



United Nations

GENDER

and

UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

“We can no longer afford to minimize or ignore the contributions of women and girls to all stages of conflict resolution, peacemaking, peace-building, peacekeeping and reconstruction processes. Sustainable peace will not be achieved without the full and equal participation of women and men.”

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

UN Photo by Evan Schneider



Women and girls endure untold suffering during armed conflicts, yet until recently they have been largely absent from the peace processes that follow. Awareness of this discrepancy was raised during the 1990s, when the number of such conflicts surged. As a result, the priorities of the international community shifted towards assisting women affected by conflict situations and integrating a gender perspective into policies and institutional mechanisms for building peace. These previously neglected issues gained even greater urgency following reports of massive crimes against women during the conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, as well as an increasing number of reports of abductions and forced slavery of girls during the conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia and elsewhere. International awareness solidified in early 2000, when the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court recognized rape as a war crime. This recognition strengthened calls for a systematic review of the impact of armed conflict on women and of their role in building peace.

The recognition from the Court and from the international community also meant that the time was ripe for the establishment of an institutional framework to address the concerns and roles of women in conflict environments. The breakthrough came about in October 2000 with the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, which was the fruit of the combined efforts of women's organizations in conflict-affected areas and the UN system, as well as the firm support of some members of the Security Council.

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Security Council resolution 1325 provides the most important mandate for mainstreaming gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations. It recognizes the contribution of women to the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, while acknowledging their specific needs and concerns in armed conflict and its aftermath. The resolution also reaffirms women's roles in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, and highlights the need to increase their role in decision-making regarding conflict prevention and resolution. At the heart of the resolution is the recognition that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, together with effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process, can contribute significantly to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. Among other mandates, Security Council resolution 1325 calls for:

- ◆ The appointment of more women Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in peacekeeping missions;
- ◆ An increase in the number of women serving in field operations, especially among military observers, civilian police, and human rights and humanitarian personnel;
- ◆ The inclusion of a gender component in field operations;
- ◆ The provision of training guidelines to Member States on the protection of women and gender mainstreaming;
- ◆ The incorporation of gender perspectives into peace negotiations and constitutional, electoral and judicial systems;
- ◆ The adoption of measures to protect women from gender-based violence, including rape and other forms of sexual abuse;
- ◆ The mainstreaming of gender in the Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council.



"The most significant progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been made in the peacekeeping arena."

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General

Report of the Secretary-General
on women, peace and security
13 October 2004
S/2004/814

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping activities demands the full incorporation of the priorities of both women and men in all processes for sustaining peace. This process should begin during the initial stages of ceasefire negotiations and the establishment of mandates for peacekeeping operations, and carry through to post-conflict situations. It also requires ongoing review and analysis of the policies and interventions of peacekeeping missions to ensure that the principle of equality between men and women in the host population is fully integrated into all functional areas of the missions' work.

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has strengthened institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in all aspects of peacekeeping. Some positive interventions include:

- The establishment of gender units in all multidimensional peacekeeping operations and the appointment of a Gender Adviser at Headquarters;
- The systematic inclusion of gender concerns in all new peacekeeping mandates;
- The development of a wide range of policy and operational tools and resources to facilitate gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions, including a Gender Resource Package, a departmental Gender Policy Statement and operational guidelines for gender mainstreaming in specific functional areas of peacekeeping;
- The development of gender awareness training materials for use in pre-deployment and induction training for military and civilian police personnel;
- The expansion of partnerships with other UN entities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Member States to advance gender mainstreaming efforts.

Gender mainstreaming refers to “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

Agreed conclusions 1997/2 of the
Economic and Social Council
18 September 1997
A/52/3

“Gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations is necessary if our interventions are to be relevant, effective and responsive to women, men, girls and boys in the host countries we serve.”



Jean-Marie Guéhenno,
Under-Secretary-General
for Peacekeeping Operations
Gender Policy Statement
March 2005

“Mainstreaming gender perspectives into peacekeeping policies and activities goes beyond awareness-raising and special activities targeted at women. Gender mainstreaming must ensure that the contributions, needs and priorities of all stakeholders — women and men, boys and girls — are taken into account in the planning and implementation of peacekeeping operations, and that they can all influence, participate and benefit equally.”²

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General

Report of the Secretary-General on
gender mainstreaming in
peacekeeping activities
13 February 2003
A/57/731

¹ Report of the Secretary-General on gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping activities, February 2003, A/57/731.

² Attention is drawn to the publication entitled *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview*, dated January 2002, prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

The post-conflict period presents a unique opportunity to reshape societies and reverse long-standing cultural and institutional gender-based discrimination. During the post-conflict transition period, gender advisers work with mission staff — civilian and uniformed — as well as counterpart institutions in host countries, providing practical guidance on strategies for addressing the specific needs of men and women.

Gender Advisers in peacekeeping missions are staff members responsible for supporting the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325. By incorporating innovative strategies for advancing the rights of women in these societies, gender units play a critical role in guiding staff working in the different functional areas of UN peacekeeping, including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), police, military, mine action, human rights, elections and rule of law. They also provide capacity-building and training support to counterpart institutions in government and civil society in host countries.

Practical examples of the way in which Gender Advisers work to support implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 include:

Training staff to integrate a gender perspective into the various functional areas of peacekeeping, responding to the special needs of women in the host country and supporting measures for preventing and responding to gender-based violence;

Advising senior management on strategies for integrating gender perspectives into policy- and decision-making;

Working with DDR units to ensure that the special needs of women are taken into consideration (for example, by advocating for the revision of the eligibility criteria to ensure the inclusion of women associated with fighting forces in the process, ensuring separate and secure quarters for women in demobilization camps and giving women opportunities for creating livelihoods for themselves and their families);

Advocating for the increased participation of women in political decision-making processes, either at the early nation-building phase by working to include gender concerns into constitutional review processes, or at later stages by promoting the increased participation of women in political campaigns and elections;

Forming partnerships with local women's groups, NGOs and civil society organizations and providing them with resources to implement training and project activities in support of gender mainstreaming, as well as undertaking regular consultations with these groups and working to integrate their concerns into policy-making processes within the mission;

Advocating for greater participation of women in all functional areas of peacekeeping;

Assisting government counterparts to integrate gender perspectives into all aspects of the transition process.



UN Photo by Martine Perret



UN Photo by Martine Perret



MINUSTAH Photo

Gender Advisers in peacekeeping missions

Out of 18 UN peace operations, 10 currently have dedicated full-time gender advisory capacity:

Afghanistan (UNAMA)
Burundi (ONUB)
Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)
Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)
Haiti (MINUSTAH)
Kosovo (UNMIK)
Liberia (UNMIL)
Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)
Sudan (UNMIS)
Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)

Focal Points in peacekeeping missions

Missions without full-time Gender Advisers have Gender Focal Points, who are full-time mission staff assigned additional gender-related responsibilities. Gender Focal Points are present in the following missions:

Cyprus (UNFICYP)
Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)
Georgia (UNOMIG)
Middle East (UNTSO)
Syrian Golan Heights (UNDOF)
Western Sahara (MINURSO)

Contact information:

Gender Unit
Peacekeeping Best Practices Section
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
United Nations Secretariat, 30th Floor
New York, NY 10017

The Gender Adviser at Headquarters

In 2003, to increase coordination between Gender Advisers in missions and those at Headquarters, and to support the process of gender mainstreaming at Headquarters, Member States approved the creation of a full-time Gender Adviser post in DPKO headquarters. The Gender Adviser:

- ◆ Advises the Department on policy options and strategies to support the integration of gender perspectives into its work;
- ◆ Provides policy guidance and support to the Gender Advisers in peacekeeping missions;
- ◆ Oversees the design of a comprehensive framework and action plan to guide the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 in all areas of the Department's work;
- ◆ Researches and analyses gender issues within peacekeeping operations and keeps a repository of best practices and lessons learned;
- ◆ Collaborates with the Training Sections in DPKO to enhance and develop tools and resources to support staff capacity-building;
- ◆ Brokers partnerships with key stakeholders in the UN system, and with Member States, regional organizations and NGOs;
- ◆ Supports the incorporation of gender perspectives into existing policy guidelines and procedures where necessary and supports the development of specific guidelines for gender mainstreaming;
- ◆ Coordinates internal and external reporting requirements.

MORE INFORMATION

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations,
Peacekeeping Best Practices Section

Policy, Analysis and Lessons Learned for the Peacekeeping Community
<http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/lessons>

Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations
<http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbpu/genderpack.aspx>

*DPKO Under-Secretary-General Policy Statement on Gender
Mainstreaming (March 2005)*
<http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbpu/library/USG%20policy%20statement%20Gender.pdf>

*The Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a
Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (May 2000)*
http://www.reliefweb.int/library/GHARkit/FilesFeb2001/windhoek_declaration.htm

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security
S/RES/1325, 31 October 2000

*Report of the Secretary-General on gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping
activities, A/57/731, 13 February 2003*

*Review of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on
mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in
the United Nations system, E/2004/L.14, 1 July 2004*

Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security
S/2004/814, 13 October 2004

UNAMA, Afghanistan Gender Office home page
http://www.unama-afg.org/about/_gender/Gender.htm

MONUC, Democratic Republic of Congo Gender Office home page
<http://www.monuc.org/Gender/>

UNMIL, Liberia Gender Office home page
<http://www.unmil.org/content.asp?cat=gender>

Peacewomen – Peacekeeping Watch
<http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/pkindex.html>

UNIFEM – Governance, Peace and Security
http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/governance_peace_security/

OSAGI – Women Watch
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/>

Main partners

Strategic partnerships are essential to gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations. Within DPKO, partnerships are formed through collaboration with designated focal points in different offices. In the wider UN system, partnerships are created through contributions to inter-agency gender mainstreaming and reporting processes and collaborative initiatives with individual UN entities:

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)

UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Externally, the gender units work in cooperation with Member States (donors and troop-contributing countries), regional organizations, local and international women's groups, and networks of international NGOs, including the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Cover quote:

Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security, 16 October 2002, S/2002/1154

Cover photos:

two women - UN Photo by Martine Perret
man - UN Photo by Evan Schneider
woman - MINUSTAH Photo by Sophia Paris