



*Amplifying Women's Leadership
and Voices in Peace Processes
through Advocacy, Partnership,
and Action.*



STRATEGIC PLAN

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION
ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

2026–2028

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PREFACE BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

The African Union's commitment to peace, security, and inclusive development is firmly anchored in the recognition that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women. Across our continent, women continue to bear the disproportionate burden of conflict, yet they remain indispensable agents of resilience, recovery, and transformation.

Over the past decades, the African Union has established a robust normative and policy framework to advance the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The true measure of our collective progress, however, lies not in the strength of our commitments but in their translation into tangible improvements in the lives of women and girls across Africa. This 2026-2028 Strategic Plan of the Office of the

Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security marks a decisive step toward closing that gap. It reflects a shift from advocacy to institutional transformation, positioning the Office as a key driver of coordination, coherence, and systemic change within the African Union's peace and security architecture.

The priorities articulated in this Strategy—enhancing women's participation and leadership, strengthening protection and accountability for violations, embedding gender-responsive conflict prevention, advancing inclusive recovery, institutionalising accountability through the Continental Results Framework, and securing predictable financing—are both timely and necessary. They align closely with Agenda 2063 and reinforce our aspiration for an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

Delivering on this ambition requires renewed political will, sustained investment, and strengthened partnerships. The African Union Commission will continue to work closely with Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, civil society, and international partners to ensure that the WPS agenda is fully integrated into all aspects of our peace and security efforts.

I commend the Office of the Special Envoy for its leadership in advancing this Strategy and call upon all stakeholders to translate its vision into concrete action. Together, we must ensure that Africa's peace processes are more inclusive, its institutions more transparent, and its recovery efforts more responsive to the needs and leadership of women and girls.

The time for implementation is now. With unity of purpose and collective responsibility, we can build a more peaceful, just, and prosperous Africa for all.

H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf

Chairperson
African Union Commission



FOREWORD BY AFRICAN UNION COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY

The African Union's (AU) commitment to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is one of our most profound normative achievements. It is rooted in the foundational principle that peace is not sustainable if it is built on the exclusion of half of our population. As we look towards 2030 and the realization of AU Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want, it is a strategic imperative to strengthen the AU WPS architecture to ensure it is transformative.

For the AU Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), the WPS agenda has been a priority essential to preventing and managing conflict, strengthening peace and security, promoting democratic governance, and building resilient societies. We have made important progress in strengthening our normative and policy frameworks. Yet, we must confront a reality: a persistent "conversion gap" remains. Commitments do not always translate into safety, voice, and opportunity for women and girls in the villages, cities, and conflict zones where peace is most fragile. Protracted conflicts, terrorism, political instability, climate-related insecurity and displacement continue to affect women and girls disproportionately, placing additional pressure on our peace and security infrastructure.

Importantly, the AU has put in place mechanisms and structures to translate this commitment into concrete outcomes. Since 2010, the AU Peace and Security Council has been instrumental to promoting the WPS agenda through conveying of two annual dedicated open sessions on WPS; endorsing the establishment of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) in 2017; adopting the Continental Results Framework (CRF) on WPS in 2018 to track continental performance on the WPS agenda; and instituting the biannual Ministerial Seminar on WPS, known as the Swakopmund Process.

Building on these normative and policy gains, the Gender, Peace and Security Programme (2014), FemWise-Africa, and now, with the institutional reform, a dedicated new unit on Women, Youth and Children, stand as tangible testimony to our resolve. These are not symbolic gestures; they are the architecture of implementation. Within this architecture, PAPS has been entrusted with the critical role of supporting the implementation of the WPS agenda through a unified, mandate-based implementation framework, while the Office of the Special Envoy provides the strategic role of advocacy, convening, and political leadership.

The 2026–2029 Strategic Plan for the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS) serves as a roadmap to support the implementation of the WPS agenda and a means to close the gap between commitment and reality. The Plan positions the OSE-WPS as a central catalyst for accountability, convening power, and political leverage. It rightly places strong emphasis on accountability utilizing the Continental Results Framework to measure our progress and hold ourselves accountable as well as on evidence-based approaches, partnerships, and sustainable financing to ensure effective implementation.

I commend the AU Special Envoy on WPS and her team for developing this forward-looking Strategic Plan. I also reaffirm the commitment of PAPS to working collaboratively with the OSE-WPS, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Mechanisms, women's organizations, civil society, and partners to transform continental commitments into measurable results.

As we shift from commitment to action, our shared success will be defined by how meaningfully women are represented in decision-making, the extent to which their rights and protection are strengthened, and the full recognition of their leadership as a cornerstone for peace, security, and stability in Africa. I am confident that this Strategic Plan will serve as an accurate compass for the OSE-WPS, guiding its work in transforming the African continental standards into lived realities, ensuring that every woman and girl can contribute fully to, and benefit from, Africa's peace, security, and prosperity.



H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye

Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security

African Union Commission

FOREWORD BY THE SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY



Women and girls across the continent are sustaining communities, strengthening social cohesion and shaping pathways to peace. Their leadership and meaningful participation are not an addition to the peace and security agenda—they are essential to building durable peace, inclusive decision-making and resilient societies.

The African Union has established a strong normative framework for Women, Peace and Security (WPS). Our responsibility now is to translate these commitments into sustained action and tangible results. This Strategic Plan sets the direction for the work of the Office of the Special Envoy on WPS, strengthening its role in providing political leadership, advocacy, convening and continental accountability for the agenda.

Aligned with Agenda 2063 and the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028, the Strategy brings together six priorities: participation, protection, prevention, recovery, accountability and sustainable financing. Together, these priorities provide a clear pathway from commitment to implementation, fragmentation to coherence, and ambition to measurable results.

The scale and complexity of Africa's peace and security challenges demand collective action. The OSE-WPS will work closely with AU institutions, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, civil society and partners to strengthen implementation, coordination and accountability. WPS cannot be the responsibility of one office alone; it must be a shared institutional responsibility across the African Union.

This Strategic Plan therefore represents both a roadmap for the OSE-WPS and a renewed commitment to strengthening the institutionalization of the WPS agenda within the Union. As the Office moves forward, our focus will be on turning Africa's commitments into action, strengthening women's voice and leadership in peace and security, and ensuring that WPS remains central to our collective pursuit of a peaceful, secure and prosperous Africa.

The measure of our success will not be the commitments we make, but the change we deliver.

H.E. Ambassador Liberata Mulamula

Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
African Union Commission

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AMERT	African Union Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Tool
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CRF	Continental Results Framework
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (OSE-WPS implementation framework)
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (AUC corporate reporting arrangements)
NAP	National Action Plan
OSE-WPS	Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security
PAPS	Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSO	Peace Support Operation
RECs/RMs	Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSR	Security Sector Reform
STYIP	Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WGYD	Women, Gender and Youth Directorate
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WPS-IDTF	WPS Interdepartmental Task Force

Executive Summary

Africa's normative foundation for Women, Peace and Security is strong. Its delivery is not. Global commitments such as United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and continental instruments such as the Maputo Protocol have not translated into consistent change in the lives of women and girls affected by conflict. This Strategic Plan calls that shortfall the conversion gap and sets out how the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS) will close it between 2026 and 2028.

The gap is not caused by a shortage of commitments. Four forces weaken delivery: coordination fragmented across institutions and partners; political commitment that is uneven and fades when trade-offs become real; financing that is unpredictable and short-term; and conflict dynamics that shift quickly and reset priorities. These are compounded by contested social norms and shrinking civic space, climate stress, fiscal pressure, and new protection risks arising from digital technology.

The Plan therefore marks a deliberate shift from general advocacy to institutional change. It positions OSE-WPS as convenor, coordinator and catalyst rather than as an implementing agency, and uses the Continental Results Framework to convert commitments into clear obligations and measurable performance.

By 2028, the African Union's peace and security architecture will deliver more consistent, accountable and adequately resourced WPS outcomes: women exercising meaningful leadership; gender-responsive prevention and protection embedded in AU and Member State systems; and recovery processes producing durable gains for women and girls. Six strategic objectives carry the Plan:

1. **SO1 – Champion women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across AU-led conflict prevention, management and resolution processes.**
2. **SO2 – Promote the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings by advancing compliance with international law, mandatory protection training, and accountability for SGBV and related rights violations.**
3. **SO3 – Advance the mainstreaming of gender-responsive conflict prevention in AU early warning, preventive diplomacy and peace support operation mandates.**
4. **SO4 – Advance gender-responsive relief and recovery efforts, services and durable reintegration outcomes for women and girls.**
5. **SO5 – Institutionalise WPS accountability and learning by strengthening Member States' and RECs/RMs' capacity to develop, implement and report on National Action Plans aligned to the Continental Results Framework.**
6. **SO6 – Secure predictable financing and institutional capacities for the WPS agenda, positioning the Office of the Special Envoy as a continental centre of strategic leadership, evidence and knowledge on Women, Peace and Security.**

This Plan is not a stand-alone thematic strategy. It is an institutional cascade. Agenda 2063 and its Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan set the continental direction. The African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 turns that direction into the Commission’s own corporate framework. This Plan sits directly beneath it.

Its primary anchor is Moonshot 4, Africa Resolves Conflicts Peacefully. It also contributes to Moonshot 3, Public Institutions Are More Responsive, and to Moonshot 6, African Citizens Are More Empowered and Productive. Beyond the Moonshots, it advances the Strategic Plan’s cross-cutting priorities: institutional capacity, digitalisation, knowledge and research, performance management, and predictable financing. Section 4.2 sets out how each objective corresponds.

Delivery rests on a disciplined division of labour. OSE-WPS leads diplomacy, convening, accountability reporting and strategic knowledge generation. The Women, Gender and Youth Directorate anchors normative harmonisation and the WPS data ecosystem. The Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department (PAPS) integrates WPS into missions, early warning and operations. Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms act as the regional bridge, and Member States lead national implementation through National Action Plans. The WPS Interdepartmental Task Force, to be chaired by OSE-WPS and constituted through the Commission’s existing coordination arrangements, will consolidate ad hoc internal arrangements.

Financing follows four streams: core institutional funding from the AU regular budget; a pooled Continental WPS Multi-Partner Trust Fund; domestic resource mobilisation by Member States; and private sector and innovative finance. Each stream will be established in accordance with the Union’s financial rules and approval procedures. The Plan aims to operationalise a Continental WPS Financing Compact and raise the share of WPS funding drawn from African public and private sources to at least 50 per cent by 2028.

A Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, a Resource Mobilisation Framework and a Risk Management Framework will support this Plan as accompanying implementation frameworks. During the first year of implementation, OSE-WPS and its partners will operationalise a results framework specifying outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines, annual milestones, 2028 targets, responsible actors and verification sources, with every outcome mapped to the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 result it supports

1

Background Section

Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS) Strategy

Introduction and Background

In January 2014, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission appointed the first Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, making the African Union the first continental organisation to establish such a post. The Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security (OSE-WPS) sits within the Bureau of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The Office provides high-level leadership to amplify the voices and leadership of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict contexts and to ensure that their priorities inform peace and security decision-making.

” “This is a human rights failure. It is also a strategic error.”

The Office advances this mandate in three ways. First, it strengthens women’s participation and influence in decision-making across peace and security processes. Second, it supports women’s economic empowerment in conflict-affected and post-conflict settings as a foundation for recovery and resilience. Third, it drives implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda across its core pillars: participation, protection, conflict prevention, and relief and recovery. Progress is tracked through the Continental Results Framework.

The rationale for this work is straightforward. Women and girls experience disproportionate harms during conflict, including targeted violence, displacement, and economic devastation. Yet they remain routinely excluded from peace negotiations and security decision-making, sidelined in conflict prevention and early warning, and too often treated as beneficiaries rather than leaders in humanitarian response and recovery planning. This is a human rights failure. It is also a strategic error. The evidence is consistent. Women’s participation increases the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years by 20 per cent, and of it lasting fifteen years by 35 per cent. Where women’s groups exercise strong influence over a negotiation, an agreement is far more likely to be reached, and the participation of civil society representatives makes an agreement 64 per cent less likely to fail.[Figures drawn from analysis of 182 peace agreements signed between 1989 and 2011, reported in UN Women, Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution

1325 (2015); and T. Paffenholz and others, *Making Women Count – Not Just Counting Women* (Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative and UN Women, 2016).] Excluding women therefore weakens the legitimacy and durability of peace processes, erodes prevention capacity, undermines protection outcomes, and compromises relief and recovery by sidelining a critical source of resilience, local knowledge, and practical solutions.

This imperative is sharpened by the rapidly evolving risk environment facing Africa's peace and security architecture. Conflict dynamics increasingly intersect with climate shocks, public health emergencies, and the expanding reach of digital technology. These forces compound and accelerate crises. They also produce distinct and often severe gendered impacts. As a result, institutions face growing strain, while attention and resources are pulled in multiple directions. A strategy that secures women's leadership in prevention, response, and recovery is therefore not optional. It is essential to effective conflict management and sustainable peace.

“A strategy that secures women’s leadership in prevention, response, and recovery is therefore not optional. It is essential to effective conflict management and sustainable peace.”



1. Figures drawn from analysis of 182 peace agreements signed between 1989 and 2011, reported in UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (2015); and T. Paffenholz and others, *Making Women Count – Not Just Counting Women* (Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative and UN Women, 2016).

2

The Operating Environment: Challenges, Opportunities, and the Conversion Gap

Africa has a robust normative and policy foundation for WPS. This includes global commitments such as UNSCR 1325 and continental instruments such as the Maputo Protocol, reinforced by AU policy decisions and operational tools. Yet normative strength has not translated into lived realities for many women and girls. A persistent gap remains between stated commitments and measurable change on the ground. This is not simply a capacity issue. It reflects a structural weakness in how WPS is prioritised, financed, coordinated, and enforced.

To understand why this gap persists, it is necessary to assess the operating environment shaping WPS outcomes. A set of interacting drivers now compounds risks, strains institutions, and repeatedly disrupts follow-through:

A. Political and security dynamics. Political will varies across Member States and over time. Geopolitical priorities can shift quickly, diluting sustained attention to WPS. Conflict patterns are also evolving, including violent extremism and protracted crises that heighten risks to civilians and complicate prevention, mediation, and recovery.

B. Social norms and civic space. Patriarchal norms continue to restrict women's participation and leadership in peace and security. In some contexts, backlash against gender equality is intensifying. Shrinking civic space further reduces the capacity of women's movements and civil society to organise, advocate, and hold institutions to account.

C. Climate and environmental stress. Climate change acts as a threat multiplier. It drives displacement, intensifies competition over scarce resources, and deepens livelihood insecurity. These pressures often produce sharply gendered impacts and raise the cost and complexity of both prevention and recovery.

D. Economic constraints and financing pressures. Fiscal austerity and competing priorities compress WPS financing, including support to National Action Plans.

E. Technology, information, and protection risks. Digital transformation offers new tools for early warning, monitoring, mobilisation, and results tracking. Yet it also creates new risks. The digital divide limits access, while online gender-based violence, disinformation, and surveillance increase threats to women leaders, human rights defenders, and peacebuilders.

Taken together, these drivers widen the results gap and make gains fragile. The gap is most visible where national legal frameworks and enforcement do not match continental standards, and where financing and accountability mechanisms are weak.

3

The OSE-WPS Strategic Framework: From Advocacy to Institutional Change

The OSE-WPS holds a rare form of influence. It carries continental legitimacy. It can convene decision-makers. It is trusted by key networks across Africa. This influence matters because WPS progress is not blocked by a lack of commitments. It is blocked by the systems that turn commitments into action.

” “This Strategy responds to the conversion gap with a sharper role for the Office.”

In practice, four forces weaken delivery. Coordination is fragmented across institutions and partners. Political commitment is uneven and often fades when trade-offs become real. Financing is unpredictable and often short-term. Conflict dynamics shift fast and repeatedly reset priorities. Together, these forces create a persistent conversion gap. Strong commitments are made, but implementation is uneven, underfunded, and hard to sustain.

This Strategy responds to the conversion gap with a sharper role for the Office. It moves from general advocacy to targeted system change. It positions OSE-WPS as a convenor, coordinator, and catalyst to remove bottlenecks in participation, protection, accountability, and financing. It uses the Continental Results Framework to translate commitments into clear obligations, measurable progress, and credible performance signals.

This is a strategy for impact under pressure. It strengthens how commitments are governed, funded, and tracked. It protects gains from backlash and crisis. It accelerates delivery towards Agenda 2063, a peaceful, secure and prosperous Africa where women and men enjoy equal rights and equal participation, through the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028, the framework against which the Office’s contribution is planned, budgeted, monitored and reported.

Strategic Direction



Vision

An Africa where women and men enjoy equal rights and equal participation in the building of a peaceful, secure and prosperous continent in line with Agenda 2063.

Mission

To advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda across Africa by amplifying the voices and leadership of women and girls, strengthening their protection, and driving accountable, gender-responsive conflict prevention, peacebuilding and recovery.

2028 Strategic Goal

By 2028, the African Union's peace and security architecture delivers more consistent, accountable and adequately resourced Women, Peace and Security outcomes, with women exercising meaningful leadership, gender-responsive prevention and protection embedded in AU and Member State systems, and recovery processes producing durable gains for women and girls across conflict and post-conflict settings.

This 2026–2028 Strategic Plan serves as the implementation bridge towards that 2028 end-state by focusing on the institutional reforms, partnerships, financing arrangements and accountability mechanisms required to accelerate delivery during the plan period.

4.1. Vision, Mission and 2028 Strategic Goal

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our work is anchored in African ownership and leadership, diplomacy, and a bottom-up approach shaped by and accountable to the lived realities, priorities, and solutions of women and communities in conflict situations.

★ African leadership and ownership

We advance Women, Peace and Security through African-led Priorities, institutions, and partnerships, guided by AU values and the long-term interests of the continent.

👥 People-centred, bottom-up accountability

We design, implement, and measure our work against the experiences and priorities of women and communities, ensuring grassroots solutions shape decisions and define results.

🛡️ Integrity, Impartiality, and responsible stewardship

We act ethically and fairly, uphold transparency and accountability, share information responsibly, and steward resources in ways that build trust and credibility

🔗 Professional, Collaborative delivery

We work respectfully across diversity, collaborate across the AU system and with stakeholders, and deliver with efficiency, quality and continuous learning.

4.2. Alignment with the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028

This Strategic Plan is a cascade of the African Union’s planning architecture, not a stand-alone thematic strategy. Agenda 2063 and its Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan set the continental ambition. The African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 translates that ambition into the Commission’s corporate framework. This Plan draws from that framework. It then sets the Office’s own outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets. Those in turn drive annual workplans, budget submissions and staff performance plans.

THE INSTITUTIONAL CASCADE

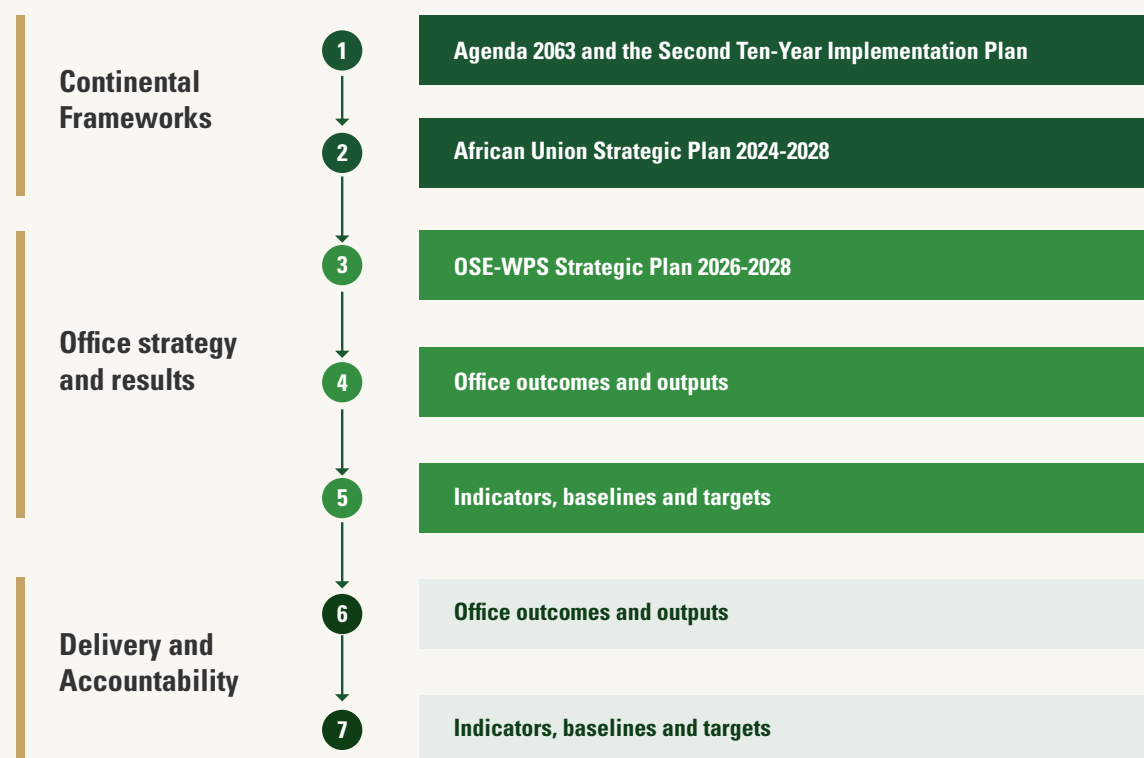


Figure 1: The institutional cascade — from continental framework to corporate reporting

The Office's primary anchor for this Strategic Plan is Moonshot 4: *Africa Resolves Conflicts Peacefully*. It carries the Union's commitments on conflict prevention, early warning, preventive diplomacy and mediation, inclusive peace processes, peace support operations, post-conflict reconstruction and development, and sustainable financing for peace. It measures progress in part by how far women and youth are included in peace processes.

The Plan contributes to two further Moonshots. It serves Moonshot 3: *Public Institutions Are More Responsive*, through its protection, compliance, human rights, justice and rule-of-law work. It serves Moonshot 6: *African Citizens Are More Empowered and Productive*, through women's participation, empowerment and inclusive recovery. Strategic Objectives 5 and 6 carry the cross-cutting priorities: institutional capacity and effectiveness; knowledge, research and learning; digitalisation; performance management; and sustainable and predictable financing.

Three commitments give this alignment operational effect.

- a. Traceability.** Every outcome and indicator in the Office's results framework is mapped to the African Union Strategic Plan result and key performance indicator it supports. The Office's performance is therefore aggregated into corporate reporting, not reported alongside it.
- b. Integration into the planning and budgeting cycle.** Annual OSE-WPS workplans, budget submissions and staff performance plans derive from the approved results framework of this Plan. Each follows the African Union planning and budgeting calendar. Each planned activity names both the strategic objective and the African Union Strategic Plan result it serves.
- c. Transition to the successor Strategic Plan.** During 2028 the Office will review its 2028 indicators, targets and reporting lines against the successor African Union Strategic Plan. It will submit any consequential amendments to this Plan for approval. The final year of implementation then cascades from the framework in force at that time.

Table 1: Alignment of OSE-WPS strategic objectives with the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028

OSE-WPS strategic objective	African Union Strategic Plan anchor	African Union result supported	OSE-WPS contribution
S01 Champion women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across AU-led conflict prevention, management and resolution processes.	Moonshot 4; secondary Moonshot 6	Inclusive peace processes; strengthened conflict management; inclusion of women in peace processes	High-level advocacy, participation standards, convening, and women’s influence in AU-led peace processes
S02 Promote the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings by advancing compliance with international law, mandatory protection training, and accountability for SGBV and related rights violations.	Moonshot 3; secondary Moonshot 4	Human rights, justice and the rule of law; safer and more legitimate peace and security processes	Protection standards, accountability advocacy, survivor-centred justice, and compliance in AU engagements
S03 Advance the mainstreaming of gender-responsive conflict prevention in AU early warning, preventive diplomacy and peace support operation mandates.	Moonshot 4	Strengthened early warning, preventive diplomacy and conflict-prevention mechanisms	Gender-sensitive indicators, analysis, response triggers, preventive diplomacy, and NAP prevention commitments
S04 Advance gender-responsive relief and recovery efforts, services and durable reintegration outcomes for women and girls.	Moonshot 4; secondary Moonshots 3 and 6	Post-conflict reconstruction and development; resilience; responsive institutions; women’s empowerment	Advocacy for gender-responsive recovery, DDR and reintegration standards, rights-based reform, and women-led recovery
S05 Institutionalise WPS accountability and learning by strengthening Member States’ and RECs/RMs’ capacity to develop, implement and report on National Action Plans aligned to the Continental Results Framework.	Cross-cutting priorities on knowledge, learning and performance management; Moonshots 3, 4 and 6	Improved institutional accountability, evidence and learning	CRF and NAP reporting, WPS accountability products, research, knowledge management, and technical support
S06 Secure predictable financing and institutional capacities for the WPS agenda, positioning the Office of the Special Envoy as a continental centre of strategic leadership, evidence and knowledge on Women, Peace and Security.	Cross-cutting priorities on institutional capacity, digitalisation and financing; enabling Moonshot 4	Sustainable delivery, institutional capacity, digitalisation and predictable financing	Resource mobilisation, institutional capabilities, MEL, partnership coordination, skills and digital tools

4.3. Strategic Objectives and Indicative Activities

Throughout this section, the indicative activities describe the Office's own contribution: convening, standard-setting advocacy, brokerage, accountability reporting and strategic analysis. Where an activity refers to training, mission support, reintegration programming or other field-level delivery, the role of OSE-WPS is to secure the standard, broker the support and report on compliance. Operational delivery rests with the competent departments of the Commission, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, Member States and partners, as set out in Section 6.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE

S01



SO1: Champion women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across AU-led conflict prevention, management and resolution processes.

S02



SO2: Promote protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings by advancing compliance with international law, mandatory protection training, and accountability for SGBV and related rights violations.

S03



SO3: Advance the mainstreaming of gender-responsive conflict prevention in AU early warning, preventive diplomacy and PSO mandates.

S04



SO4: Advance gender-responsive relief and recovery efforts, services and durable reintegration outcomes for women and girls.

S05



SO5: Institutionalise WPS accountability and learning by strengthening Member States' and RECs/RMs' capacity to develop, implement, and report on NAPs aligned to the CRF.

S06



SO6: Secure predictable financing and capacities for the WPS agenda, positioning the Office of the Special Envoy as the WPS thought leader in Africa.

ID	Activity
1.1	Support Member States and RECs/RMs WPS focal points to implement the WPS agenda through coordinated guidance, accompaniment and peer exchange.
1.2	Secure AU WPS policy decisions and guidance that set minimum standards for women's representation and leadership in AU-led processes.
1.3	Advocate for and track women's participation and leadership in AU-led peace processes, reporting against the African Union Strategic Plan measure on the inclusion of women and youth in peace processes.
1.4	Convene high-level forums and institutionalised platforms for women to brief and shape AU peace and security processes.
1.5	Mobilise finance, build strategic partnerships and facilitate the sustained participation of WPS networks in implementing the AU WPS agenda.

S01

Champion women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across AU-led conflict prevention, management and resolution processes.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: Moonshot 4, with a secondary contribution to Moonshot 6. Result supported: inclusive peace processes and strengthened conflict management, including the inclusion of women in peace processes.

5 Consolidated Indicative Activities



ID	Activity
2.1	Advocate for AU-wide protection compliance standards and SOPs for AU engagements and missions, including CRSV/GBV and SEA, and promote independent compliance review and escalation mechanisms.
2.2	Convene and broker capacity-building on CRSV/GBV and SEA, with delivery led by PAPS, WGYD, RECs/RMs and partners in accordance with their respective mandates.
2.3	Advance accountability platforms that strengthen investigation, evidence and survivor-centred justice processes, including harmonised documentation protocols and accountability provisions in peace processes.
2.4	Champion mandatory protection and SEA prevention training standards for peace support operations, including pre-deployment and in-mission training for uniformed and civilian personnel.
2.5	Undertake rapid diplomatic engagement and solidarity missions following major violations and issue periodic protection accountability briefs.

S02

Promote protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings by advancing compliance with international law, mandatory protection training, and accountability for SGBV and related rights violations.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: Moonshot 3, with a secondary contribution to Moonshot 4. Result supported: human rights, justice and the rule of law, and safer and more legitimate peace and security processes.

5 Consolidated Indicative Activities



S03

Advance the mainstreaming of gender-responsive conflict prevention in AU early warning, preventive diplomacy and PSO mandates.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: Moonshot 4. Result supported: strengthened early warning, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention.



Consolidated Indicative Activities **5**

ID	Activity
3.1	Promote the adoption and use of gender-sensitive indicators, triggers and response protocols within CEWS, aligned REC/RM early warning systems and national mechanisms, drive follow-up on action taken, and report the resulting measures against the African Union Strategic Plan indicators on early warning and conflict prevention.
3.2	Champion the institutionalisation of OSE-WPS participation and WPS mainstreaming in AU conflict-prevention shuttle diplomacy mandates and missions.
3.3	Advocate for the integration of systematic gender analysis in conflict prevention, management and resolution activities.
3.4	Promote more standardised training and guidance for uniformed and civilian personnel on gender-responsive prevention and preparedness.
3.5	Publish an annual WPS prevention outlook and support Member States to adopt, cost, finance and report on prevention commitments in NAPs aligned to the CRF, including peer review and periodic gap analysis.

S04

Advance gender-responsive relief and recovery efforts, services and durable reintegration outcomes for women and girls.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: Moonshot 4, with secondary contributions to Moonshots 3 and 6. Result supported: post-conflict reconstruction and development, resilience, responsive institutions and women's empowerment.



Consolidated Indicative Activities **5**

ID	Activity
4.1	Advocate for gender-responsive peace agreements and recovery frameworks that address women's and girls' needs across repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.
4.2	Broker technical and political support for rights-based recovery by promoting reforms that embed protections in constitutions, electoral systems, policing and the judiciary in post-conflict contexts.
4.3	Champion gender-responsive DDR and reintegration standards that address women's distinct needs and expand pathways to safety, livelihoods and economic security through strategic financing and partnerships.
4.4	Promote gender-responsive sanctions design by advocating for humanitarian exemptions and monitoring unintended impacts on women and girls.
4.5	Promote safe displacement responses within recovery planning by advocating for protective camp and settlement design, gender audits of recovery and stabilisation programmes, public reporting, and women-led recovery dialogues that strengthen social cohesion.

ID	Activity
5.1	Secure AU decisions and guidance, and establish a coordination mechanism that sets minimum NAP quality standards, CRF alignment requirements, and annual reporting obligations, with defined roles for Member States and RECs/RMs.
5.2	Broker and coordinate targeted technical support to Member States and RECs/RMs to develop, update and implement NAPs aligned to the CRF, mobilising WGYD, RECs/RMs and partners as the providers of that support.
5.3	Develop and roll out a CRF reporting toolkit and digital workflow, including agreed indicators, templates, verification protocols, and an annual consolidation process that produces an AU WPS Accountability Report for AU policy organs, with the consolidated data transmitted into the Commission's monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning arrangements and the African Union Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Tool, so that WPS results are reported through the corporate system rather than alongside it.
5.4	Generate research and periodic analytical products, including WPS policy briefs and thematic, country or sub-regional studies, to inform AU participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery priorities and strengthen Member State uptake.
5.5	Develop and implement WPS communication and knowledge management strategies.

S05

Institutionalise WPS accountability and learning by strengthening Member States' and RECs/RMs' capacity to develop, implement and report on NAPs aligned to the CRF.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: the cross-cutting priorities on knowledge, research, learning and performance management, contributing to Moonshots 3, 4 and 6. Result supported: improved institutional accountability, evidence and learning.

5 Consolidated Indicative Activities



S06

Secure predictable financing and capacities for the WPS agenda, positioning the Office of the Special Envoy as a continental centre of strategic leadership, evidence and knowledge on Women, Peace and Security.

African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 anchor: the cross-cutting priorities on institutional capacity, digitalisation and sustainable, predictable financing, enabling delivery of Moonshot 4. Result supported: sustainable delivery, institutional capability and predictable financing.



Consolidated Indicative Activities **5**

ID	Activity
6.1	Advocate for and secure binding AU decisions to embed the OSE-WPS mandate and provide for predictable core funding through the African Union regular budget, complemented, where activities fall within its approved scope, windows and governance arrangements, by the Peace Fund, so as to ensure operational continuity and sustainability.
6.2	Establish a multi-year resource mobilisation strategy, cleared through the relevant African Union financial and partnership procedures, to secure flexible, predictable funding through a Continental WPS Financing Compact, targeted partnerships, and dedicated thematic funding windows.
6.3	Enhance internal governance and MEL systems so that OSE-WPS results data feed the Commission's corporate monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning arrangements and the African Union Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Tool, and formalise partner coordination platforms (with RECs/RMs, UN and CSOs) to ensure coherent strategy delivery, accountability, and a unified regional WPS ecosystem.
6.4	Design and implement, within the Office's approved structure and staffing establishment, a dedicated programme to attract, retain and develop specialised WPS expertise, including fellowships, mentorship, and advanced skills training in mediation, advocacy and policy analysis.
6.5	Acquire and deploy integrated digital tools and platforms to enhance data analysis, secure communications, virtual diplomacy, and the internal management of the Office's evidence, contacts, and strategic information.



Strategic Approaches

To operationalise this Strategic Plan, the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security will apply a set of mutually reinforcing strategic approaches. These approaches are designed to leverage the Office's continental mandate, political legitimacy, and convening authority to drive systemic implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda across the African Union system, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, Member States, and partner institutions.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

Six mutually reinforcing approaches through which the Office converts continental commitments into delivery — the mechanisms that close the **conversion gap**.

WHAT THE OFFICE BRINGS

CONTINENTAL MANDATE

POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

CONVENING AUTHORITY

A1 High-Level Diplomacy and Advocacy

Sustained political engagement and normative advocacy with AU organs, Member States and RECs/RMs to secure high-level commitments and to support their translation into policy, institutional practice and measurable action.

CONVERTS: **Commitment** → **Policy and practice**

A2 Strategic Convening and Coordination

A central convening platform that aligns AU organs, RECs/RMs, Member States, civil society and development partners around shared priorities, coordinated implementation and common accountability frameworks.

CONVERTS: **Fragmentation** → **Continental coherence**

A3 Evidence-Based Influence and Public Accountability

Credible evidence, policy analysis and performance data — generated, curated and disseminated to inform decisions, sharpen prioritisation, guide resource allocation and reinforce public accountability for results.

CONVERTS: **Data** → **Decisions**

A4 Catalytic Partnership and Alliance Building

Brokering and stewarding inclusive, results-oriented partnerships that mobilise predictable resources, deepen technical collaboration and amplify collective impact under African leadership.

CONVERTS: **Interest** → **Predictable resources**

A5 Transformative Leadership and Capacity Development

Principled leadership that shapes and upholds continental WPS standards through practical guidance, stronger institutional capabilities and reinforced systems, learning and accountability.

CONVERTS: **Standards** → **Institutional capability**

A6 Context-Sensitive and Agile Crisis Response

Rapid, strategic response during crises through advocacy, solidarity engagement and timely analytical support that elevates gender perspectives in crisis decision-making.

CONVERTS: **Shock** → **Protected WPS gains**

APPLIED ACROSS

AU ORGANS

RECS / RMs

MEMBER STATES

CIVIL SOCIETY & PARTNERS

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

DRIVING SYSTEMIC
CHANGE FOR WPS



Delivering the Strategy: Implementation Architecture and Partnerships



To overcome the historical obstacles of overlapping mandates and fragmented projects, this Strategy establishes a clear, mandate-based implementation and coordination framework. This structure is designed to define distinct but interlocking roles, clarify how all stakeholders engage with the continental system, and institutionalise a single internal coordination mechanism to anchor joint planning, accountability, and learning. The overarching principle is a disciplined division of labour: the OSE-WPS provides high-level political and strategic leadership, operational departments and decentralised actors deliver programmes, and all are bound together by shared indicators and the Continental Results Framework (CRF), which are in turn mapped to the results of the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028.

The division of labour is built on comparative advantage. The OSE-WPS acts as the strategic convenor and political engine, focusing on high-level diplomacy to secure binding commitments, strategic convening (including chairing the coordination mechanism), continental accountability through the AU WPS Accountability Report and Scorecard, public advocacy, and strategic analysis. It creates political space, stewards partnerships, and brokers coordination and technical support, but does not manage project budgets or execute field-level missions. The Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD) serves as the technical and mainstreaming anchor, leading on normative harmonisation, capacity-building, managing the gender and WPS data ecosystem, and mainstreaming gender into non-security portfolios. PAPS is the operational arm, integrating WPS into all field missions, peace operations, early warning systems, and programmes like DDR and SSR. Externally, RECs/RMs act as the regional bridge, Member States lead national implementation via National Action Plans, and civil society and partners provide implementation, monitoring, and complementary support.

In practical terms, OSE-WPS will directly lead diplomacy, convening, advocacy, accountability reporting and strategic knowledge generation; it will broker financing platforms, technical accompaniment and partnership alignment with relevant AU entities and partners; and it will influence, rather than substitute for, operational delivery by departments, missions, RECs/RMs and Member States.

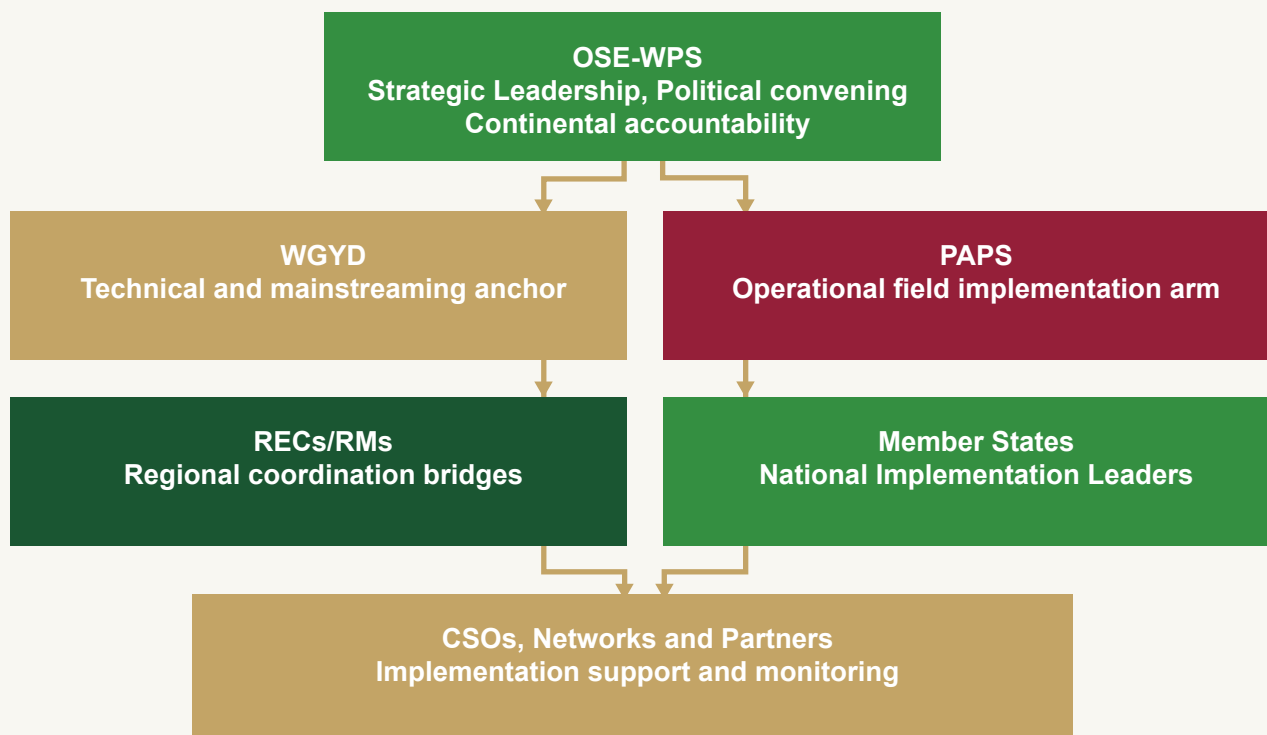
At the core of internal coordination is the WPS Interdepartmental Task Force (WPS-IDTF), proposed to be chaired by OSE-WPS with vice-chairs from WGYD and PAPS and to be constituted through the Commission's existing coordination arrangements rather than as a new structure. Its terms of reference, including its relationship to existing African Union governance and coordination mechanisms, will be submitted for institutional clearance before it is convened. Once established, it will consolidate the ad hoc internal arrangements that currently operate. Meeting quarterly, its core functions are to harmonise planning and resources, monitor performance via a consolidated dashboard aligned to the corporate performance framework, prepare joint strategic inputs for AU organs, oversee knowledge management, and convene annual strategic reviews to align all actors around a common Action Matrix and priorities.

This internal coherence is extended outward through a strengthened continental partnership framework, shifting from donor-recipient models to a continent-led, results-focused collaboration. Guided by principles of African ownership, complementarity, and predictable financing, the framework is operationalised through an annual Continental WPS Platform for strategic alignment. Partnership efforts are organised into four pillars: reinforcing African institutional leadership; empowering Member State implementation with standardised support packages; forging strategic alliances with the UN and international partners via a structured Joint Compact; and harnessing broader society through a CSO Consultative Forum, a research consortium, and private sector engagement. All partners commit to a shared compact for joint advocacy and mutual accountability.

Sustained delivery depends on a robust Resource Mobilisation Framework to secure predictable, diversified and accountable financing. The strategy pursues four streams: 1) core institutional funding from the AU regular budget; 2) a pooled Continental WPS Multi-Partner Trust Fund; 3) domestic resource mobilisation from Member States, supported by gender-responsive budgeting; and 4) private sector and innovative finance. Each stream will be established in accordance with the African Union's financial rules and approval procedures. Core budget provision will be pursued through the regular budget process; recourse to the Peace Fund will be sought only for activities falling within its approved scope and windows and subject

to its governance arrangements; and the Continental WPS Multi-Partner Trust Fund will be designed, hosted and governed in line with African Union financial regulations and applicable partner fiduciary requirements, with its instrument submitted for clearance before establishment. A WPS Financing Coordination Mechanism under the WPS-IDTF will ensure coherence, supported by integrated tracking systems and a resource mobilisation capability within OSE-WPS, to be resourced within the Office's approved structure and staffing establishment, that stewards partnerships and financing alignment rather than managing partner-funded project implementation. Guided by principles of African ownership, diversification and transparency, the framework aims by 2028 to operationalise a Continental WPS Financing Compact and increase the share of WPS funding from African public and private sources to at least 50 percent, ensuring the strategy is both politically credible and financially sustainable. Annual financing requirements arising from this Plan will be reflected in the Office's annual budget submissions on the African Union planning and budgeting calendar.

IMPLEMENTATION ARCHITECTURE



7

Measuring Change: Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, Accountability and Learning

7.1. The results framework

A detailed monitoring, evaluation and learning framework (Annex 1), a resource mobilisation framework (Annex 2) and a risk management framework (Annex 3) accompany this Strategy. Within the first six months of implementation, OSE-WPS and its partners will operationalise a results framework specifying, for each strategic objective: the outcome sought; the outputs that produce it; indicators with baselines, annual milestones and 2028 targets; the responsible actor; the means of verification; the reporting cycle; and the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 result and key performance indicator to which the outcome contributes. Indicators are drawn from the Continental Results Framework wherever a Continental Results Framework indicator exists, so that measurement of Women, Peace and Security results remains continentally comparable.

7.2. One reporting route, not two

The Continental Results Framework is the Union's thematic accountability instrument for Women, Peace and Security. It is not a parallel corporate reporting system. Continental Results Framework returns from Member States and from Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms are consolidated annually by OSE-WPS into the AU WPS Accountability Report and Scorecard for the African Union policy organs. The same consolidated dataset is transmitted, through the mapping established in the results framework, into the Commission's monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning arrangements and the African Union Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Tool on the corporate reporting cycle. OSE-WPS will not maintain a separate reporting architecture, and Member States will not be asked to report the same information twice.

Annual OSE-WPS workplans, budget submissions, procurement and partnership plans, and individual staff performance plans derive from the approved results framework. Each is prepared on the African Union planning and budgeting calendar, and each planned activity references the strategic objective and the African Union Strategic Plan result it serves. Divisional and individual performance objectives within the Office are aligned to the indicators in the results framework, so that performance management, resource allocation and strategy delivery move together rather than separately.

7.3. Planning, budgeting and performance integration

The Plan will be reviewed annually by the WPS Interdepartmental Task Force, with a mid-term review in 2028. Annual reporting through the AU WPS Accountability Report and Scorecard will track delivery, surface implementation bottlenecks and inform course correction. Because the African Union Strategic Plan 2024–2028 concludes one year before this Plan, the 2028 review will additionally re-align the Plan's 2028 indicators, targets and reporting lines to the successor African Union Strategic Plan, and any consequential amendments will be submitted for approval.

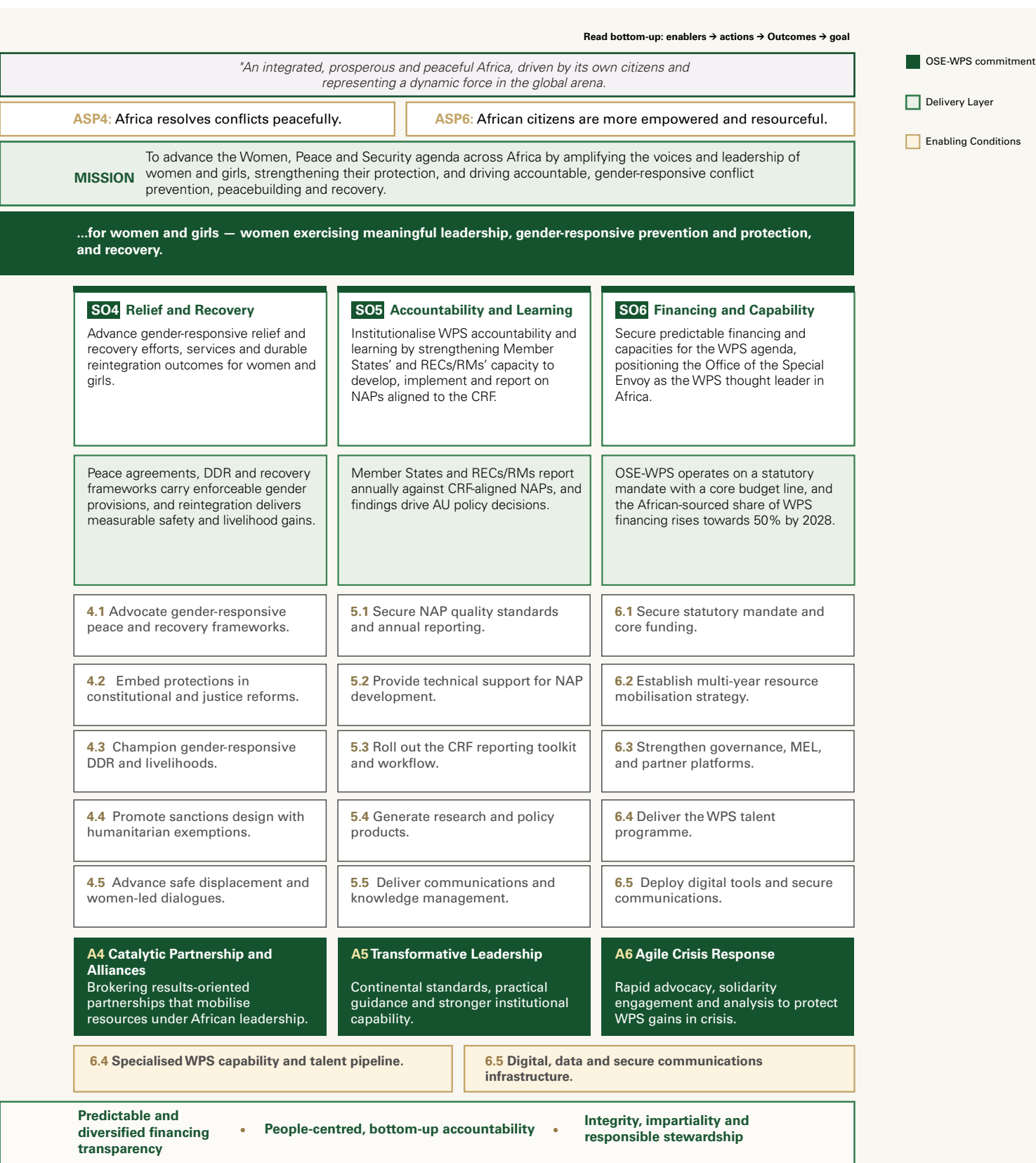
7.4. Review and re-alignment

The Strategy Map

AU VISION	"An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena."		
Agenda 2063 Aspirations Served	ASP3: Public institutions are more responsive to citizens' needs.		ASP4: Africa resolves conflicts peacefully.
VISION AND MISSION	VISION An Africa where women and men enjoy equal rights and equal participation in the building of a peaceful, secure and prosperous continent, in line with Agenda 2063.		
2028 STRATEGIC GOAL	By 2028, the African Union's peace and security architecture delivers more consistent, accountable and adequately resourced WPS outcomes embedded in AU and Member State systems, producing durable gains...		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	SO1 Participation and Leadership Champion women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across AU-led conflict prevention, management and resolution processes.	SO2 Protection and Justice Promote protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings by advancing compliance with international law, mandatory protection training, and accountability for SGBV and related rights violations.	SO3 Prevention Advance the mainstreaming of gender-responsive conflict prevention in AU early warning, preventive diplomacy and PSO mandates.
	OUTCOMES BY 2028 AU-led mediation and peace processes meet an agreed minimum standard for women's representation, and women's influence on outcomes is tracked and reported annually.	OUTCOMES BY 2028 AU missions and engagements operate to common protection standards, with independent compliance review and functioning survivor-centred accountability routes.	OUTCOMES BY 2028 Gender-responsive indicators and triggers are embedded in CEWS and REC/RM early warning, and generate documented preventive action.
INDICATIVE STRATEGIC ACTIONS five per objective	1.1 Support Member State and REC/RM WPS focal points.	2.1 Advance AU-wide protection standards, SOPs and escalation.	3.1 Embed gender indicators and triggers in CEWS.
	1.2 Secure AU minimum standards for representation.	2.2 Deliver capacity building on CRSV, GBV and SEA.	3.2 Institutionalise OSE-WPS in preventive diplomacy mandates.
	1.3 Track women's participation in AU-led processes.	2.3 Strengthen survivor-centred accountability platforms.	3.3 Integrate systematic gender analysis across the cycle.
	1.4 Institutionalise platforms for women to brief AU organs.	2.4 Champion mandatory protection training for PSOs.	3.4 Standardise prevention training and guidance.
	1.5 Mobilise finance and partnerships for WPS networks.	2.5 Run rapid response missions and accountability briefs.	3.5 Publish prevention outlook; support NAP costing.
STRATEGIC APPROACHES HOW WE WORK	A1 High-Level Diplomacy and Advocacy Sustained political engagement to secure commitments and their translation into practice.	A2 Strategic Convening and Coordination A central platform aligning AU organs, RECs/RMs, Member States, civil society and partners.	A3 Evidence-Based Influence Credible evidence, analysis and performance data guiding decisions and resource allocation.
	ENABLERS (FROM SO6) 6.1 Statutory mandate and core budget line	6.2 Continental WPS Financing Compact and diversified partnerships.	6.3 WPS-IDTF coordination, governance and MEL systems.
PRINCIPLES & VALUES	African ownership and leadership • Complementarity and a disciplined division of labour • Predictable and diversified financing transparency		

Outcome indicators, baselines, and 2028 targets are set out in the OSE-WPS Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan. Financing assumptions and the 2026 financing baseline are set out in the Resource Mobilisation Plan.

The Strategy Map below explains how the OSE-WPS will convert its mandate and resources into system-wide transformation by 2028.



Approaches A1–A6 apply across all six objectives; alignment shown is indicative of primary emphasis. Read Strategy Map bottom-up starting from Enablers (S06).

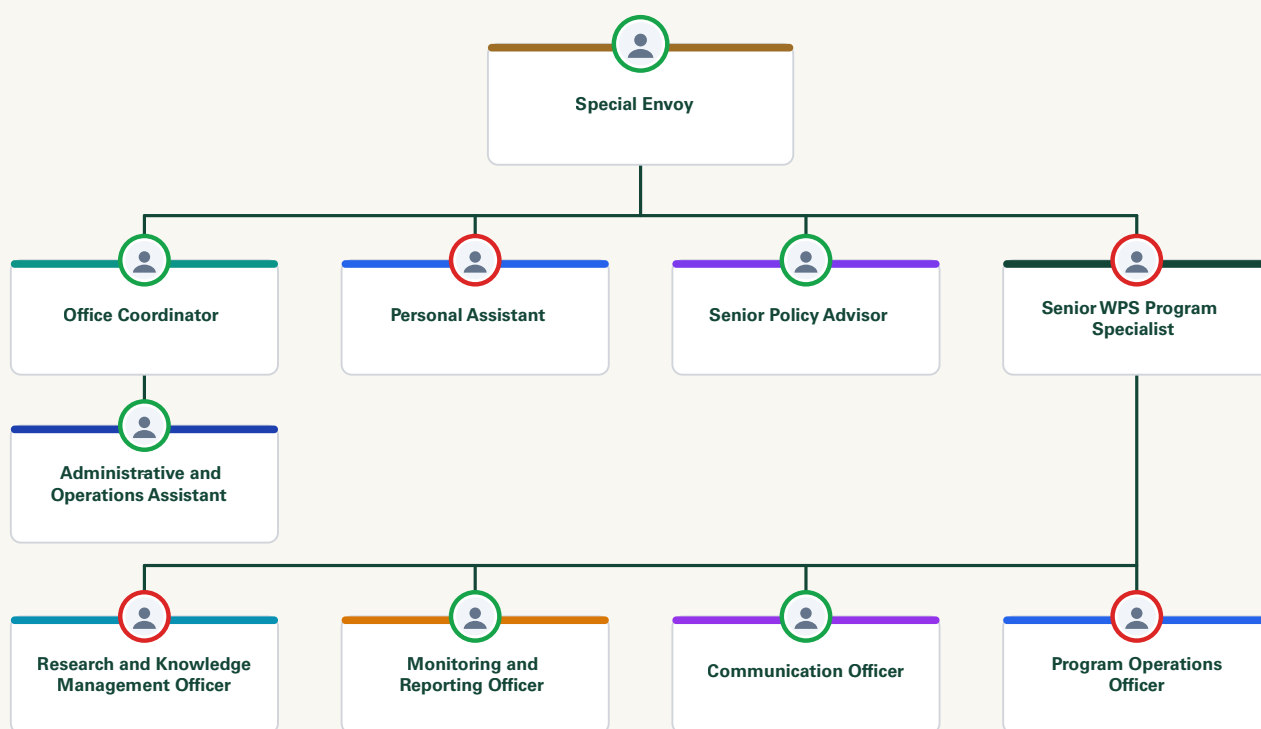
The Strategy Map contains abbreviated activity descriptions.

9

The Organisational Structure

The organisational structure below shows how the OSE-WPS is configured to support delivery of the Strategy through 2028.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY STRUCTURE



● Position approved by the AU Assembly

● Positions proposed Subject to Approval by AU Assembly

*Interns and Volunteers



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