

Operational / External Title: Senior Research and Policy Specialist - Humanitarian and WPS

Role Title:	Senior Research and Policy Specialist (WPS & Humanitarian Reform)
Date of JD Review:	6 August 2025
Department:	Advocacy and Influencing
Team:	Women Peace and Security
Tenure:	Full time & Fixed-Term
Band & Range:	Band D
Location:	London & Hybrid (1 day per week in office)
Reports to:	Head of Women Peace and Security
DBS check required:	Yes [DBS Roles]
Role requires travel:	Yes
Budget Holder	No
Direct Reports:	No
Indirect Reports:	No
Dotted line reports:	No
<p>Internal: Technical Advisers, Policy Advisers, advocacy advisers, all ActionAid UK Departments and Teams, AAUK Leadership Group, AAI Federation, IHART.</p> <p>External: Policy stakeholders, Politicians and NGO networks.</p>	

Purpose Of the Role:

The Women Peace and Security (WPS) team is a key delivery partner in ActionAid's UK new strategy to promote a world where women and girls are valued, live free from violence, and can exercise their rights to promote their own resilience, safety, equality and voice. The WPS team is comprised of policy and technical advisers who advance policy perspectives and programme led learning to ActionAid UK's target donors, influencers, academic audiences and policy makers. A key purpose of the role is to lead the provision of high-quality research and policy development rooted in AA programme and policy work, applying feminist principles to research and analysis. The role demands a specialist who will bring a strong feminist perspective, research skills, networking ability and a spirit of collaboration to ActionAid UK.

Main Accountabilities:

Research and Policy

- Co-develop, monitor and lead the roll out and implementation of AAUK's WPS feminist research and policy strategy, in collaboration/coordination with colleagues across the department and ActionAid International's humanitarian team.
- Develop and deepen our policy content and positioning work in the WPS technical focus areas (women's protection, women's leadership, and the intersections of WPS with resilience/climate and localisation).
- Deliver and lead on research initiatives to support UK commitments on WPS and ActionAid's humanitarian localisation priorities, ensuring adherence to, and integration of, ActionAid's Feminist Research Guidelines e.g. via the development of key policy and research outputs.
- Continue and strengthen ActionAid UK reactive and proactive policy and advocacy support to countries facing humanitarian crisis, building relationships with relevant government and sector colleagues, and working with federation members and their partners, AAUK's advocacy team and ActionAid's international humanitarian team.
- Work on request with AAUK's communications and media team to act on opportunities to communicate AA policy and thinking, including through writing articles/op-eds, blogs.

Business Development

- Provide timely and quality technical policy and research inputs on WPS strategic thematic areas.) support the development of funding processes and EOIs as required.
- Develop and maintain relationships with academic institutions, partners, and feminist/women's rights networks, to support partnerships and business development opportunities, in collaboration with the Funding department.

Advocacy, Campaign Representation and Networking

- Promote AAUK's research and policy within the UK and global humanitarian and women's rights space, including engagement with UK government and parliament, peer organisations, sector working groups, academic institutions, and WROs and Southern-led partners.
- Work in collaboration with the AAUK Advocacy team to influence key actors in the UK, including the UK Government, and advance AAUK WPS priority issues and asks in key decision-making spaces.
- When needed, support ActionAid's international humanitarian team and country colleagues to influence key actors at the global level, and advance AAI / AAUK WPS and humanitarian sector reform issues and asks in key decision-making spaces.
- Facilitate opportunities for international colleagues and partners to access WPS and humanitarian policy and advocacy platforms in the UK, and at a global level, ensuring joined up policy thinking.
- Act as an AAUK media spokesperson on request.

Technical Leadership

- Act as the technical policy and advocacy adviser on WPS and Humanitarian Localisation, including support to federation members and their partners, in the delivery of policy and programme outputs, as appropriate.
- Support cross ActionAid federation efforts to enhance understanding and learning of ActionAid's' WPS Approach (such as co-leading new or deepening WPS and humanitarian workstreams, e.g. links between WPS and humanitarian reform, and gender transformative conflict sensitivity programming implementation).

EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE & EXPERTISE

Essential Criteria:

- Excellent knowledge of women's rights and gender equality as they relate to humanitarian issues and the WPS agenda, including a strong understanding of feminist approaches and the power that shapes relations between the global North and South.
- Excellent understanding of the international humanitarian system and relevant policy debates for ActionAid's strategic areas of interest.
- Excellent understanding of the international WPS system and relevant policy debates for ActionAid's strategic areas of interest.
- Strong technical knowledge of one or more of ActionAid's priority areas, including women's protection and gender-based violence,
- resilience, climate, women's leadership and localisation.

- Substantial experience of policy analysis and commissioning and conducting research on relevant issues gained in a public policy, NGO or academic environment.
- Strong networks within the women's rights and humanitarian spaces, including a strong understanding of how to influence decision-makers and build relationships within the UK government and at the global level.
- Excellent writing skills and the ability to translate complex material and data into clear and concise materials appropriate for the intended audience.
- Experience developing strategy and engagement plans for influencing purposes.
- Good understanding of ActionAid's Feminist Leadership Principles and a range of management tools to promote a positive working relationship with line manage.
- Excellent negotiation and presentational skills and the ability to communicate and listen effectively at all levels and across cultures.
- Ability to travel overseas, including to insecure environments.
- Commitment to decolonisation and anti-racist principles.
- Commitment to AA's vision, [mission](#) and values, including a commitment to [feminist principles](#), safeguarding, and working in an organisation committed to working for the rights of women and girls.
- Commitment to AA's values of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and upholding the values of becoming an anti-racist decolonised INGO.
- ActionAid UK is committed to preventing any form of sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse (including child abuse and adult at-risk abuse) and responding robustly when these harms take place. We expect all ActionAid UK Staff and ActionAid UK Associated Personnel to share this commitment.
- Commitment to continually improving your digital skills and knowledge within the working environment.

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of living and working in the "Global South", especially regions where we are funding programmes & projects
- Experience of working for an INGO
- Experience of working in a humanitarian context or responding to an emergency.
- A post graduate degree in a relevant subject.
- Experience of being published in academic journals and strong relationships with academia.
- Fluency in French and/or a second language spoken in one of
- ActionAid's countries.

It is expected that everyone at ActionAid UK will work to support and strengthen our desired culture of being bold, connected, diverse, optimistic, open and respectful through the way they approach and deliver their work by:

- Being accountable and responsible – your individual way of working
- Being innovative and collaborative – how you get things done
- Being empowering and trusting – how you build and sustain relationships.