

Turning UNSC Resolution 1325 into operational practice

A cross-country study on implementing Resolution 1325 in peacekeeping and military operations

Randi Solhjell, Marcela Donadio, Ancil Adrian-Paul,
Niels Nagelhus Schia, Juan Rial and Renata Giannini



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Visiting address: C.J. Hambros plass 2d
Address: P.O. Box 8159 Dep.
NO-0033 Oslo, Norway
Internet: www.nupi.no
E-mail: info@nupi.no
Fax: [+ 47] 22 99 40 50
Tel: [+ 47] 22 99 40 00

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Report to the Norwegian Ministry of Defence

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
CPT	Core Pre-Deployment Training
DRC	the Democratic Republic of Congo
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FARDC	the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo
FET	Female Engagement Team
GFA	Gender Field Advisor
GFP	Gender Focal Point
DP	Internally Displaced Person
ISAF	the International Security Assistance Force
MET	Mixed Engagement Team
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TCC	Troop Contributing Countries
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNPOL	United Nations Police

Executive summary and key findings

This report focuses on the integration of gender perspectives in military and peacekeeping operations. It examines operative issues from the viewpoints of men and women to identify differences in needs and priorities, as well as in abilities and potential to contribute to the success of the mission, as identified in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). **Gender** in this report refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female, and the relations between women and men, girls and boys. As to the **integration of gender perspectives** in military operations, we examine issues from the point of view of men as well as women in order to identify differences in needs and priorities, as well as in abilities and potential to contribute to mission success.

The comparative study examines UN operations in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Liberia (UNMIL) and the DR Congo (MONUSCO) in addition to the Norwegian contribution to the NATO operation in Afghanistan. Although more research is needed, the findings provide documentation on progress and gaps on the implementation aspect of Resolution 1325 regarding the incorporation of gender perspectives at field level. In particular, the project has looked into the terms of mandate and training aimed at implementing and operationalizing these tasks and reaching the entire population. Moreover, as there is nothing to indicate that in the near future a more equal number of women and man will be used and deployed to international operations, it is important that the male soldiers and military staff have an awareness of their surroundings in terms of gender perspectives. This means that, for instance, in their daily activities like patrolling and reporting in UN missions they should be aware of the situation for both women and men, and that they liaise with a community representative who can give gendered details of various security concerns.

Key findings:

- First and foremost, documentation (field-based research, knowledge etc.) on gender-sensitive peacekeeping on the military side of missions is limited. There is a need to develop better indicators, far beyond merely counting number of women, and to ensure in-mission awareness training specific to the context to be patrolled.
- The gap between political guidelines and the tactical/operational level is evident, in varying degrees, in all the operations studied here. There may be declared goals of integrating Res.1325 at all

levels of operations, and mandated aims, but in practice the operative level of peacekeepers depends on good leadership and individual initiative.

- Though improvement is likely in future missions, it may be argued that planning and analysis as a first, key step of military operations rarely incorporates or mainstreams gender perspectives. There is also reason to believe that women in the countries where missions are based are not sufficiently consulted on peace and security concerns.
- As most peacekeepers do not speak the local languages of the mission areas, there is a high reliance on local interlocutors, termed Community Liaison Assistants, in places like the DRC. These key staff should, together with the peacekeepers, not only receive in-mission training on reporting but most crucially share their experience and local knowledge with the UN staff (peacekeepers and substantive sections) so that gender-sensitive approaches can be adapted to the needs of the local civilian population.
- Staff interviewed in the missions tended to mix the two themes Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), which is a code-of-conduct issue for peacekeepers concerning the avoidance of sexual relations with the local population, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), which is a security issue concerning protection, prevention and reporting in conflict and post-conflict areas. Peacekeepers usually emphasized the former when asked about the latter.

Acknowledgements

We would first and foremost extend our thanks to the Norwegian Ministry of Defense, for funding this study and making the field visits possible. The interest in this topic shown by the Ministry and by the Norwegian government more broadly is an encouragement to continue the work, also beyond this report. Moreover, our work would not have been possible without the contributions from our external partners Marcela Donadio, Juan Rial and Renata Giannini from RESDAL, who conducted the work in Haiti, and independent advisor Ancil Adrian-Paul, who conducted the work in Liberia.

In the field, the Sexual Violence Unit at MONUSCO HQ Bukavu (DRC), Chiara Oriti Niosi and Alejandro Sanchez were central experts to consult with on gender perspectives in the mission and were also crucial for establishing good relations with the South Kivu Brigade. Our warm thanks go also to the South Kivu brigade headquarters for helping the researcher to meet with all the commanders of the battalions in the area. The Liberia study would have been impossible without the assistance of the gender team in the DPKO Peacebuilding Best Practices Section (PBPS) and the understanding of and permission granted by the UNMIL Force Commander to access the military troops. We wish to thank him and his office, as well as the UN Police Commissioner, for meeting with us and allowing us to interview selected UN Formed Police Units. In Haiti, the MINUSTAH study was possible thanks to the support provided by the Mission authorities and the contribution of the Head of the Gender Unit Baudouine Kamatari and Isidore Boutchue, Naval Captain Rodolfo Neuss, U9 of the military component, Lt. Col. Coudou Camara, in charge of the UNPOL gender team, and all civilian officials, commanders, officers, members of battalions and companies, and FPU personnel and UNPOL, who facilitated our work there.

From Norway, we would like to thank the Norwegian Armed Forces for facilitating interviews with our informants among the Norwegian staff recently returned from Afghanistan. Our warm gratitude's also goes to the staff at the Gender Project at the Norwegian Defense University College for useful discussions, inputs and knowledge.

1.0 Introduction

This report focuses on the integration of gender perspectives in four peacekeeping and military operations: Norwegian participation in the ISAF in Afghanistan (Maymaneh, Fayab province), and United Nations operations in Haiti (MINUSTAH), in South Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), and in Liberia (UNMIL). UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. Although the adoption of the resolution marked a substantial achievement in international politics at the executive level, practical implementation of the content of this resolution and the follow-up resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) has proven more difficult. With reference to the standards listed in the UNSC resolutions two goals in particular seem difficult to achieve: (i) the integration of gender perspectives at all levels of military and peacekeeping interventions and operations, and (ii) the participation of women in the armed forces.

This report draws inspiration from the milestone report *Operational Effectiveness and UN Resolution 1325 - Practices and Lessons from Afghanistan* (Olsson & Tejpar, 2009). Olsson's analytical framework (p. 20) (see below) for evaluating the representation and integration of Res. 1325 at the internal and external levels of a NATO-led and UN-led operations offers a meaningful approach to studies also beyond Afghanistan., and has been used in order to analyze the findings of this study.

This report begins with a brief presentation of the methodology employed and the analytical framework. After an introduction to trends within NATO concerning UNSC Res. 1325 (2000), there follows a case study of Norwegian experiences from Fayab province in Afghanistan. Then comes a similar introduction to UN peacekeeping and Res. 1325, followed by three case studies: of the UN missions in DR Congo (MONUSCO), in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and in Liberia (UNMIL). The report concludes with some remarks and key recommendations from the study. It should be borne in mind that the cases presented here can provide only a snapshot of the efforts and challenges in these operations, as this report is far from an exhaustive study.

1.1 Methodology

This study has involved a combination of desk studies, interviews, focus groups and fieldwork for three of the four cases (Afghanistan excluded). The fieldwork in Haiti and in Liberia was undertaken by three colleagues from RESDAL, Marcela Donadio, Juan Rial and Renata Giannini, and one independent advisor, Ancil Adrian-Paul, respectively. The RESDAL team had recently conducted a similar study. Teaming up with them benefitted our study because they already had good contacts; it also enabled them to undertake a follow-up study of their previous work. Adrian-Paul came highly recommended through our contact networks for her expertise in the field of Liberia and Res. 1325, where she had, *inter alia*, co-authored the Liberian National Action Plan for implementation of Resolution 1325 and also undertaken situational analyses of gender, peace and security issues.

The selection of informants among the Norwegian ISAF stab was undertaken by the foreign affairs section of the Norwegian Defense Personnel Service (*FPT-utland*), which made possible access to these central figures. The ten personnel interviewed (five men and five women) had all served various functions in Norwegian Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and were all recently returned from Afghanistan from PRT18, some with experience from previous PRTs as well. Due to practical considerations, some were interviewed in a focus-group setting at NUPI and others were reached by telephone. In addition, informants were found in the Oslo-based network, especially the Gender Project at the Norwegian Defense University College (NDUC), among previous gender field advisors (GFAs) and others working on similar topics within the defense and security sector, including participants at the ‘Masculinity and the Military’ seminar arranged by the Norwegian Ministry of Defense (June 11, 2012).

In the case of MONUSCO, the researcher was based in Bukavu, South Kivu, and made visits to peacekeeping units in the surrounding areas. The instability of the North Kivu region and the provincial capital Goma made visits to that area riskier, and would also have strained the UN in terms of limited availability for visitors. In the case of UNMIL (Liberia), the researcher was based in Montserrado County, which includes the capital Monrovia. With Haiti and MINUSTAH, the team was based in Port-au-Prince; the previous study had covered Cap-Haïtien, Gonaïves, Port Salut and Les Cayes. Contingents were interviewed at their bases.

Questions focused on pre-deployment and in-country training, operational and tactical mandates of the troops, rules of engagement, familiarity with Res. 1325, contact and interaction with the local communities in the area of responsibilities, and protection of civilians, includ-

ing women and girls. Emphasis was placed on the challenges, lessons learned and recommendations from the respondents.

It is important to underscore that this study has *not* assessed the impact of Res. 1325 in the local communities: the scope was limited to a focus on peacekeepers and the relevance of resolution Res. 1325 in their everyday work.

1.2 Analytical Framework

Olsson's (in Olsson & Tejpar, 2009, p. 20) analytical framework distinguishes between Res. 1325 understood in terms of *representation* (male/female participation), and of *integration* (use of the content of the resolution to achieved desired outputs). In turn, these topics can be analyzed internally – how the UN and NATO are organized internally; or externally – how the operation (led by the UN or, NATO) handles the situation in the area of responsibility to obtain the desired output. The table below illustrates this framework.

	Representation	Integration
Internal (Internal military organization of the mission/operation)	Manning policies and equal opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Male and female personnel – all functions and levels ✓ Work environment ✓ Access to resources and material 	Work structure of UN/NATO missions/operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training ✓ Analysis ✓ Planning ✓ Reporting ✓ Evaluation and policy development
External (How the operation/mission addresses the situation in the area of responsibility to obtain its objective)	Liaison, intelligence and support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interaction with local women and men ✓ Cooperation and promotion of local partners, including women's organizations 	Mandate interpretation and execution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How main assignments are selected and prioritized ✓ Execution of selected and prioritized assignments ✓ Adaptation to local developments

Internal representation involves the working environment for involving female personnel in the military section. *External representation* includes two aspects of military practice: how military personnel interact with the civilian population in carrying out their tasks, and how operations select local parties and organizations in the host society for provision of support and information exchange. *Internal integration* means that resolution Res. 1325 is understood as an integrated part of operations, not a separate topic, and permeates all activities as identified in the table. And finally, *external integration*, perhaps the most complex and extensive category, relates to where the mandate is interpreted and executed and adapted to priorities on the ground. Here, the focus is on need and context relating to the differing security situations for men and for women during violent conflicts and in the aftermath. Different assignments and priorities will differ in their effects on women and on men: revision and adaptation to the needs and contexts are essential elements.

2.0 NATO and UNSC Rs. 1325

With regard to the gender dimension, significant changes have taken place recently within the organization of NATO. Among other things, the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP), established in May 2009, serves as an advisory board to the Military Committee.¹ Furthermore, in the commanding ISAF operational plan (COMISAF OPLAN, version 5), there is Annex X Gender, the first annex ever to concern gender. This annex, developed by Birgith Andreassen and Elin Rørvik (who at various stages served as Gender Advisors at ISAF HQ), specifies the mandate for ISAF's implementation of gender perspectives in the planning and execution of its operations, as well as Female Engagement Teams. In September 2012, Moreover, Mari Skåre became NATO's special representative for women, peace and security – which, in the words of Anders Vogt Rasmussen, “demonstrates how much NATO values the unique contribution of women to our armed forces and operations and their important role in conflict prevention and resolution.”²

Due to the alliance's more covert style of operating, it can be difficult for researchers outside NATO circles to follow internal processes and their actual impacts on missions. Nevertheless, there has been research on NATO and topics related to gender perspectives, international operations and inclusion of women. Some research has been conducted on the recruitment and retention of women in the military and to international operations in NATO (Schjølset, 2010a, 2010b) as well as the earlier-mentioned report on Res. 1325 in Afghanistan (Olsson & Tejpar). The report by Fasting and Sand (2012) offers a systematic categorization of research undertaken on gender and military issues, with a bibliography. It is likely that there will be more systematic research on Res. 1325 and gender perspectives in NATO's structure and operations in the coming years, as has been signaled from the top level of the organization.

¹ Details and publications from this board can be found at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50327.htm

² See NATO webpage, at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_89583.htm , accessed 31.08.2012

2.1 Experience from the Norwegian PRT in Meymaneh, Afghanistan

This is a matter of modernizing – of transitioning from brotherhood to team. The military is no playground for masculinity. It is modern teams of highly competent professionals.

Former Defense Minister Espen Barth Eide, 11 June 2012³

Eide's statement reflects the changes that are starting to take place in the Norwegian armed forces, moving away from traditional combat roles and towards the multidimensional military operations that require a range of specialized skills (see e.g. Andreassen & Ingalls, 2009). Norway has through the Action Plan (Foreign Affairs, 2006) committed to contribute to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at home and in the global context. One key area identified in the Action Plan is to increase women's participation in NATO-led peace support operations in order to reach the female population in places like Afghanistan, where religious-cultural factors place restraints on male-female interaction. More broadly, the 2006 Action Plan and the follow-up strategy (Foreign Affairs, 2011) have stated a commitment to gender-sensitive approaches at all levels of these international operations – from planning activities, operational practices and through to the evaluation. Through desk studies, interviews and focus groups, the researcher has examined the various levels of achievements in PRT18 concerning the goals set and the actual representation and integration of Res. 1325 in the context of the Norwegian presence in Afghanistan. However, this has not been intended as an exhaustive study; additional external and internal reviews and studies should be undertaken of the every-day practices and the more long-term aspects of the armed forces and gender issues.

2.1.1 Representation and Resolution 1325

Internal Representation

The aspect relates to the issue of equal participation of men and women in the armed forces. In the view of the researcher who conducted this sub-study, there are not enough women at the current stage in professional positions in the Norwegian armed forces. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan consists of approximately only 7% women (Ellingsen, 2012). At higher political and military levels, it has also been mooted whether the Female Engagement Team

³ Speech downloaded 27 August 2012 at <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/fd/whats-new/Speeches-and-articles/minister/speeches-and-articles-by-minister-of-d-2/2012/masculinity-and-the-military.html?id=685175>

(FET) or Mixed Engagement Team (MET) may offer a better approach for reaching the female population in countries where establishing contact with women can be difficult, as in Afghanistan.⁴ The feedback from some of our informants has been that the presence of women serving in various units has been a positive contribution in reaching women and has improved information gathering and cooperation with the local population. However, it is important that women in this unit are there because of their function in the team, as interpreters, engineers etc., and *not* as women per se. The latter situation could in a worst-case scenario even lead to unnecessary deaths, if women are present in the field without a clear added value to the operation as a whole.⁵ Furthermore, these women should not have sole responsibility for implementing Res. 1325 at the operative level. It should also be noted that female personnel are not necessarily interested in joining female-only teams, as these might be viewed as subordinate positions/roles in the armed forces.

One Gender Field Advisor (GFA) argued that the paucity of women in Norway's armed forces has its origin in the initial military service, which had traditionally recruited only men, as this is often the first step into a professional military career. If today there are, for instance, women in the Norwegian Telemark Battalion, a highly professional rapid-response group, that is rather by chance than because of active recruitment policy. This is slowly changing, and it is likely that women will increasingly form a part of the operational and specialized services. As it stands now, however, the Norwegian defense does not have enough personnel qualified to form a FET. In addition, the women who are in the specialized units cannot be taken out of their teams to form a part of a FET, as that would lead to a gap in their initial unit.

External Representation

This section concerns the contextual situation in the area of operation in terms of participation of women and men, and the interaction between mission staff and the Afghan people. Informants who had previous experience with this area in Afghanistan argued that the situation of women had indeed improved. In particular, there were many more women and girls attending school, which was seen as essential for re-including women in society. Also *generational differences* should be taken into consideration in evaluating external representation. This was pointed out by informants who could tell us that older men held views that were far more liberal views than those of younger men of about the same age as the ISAF staff. This was because the older gen-

⁴ See for instance former head of PRT15 Rune Solberg's evaluation of the potential good prospects for all-female teams at <http://m.db.no/download/dokument.pdf> (downloaded 31.08.2012)

⁵ It is important to state that this has *not* been the experience in the Norwegian engagement units as far as we know.

eration had experienced the times before the Taliban. Also worth noting were the differences between ethnic groups and their areas: there was significant variation in how conservative or liberal local societies were, depending on their affiliation to place and culture. Points like these represent important information that could be fed into a planning phase, as well as pre-deployment and in-mission training courses for soldiers, both theoretical and practical, for the armed forces.

Contact between PRT18 and women's organizations and other female representatives appeared basically limited to the personal initiatives and engagement of the Gender Field Advisor. Again, the lack of female staff who could contact women was mentioned as a key problem. Here the question arises of whether the ISAF has a broader mandate at all and an operational side beyond the responsibility of the individual GFA to reach women. As one informant stated, "there is no operational success if you are able to reach only half of the population in the area of responsibility."

It also became evident through talking to GFAs and other ISAF personnel that language played an essential role in reaching the population. There was a need for more female personnel who could speak Dari or Pashto, and local for female translators, as this would make it easier to talk with Afghan women. In some cases, it was necessary for the local male interpreter to be sitting outside by an open window to translate between a Pashto-speaking Afghan woman and an ISAF soldier – not an optimal solution.

2.1.2 Integration and UNSC Res. 1325

Internal Integration

There was a full-time position as Gender Field Advisor in the PRT18 to support the integration of Res. 1325 in the PRT's work. Representatives from the gender project at the Norwegian Defense University College are working on a more systematic study of the experiences of previous GFAs in ISAF. In this study, the researcher was only able to speak with three of these. It nevertheless provided useful feedback that will, it is hoped, feed into a process of lessons learned and further progress.

The former GFAs all stated that there was not always an authority to turn to for advice or guidance in their role, nor was there a sufficient professional environment for understanding gender perspectives and mainstreaming them into the military. One exception is the assistance that some received from their contact with the Gender Project as well as the pre-deployment training of GFAs at the Swedish Armed Forces

International Centre (Swedint). On this latter, one held that the Swedish armed forces have been much better at taking gender perspectives seriously and that in Norway there remained too wide a gap between political goals and the tactical/operational level. Another argued, however, that the training Swedint provided put too much emphasis on ideals of gender equality based on the “Swedish model,” and that this was not the right way to approach military personnel from places far removed from Swedish culture such as Nigeria or Sierra Leone. Around the globe, the job of armed forces personnel is usually *not* to act as a provider of gender equality in the local society. It was suggested to focus on the *cultural aspects of the society* where a mission would be placed and the operational effectiveness of gender perspectives in reaching mandate goals, especially in terms of reaching the entire population.

Also mentioned was the need for better operational scenario-based pre-deployment training in understanding how gender analysis is or should be a part of the operation. There were exceptions, but the general impression was that the pre-deployment training included only a short (two-hour) session on cultural aspects of Afghanistan, concerning *inter alia* the position of women, but this was usually not followed up in the scenario training sessions at Setermoen in Norway. In other words, there is a need for more “how-to” training in terms of what to look for, whether or not to intervene and how to respond to scenarios x, y, z. This is not to say that soldiers do not understand theoretical training, on the contrary: but scenario-based training is more similar to the role and function expected of them in the field.

Many if not all of our informants expressed retrospective views that emphasized the integration of gender perspectives should have taken place at the planning stage of ISAF – that is, the stage of mapping, information gathering and operational goal setting. The inclusion of Res. 1325 at a much later stage in the operation was not seen as a good approach, and should serve as a lesson for the future planning of operations.

External Integration

This aspect relates to the actual execution of plans and operational aspect of the mission. It seemed acknowledged among ISAF staff that women and men in Afghanistan play different but important roles in society. In particular, women are often central in decision-making at home. However, Afghan women were often consulted solely through the female GFA and not through her male colleagues, as the latter was deemed inappropriate. Women’s and men’s security issues were not necessarily radically different, as the GFA explained,⁶ although there

⁶ Personal interview with the researcher, 3 September 2012.

could be differences in emphasis and nuances on subjects that should be considered in order to understand the situation of the civilian population better.

The message from some of the returned ISAF staff was that there has to be a solid leadership, a clear mandate and a 100% effort to undertake risks such as spending more time in the field getting in touch with women and analyzing the situation, in order to achieve the goals set for the operation. Talking with women and women leaders must be seen as a key entry point for understanding security concerns and cannot be done half-heartedly, as that might put more people than necessary at risk. If the risks are understood and action is taken to engage with the female population, then one can retrospectively argue that it was worth it despite the possible short-term losses or even loss of life in the worst case.

One of the soldiers argued that there was a need for female military staff for check-point searches of Afghans. There had been several incidents around the country where suicide bombers had dressed in burkas and managed to detonate bombs, as they could not be searched by the male representatives of ISAF or the Afghan security forces.

Overall, the mandate of supporting the reconstruction of state institutions in Afghanistan and the long-term goal of reconciliation and development has, at least at a later stage, involved empowering women's organizations as well as women in the police and the armed forces in Fayab province. The long-term development of Afghanistan is certainly not the sole job of the armed forces in ISAF, but the training of Afghan women in the police and armed forces as well as liaison established between the GFAs and the women's organizations can serve as a starting point in the operational practice of gender perspectives in the armed forces.

3.0 UN peacekeeping and UNSC Res 1325

The various UN missions have, throughout their existence, focused on ensuring that peace treaties are complied with; on providing safe passage of humanitarian aid; protection for vulnerable groups in conflicts including women, children, elderly and impaired; and patrols in insecure areas and around refugee camps. In other words, it is almost implied that the missions have or should have an understanding of gender-sensitive peacekeeping and protection. There are, however, some shortcomings when it comes to specifically nuanced training, information gathering and operational effectiveness. The UN is currently undertaking thorough training needs assessment in order to identify performance gaps and address the diversity and scope of the peacekeepers.⁷ Some of the preliminary findings include the need for better understanding of the tasks and of the political and cultural context; language skills; mentoring skills; and the need to work in an integrated fashion. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is developing new training modules based on the Military Guidelines 2010 (*Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the UN Military in Peacekeeping Operations*).

One aspect that has been dealt with fairly extensively in relation to operationalization of Res. 1325 and related resolutions is sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and protection issues for peacekeeping forces, as exemplified by the recently established role of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (currently Zainab Hawa Bangura). The UN toolkit (2010) “Addressing Conflict-related Sexual Violence: An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practices”⁸ attempts to categorize preventive and protective measures, empowerment actions and information gathering within peacekeeping missions in order to approach issues of SGBV as a key security concern in various conflict/post-conflict settings. There are examples such as “Operation Night Flash” in the DRC, where a patrolling MONUSCO contingent drove into a bush area and keep their headlights on all night to signal their presence. In the morning, they found several women sleeping in the safe area beneath the headlights. However, in some instances, unintended side-effects emerged. For in-

⁷ 18th Annual Conference of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centers, 17–20. September 2012, Helsinki, Finland.

⁸ Downloaded 29 August 2012 from http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/Analytical_Inventory_of_Peacekeeping_Practice_online.pdf

stance, under the category of gender-sensitive camp design and management, the UN mission in Chad found that alcohol abuse was related to heightened SGBV threat in the camps, and therefore supported the destruction of 200 liters of locally-produced spirits. What the report fails to note, however, is that alcohol production is the livelihood for many women in these camps, and so the UN missions was indirectly involved in destroying their livelihoods there.

The point is not to become paralyzed because choices and actions might have unintended consequences. However, it must be acknowledged that some tasks, such as prevention and protection against highly stigmatized issues like SGBV, require intensive local analysis and information gathering and most likely the close cooperation of community-based groups and civilian experts from the substantive part of the mission. More broadly, gender analysis and community liaison are essential to better operational effectiveness. But it is also important *not* to equate gender mainstreaming in a peacekeeping operation with protection against SGBV. Equally important is heightened awareness of cultural aspects like the position of women and men in the society, and good cooperation between military contingents and civilian experts for assessing and assisting vulnerable populations.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that peacekeepers have a difficult task: Many come from countries far away and do not speak the local languages, and yet they are expected to ensure administrative functions, monitor the security situation, gather information through arduous foot patrols, protect civilians against physical violence and help establish a more secure environment – among other things. In the following, we present some experiences from peacekeepers based in DR Congo, Haiti and Liberia.

3.1 Experiences from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo, MONUSCO

There will never be enough resources...this is why, for example, we are trying to understand the communities better... We need to recognize that protection is more than just having military boots on the ground. It's about how you use them, and how you can connect with your civilian staff.

Former MONUC SRSG Alan Doss, May 2009

The UN mission in the DR Congo MONUSCO (previously MONUC) has as a priority to protect civilians and facilitate a safer environment for the humanitarian personnel operating in the area.⁹ Another essential part is the cooperation and strengthening of the Congolese armed

⁹ UNSC Resolution 2053 adopted by the Security Council on 27 June 2012, affirming the continuation of MONSUCO until the 30 June 2013.

forces (FARDC) and the police in the process of stabilization and peace consolidation. In many cases, these are conflicting objectives – as the FARDC was held responsible for about 18% of the cases of sexual violence cases committed in South Kivu as of February 2012, as estimated by the UN sexual violence unit in Bukavu. Thus, the FARDC represent for many civilians in eastern DRC a serious security concern. Nevertheless, Security Sector Reform (SSR) and general professionalization of the armed forces in the DRC is direly needed. The largest component of MONUSCO is the military, consisting of 19,102 total uniformed personnel, of which 691 military observers and 17,035 military personnel. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are the largest troop contributing countries (TCCs).¹⁰

The research for this report was conducted in Bukavu, the provincial capital of South Kivu, and nearby locations. These areas were relatively calm, compared to the situation in North Kivu at the time of the study. Nevertheless, in the eastern DRC the political and security situation can change rapidly, such as shown by the M23 rebellion that has destabilized the entire region at the time of this writing.

3.1.1 Representation and Resolution 1325

Internal Representation

Generally speaking, the MONUSCO military units do not have women in professional military positions; they are present mainly in civilian roles as translators, nurses, in administrative posts, etc. It is in other words a masculine environment. There are some exceptions, such as in the Uruguayan contingent, where there are a few women serving in the armed forces as officers. The mission average of women in the MONUSCO military is 2.13% – but mainly as support staff and not combatants. As one informant explained regarding the Pakistani contribution, the largest in the Bukavu area: “the Pakistan army does not have women in the more traditional battalion roles, as they are not supposed to fight in a war.”¹¹

The researcher conducted interviews with the female staff working as nurses and doctors at the Chinese level II hospital in Bukavu. These women, together with their other female colleagues at the hospital, represented about 35% of the total staff. What is exceptional about the Chinese contribution is that they do not have leave, but stay for 8 months straight. This can cause psychological pressure, they noted, since they are not able to see their husbands, children or parents and

¹⁰ Figures as of 31 July 2012 from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKOs) webpage, downloaded 20 August 2012 at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/facts.shtml>

¹¹ Interview with researcher 26.09.2012, Bukavu, South Kivu.

feel affected by happenings at home that they cannot be a part of. Their work in the DRC was a sacrifice, but they were proud to have been selected to join MONUSCO and ‘contribute to the world peace’, as one stated. The gynecologist at the hospital, who treated mainly UN staff and other ex-pats, said that many of her clients experience severe pressure at work, which resulted in irregular periods and weight loss. She argued that conditions are too hard for women in peacekeeping missions.

External Representation

The contextual situation of the Congolese civilians whom MONUSCO tries to protect from its base in the eastern part of the country is dire. As the commander of the South Kivu brigade argued, “there is not a clear separation of friends and foes,” which makes any operation more complex.¹² Women, men and children all experience severe hardship on a daily basis. What was repeatedly mentioned when the researcher asked about how they see the situation of women in the DRC that it was terrible how women had to work so hard for their livelihood and families, while the men did nothing. Many added that in their home country, they respect women and protect them from daily hardship. They see women as anyone’s mother or sister, and feel that they should be respected in every sense. During previous work on the gender perspectives of women and men in the DRC, however, the researcher found that similar arguments were made about women as “anyone’s mother and sister.” What can distinguish society in the DRC from that in some of the TCCs is that women are more visible in everyday life. Congolese customs are in many ways conservative, but women are clearly present and form a significant part of the socio-economic backbone of the society. This also affects women’s level of insecurity, as they must walk long distances to reach marketplaces, fetch water etc. in highly insecure areas where they are harassed by local police, army and armed groups who may demand sexual services to let them pass. Patrolling areas where women walk and work is thus an operative, gender sensitive-peacekeeping activity in the eastern DRC.

When it comes to engaging with the Congolese, this depends of course on the tasks of the various units, as well as language barriers. Many of the rural population do not speak French and there are not necessarily Swahili to English translators available either. In some settings, peacekeepers will engage with the chief of the villager and perhaps his wife or someone of equal status. However, whether these chiefs actually represent their people in a good way is a question beyond the scope of this study. What is perhaps often the case is that the peacekeepers tend to move around and thus are less able to establish good

¹² Interview with researcher 26.09.2012, Bukavu.

communication with entire communities. It is thus often up to the chief of the village to decide on topics and what areas the village requires help. Moreover, each unit in MONUSCO has a large geographical area to cover, usually around 350 km², with limited communication possibilities for the peacekeepers, thus entailing more junior-level responsibility. The peacekeepers are trained to expect this situation, but it is not easy to establish good civilian contacts when peacekeepers are scattered across vast areas.

3.1.2 Integration and Resolution 1325

Internal Integration

MONUSCO has firmly established the importance of Res. 1325 in its mandate mission. However, the level of understanding in terms of gender perspectives and the prevention, protection and reporting roles of MONUSCO peacekeepers appeared generally low. Gender was not seen as something they could “help” the researcher with as “there were no women here” or perhaps even “our men does not do sexual exploitation and abuse.” The researcher had few if any good discussions with peacekeepers on prevention and protection against SGBV and the reporting of SGBV committed by armed groups or Congolese army. There were views and some understanding on the positions of men and women in the DRC, but not how this affected the peacekeepers’ day-to-day activities.

Among the main challenges of achieving the overall operational goals for the UN seem to be active leadership from the section chiefs, the coordination between units (civilian–military, military–military, civilian–civilian, external–national, etc.) and concrete short-term and long-term objectives achievable with the limited resources and capacities available. The goals of prevention, protection, participation and relief/recovery are demanding and require specific goals set to the military, but also overall cooperation with affected parties in the civilian, police and military spheres. One disadvantage of setting very specific goals as to gender perspectives, however, can be that the matter may be reduced to the number of women represented in national and international positions. In future, the expertise of the gender affairs office, the sexual violence unit together with the Congolese Ministry of Gender, Family and Children could perhaps be used more systematically in mission for the various peacekeeping units.

Moreover, there is not necessarily sufficient training on Res. 1325, at least not systematic training, provided for peacekeepers in pre-deployment or in-mission training. It seemed that the resolution was not a familiar or indeed even a known topic for the (limited number

of) informants in this study. Courses were held on the position of women and men in the DRC, but these were intended mainly to familiarize peacekeepers with what they see in the field, and not for applying that information in their operational tasks.

External Integration

There are multiple ways, both longer-term and quick-impact initiatives, for MONUSCO to operationalize the mandate of protecting civilians as well as security sector reform (SSR) using a gender-sensitive approach. As to the shorter term, one peacekeeper maintained that the best way to do patrolling and information gathering was together with civilian experts in the substantive section of MONUSCO, experts who were trained in the various humanitarian needs and knew how to best respond to the context.¹³ The peacekeepers are not necessarily substantially skilled in the specific needs of the DRC context; in such situations, there are great advantages in having a team leader like a civilian expert who knows what to ask and how to respond, as this interviewee explained. The Joint Protection Teams and other joint missions are good examples of this and could be further improved.

Moreover, as to more long-term approaches, a central feature of recent years has been the Comprehensive Strategy on Combating Sexual Violence in DRC, led by the government of the DRC and supported by MONUSCO.¹⁴ The military section of MONUSCO plays a key role in the preventive, responsive and reporting aspects of cases of sexual violence as well as the SSR activities. Moreover, the Congolese Ministry of Defense with its civil and patriotic education unit (*Service d'Éducation Civique et Patriotique*) has developed a training manual on the issue of sexual violence to sensitize the Congolese army (FARDC) against such behavior (Mandjangu Atumesa & Batabombi Apanze, 2011). In addition, the Ministry has distributed to FARDC soldiers handbooks that visually and textually emphasize the codes of conduct as regards civilians.

Actual implementation of these codes, however, will entail fundamental changes to the structure of the armed forces, as well as to the political, economic and social situation within the military and in the country more broadly (see for instance Baaz & Stern, 2010, on this topic).¹⁵ Most informants stated that collaboration with the Congolese security forces, especially the army FARDC, was a key area for im-

¹³ Interview with researcher, 20 September 2012, Bukavu, South Kivu.

¹⁴ Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l'Enfant, République Démocratique du Congo, "Stratégie Nationale de la Lutte contre les Violences basées sur le Genre", Kinshasa, November 2009.

¹⁵ Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern (2010), "The complexity of violence: a critical analysis of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)". Stockholm: SIDA and the Nordic Africa Institute

provement if they were to fulfill their role as protectors of the citizenry. Some peacekeepers expressed frustration for the level of competence of FARDC as well as their own level of understanding of the workings of the political and military hierarchy in the country. As one stated, “isolated achievements do not achieve the higher goals of peace and security in the country.”¹⁶ There are no quick fixes to the violations of human rights committed by the armed forces against men and women, or to the reformation of the armed forces as a whole in the DRC to enable them to become the protectors of the people. Nevertheless, the strategies and the national ownership represent an important start to the professionalization of the armed forces in the DRC. Streamlining training for the FARDC is essential: “wearing a uniform does not make you a soldier,” as one informant put it.

3.2 Experience from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH

MINUSTAH is a long-term mission that began in 2004, following UN Security Council Resolution 1542. The mission sought to halt the deep internal crisis in which the country found itself, with a mandate that essentially sought to ensure a secure and stable environment within which constitutional and political processes in Haiti could unfold, as well as seeking to guarantee the protection of civilians and human rights in particular.

MINUSTAH’s mandate currently consists of providing support to the Haitian government in the process of building up the country’s institutions. Despite the combined efforts of MINUSTAH, the Haitian government and the policy coordination process, the Haitian state is still weak, lacks effective authority across its territory, territorial waters and airspace, and there remain a great many internally displaced people (around 600,000); moreover, the majority of the population live in conditions of extreme poverty.

3.2.1 Representation and Resolution 1325

Internal Representation

As of September 2012 the military personnel amounted to 7,286 troops, with the top TCCs being Brazil (26%), Uruguay (13.1%) and Sri Lanka (11.8%). As the military contingents participating in MINUSTAH composed of mainly Latin American and Asian troops, the achievements of Resolution 1325 involves two aspects to be borne in mind: the incorporation of women into Latin American armed forc-

¹⁶ Interview with researcher, 26 September 2012, Bukavu, South Kivu.

es is recent; and in the case of Asian countries, women represent a clear minority.

Women represent 2.43% of MINUSTAH's military component, with 177 female soldiers in total. This is far from a balanced representation: the mention of a possible target of 10% female representation, as has been mooted in some circles at the UN, has met with a range of differing responses. Amongst the TCCs, Guatemala, the Philippines and Argentina have the highest percentages of female representation within their personnel, with 7.25%, 7% and 6.78%, respectively. Here we should note that the Philippines provides all of MINUSTAH's clerks; consequently the female personnel, along with their male counterparts, work independently in the various military cells and branches within MINUSTAH.

The majority of women perform support functions, such as nurses, doctors, cooks and administrative staff. For the women who are stationed as part of the MINUSTAH force, it is essential that they be provided with equal opportunities: this means not just having the same opportunities as their male counterparts, but also the same duties. To achieve this it is necessary, for example, that they work the same hours, that they carry out guard duties, and, furthermore, that they are not treated specially nor that their male counterparts believe them to be privileged. Although it is often said that women do not participate because they do not want to leave behind their families and thus do not volunteer for such roles, actual testimonies of men and women in the field show that men and women speak equally of how much they miss their families.

External Representation

Within MINUSTAH it is the police component, rather than the military component, that has the most to do in relation to gender-based violence and the protection of civilians in internally-displaced person (IDP) camps. The current order is that the military can intervene only if a crime is actually being committed and no other means are available. On the other hand, the highly visible military presence in the various neighborhoods and actions undertaken against criminal and gang-related activities are intended to have positive spillover effects in protecting women and girls against SGBV.

The doctors and nurses within this same contingent also said that, on some occasions, during civilian–military activities they are provided with private rooms so they can treat local women who have genital infections, one of the most common problems they find when examining the local population. Although they often do not speak the local language they are able to make themselves understood by the use of

gestures, and can provide treatment. On the positive side, most contingents mentioned that they offered medical services to the local population and that they had female staff to attend to local women.

Among the contingents interviewed, only one confirmed having received female Haitian victims of SGBV. Brazil's Battalion II (BRABATT II) has a company permanently established in Bel-air, a problematic neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. Within the company's base, Brazilian civil defense has established a clinic open to the local population. The commander of BRABATT II told us that in a period of four months (April to September 2012) they attended to 46 victims of SGBV in that clinic. Personnel stationed at that base commented that the population often trusts the military component and looks for help. Between January and August 2012 BRABATT II also assisted at three deliveries.

External representation in contact with local leaders, or with the local population, also has an important element that should be highlighted: language. Personnel often do not speak French, and even less so Creole; in some cases, contingents also have serious difficulties communicating in English. This can contribute to a certain feeling among the local population that the military contingents are distant, and for historical and cultural reasons they may view foreign military personnel with distrust.

3.2.2 Integration and Resolution 1325

Internal Integration

Resolution 1325 is integrated into MINUSTAH's planning and activities. It was one of the missions that participated in the preliminary testing done by the DPKO prior to the completion of the Military Guidelines based on Resolution 1325, and the civilian component of MINUSTAH has considerable knowledge on the issue and has internalized it. In general, all professional staff members are familiar with the UN's normative disposition and seek to communicate it to the rest of the mission. Many of the military contingents visited by RESDAL in 2011 were unaware of the Resolution's existence, or had a very cursory understanding of its nature. By 2012, however, this had changed. In several cases, not only were they aware of the Resolution and those behind it, they had begun the process of practical implementation by designating a Gender Focal Point (GFP) in charge of gender issues within each unit.

The combination of the work completed by the Gender Unit in conjunction with the military contingent's GFP (a military officer from

Argentina), and mandated by the Force Commander, has made it possible, at least nominally, for all military contingents to have an officer named as the GFP. While much remains to be done, and there seems to be little further development of this role, the indicators are positive. Integrated work could be observed in 2012, with a civilian component that promotes gender policies and a military component working to develop better practices according to those policies.

The biggest problems stem from the bureaucratic complexity of the mission, and the time it takes to coordinate actions among the various components – rather than lack of knowledge about, or integration of, the Resolution. For example, before the earthquake MINUSTAH and the UN agencies working in Haiti had formed a gender thematic group, but it was not actually in operation during post-disaster relief. It only was when the post-earthquake context improved that this thematic group resumed its activities; it is currently under the leadership of UN Women.

Regarding training, the preparation that military personnel receive is the basic pre-deployment module dedicated to gender: the Core Pre-Deployment Training (CPT) Module. Specific lectures about gender can be programmed apart from the mandatory CPT module, and in fact are carried out in pre-deployment training in Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Guatemala at least. However, it is always necessary to distinguish how much is actually about gender issues, and how much is about SEA (sexual exploitation and abuse). As explained by those in charge of training in Guatemala:

in order to improve this type of training it's necessary to re-create scenes in order to know how to respond in the best manner when such situations arise. Elements need to know up until what point they can act, and when to intervene, and include them as part of the civil protection functions. It is also important to address the issue of coordination in these cases.¹⁷

Upon arrival at the mission location, induction training is provided. According to the testimonies of both those who give it and those who receive it, this training is exceptionally basic and seeks to cover a range of issues. In the case of gender, if there is a gender adviser at the mission, then s/he covers that theme for 40 minutes. This refers to training for all the contingents. For mission personnel and selected officers, a course has recently been developed based on in-mission training. It lasts for three days and is organized by the Gender Unit with the collaboration of the military and police components; two versions of this course have been completed thus far.

¹⁷ Interview held in Guatemala in the framework of the RESDAL Gender Project, October 2011.

The development of specific guidelines on the role and tasks of MINUSTAH's military focal point and each contingent's GFPs is a challenge for the future. Particularly in regard to the latter, there is still a lack of awareness of their role, and the overall impression after interviews is that the GFPs themselves are perhaps unsure about their own role. This should not, however, detract from the fact that the appointment of Gender Focal Points in every contingent represents a huge step forward in relation to integration.

In regard to military planning, reporting and analysis, the military component still has much to improve. The military reporting cell does not have a category for gender-based violence, which makes it very difficult for gender to be taken into account as part of military planning and analysis. On the other hand, information collected shows that the vulnerability of women within IDP camps is taken into account, to the extent that the military (previously not allowed to patrol within IDP camps) were in 2012 tasked with patrols inside the biggest and most dangerous of these camps. While this is an important initiative and represents a way through which gender can be integrated into the work of the military, it encompasses a limited view of the reality of Haitian women and can be further improved. The military has an extraordinary capacity to analyze and recognize signs of threats, and if this capacity were applied in order to detect signs of abuse and violence that would help to prevent such acts.

External Integration

Besides being tasked with the mandate to establish a safe and stable environment in Haiti, the military component in MINUSTAH is also charged with the protection of civilians. In the fulfillment of its mandate, the protection of women and girls against violence and promoting gender is accomplished mostly indirectly. However, it is important to keep in mind that the military component has successfully carried out operations that managed to curb gang activities, and the analysis of Haiti's complex political situation had showed that women were constantly victimized by these and other armed groups. Consequently, the capture of gang leaders, their being banned from some neighborhoods, and the overall decrease in criminal activities had an immense effect on the protection of women, although it is not often cited as a main contribution of the military component to women's protection. This is possibly because it is not directly referred to by the military themselves as one of the merits of their actions. On the other hand, the MINUSTAH projects that provided street lighting in various parts of the city brought better security, and the military have been involved in this work.

The interpretation of the mandate does not, however, include that gender matters related to the local population form part of the duties of the military component. All contingents explain that, in the case of observing a flagrant offense being committed, their mission is to stop the act and immediately call UNPOL and the Haitian National Police. However, the testimonies provided mentioned difficulties in accepting the intervention of the Haitian police, given their reputation for not truly intervening, as well as the poor reputation of Haitian justice.

The presence of women on patrol or military activities is one of the issues that need to be addressed. Although the number of female staff deployed in Haiti is not very low compared with other missions, women often have little or no contact with the local population. An important interpretation of the mandate could be, therefore, to ensure that the presence of women in the mission can also translate into a gender perspective. The possibility of more contact with local women, generating greater trust, is precisely one of the arguments raised in the UN in advocating women's presence in the field. The women and men interviewed recognized that there are more opportunities for approaching the local population when a woman forms part of the group; women say that local women reach out to touch them (especially their hair), that they look at them with fascination, and that a common question is whether they have a husband and children, and if they have left them to come to Haiti.

3.3 Experience from the United Nations Mission in Liberia, UNMIL

UNMIL, as the first peacekeeping mission to include an explicit gender mandate, was tasked with ensuring a gender perspective in its force composition and its operational and tactical mandates.¹⁸ UNMIL has taken various steps towards implementing this gender mandate, and has put in place a gender architecture (described below). UNMIL's presence in Liberia has resulted in several gains for women – including the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants among whom were women associated with the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The mission has also provided support to democratic elections, notably in 2011 when UNMIL provided country-wide logistical support for the delivery of voter registration materials. However, despite UNMIL support and the efforts of the Liberian government, several challenges remain. These include the lack of capacity of the national police, the lack of gender sensitivity within the armed forces,

¹⁸ Fatoumata, Aisha (ND). Mainstreaming Gender in Peace Support Operations, Progress Report. The United Nations in Liberia. <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Books/TortuousRoad/Chapter7>.

the human and drug trafficking, insecurity along Liberia's porous borders, and the continued prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence.¹⁹

3.3.1 Representation and Resolution 1325

Internal Representation

Initially UNMIL's force strength was 16,525, but is currently in a drawdown phase. Total uniformed personnel in the mission have therefore been reduced and now stand at 8,981, of which 7,545 are troops, according to the DPKO.²⁰ Of the 58 TCCs, the largest contingents are from Pakistan (31%), Nigeria (18%) and Bangladesh (15%).²¹

A review of the gender composition of the contingents interviewed reveals that although a concerted effort has been made to ensure that contingents include both male and female troops, the total number of female troops and experts within the mission is 196, or only 2.18%. This falls far short of the much-needed gender-balanced representation, and the goal of 10% still seems a long way off. Of the troops interviewed, there are 101 women from Nigeria, 53 from Ghana, 10 from Bangladesh, 12 from the Philippines, 15 from China, 4 from Jordan and 1 from Ukraine.

External Representation

UNMIL's external representation with relation to its protection mandate for women and girls is somewhat constrained. The Force Commander's policy of 'No fraternization with the locals' is strictly enforced by contingent commanders, who are held accountable for incidents – especially those of a sexual nature – involving their troops.

Of critical importance is the medical care that UNMIL provides through its hospitals and medical teams. SGBV continues to be prevalent in Liberian society. According to reports from the Ministry of Gender, between January and June 2011, rape and domestic violence accounted for over 70% of all reported cases. Rape-related incidents represented a total of 68% of all cases of gender-based violence. These figures, compounded by high mortality rates among Liberian women, estimated at 994/1000 births (DHS, 2007) result in significant health needs that cannot be easily dealt with, due to limited access to medical and healthcare facilities. UNMIL's medical teams provide

¹⁹ UN PEACEKEEPING: Enhancing American Interests, September 2012. Downloaded 9 November 2012 at <http://www.betterworldcampaign.org/un-peacekeeping/missions/liberia.html>

²⁰ Downloaded 29 October 2012 at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/facts.shtml>

²¹ DPKO figures obtained through personal communication, 6 November 2012.

care and equipment, medicines as well as training and information on matters such as sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDs, and gynecological and contraceptive needs.

Female representation among UNMIL's troops and UNPOL, including the all-female formed police and mixed male and female units, provide opportunities for better relationships with local women and girls, to lend a listening ear and respond strategically and timely to their protection needs. The presence of the Indian All-Female Formed Police Unit, the mixed male and female police units, and the high-ranking uniformed females (majors, lieutenants) that patrol jointly with their male counterparts serve as role models for local women and act as points for strategic information. However, when asked about troop response to women's complaints about sexual assault and harassment by males in the community or domestic violence or rape, police and military respondents clearly indicated that they did not have an executive mandate and could therefore not intervene directly in such incidents, but had to inform the Liberian police as the first point of law and order in the society.²² The comments made by the troops suggest that there may be scope for a review of how they are expected to discharge their protection mandate in a context like that of post-conflict Liberia, where the military threats have been reduced.

3.3.2 Integration and Resolution 1325

Internal Integration

The leadership function in UNMIL has played and continues to play a critical role in driving the complete integration of Res. 1325. Ms Margrethe Loj, the former SRSG, was a key proponent of the resolution. Ms Karin Lundgren, the recently arrived SRSG, takes a very strategic approach and is a champion of implementing Res. 1325 with a specific focus on sexual and gender-based violence. To this end she has regular meetings with the Force Commander and the Police Commissioner.²³

Respondents for this study noted several remaining challenges. Mission GFPs need to be experienced and truly expert in their functions; that those embedded within the troop contingents should not rotate too quickly away from the mission. Troops have varying homeward rotation schedules and this may not allow for enough time for the GFPs to fully understand what needs to be done, or to develop their role and effectively implement their ideas on gender mainstreaming within the military. In addition, the Ten-Year Impact Study on Implementation

²² Personal interviews with police and troop contingents, September 2012.

²³ Interview with the Special Advisor to the SRSG UNMIL, September 2012.

of Resolution 1325 (DPKO, 2010) points out gender units within peacekeeping operations are understaffed, under-resourced and lack the technical expertise required to support the implementation of Res. 1325.

Responses were varied as to pre-deployment training on Res. 1325 and gender issues. One third of the contingents interviewed in this study said they had received training on the resolution but others, especially officers, seemed to have only cursory knowledge, which may indicate that where training was provided it was brief and not in-depth. On the other hand, more than 70% of troop informants said that their pre-deployment training included a focus on the protection of civilians, including women and children. The content of these training sessions focused on general peacekeeping duties, simulation of the context of the mission field, water and sanitation, and on the protection of civilians, women and children in particular. When asked their views on the protection of civilians and especially of women, some troops replied that for them it was not a big concern, as protection of females came naturally, based on their relationships with their mother, sisters and other female relatives.²⁴

In mission, UNMIL's Integrated Mission Training Centre provides training, once the troops and UN Police forces have been deployed to the mission. The Office of Gender Advisors provides training on gender and gender-related issues, using the Training of Trainers model (cascade training). Officers and soldiers are first selected for training; they are then expected to provide training to the remaining members of their contingents. Over 80% of the respondents reported that they had two days of training that concerned gender mainstreaming, gender awareness, sexual exploitation and abuse and SGBV. Some respondents did not mention this training, but it is unclear whether this was because they had not yet been scheduled for training or if there were unknown factors. For example, respondents from some contingents pointed out that the length and timing of their training was constrained by their rotation into the mission. Language barriers also proved challenging in the provision of in-mission training to UNMIL troops.

External Integration

While operational mandates affecting UNMIL troops exist in the form of several UN resolutions, it is also clear that the changing context on the ground influences how the mandate is tactically interpreted, thus affecting the practical day-to-day implementation of Res. 1325 by peacekeepers. Civilian–Military activities and quick-impact measures such as medical treatment, activities in schools and community patrol activities have more of a focus on women, children and the vulnerable

²⁴ Personal Interview with UNMIL military troop contingents.

than do formal military activities. However, troops indicate that the degree to which implementation of Res. 1325 is formally prioritized also depends on context-specific locations in selected counties of Liberia. Thus, troops based in counties where women still face high levels of SGBV (Nimba, Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado among others) are likely to more obviously and practically implement the resolution in their day-to-day activities.²⁵

A critical area of UNMIL's external integration has been the collaboration with the United Nations Observation Mission in Cote d'Ivoire, where border issues involving refugees, women's security in refugee camps and land issues are paramount. Additionally, UNMIL's support to the Bureau of Immigration and Nationalization in dealing with cross-border issues and women's insecurity due to sexual exploitation and abuse by border guards, refugees and others in the Mano River Union provides women a measure of security and confidence in crossing the borders.

With UNMIL's support to the maintenance of peace and stability, post-conflict Liberia has clearly made progress. Women, though still unequal, have achieved a certain level of empowerment. They are represented in decision-making positions at all levels of the government. UNMIL has provided training to the Liberian armed forces, UNPOL, and the Office of the Gender Advisor, and has helped reform and train the Liberian police in emergency response and the protection of women and children. Female officers have also been trained, and now comprise between 18 and 20% of the total Liberian police strength.

However, despite the efforts of UNMIL and the Liberian government, significant challenges remain. These include insecure and porous borders in the Mano River Union, gender-based violence affecting women in refugee camps, human and drug trafficking, continuing land disputes related to mining concessions, and conflicts involving refugees. One priority issue relating to women is access to justice, which is limited due to the lack of capacity of the judicial branch of government. During the September 2012 Global Open Day on Women, Peace and Security in Bong County, over 100 women met with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) to call for access to justice. The women demanded national dialogue on customary laws affecting women, the strengthening of women's participation in community policing initiatives, and greater gender equality.

²⁵ Interview with troops, civil society organizations and with the Ministry of Gender and Development.

4.0 Conclusion and recommendations

Multidimensional peace operations, such as those in this study, function within a political strategic crisis management framework. They incorporate key priorities such as restructuring state institutions, reorganizing and strengthening rule of law institutions including the judiciary as well as training the local police and armed forces to take up their responsibility to protect – all issues that are included in the mandate of Res. 1325.

Even though the DPKO and TCC pre-deployment procedures had been made available, the review of the missions above clearly demonstrates that more needs to be done to ensure that troops are familiar with the gender guidelines and with the mandate of Res. 1325. In this respect, the new training module for protection of civilians currently being developed could include a stronger focus on the resolution and on how the military could best implement it in their daily activities.

Recommendations

- Awareness on Res. 1325 needs to be raised. Deliberate efforts must be made to inform troops and provide detailed explanation of the resolution during training. This should form part of the pre-training curriculum where troops are prepared for peacekeeping activities. More clearly defined core operational standards could help in the designing of basic training that incorporates a clearer and more strategic three-to-four-day focused training on Res. 1325.
- There needs to be a clearer understanding that Res. 1325 is widely encompassing, and deals with much more than the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers. Here, it is also important to distinguish between SGBV committed by e.g. armed groups/national armed forces against members of the civilian population – this is an issue of protection, prevention and reporting for peacekeepers; and SEA – a code of conduct issue with legal implications for the peacekeepers involved.
- Contingent Gender Focal Points should be well trained and experienced, with a sound knowledge of Res. 1325. Their duties should include a reporting and monitoring function that requires them to monitor and report on the interpretation of the

mandate of Res.1325 and its tactical implementation on a day-to-day basis. If the recommendation on the standardization of troop rotation is taken up, this may contribute to contingent GFPs being more effective in their roles.

- Development of an accountability mechanism could be beneficial in order to ensure the clear interpretation of the mandate as regards the tactical implementation of Res. 1325. Such an accountability mechanism would ensure that individual troop contingent commanders are themselves aware of the resolution and its content, that they participate in its tactical interpretation and are held accountable for its being implemented by the troops under their command.
- Operationalization of Res. 1325 in relation to the protection of civilians in military and peacekeeping operations requires good contextual understanding of the societies where the peacekeepers and/or soldiers are based.
- Leadership in the operation (e.g. SRSG, commanding officers, section heads in the substantive sections) is central to greater success on the ground. In addition, the local interlocutors, the Community Liaison Assistants between civilians and peacekeepers, should be recognized as vital experts who also should receive training in gender perspectives and reporting, as well as assisting the international staff with context-specific knowledge.
- Integration of UNSC Res. 1325 on the ground can benefit from the integrated work of the military with the Gender Offices and Sexual Violence Unit. Understanding the importance of civil/military coordination should be reinforced during pre-deployment training.

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