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1923 - 2023



INTERPOL

POLICING WITH A

# GENDER PERSPECTIVE

LAW ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD



# Acknowledgements and Disclaimer

All information presented in this publication has been contributed by INTERPOL National Central Bureaus or Regional Bureaus, or by individual law enforcement officers from national law enforcement agencies. We wish to thank each and every individual involved for working with us to make this publication possible. We had a fantastic response to our request for stories and initiatives, which confirms the importance and relevance of this issue in policing today. Unfortunately, we were unable to include them all and the Editorial Board, which oversaw the development of this publication, had the difficult task of curating a representative selection. The initiatives chosen are intended to present a geographic balance and a variety of endeavours and approaches to promote gender equality and advance gender-sensitive policing services in law enforcement agencies worldwide.

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# FOREWORD

As police officers, we play a crucial role in our society. We are responsible for maintaining law and order, deterring and investigating crime and protecting individuals and communities from harm. Policing is dynamic; we must constantly adapt to a shifting crime landscape, emerging technologies and societal changes in order to perform our duties effectively.

Gender diversity is an indispensable condition to ensuring this adaptability. The voices and perspectives of female, as well as male, officers are essential to address and enhance the ever-changing environment of police work. Only with this diversity can we make the necessary strategic decisions to protect and serve all communities.

A diverse police service has a deeper understanding of their community's needs and can build stronger relationships with them, thereby facilitating more effective policing.

As INTERPOL's celebrates its 100th anniversary, we have chosen to mark this moment by reflecting on how law enforcement across our global membership of 195 countries is working towards greater gender inclusivity.

From a female police mentoring programme in Costa Rica, to Angola's first female peacekeeper, the resulting compendium demonstrates that gender diversity in law enforcement is a truly global effort. By presenting an overview of the range of actions to promote diversity in law enforcement and provide services that cater to the diverse security needs of the population, our hope is that this collection will encourage readers and spur further initiatives.

While the breadth of activities is remarkable, the drive towards greater representation and equity remains a work in progress. At INTERPOL, we have recently seen female representation within our senior management increase, but much more remains to be done to accelerate this momentum.

I am proud, however, of the important steps INTERPOL has taken in recent years towards greater gender and geographical diversity. At our 2022 General Assembly in India, our member countries adopted a resolution that will see the Organization implement a series of measures to proactively seek candidates from under and unrepresented countries.

We must continuously embrace all efforts to develop a more equitable society. Furthering this goal as police officers is also, I believe, a crucial role.

**Jürgen Stock**  
**Secretary General**  
**INTERPOL**

# INTRODUCTION



I started my career as a law enforcement officer over thirty years ago in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). By then we had already made great progress in terms of recruiting and deploying female officers in a variety of roles. Today, I am proud to say that the RCMP's young male and female recruits find it natural to work alongside, and under the leadership of a diverse range of colleagues, including a growing number of women, in all areas of police work. I was Contingent Commander of Canada's police training mission in Ukraine, in which almost 30 per cent of trainers were women; an experience which proved to me that the idea of gender equality in policing can become a reality for all countries around the world. From my experience it is clear that our law enforcement agencies, and our citizens, need competent officers, both male and female, working collectively to make the world a safer place for all.

It is thus a privilege for me, and my colleagues in the Capacity Building and Training Directorate, to lead the way in INTERPOL when it comes to ensuring that gender considerations are systematically and meaningfully integrated throughout all our activities. Over the past five years, the department has created dedicated training resources on gender and transnational crime, conducted research on women in law enforcement, set up and continued to develop networks that aim to advance gender equality and support female officers, and put in place internal policies and frameworks. To date, more than 750 officers worldwide have taken our e-learning course on gender mainstreaming in law enforcement, and almost 200 officers have taken the Gender and Transnational Organized Crime Online Course. Over 600 law enforcement officers in our regional networks have expressed an interest in this topic, and we currently are the only department with expert staff dedicated to gender issues. I would like to encourage all law enforcement officers to access the INTERPOL e-learning Platform and continue their professional development by taking some of the eLearning modules and courses.

We strive to promote gender balance and the inclusion of gender issues in all that we do, and this compendium is part of our efforts to raise awareness and improve understanding about this topic in law enforcement. There is no one-size-fits-all approach and, as I hope you will appreciate from the initiatives briefly presented below, strategies and policies must reflect local realities and challenges if they are to be effective and drive change. This publication therefore aims to showcase a collection of the diverse initiatives that INTERPOL member countries have deployed in order to attract and retain female talent and promote gender-sensitive policing services.

We hope they will provide inspiration as we move forward on our collective journey toward making our law enforcement agencies fit for the challenges ahead and providing the best services to our citizens.

**Glenn Martindale**

**Director Capacity Building and Training Directorate  
INTERPOL**



# MORE WOMEN ACROSS ALL AREAS



A more gender-sensitive police force is first and foremost a force that better reflects the society it serves. Over the past decades, more and more women have chosen law enforcement as a career. Traditionally, when female officers join the workforce, they are initially assigned roles working with female or child offenders or victims, in particular those involving cases of sexual and gender-based violence. This is important because experience drawn from various contexts has highlighted the importance of having well-trained officers, both female and male, in these units to deal with victims and offenders.

With more and more female officers joining the ranks, and the skills police officers need evolving and changing, female officers are aiming higher in terms of their career aspirations and are taking on a more diverse range of roles and responsibilities. Law enforcement agencies across the world have recognized how crucially important it is to increase diversity across all areas of policing and are working to attract and retain female talent and to put in place policies and structures that support their recruitment and deployment across a wide spectrum of roles.

Institutional reform is a long-term endeavour; this transformation does not happen overnight and culture can take time - even generations - to change. Our aim is to shine a spotlight on the great strides countries have made in breaking down barriers to the recruitment and deployment of female officers, developing policies and establishing departments dedicated to supporting women wishing to pursue a career in law enforcement, and deploying officers to support other countries who are beginning to integrate female officers into their workforce.



**The Bicycle Police in Helsinki, Finland.  
Photo by Mika Pakarinen**

# AUSTRALIA - A RECORD NUMBER OF WOMEN QUALIFY FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The Australian Federal Police's (AFP) Specialist Protective Command (SPC) runs foundation programmes and training courses that give members an opportunity to qualify in a range of expert subjects. Twenty women graduated from the most recent intake into the programmes highlighting the success of diversity efforts in often traditionally male-dominated specialist domains.

The presence of more women on Specialist Operations courses has given rise to a series of "firsts". Four of the six students on the Negotiation Operations Foundation Programme were female, including the first Protective Service Officer (PSO) graduate. Similarly, the Rapid Appraisal Officer (RAO) Foundation Programme can now boast a female PSO. Seven women have become active members of the Specialist Support Teams, a part-time specialist capability of the AFP. Three of those women are in leadership roles and earlier this year the coveted Student of Merit Award honoured a female graduate. Twenty percent of AFP Discreet Operations are female members who undertake low signature enhanced discreet specialist roles following completion of a three month Foundation Programme. The DO Foundation Programme Student of Merit Award was presented to a female graduate and with a number of females in leadership positions or running operational teams. The Australian police also recently recruited its first-ever female dive-team member. Command Readiness, the Command's Specialist Training portfolio boast a number of female trainers across its Protection, Aviation, Public Order and Specialist Exercising teams.

One solution to attract more female recruits and boost participation is a more flexible approach to training. For the National Canine Operations Centre, this has yielded both individual and organizational benefits and resulted in the number of female members in the capability more than doubling, with currently eleven female canine handlers with an additional seven female members

serving in other roles within the capability. AFP Canine has expanded to include development opportunities within the Canine Training and Development team to provide a pathway towards training delivery within the capability.

A growing number of women are applying for specialist training opportunities and joining the ranks of AFP Specialist Operations.



A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a dark, quilted jacket, is kneeling on a light-colored concrete floor. She is focused on adjusting or working with a piece of equipment on a small table or stand. The equipment includes a black bag and a device with a yellow label. In the background, there are metal stanchions and a red retractable belt. The scene appears to be an outdoor or semi-outdoor area, possibly a training or operational site.

***"AFP Specialist Operations has established gender inclusive strategies for the recruitment and training of female members that has enabled a broader and more diverse representation than ever before. As a result, we see representation across Specialist Operations command which is reflective of the community we serve."***

**Acting Commander Specialist Operations,  
Rowena Penfold**

## BAHRAIN - INTER-STATE COOPERATION HELPS BOOST WOMEN'S ROLE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE ARAB REGION

Women have been active in the Bahraini police force for over 50 years; in fact, the Kingdom of Bahrain was one of the first states in the Arab Region to integrate women into the Public Security Forces. Although women were initially assigned to conventional roles, dealing with women and children or juvenile delinquents, they now execute more active duties; female police officers can be seen at the frontline in every field and specialization. Positions such as police aviation command engineers, AI specialists, customs officers, border and traffic security police, SWAT team members and counter-terrorism officers at the Special Security Force Command are all open to women.

Bahrain was therefore well placed to offer support to the State of Kuwait when it sought assistance in establishing its own female police force. As part of a cooperation agreement, the Kingdom sent an elite group of women - officers, infantry, and fitness trainers - to Saad Al-Abdulla Academy for Security Sciences to train Kuwaiti female cadets to become competent police officers.

Women's progress in law enforcement has continued apace and, in 2012, the first female SWAT squad in the region was set up in Bahrain - led by female officer. In 2022, women participated in a joint Emirati-Bahraini military anti-terrorism exercise which highlighted the skills and abilities of its participants in the fight against all types of crime including counter-terrorism. The Women Police Training Centre is currently implementing a Marine Sciences training course in collaboration with the Bahrain Coast Guard targeting female police officers within the Ministry of the Interior. The course primarily covers firefighting, first aid and search and rescue operations but female participants will also be able to gain proficiency in areas such as state-of-the-art maritime equipment, chart reading, maritime law and communication techniques.

The Women Police Directorate in Bahrain has been an official member of the Supreme Council for Women since 2016 which was a significant driver to empower women in the policing field. One outcome was the establishment of a Family and Child Protection Office that manages a database of cases concerning women and children. All police stations now have specialized sections with officers – many of them female – trained to deal with these sensitive and confidential cases.





***In November 1970, the Bahraini Women Police was established with just two female officers who beared bachelor's degrees.***

***In 1972, their number increased from two to eight officers and in 1973 the Ministry of Interior had a total of seventeen female officers. Today, the Ministry has around 2,000 of competent female officers in the Public Security Force.***

# MALDIVES - POSITIVE ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE MALDIVES POLICE SERVICE

There were only 65 women serving in the Maldives Police Service (MPS) when the organization became a fully independent civil law enforcement agency in 2004.

Over the years, gender equality and diversity have become top priorities for MPS leadership. Various strategies have been implemented over the last decade to boost numbers of female recruits and improve the representation of women in MPS management positions.

Key gender-inclusive policy initiatives include:

- At least one female officer in every station;
- Slots reserved for women officers on training courses;
- Talks in schools and universities to provide career advice and information on opportunities for women within the MPS;
- Paid maternity leave extended from two to six months;
- Work opportunities on home islands.

To ensure more women are represented in decision-making roles, female officers have been appointed to all key internal committees and boards. This has led to an increase in the number of women officers in commissioned ranks of the MPS; currently more than 29, over 10 per cent of the total.

The Maldives Police Service 2019-2024 strategic plan focuses on wider priorities in order to engage with the public and better serve the country. This strategic plan includes the “Maldives Women in Policing Project”, which aims to build a culture of gender inclusivity in the workforce and empower women across policing. This is the idea behind the Maldives Women in Policing Committee, established on 1 September 2021. Its mission is to empower women, and the committee plays a crucial role in providing mechanisms to ensure that women in policing have a say in the policies that affect their lives.

Today, the percentage of female officers within the MPS has grown to over 17 per cent, and there is a continued commitment to see this figure rise in the coming years.



# JORDAN - A GOLDEN JUBILEE FOR JORDANIAN FEMALE POLICE OFFICERS

Jordan's police force welcomed its first female recruits in 1972; since then, their ranks have swelled and more than 5,000 female officers now work alongside their male counterparts. Initially assigned to roles perceived to be more appropriate for women, they occupy a wider spectrum of positions today - ranging from security work patrolling forest and tourist areas to operational raid and arrest duties dealing with wanted and dangerous criminals.

The Directorate of Public Security of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has taken a proactive stance with the adoption of a four-year Gender Integration Strategy. This provides for measures such as the recruitment of a counsellor, the creation of the Gender Desk and the

appointment of ambassadors at the leadership level to ensure the integration of gender diversity in all areas - especially non-traditional ones.

This reflects the growing participation of women in many areas of law enforcement. A specialized women's team was established for criminal investigation in order to improve the response to gender-based violence and a Female Raid Team (SWAT) was set up to train women in the latest techniques. Female SWAT officers carry out private raids and also offer crucial backup to Raid teams, dealing with wanted and dangerous individuals, drug smugglers, and other types of criminals.



**From 6 women in 1972  
to over 5,000 in 2022!**

## HONDURAS - NEWLY-CREATED "GENDER DIVISION"

Gender equality is at the top of the agenda in Honduras under the impetus of its first female President and the National Police of Honduras has taken a proactive approach to addressing this challenge in its own ranks.

In April 2022, the National Police approved an Institutional Gender Policy which embodies its commitment to promote equal opportunities and zero tolerance approach to gender-based violence, as well as contributing to the elimination of inequality gaps and strengthening the institutional structure. This builds on the work of the Gender Division which has been responsible for attracting more female recruits in recent years. In 2022, 18 per cent of Honduran police officers are currently women. In February, following a

change of administration, 15 female police officers were appointed to command police units, with high-level responsibilities in the different departments. In addition, the INTERPOL NCB in Honduras is headed by a woman, Police Commissioner Adela Maria Serrano Torres.

Honduras is providing practical examples of how law enforcement agencies are making efforts to mainstream gender issues and promote inclusion. The Honduran National Police is convinced that better awareness of gender issues can improve the channels of communication with the communities it serves, enhance operational efficiency and set high standards of accountability.

## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

Institutions are built by individuals and reflect the values of those individuals. The gendered nature of institutions Over the past two decades, peacekeeping operations have often made the headlines due to a lack of female officers. The concern is that the absence of women makes it harder to engage with the community, in particular with women and girls, and can lead to their security needs and interests being overlooked. Efforts have thus been made to increase the numbers of women deployed on peacekeeping operations in both military and policing roles.

Despite the fact that the presence of women has been shown to improve the efficacy and outcomes of peacekeeping operations, they are still significantly underrepresented. In 2021, only 6 per cent of military peacekeepers and 28 per cent of police peacekeepers

on United Nations missions were women. Several countries have taken action to turn things around and address this imbalance, and to offer support to other countries who are interested in investing in this area. Below are the experiences of two countries and the work they have done to promote and support female officers' participation in peacekeeping operations, and the progress made so far.







## Canada leads by example in deploying women in peace-keeping missions across the globe

The advancement of women's participation in all peace and stabilization efforts is at the forefront of Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) on Women, Peace and Security. Canada can boast a significant increase in women's participation in peace operations - from 1 per cent in fiscal year 2013-2014 to 36 per cent in 2021-2022. In that same year, Canada rotated a total of 103 female police officers through 11 international missions across eight countries.

Canada's continuing efforts to address barriers to women's participation in peace operations have proved successful, focussing on awareness-raising and improved access to information, flexibility including shorter deployments and the integration of domestic and international best practices.

Given the importance of female exemplarity, Canada seeks to ensure women are well represented in senior positions such as Contingent Commanders, Gender Advisors and Human Rights Mentors. In these roles, they are able to make a significant impact on the



development of effective law enforcement institutions that respect human rights, particularly those of women, girls, and marginalized communities, as well as protect civilians from violence, including sexual violence.

Canadian women police officers are currently on active duty in the West Bank, Mali, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, commitment to gender inclusion abroad does not preclude initiatives closer to home. By continuing to develop gender inclusive programming, governance models, and supporting operations, Canada is always looking to advance its Action Plan and lead by example.

Over and above their peace-keeping mission, female officers on duty in host nations provide mentorship to local police agencies; in some cases, it is the first opportunity male police officers have had to work alongside women counterparts. This is instrumental in helping bridge the divide that exists within some policing communities.

**Canada is on course to meet or exceed the United Nation's target of 30 per cent of women in peacekeeping by 2028**



**Assistant Commissioner Maureen Levy is one of the first Canadian women police officers to deploy to the Iraq mission. She is now the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Champion for Women, Peace and Security.**



## Angola's first female peacekeeper

Women have been part of the Angolan National Police Force since it was established in 1975. However, back then they only made up 1 per cent of the police force, a total of 103 female officers. In 2021, forty-six years later, there were 15,000 women officers on the force, 15 per cent of the total. Female officers hold a wide variety of positions including Directors at the national level and Provincial and Municipal Commanders of Police Stations and Posts. Women also work in the Criminal Investigations and Criminal Offences Services as Chiefs of Brigade, investigators, instructors, and INTERPOL officers.



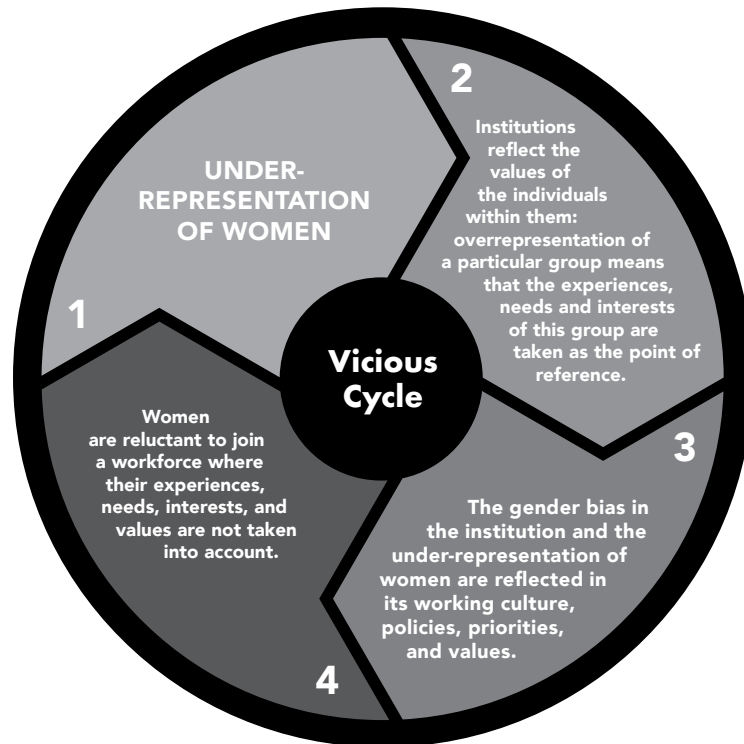
**In June 2022, Officer Sarita Domingos Tomas de Almeida, became the first female Angolan police officer to be deployed to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Officer Domingos joined the Angolan Police Force in 2010 and swiftly climbed through the ranks to become a senior officer.**



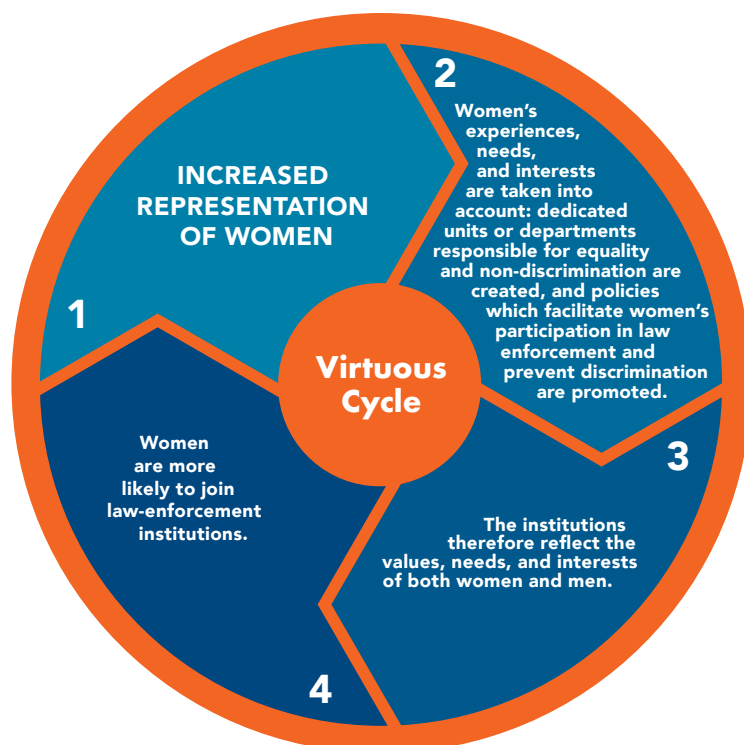
# CREATING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR POLICY CHANGE



## Traditional law-enforcement institutions: a vicious cycle



## A virtuous cycle: how women's participation in law enforcement leads to institutional, infrastructure, and policy change





“ Gender equality is a human right ”

“ World peace begins with inner peace ”

“ Lets speak up ”

“ Lets speak up ”

Each country’s situation is different and comes with its own specific particularities and challenges, but the various different initiatives that have been set up – from dedicated facilities such as washrooms, prayer rooms, and sleeping quarters to policies on childcare or preventing harassment – all contribute to institutional change. Below are just some of the initiatives that have been set up to promote gender equality and non-discrimination in law enforcement.

# FINLAND - FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY IN POLICE STATUTES AND STATIONS

Non-discrimination means the equal treatment of all individuals, regardless of their personal characteristics (age, origin, nationality, language, sexual orientation, etc.). The law prohibits direct and indirect discrimination and harassment, as well as discriminatory job announcements and any instruction or order to discriminate.

The goal is for the police to reflect Finnish society as a whole and they have been working towards this for a long time. The police in Finland have set out a plan defining the administrative bodies that need to be established within the force in order to improve equality and prevent discrimination in Human Resources, policy, and operations. This plan is updated regularly by the national equality and non-discrimination working group, and the measures taken and the progress made toward the objectives are monitored and recorded for comparison.

## Objectives 2021-2023:

- Raising awareness and promoting positive attitudes to gender equality and non-discrimination;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment within the police;
- Improving diversity in recruitment and providing equal career-development opportunities;
- Increasing the number of women in key management positions;
- Removing structural obstacles to diversity in recruitment.

With these objectives in mind, training sessions on discrimination and harassment have been organized for the entire workforce, and local police units also have equality and non-discrimination working groups. Finland also supports women in furthering their careers through long-term career plans set out during performance appraisals. Mentoring and the rotation of

tasks/persons are also encouraged in order to promote skill development, and career stories are used to increase awareness of opportunities within the police. Job postings are worded so as to attract applications from both men and women and equitable recruitment and pay equality for men and women are a priority. Efforts are made to ensure working conditions are suitable for both men and women and working life can be balanced with family life.

There has been a steady increase in the number of women in the police in Finland over recent years, including in chief and senior officer positions.





***“Discrimination or harassment are not tolerated in our working community on any grounds and everyone is responsible for not encouraging discriminating or degrading conduct in our own actions or in those of others.”***

**The Finnish Police Ethical Code**



# ISRAEL - EMPOWERING THROUGH POWER

The Israeli Police Force boasts a larger female component than many other law enforcement bodies due in part to its gender-balanced mandatory military service during which nearly half of the conscripts doing their compulsory service in the Israel Police are women. Among permanent staff, many high-ranking positions are occupied by women including Major General and heads of key departments such as Forensics and Operations. However, the aim of achieving equal representation within the organization has yet to be met.

To accelerate female representation, the Israeli Police Force has recently put in place a Gender Equality section as part of its Communities Branch set up to combat cultural and gender inequality and meet recruitment targets. Its role is to offer guidance on procedures for the advancement of women, organize training and lectures on gender equality, run the Commanders' Forum and He4She campaigns and conduct studies on identifying and tackling obstacles for gender equality. The Section has developed a programme on "Empowering through Power" to provide networking opportunities for female officers including the Senior Female Officers' Forum. Female officers that finished their service are not forgotten and benefit from tools for their professional development.

## Women at the top

**31% Commissioned Officers**  
**17% Commissioned Officers (field units)**  
**55% Commissioned Officers (admin. units)**

**1 Major General**  
**8 Brigade Generals**  
**30 Commanders**

**2021 figures**

Furthermore, a Prevention of Sexual Harassment Section has been set up to foster a safe and respectful work environment, promote involvement and responsibility of commanding officers, advocate holistic treatment of

the victims of harassment and raise awareness of the importance of a culture of prevention.

This initiative is part of a wider movement started in 2019 which introduced measures to cater to different community needs and foster greater cultural competency amongst the police.



## BALANCING TRAINING AND MOTHERHOOD AT THE NATIONAL FEDERAL POLICE ACADEMY IN BRAZIL

Brazilian legislation, in line with international good practice principles, protects female workers by guaranteeing them employment, paid maternity leave, and breastfeeding support. For more than 50 years, the Brazilian police has been working to promote the inclusion of women in the security forces. For example, the National Police Academy, in collaboration with the army and the government, has provided interactive self-defence courses for women police officers, and has created safe spaces for them to share their concerns. These initiatives, along with changes in public perceptions of policing and in society as a whole, have encouraged more women to see law enforcement as a career option.

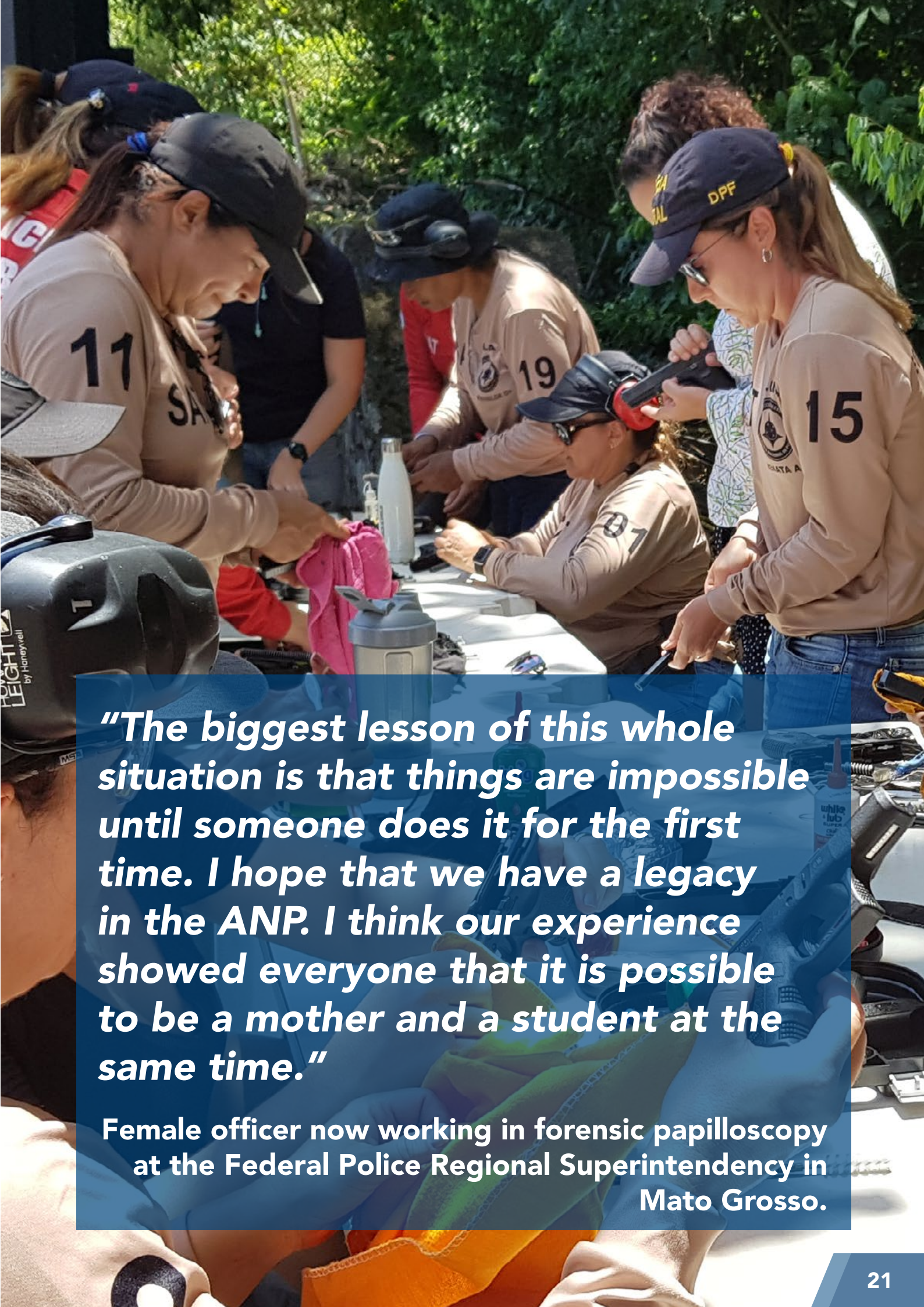
Brazilian Federal Police training courses are intense and require full dedication from students. Those who have completed the 4-month Professional Training Course at the National Police Academy are aware of the demanding routine: early starts, theory classes,

practical exercises, studying, stress, and only few hours' sleep. It is not easy fitting in breastfeeding a baby...

A number of candidates contacted the Academy's Course Execution Service to ask if they could breastfeed during the course. In response to this request, the National Academy of the Federal Police – aware of the importance of motherhood and family cohesion, as well as the World Health Organization's 2022 recommendations regarding breastfeeding – took an unprecedented step. During the Professional Training Course - one of its toughest programmes - they provided a room so mothers could benefit from a calm and private environment to breastfeed their babies or express milk.

Two female officers were the first to benefit from the scheme, and were able to breastfeed their young babies three times a day without interfering with their training or that of the other students. Both remember how challenging it was balancing class attendance with family life.





***“The biggest lesson of this whole situation is that things are impossible until someone does it for the first time. I hope that we have a legacy in the ANP. I think our experience showed everyone that it is possible to be a mother and a student at the same time.”***

**Female officer now working in forensic papilloscopy at the Federal Police Regional Superintendency in Mato Grosso.**

## SOUTH KOREA - A DYNAMIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN TO CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY WEEK

Gender Equality Week has been a regular fixture for the Korea National Police Agency (KNPA) since 2020 but in 2022 the initiative was given new impetus by an eye-catching video declaration led by Commissioner General Yoon Hee Keun underlining the agency-wide commitment to eradicating all forms of gender discrimination at work.

The communication campaign is part of a broader policy aimed to put an end to gender bias in the workplace enshrined in the Framework Act on Gender Equality which was adopted by South Korea in 1995.

One of the equality measures put in place by the Korean National Police Force is the introduction of a physical examination that requires the same standard of fitness for both men and women.

The new fitness test, due to be applied from 2026 onwards, is designed to measure the abilities that police officers require to carry out their daily work. It includes running an obstacle course and carrying a 72 kg human-like doll for 10.7 m, while wearing a 4.2 kg vest corresponding to the typical weight of the equipment carried by officers on duty.

Additionally, the number of female officers rose from 14,327 in 2018 to 18,831 in 2021 which represents a female-to-male ratio of approximately 14 per cent in 2021.

The greater presence of women officers in the force has enabled the KNPA be more responsive to protecting victims and tackling gender-based crimes as well as being better prepared to face diverse emerging threats.



## COSTA RICA - SAFE SPACES FOR WOMEN

The Gender and Access to Justice Unit (*Unidad de Género y Acceso a la Justicia*) was created in 2016 with the aim of eliminating gender gaps in Costa Rica's Judicial Investigation Agency (OIJ) and facilitating access to justice. The unit's work is highly sensitive, and one of its main tasks is to advise, monitor, and assist with establishing and enforcing policies that promote gender equality.

One example is providing a safe space where officers can go to speak about any issues they wish to raise, such as abusive behaviour, sexual harassment, and bullying, and ensuring that the necessary action is taken to resolve them.

The Unit, in conjunction with the Operational Psychological Support Section, has also held a series of awareness-raising talks addressing the psychological and legal consequences of abuse, harassment, and bullying. The aim is to create an environment in which women officers, who are most likely to be the victims of such behaviour, can carry out their work free of sexual harassment. The Unit organized a total of 46 talks between 2021 and 2022.

Other practical measures include the creation of a breastfeeding room in the OIJ building, fully equipped in accordance with the Regulation of Conditions for Breastfeeding Rooms in Work Centres. The OIJ also applies internal rules and regulations to safeguard the health and safety of employees who are pregnant or breastfeeding and to protect the best interests of the child. In addition, areas previously used only by men have been adapted, with the installation of shower facilities, and special bulletproof vests and regulation weapons have been provided for female officers.



## FRANCE – AFNOR CERTIFICATIONS GIVE A BOOST TO DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

The French Ministry of the Interior has been awarded a dual certification in “diversity” and “professional equality between women and men” by AFNOR, the French standards organization. The French police force falls under its scope and the Directorate of Human Resources and Skills of the National Police is consequently leading a large-scale communication campaign to raise awareness about these two certifications. Communication strategies include:


- A toolbox containing reference texts, communication tools (posters, etc.) and methodological advice;
- A national action plan for certification renewal for national police directorates and services including an action plan, benchmark, needs assessment, and programme of action for at least a year;
- “Signal Discri”: a dedicated platform allowing officers to report instances of discrimination;
- Professional equality and diversity labels promoted via the “Objectif Police” platform which connects police e-ambassadors and the public through live chat events.

Training is also crucial to improving diversity and professional equality between women and men, and the Central Directorate of Recruitment and Training of the National Police has made huge investments in this area, using educational kits, applied games such as the South-East National Police initiative AEQUALITAS, and initial and continuous training to raise awareness on issues related to the diversity and professional equality certifications, including verbal and non-verbal communication, respect for ethical values, and dealing with vulnerable victims. Staff from pre-appointment level upwards across a wide range of roles have received training, from administrative, scientific, and technical staff to deputy police officers, police commissioners, and peacekeepers, including new recruits and transfers.

Establishing a network of “equality and diversity ambassadors” has been a key element in this training drive. These ambassadors are present in every directorate and service of the national police, with a central point of contact managing a national network composed of regional and local ambassadors. These ambassadors disseminate policies related to the certifications to all officers, using tools such as dedicated pedagogical kits (face-to-face or e-learning). They also play a leading role in defining and implementing action plans, and pass on important information on international events such as International Women’s Day and the International Day Against Homophobia.

This comprehensive approach hit the ground running in 2021-2022, and is expected to continue and develop in the coming years, beyond the renewal of the AFNOR certifications. The aim is to ensure that staff across the national police force have a thorough understanding of the issues related to diversity and professional equality.





***“I wanted to have a useful job, useful to others, useful to the society, to be in a field of work that serves a certain idea of social justice. All careers are open to women in the police.”***

**Céline BERTHON, Deputy Director General,  
French National Police**



# MENTORING AND PEER-TO PEER SUPPORT



Mentoring and peer-to-peer support are useful tools for career advancement in all professions and policing is no exception. Mentoring and coaching for mid-level women police officers is an effective way of creating pathways for future female leaders and preparing them to take on leadership positions. Many law enforcement agencies use mentoring and leadership programmes to identify and develop the next generation of leaders: the next section presents some examples of such programmes.

Peer-to-peer support among women in law enforcement is also essential. Women officers face unique challenges and having a support network of people who have had similar experiences can provide validation, encouragement, and empowerment. Support from peers can help women officers develop and improve their skills and knowledge through sharing best practices, feedback, and learning from each other's experiences. It can also help to combat feelings of isolation. Having a group of colleagues who understand one another's daily struggles can help to build a sense of community and belonging. These networks of female officers are often at the forefront of promoting women's participation in law enforcement, eliminating discriminatory practices, and paving the way for future generations.



**Female officers in South Africa are part of the unit responsible for the management and maintenance of a bomb disposal capability and national explosives control**

# SARPCCO WOMEN'S NETWORK: GIVING A VOICE TO WOMEN IN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACROSS SOUTHERN AFRICA

The idea for the SARPCCO Women's Network was mooted in 2007 at the 12th Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO) Annual General Meeting in Zambia. The objective was to create a platform to advocate for female officers in police organizations. The network has now expanded from the 12 core members to include all 16 member countries in the region.

It has been instrumental in facilitating women's empowerment and gender parity within the law enforcement agencies of its member states and can boast of a number of key achievements:

- **More women in the police force**

The Botswana Police Service (BPS) has now reached gender parity in terms of recruitment. Since it joined the network, the BPS has seen a steady rise in the number of female recruits and the male-female ratio has shifted from around 70:30 to 50:50 in 2022.

- **More female officers in high-ranking roles**

In 2007, when the Eswatini Police Service became a member of the Women's Network, there were no female officers in commander positions – today the figure stands at 47 per cent.

- **More women in previously male-dominated areas**

The South African Police Service now includes female members in its Special Task Force, for example as snipers or hostage negotiators in terrorist incidents. There is also a higher uptake of women officers in the bomb disposal units and Rapid Response Teams.

- **More female empowerment and emulation**

The SARPCCO Women's Network leveraged its experience to assist the East Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) in establishing its own Women's Network in 2022.

- **More women taking the operational lead**

Female police officers now head anti-crime operations such as Operation BASADI which is carried out annually across all SARPCCO member countries to target violence against women and children.

These achievements did not happen overnight. They are the fruit of considerable efforts to raise awareness and gradually obtain buy-in and support from male officers. However, the Women's Network does - and will continue to - play a pivotal role in empowering women and providing them with the professional skills they need for a successful career in policing. The network is inspiring and preparing the next generation of women leaders while taking a firm stance against gender-based violence.



## COSTA RICA - FEMALE POLICE MENTORING PROGRAMME: FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF “PANCHA” CARRASCO

High-ranking female officers are volunteering to mentor their less experienced counterparts in a pioneering programme aimed at policewomen who belong to the various police forces reporting to the Costa Rican Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Interior. The Programme takes its name from an inspirational figure - “Pancha” Carrasco - Costa Rica’s first female soldier and feminist icon.

The idea for the programme emerged from regional and national meetings of policewomen held in 2018 and 2019. It became clear that junior officers could really benefit from guidance from role models who were able to share first-hand experience and advice on setting career goals and tackling complex professional situations.

The programme focuses on awareness-raising events, direct mentoring actions and the creation of regional networks. It also promotes the importance of sorority among women across different police forces and provides a framework for previously isolated efforts. In 2021, thirteen female mentors facilitated two one-hour sessions a week over a six-month period. The movement is gaining momentum and sixteen participants applied to join in 2022.

Networking activities include Sectorial Meetings of Women Police Officers which are held annually in seven different locations throughout the country, taking into consideration the geographic distribution of police personnel. In addition, national meetings are organized at the end of November, timed to mark the beginning of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

The programme already involves women from different branches of law enforcement but is striving to train more female officers in command positions to become mentors so as to obtain even greater outreach.



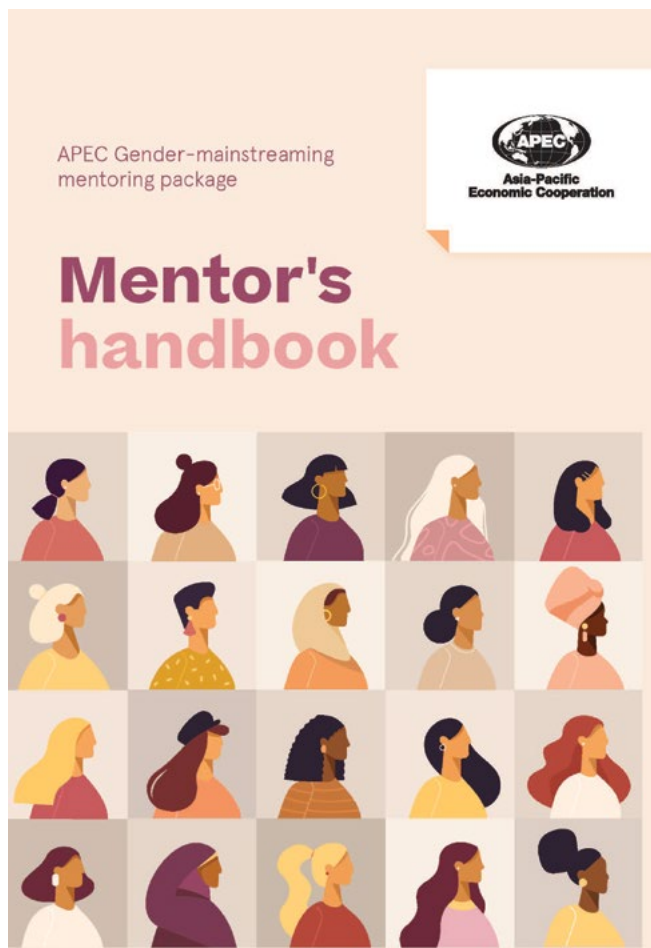
# NEW ZEALAND - A GO-TO HANDBOOK TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN APEC ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCIES

New Zealand's Serious Fraud Office (SFO) has produced a detailed handbook outlining how to implement a mentoring programme for women in corruption agencies across Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member countries. It makes a tangible contribution to 'Enhancing Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment in Fighting Corruption' - a project adopted in 2021 when New Zealand was chair of the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group. It builds on work carried out by Malaysia in 2020 in the framework of the La Serena Roadmap intended to advance women's integration in APEC economies.

The handbook was published in response to the findings of a survey on the level of gender mainstreaming in anti-corruption workplaces, which revealed a degree of gender segregation and the need to support women to

take on leadership roles. More than half of Serious Fraud Office employees are women and the agency is therefore well equipped to make recommendations about female empowerment in the fight against corruption. Its guidelines provide a framework for reference that can be adapted to suit the relevant cultural and legislative environment.

The handbook is a key component of the Mentoring for Women Training Package informed by research and the conclusions of a three-day virtual symposium attended by a panel of international experts in gender mainstreaming.



## NORTH MACEDONIA - TRIALLING MIXED, GENDER MENTORSHIP IN THE NORTH MACEDONIAN POLICE FORCE

The percentage of women in the North Macedonian police is relatively small – currently 18 per cent - but this figure is on the increase. The value of including more women in public security to help address societal needs and the positive impact of women on the communities they serve are clearly acknowledged at government level. The Department for Common Affairs and Human Resources and the Women's Section of the Macedonian Police Trade Union in the Ministry of Interior have been partnering with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to implement a Gender Mentoring Programme since 2018.

The programme is designed to strengthen solidarity among female officers and facilitate mutual support through experience sharing and networking. Officers are given the opportunity to develop their skills, improve their personal and professional relationships and boost their self-confidence. The programme also studies the interplay between law enforcement and gender issues and how this can be manifested in everyday policing. Up until 2021, 106 female officers - acting as both mentors

and mentees - had benefited from the programme which is designed to help women carve out their rightful place in a male-dominated environment. Participants in the Programme are also trained in public speaking and academic writing skills so as to communicate more effectively on this important issue and contribute to the increased presence of women in law enforcement in the country.

The approach has proved effective in promoting female empowerment and women are rising through the ranks to occupy key positions such as police station commander or head of the Police Training Centre.

The third generation of mentors and mentees joined the programme in 2022. However, unlike previous intakes, male officers were recruited in both roles. Extending the programme to male officers led to a greater understanding of the concept of gender, a more gender-sensitive attitude and awareness of gender bias in the workplace.



**Men mentoring women and vice versa fosters a culture of inclusion.**

## HELPING WOMEN CONNECT BEYOND BOUNDARIES ACROSS THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION

The Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) is continuing to work at the forefront of building gender equality and women's leadership within Australia, New Zealand and across the Pacific region by means of its "Balance" programme. It has recently added a virtual module to the existing programme suite as an alternative to the residential course held in Sydney. Initially created in response to the Covid pandemic, it has clearly proved its value in helping women connect beyond their geographical boundaries.

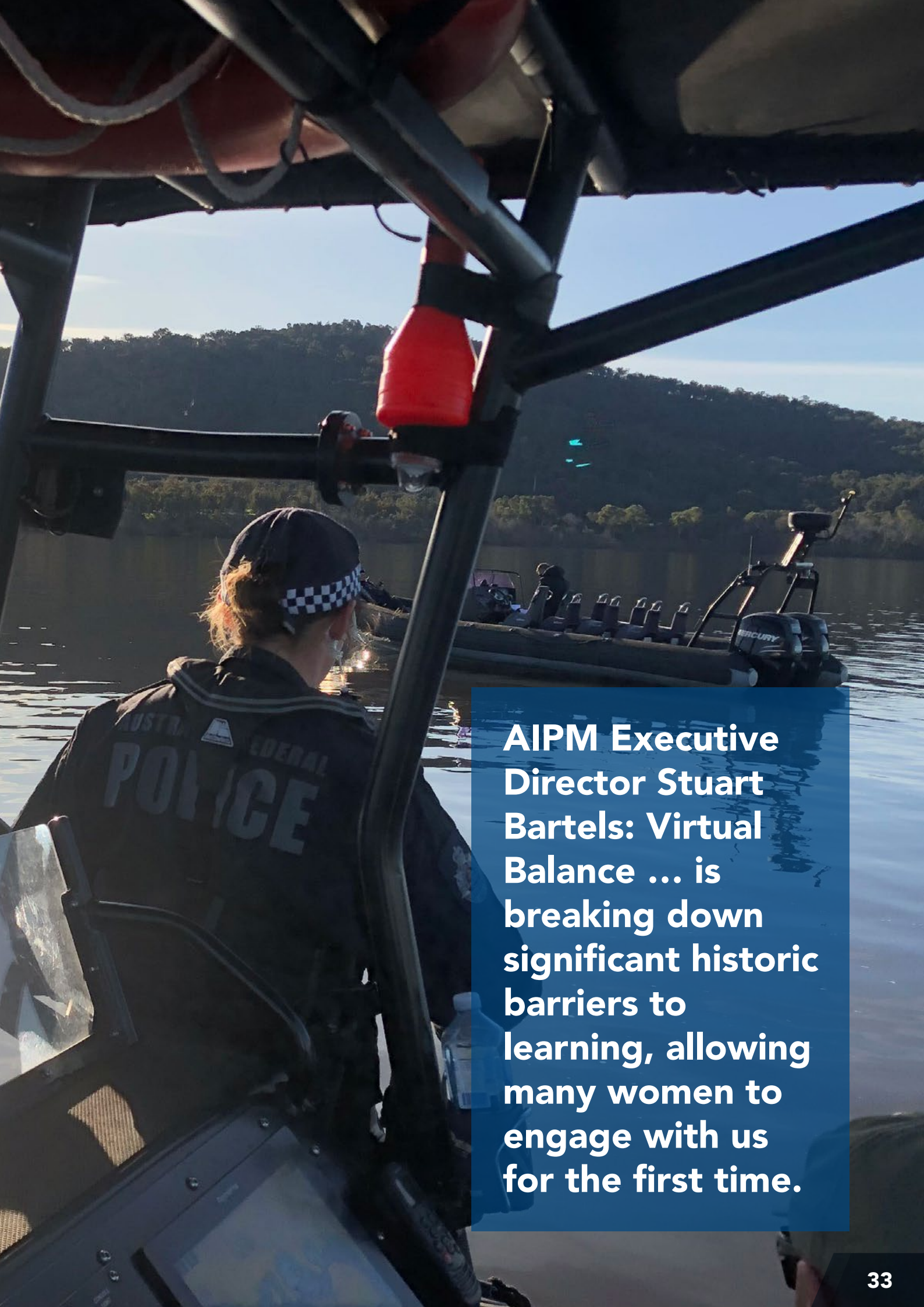
Since its inception in 2015, hundreds of women from policing, law enforcement and emergency service agencies have followed the Balance programme. Participants gain the opportunity to explore their own leadership style in the context of gender and culture. Programme surveys show 87 per cent of participants felt better equipped to establish networks and professional relationships after completing the programme, while survey respondents unanimously agreed it was extremely beneficial to their leadership development.

Another dimension of the AIPM's work to champion gender equality concerns its Pacific Faculty which works with 22 Pacific nations to develop their future police leaders. Programmes specifically addressing women include two iterations of a Pacific Senior Women's Executive Development Strategy (PSWEDS), the Pacific Balance Programme and a Pacific Women in Leadership programme which is currently under development. Gender-specific programmes are not the only way to tackle the issue of gender balance, work is also carried out with the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police to ensure that all of the programmes delivered have a blend of gender to enhance the quality of learning. The AIPM is also partnering with Australian Border Force to deliver bespoke gender-based programmes for Indonesian police officers across a range of agencies in Indonesia.

To promote more gender inclusiveness, the AIPM gives selected female candidates an opportunity to attend the residential programme via a Balance scholarship through the Australian Council of Women and Policing (ACWAP) while the Pacific Faculty sponsors the excellence in law enforcement award in the Asia Pacific Region.



Participants at a recent PSWEDS course



**AIPM Executive Director Stuart Bartels: Virtual Balance ... is breaking down significant historic barriers to learning, allowing many women to engage with us for the first time.**

## MALE POLICE OFFICERS CHAMPIONING CHANGE

The role of male officers should not be underplayed: men still occupy the majority of management positions and are therefore key agents of change. They can be instrumental in creating a safe and inclusive environment and providing support. This can lead to positive institutional change and reduce negative attitudes. In interviews INTERPOL conducted with high-ranking female officers, male champions were identified as a critical element in access to promotion opportunities.

The examples below show several countries where male officers have taken steps to engage fellow officers in raising awareness and advocating for diversity and inclusion in law enforcement, and combatting all forms of gender-based violence.



South Korea National Police Agency





## MEN FOR CHANGE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Men for Change (MFC) is a non-statutory voluntary body within the South African Police Service (SAPS). Established in 2004 by the Women's Network Structure, its role is to advocate for gender equality and promote changes in attitudes, values, and behaviour in order to create a culture of respect for all. Its members work to address the gender stereotypes that contribute to unfair discrimination in the workplace and in society as a whole. The organization is made up of male volunteers, and it puts the focus on men, encouraging them to be agents of change in dealing with gender stereotypes and the patriarchal systems that perpetuate women's rights violations and gender-based violence.

Men for Change operates across the country in all provinces up to station level. It provides support for women within the South Africa Police Service Network (SAPSN) and for women and girls in communities. It also works to raise awareness of gender-based violence in South African communities, hosting conferences, forums, and discussions to address this scourge. It also organizes outreach programmes for disadvantaged communities across South Africa in collaboration with the SAPS Women's Network. One of the biggest success stories to emerge from the MFC has been the declaration of "ukuthwala" as a criminal offence and its inclusion in the trafficking in Persons Act. This change was achieved as a result of an awareness campaign led by the SAPS and stakeholders in the community.



**'ukuthwala', or the bride abduction custom is now legally considered to be human trafficking.**

***"It is our duty as MFC to utilize men as change agents in achieving gender transformation in our workplaces and beyond."***

**Colonel Sivuyile Nqaphi, National Chairperson,  
Men for Change**



## HeForShe – MAKING GENDER EQUALITY THE NEW NORMAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Support for the HeForShe movement has spread throughout UK policing since it was introduced in 2017, with each of the 45 individual forces making the following three commitments:

- **Addressing gender imbalance in middle management teams.**

Men are overrepresented in middle management (the ranks of Sergeant and Inspector) across all police forces in the UK. Forces are working together to gain a genuine understanding of the barriers that prevent women officers being promoted and improve the promotions process to remove these barriers. Many women lack the confidence to apply for a promotion, and a HeForShe Development Programme has been set up to support women officers in this area.

- **Eliminating sexism and misogyny in police culture.**

HeForShe cultural change workshops have been organized to address the sexism and misogyny that exist within police culture. They give teams the opportunity to discuss gender inequality in policing, to learn from each other's lived experiences, and to encourage individuals to change their mindset and their ideas about women in policing. This initiative is strongly linked to the work

carried out by forces to combat violence against women and girls and ensure that women feel safe both within the police and in the wider community.

- **Providing annual reporting on gender equality**

For the past four years, the UK police has produced an annual report on gender equality in policing. The report contains data on the gender balance in each force, as well as examples of good practice. The publication of this report means that forces can be held to account, and it also acts a catalyst for action, as forces see how others are working towards gender equality and are motivated to improve. The report is supported by regular events where forces share key activities and present examples of good practice.

A network of HeForShe Allies has also been set up throughout UK policing. HeForShe Allies recognize the gender imbalance within the police and the communities they serve, and act to address these issues and make standing up for gender equality the new normal. Aside from the direct effect of their day-to-day work, they also inspire others and encourage them to take action.



Chief Constable Carl Foulkes (left), UK Policing Lead for HeForShe and Director General Graeme Biggar (right) from the National Crime Agency at the official HeForShe London launch event in July 2022.



# Gender Equality in UK Policing

Fourth Annual Report 2022



[www.heforshe.org](http://www.heforshe.org)



In support of

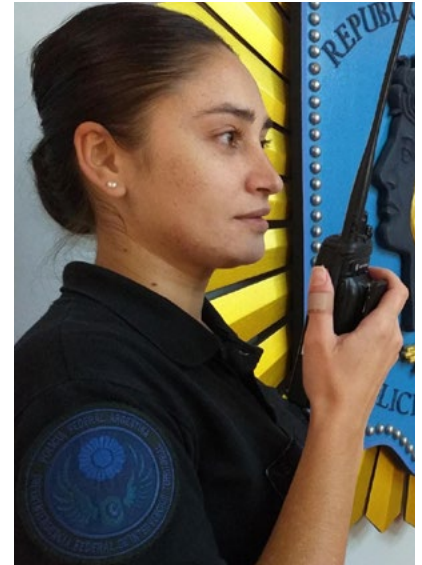
**HeForShe**

UN Women Solidarity Movement  
for Gender Equality



# PHOTO SECTION

## ARGENTINA



Keeping an eye on every nook of the streets. The Argentinian Federal Police ensures the safety of the public through round-the-clock surveillance using a state-of-the-art facility.

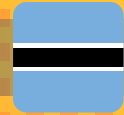
A female officer ready to heed the call of public service.

## BOLIVIA



Administrative Resolution No. 0047/2021 created the Gender Unit of the Bolivian Police General Command, whose objective is to strengthen the process of gender mainstreaming in the Bolivian Police, to avoid situations of discrimination and exclusion of female police officers. The unit is also responsible for complaints filed with the Special Force to Combat Violence and the Departmental Directorate of Police Investigation against police officers for acts of violence. The Unit follows-up on these cases with the purpose of ensuring that there is no bias on the part of the investigative bodies.

# BOTSWANA



Women police officers are involved in various specialized areas such as piloting, the dog handling section (K9) or the Special Working and Tactics Unit (SWAT)

# CHILE



In 2022, Chile's National Investigation Police had 35 per cent female officers in its ranks

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



Border control is a key control mechanism to prevent and detect criminal activity. INTERPOL provides member countries with access to its Mobile INTERPOL Network Device (MIND), an essential tool to fight transnational organized crime. In Central Africa, the training of female officers in the use of the system and the detection of fraudulent documents is an important component of supporting the development of the border management agency.

## COLOMBIA



Within the National Police, many women have worn their uniforms with commitment. Women who infiltrated subversive groups or drug cartels for years, until their leaders were captured; women pilots who have flown to rescue operational groups of the National Police or the Colombian Army, as well as women who have died tragically in fulfillment of their vocation to defend the life, honor and property of Colombians.

## ESTONIA



Although 43 per cent of Estonian police staff are female, male-dominated police units still exist. Mirjam Männamaa is an Estonian police officer, who has worked in such units. She was - and still is - the only female motorcycle patrol officer.

@Reelika Riimand, photographer for Police and Border Guard Board, Estonia.

## ECUADOR



The National Police was the first armed institution to allow women to join its ranks. The Motorized Operations Group trains women in the use and handling of their motorcycle for various real-life scenarios.



## GREECE



Representing about 13 per cent of the staff, women in the Hellenic Police receive equal treatment to their male colleagues when it comes to recruitment, training, working hours, payment and gear they are entitled to carry. Greece is one of the few countries in Europe in which the career of women in the national police force is not restricted. As early as 2002, the Hellenic Police Force boasted a female Major General, a first in Europe.

## MOROCCO



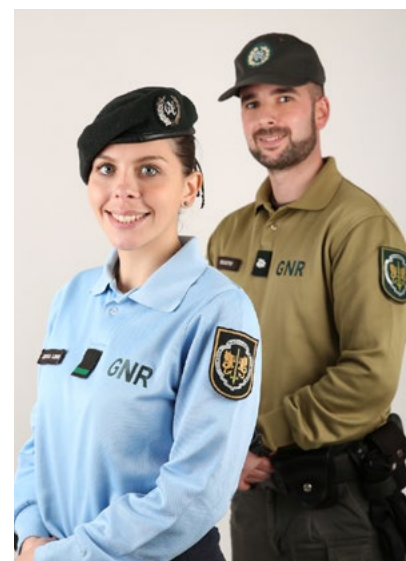
Female police officers are present in all areas of security in Morocco with key roles in specialized scientific and technical policing, cybercrime and information systems, K9 teams, the motorcycle police, the mounted police, command operation rooms for patrols and rescue, and in the protection and guarding of female prisons.

## POLAND



Any citizen of the Republic of Poland, regardless of sex, age, religious denomination or membership of minority groups, can apply to join the police service. All candidates are subject to the same rules and the same assessment criteria for the various stages of the qualification procedure. Over the period 2018-2022, women accounted for an average of 35 per cent of all candidates for service in the police. The number of women admitted to the service has doubled over the past 20 years, from 9,817 in 2002 to 18,486 in 2022.

## PORTUGAL



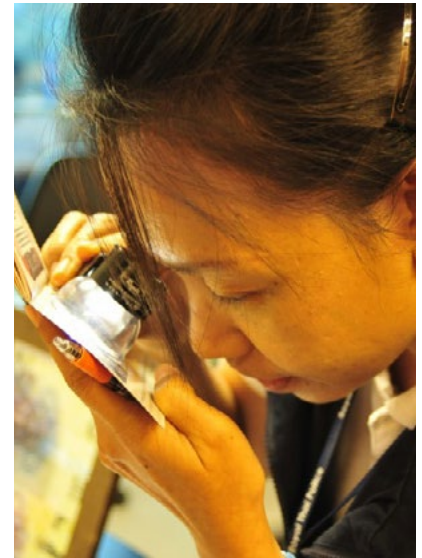
Both women and men are an integral part of the National Republican Guard. They work side by side in the Nature and Environment Protection Service to tackle environmental crime.



In the recently established Centre of Excellence in Cybercrimes and Digital Forensics of the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, postgraduate programmes in cybercrime and digital forensics investigation were launched to train officers to combat cybercrime in the Arab region. The first intake commenced in September 2021 and women make up 60 per cent of the cohort.



# THAILAND

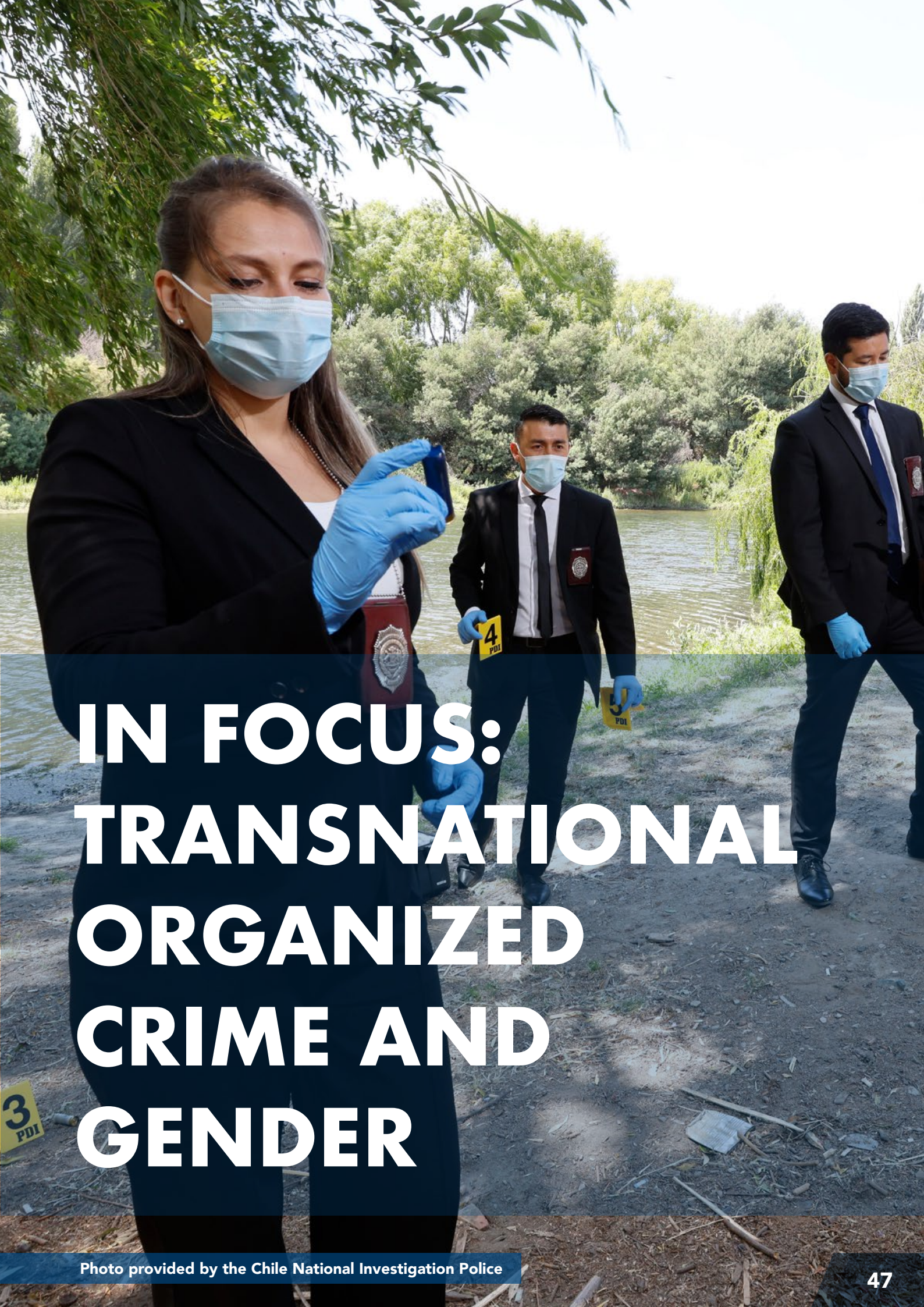


Female officers of the Immigration Police at Suvarnabhumi Airport are regularly trained on document examination, passenger risk assessment, interview techniques and practices.

# ZIMBABWE



Constable Elizabeth Mapomba campaigning against drug and substance abuse in Harare, Zimbabwe



# IN FOCUS: TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME AND GENDER

Policing with a gender perspective should not only be inward-looking, it is also crucial to understanding the gendered dynamics of organized crime and how gender considerations shape men and women's experiences of crime and criminal justice. The following examples show how this approach can help to develop effective strategies to combat transnational organized crime.

## CANADA - FEMALE-LED "CARE" TEAM FIGHTS THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Toronto Police Service CARE – Children At Risk of Exploitation – initiative is one of a number of projects launched to tackle the growing threat of human trafficking. The majority of cases reported in Ontario involve the sexual exploitation of women and girls although boys, men and people who identify as LGBTQ2S+ are also targeted.

The CARE Team is comprised of more than 80 per cent female officers who bring a wealth of experience from across the organization. Police investigators are paired with child protection workers creating new multi-disciplinary police and child protection intervention teams, focusing on at-risk and exploited children and youth. Cooperating with community-led initiatives is an important aspect of the CARE team's job and they are keen to organize young women empowerment workshops.

The team's mandate is to:

- Identify and locate at-risk children and youth aged 12-17;
- Engage children and youth to gather intelligence on offenders;
- Carry out preventive action;
- Provide support to victims, including transportation to a place of safety;
- Assist in the prosecution of offenders;
- Advocate for policies and procedures aligned with human trafficking strategies;
- Arrange training for external organizations.

This initiative falls under the umbrella of a dedicated five-year anti-human trafficking plan representing an investment of 307 million dollars.



## GHANA - FEMALE OFFICERS JOIN GHANA'S RAPID RESPONSE UNITS

Recent intelligence points to a marked rise in women's involvement in transnational crime along Ghana's borders which includes human trafficking, people smuggling, drug trafficking and money laundering. At the same time, women police officers are increasingly being deployed along the borders in frontline roles.

To help the military and police tackle volatile situations along Ghana's often porous borders, the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) has set up special Rapid Response Units with both male and female recruits. Female officers follow the same training as their male counterparts, learning about weapon handling, the identification of trafficking networks and the arrest and detention of offenders.

Recruiting more women has been identified as a priority as the current male to female ratio stands at 64 per cent to 36 per cent. The GIS regularly organizes workshops for schools and communities to provide insights into emerging crime trends and highlight career opportunities for women in law enforcement. Many initiatives target younger women to help them overcome ingrained cultural stereotypes and be more aware of the career paths open to them.

***Women prepare for active duty at the Huhunya Counter-Terrorism Training Camp.***



## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: PROVIDING SERVICES THAT MEET CITIZENS' NEEDS

Gender-based violence is a security threat in all countries and on all continents, and every police station in the world has almost certainly been confronted with cases at some point. This form of violence is frequently committed in the home, and statistics show that women are most often the victims. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, or sexual violence by a non-partner, at some point in their lives. In extreme cases of gender-based violence, victims can end up losing their lives. Law enforcement agencies have a duty to protect those who may find themselves victims of such violence.

There is no catch-all solution to gender-based violence. It can only be tackled with initiatives adapted to the local context and a commitment from law enforcement officers to prevent and prosecute these crimes and protect victims. As can be seen from the following reports, agencies in various countries have established a range of different strategies to tackle these crimes: using technology to prevent and report criminal acts,

changing the penal code and operational procedures, setting up specialized services to protect victims, and campaigning to encourage those who have experienced violence to come forward.



***According to the WHO, an estimated 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, or sexual violence by a non-partner, at some point in their lives.***



## SWEDEN - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: TAKING A SERIOUS CRIME SERIOUSLY

Despite its severe consequences, domestic and gender-based violence have historically been regarded as family matters. Thus, preventive efforts have not been sufficiently pursued and perpetrators have not been brought to justice to the extent possible. The Swedish Police Authority in the Stockholm Metropolitan Area has recently launched an initiative to prompt crucial changes in attitudes as concerns domestic and gender-based violence, among law enforcement personnel as well as the general public, as a means to emphasise and combat all forms of violence, and reduce impunity.

The initiative is based on law enforcement methods that have proven successful in targeting organised crime and criminal gangs. Investigation focuses on the perpetrator rather than the victim, pinpointing in particular offenders with a repeat history of violence against partners or other family members. The investigative “toolbox” entails methods to prevent and tackle organised crime, such as secret coercive measures, analytical mapping models and liaising with local community organisations. A forensic coordinator is systematically contacted in suspected cases of domestic violence to ensure that all forensic evidence is properly collected and evaluated. Experienced police negotiators are brought on board to convince perpetrators of domestic violence to join schemes similar to the “defector” programmes targeting gang members, with the involvement of psychologists, social services and a dedicated centre

for domestic violence. In parallel, a carefully targeted communication campaign was launched to tackle the ingrained reluctance to report suspected cases of domestic violence to the police.

Emphasising in words and action the fact that these forms of violence are nothing less than serious crimes, has had a crucial impact on mindsets within the police force. More adequate handling and investigation methods have now become routine. Initial results from the pilot initiative have been remarkable, with a significant reduction in the number of reported repeat offenses.

Changing attitudes inevitably takes time, but the results of the Stockholm Police’s initiative are encouraging, showing the effects of an internal shift on external law enforcement work.



***A ‘toolbox’ capitalises on methods successfully applied to organised crime to focus on the perpetrator rather than the victim.***

# MONGOLIA - PROTECTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN

In today's digital era, children are more vulnerable than ever, and pandemic restrictions have exacerbated the situation. The Mongolian Police has therefore taken drastic measures to improve its capacity to deal with children in need of care and protection.

In 2020, the National Police Agency established a division to combat Domestic Violence and Crimes against Children, and the Police Investigation Department set up a division specializing in the investigation of child delinquency and crimes committed by children. Every local police department has a Child Protection Officer, and the Domestic Violence and Crimes against Children division provides professional guidance for these officers across the country. Most importantly, 70 per cent of all police officers dealing with children in need of care and protection are women.

The division's main responsibilities are:

- Organizing crime prevention and awareness-raising campaigns on domestic violence and crimes against children;
- Providing professional guidance for local police departments on preventing domestic violence and crimes against children;
- Monitoring the implementation of legislation on the protection of children's rights and the prevention of domestic violence and crimes against children;
- Collaborating with relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations who work in child protection and domestic violence.

Since it was launched, the new division has rolled out eight national awareness-raising campaigns on domestic violence and crimes against children. Officers have identified 1,254 minors who are victims of domestic violence, and have taken measures to protect them in accordance with the law.



# ZAMBIA - VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT COMBATS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The Victim Support Unit (VSU) in Zambia was established by an Act of Parliament in 1999. As of February 2023, around 400 officers work in VSUs, across all police stations and posts. These units provide professional counselling to victims of crime, and protect citizens from all forms of abuse. They offer physical protection, receive reports, arrest suspects, investigate gender-based crimes, and provide victims with counselling and referral services so they can access shelters and medical facilities.

One of the responsibilities of the Victim Support Unit is to compile quarterly and annual statistical reports on gender-based violence. This information is shared with government departments and other stakeholders, including the United Nations Family, to inform policies and evidence-based planning and to devise strategies to combat gender-based violence.

A range of improvements has been made to data collection and collation in order to better counter these crimes:

- Quarterly reporting to facilitate the monitoring of trends and patterns across the year;
- A new data classification format sorting data by gender and age to improve understanding of gender-based crime;
- Inclusion of data on counselling to raise awareness of counselling services among victims and police, thus increasing referrals.

Training is a crucial element in data collection, as officers must understand what constitutes gender-based violence if they are to record it as such. Staff in various provinces are currently being trained on the use of the database and reporting templates. Training is also key in reporting: anecdotal evidence suggests that victims may be reluctant to come forward due to unprofessional conduct by front desk officers. A network of 468

Single Points of Contact has been established across all ten provinces; they are responsible for receiving and registering crime reports and referring victims or those reporting on their behalf to the VSUs. These officers are currently receiving training on issues such as confidentiality, in order to increase the reporting of gender-based crimes. Finally, a gender-based violence Training Manual for police officers is being finalized and will be provided during Basic Training. It will also be used to train other partners working on gender-based violence during multi-disciplinary training sessions.



## SOUTH ASIA - FIRST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN CENTRE (VAWC) OPENS IN PAKISTAN

The Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act was passed in 2016 to combat the epidemic of violence in Punjab.

The aim was to combat all forms of violence against women via the following measures:

- Extensive awareness-raising campaigns
- Free helpline for victims
- District women police officers appointed to VAWCs
- Rescue services
- The creation of a district-level women's protection committee.

As part of the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act, South Asia's first VAWC was officially opened in Multan on 25 March 2017. The centre has 60 staff members, with women working across all departments, including district police officers. The VAWC houses a number of departments under one roof: police, prosecution, health, meditation, rehabilitation, and a shelter home and the services it offers are all

free of charge. As a single case may be dealt with by multiple departments, the Punjab Women's Protection Authority has developed referral software to improve communication between departments and ensure smooth transitions between the various VAWC services, thus facilitating case management within departments as well as in the VAWC as a whole.

Its major functions include:

- Case registration and referrals between VAWC departments
- Separate portals for all VAWC departments
- One-click report generation for cases
- Graphical representation of general data trends
- Forms and customized templates for case reporting.

The VAWC is also using artificial intelligence-based models to examine the data collected via the VAWC software in order to identify emerging trends and their causes and inform the policy-making process.

**8,690 cases of violence against women, mostly domestic violence, have been recorded since the VAWC was established. Reporting has also increased, with registered cases increasing from 1,436 in 2017 to 2,203 in 2021.**

# SOUTHERN AFRICA - GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE FIRING LINE IN

Operation Basadi is the operational response to a policy to crack down on gender-based violence in Southern Africa and encourage more female law enforcement officers to take a leading role. This large-scale operation takes place twice a year simultaneously across 16 countries and is overseen by the Southern Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO). There has been an impressive number of arrests for gender-based and related crimes since the operation was launched in 2013. Fifty criminals were apprehended in 2021 despite the constraints of Covid and difficult weather conditions.

Lesotho is a proactive member of this operation and has enjoyed some successful outcomes. It has chosen to identify and deploy female and male officers with a ratio of 7:3 to ensure more women are represented and occupy leading positions during execution of operation Basadi.

Many violent crimes against women and children take place in close-knit communities and it is not unusual for victims to withdraw their complaints at the last minute. However, the Lesotho Mounted Police Service is determined to improve on public awareness targeting vulnerable groups from remote areas. Intention is to sensitize potential victims about the ills of violence against women and children, the importance of reporting cases of Gender Based Violence, discourage them from withdrawing their complaints as such has a negative impact of exacerbating acts of abuse and motivates perpetrators' behavior to remain the same.

## Arrests during Operation Basadi (2021)

- 3 - Abduction
- 31 - Rape
- 13 - Assault
- 1 - Human Trafficking/Kidnapping
- 2 - Murder



***Basadi means 'women' in Setswana, one of the main languages spoken in Southern Africa.***

## THIS IS NOT LOVE: BREAKING THE CODE OF SILENCE

The Central Anticrime Service (SCA) of the Central Anticrime Directorate (DCA) collects data on gender-based violence from all Italian police stations across the country. The analyses carried out are used to identify patterns and trends and formulate recommendations for the preventive measures put in place by the provincial police authorities.

Violence against women is a complex phenomenon and effective police action is often hampered by the conflicting loyalties of the victims. This type of violence occurs in every stratum of society but is characterized by victims' reluctance to speak out, partially due to fear, but also a tendency to justify the aggressive behaviour of partners and ex-partners. When victims do seek help from the police, they need time to be able to process their experience.

The Italian state police is attempting to change attitudes by means of a novel campaign which has been running for the past five years. Entitled This is not love, it is intended to reassure victims and encourage them to come forward and report abuse. Law enforcement and specialist psychologists joined forces on the campaign which uses both on- and offline channels of communication including messages printed on shopping bags.

A dedicated website is available to share advice and publicize the initiatives taken by the state police which include therapy to prevent re-offending.

**The statistics speak for themselves. In 2021, 89 gender-based violent crimes were reported every day.**



***"Silence helps the abuser, never the victim."***

**Chief of Police-Director General of Public Security  
- on the occasion of the International Day for the  
Elimination of Violence against Women.**

# HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIA

Women's safety on public transport has long been a concern for law enforcement authorities in India, due to the high incidence of sexual harassment and assault women experience when travelling. In an effort to tackle this security challenge, many states across India are using technology to improve reporting and prevent sexual and gender-based violence on public transport.

The Haryana Police has launched the "Durga Shakti app", a fast-response mechanism that enables women to contact the police in an emergency via a Women's Helpline. Any woman or girl who finds herself in trouble can send her details and GPS location to the Woman's Helpline for the district via WhatsApp simply by pushing a red button on the app, and a team from the nearest police station will then be dispatched to help out. The police can use the app to send messages and tips about women's safety and security to users. It is now being used in other Indian states such as Rajasthan, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh.

**The Nirbhaya case was a particularly brutal gang rape which took place in 2012. The victim did not survive. The press named the victim Nirbhaya - the fearless one.**

Another recent initiative is the Nirbhaya Squad, launched in September 2021, which aims to prevent sexual harassment in public places across Mumbai. Each squad


consists of specially trained officers, a woman officer, two constables, at least one of them a woman, and a driver. These squads identify and patrol crime hotspots, isolated locations, and areas where women's hostels and shelters are located. The squads also run training sessions in schools and colleges and set up Nirbhaya complaints boxes for female students to report any issues.

*"The Nirbhaya Squad is being set up with the aim of creating a sense of respect for women in society and creating fear of the law, as well as to curb harassment against women."*

**Mumbai Police Commissioner  
Hemant Nagrale**

Finally, Aparajitha is online! This initiative was launched by the Kerala police to combat the online harassment of women and girls. It is a quick-response mechanism for grievance redressal, and was introduced in the wake of the Covid-19 lockdown when people were more active online and cyber-harassment was on the rise. There are specially trained female officers in every police station, and they collaborate with cyber cells, District Cyber Cells, Hi-Tech Cells, and the Cyber Dome to identify and locate offenders and pursue legal action while maintaining the confidentiality of victims and their families.





**THOUGHT  
LEADERSHIP:  
HIGH-RANKING  
WOMEN OFFICERS  
ON RESHAPING  
THE NARRATIVE**



Looking back even just fifty years, great strides have been made in gender equality across the world, and this has also affected gender parity in policing. How much of this phenomenon has translated into changes in opportunities and support for women and their role in the police force?

Here are accounts from five outstanding women leaders in policing who reflect on their own journeys, how things used to be and how they are evolving, as well as the part they play in encouraging women in the force.



**Major-Gen. Anne-Marie Nainda, Deputy Inspector-General responsible for administration, Namibian Police Force**

*As a young girl, I wondered why so few women chose a career in the police, so out of curiosity, I applied. On 1 April 2017, I became the first female police Deputy Inspector General and the first female Major-General, a historic appointment in my country.*



Photo was taken in July 2022

**Assistant Commissioner of Police (AC) Fanny Koh, head of the Public Transport Security Command (TransCom) with the Singapore Police Force (SPF)**

*The specialist unit I lead is mostly made up of young men who are completing their military service, and its role is to protect Singapore's public land transport networks against security threats and to support the SPF in its mission to prevent, deter, and detect crime.*



**Lt Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi, Director General of the International Affairs Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, United Arab Emirates**

*I am a law enforcement professional, and I am in charge of the Ministry's international collaboration agenda. I work closely with law enforcement agencies and international organizations operating within the UAE and abroad, and I head the Secretariat of the International Security Alliance (ISA), which brings together 10 Interior Ministries from across the world to collaborate on a range of security issues. I also serve as Chief Executive of the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities, a faith-based non-governmental organization based in Geneva.*



**Principal Commissioner Alicia Malo Sanchez, Head of the International Cooperation Division, Spain**

*Thirty-three years ago, in September 1990, having just finished my degree in Spanish Language, Literature, and Linguistics, I passed the entrance exam and was admitted to the National Police Academy in Ávila. I was twenty-three years old. I studied to become a Police Inspector completing the course in 1993. Bearing in mind the fact that women were only admitted into the National Police in 1978, at that time there was still not much of a female presence in the force. In 2020 I became the first woman to head the International Cooperation Division of the Spanish National Police, the main body in charge of international police cooperation.*

**Tanya Varela, General Commander  
of the Ecuador Police**

*After graduating, my father wanted me to study at university to become an economist. However, on 3 September 1983, when I was just 17 years old, I saw an advertisement in a newspaper: a call to be part of the second intake of female officers. The advertisement featured Colonel Teresa Carranza, the first woman to wear a police uniform in my country. The image of this beautiful woman in her impeccable uniform made a great impression on me, and at that moment I said to myself: "that is for me". My decision to enter General Alberto Enriquez Gallo High School in 1984 took my parents by surprise, but they were completely supportive. I graduated in 1987 and, at the age of 20, I began working in an institution where there were only 12 other women.*

*"I love field work. Over the course of my career, I have shown that I am not just a desk officer, and my staff respect me for that. I have held various positions, including Head of the Police Commissariat, Head of Crime Georeferencing, Director of the Guayaquil Women's Training School, Director of the Police Hospital, and Commander of the Central District and the Guayas Sub-district."*

**Tanya Varela, General Commander  
of the Ecuador Police**

# THE CONVERSATION

How did your policing journey begin and where are you on that journey today?

## Assistant Commissioner Koh

*I have enjoyed a varied and challenging career since I joined the Singapore Police Force in 1998 – a choice motivated by the desire to explore the many facets of Singaporean society and to avoid being trapped in a desk job. Since then I have spent a fulfilling 24 years in the force! Along the way, I have held several key positions, including:*

- > Deputy Commander of the Protective Security Command;*
- > Deputy Director of the Training and Capability Development Department;*
- > Assistant Director of the Major Security Events Division of the Operations Department;*
- > Deputy Director of Operations Policy, Security Policy and Development Directorate in the Joint Operations Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs;*
- > Head of Operations and Training in the Ang Mo Kio Police Division;*
- > Head of Operations Development in the Criminal Investigation Department.*

## Major-Gen. Nainda

*I am something of a pioneer, as I joined my local police force when I was just 18 years old. There were few female role models at that time, and as a child I can only remember seeing one female police officer in the area where I lived. Enlisting with the Namibian Police Force was an unusual career choice – and a brave one.*

*Throughout my career I have passed an impressive number of milestones, culminating with my historic appointment as Deputy Inspector General.*

*1996 - First female member of NCB INTERPOL, Windhoek, Desk Officer on Drugs, Protected Resources, Vehicle Crime, Firearms, Fraud and Stock Theft;*

*2003 - First female NAMPOL officer to be seconded to the INTERPOL Regional Bureau in Harare as a Specialized officer on Violent Crimes, Fugitives, and Regional Training Desks;*

*2007 - First female Regional/Provincial Commander of the Oshikoto Region;*

*2014 - Deputy Commissioner of the SADC Police Component of the Observer Mission in Lesotho and Contingent Commander of NAMPOL*

*2017 - First female police Deputy Inspector General and Major-General.*

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

### Major-Gen. Nainda

*I have been instrumental in establishing and developing networks and activities for women, both nationally and at a regional level. In my advisory capacity I engage with police institutions at the relevant level on issues pertaining to professional development and the inclusion of women across all programmes. I lead and support initiatives from female officers, both formally and informally. I also look out for talent and engage with women on self-development and career decisions.*

### Assistant Commissioner Koh

*I served as Deputy Commander of the Inter-Agency Task Force to support Singapore's Cross-Government efforts to manage COVID-19 in migrant worker dormitories. This role involved public order duties and overseeing the care and well-being of dormitory residents.*

## OVERCOMING DISCRIMINATION

### General Commander Varela

*The perception of women's work within the institution has definitely changed since I took the first steps along my career path. In the past, women's only role was as secretaries to police chiefs; however, over time we have shown that we are perfectly capable of performing in any field. I consider that women are not in the National Police to compete with men, but to work with them in order to achieve the goals set by the institution. Moreover, women have a greater aptitude for dealing with social problems, which is why we must be in the streets working with the*

*community across all areas. My goal is to raise my colleagues' self-esteem and confidence. I believe that a policewoman must maintain her femininity, and that pregnant women must have a suitable working environment. There is no point talking about gender equity if we do not put it into practice.*

### General Commander Varela

*Female police officers are respected and valued for their profession in Spanish society, and over recent years it has become increasingly common to see women in the police. Law Enforcement agencies are a reflection of the society they protect, and Spanish society has evolved to the point where not only are women accepted in the police, but their role in police work is considered necessary. The numbers of women in the police has increased in recent years as society has moved closer to achieving equality. In the Spanish police, women and men are treated equally, especially in the areas of recruitment, professional promotion, training, and working conditions - in accordance with the principles of equal opportunities, merit, ability, and seniority.*

### Lt Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi

*Since I joined the Ministry of the Interior over 10 years ago, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of female colleagues being appointed to leadership and decision-making positions within their respective fields. This has been driven by a directive from the very top of the Ministry which aims to increase diversity, inclusivity, and gender equality across all police forces in the UAE, and it has been hugely exciting to be part of this transformation.*

## INCENTIVISING WOMEN IN POLICING

### Principal Commissioner Sanchez

*As a woman who works in a Law Enforcement Agency, I feel it is my duty to devote some of my efforts to convincing women that this job is not only for men, and that they too can hold positions of responsibility. This year, the call for applications to join the National Police has removed the height requirement, so we expect the numbers of women entering the force to be much greater than in previous years.*

### Lt Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi

*We have created several incentives to encourage women to join the force, including scholarships to continue their education and specialized training courses and workshops to enhance and develop their skillsets. One example is the "Female Police Officers Leadership programme" that was set up to help equip female officers with all the necessary skills to become leaders in their field.*

## REAPING THE BENEFITS OF WOMEN IN POLICING

### Lt Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi

*Women can play a very important role in public safety and peace building through their work in law enforcement agencies, and as a female law enforcement officer, I can testify to this first hand. Women officers bring unique and valuable professional qualities to law enforcement, lowering the probability of the use of force and improving community relations. Such qualities are believed to enhance law enforcement agencies' ability to make a positive impact on the communities they serve. The increase in the numbers of women in senior positions in both federal and local police forces in the UAE will bolster efforts to make our communities safe and secure.*

### Major-Gen. Nainda

*Some forms of transnational organised crime are highly gendered in nature, and future security responses will therefore only be effective if diversity and equality are taken into account. Modern policing requires astute, versatile officers who are up to date with modern technology and are capable of out-maneuvring devious criminals. Not only are female officers central to this endeavour, but they should take up the challenge and lead the fight, embracing opportunities for change, capacity building, and leadership.*

## WHAT'S NEXT? A VISION FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS OF POLICING

Whilst enormous progress has been made in overcoming gender bias, prioritising women's participation, and promoting gender equity in policing, there is still room for improvement and further action is needed if we are to continue to move towards gender parity in law enforcement.

Our five thought leaders share their visions and thoughts on what the next 100 years will look like for women in the police, in a message to serving and aspiring women officers.

### General Commander Varela

*We will go to all the territories, focusing on areas where we are most needed. With the support of investigative and intelligence units, we will increase preventive work on gender issues and make improvements in the operational field, so that people feel safer.*

### Assistant Commissioner Koh

*Policing is certainly not for the faint-hearted. Policewomen need to have a strong sense of justice, a passion to serve, a thirst for challenge and a willingness to go the extra mile. Police officers, regardless of their gender, need to be mentally, emotionally, and physically resilient as they work to keep our world safe and secure.*

### Major-Gen. Nainda

*The perception of women's role in policing has drastically changed in recent years; women are now widely accepted in the force and we are generally appreciated and respected, although there are still certain gender biases that make people think men are better suited to certain roles and ranks. The drivers for change are political will (government policies and frameworks on gender equality and women's empowerment), commitment and support from police leadership, and advocacy and initiatives from women's networks within the police.*

### Lt Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi

*My message is that women have an essential role to play in protecting our communities, and I would encourage anyone who is interested to explore the opportunities available to them in their local police forces. Police forces across the UAE have evolved significantly in recent years, and we believe that if we are to be the best that we can be, we must be constantly evolving. Evolving in terms of our practices, our culture, and our people – and increasing the numbers of women in senior positions is an essential part of this evolution for the coming years and beyond.*

### Principal Commissioner Sanchez

*Given that maternity has been defined as one of the key elements in determining women's chances of promotion in law enforcement and the army, all measures that contribute to granting the same parental rights and obligations to men and women will encourage more women not to give up their ambitions and to aspire to positions of greater responsibility. The concept of shared parental responsibility is deeply embedded in Spanish society and will help define and facilitate women's careers in law enforcement. The current percentages of men and women in the police do not fully represent the demographics of Spanish society, although the statistics show a trend towards an increase in the numbers of women at all ranks, in line with one of the objectives set by the European Network of Policewomen.*





# **INTERPOL VOICES: HOW WE HAVE CHANGED**

From the very beginning, diversity has been important for our organization. As an international body, we strive to reflect not only gender diversity, but also geographical diversity. One hundred years is a long time, and in our 100 years of existence we have changed. Today INTERPOL is made up of 1,081 staff from 116 countries, with women representing 33.3 per cent; so, let's hear from five of our leaders and colleagues about the changes they have witnessed, how diversity and women's participation have contributed to the organization's progress over the past decades, and their vision for the future.



**Madan Oberoi**  
**Executive Director**  
**for Technology and**  
**Innovation**

Seven years at INTERPOL

*I started my second tenure with INTERPOL in June 2019, and this is my seventh year with the organization. Having served in national law enforcement agencies for over two decades, INTERPOL was the logical next step as it tackles issues from a global perspective: the majority of crimes today have a transnational element. I am currently the Executive Director for Technology and Innovation.*

**Have you identified any gender-related issues while working in your current role?**

*There are certain gender-related issues in the field of technology and innovation, in terms of the differences in the way men and women engage with and benefit from technology and innovation. One of the most significant problems is the gender gap: women are often underrepresented in technology-related fields. This has been attributed to various factors such as social and cultural norms, bias, and a lack of access to resources and opportunities.*

*Another issue is the impact of technology and innovation on gender roles and relations. Technology can either reinforce traditional gender roles, or challenge them by providing new opportunities for women. For example, the rise in remote working has enabled women to work from home and find a better balance between work and family responsibilities. On the other hand, technology can also perpetuate gender bias and stereotypes, such*

*as algorithms and machine learning models that reinforce gender-based discrimination.*

*In recent years, I have seen many initiatives aimed at addressing the gender issues in technology and innovation. These include programmes to encourage girls and women to pursue careers in the field, establishing gender quotas for leadership positions, and the introduction of inclusive design principles in technology development. If we are to create a more inclusive and equitable society, we must recognize and address the gender issues in technology and innovation; by promoting gender equality and diversity in technology and innovation, we can ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities these fields provide.*

**Where next in the coming 100 years?**

*In my view, gender equality in policing is not exclusively a women's issue. Men are important partners in facilitating gender parity and can act as agents for change in a male-dominated policing culture. INTERPOL is celebrating its centenary this year, and remains committed to reflecting the growing diversity of the global law enforcement community. As member countries become more interconnected, we expect to see an increase in the numbers of law enforcement officers from different backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, and cultures. This will result in a more inclusive workforce that will further strengthen INTERPOL's expertise: with a broader range of perspectives, the organization will be better equipped to tackle the complex and ever-changing issue of transnational crime. Inclusion and creating a work environment where everyone feels valued and respected will therefore remain a top priority at all levels of the organization over the next 100 years.*



**Roraima Ana Andriani**  
**Executive Director**  
**Partnerships &**  
**Planning**

22 years at INTERPOL

*I joined INTERPOL the week immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Certainly, I will always remember the tragedy of those days and the deep motivation that grew up in all law enforcement officers to work harder to contribute to make the world a better place. Since then, our Organization has been evolving in many areas developing strategies, capabilities, technologies, expertise. INTERPOL has gained more and more relevance, substance, and effectiveness. I am, of course, extremely proud to have given my contribution to what INTERPOL is today. As a police officer, as an international public servant and as a woman I can say*

*that I have spent the majority of my professional life in the place where I wished to be!*

**What is your vision for the future of INTERPOL?**

*For INTERPOL's future I would bet on "people". People are the key. Motivating staff, developing their careers, having a vision that evolves – that is the future I want to see. I believe in the next generations of police officers and civil servants. They are promoting the cultural change. Today when I speak with my young colleagues in the Organization, they don't care about your gender, your age, or where you come from. They care about the Organization, about working together. This is what I would like to see as cultural change so that having female colleagues or women in leadership positions is a normal part of life, and I hope that we will succeed in leading the Organization into this vision of the future.*



**Karla Andrade**  
**Alvarenga,**  
**Specialized Regional**  
**Officer; Security**  
**Liaison Officer,**  
**San Salvador**  
**Regional Bureau for**  
**Central America**

Two years at INTERPOL

*I was a police officer for 27 years before joining INTERPOL as a Specialized Regional Officer/Security Liaison Officer at the San Salvador Regional Bureau for Central America. For me, working at INTERPOL is a great opportunity for professional development.*

**How can diversity and inclusion be promoted in Regional Bureaus?**

*I believe that there must be more representation from the various member countries in every Regional Bureau. They must be encouraged to open up positions to a wider range of candidates and change recruitment practices to ensure that inclusion becomes standard practice. The leadership team at the San Salvador Regional Bureau is a great example of the inclusion of women and gender equality. At the San Salvador regional bureau, our leadership team sets a great example in terms of the inclusion of women and gender equality. We would also welcome a policy to encourage member countries to offer INTERPOL positions to women police officers.*



**Juan Prieto Rojas,  
Team Leader,  
Command and  
Coordination Centre**

**26 years at INTERPOL.**

I joined INTERPOL because I wanted to discover the international police community with its diverse cultures and its various police institutions and working methods, and the challenges it faces in the fight against transnational crime.

**Are there any gender-related issues in your work? What are they and how can they be addressed?**

*In the recruitment process for the Command and Coordination Centre (CCC), we are trying to ensure more women are included in the shortlisted candidates. However, I have noted fewer female candidates apply for these positions than men. An INTERPOL strategy may be needed to encourage female candidates from around the world to apply to all vacant positions that match their professional experiences and qualifications.*

**Tell us about some of the women you have seen contribute to INTERPOL's evolution over the years**

*I have seen significant progress in the Organization in terms of its efforts to meet Member Countries' operational requirements, and several female leaders have played a key role in this change. For example, when I first arrived at INTERPOL in 2003, I worked with Julia Viedma, a Specialized Regional Officer in the Global Outreach & Regional Support (GORS). Because of her outstanding performance, she was promoted to Assistant Director of Europe and subsequently on to*

*other leadership positions and finally Director of the Capacity Building and Training Directorate in 2015.*

*Another example is General Juliette Parra Kure, former Head of NCB Bogota and the first woman to head the Bureau. With her extensive police experience, she played a significant role in restructuring NCB Bogota. She was promoted to the rank of General in 2017, the fourth woman to achieve this rank in the 126 years of the Colombian Police.*

*The most recent example is Branislava Stojcevski, who spent several months working as the CCC's Acting Assistant Director. She was solely responsible for critical roles including Coordinator of INTERPOL Major Event Support Team and Incident Response Team Operations and Coordinator of the CCC Operations Room in Lyon. She proved herself to be extremely capable and efficient in managing all three responsibilities.*



**Shewaye Shumye,  
Talent Attraction  
and Diversity  
Coordinator,  
Human Resources  
Management  
Directorate**

Five years at INTERPOL

*I joined because I consider the organization’s mission to be a worthy one, and because its values are aligned with my own. I wanted to help INTERPOL succeed in its mission by enabling the organization to hire the right calibre of people to defend its cause.*

**What changes you have seen over the years?**

*In my view, noticeable progress has been made in terms of gender and geographical diversity over the past few years. For example, the gender ratio at senior management level was 24.24 per cent female/75.76 per*

*cent male in December 2022, compared to 21.88 per cent female/78.13 per cent male in December 2021. The number of different nationalities (by principal nationality) increased from 110 in December 2021 to 116 in December 2022.*

**What action is being taken to address current challenges?**

*I believe we are on the right track. Our 2023-2025 HR Strategy includes a Diversity and Inclusion stream, and the organization is determined to increase gender and geographical diversity. We are reaching out to women who may want to join our workforce via various outreach channels and organizations such as UNPOL and the International Association of Women in Police. With the endorsement of Member States who have signed the Diversity and Inclusion resolution, the commitment of the Executive Committee, and the leadership of the Secretary General and various other ranks, I am positive that we will be able to achieve the goals we have set ourselves.*



**Laurent Felgerolles,  
Programme Manager  
INTERPOL Centenary**

14 years at INTERPOL

*After 10 years in the private sector, I accepted an initial 18-month contract at INTERPOL in 2009: I wanted to put my skills and experience to contribute in building a safer world for all. This was (and still is) my primary motivation, and it is what gives my work a meaning. My second reason was a desire to continue experiencing the rich diversity of an international working environment.*

**How do you integrate gender equality in your everyday work?**

*I lead various different teams and had and have to conduct different recruitments, I always take care to include people from a diverse range of origins.*

*I’m also promoting in-house and within member countries the different actions the Organization is doing in relation to policing with a gender perspective (the trainings from Capacity Building and Training portfolio, the new Human Resources strategy, or the collection of country practices done in the framework of the Centenary as an example).*

*It is widely recognized that the multiple perspectives and diversity trigger creativity and innovation and help identify new opportunities. Gender equality is a human right, yet humanity has lived through millennia of inequality. I think that raising awareness on this history and the issues which remain today would help move things forward for more equality.*

**Where will we be 100 years from now?**

*Will gender concept or issues exist in one hundred years? I hope that by then equality will be the norm in our lives, and everywhere.*



Portrait of a police patrol Finland. Photo by Mika Pakarinen





## About INTERPOL

Today's crimes are interconnected and global. More than ever, there is a need for multilateral police cooperation to address the security challenges facing the world. INTERPOL's role is to enable police in our 195 member countries to work together to make the world a safer place.

We provide secure access to global databases of police information on criminals and crime, operational and forensic support, analysis services and training. Our colour-coded Notices are used to alert police worldwide to wanted people, security threats and modus operandi.

All these policing capabilities are delivered worldwide and support four global programmes against the issues that we consider to be the most pressing today: financial crime and corruption; counter-terrorism; cybercrime; and organized and emerging crime.

INTERPOL's General Secretariat is based in Lyon, France, supported by the Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore, six regional bureaux and Special Representative offices at the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations.

Each member country runs an INTERPOL National Central Bureau, staffed by national law enforcement officials, which connects them and their frontline officers to our global network.



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