

Call for research proposals – WPS@25 in Southeast Asia

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY FOR RESEARCH PAPERS ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Duration	October 2025 – February 2026
Level of Effort	20 days (8 hours equals 1 day)
Place of Work	Home-based

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

AMPLIFY is a five-year Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative that addresses the differential impacts of armed conflicts and human security threats on women in Southeast Asia by advancing their meaningful participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. AMPLIFY supports the implementation of ASEAN’s Regional Plan of Action on WPS and focuses on Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar through policy development, civil society partnerships, and community-level peacebuilding. The initiative is funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF).

The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in 2000 marked the inception of the WPS agenda, which has strengthened recognition that women’s participation and leadership in peace processes, the promotion of their rights, and protection from all forms of violence are central to building and sustaining peace. Following the adoption of subsequent resolutions and the expansion of the normative framework in the years since, WPS has broadened beyond its original scope of application in the context of armed conflict to have developed into a valuable tool for ensuring inclusion in a range of peace and security issues. In recent years, the WPS framework has been applied to policy and programming in areas including cybersecurity,¹ preventing and countering violent extremism,² and climate change.³

In Southeast Asia, the value of WPS analysis and action to tackle localized peace and security threats continues to be underexplored. As 2025 marks the 25th commemoration of the adoption of UNSCR 1325, it is an opportune time to **take stock of opportunities to advance its implementation moving forward with specific attention to the Southeast Asian context.**

The 25th anniversary of 1325 also provides an opportunity to **uplift emerging WPS academics and practitioners.** While a depth of WPS expertise has been established in Southeast Asia over the past decades, it is critical to the relevancy and sustainability of WPS practice that diverse and emerging voices have a platform to contribute to the WPS knowledge base.

To support these priorities, the AMPLIFY program will commission **up to three (3) early career WPS researchers to develop research briefs on WPS@25 in the region.**

¹ For more information: <https://wps.asean.org/resources/asean-rpa-wps/>

² For more information: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2242>

³ For more information: <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GIWPS-WPS-Index-Climate-Brief.pdf>

OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

Since the adoption of ASEAN's Regional Plan of Action on WPS in 2022, the implementation of the WPS agenda has accelerated in the region. The Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam and Timor-Leste all have National Action Plans on WPS (NAPs), with NAPs in development in Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia and policy advancements underway in Lao PDR.

These regional and national policy instruments present the potential for localized WPS approaches that analyze and engage with the drivers of change to unlock pathways for WPS that are politically feasible and locally ⁴⁵

The project aims to build the knowledge base on the status of WPS in Southeast Asia and opportunities for regional actors, governments, local authorities, civil society and communities to address current peace and security challenges through harnessing WPS policy and programming.

Potential thematic areas of research may include:

'WPS and':

- Natural resource conflict;
- UXO/land mine issues;
- Disarmament and small arms;
- Cyberwarfare and future technologies;
- Backlash to gender equality and rising authoritarianism;
- Intersectional approaches to WPS, such as for ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+ communities, and people with disability.
- Cross-border crime/scam centers.

This is not an exhaustive list and proposals on different themes at the nexus of WPS are welcomed.

Research briefs should be focused on Southeast Asia and provide primary research for **at least one Southeast Asian country**.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, INDICATIVE TIMELINE AND LEVEL OF EFFORTS

This TOR will guide the hiring and engagement of consultants to conduct research under the project.

The consultant/s will:

- a. Develop and finalize the methodology, incorporating feedback from TAF.
- b. Collect and analyze data obtained from secondary sources, such as academic papers, reports, research articles, working papers, and statistical databases, and document promising practices.

⁵ The Asia Foundation, *Securing Women's Peace: A Political Economy Analysis of Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN, Cambodia, Lao PDR and the Philippines 2025*

- c. Conduct a small number of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) or other primary data collection. Consultants will be responsible for identifying and engaging research participants, with assistance from TAF where possible and in accordance with ‘do no harm’ and safeguarding policies and practices.
- d. Develop a draft brief.
- e. Revise and finalize the brief, incorporating inputs from TAF and partners.
- f. Present the findings at one meeting/dialogue as identified by TAF. and
- g. Perform any other related tasks as requested by and agreed with TAF.

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant within the maximum 20 days:

Indicative timeline	Activity	Deliverable	Level of Efforts (Maximum input days)
October-early November 2025	Research proposal/inception report: To include development of research scope, methodology, design, and outline as well as desk review.	Document outlining research methodology, design and outline	5 days
November-December 2025	Data collection and analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Analysis • Write-up of the draft brief And submission of the draft brief for TAF review	Research and draft brief preparation	10 days
January-February 2026	Revision and finalization of the brief with inputs received from TAF	Final research	3 days
To be confirmed (TBC)	Presentation of brief	Presentation of brief	2 days

All deliverables will be produced and delivered in English. The final brief is expected to be no more than 10 pages.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTANT

The consultant/s is required to have the following qualifications:

- The consultant must be an **early career WPS researcher**. For the purposes of this TOR, **early career is defined as having no more than 8 years post-PhD or Masters experience**.
- Proven strong record of research experience in the field of WPS. Samples of written work will be required as a basis for consideration;
- Proven ability to develop comprehensive and evidence-based analysis to inform policy makers;
- Knowledge of, and experience with Southeast Asia;
- Ability to work cooperatively and respond constructively and adapt to the requests and inputs from different stakeholders;
- Postgraduate degree or candidature in a field related to the topic;

- Ability to deliver quality outputs within the timeframe stipulated;
- Excellent English writing, communication, and presentation skills.
- **Candidates with nationality of Southeast Asian countries are strongly encouraged to apply.**

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

TAF will be responsible for overseeing the consultant, the consultant's contract, and tasks and deliverables. TAF will explore opportunities for feedback on the briefs from MFAT and other WPS partners for the consultants to reflect in the work.

HOW TO APPLY

Please share a no more than 2-page research proposal, including research objective, background/rationale, scope, methodology and research timeline, as well as CV and proposed daily rate by **October 24, 2025**. Email amplifyinfo@asiafoundation.org with subject line: **AMPLIFY Research Consultancy WPS.**

.....