and advisory roles. Finally, the workshop was a vital part of ensuring that the papers stood up to the rigor of scrutiny by practitioners and fellow scholars, which will increase their quality and lasting impact when they are published.