WOMEN, PEACE, & SECURITY LESSONS LEARNED

This document includes the WPS related lessons learned submitted to the Stability Operations Lessons Learned and Information Management System (SOLLIMS) hosted by the Peacekeeping Stability and Operation Institute (PKSOI) and U.S. Combined Arms Center from 2009-2019.

LESSONS COMPILED BY:
Jack Dougherty
Lessons Learned Analyst, PKSOI
John.m.dougherty4.ctr@mail.mil

Office: (717) 245-3834
Cell: (702) 499-0922
Overview
This document includes the Women, Peace, and Security related lessons learned submitted to the Stability Operations Lessons Learned and Information Management System (SOLLIMS) hosted by the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) from 2009-2019. In 2020, SOLLIMS was sunset. All lessons learned have been transferred to the Joint Lessons Learned Information System, accessible to DoD CAC holders (https://www.jllis.mil/).

PKSOI aggregated the following lessons learned related to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda submitted between the years 2009-2019. Though this is not a comprehensive list of WPS related lessons learned, its reflects many case studies related to peacekeeping and stability operations.

The managers of this document have not edited or deleted any information submitted as part of a WPS lesson learned in SOLLIMS. The information in each sub-section is specific to the former SOLLIMS online template. Should you have any questions about this document, please reach out to the Point of Contact for this document.

How to search this document
Each case study has a Focus which includes the tags according to Region, Topical Focus or Type of Mission Area listed below. Regions are only tagged when the lesson focused on a country within the region or the region more broadly. Tags should be entered in to the Navigation Pane exactly as you see them below including the hashtag (#). If you do not include the (#) in your search, it will not search the document properly. The Navigation pane is accessible by typing CTRL+F on your keyboard.

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2009-2019 WPS-Related SOLLIMS Entries

2009 - Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Lessons Learned

- **Created:** 03 Sep 2009
- **Last Updated:** 13 Nov 2009
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Pakistan - General
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff
- **Focus:** #IDPs; #Asia

**Observations:**

The Pakistan counterinsurgency campaign, especially in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has created a large population of IDPs. The Pakistan government and international NGOs can apply lessons learned from past large-scale displacement in response to the large and sudden IDP problem.

**Discussion:**

People fleeing violence and remaining within the borders of Pakistan are not refugees. If Pakistani citizens were to flee across the border to Afghanistan, as an example, they would be recognized as "refugees." The same would be true if Afghan people were to flee across the border into Pakistan. In general, the reason that IDPs are mislabeled as "refugees" is that it is an easier word to use on print and TV media. Use of "refugee" is more recognizable than using "internally displaced persons."

Estimating the number of IDPs or refugees is a difficult process for governments and humanitarian organizations. Counting displaced persons in a static camp is easier and more accurate than when people are moving around or dispersed across a large area. Governments sometimes inflate the number of displaced people as a way to draw international attention and assistance. Some humanitarian workers in Pakistan claim that the number of Pakistani IDPs have been over-inflated by as much as 40%. Whatever the number, the important issue is the basic need of the IDPs.

The Pakistani infrastructure is significantly strained. The conflict in the Pakistan NWFP and FATA created a large displaced population very fast and local communities and displacement camps are having difficulty providing basic and essential services. The response from the government and international NGOs has been described as slow compared to the need. One of the difficulties is tracking where the IDPs move to - e.g. many IDPs are living with family and relatives and are not 'reported' as IDPs. Also, it is much easier to provide services to individuals living within a static, designated "refugee" camp than to people living in existing communities. For example, medical supplies are easier to deliver and estimate at a camp than at a country, county, regional or urban health clinic. The slow humanitarian aid response is being exploited by Pakistani militants who are taking advantage of the resentment and discord of displaced Pakistanis.
The international community has been quick to pledge humanitarian aid but delivering that aid has been slow and intermittent. Another significant issue is how to get aid to people remaining in the conflict areas. For example, The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), estimates that 40,000 people did not flee the SWAT area. Currently, the Pakistani military and ICRC are the only entities that can get aid to those people. Besides relief aid, other issues needing immediate action include education, reconstruction and long-term development. These are usually put on hold until after people move back to their homes. However, this is easier said than done because conflicts often persist longer than expected and communities, homes, schools, and facilities are often destroyed during conflict activity. Many of the families who do return back to their homes have left again soon thereafter because personal / property security is not adequate, basic and essential services are lacking; in some cases unexploded ordinance (UXO) such as landmines pose a risk to the populace - children in particular.

**Recommendation:**

- Governments and international NGOs must rapidly assess the humanitarian crisis. They have to determine where the IDPs are moving to and the dispersion area. This will affect where and how much aid goes from one location to another.

- Governments and international NGOs must deliver humanitarian aid and assistance swiftly, efficiently, and impartially. This will have an impact on the health, well-being, and sentiment of IDPs toward the government and international community - "winning the hearts and minds." Some areas may be more difficult to get to because of the terrain or security situation.

- Security and rule of law must be maintained at IDP and refugee camps. In many cases, women and children make up the vast majority of people in camps and are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by criminals, lawless people, undisciplined troops, militants, and insurgents.

- Plans for resettlement, security, reconstruction and long-term development must occur simultaneously or early during a humanitarian crisis. These issues are usually given low priority until after IDPs return to their homes or a crisis has subsided. This presents a problem when a crisis or disaster lasts for a long time or over several years.

**Implications:**

- **The longer IDPs do not return to their original communities and homes, the more protracted the problems becomes.** The longer people are displaced, the less likely they will return. It is in everyone’s interest for IDPs to return quickly. Most IDPs want to go back to their homes and communities.

- **The social problems become larger and more complex as people remain displaced over a long time.** Women and children of families tend to live in the camps while men and fathers move to areas where they can find work and employment, generally in the urban areas. Sexual abuse often occurs in the camps. In Lebanon and Colombia, for example, children do not want to return to their parent’s communities, especially when they live in or near an urban area.

- **Insurgents/Insurgencies are helped the longer IDPs do not return home.** IDPs develop an unfavorable opinion towards their government and international NGOs/community the longer they
stay away from their homes because their basic needs are not met. Insurgents and criminal elements use this dissention to gain credibility with the populace and further discredit the fragile government structure.

Event Description:

This extract is from the article "Pakistani Displacement: Lessons Learned from Other Mass Displacement Situations," on 19 June 2009, by Elizabeth Ferris, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Brookings Institution, and her speech to the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), on 11 June 2009.

- **Posted By:** Apo, Jaime Mr.
- **Email:** jaime.apo@conus.army.mil
- **Phone:** (717) 609-6782
- **Rank:** Department Staff
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2010 - Delivering Health Services in Conflict-affected States**

- **Created:** 26 May 2010
- **Last Updated:** 09 Oct 2012
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
  - **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #medical;

**Observations:**

It is possible to contribute successfully to the restoration of disrupted health services. Conflict-affected fragile states have the worst health care systems in the world. However, investment in health service development is important such as alleviating suffering, contributes to the peace process, and provides long-term return in terms of equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of services provided.

**Discussion:**

The following discussion were from reports by the 1) High-Level Forum on the Health Millennium Development Goals and 2) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD):

1. Sometimes, transitions from war to peace are brought about by specific, tangible events, such as a peace agreement, or the outright military victory of one side over the other. In other cases, such as Somalia and the DR Congo, the process evolves slowly and erratically, and the explicit features of a post-conflict situation only emerge later. Decision-makers are faced with an array of post-conflict situations: poor information base; health actors with a knowledge gap; newcomers not understanding context, language, culture and history; health sector lacking capacity; uncertain
financial, political and administrative future; uncertain external support; peace-building taking precedence over other competing concerns; fear of relapse of war; conflicting agendas from powerful players; urgency to address immediate needs.

2. Donors should tailor interventions to context, maintain a long-term focus on governance and state-building and manage transition and hand-back sensitively. Efforts at national government level need to be balanced with programs linked to local authorities and communities. The quality and availability of essential services, such as health care and primary education, are key measures of governance. Inadequate service delivery therefore is a clear symptom of state fragility. Fragile states also suffer from other deficits of governance, such as political instability and lack of territorial integrity. These deficits hinder efforts to establish the accountability mechanisms between state and citizens that are necessary for effective health service delivery.

3. Some characteristics of health sectors in states emerging from protracted crises:
   a. Many of the weaknesses observed in post-conflict health sectors actually pre-date the crisis.
   b. In most cases, conflict serves to exacerbate the problems of any already fragile health sector.
   c. In some cases, conflict has resulted in a smaller health service workforce; in other situation, the workforce has grown as lesser-skilled worked have been enrolled in the sector to meet demand.
   d. Health sectors respond to crisis in many ways. Because of external funding, easy access and better security conditions, islands of relative privilege, may emerge in areas where deprivation is rife.
   e. Health sectors respond to crisis in many ways. Thanks to the presence of humanitarian actors, areas affected by violence may be better served than other comparatively peaceful ones. By that same token, refugees may have access to better health services than people who remain in country, or host communities.

4. Efforts to improve service delivery within fragile states face challenges specific to this context. In particular, the socio-political environment may not be conducive to usual foreign assistance initiatives owing to social fragmentation, governments lacking capacity and legitimacy, and poor relations between citizens and state. Some particular challenges that arise in this situation are:
   a. Recognizing path dependencies: Interventions will create path dependencies and must be designed with the specific local context in mind.
   b. Building accountable governance: While this is common in any context, within fragile states external aid can sometimes have the negative effect of further alienating the state from its citizens and undermining its ability to build capacity organically.
   c. Understanding access constraints: Social fragmentation can leave many groups marginalized, particularly the poor. Understanding these constraints is necessary in designing appropriate interventions.
   d. Improving women’s wellbeing and opportunities: Women play an important role in promoting social cohesion and reducing conflict. They must be provided with sufficient opportunities and security to participate fully in society.
5. In facing these challenges, donors must make strategic choices in determining their engagement with fragile states on service delivery. Specifically, they must decide on their method of delivering the aid, the instruments they intend to use, and the priorities they will focus on given limited resources. These choices and the context in which they are made have several policy implications for donors:

   a. Tailoring interventions to context: Donors should do contextual analyses and mapping of service realities to acquaint themselves with the country situation and to design more robust indicators for monitoring short- and long-term progress. In selecting their means and degrees of engagement, donors should seek to strike an appropriate balance, based on risk/benefit analyses of the political realities of different service sectors.

   b. Long-term focus on governance and state-building: Donors face an ethical challenge in fragile states between achieving short-term improvements in service delivery and establishing the foundation for long-term improvement in governance. To attain both of these goals, donors must be engaged at multiple levels of government within a fragile state, working to promote a mixture of community-driven and nationally organized programs.

   c. Managing transition and hand-back: Different fragile state settings require different transition strategies. In stabilizing or post-conflict settings, donors should work with government to accelerate the transition of service provision from external and non-state actors back to state mechanisms. Deteriorating settings necessitate a decision on whether or not to engage with the government. If not, a strategy focused on community and locally-led service delivery may be most effective.

6. Main actors involved in the health care sector: official funding agencies (bilateral and multilateral donors); informal funding agencies (e.g. charities and private contributors); government (central and local authorities); rebels; UN agencies; International transitional authorities and peace-keepers; Military, indigenous and foreign armies; NGOs, international and local; special programs (e.g. Polio Eradication Initiative); private for-profit entrepreneurs (e.g. health care facilities, laboratories, training outlets, suppliers); Users of health services.

**Recommendation:**

1. Examples of best practice (general):

   a. Adopt a sector-wide appraisal of the factors affecting health service delivery.

   b. Repair existing, damaged management systems whenever possible, before or instead of rushing to introduce new ones.

   c. Do not base recovery plans on realistic assessments and sound forecasts of available resources and capacity.

   d. Recognize that certain structural changes caused by a deep, protracted crisis are irreversible.

   e. ‘Aligning’ as far as feasible, donor procedures, systems and approaches with country systems.

   f. Introducing aid management tools, such as trust funds and pools that oblige participants to harmonize their activities.
g. Establishing aid coordination mechanisms, even in the absence of a recognized central government.

2. Examples of best practice (health):
   a. Advance planning.
   b. Invest early in the systemic analysis of the health sector and health service delivery.
   c. Introduce measure to address deep-rooted systemic distortions. These distortions include bias toward tertiary hospitals and curative treatment, under-skilled workforce, and perverse incentives.
   d. Introduce rational and progressive drug management systems.
   e. Introduce standardizations and common policies.

Implications:

Using the Best Practices:

1. Donors will need a long-term focus on governance and state building. The short-term will be on ensuring essential health services to those in urgent need. The key will be to strengthen public health institutions for sustained development.

2. Decision points will include whether a state can be a viable aid partner and what appropriate level of alignment and engagement should take place. If the state/central government is not a willing partner then possible entry points include certain ministries, regional/local governments, and/or the public sector. However, the central government will have to be involved, to some degree, as long as there is some capacity for policy and program coordination.

3. Donors will need to carefully consider the political dimension in their programs. The health sector work should support the objectives of state building and reduce conflict. A phased transition strategy should rebuild healthcare services. An example of this phased strategy is as follows: 1) emergency re-establishment of services; 2) establishing policy framework and planning; 3) hand-back and capacity development initiated; 4) hand-back completed.

4. International governments and organizations will have to be flexible as fragile state undergoes fluctuations in stability and crisis. Donors will adapt aid to the situation whether reinforcing the government or to private institutions or a combination of both.

5. Health service strategists and planner need to be realistic about a sustainable health care system. A fragile and post-conflict state will already be marked by distress, lack of basic resources, poverty, and operational constraints. Sustainability should be examined in terms of technical, financial, and political dimensions. At the strategic and operational level, requirements and goals must be set so that practitioners can achieve these at modest levels in early phases. As experience and capacity grows, practitioners can achieve higher standards and goals as transition develops and continues.

Event Description:
This observation finding is based on the background paper *Health Service Delivery in Post-Conflict States*, from the High-Level Forum on the Health Millennium Development Goals (MDG), November 2005. This paper was based on the Forum meeting on 14-15 November 2005, in Paris, France.

The other publication is the OECD/DAC Discussion paper *Service Delivery in Fragile Situations: Key Concepts, Findings and Lessons*, by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), May 2008, based on the work of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), which is the principal body through which the OECD deals with issues related to cooperation with developing countries.

- **Posted By:** Apo, Jaime Mr.
- **Email:** jaime.apo@conus.army.mil
- **Phone:** (717) 609-6782
- **Rank:** Department Staff
- **Unit:** PKSOI

### 2010 - The Balancing Act of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and the Need to Involve Local Groups

- **Created:** 25 Oct 2010
- **Last Updated:** 10 Nov 2010
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #HADR; #Afghanistan;

**Observations:**

Post-conflict reconstruction can be seen as a balancing act for the intervening organizations - on the one hand, expending resources on immediate/near-term requirements such as security, humanitarian relief and physical infrastructure, while on the other hand simultaneously working toward longer-term social, political, and economic development objectives. The primary challenge in this regard is how to provide enough humanitarian relief to offset the daily needs/pressures from conflict recovery, while not compromising the building of key Host Nation institutions that can facilitate peace and stability, provision of essential public services on a sustainable basis, and economic prosperity. In this latter task - the building of institutions for long-term growth - immediate engagement with local civil society groups is imperative. With the right support, local groups can lead rebuilding efforts, become drivers of reform, and improve the well-being of citizens in post-conflict countries.
Discussion:
The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) (an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce) is of the position that the reconstruction process is indeed a balancing act of providing sufficient immediate humanitarian relief for post-conflict society, while also constantly working to attain long-term development objectives. CIPE appears to give primacy to the latter, and it advocates the use of institutional and economic reforms at the grass roots level as the basis for long-term recovery.

On the one hand, addressing the basic nutrition, sanitation and health needs of the population and restoring the physical infrastructure in post-conflict countries is critical upfront; however, the long-term social well-being of the populace must also be kept at the forefront of reconstruction efforts. Success depends on addressing economic issues and establishing an economic foundation and opportunities for employment and self-advancement. In fact, economic issues are generally at the forefront of all concerns held by citizens of post-conflict countries. For example, in 2006 in Afghanistan, according to a survey conducted by the Asia Foundation, the main reason that many respondents believed the country was moving in the wrong direction were: unemployment, a poor economy, and lack of reconstruction progress. "Unemployment" was named as the greatest problem by Afghan respondents at both the national level and local level. Other major problems identified by participants were "security" and "corruption."

While foreign assistance is an integral component of the reconstruction process and can be a short-term solution to basic needs and services, long-term success depends on state-building and the rebuilding of key social, political, and economic institutions down to the lowest levels possible. It is through institutional reforms - especially at the community level - that a post-conflict country can take ownership of its problems and resolve problems on its own. Such reforms encompass the inclusion of marginalized groups; the promotion of independent media; the revision of laws, regulations, and informal rules of cooperation; and, improved involvement and agendas of existing local decision-making groups. In Afghanistan, for instance, the incorporation of local, traditional decision-making institutions and mechanisms - such as shuras (village level councils) and jirgas (tribal assemblies of elders) - in implementing foreign aid and assistance projects serves the purpose of affording legitimacy to the aid projects and builds a sense of ownership for the reforms.

In Afghanistan, CIPE’s approach to reconstruction has also been to target the private sector - shaping it to become a vested participant in the reconstruction process. The idea of involving the private sector was identified early on in the reconstruction process, when CIPE contacted members of the expatriate business community and facilitated their travel back to Afghanistan to meet with other entrepreneurs - those who could most affect the creating of jobs, supplying of goods and services, and improving standards of living. The assembled group of entrepreneurs/businessmen cited concerns such as existing barriers to conducting business within Afghanistan, an ineffective banking system, weak rule of law, exclusion from policymaking, and marginal accountability in government.

As the next step, CIPE facilitated the creation of the Afghanistan International Chamber of Commerce (AICC), Afghanistan’s first voluntary national business federation. This federation included over 20 national, regional, and local business associations, and three international affiliates. To address the problems identified by businessmen and to better integrate the private sector in reconstruction activities, AICC launched an initiative called the Procurement Technical
Assistance Center (PTAC). PTAC provided assistance on the procurement process to over 50 companies and has distributed more than 85 government tenders to its members, resulting in more than $2.5 million in contracts for Afghan companies - thereby creating jobs and providing economic opportunities for Afghan citizens. AICC also facilitated over $20 million in investments through its International Trade and Investment Promotion Office, creating hundreds of further employment opportunities.

Also, to influence long-term development through policy reform, AICC organized more than a dozen large-scale public policy roundtables to help address private sector reform issues. Attended on average by more than 250 government and business leaders, these events energized the business communities in Kabul, Kandahar, and Jalalabad behind public policy issues and positions, leading to a number of policy successes/reforms. These reforms occurred in the areas of Customs, Private Investment Laws, and feedback mechanisms between private sector and government. Much work remains to be done to influence long-term economic development; however, key steps in laying the foundation have been initiated.

Kosovo, another recent post-conflict environment, saw similar, perhaps greater, success in reconstruction. From the outset of the reconstruction process, the Riinvest Institute of Kosovo - a non-profit institute founded in 1995 for the promotion of modern economic development - took the same "balancing act" approach. On the one hand, Riinvest advocated and facilitated the delivery of humanitarian relief to address pressing day-to-day problems of citizens, but it also remained continuously focused on long-term development. To attain those long-term objectives of stability, transition, and growth, Riinvest emphasized institutional reforms to build a private sector capable of bringing Kosovars out of poverty - through job creation, investment, and trade.

When reconstruction efforts first began, Riinvest was the only organization to conduct a detailed study of the Kosovar private sector. Upon completion of this study, it developed policy recommendations aimed at improving the business climate. Riinvest's emphasis on building up the private sector and economic capacity became even more important in light of a decision by reconstruction stakeholders that required Kosovars (citizens) to contribute to reconstruction funds in order to avoid the aid dependency problem that plagued rebuilding efforts in nearby Bosnia. In this respect, business growth, employment, and income became even more essential for Kosovars.

The recommendations of Dr. Muhamet Mustaf, president of Riinvest, made in the early stages of reconstruction and later throughout the process to public officials and businessmen, turned into highly effective measures to rebuild Kosovo's economic capacity and ensure long-term development. Specifically, he advocated developing, with citizens' input, an economic framework that reflected the needs and the aspirations of Kosovars - and that discouraged corruption and illegal economic activity. Additionally, he encouraged the strengthening of civil society and democratic institutions, the involvement of Kosovars in the reconstruction process, and the continued commitment from the international community to transform Kosovo from an aid-based economy to a self-sufficient economy. Dr. Mustaf's recommendations spurred both the reform agencies and average citizens to identify problems, drive solutions, and build local consensus - resulting in civil society groups and political leaders taking ownership of a sustained reconstruction process.

One grass roots example in Kosovo of a civil society organization that successfully promoted reconstruction and free markets was the Kosovo Business Women's Association (SHE-ERA). This
organization was founded through the support of CIPE in 1999 in the aftermath of the Balkans conflict. It targeted a previously marginalized sector, women. It brought people and ideas together and took measures to help women enter the business community. SHE-ERA also diligently worked to promote values conducive to free markets and democracy: fairness, accountability, responsibility, and transparency. Additionally, SHE-ERA worked to foster a spirit of entrepreneurship and social and political healing.

**Recommendation:**

- Build participatory political and economic institutions. Governments, businesses, and civil society organizations should focus on building the structures/mechanisms of democratic governance and free markets - to allow public participation in reconstruction reforms, and to create an economic system that encourages entrepreneurship and growth.

- Engage local civil society groups. Planners and executing agencies in post-conflict recovery should identify ways to utilize the expertise and commitment of local groups. Engagement and capacity-building should consistently be worked hard at the grass roots level - to cultivate a sense of responsibility within local communities, and to ensure that civil society becomes closely involved in helping to identify and address developmental needs.

- Involve the private sector/entrepreneurs. Planners should conduct a detailed study of the private sector to understand the business climate, to determine shortfalls/impediments, and to develop suggestions to re-look policies, improve the business climate, and stimulate growth. Donors should study pre-existing conditions and analyze how they may affect aid projects, and what can be done to optimize outcomes. Lead agents should consider encouraging the establishment of business federations/associations - such as AICC in Afghanistan and SHE-ERA in Kosovo - in the interest of gaining consensus and promoting coordination with public officials to address economic issues.

**Implications:**

If local groups and the private sector are not engaged at the outset of the reconstruction process, then a window of opportunity will be missed for gaining broad participation, accountability, and effective/lasting reforms. If a foreign assistance-driven, top-down approach only is emphasized, such an approach may result in continued aid dependence and alienation of the population - who have no sense of ownership of the reconstruction activities. Unemployment, corruption, and economic stagnation are the likely outcomes, and potential for conflict may also increase.

**Event Description:**

This observation is based on the article "Building Democracies and Markets in the Post-Conflict Context," by Aleksandr Shkolnikov and Anna Nadgrodkiewicz, Center for International Private Enterprise, ECONOMIC REFORM Issue Paper No. 0806, 29 August 2008. This article can be found at: [www.cipe.org/publications/papers/pdf/IP0806.pdf](http://www.cipe.org/publications/papers/pdf/IP0806.pdf)
2010 - Engaging Civil Society in Peacekeeping

- **Created:** 13 May 2010
- **Last Updated:** 15 Jun 2010
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #civilsociety; #UNPKO

**Observations:**

Civil society actors have the potential to serve as peace enforcers or as spoilers in fragile peace processes. Civil society has a role, along with national government and the international community, in efforts to build sustainable peace. The situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone before and after the establishment of United Nations peacekeeping missions provide examples towards supporting the peace process. The close partnership between peacekeeping missions and civil society has the potential of bringing more value to the work of the United Nations system in post-conflict countries.

**Discussion:**

A definition of civil society: other organized social networks and associations outside the governmental sector, whose activities and programs influence and influence the lives of wide sectors of the community. They include voluntary associations, non-governmental organizations, social movements, traditional organizations community-based associations, and faith-based organizations. The range of activities that influence the work of these civil society organizations include: the provision of basic social services; monitoring implementation of national government policies according to established national and international standards; undertaking advocacy for, and working to promote social justice and equality; and providing moral and/or cultural leadership at the community level.

Civil society is often presented as a complementary pillar to the work of government at the national level. Given that many civil society organizations in developing and post-conflict countries are engaged at the community level, they are often considered an effective vehicle for translating national level policies into practical programs and activities for the benefit of wide sections of the population. In communities where the impact of national policies may not have taken sufficient root at the local level, traditional leaders and religious/faith-based groups often wield strong influence in the governance of the day-to-day lives of the population. Civil society groups can also provide an independent voice to monitor the implementation of government policy and to advocate and negotiate for socially just policies and programs.

According to the basis of this observation finding, civil society plays an important role in transitions to sustainable peace. Successful partnerships between UN peacekeeping missions and civil society mainly have been the commitment of peacekeeping personnel. Poor performance at the operational and strategic level have been attributed to lack of clear policy framework, prevailing
institutional culture in peacekeeping, bureaucratic and administrative procedures, and inadequate resources.

The most successful areas of partnership-building have been in logistical and training support by UN peacekeeping missions to some sectors of civil society. However, at the level of strategic engagement, peacekeeping missions have invested little in understanding how the influence of civil society at the ground level wide outreach capacity, knowledge of the operational environment and trust and respect that specific sectors of civil society command at the community level) could be better; harnessed to facilitate implementation of mission mandates. A fundamental point is that in order to facilitate the establishment of democratic structures in post-conflict countries, peacekeeping missions must invest as much in strengthening government structures, as in strengthening structures within civil society, since this latter can support local-level peace-building initiatives and can also help to monitor the exercise of accountable governance.

Recommendation:

Lessons Learned:

1. **A context analysis is important to understand the role played by civil society during the conflict.** The assessments prior to peacekeeping missions should include an understanding of the role played by civil society in the conflict and its potential during post-conflict. The assessment results should inform and shape the nature of relations developed between peacekeeping missions and civil society during post-conflict.

2. **Civil society representatives are not innocent bystanders but actors who have affected or have been affected by the conflict.** Peacekeepers should recognize the influence of civil society groups within their communities – whether positive or otherwise. Civil society can serve as partners, capable of providing essential information to peacekeepers based on their knowledge of the operational environment. This approach should enable peacekeepers to recognize any divisions within or among different sectors of civil society as a result of the conflict, which could work to undermine the peace process.

3. **Civil society has a key role to play in facilitating implementation of the mandates of peacekeeping missions.** An illustration of this point was the strategic support from women's organizations in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process overseen by the ECOMOG regional peacekeeping force in Liberia. Civil society organizations also have been supporting reintegration of ex-combatants back into society by providing psycho-social counseling services for mental healing and ceremonial cleansing rites performed by faith-based groups.

4. **The mission mandate provides the best starting point for defining partnership engagement with civil society.** Peacekeeping missions can be enhanced by including civil society partnership in peacekeeping mandates which provides a sense of collective ownership.

5. **Peacekeeping pre-deployment training should include instruction on civil society elements present in the host country.** This would help peacekeepers be aware and recognize the potential of civil society actors in the operational area. This could help peacekeepers implement their mission mandates(s).

6. **An institutional approach is necessary to implement partnership-building with civil society.** A more institutionalized policy framework is necessary in order to maximize
the partnership potential with civil society elements and set it on a sustaining footing. This requires a structured mechanism be established to facilitate dialogue and communication between civil society and the peacekeeping leadership. As a good practice, a Civil Affairs officer should be appointed who would be responsible for supporting partnership engagement with civil society.

7. **The mission leadership style can work to facilitate or hinder partnerships with civil society.** In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, the representatives of civil society interviewed for the study noted that their ability to engage effectively or otherwise with the peacebuilding mission was significantly influenced by the leadership style of the SRSG, and referenced both positive and negative experiences in this respect.

8. **Partnership-building with civil society requires some capacity-building investments to support the exercise of democratic governance.** This would require a shift in policy emphasis to underline capacity-building of civil society to complement the technical and logistical assistance that has largely defined the scope of partnership engagement between peacekeeping missions and civil society. Capacity-building of civil society should enable them to effectively monitor accountable and transparent governance practices in post-conflict countries and provide feedback to peacekeeping missions on the effectiveness of its governance programs.

9. **Capacity-building of civil society also requires some financial resources to enhance the activities of this sector.** This would require revisiting the rules and procedures that govern the use of peacekeeping budgets to ensure that some flexibility is provided through for example, the use of the quick impact project (QIPS) mechanism to facilitate capacity-building support to civil society.

10. **Civil society actors are well-placed to facilitate outreach to the wider population.** The peacekeeping mission mandates need to be understood by the host-country population which is often not the case. Civil society actors with the capacity to mobilize wide sectors of the population can help to inform and educate the population on the mandate of peacekeeping missions. More interaction between peacekeepers and the local population should be encouraged to facilitate confidence-building with the local population.

11. **Enhancing the civilian face of peacekeeping offers an important entry point for better outreach to civil society.** A stronger engagement by civilian peacekeepers with the local population can help to dispel the perception that peacekeeping is a largely militaristic exercise, and can also facilitate closer relations between peacekeepers and the civilian population. In this regard, the deployment of more women peacekeepers can also help facilitate better interactions with women in the local population, as was underlined by women in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

12. **Civil Society should be involved in the exit strategy of a peacekeeping mission so that civil society has subsequent mechanisms ready to support the peace-building process.** As an example, in Sierra Leone, civil society representatives noted that their limited input in the formulation of the exit strategy of the peacekeeping mission slowed down the momentum of their partnership engagement with the follow-on integrated mission.

13. **Other UN entities should engage with civil society actors to strengthen the integrated approach to partnership-building.** This approach is necessary to sustain the efforts of peacekeepers. It would also ensure that the UN peacekeeping mission complements efforts
from other international partners. This would promote a unified approach to support post-conflict peace-building processes.

**Implications:**

**If lessons and recommendations are used:**

1. Peacekeeping missions will not engage with all civil society elements. Pre-mission assessments will identify good and bad civil society elements. Further analysis will show which civil society elements will help facilitate the mission and operations. Mission leaders need to plan accordingly for those civil society elements that are excluded or have a minor role in engagement with the peacekeeping mission. Continual mission reviews will be needed to track the impact and effectiveness of civil society elements especially if they receive resources from the peacekeeping mission. The relationship with a civil society element may warrant a change based on its level of effectiveness.

2. Mission leaders and personnel need to be careful with their relationship with civil society elements. Some may be more capable than others but the relationship should be perceived as fair and even-handed. Civil society elements, in most cases, will not have the capacity, transparency, or accountability to help the mission. Initially, civil society elements will need assistance to build capacity but subsequently demonstrate its effectiveness and impact to the mission.

3. Civil society actors will provide useful information and help peacekeepers gauge progress toward fulling their mandate. However, civil society cannot be the only or single source of information. Peacekeepers will continue to do most of its work directly with the population even without coordination or assistance from civil society elements. Additionally, peacekeepers should obtain specific information from more than one element within civil society. Likewise, broad-based engagement with the population should also use as much of civil society as possible.

4. Military forces will continue to be the public perception of peacekeeping despite the presence or call for more civilians in peacekeeping missions. Numerous lessons learned and best practices demonstrate the need for civilians because of unique skills and expertise needed for the mission. For policing tasks, civilian police are preferable over military police and conventional military forces pressed into policing tasks. However, military forces have the capacity to train, staff, and organize, and deploy fairly quickly for peacekeeping operations. Pre-deployment assessment can identify positions where civilians can have the best impact for a mission. Non-governmental organizations can also help improve public perception of peacekeeping operations despite not being affiliated with the UN.

5. Civil society will be one of many factors in a peacekeeping exit strategy. As in collecting information, civil society cannot be the only source to develop and determine the strategy.

6. Be prepared to provide financial resources to civil society organizations. There has to be a system established to monitor and account how the money is used by those organizations.

**If lessons and recommendations are not used:**

1. Civil society organizations will not receive due recognition of its influence to help the peace process. For example, civil society can strengthen the capacity to monitor and be a partner in the establishment of legitimate governance. Civil society can be one of the partners with the UN to
implement peacekeeping mandates. Civil society organizations can be one source to help peacekeepers engage with the population and measure the population’s support.

2. Not engaging with civil society leaves out an important stakeholder especially if they yield influence and respect with the host nation population. Peacekeeping forces should reach out to as many legitimate entities to build partnership. Civil society organizations’ influence probably will extend after peacekeeping forces depart when the mission ends.

Event Description:

This observation is based on Research paper, Engaging Civil Society in Peacekeeping: Strengthening Strategic Partnerships between United Nations Peacekeeping Missions and Local Civil Society Organizations during Post-conflict Transitions, August 2007, by Comfort Lamptey, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). The research included interviews with personnel from the UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone; representatives of civil society from both those countries; and representatives from the UN, international agencies, and NGOs.

- Posted By: Apo, Jaime Mr.
- Email: jaime.apo@conus.army.mil
- Phone: (717) 609-6782
- Rank: Department Staff
- Unit: PKSOI

2011 - Civil Society Capacity and Action for Peace Building - Kenya

- Created: 11 Feb 2011
- Last Updated: 18 Oct 2013
- Status: Active
- Event: Kenya - General
- Unit: PKSOI
- Focus: #UNPKO; #Africa; #civilsociety

Observations:

In the immediate aftermath of the December 2007 elections in Kenya, violent clashes broke out that threatened the very existence of the country. Besides the successful formal mediation efforts by the former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, an equally impressive "civil society response" - based on previously developed civil society peace building capacity - was absolutely critical to bringing about peace to this country in chaos. The actions of the Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP) during this crisis of emergent/spiraling violence is a tremendous example of utilizing civil society peace building capacity, mobilizing a larger constituency on short notice, incorporating multi-sector and multi-level actions, and teaming with a parallel formal mediation effort.
Discussion:

Politically instigated ethnic clashes had been a well-known source of violent conflict in Kenya prior to the elections of December 2007. Ruthless politicians/candidates had often utilized youth militia groups to carry out violent attacks on communities they perceived to be in opposition to their political agendas.

In December 2007, national presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Kenya. Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga were the two leading presidential candidates. In the months and weeks leading up to voting day, opinion polls favored Odinga and his party. Early voting results on 27 December indicated that Odinga had built a comfortable lead. However, this lead gradually eroded, and, as election day passed and two more days passed without a presidential winner being declared, tensions and anxiety among Kenyans gave way to many violent clashes and incidents. Finally, on 30 December, the Electoral Commission of Kenya announced that Kibaki had actually won. With this announcement, Kenya exploded into unprecedented and widespread violence/conflict. 1,300 people lost their lives, and more than 500,000 people were displaced.

Within 24 hours of the 30 December announcement, in the midst of the spiraling violence, a new civil society group called Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP) was launched by five prominent Kenyan civil society peace workers and mediators, including two retired general officers. The group's formation was widely announced to the public. Among the CCP's five core leaders was Ms. Dekha Ibrahim Abdi, well known as a founding member of the Wajir Peace and Development Committee. By way of background, Ms. Abdi had worked with a number of women back in the 1993-95 timeframe to address a cycle of violence in the Wajir district of Kenya, where state institutions had miserably failed to provide security. These women took initiative and developed a civil society peace building capacity to address that cycle of violence. They initially engaged the elders of different clans, set up a mediation process, and included formal authorities such as the district commissioner. In 1995, the Wajir Peace and Development Committee was established, which broadened participation in the province to include additional government officials, security personnel, religious leaders, NGO representatives, tribal chiefs, and peace advocates. This civil society committee not only brought peace to the Wajir district, but was also used as a model for all districts throughout northern Kenya.

Notably, the districts of Kenya that had such Wajir-like civil society peace committees in place during the aftermath of the December 2007 elections reported far less violence than the districts without such committees.

The CCP, formed on 31 December 2007, immediately drew upon existing civil society peace building capacity and provided a crucial space/avenue for all people to utilize. The CCP's initial focus was to plead publicly and privately with political leaders and candidates to dialogue, while simultaneously reaching out to all Kenyans. In its very first media appearance, the CCP appealed to all Kenyans to halt the violence and called for calm, peace, and dialogue throughout the country. The CCP leaders invited anyone and everyone interested in peace to come to their location, the Serena Hotel, to join the group.

An Open Forum was born, then, on 1 January 2008. The Open Forum’s daily morning sessions became the meeting place for civil society group leaders, politicians, private sector representatives, various professionals, the media, and people from all walks of life. Working committees were developed in the areas of Humanitarian Response, Media, Community Mobilization, Resource
Mobilization, and High Level Dialogue. Committee members harvested ideas and suggestions from the people gathered at the Open Forum, developed discussions on those topics, and then produced focused actions. The High Level Dialogue committee soon interfaced with a parallel, formal mediation effort led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Besides the working committees, a web of interrelated groups emerged from the Open Forum: the "Concerned Youth for Peace," "Concerned Kenyan Writers," "Concerned Artists and Celebrities for Peace," “Concerned Women,” and several others. Each of these groups and their leaders were deliberately linked to other networks/leaders. The resulting interactions encompassed and connected multiple sectors and multiple levels of Kenyan society.

On 9 January 2008, in just 10 days time, the CCP released a document entitled "Citizens' Agenda for Peace." This document provided a 7-point agenda for ending the crisis. Among its points were the building of trust and confidence between the (competing) political parties, closure to the elections, and the formation of a government of national unity. On 28 February 2008, the formal mediation process led by Mr. Kofi Annan (and involving the African Union’s Panel of Eminent Personalities) produced its own "National Peace and Reconciliation Accord" - which bore a striking resemblance to the CCP document released weeks earlier.

**Recommendation:**

1. Stability operations practitioners should consider building "civil society peace building capacity" in states/provinces prone to conflict. Kenya’s Wajir Peace and Development Committee - which included women, government officials, security personnel, clan/tribal leaders, religious leaders, NGO representatives, and peace advocates - can serve as a useful model for some fragile states/provinces.

2. In conditions of emergent/spiraling violence in fragile states, it is important for respected leaders - internal and external - to take prompt action to mobilize peace building efforts. In the case of Kenya, the efforts of Ms. Dekha Abdi and the other four leaders of CCP, and the parallel work of Mr. Kofi Annan and the African Union’s Panel of Eminent Personalities, were absolutely critical in grabbing the attention of the Kenyan people and in mobilizing multiple sectors of society for peacebuilding.

3. In conditions of emergent/spiraling violence in fragile states, it is likewise essential that a space/avenue be provided to the people to vent their frustrations and to develop alternatives to violence. In the case of Kenya, the CCP afforded that necessary space/avenue for positive civil society actions.

4. In peace building and conflict resolution actions, those leading the actions should employ an inclusive strategy - one of maximum participation/representation and transparency. The CCP’s call for anyone and everyone to participate, the daily Open Forum, and the active participation of media in the Open Forum, all serve as an excellent example of an inclusive strategy and the resulting benefits.

5. In peace building and conflict resolution actions, those leading the actions should ensure that participation is extended to multiple levels and multiple sectors of society. In the case of Kenya’s Open Forum, the "reach" generated by linking the various committees and groups to one another bridged the lines of party, tribe, ethnicity, religion, age, and gender.
Implications:

- If civil society capacity for conflict resolution is not developed in fragile states, and if respected leaders do not step up in a crisis to use this capacity and to mobilize society for peacebuilding, then conflict can quickly spiral out of control and turn the state into lawless chaos.

- The need to get the word out to all countrymen to end rising violence and to join peacebuilding efforts (in times of crisis) implies that mass communication venues/resources are readily available. If they are not, peace building leaders should exhaust all available alternatives in order to maximize information dissemination.

Event Description:

This observation is based on the article "Inspiring Citizens' Initiative for Peacebuilding in Kenya," by Paul van Tongeren, New Routes, Volume 15, 4 November 2010 (attached).

- Posted By: Mosinski, David Mr.
- Email: david.a.mosinski.civ@mail.mil
- Phone: 256-651-3678
- Rank: Civilian
- Unit: PKSOI

2011 - Medical Services as part of an overall Stability Operations strategy.

- Created: 15 Jul 2011
- Last Updated: 20 Sep 2011
- Status: Active
- Event: Stability Ops - General
- Unit: PKSOI Staff - SRT
- Focus: #StabOps; #Medical; #HADR

Observations:

The ability to provide competent and appropriate "expeditionary medical services" is perhaps one of the most urgent, and critical capabilities needed when responding to conflict-related crises or natural disasters – when large numbers of people are displaced or injured by violence, earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, tsunami, etc. In these situations, the Host Nation, region, or town can be so devastated by the events that Essential Services are either overwhelmed or become incapacitated. Where robust and modern medical services never truly existed (in some 3rd world countries) – when medical personnel themselves are also among the casualties; when medical care facilities are significantly destroyed, then the provision of medical services becomes one of the most critical aspects of any Stability Operations strategy. Time is of the essence during these Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief Operations (HA/DR) to save lives, alleviate suffering and to prevent more morbidity or mortality from environmental exposures or infectious
diseases. There are significant challenges to both military medical support elements as well as civilian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in being able to provide critical care to the indigenous population. For military medical teams and units – e.g. a Combat Support Hospital, their normal mission is to provide Force Health Protection to the "kinetic" force. Because of this, the local populace may see these medical providers as being aligned more with military intelligence activity and the warfighters! However, as recently reiterated by the Department of Defense, Medical HA/DR and other Stability Operations are now just as important as offensive and defensive operations in the core competencies of the military. For the NGOs, many seek to distance themselves from close association with military forces – to include such "vanilla" activities as having medical supplies delivered by military assets; moving with military forces for local security; or regularly conversing with military patrols in their area. Otherwise, groups such as Al Qaeda (AQ), the Taliban, or other opposing forces can use these passive events to show that NGOs are in league with the military and can then become targets for the insurgents. The result – the populace will not trust nor will they use the available medical services and facilities. For both military and NGO medical providers, another precept of Medical Stability Operations is to work closely with the Host Nation (HN) so that priorities are identified, medical support activities properly coordinated, and the HN Ministry of Health programs and services are not disparaged or undermined by the short-term Stability Operations. Another challenge, particularly in Middle Eastern regions, is understanding the culture as it relates to the medical treatment of women, children, and prisoners/detainees – a very touchy subject. Expect/anticipate that, at best, only female medical personnel will be able to talk to, perform triage, or to treat indigenous female population.

Discussion:
- Security of the medical care personnel / facilities must always be kept in mind. Terrorists/insurgents often seek soft targets (those that are not as well-armed as combat units). They like to disrupt HA/DR missions or kill medical or NGO providers/personnel. Example: during the initial UN mission in Iraq, a Vehicle Borne IED hit the UN headquarters and killed the head of the UN team. Result: the rest of the UN mission packed up and went home !! The overall security plan for stability operations personnel and facilities must always include an ongoing evaluation of security risks and the protection of expeditionary medical services and personnel – without being intrusive. Over emphasis on security requirements; responding with excessive military force can leave the impression that medical services are not there as a priority and can even result in the local populace fearing and fleeing from medical elements.

- Immediately after a major disaster, essential medical services are vitally needed to save lives and to prevent more suffering. Failure to provide adequate essential medical services not only brings down the overall standard of living and wellness of the population and can result in a loss of confidence and dissatisfaction with the HN government. (Failure to care for/inability to care for their basic needs can result in a decline in governance and order.)

- Expeditionary / emergency medical care: need to have military “eMed” forces available 7x24; when responding to a humanitarian crisis – tsunami, floods- “eMeds” should deploy within 48-72 hours; they must be nominally self-sufficient for 7-10 days.

- When designing a stability operations/expeditionary medical support concept, priority of effort should be determined and coordinated by the HM: – emergency medical services are needed during
the early part of a major HA/DR operation; general preventive medicine; public health; hygiene & sanitation; training and education; and building or improving partnership capacity.

- Special challenges: How to interact with/provide care for women, children; maternal and child health; “mothers” are very central characters in many cultures; control of family – influencing the children/daughters; by training the “mothers” how to provide basic medical/health results in training of the children and the family.

- Providing medical care for detainees/prisoners is important in showing respect for the Rule of Law and in instilling professionalism in the detention cadre for the most vulnerable, disenfranchised, and often the most reviled segment of the population. Yet some of these detainees may, in the future, become the military, political or business leaders of the HN one day. Must be careful to show respect for cultural issues; don’t antagonize the family, community, local leadership; application of acceptable humanitarian principles; adhering to Geneva Conventions; also applies to treatment of combatants and non-combatants in general.

- In disaster response situations, tendency for populace to move away from the disaster site(s) – e.g. flooded areas; expect massive migrations; need to be prepared to run/administer refugee communities / IDP camps (and EDP camps in neighboring countries). The people are now located where there are no preventive medical services; no infrastructure; no professional care givers

- Priority of effort: (1) potable water – used for both drinking and cleaning; without this expect large number of cases of gastrointestinal disorders; (2) disposal of garbage, human waste, and black/brown water [black=sewage/human waste; brown = post cleaning; body / food]; (3) teach good personal hygiene and infection control; (4) provide proper and adequate/appropriate shelter, food and water – e.g after Hurricane Katrina they provided trailers as shelter/homes – but, they were not connected to any sewage system, no electrical power or water; might have been better off with communal toilets, and tent shower and bath facilities.

- Importance of STRATCOMM – letting people know where to go to get medical attention/care; ensuring that people know who is providing services so that AQ/Taliban cannot claim credit; counter negative STRATCOMM being broadcast by AQ/Taliban –e.g. defiling women; etc. Use social media as part of STRATCOMM operations; inform populace on matters of public health, preventive medicine, hygiene, warnings about epidemics.

Recommendation:

- When designing a stability operations/expeditionary medical support concept, priority of effort – emergency/essential medical services, general preventive medicine; public health; hygiene & sanitation; training and education; improving or building partnership capacity. Always work with and coordinate with the HN Ministry of Health.

- Understanding and disseminating to medical care givers the cultural nuances related to caring for women, children.

- Teaching detention cadres and disseminating to medical care givers the professionalism needed to care for prisoners/detainees to demonstrate respect for the Rule of Law.

- Using social media to inform the populace on the types of medical care facilities, capabilities, locations, missions, etc. can be useful to connect patients with medical providers.
- Respect NGOs and other civilian medical providers’ wish to be non-affiliated with warfighters; any interpretation by the population that the medical services personnel or NGOs are part of the warfighting element can jeopardize the care givers themselves as well as spreading mistrust among the populace.

- Avoid any activity that supports the perception by the people that the medical services are more a part of “military operations” than a true concern for the health and welfare of the people. Medical services provided by the military or NGOs must be done in close coordination with the HN. Medical services provided must not overshadow the Ministry of Health because this can ultimately result in a lack of confidence in the government – and dependence on a standard of care that may not be sustainable once the expeditionary medical services leave.

Implications:

Failure to adhere to the concepts and principles outlined in this observation may not only jeopardize the success of medical services in Stability Operations, but also the success of the overall stability operations strategy for the region, province, etc. The successful implementation of medical services can be a tremendous positive influence on the populace thereby enhancing the probability that other stability operations objectives will be more easily realized and aid in winning the “hearts and minds” of the people.

Event Description:

Extracted from notes taken during live interview with COL Roberto Nang by Mr. French, Chief, Lessons Learned, PKSOI on 3 June 2011. A copy of the interview (format is MP3) is available on request. COL Nang’s Professional Profile is attached.

- **Posted By:** Nang, Roberto COL
- **Email:** roberto.nang@us.army.mil
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Military - Officer
- **Unit:** SRT, PKSOI

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2012 - Attending to the "Human Domain"

- **Created:** 13 Dec 2012
- **Last Updated:** 22 Mar 2013
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** _Stability Ops - General
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #HumanDomain; #StabOps

Observations:
Attending to the “human domain” is vital to peacekeeping and stability operations. The following quotes are provided to illustrate what is meant by the “human domain” and why it is essential for planning and executing operations:

- “We must also remember that conflict is a human endeavor, ultimately won or lost in the human domain. The Army operates in this human domain, which is the most important factor in a complex environment.” (Ref 1)

- “Simply stated, the lesson of the last decade is that failing to understand the human dimension of conflict is too costly in lives, resources, and political will for the Nation to bear.” (Ref2)

- “A nuanced understanding of the environment [in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere] was often hindered by a focus on traditional adversaries and a neglect of information concerning the host-nation population. Because the traditional intelligence effort tended to focus on enemy groups and actions, it often neglected ‘white’ information about the population that was necessary for success in population-centric campaigns such as counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Local commanders needed information about ethnic and tribal identities, religion, culture, politics, and economics.” (Ref 3)

- “Partnerships with host nation actors should be guided by impartiality, inclusiveness, and gender considerations based on a solid understanding of the local context (to include civil society; private sector actors; and, all ethnic, religious, and minority groups.).” (Ref 4)

Discussion:

Although the “human domain” is broad in nature – encompassing the full range of host nation populations, their values, their motivations, and their behaviors – recent stability operations highlight the importance of focusing attention on the following specific elements / population groups:

- **Local leaders/elders.** Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and peacekeeping and civil-military operations across Africa have shown the importance of engaging local leaders/elders and gaining their buy-in on stability and reconstruction efforts. Particularly effective approaches have been the implementation of an “itihad” (“unity”) strategy in OIF to influence community leaders and build consensus, the use of Village Stability Operations (VSO) in OEF, and Key Leader Engagements (KLEs) with local officials in both operations. (Refs 5-9)

- **Women.** Recent stability operations have shown that engaging women in peace building efforts can pay significant dividends, even in societies where women have had little or no participation in governance. The deliberate inclusion of women’s groups in Liberia and Kenya and the use and expansion of Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in Afghanistan provide valuable lessons on engaging women/women’s groups and the derived benefits for the mission. (Refs 10-13)

- **Youth/young adults.** With challenges ranging from disgruntled youths (lacking education and employment) to youths taking up arms (in militias and extremist groups), the need to address sizable youth populations has come to the fore in peacekeeping operations across Africa, as well as in OEF. Effective approaches have included: engaging established youth groups (Kenya), creating new youth groups/youth “shuras” (OEF), and implementing various post-conflict employment programs – e.g., public works programs (Liberia and Uganda). (Refs 11 and 14-16)
- **Religious leaders.** From the Balkans to Iraq to Afghanistan, religion has often played a role in fueling conflict between groups within the host nation. It has also been used by insurgents as a basis for violence against coalition/international forces. Engagement with religious leaders has shown to merit attention, particularly if the coalition/international force is resourced with subject matter experts/chaplains and places command emphasis on using them for this purpose, as per II Marine Expeditionary Brigade & the UK contingent in Helmand Province in OEF. (Ref 17)

- **Civil society groups.** Civil society groups have proven to be critical resources both for forging peace in a conflict-affected nation and for post-conflict reconstruction efforts. The work of the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) in Afghanistan and the Riinvest Institute in Kosovo show that immediate engagement with civil society groups and investments at the local level can lead to host nation capacity for long-term growth and stability. Understanding local culture, societal groups, and how they interact is paramount for this engagement – which the Human Terrain System afforded to commanders/staffs during OIF and OEF. (Refs 11 and 18-20.)

- **Insurgents.** OIF, OEF, and peacekeeping & stability operations across Africa have shown the criticality of understanding the mindset of insurgents, as well as how insurgents can sometimes be persuaded to change course. Regionally-tailored Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) initiatives (bolstered by command emphasis) were able to gain notable success in both northern Iraq and northern Afghanistan – and perhaps could have been used by host nation authorities as foundations for broader programs. Information operations targeting insurgents/combatants, amnesty provisions (temporary/conditional), and nationally-resourced employment programs were shown to be critical for DDR program success. (Refs 10 and 21-23)

**Recommendation:**

1. U.S./coalition forces engaged in future peacekeeping and stability operations should develop a comprehensive strategy upfront to address the "human domain." This strategy should target six key population groups – local leaders/elders, women, youth/young adults, religious leaders, civil society groups, and insurgents – and should consider use of the following elements:

   - An “itihad” strategy (“unity” strategy)
   - Village Stability Operations
   - Key Leader Engagements
   - Female Engagement Teams
   - Youth group engagement programs
   - Nationally-supported employment programs
   - Chaplain/religious leader engagement programs
   - Programs designed to engage, invest in, and mentor civil society groups
   - The Human Terrain System
   - Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration programs
   - Information operations targeting insurgents/combatants
2. U.S./coalition forces should ensure that formations are sufficiently resourced and trained to operate in the “human domain.”

Implications:
N/A

Event Description:
This lesson is based on the following REFERENCES:


(4) “Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction,” United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and PKSOI, October 2009.


(9) “Rebuilding Schools and Communities in Post-conflict Kenya,” SOLLIMS Lesson 772.


(14) “Youth Shura Innovation in Afghanistan,” SOLLIMS Lesson 771.


(21) “DDR Initiative in Northern Iraq,” SOLLIMS Lesson 774.

(22) “Bottom-up Approach to Reintegration in Northern Afghanistan,” SOLLIMS Lesson 778.

(23) “Strategic Lesson Number 6: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR),” PKSOI, 30 April 2012.

- **Posted By:** Mosinski, David Mr.
- **Email:** david.a.mosinski.civ@mail.mil
- **Phone:** 256-651-3678
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2013 - Gender Inequality as an Early Warning Indicator of Violent Conflict**

- **Created:** 13 Sep 2018
- **Last Updated:** 07 May 2019
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #GP; #POC; #WPS

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Building / Enabling Partnerships
- Women, Peace & Security
- Protection of Civilians (PoC)
- Strategic Intelligence
- Social/Societal

**This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:**

- HS 10 Public Information and Communications
Observations:

Gender inequality within a society is often a predictor of armed conflict. Thus, early warning systems for violent conflict and violent extremism must include indicators about gender inequality and sexual/domestic violence. Furthermore, conflict prevention mechanisms must support gender equality and women’s empowerment in order to be effective, as shown by Morocco’s support of women’s rights in the wake of the Arab Spring, which has prevented severe growth of violent extremism.

Discussion:

Conflict early warning systems are mechanisms used to anticipate conflicts and to respond to their escalation. Such systems involve collecting, analyzing, and communicating data to inform prevention and mitigation response strategies. Awareness of longstanding structural violence, such as social exclusion (economic inequality and/or lack of access to resources for certain groups) can improve early warning for the potential escalation of physical violence.

As such, it is important for early warning systems to incorporate data about the entire population (including marginalized groups) and to include stakeholders from the entire population in conflict response efforts. However, according to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), “Gender is still often ignored in efforts aimed at conflict prevention, with the result that these efforts may perpetuate stereotypes or even increase women’s vulnerabilities to having their human rights violated” (2009, p. 2). “Because threats that are regarded not as public but as private matters (including sexual violence and domestic violence) are often perceived and treated as non-political matters, there is a risk that EWS [early warning systems] reporting disproportionally highlights security threats that affect men” (OSCE, 2009, p. 10).

Yet, it is important not just for women – but for entire societies – that sexual and domestic violence are taken into account in early warning systems. These factors can in fact be an indicator of the potential for more widespread armed conflict. According to OSCE, “The lower status that most women generally hold relative to most men may cause them to be among the first to experience the weakening of security levels. Thus, their experiences can potentially serve as foreshadowing of more widespread armed conflict.” (2009, p. 10).

According to a study of civil wars between 1960-2001, there is a confirmed link between gender inequality and intra-state armed conflict. Cultures with a great degree of structural inequality, including a system of male domination which persists through gender stereotypes, may support violence as a way to address grievances. In other words, when there is inequality at home, this norm of inequality can also extend to the national and international stage and make the resolution of conflicts more difficult and more violent. Furthermore, gender stereotypes are often used to mobilize people to war. Following a cross-national analysis coded for gender inequality and controlled for other variables (such as GDP), the study concludes that: “Gender inequality, as measured by both fertility rate and female percent of labor force, increases the likelihood that a state will experience internal conflict. The higher the level of gender inequality within a state, the
greater the likelihood such a state will experience internal conflict. In short, states characterized by gender discrimination and structural hierarchy are permeated with norms of violence that make internal conflict more likely” (Caprioli, 2005, p. 171-172).

When societies implement norms of equality, however, groups are more likely to interact based on cooperation, not violence. This is evident from support for women’s empowerment as a successful method of conflict prevention in Morocco. Following the Arab Spring, Morocco began a series of reforms aimed at responding to public concerns. Instead of cracking down on women’s rights, amidst a series of interventions, Morocco actually strengthened and expanded women’s rights through revisions of the Family Code which enabled women to be considered equal to their husbands. Furthermore, women were given the right to become certified as mourchidates, Islamic preachers, to teach messages of peace and to promote equality. This program has been proclaimed a success within Morocco and abroad, and it was praised by the U.S. Department of State in 2009.

Another example of a state which has had some success decreasing extreme violence in the decade following 2005 is Bangladesh. In 2005, Bangladesh introduced a zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and adopted a CVE strategy which focused on poverty as a main driver of extreme violence. To address this driver, the government focused on women's economic empowerment through supporting micro-credit lending programs and employment opportunities in garment factories. Improving the quality of life for women in Bangladesh “will contribute to increased security and stability in Bangladesh,” according to a Brookings Policy Paper (Couture, 2014, p. 22). The country has also taken steps to improve the access to education for both girls and boys.

Key female empowerment indicators include social indicators (such as the female literacy rate, legal marriage age, and enrollment in education), political indicators (female heads of state, parliamentarians, and religious leaders), economic indicators (female unemployment, right to inherit land, percentage of the workforce, and access to credit), and quality of life indicators (female mortality rate, access to healthcare, and access to birth control) (Couture, 2014, chart on p.7). Such indicators must be incorporated into early warning systems for effective conflict prevention.

**Recommendation:**

1. Ensure the incorporation of a gender perspective into early warning systems. This can be accomplished along the following lines of effort (OSCE, 2009, p. 12):
   - “Ask how men and women are affected by the conflict: What are the consequences and the threats they experience with respect to international human rights and international humanitarian law?
   - Evaluate structural and conflict-related inequalities and human rights violations as to how they affect men and women.
   - Explain roles, experiences, needs and capacities of women and men in conflict. Gender analysis can be used to better explain factors that generate vulnerabilities.”

2. Utilize gender inequality (and other key female empowerment social, political, economic, and quality of life statistics) as indicators to predict potential armed conflict.

3. Prevent conflict by supporting the empowerment of women and by furthering women’s rights.
Implications:
A key component of effective conflict prevention is the inclusion, equality, and empowerment of all stakeholders, including women. When states achieve greater gender equality, gender stereotypes are less likely to be used to incite people to violence for both intra- and inter-state armed conflict. The levels of a society are composed of fractals, wherein the structure of power in relationships is often repeated from family and community levels to national and international levels. When there is a greater balance of power at the family level between men and women, then there may also be a greater balance of power between stakeholders at the political level which can promote inter- and intra-state cooperation and decrease the potential for extreme violence.

Event Description:
This lesson is primarily based on:

“Gender and Early Warning Systems: An Introduction,” OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), (2009); Found at: https://www.osce.org/odihr/40269?download=true

“Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict,” M. Caprioli, University of Minnesota-Duluth, International Studies Quarterly (2005) 49, 161-178; Found at: https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/233359/original/


- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2013 - Humanitarian Assistance and Social Well-being – Precluding Exploitation and Corruption**

- **Created:** 23 Apr 2013
- **Last Updated:** 07 Dec 2015
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** PKSOI_Elective
- **Unit:** USAWC Student
- **Focus:** #HADR; #SEA
Observations:
The provision of humanitarian aid can evolve into a situation where locally recruited personnel, entrusted with the responsibility of aid distribution, engage in corrupt and abusive practices.

Discussion:

GENERAL

1. From Angola, Sierra Leone, and Sudan mission experiences, I came to understand how provision of humanitarian aid can evolve into a situation where locally recruited personnel, entrusted with the responsibility of aid distribution, engage in corrupt and abusive practices against their own nationals - abusing the privilege of distributing aid on behalf of international agencies.

2. Due to women usually being faced with challenges of looking after children and the sick, they are usually the ones held at ransom, especially through sexual abuse in return for aid provisions. Therefore, appropriate accountability and monitoring mechanisms are required to be put in place as checks and balances on those that handle aid provisions, thereby curbing the abuse.

3. In the missions, hostilities and ill feelings by the affected persons were usually directed at agencies that provided aid instead of the corrupt personnel or host nation (HN). The affected persons felt that by not placing foolproof systems in place to monitor the whole Humanitarian Assistance effort, the aid providers facilitated the unpalatable practices.

HOST NATION RESPONSIBILITIES

4. The lapses in the preparedness to mitigate the effects of crises by a number of countries still leave a lot to be desired. The lack of adequate preparations is mainly attributed to poor governance, as opposed to lack of resources. A lot of misplaced priorities result in needy areas being neglected whilst colossal amounts of money are spent on fringe benefits for those in government. In areas where Humanitarian Assistance is rendered with a functioning government present, most of the assistance is channeled towards gaining political mileage and corrupt disposal by government officials by favoring tribes/groupings and personnel supporting their governance. Therefore, Humanitarian Assistance should be with a definitive purpose emphasized to recipient governments or personnel in charge as given in the succeeding paragraph.

PRIMACY OF HUMANITARIAN AID

5. As budgeting and preparations by USAID, which is the lead department, in unison with the cooperating partners in rendering Humanitarian Assistance, together with the military planning processes concluded and set in motion, I believe assistance should be aimed at facilitating the under-mentioned:

a. Access To and Delivery of Basic Needs Services, where the affected population should have equal access to aid and be able to obtain adequate water, food, shelter, and health services so as to ensure survival and life with dignity.

b. Access To and Delivery of Education, with the affected population having equal and continuous access to quality formal and non-formal education, whose aim should be the provision of the opportunity for advancement and promotion of a peaceful society. This is achievable through a
system-wide development and reform that avails equal access to relevant, quality, and conflict-sensitive education.

c. Return and Resettlement of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons should ensure that all individuals displaced from their homes by violent conflict have the option of a safe, voluntary, and dignified journey to their homes or to new resettlement communities. All affected persons should have recourse for property restitution or compensation, and receive reintegration and rehabilitation support to build their livelihoods and contribute to long-term development.

d. Social Reconstruction should enable the population to coexist peacefully through intra- and inter-group forms of reconciliation. Mechanisms to help resolve disputes non-violently and address the legacy of past abuses should be activated, especially through development of community institutions that bind society across divisions.

6. I am in accord with the requirement that Humanitarian Assistance is delivered in a manner and with the sole purpose of fostering reliability and sustainability in order to mitigate the effects of the crises in such a way that people quickly readjust to their old ways of living after stability is achieved.

**HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THROUGH HOST GOVERNMENT**

7. I find the under-mentioned to be fundamental information that has to be stressed to the cooperating partners before crises:

a. It is the primary role and responsibility of the state to provide timely assistance and protection to affected persons as provided for in the Humanitarian Charter, once a crisis is experienced. Extenuating cases like the Haiti earthquake or floods in Mozambique can be dealt with appropriately whilst cases like famine in Zimbabwe and floods in Zambia, where the central government allotted monies which never reached the affected persons, should have corrective measures taken when all is addressed.

b. The above is said especially in the light that the affected population usually does not have sufficient capacity to respond, particularly early in the response to crisis. Therefore state or controlling authorities should not engage in discrimination of certain groups of people and/or affected areas.

c. It is important that the host government is made to understand that it has the responsibility to determine the capacity and intentions towards all members of the affected population about the scale and type of humanitarian response and what in addition is required.

d. The HN government should overcome all forms of exploitation and corruption so that all affected people are afforded access to assistance without discrimination. Aid can negatively affect the wider population and amplify unequal power relations between different groups, including men and women. Valuable aid resources can increase exploitation and abuse and lead to competition, misuse or misappropriation of aid.

e. The requirement for timely information to the affected population on how to access aid facilitates sanity in the whole operation. The assurance of access to basic services, security and respect for human rights is the foundation of life with dignity. Therefore, the interplay of personal and contextual factors that heighten risk should be analyzed, and mitigating programmes should be
designed to address risks and as well as target the needs of vulnerable people. Planning and feedback procedures by those dealing with the crisis are very important.

8. I believe that HN actions taken at the earliest opportunity become very important in the sense that they strengthen local capacity utilizing local resources to restore services, education, markets and livelihood opportunities to promote early economic recovery and the ability of people to manage risk after external assistance has ended. Therefore, it is time governments became proactive rather than reactionary to managing effects of crises.

9. The case study we dealt with really brings out all the lessons to be learnt because of both positive and negative aspects under provision of Humanitarian Assistance manifested on the ground.

**RESILIENCE – THE END STATE**

10. I find that USAID looks at Resilience as the End State in the provision of Humanitarian Assistance. I say so because the Assistance is not rendered in perpetuity but will have to be discontinued at one point. I believe that it is most appropriate when the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth is achieved, as this defines Resilience.

**Recommendation:**

1. Humanitarian Assistance should be undertaken with a definitive purpose emphasized to recipient governments or personnel in charge.

2. The host nation government should be made to understand that it is responsible to determine the required capacity for crisis response, as well as to disseminate the intentions of humanitarian responders to the affected population.

3. The host nation government should overcome all forms of exploitation and corruption so that all affected people are afforded access to assistance without discrimination.

**Implications:**

If systems are not put into place to preclude exploitation and corruption, then hostilities and ill feelings by the affected persons may be directed against agencies providing the aid.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based upon Angola, Sierra Leone, and Sudan mission experiences.

- **Posted By:** Alibuzwi, Sitali Dennis Army Officer
- **Email:** alisitden040862@yahoo.com
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Military - Officer
- **Unit:** USAWC - AY 13
2013 - All-Female Formed Police Units

- **Created:** 20 Sep 2013
- **Last Updated:** 25 Sep 2013
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Stability Policing
- **Unit:** PKSOI
- **Focus:** #UNPKO; #police; #Africa

**Observations:**

All-female Formed Police Units (FPUs) serving on UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have effectively improved security in those post-conflict environments. Moreover, they have proven to be an excellent asset for community-level peace building, as well as a major source of inspiration for women and girls.

**Discussion:**

In January 2007, India deployed a contingent of 103 policewomen to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). They provided the core of the first all-female Formed Police Unit (FPU) to ever serve on a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Initially 22 male staff personnel supported the FPU, but after several months, the organization was turned into an all-female FPU. Since then, there have been successive contingents of all-female FPUs in UNMIL, contributed by India.

The original tasks of the all-female FPU consisted of guarding the president’s office, providing security at various public events having high-profile leaders in attendance, carrying out night patrols with members of the Liberian National Police (LNP) in and around the capital (Monrovia), and conducting riot control when needed. With each rotation, the FPU’s roles expanded beyond their mandated tasks to include supporting a wide range of community-focused programs, with particular emphasis on those involving Liberian women and girls. For example, the all-female FPUs conducted community summer camps, in which they taught self-defense, first aid, and classical Indian dance for Liberian girls.

Several researchers have indicated that the time and energy that female peacekeepers expended on interacting and communicating with the community had an amazing influence. It was reported that when the all-female FPUs noticed decreasing attendance in various community programs, they made a concerted effort to approach both men and women, seeking to understand the reasons for their absenteeism or their withdrawal from certain activities. This approach resulted in a detailed understanding of the concerns, needs, and prevalent challenges of the community, which in turn facilitated the improvement of community programs, greater participation by community members, and significant strides in peace building to overcome friction and grievances.

Of note, in the areas where all-female FPUs operated, it was reported that sexual abuse and exploitation of women dropped sharply. Reports also showed an increase in the number of girls remaining in, and completing, primary school in those areas. An increase in female recruitment in the LNP was also ascribed to the all-female FPU, which is said to have inspired women to take on non-traditional roles such as the security profession.
Overall, the presence of the Indian all-female FPU has led to enhanced physical safety and security in Monrovia and surrounding districts. Support from the Government of Liberia was contributory to the all-female FPU’s success, as the Government not only supported the activities of the FPU, but also created awareness of its activities among the local populace. By increasing the FPU’s visibility at public events and drawing attention to its presence in the community, security continued to improve.

In November 2011, Bangladesh deployed an all-female FPU to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). This first all-female FPU from Bangladesh began its work at a crucial point in time for the DRC, needing to establish security in a tense environment plagued by the violence surrounding the presidential and national legislative elections of 2011. The all-female FPU not only performed its tasks successfully, it also proved instrumental in saving many civilian lives during one period of heavy fighting in Kinshasa. Based on the FPU’s success, Bangladesh replaced this unit with another 125-member all-female FPU in February 2013, and Bangladesh has committed to subsequent rotations as well.

The tasks of the all-female FPU have included: crowd control, the protection of the UN staff and its facilities, and escorting UN personnel into various areas deemed insecure. In addition to these security-related tasks, the all-female FPU has also worked to support various programs and events within the communities it has served. For instance, the Commander of the second FPU contingent, Shirin Jahan Akter, arranged to have the FPU participate in the International Women’s Day event held in Kinshasa on 8 March 2013, where it provided a demonstration of martial art skills under the theme "Rise up Women, Awaken Your Power." Such activities by the all-female FPU have had a significant positive impact on Congolese society at large, and its women in particular.

Recommendation:

1. The UN should continue the approach of sending all-female FPUs on select peacekeeping operations. This should be done on a case-by-case basis, depending on the UN’s assessment of the given host nation environment and the willingness of contributing countries to deploy such units. In certain environments, all-female FPUs may be able to serve as key role models for host nation women and girls.

2. The UN and other organizations/coalitions engaged in peacekeeping operations should consider the benefits of having their deployed police/security forces engage in community peace building programs and activities.

Implications:

If the UN does not pursue the option of deploying all-female FPUs on appropriate missions, then an opportunity to provide role models for women and girls of the host nation by way of a cohesive, professional security organization may be lost. Also, the failure to couple "peacekeeping/stability operations" with "peace building activities" may translate to achieving only short-term security gains – without resolving long-standing grievances, maximizing participation/inclusivity, and potentially achieving long-term stability/peace.

Event Description:
Observations:

Bringing about social/societal changes – especially in regard to women's rights – has been a daunting proposition in Afghanistan, where large segments of the population reside in tribal regions and rural villages, heavily influenced by tribal codes/traditions, tribal leaders/councils, Taliban/insurgent threats, and so on. Inroads have been made by Village Stability Operations (VSO), as described by a VSO team member in eastern Afghanistan; however, lasting or meaningful change seems elusive as the VSO presence draws down.

Discussion:

In a certain case in eastern Afghanistan, a Special Operations Forces (SOF) team conducting VSO made notable headway towards improving women's rights within the village; however, once the team pulled out during the drawdown, the situation quickly changed for the worse.

In this particular village, the SOF team had been successful in training several dozen villagers to be "local police.” It was also successful in forming, beyond the security alliance, a friendship (albeit weak) with the village elders. The SOF team often engaged these village elders on women's rights - requesting permission to build a girls' school and to form a women's shura (council). However, these requests were repeatedly denied. After many months, the village elders finally granted permission for construction of a girl's school, but only after certain demands of theirs were met. Then, three months later, in a similar quid pro quo, the village elders also granted permission for the formation of a women's shura.
After the capture or killing of several Taliban commanders in this area by other U.S. forces, the partnership between the SOF team and the village leaders grew to new heights. An improved level of security (as Taliban attacks diminished) allowed for a local bazaar to begin operating again. Village leaders recruited even more "local police," and the SOF team trained them and charged them with patrolling the bazaar. Village leaders then agreed to allow certain USAID project teams to work in the village, such as a water sanitation team, and to allow a U.S. Army Female Engagement Team (FET) to hold a number of classes for the local women. The FET brought members of various NGOs with them, and they set up classes on midwifery, female hygiene, sewing, and handicrafts. Sewn items and handicraft products were then sold in the local bazaar.

These gradual steps that began to improve the education, rights, and livelihoods of girls/women in this village were quite significant advancements. Earlier, the village leaders' attitudes toward such ideas/advancements were made very clear to the SOF team during one of the shuras, as they complained that "Americans are trying to free Afghan women from their husbands throughout the land, and we will oppose this with force if we must." For the village leaders, such issues were solely matters of Pashtun code (i.e., it is the individual man's decision to allow what his wife and daughter may or may not do); the central government and outsiders have no business in such matters.

Regrettably, once the village leaders learned of the SOF team's projected departure (concurrent with the U.S military drawdown), things took a turn for the worse. Certain village leaders believed the village would not be able to maintain its autonomy (from the Taliban) without the security support of the SOF team, and they proceeded to cut backdoor deals with the Taliban. Soon thereafter, several other village leaders who had been opposed to collaborating with the Taliban were abducted from their homes at night. Days before the SOF team's departure date, two women were found hanged in the village center. Two weeks after the SOF team departed, the women's shura ceased to exist, and the girl's school was abandoned. Weeks later, the girls' school was burned down.

In the view of one individual on this SOF team, VSO was implemented too late in the Afghanistan conflict, and then certain SOF teams were withdrawn too early from villages where they had made moderate headway.

**Recommendation:**

1. Issues of gender equality in Afghanistan should be approached with a realistic mindset: Small, pragmatic goals should be set with generous, long-term timelines.

2. Bottom-up approaches should be emphasized in Afghanistan, whereby local and tribal elders are engaged on the issues, and whereby they are encouraged to foster communication with higher levels of government – linking bottom-up approaches with top-down approaches.

**Implications:**

Unless local/village level leaders are simultaneously (and more heavily) engaged through bottom-up approaches, then national-level programs and top-down approaches on issues dealing with women's rights will see little results in many regions of Afghanistan.

**Event Description:**
This lesson is based on the article "A Bottom-Up Approach: The Importance of the Village in Afghan Society," by Eric Wilson, in The WVoice, Vol. 2, No. 1, 12 February 2014. The WVoice is a publication of Women's Voices Now (http://womensvoicesnow.org).

- **Posted By:** Mosinski, David Mr.
- **Email:** david.a.mosinski.civ@mail.mil
- **Phone:** 256-651-3678
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2014 - Access to Energy in Developing Countries**

- **Created:** 04 Jun 2014
- **Last Updated:** 20 Jun 2014
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** PKSOI_Elective
- **Unit:** USAWC Student
- **Focus:** #Africa

**Observations:**

To those that have grown up in developed countries, energy may be thought of purely in terms of access to electricity. For people in developing countries that live at or below the poverty line, access to energy takes many different forms and, depending on the type used, could carry many health risks and deter social and economic growth.

**Discussion:**

When analyzing access to energy in developing countries, there are a number of similarities across the globe. First, almost all people have access to some form of energy. Second, people in urban areas have greater access to electricity than those in rural areas, and only in Africa has this become a significant issue due to higher birthrates in the urban areas while the electricity supply remained stagnant. Third, in households that do not have access to electricity, women suffer more than men, both socially and in higher health risks. Finally, families at or below the poverty line pay more for energy than those with higher per capita incomes.

Those living in developed countries tend to think of energy primarily as electricity. For those living in the rural areas of certain developing countries, however, the three-stone fire, burning dung or crop residue to cook food, is considered energy. Although this form of energy is relatively cheap, it is paid for by those in poverty through time and labor. Excessive amounts of time are expended daily to gather resources for this energy. Additionally, these rural areas typically maintain very conservative gender-type roles within the household, whereby the women gather the fuel and conduct the food preparation. Where electricity is not available, the women may have to conduct
threshing and grinding by hand. In these environments, the amount of time required to gather fuel and prepare food often prevents women and girls from attending school, bound in their traditional roles/duties within the household.

For those at the poverty line in urban areas of developing countries who must buy their energy, the cost is disproportionately high. The lack of disposable income held by these families means they can’t buy in bulk, and buying less costs more. Additionally, the cheaper the fuel, the less efficient it is during use. It is estimated that 80% of the energy expenditures by these families is dedicated to cooking fuel, while 20% goes to lighting.

Regardless whether the family lives in a rural or urban area, many at the poverty line suffer from respiratory diseases due to inefficient stoves, poor ventilation, and use of fuels that require open pit burning – all of which combine to increase the chance of premature death through respiratory disease. Over the next 30 years in Africa, deaths due to HIV and Malaria are expected to decrease, while deaths due to respiratory disease are expected to increase.

**Recommendation:**

First, the cycle of poverty placed on women must be alleviated. Access to electricity will allow for the education of women, which will result in their ability to make informed parenthood choices. Development efforts should focus on the recruitment of private organizations to donate mini-grid access to remote villages and on using renewable energy sources, clean cooking stoves, and improved ventilation systems. The per capita electricity needs are much lower in remote areas, and renewable energy sources are generally sufficient.

Second, in areas closer to major population centers, encourage public and private investment in electricity access and the use of hybrid grids using many forms of electricity. This will provide greater incentive for the public utility companies to invest in the needed infrastructure, but with fewer tariffs passed on to the consumer to pay for the infrastructure. The less costly infrastructure is possible because the grid will not have to be extended over large distances from major population centers, but will instead take advantage of a series of clustered hybrid grids.

**Implications:**

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on a group presentation during U.S. Army War College course PS 2221 - Emerging Global Challenges and Development Trends.

- **Posted By:** Cardoni, Christopher Student
- **Email:** christopher.j.cardoni.mil@mail.mil
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Military - Officer
- **Unit:** USAWC AY14
UNCLASSIFIED

2016 - Integrating Refugees with Differing Norms of Gender & Sexuality

- **Created:** 26 Sep 2016
- **Last Updated:** 28 Sep 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Other
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #GP; #IDPs; #Europe

Observations:

As 100,000s of people flee to Europe during the European refugee crisis, European nations face a huge challenge in integrating these refugees, many of whom have differing cultural norms of gender and sexuality. Addressing host nation concerns is essential for sustainable integration, yet public tensions about gender issues have increased due to a series of sexual assaults in Norway (2013) and Germany (January 2016), some of which were perpetrated by asylum-seekers. In response, Norway and other European countries have begun hosting discussion classes to educate refugees and migrants on European social norms in the hopes of preventing various forms of violence and helping refugees to avoid misunderstandings as they navigate their new host cultures.

Discussion:

By the end of 2015, 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide due to conflict, persecution, human rights violations, and violence - of whom 40.8 million were internally displaced persons (IDPs), 21.3 million refugees, and 3.2 million asylum-seekers (according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)). The majority (54%) of refugees worldwide come from three main countries: Somalia (1.1 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), and Syria (4.9 million), all three (Somalia, Afghanistan, and Syria) affected by years of continuous fighting involving multiple internal/external parties and stabilization forces. By the end of 2015, more than half of all refugees were residing in Europe or sub-Saharan Africa. The majority (84%) of arrivals in Europe are from the world’s 10 top refugee-producing countries, including Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria, Somalia, Morocco, and Sudan. Other refugees have fled to Europe from regions in Africa where conflict has continued for years in spite of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations, such as the Central African Republic (Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA)), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mission de l’ONU pour la Stabilisation en RD Congo (MONUSCO)), and South Sudan (UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)).

While refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing such conflicts have distinct needs as they seek refuge, welcoming communities in host nations also have needs and concerns that must be addressed for sustainable refugee resettlement and integration. Studies have shown that the risk of refugees radicalizing or turning to violent extremism lessens if they are integrated into welcoming communities (see SOLLIMS Lesson #2481 – "Regional Constraints & Resettlement for the Syrian Refugee Crisis"). Yet, it is also important to address the concerns of the receiving communities so as not to produce further instability. A 2015 RAND study affirms that “the risk [of radicalization] can be mitigated if the main stakeholders adopt comprehensive policies that extend beyond
immediate life-saving needs and address such issues as the refugees' impact on the countries that host them,” (p. 1).

Europe is deeply split politically about whether or not to open borders for refugees. One of the most contentious cultural issues for refugee integration in Europe is gender norms about how men and women relate with each other. Some – not all – of the refugees come from countries with religious or cultural norms that are more conservative in nature than those in contemporary Europe where gender equality is prized. Refugees from these societies may be accustomed to a higher degree of segregation between men and women and to codes/norms in which women do not show flesh nor public affection and typically wear some form of covering. For these refugees, interactions between men and women in open European society may be a shock. Some may misunderstand social cues and assume that smiling or drinking alcohol with someone constitutes an expression of further interest. They may also have fundamentally different beliefs and values about what it means to be a man or a woman, in direct contradiction to European gender values. It is very important to note that this does not apply to all refugees – but that an element of the European refugee crisis has been the difference in cultural norms and values, especially concerning gender and sexuality.

This tension in values and norms surrounding gender is further complicated by the demographics of refugees and asylum-seekers in Europe. Increasingly, the majority of those seeking refuge in Europe are men, since so many men have fled Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan to avoid participating in fighting groups. For the year 2015, over 66% of adults registered for asylum through Greece and Italy were male, according to the International Organization of Migration (IOM). Furthermore, the IOM estimates a shocking 90% of unaccompanied minors traveling to Europe to be male. This high percentage of young men has begun to affect a gender imbalance in certain age groups in European countries such as Sweden, in which Politico Magazine suggests that by the end of 2015, there were 123 16-17 year old boys for every 100 girls. These statistics are causing some to worry as various studies have indicated a correlation between an imbalance in a populations' sex ratio and higher rates of crime and sexual harassment.

A series of sexual assaults on New Year's Eve 2016 – primarily in Cologne, but also in other major German cities such as Hamburg – exacerbated significant public concern in Europe on this issue. Estimates indicated that over 1,200 women were separated and surrounded by groups of men (as many as 2,000 perpetrators) who harassed them, performing theft and sexual assault. Reports have differed concerning how many of the perpetrators were refugees, although many were initially described as of 'North African or Arab descent' and a public prosecutor claimed that the majority of suspects fell into the general category of refugees "[with] various legal statuses, including illegal entry, asylum-seekers and asylum applicants [which] covers the overwhelming majority of suspects," (Huffington Post). Police have been accused of hiding the exact numbers of suspected refugees due to political concerns of increasing anti-immigration sentiment, since the Angela Merkel government had opened Germany's border to receive 441,900 claims for asylum in 2015.

Only two months before this series of sexual assaults, the German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation had released a November 2015 report with findings from January – September 2015 that the crime rate for refugees was the same as that for the native German population. "The study concluded that the majority of crimes by refugees (67 percent) consisted of theft, robbery and fraud. Sex crimes made for less than 1 percent of all crimes committed by refugees, while homicide
registered the smallest fraction at 0.1 percent,” (Deutsche Welle). However, another 2015 study concerning immigration in western Europe and corresponding crime rates found that even if the crime rate had not increased due to immigration flows, the fear of crime had increased and spread with anti-immigrant sentiment. This fear has exponentially increased following the Cologne sex attacks; the title of an article written following the rapes captures the extent of public concern about this issue: “Europe’s Rape Epidemic: Western Women Will Be Sacrificed At the Altar of Mass Migration.”

In response, Norway, followed by other European countries, has begun hosting coaching classes for refugees about social codes, gender/sexual norms, and host nation laws in the hopes of both preventing sexual violence and assisting refugees with navigating new host nation cultures. Norway originally started hosting these courses following a series of rapes occurring between 2009-2011 in the city of Stavanger, primarily committed by foreign immigrants (3/20 by native Norwegians). In 2013, the Norwegian immigration department mandated nationwide offering of programs for refugees on sexual and other violence. The nonprofit Alternative to Violence and the private company "Hero Norge" were both hired to train refugee center workers and run asylum center discussions. Other European nations have followed suit. Denmark is considering incorporating sex education into mandatory language classes for refugees; Germany is experimenting with similar classes at shelters for teenage migrants; and in January 2016, Belgium announced plans to introduce compulsory “respect for women” classes for non-European migrants and refugees.

Classes hosted at Norwegian reception centers for refugees are discussion-based and use role-playing scenarios in order to help those seeking asylum to avoid mistakes in their discovery of Norwegian culture. These courses consist of voluntary weekly group discussions about rape and other violence. They do not focus on religion per se, but on educating new arrivals on the laws of Norway that must be obeyed regardless of religion. For example, the course manual instructs in the rule that forcing someone to have sex is not permitted in Norway regardless of whether you are married to that person. It also addresses perceptions of honor and how violence understood to be honorable in some cultures is illegal in Norway. These classes provide space for refugees to open up about their own views about relations between men and women. The aim is to assist refugees in understanding different cultural signals. Typical interactions between native Norwegian men and women such as being friends, drinking, smiling, and flirting are explained so that refugees from different cultures will learn not to assume that these behaviors automatically mean an expression of further sexual interest.

This type of coaching program has been controversial because of what message it might send as labeling migrants, to what degree it might play into anti-immigration politics as such, and if it is in fact racist or discriminatory by offering the courses specifically for non-European migrants. In light of these concerns, some courses have studiously avoided stereotyping migrants as criminals; the Hero Norge teaching material, for example, instead uses fictional scenarios with fictional characters; the native Norwegian in this curriculum is portrayed as a sexual predator with the immigrant as an honest man, in order to underline that sexual violence is a problem in all cultures, and that the behavior is the problem, no matter the identity of the perpetrator.

So far, attendees of these courses have affirmed their usefulness. One Muslim asylum-seeker from Eritrea who was interviewed in the New York Times about his voluntary participation expressed how he was initially shocked and confused by European society. He was not accustomed to the
open consumption of alcohol, public displays of affection, or less conservative apparel worn by women, who, in his home context, would be considered prostitutes. As such, this asylum-seeker decided to attend a weekly discussion class in Stavanger. Now, he is less confused about the social signals in his new environment and is less likely to misread them. Other men interviewed by the BBC for a June 2016 article did not feel patronized or stigmatized by the classes but instead found them helpful for forming relationships in their new culture.

The purpose of these courses has not been to make false generalizations about refugees, label refugees as ‘rapists,’ or fuel anti-immigrant sentiment. The purpose instead has been to address the very real cultural differences in social norms between many refugees and the European societies where they have sought asylum/refuge. By promoting discussions about the laws and social codes of the host country, these courses attempt to protect both host nation constituents and refugees/asylum-seekers from misunderstandings which could lead to potentially dangerous situations.

“[I]ntegration policies that require people to shed fundamental aspects of their identity are unlikely to succeed. Sustainable integration should aim at giving migrants a real stake in their new home, encouraging participation rather than exclusion, while requiring full adherence to laws and respect for the rights of others.” (Human Rights Watch, p. 3).

Recommendation:

1. Host nations (in Europe, but applicable elsewhere) should continue to provide educational coaching opportunities and discussion classes for refugees coming from differing cultural backgrounds in order to assist them in navigating their new host nation culture, especially in terms of gender relations and host nation laws. Provide these opportunities not only for migrant/refugee men but also for migrant/refugee women.

2. Assure that these courses are not offered based on racist or discriminatory policies. Do not generalize all refugees into one category or assume that just because some may have committed crimes that therefore all have. Courses should convey that all crimes of sexual assault, whether perpetrated by native host nationals or by migrants and refugees, should be brought to justice under the host nation’s legal system.

3. It is important for refugee advocates not to ignore or downplay the tensions that do arise from time to time when refugees come from cultures with differing norms and values, especially concerning gender and sexuality. Space must be opened for conversation about real challenges arising in the process, so that host nation communities feel that their concerns and needs are being addressed during the refugee integration process. For example, reports written following the Cologne rapes reveal that some European women felt that their safety was the price for increased immigration. This is a concern that needs to be addressed during the process of refugee integration.

Implications:

If discussion courses are hosted for refugees to identify and speak about their own views of gender and learn about those in their new host community, then there may be increased understanding. If there is increased understanding about European norms concerning gender relations, then gender relations involving refugees may improve and host nation constituents (especially women) may feel safer. If host nation concerns are addressed during refugee integration, integration will be more
sustainable and less likely to breed instability in the host nation. Educational classes about gender and culture may enable refugees not to misread gender signals so that they may be less likely to break laws of the host nation. Hopefully, this will work towards preventing sexual violence and keeping host communities safe.

**Event Description:**

This lesson was based on information found in the following sources:


“Refugees to be given lessons in 'Western sexual norms’ in Norway,” by: Jake Alden-Falconer, Independent, (9 January 2016); Found at: [http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/norway-refugees-given-classes-on-sexual-norms-a6803666.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/norway-refugees-given-classes-on-sexual-norms-a6803666.html)

“Belgium to launch ‘respect for women’ classes for refugees and migrants,” by: Jake Alden-Falconer, Independent, (8 January 2016); Found at: [http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/belgium-refugees-will-be-taught-to-respect-women-a6802221.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/belgium-refugees-will-be-taught-to-respect-women-a6802221.html)


For information on refugee statistics, see:

For crime rate and radicalization statistics, see:


[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE166/RAND_PE166.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE166/RAND_PE166.pdf)

For information on the Cologne attacks, see:
UNCLASSIFIED


http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2016/02/15/cologne-sex-attacks-refugees-prosecutor_n_9235358.html

- Posted By: Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- Email: katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- Phone:
- Rank: Civilian
- Unit: PKSOI

2016 - MINUSTAH Specialized Police Team Builds Capacity for Police Response to Sexual/Gender Based Violence

- Created: 14 Sep 2016
- Last Updated: 15 Sep 2016
- Status: Active
- Event: Other
- Unit: PKSOI Staff - PKM
- Focus: #SGBV; #UNPKO; #Caribbean; #police

Observations:

In 2010, a Norwegian Specialized Police Team (SPT) deployed with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in order to build the Haitian National Police (HNP)'s capacity to conduct investigations into Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). The SPT approach proved more effective than the UN's traditional approach utilizing individual police officers because the SPT police experts worked closely with Host Nation (HN) police to develop and implement a specific project over a 3-5 year framework. However, the SPT also faced challenges due to UN bureaucratic procedures and lack of collaboration across various elements of the mission.

Discussion:

MINUSTAH was established in Haiti in 2004 with a mandate focusing on rebuilding rule of law through professionalizing the Haitian National Police (HNP) as well as involvement with anti-gang efforts in the shantytown Cité-Soleil in Port-au-Prince. Its mandate has changed some over time, in response to political and socio-economic circumstances. While Haiti has not emerged directly from a specific armed conflict, the past decades have seen political instability and sporadic violence connected with dictators rising and falling and a military coup. This instability has been exacerbated by the substantial 2010 earthquake which caused as many as 220,000 deaths and at least 1.5 million displaced people, not to mention a cholera epidemic stemming from faulty sanitation at MINUSTAH bases, affecting over 770,000 people.
Following the 2010 earthquake, displaced Haitians lived in makeshift shelters and crowded encampments with limited sanitation facilities. Extremely high rates of sexual violence were reported in these Internally Displaced Person (IDP) settlements; one study documented 14% of displaced respondents (or their household members) having experienced sexual violence and/or rape since the earthquake. In Cité-Soleil, state police did not have much of a presence, and rape was used routinely by gangs for area control. Furthermore, the police often dismissed cases or failed to act in response to victims who did report sexual assault, which perpetuated de facto impunity for many SGBV perpetrators. Due to a lack of trust in the Haitian police and justice departments as well as community stigmatization and fear of reprisals, most victims of sexual assault or domestic violence have thus not reported to the Haitian police.

Due to the exorbitant rates of SGBV in Haitian IDP camps, Norway decided to spearhead an effort to deploy police peacekeepers focused specifically on this task. There are two main options for how police typically deploy in UN missions: 1) Individual Police Officers (IPOs), or 2) Formed Police Units (FPUs). IPOs are deployed on an individual basis, seconded as police or law enforcement personnel to perform specific policing tasks. FPUs, on the other hand, are cohesive mobile police units composed of 120 armed and self-sustaining police officers tasked with supporting higher-risk UN operations, ensuring the safety of UN personnel/facilities, and managing public order. More recently emerging is an alternative option for UN police - the Specialized Police Team (SPT) concept. SPTs are a group of experts with a particular specialization seconded to serve with the UN as a team working on a specific policing project.

After conducting a fact-finding mission and approving the concept through the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)’s Police Division and through MINUSTAH, Norway decided to form a Specialized Police Team to tackle the issue of police response to sexual and gender-based violence. This SPT was composed of five police officers. The SPT also made an effort to include French-speaking UN Police (UNPOL) officers on the team (since few Norwegian police spoke French). As such, they formed a partnership with Canada, because in addition to possessing French language skills, the Canadians had a similar policing culture to Norway and so approached project considerations in a like-minded way.

The Norwegian SPT arrived in Haiti in October 2010. When the SPT deployed, however, the mission was not prepared to handle it. MINUSTAH initially sought to assign the officers to individual posts, as was typically the case for IPO assignments, even though the SPT was designed to work together as a team. As such, it took the SPT time to establish its place within the UNPOL component of the MINUSTAH mission, as its members were not initially allocated an office, equipment, or vehicles. Once the SPT did become established, the mission requested a specific project proposal from the team. The SPT proceeded to perform a comprehensive assessment on SGBV in the Haitian police and judiciary systems in order to form the requested proposal. However, due in part to poor communication between the police and civilian components of the mission, similar assessments had already been performed, which the SPT members did not find out about until after completing their own assessment. Despite these delays and redundancies, the SPT completed a viable project proposal.

The first phase of the SPT proposal (“SGBV I”) implemented from 2012-2015 included two strategic objectives: 1) professionalize the HNP, and 2) strengthen HNP operational capacities. In order to contribute to professionalizing the HNP, basic investigation courses on SGBV were organized and facilitated in Haiti’s ten regional departments. SGBV requires sensitivity in terms of how victims
and witnesses are interviewed and evidence is collected, so special training is required in order to investigate SGBV cases in a trauma-sensitive manner. In close consultation with local Haitian police, a one-week course was designed, utilizing local instructors from the Haitian Police School, with the intent not only to train technical skills but to create a mind-set change in attitudes of officers towards sexual violence. In prior years, the HNP had often been trained by various foreign police with competing policing models which were driven by foreign interests instead of local needs. A priority of the Norwegian SPT was to ensure that any programs designed would connect to actual needs on the ground in a sustainable way, so the SPT consulted closely with local HNP and HNP senior management, valuing local knowledge and buy-in for the project.

Over the first four years of SGBV I, the SPT trained 35 HNP trainers, who in turn trained a total of 1191 Haitian police personnel (9% of the entire HNP). The SGBV course that they designed was also incorporated into basic training at the Haitian Police School; since 2014, all Haitian police recruits have received this one week of SGBV training during their 7-9 months of basic training. Phase one also included a capacity-building initiative for infrastructure development. Via this initiative, fifteen offices for SGBV were built or renovated in order to increase police reception facilities for SGBV victims to enhance privacy and reduce stigma. After the success of phase one (“SGBV I”), a second phase (“SGBV II”) was developed for the following years 2015-2017. SGBV II focused specifically on training specialized investigators at the Central Directorate of Judicial Police, who will be responsible for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and focusing on investigating more serious cases.

While the Norwegian SPT has thus been met with many successes, it has also been met with many challenges. One major hurdle was the initial lack of support by the mission for this new concept. Though the team had independent funds, transferring its funds became a major problem as there were many financial bureaucratic procedures which required the SPT to acquire special authorization to carry out its activities, even though the mandate had already been agreed between the DPKO and the Norwegian government. This caused several month delays on project disbursements, which led to the cancellation of one training, overdue payments, and issues with other planned events. SPT team members did not understand the financial procedures and so spent a great deal of their time trying to sort out the UN system instead of focusing on their specialized SGBV police capacity-building. Despite these bureaucratic obstacles with procurement, independent funding of the project still proved critical to its success, since it guaranteed that financial resources would be available for the implementation of the project – which totaled $1.2 million by December 2015.

**Recommendation:**

1. **Continue to utilize the SPT concept in future UN missions to partner with local HN police forces for capacity-building.** "With its defined project, independent budget, and specially selected team of personnel, an SPT is likely to be more successful in achieving its objectives than many independently deployed IPOs," (NUPI, p. 31). This model, using 3-5 year project cycles, provides greater coherence and continuity of assistance. Small teams also lead to a greater sense of accountability and solidarity across the contingent. In addition, "Specialized teams present an opportunity for Western/Northern PCCs to re-engage with peacekeeping, as a modality that arguably represents more effective use of their personnel and resources," (NUPI, p. 33).
2. Form SPTs from team members with a common police culture, as this SPT did by including Canadians and Norwegians in order to advance a coherent policing message to the HN counterparts. “This stands in contrast to the prevailing UN approach to capacity-building in which host-state police are subject to a plethora of varying national approaches from the succession of individual police officers tasked with capacity-development,” (NUPI, p. 30). Including police officers with context-specific skills, such as the Canadian police’s fluency in French, is also beneficial in terms of connecting with counterparts in the HN.

3. Ensure that SPTs are “properly informed about the roles and work of other relevant components and divisions in [each UN mission] (such as justice, human rights, rule of law, gender) that may overlap or intersect with their project” (NUPI, p. 33). It is also important to include an administrative focal point within the Specialized Police Team to assist with navigating UN bureaucratic procedures, so that the police personnel can focus on their specialized expertise instead of getting lost in administrative processes. Equip SPTs with independent project funding for planning and procurement so that they are not in competition with other mission elements for resources.

4. Continue to utilize local ownership approaches in SPTs by consulting closely with HN police departments, not delivering “widely-used approaches to capacity-building in which external actors tend to deliver externally conceived projects to host populations,” (NUPI, p. 30). Strengthen Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) capacities within UN policing projects, such as the SGBV SPT, so as to determine whether the training courses have in fact changed policing mindsets and improved SGBV investigative practices in the local HN.

Implications:

If SPT teams are not formed from member states with similar police cultures, then their policing message to the HN may be incoherent, which may affect the degree to which any program can be effectively implemented. If SPT team members are able to communicate in the local language, then they will be more effective in connecting with their HN counterparts to design and implement programs. If personnel specializing in the UN’s bureaucratic administrative process are not included in SPTs, then SPT team members with policing expertise will not be able to focus on their specializations but will instead spend much of their time trying to figure out how to make requests through the UN systems. If SPTs are not funded independently, then they will be in competition with other mission/police components for scarce project funding. If SPTs are not properly informed about the other parts of the mission, then they may do redundant work and waste precious time and resources. If SPTs do not consult directly with local HN police departments in program design, there will be less local ownership and the programs may be less effective in reaching the host nation populace.

Event Description:

This lesson is based primarily on this article:


- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
Observations:

Studies have shown that women have higher mortality rates than men during natural disasters, due primarily to vulnerabilities arising from gender inequalities. Yet despite their increased vulnerability and also their capacity to address disasters, women are often excluded from both short-term humanitarian assistance / disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts as well as disaster risk reduction (DRR) prevention measures. The UN’s 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and subsequent Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 attempt to mainstream gender considerations into DRR and to include women in leadership, reversing this trend so that disaster efforts will be more likely to successfully meet everyone’s needs.

Discussion:

During natural disasters, mortality rates for women are typically much higher than for men, as shown through several studies. This was primarily brought to attention during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami which struck 14 countries, including Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India, with approximately 230,000 fatalities. Oxfam found in a 2005 study that in the worst affected villages in Aceh, Indonesia, 80% of victims were female, and approximately three times as many women were killed as men in Cuddalore, India. Other disasters have produced similar results. Victims of the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh that killed 140,000 were 90% girls and women. Furthermore, one study of life expectancy within natural disasters from 141 countries between 1981 and 2002 showed that natural disasters lower the life expectancy of women much more so than that of men. Even more recently, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck East Japan produced 54% female fatalities in the country’s three most affected prefectures.

The disproportionate vulnerability of women to disasters is exacerbated by gender inequalities in access to resources/opportunities. If only men have access to early warning and evacuation information, for example, women experience more adverse effects from natural disasters. During
the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone, women were ill-informed about the coming hazard and were not allowed to make decisions to evacuate, resulting in an extremely high percentage of female fatalities. In Sri Lanka, more women than men were killed from the Indian Ocean tsunami because they lacked skills of tree climbing and swimming that were needed to survive the tsunami - skills which had only been taught to men. In Indonesia, the tsunami hit women the hardest because the men were either out fishing at sea in the coastal areas or working in the fields in the agricultural areas, while women were home with children. A woman’s socioeconomic status greatly affects the gender gap in mortality rates - the higher her status, the smaller the gap. Thus, it is not primarily the biological/physical capabilities of women per se that put them at a disadvantage – it is “inequalities in access to resources, capabilities, and opportunities [that] systematically disadvantage certain groups of people, rendering the more vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters,” (Neumayer, p. 2).

Even if a woman survives a disaster, she faces many challenges if aid is not incorporated in a gender-sensitive way. In immediate response efforts, it is important to understand different needs of men, women, boys, and girls, arising in part from vulnerabilities due to inequality and from women’s exclusion from decision-making in these arenas. Immediate concerns for surviving women included obtaining equal access to emergency assistance. In Sri Lanka, ration cards were registered under the husband’s name, which caused difficulties for some women to obtain access to benefits. Poor design of temporary shelter areas and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp latrines also often pose security threats to women. Following the Indian Ocean tsunami, incidents of sexual assault were reported in toilet areas which lacked adequate lighting, and women in Aceh faced increased risk of sexual violence. Furthermore, designated facilities for washing sanitary cloths during menstruation are not always provided in a camp environment. Yet, “Cultural taboos exist against washing these cloths in public and women need to be comfortable while caring for their basic needs in the camp environment,” (Oxfam (2005), p. 10). Gender considerations are important across all contexts, yet often overlooked, even following the 2011 Great East Japan earthquake/tsunami. According to the Aid & International Development Forum, “In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami that hit Sendai in 2011, evacuation centres did not respond to women’s needs as they were mostly run by men; effectively, women had no place to change or breastfeed, had no separate bathrooms and lacked sanitary products.”

As such, it is important to incorporate gender considerations for both response operations (HA/DR) and for prevention efforts – known as disaster risk reduction (DRR) – and to work directly alongside women. Often, women and women’s groups are involved in both disaster response and prevention, but their work is not acknowledged or included in formal decision-making processes, policies, or programs. “This gap is evident around the world. According to a 2009 Huairou Commission survey, women’s civil society organizations active in DRR in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa region felt excluded from national emergency preparedness and other disaster risk reduction programs,” (“Disaster Risk Management,” p. 11). Efforts these women make to participate in disaster relief or risk reduction are often complicated by long-term social implications of high female disaster fatality rates. A gender imbalance post-disaster may greatly multiply surviving women’s domestic workloads if surviving men do not take on household and childcare responsibilities. Surviving men may also place more restrictions on surviving women’s mobility and visibility. Strains from natural disasters also at times exacerbate domestic violence and abuse of vulnerable populations, especially women and girls.
Several frameworks were created in response to these disasters and their gender implications. The landmark Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) was formed after the Indian Ocean disaster, focusing on DDR for the decade 2005-2015. It emphasized bringing “gender perspective and cultural diversity” to the forefront by integrating it into disaster risk management policies and decisions, including risk assessment, early warning, information, and education. However, in the years following the HFA, progress on gender integration in planning has been quite slow – with only 20% of countries by 2009 relying substantially on gender integration as a progress driver (30% by 2013). According to the April 2014 paper “Towards the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (HFA2),” one problem with the approach of the HFA was that it focused on vulnerability reduction as opposed to capacity development; this risks limiting the capabilities of all societal stakeholders for reducing risks instead of “enhancing the strengths of the community reserves,” (p. 6).

An attempt to improve upon this framework was made in 2015. Four years following the 2011 Japan earthquake/tsunami, the Third UN Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai in March 2015, exploring the role of women in the post-2015 agenda on DRR. The Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 was formed, in part identifying gaps and improvements in engendering and mainstreaming gender into DRR. Some improvements have been made since this framework was instigated. In 2011 Sendai, women composed only 10% of DRR roles in the city. Since the disaster, Japan has incorporated more women as representatives in prefectural disaster management councils to ensure that they play a key role. Thanks to the Sendai Framework, other nations are also asking the question – What is the role of women in reducing disaster risk, and how can they be more fully included in the future?

“Adopting a gender-sensitive approach to disaster risk management is not only an issue of basic human rights but also effective on the practical level. Simply put, policies that ensure that women as well as men are fully involved in planning DRR strategies and are full participants in recovery efforts are more likely to succeed. Disaster response strategies that protect and assist women as well as men are better for the community as a whole. A gender-sensitive approach is also a smart policy in that it enables the resources of all members of an affected community to be fully utilized,” (“Disaster Risk Management,” p. 17).

Recommendation:

1. **Gender Analysis:** “Humanitarian actors should carry out a rigorous and context-specific gender analysis of the populations they set out to support. [...] Gender-sensitive baseline information – both qualitative and quantitative – should be collected at household and community level. Sex- and age- disaggregated data, as well as data on other social determinants of vulnerability, should be collected and analyzed routinely, in order to target assistance towards those most at risk,” (Oxfam (Nov 2013), p. 3). It is important as such that gender considerations and a gender assessment be incorporated into all HA/DR doctrine, handbooks, and guides.

2. **Response:** Humanitarian actors as part of Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) must be mindful of vulnerabilities in disaster rescue and how gender and cultural norms may impact locations of where men, women, boys, and girls may be trapped during disasters. Temporary shelters should be designed in consultation with local women in order to take care of women’s specific needs. Women should be in leadership positions during crises to ensure that women’s needs are addressed, and women’s and women’s organizations’ official and unofficial disaster relief
efforts should be acknowledged. Long-term response efforts to humanitarian disasters must be designed to deal with the social impacts if fewer women survive.

4. **Prevention:** Implement the Sendai 2015-2030 framework to increase gender mainstreaming in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) efforts. Involving women and women's organizations in HA/DR efforts is also paramount, making sure that women are not just included as tokens but as partners. Gender-sensitive prevention efforts aimed at decreasing the high rate of female mortality during disasters should include teaching women skills that may save their lives during disasters (e.g., tree climbing and swimming) and familiarizing them with early warning systems. Furthermore, development work targeting gender inequalities may decrease the high rate of female mortality, since the gender gap is most exacerbated by women's socioeconomic status.

*Note:* See also the recommendations within this UN document for increasing gender sensitivity in DRR: “20-Point Checklist on Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Sensitive,” UNISDR, (no date); attached.

**Implications:**

If humanitarian actors do not perform a gender analysis before beginning operations, they may miss important gender disaggregated data concerning which populations are most at risk and may subsequently not provide aid to those most vulnerable. If women are not consulted and included in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief efforts, rescue attempts, and temporary shelter design, then their needs may not be met and they may be more vulnerable to sexual violence. “If humanitarian interventions are not planned with gender dynamics in mind, the needs of those most under threat may not be adequately met, and an opportunity to support positive change will be lost. That is why gender equality is central to humanitarian action,” (Oxfam (2013), p. 1). “As long as women are excluded from effective engagement at such levels, gender inequities will be persistent, and countries will not recover as quickly from both the major and chronic economic shocks that disasters and climate change impacts engender,” ("Disaster Risk Management," p. 13). If women are consulted and included in leadership for disaster efforts, however, disaster relief will more holistically address the needs of the entire community and ensure access of benefits to women.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on information from the following sources:

“The tsunami’s impact on women,” Oxfam Briefing Note, (March 2005); attached.


For more information on the Great East Japan Earthquake & Tsunami of 2011:


“Japan quake took toll on women and elderly,” by Brigitte Leoni, UNISDR, (12 March 2012). Found at: https://www.unisdr.org/archive/25598

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

2016 - Gender-Sensitive DDR Processes: Integrating Female Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone

- **Created:** 11 Aug 2016
- **Last Updated:** 24 Aug 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Other
- **Unit:** PKSOI
- **Focus:** #DDR; #Africa #FemaleCombatants; #GP

**Observations:**

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) processes have narrowly defined women's roles in armed conflict by focusing on women primarily as victims, showing reluctance to identify them as soldiers. Because of this lack of gender sensitization in programming, female ex-
combatants, such as those from Sierra Leone’s 11-year civil war (1991-2002), have largely avoided participating in DDR processes.

**Discussion:**

The DDR process for ex-combatants in Sierra Leone has been harkened internationally as a model for success. It was implemented by the UN peacekeeping mission United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and its partners following the signing of the Lome Peace Accord in 1999. “Under the programme, UNAMSIL disarmed combatants from the main warring factions, the RUF and the Civil Defence Forces, a government militia, as well as elements of the former Sierra Leone Army and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council,” (UNAMSIL, p. 1). By the completion of the DDR process in February 2004, over 75,000 adult soldiers and more than 6,800 child soldiers had participated in the process. “Demobilized combatants got small cash stipends while undergoing six-month training after which they were then sent back into civilian life with start-up tool kits to help them find work,” (UNAMSIL, p. 1). Almost 55,000 ex-combatants received reintegration benefits such as skills training programs, formal education, and/or tool kits, and over 42,000 weapons were collected and destroyed.

While Sierra Leone’s DDR process was recognized internationally as a success, the vast majority of both adult and child beneficiaries were male. The percentages of women/girls who participated in the DDR process were very low compared with the number who actually participated in the war - only 5,000 out of the 75,000 adults in DDR were women, and only 8% of the participating child soldiers were girls. While the exact number of females involved in the fighting in Sierra Leone remains unknown, estimates range from 10-50% of the armed factions. Some female ex-combatants in Sierra Leone joined armed factions voluntarily and many achieved high military ranks, leading lethal attacks, fighting, and killing, in addition to often acting as sex slaves. Some also had children from the rebels. According to interviews with over fifty former female soldiers in the post-war context, over 75% of those interviewed described their roles as ‘active combat duty.’ “From these interviews it becomes clear that women and girls participated in all facets of war including active combat, commanding, and military training,” in addition to various supporting roles, (MacKenzie, p. 249).

Despite this lived reality, few if any programs were directed towards female ex-combatants as soldiers. The DDR program in Sierra Leone used several labels to refer to ‘girls and women associated with the fighting forces,’ including ‘camp followers,’ ‘sex slaves,’ ‘bush wives,’ and ‘abductees.’ In this way, even if these women had actually taken an active part in the violence or fighting, girls/women in this context on the whole were classified as victims. Many of these women were in fact victims on one level. Sexual violence was rampant, used systematically as a currency during the war and experienced by an estimated 70%-90% of the women. However, focusing on only one aspect of their experience isolated many female ex-combatants from their lived reality of also participating in the violence. Furthermore, women in supporting roles were not considered to be ‘real soldiers,’ even though male ex-combatants in similar supporting capacity were treated as soldiers by the DDR programs. In this way, the DDR program was based on gendered stereotypes of how men and women experience war, which “led to a disarmament process that did not address the ‘actual lived experiences’ of girls and women,” (MacKenzie, p. 246).

There were several barriers that limited female participation in DDR due to how the process was structured. One such barrier to the participation of female ex-combatants in the Sierra Leone DDR
process was the weapons policy. Initially, each combatant was required to turn in a gun during the “Disarmament” phase in order to be eligible for the DDR program. However, "both males and females who performed support roles during the conflict (including domestic tasks, acting as spies or messengers, and looters) may or may not have ever possessed a gun." (MacKenzie, p. 251). Many female ex-combatants did not have a gun or no longer had a gun, or had used an alternative type of weapon, such as a machete. A NOREF report maintains that “[...] women often shared guns when engaged in fighting. The fact that sometimes four or five women shared one gun became a challenge during the DDR process, when the handover of an individual gun was required for an individual to be considered eligible to participate in DDR programmes,” (p. 2). Over eleven years of war, items were lost, stolen, and/or transferred; furthermore, some commanders deliberately took weapons from women/girls to preclude their eligibility in DDR.

Another obstacle preventing female ex-combatants from participating in the DDR process was the way in which the children’s and adults’ DDR processes were separated. The distinction and eligibility for each respective program was based on international definitions of the age limits for children and youth. However, these international standards did not make sense in the local context. Local traditions differentiated children from adults based on the completion of certain traditional ceremonies, not on age. As such, even if a young girl had been with the rebel forces and had already born a child of her own, she would not be considered an adult in the local community if she had not completed the milestone rituals. If she was young enough, she could still qualify for the children’s DDR process - however, she might not consider herself to be a child because of having had her own child. In this situation, attending a DDR process might be shameful for her or her family. This distinction between adult’s and children’s DDR caused many such female ex-combatants to avoid the process altogether.

The "Reintegration" stage of the DDR process also posed challenges for female ex-combatants. "Women were given few choices in their reintegration process: silence or stigma, limited training or nothing, isolation or marriage, motherhood, and returning to their families,” (MacKenzie, p. 258). Traditionally, reintegration for women has been treated as a sensitization process to their marriageability if they had been raped or had children out of wedlock. This is an important consideration, especially given the high degree of sexual violence many women experienced and their subsequent unique needs. However, these are not the only factors to consider. It was assumed that reintegration for women would be a ‘social’ process that would happen ‘naturally.’ Yet, in situations of conflict, norms are often disrupted and the social order is rearranged. Some women were empowered by the conflict and by the new roles they could fulfill because of it. So, returning back to norms of the past meant that they would lose power and status, especially since such women are often sidelined out of post-conflict policies. Furthermore, the training options available for women in Sierra Leone’s DDR reintegration phase were trades such as tailoring, soap-making, and weaving. These were very gendered options, not particularly lucrative, and seemed condescending to women who had participated and led military units in rebel movements for eleven years.

As such, few female ex-combatants participated or desired to participate in Sierra Leone’s DDR process. The vast majority of those interviewed did not think that it would be useful to them and lacked access to accurate information about the program. (44 of the 50 women interviewed, for example, had escaped from armed groups but were not aware that they would still qualify for the DDR process as escapees.) Others had negative perceptions of the process, seeing it as corrupt and
fearing that it was a trap to identify anti-government combatants since photo ID cards were a prerequisite for DDR start-up packages. Many were concerned that identifying themselves would lead to potential retaliation. Female ex-combatants faced different kinds of stigma than did returning males; men might even be seen as heroes for having participated in the fighting. Women, however, were largely not seen in a positive way for having participated in the war. Many female ex-combatants and escapees subsequently avoided DDR because they were trying to disassociate themselves from the armed factions.

For both male and female ex-combatants to fully participate in and benefit from DDR processes, the programs cannot be designed as a gender-neutral process. “The case of Sierra Leone demonstrates that the failure to address gender as a factor in post-conflict programming as not only sacrificing gender equality, but also the overall effectiveness of the DDR process and the chances for a true and lasting transition from conflict to peace,” (MacKenzie, p. 243).

**Recommendation:**

1. **Consult with female ex-combatants** in the program design for DDR to understand both the ways in which they have been victimized by the conflict and “the ways in which they have participated in the conflict as agents, as supporters, and as soldiers,” (MacKenzie, p. 261). All too often, “[p]rograms for female victims of the war, abducted girls and women, and girls left behind were developed in the absence of women’s own accounts of what roles they took up during the war, how they perceived the DDR, and why they did not participate in the DDR,” (MacKenzie, p. 255).

2. **Utilize GENDER MAINSTREAMING to form gender-sensitive DDR models** so that gender is considered and included ahead of time, not as an afterthought. This includes identifying women as ex-combatants, establishing appropriate criteria for them to participate in DDR, understanding the obstacles to women’s political participation ‘post-conflict,’ and being sensitive to their experiences of stigmatization and discrimination.
   - Take local traditions into account (e.g., child – adult ceremonies) so that DDR is not just an internationally-imposed process.
   - Incorporate sensitivity to rampant sexual violence but do not use it to define women’s experiences too narrowly.
   - Emphasize the need for reintegration of female ex-combatants without assuming that it will be a natural social process. Offer livelihood options that would be relevant to their experience, not based solely on gender stereotypes. Do not pressure women to resume traditional gender roles, especially if these roles have been broken by over a decade of war.

3. **Provide clear information about the DDR process**, educating the public on eligibility and on the use of ex-combatant personal information (for photo ID cards, etc.). Target specific audiences for awareness-raising, such as female ex-combatant soldiers and escapees. Utilize language that fits with the lived experience of these women.

**Implications:**

If gender mainstreaming is utilized in the design of DDR processes, then DDR may be more relevant for female ex-combatants; if it is more relevant to female ex-combatants, they may participate more in the process; if they participate in a process that is tailored to meet their unique needs, then they
may have access to increased opportunities to relevant livelihoods and community participation. If female ex-combatants are educated about the DDR process and how their personal information would be used, it may decrease their anxiety about participating in DDR.

If the DDR process is not sensitized to sexual violence, then female ex-combatants’ needs may go unaddressed. However, if DDR programs solely focus on sexual violence for women, female ex-combatants will only be seen as victims, even though some may have also participated in the violence. If they are only seen as victims and not also as agents in the conflict, their roles in the conflict may be “depoliticized,” which may take them out of the ‘post-conflict’ policy discourse. “By encouraging women and girl soldiers to return to their “normal places” in the community, any new roles or positions of authority they may have held during the conflict are stripped from them, and [...] then the DDR process risks entrenching gender inequality,” (MacKenzie, p. 258, 261). However, if women are taken seriously (by DDR programs) for the various roles they held during the conflict, then they may be able to sustain the social change of gender norms and experience empowerment ‘post-conflict.’

**Event Description:**

This lesson was based on information found in the following sources:


“Fact Sheet 1: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration,” United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL / MINUSIL), (December 2005); attached.


- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2016 - Inclusion of Gender Perspectives Increases Security in Operations by a Swedish PRT**

- **Created:** 06 May 2016
- **Last Updated:** 06 May 2016
Observations:

Including gender perspectives in operations increases security by enhancing situational awareness, according to a 2012 report from the Institute of Inclusive Security commissioned by NATO’s Committee on Gender Perspectives. This is illustrated by a Swedish Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan in 2009 whose engagements with women provided information that prevented misinterpretation of a local event, averting escalation of a potential security incident.

Discussion:

As the nature of violent conflict in recent decades has expanded to include rape camps and gender-based violence, “women are often the prime victims of political violence and extremist religious interpretation” (p. 5 of the 2012 report from the Institute of Inclusive Security). As such, the security sector must take into account the differing needs of women, girls, boys, and men, particularly as affected by conflict. Women’s experiences, roles, and rights in conflict were internationally recognized with the passage of the 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). The pillars of UNSCR 1325 include participation, protection, prevention, and gender mainstreaming, and the framework provided by WPS and subsequent UNSCR resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2016 (2013), 2122 (2013) incorporate a gender perspective into peacebuilding, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction.

Over the years since the passage of UNSCR 1325, several regional organizations have passed policies to increase gender perspectives/awareness in support of WPS. In 2009, NATO adopted a Bi-Strategic Command Directive on Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspectives in the NATO Command Structures Including Measures for Protection During Armed Conflict, which incorporates lines of effort such as gender advisors and pre-deployment training. The United Nations has also called on individual member states to create National Action Plans (NAPs) to delineate how to implement principles from UNSCR 1325. As of 2016, 57 countries have adopted a National Action Plan. (The United States did not release its NAP on WPS until December 2011, which was later complemented by its Department of Defense (DoD) implementation plan in 2013 (see “Comments” below).)

Various other member states have devised additional measures to incorporate gender specifically within military operations. In 2003, the Swedish Armed Forces established Genderforce, a national project focusing not only on augmenting the participation of women within the security sector, but also on incorporating a gender perspective in security operations via female recruitment, gender analysis, civil-military relations, gender advisory training, gender coaching programs, human trafficking recognition, gender training, and best practices for the inclusion of local women in operations.
For a Swedish PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, in summer 2009, the inclusion of a gender field adviser and a system of gender focal points in military units across the PRT led to tangible outputs. [Note: A "gender focal point" is a designated person within a unit whose job is to liaise with the parent organization’s gender adviser.] Due to these gender focal points extending throughout the PRT, military units had become more aware of gender issues. As such, when an all-male rifle patrol noticed that they never saw Afghan women in public, they discussed this with the PRT’s gender field adviser, who analyzed their route and realized that they were only patrolling larger streets where men usually walked. The gender adviser advised them to change their route to include smaller, less busy alleys.

Sure enough, once the Swedish PRT patrol changed their route, they began to encounter local women on the side streets who began to approach the patrol. At one point, some women invited the patrol to come to their home and meet their family. While conversing in their home over tea, the patrol, the women, and their male family members began to discuss events they were looking forward to. The women discussed an upcoming large wedding in their town for which several hundred relatives were going to come to celebrate. This was a different response than any of the men had given.

Because the patrol had gained situational awareness of the upcoming wedding event specifically through talking with the women, they expected the large influx of people into the town two days later. As such, this information enabled the military to better plan and monitor the flows of people. Furthermore, it prevented escalation of potential conflict, since unexpected people coming to the town could have been misinterpreted as insurgent activity. A misinterpretation of that sort could have led to “immediate violence as well as longer-term risks to the force from a resentful community” (p. 8).

“Through their unique roles in communities and families, women often know about people and events that men do not” (p. 3-4). Women thus enhance situational awareness due to their unique observations from varied perspectives. This comes in part from different roles and responsibilities; for example, women may be responsible for collecting water and firewood. Their experience in their community and family shapes women’s priorities and perspectives. As such, regular consultation with both men and women provides a more complete picture “of local circumstances and results in operations that better address the entire community’s needs and priorities” (p. 5).

“When we undercut the contributions of one gender we do so at our own peril... denying ourselves half the talent, half the resources, half the potential of the population. And as we approach future challenges we must think rather than fight our way through, we need to be able to leverage all of the best thinking out there.” – General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff

Recommendation:

“The Institute for Inclusive Security and the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives generated recommendations and suggested indicators for further enhancing attention to gender in NATO-led operations. The following is [a portion from] the full recommendation list.

• Consult regularly with local women in the theater of operations. Structures designed to promote sustained, repeated contact with women should be prioritized to promote confidence building, Make the necessary force structure adaptations to ensure women are trained and can go on all patrols and engagements. [..]
• Require that each unit has a gender focal point who liaises with a senior gender field adviser. For example, the Swedish PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif has between 20 and 25 gender focal points across its units. A commander’s order required contingents to identify focal points.

• Mandate that all planning processes and resulting concepts of operation (CONOPS) at the brigade and battalion level include attention to gender, specifically plans for direct engagement with local women, and gender-sensitive information operations campaigns. [...] 

• Ensure all personnel, including unit commanders and patrol members, have overall basic and in-theater training on gender issues. Training should be practical, related to local circumstances and focused on tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), rather than theory,” (p. 14).

Implications:

If varied (gender) perspectives are not incorporated into training, campaign and operation plans, and engagement/patrol activities, then military forces will lack full situational awareness and may miss key pieces of information. This lack of complete situational awareness may lead to misinterpretation of events, which may cause security incidents (and potential local resentment) which could have been avoided.

Cautionary note:

“However, direct asks for military intelligence may present too great a risk to women and limit access to them in the future. As a rule, women should therefore not be asked to directly provide military intelligence. Best practices focus on using effective engagement activities to cultivate trusting relationships with women. These activities create channels for women to report on security threats if and when they feel comfortable doing so,” (p. 4).

Event Description:

This lesson is based primarily on the Institute for Inclusive Security’s April 2012 article “Attention to Gender Increases Security in Operations: Examples from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO),” written by Tobi Whitman and Jacqueline O’Neill, (attached). It also includes information from the article “Gender and the Security Sector: Towards a More Secure Future,” by Julie L. Arostegui, J.D., found within CONNECTIONS: The Quarterly Journal (Volume XIV, Number 3; Summer 2015), (attached).

• Posted By: Gehman, Katrina Ms.
• Email: katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
• Phone:
• Rank: Civilian
• Unit: PKSOI

2016 - “Success Reporting” by Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in Afghanistan
• Created: 28 Mar 2016
• Last Updated: 30 Mar 2016
Female Engagement Teams (FETs) were established by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2009 to influence Afghan women as part of counter-insurgency (COIN) strategy. According to the report on which this lesson is based, written by a Cultural Advisor in Regional Command – South (RC-S), US Marine Corps (USMC) and British (UK) FETs in southern Afghanistan from 2010 to early 2012 reported many of their engagements as successes without culturally-appropriate indicators to evaluate whether or not there were substantive outcomes to their varied activities.

Discussion:

After the events of September 11th and the United States’ subsequent invasion of Afghanistan, the 2001 Bonn Conference established, for the provision of security, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, whose leadership was taken over by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2003. Initially, ISAF forces did not form gender-specific engagements or include female military personnel prominently in engagements due in part to cultural concerns of offending Afghan men. However, by 2010, ISAF had turned towards a COIN strategy which required a population-centric approach for the entire society. Afghan women thus became part of the strategic calculus of the international forces, seen as an untapped 50% of the population who could be won to influence their communities against the insurgency.

The first Female Engagement Teams (FETs) were initiated by the US Marine Corps (USMC) in 2009 as small teams of female soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan to engage local Afghan women in light of this strategy. The concept was subsequently promoted by USMC Captain Matt Pottinger, who co-founded the first FET, until it was accepted at higher levels, and by summer 2010, ISAF HQ had issued orders that all Regional Commands (RC) launch FETs. USMC established a four month pre-deployment training for FET, ISAF required all deployed Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) to send female candidates for FET training in theater, and FETs from the United Kingdom (UK) implemented short pre-deployment training as well. By 2012, however, only the Marines had full-time FET personnel.

From the ad hoc beginning of the FET, both commanders and FET teams experienced considerable confusion over its specific role, due in part to a broad range of objectives and a lack of standardization of the teams. FETs ended up performing a broad variety of tasks that ranged from cordon and search operations to playing with children, teaching literacy, and providing medical handouts. FETs were tasked to improve situational awareness for military units while influencing Afghan women to perceive the ISAF forces as benevolent and to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), without straying into ‘women’s rights,’ which at times proved to be a contradiction. Furthermore, although some guidance stressed that FETs were not in fact intelligence collection assets, due to possible danger this may bring to the Afghan women, not
all commanders were trained in how to utilize FETs, and some hoped that FETs could in fact be used to yield actionable intelligence.

The confusion over FET roles compounded confusion over how to properly evaluate the teams. It was difficult for measures of performance, effectiveness, or accountability, to be established and implemented for Female Engagement Teams. FETs from 2010 to early 2012 in southern Afghanistan were unable to obtain good baseline information, and FET reports showed a lack of “before and after” scenarios. Furthermore, the standards by which some FETs evaluated themselves showed a lack of cultural and contextual understanding. For example, Afghan women expressing happiness and/or the perceived popularity of the FET was used as an ad hoc measure of impact on the communities. However, according to the article by Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam on which this lesson is based, “Evaluation of multiple aid programmes in Afghanistan has shown that Afghans will almost always say the programme implemented achieved its aims and was a success. (...) Outbursts of emotion, blessings and prayers are very unreliable indicators of impact, and yet they consistently appear in FET reporting” (p. 20).

This lack of appropriate, implemented metrics was exacerbated by the pervasive pressure the FETs were under to report everything as a success – known as ‘success reporting.’ Each commander is required to show results within the short timeframe of six months or one year of his/her deployment, and his or her subordinates may feel that same pressure to succeed. For U.S. servicewomen, this was heightened by the ongoing debate about women in combat. Due to the Combat Exclusion Policy, U.S. servicewomen were not allowed to be directly assigned to ground combat units, but they could be “attached” to them, as some FETs were. Due to cultural resistance from some male military personnel of these female servicemembers being attached to ground combat units, many female servicemembers felt increased pressure to prove themselves and to prove the women-centric FET program against the scrutiny of their male colleagues.

Throughout USMC and UK reporting from Helmand province in 2010-2012, according to Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, former advisor to the UK military command in southern Afghanistan, every engagement is described with great detail, often listing single conversations or enthusiasm by local woman as critical events. Furthermore, sweeping results are claimed for entire communities even if engagements only involved a few individuals. This “success reporting” by FETs led to misrepresentation of Afghans, mistaking grandstanding as sincere intent, raising expectations by creating hand-out mentality, and overall inaccurate reporting that went unverified by consultation with Afghans or subject matter experts.

“Still struggling to be accepted and thought of as worthy in the military, [female Soldiers in FETs] tried to make an experimental concept based on erroneous assumptions succeed in a difficult and complex environment, at times with no interpreters, knowing that they would return to base empty-handed to face colleagues who were either cynical or had unrealistic expectations of results. The FET experiment was the sociological equivalent of sending troops out with malfunctioning weaponry,” (Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, p. 2).

**Recommendation:**

**Female Engagement Teams should incorporate appropriate evaluation frameworks to prevent against “success reporting,” which may lead to inaccurate or misleading reports which may have unintended negative ramifications for both the local community and for the commanders’ decision-making.**
1. Craft measures of performance, effectiveness, and accountability for FET program design in consultation with those knowledgeable of the local community, including both locals and aid/development workers who have had years of experience forming such evaluation parameters.

2. Incorporate baselines, “before and after” scenarios, and improved reporting formats in FET evaluation reports which do not lend themselves as easily to "success reporting."

3. Clarify FET roles and narrow the scope of their assigned functions so that their roles are not contradictory; verify the reasoning for why FETs are assigned to certain roles for accuracy against the experience and cultural expertise of locals and/or aid/development workers in the local community.

**Implications:**

If measures of performance and effectiveness are not created for FET in consultation with those knowledgeable of the local community and culture, then these measures may not be culturally appropriate. If measures of performance and effectiveness that are not culturally-sensitive are used to evaluate FET teams, then FET teams may misinterpret local community responses, mistaking grandstanding for sincere intent. If FETs misunderstand local community responses, they may misrepresent the locals, unintentionally providing misleading situational awareness/atmospheres to military leaders, which may cause military leaders to make decisions based on inaccurate information. If baselines, “before and after” scenarios, and measures of accountability are not created and implemented for FET, then FETs may remain unaware of unintended second- and third-order effects that their actions may have on local communities; if FETs are not aware of potential implications of their actions on the protection of civilians in the local community, then they may continue to engage local communities in ways that may be potentially harmful to the local people.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is primarily based on the March 2014 Working Paper through the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI), "Seeking out their Afghan Sisters: Female Engagement Teams in Afghanistan," by Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam (attached). The author of this Working Paper had extensive experience as Cultural Advisor to ISAF military commanders after sixteen years of experience in Afghanistan; she worked particularly in RC-S and RC-SW, and her working paper is based on her participant observation and analysis of US Marine Corps and UK FETs from early 2010 to early 2012 in Helmand province in southern Afghanistan.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI
2016 - The UN’s Response to Sexual Abuse by Peacekeepers in the Central African Republic (CAR)

- **Created:** 24 Jan 2016
- **Last Updated:** 25 Jan 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Other
- **Unit:** PKSOI
- **Focus:** #UNPKO; #SEA; #Africa; #CRSV

**Observations:**

In recent years, egregious incidents of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) have emerged across UN peacekeeping missions by peacekeepers abusing the very vulnerable populations whom they have been sent to protect. Most recently, a host of allegations of sexual violence by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic (CAR) came to light, including the case of the sexual abuse of several children in exchange for money or food between December 2013 and June 2014. Alleged perpetrators in this case primarily included soldiers from the French Sangaris Forces - peacekeepers authorized by the UN Security Council but not under direct UN command. An Independent Panel established by the UN in June 2015 to investigate the UN’s response to these incidents found that a fragmentation of responsibility within UN agencies led to inaction, bringing further harm to the victims and reinforcing an implicit culture of impunity within UN peacekeeping concerning sexual violence.

**Discussion:**

According to a June 2015 report from the UN’s Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluating sexual exploitation in 11 peacekeeping missions from 2008-2014, more than a third of all allegations between 2008-2013 involved children (p. 4). Transactional sex was also found to be quite common but underreported, as peacekeepers would pay dresses, mobile phones, cash, and other items for sex with women seeking a way out of hunger and poverty. The four missions in this study which have accounted for the most consistently high numbers of sexual violence allegations by peacekeepers include MINUSTAH (Haiti), MONUSCO (Democratic Republic of the Congo), UNMIL (Liberia), and UNMIS/UNMISS (Sudan/South Sudan). The Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was not included in this OIOS investigation, but its reputation for SEA violations has grown as news reports as recent as January 2016 have highlighted cases of rape, sexual abuse of children, and transactional sex by peacekeepers (see “News Reports” under “Comments” section, below).

The sexual violence perpetrated by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic emerged from the background of a crisis within the country. After decades of political instability and several coups since its independence from France in 1960, CAR saw a resurgence of overt violence in 2013 when the Seleka opposition forces overthrew the standing government. By December 2013, fighting between Seleka and anti-Balaka forces intensified, precipitating a humanitarian crisis in which as many as 1.2 million people faced food insecurity and over 800,000 fled as refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) to camps such as the M’Poko Camp at CAR’s capital Bangui; children – as
much as half the population of CAR - bore the brunt of the conflict. In response to the violence and its aftermath, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of both the French Sangaris Forces and the African Union-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) in December 2013. MINUSCA was subsequently established on 10 April 2014, transferring authority from both MISCA and the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the CAR (BINUCA) to MINUSCA by 15 September 2014. MINUSCA’s mandate prioritized the protection of civilians and also included the promotion and protection of human rights (see “Mandate” under “Comments” section, below). The French Forces were authorized to stay alongside MINUSCA “to use all necessary means to provide operational support to elements of MINUSCA” (S/RES/2149 (2014), p. 13/14).

The allegations of the sexual abuse of children by peacekeepers in CAR took place between December 2013 and June 2014 at M’Poko Camp, at the peak of the violence in CAR and during the transition from MISCA to MINUSCA. During May and June 2014, after a local NGO leader reported the incidents to the Human Rights and Justice Section (HRJS) of MINUSCA and the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), a Human Rights Officer (HRO) interviewed six children who had reported abuse. Their experiences revealed serious sexual abuse of the most egregious nature, not only to the children interviewed, but also witnessed to other children in exchange for small portions of food or cash, primarily by soldiers with French Sangaris forces, several with specific identifying markings. This sexual violence experienced by the children fell under one of the six grave violations against children in armed conflict (see “MRM Guidelines,” under “UN Child-Protection Mechanisms” in “Comments” section, below). UNICEF referred the
interviewed children to a local NGO partner with whom UNICEF already had a standing agreement to provide “medical care, psychosocial support, and legal assistance to victims of sexual violence, including children” (Independent Review, p. 42). However, no attempt was made by the NGO to assess and provide for the children’s medical and security needs or to locate any additional children who may have been abused, and UNICEF did not follow up with the NGO or the children to assure that their needs were being met.

One year later, in May of 2015, international media brought attention to these allegations. Due to the media, attention was again given by the UN to the original children interviewed, and it was discovered that some of them had become victim to additional abuses since the original interviews and that the number of victims had grown. At that time, UNICEF finally arranged for medical examinations for the children and for housing, clothing, and schooling, but the year delay was too late to protect some of the children from additional abuse. After international media brought attention to the allegations, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened an Independent Panel in June 2015 to investigate the UN’s response to the allegations and to determine whether or not there had been any abuse of authority. During the course of the Panel’s investigations, it became clear that “[t]he manner in which UN agencies responded to the Allegations was seriously flawed” and that “information about the Allegations was passed from desk to desk, inbox to inbox, across multiple UN offices, with no one willing to take responsibility to address the serious human rights violations” (p. i). This fragmentation of responsibility ultimately led to inaction on the part of the UN on behalf of the victims and to hold their alleged perpetrators accountable.

Two distinct policy frameworks within the United Nations address sexual exploitation and sexual violence by peacekeepers: 1) SEA as misconduct, and 2) SEA as a human rights violation. The Secretary-General issued a 2003 Bulletin affirming a Zero Tolerance Policy for sexual violence by UN personnel and prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual relations with minors, and any type of transactional sex; the bulletin also strongly discourages sexual relations between UN personnel and “beneficiaries of assistance” (see OIOS, p. 7). However, this Zero Tolerance policy for peacekeeper misconduct only applies to troops directly under UN command, and as such, allegations of abuse by peacekeepers without blue helmets, such as the French Sangaris forces, do not fall under this framework. Furthermore, the TCCs, not the UN, have the authority to investigate allegations of misconduct by their personnel. The second policy framework to address SEA by peacekeepers acknowledges SEA and CRSV as human rights violations. The recent Human Rights Up Front Initiative seeks to place human rights at forefront of all UN activity, reaffirming the primacy of human rights in the Charter of the UN (See “UN Human Rights Policies” under “Comments” section below). UN peacekeeping missions have an obligation to investigate, report, protect victims, and promote accountability regarding human rights violations, as well as to monitor and report on grave violations against children in armed conflict.

Unfortunately, “In the course of the Review it became clear that in the eyes of many UN staff, the human rights framework does not apply to allegations of sexual violence by peacekeepers.” (p. iii). Several UN agencies reported the allegations in some way but did not see themselves as needing to take responsibility to take action to protect the victims or to hold the perpetrators accountable. On the ground in CAR, HRJS did not search for other victims to protect despite information from the original interviews that would suggest a high likelihood of additional victims; furthermore, HRJS did not urgently report these violations to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva. The head of the MINUSCA mission – its Special
Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) – also failed to follow up on the abuse allegations, and the Independent Panel found both leaders to be guilty of an abuse of authority concerning the handling of these SEA allegations. (Due to mishandling of peacekeeper misconduct, the SRSG of MINSUCA was replaced in August 2015.)

In Geneva, the focus of the SEA allegations became political instead of protecting the victims and seeking justice. At the end of June 2014, the HRO sent her interview notes to OHCHR Geneva, which landed in the desk of the Director of Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division (FOTCD). He thence sent the unredacted notes directly to French authorities in the hopes that the French would take action to prosecute the alleged perpetrators since TCCs have more authority than the UN to prosecute misconduct of peacekeepers. This did jumpstart the French investigation. However, seven months later, the Director of FOTCD was put under investigation himself due to allegations that he had improperly "leaked" the interview notes. Several UN agency leaders prioritized the investigation into the Director of FOTCD instead of taking further action towards the SEA victims in CAR, and the Panel found the Under-Secretary-General (USG) of OIOS to have also committed an abuse of authority. Furthermore, the UN’s own policies of immunity and confidentiality worked against themselves during cooperation with the French investigation into the allegations. UN personnel typically enjoy immunity from national legal proceedings, but this is for the protection of victims, not to keep UN personnel from providing information that would aid investigations. The UN’s internal services failed to recommend that the Secretary-General waive the immunity of the HRO until almost a year after the allegations, greatly delaying the French investigation and the collection of evidence to hold the perpetrators accountable.

The failure of the UN to respond adequately to the allegations of sexual abuse in CAR was more than just the abuse of authority of individuals – it underlined a systems problem within the United Nations. Indeed, “A system in which everyone is meant to be responsible for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse has produced a leadership vacuum in which no one is ultimately responsible or accountable” (Independent Review, p. 80). As the Independent Review so poignantly states, “It is not enough for the UN to report on acts of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers” (p. v); “Zero tolerance cannot be achieved with zero action” (p. 6).

**Recommendation:**

Improve the UN’s Response to SEA by Peacekeepers.

**Address the culture of impunity for SEA by peacekeepers by:**

1. Acknowledging any SEA by any peacekeepers as CRSV and as a human rights issue (and not just a misconduct issue for blue helmeted troops under UN command), and focusing on prevention, in part by implementing the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP).

2. Harmonizing SEA policies and Human Rights frameworks, clearly communicating this to all peacekeepers, including those authorized by the UN but not under direct UN command.

3. Holding perpetrators accountable, and giving the UN recourse to hold perpetrators accountable if TCCs do not take immediate action to do so.

**Reduce/Eliminate the fragmentation of responsibility within the UN by:**
1. Providing clear guidelines as to which agency is ultimately responsible for following up on which aspect of SEA violations and clarifying that responsibility towards SEA violations entails not just immediate reporting but also taking protective action.

2. Creating a centralized unit with the responsibility to monitor/report and follow-up on sexual abuse allegations so that the current fragmentation of responsibility will stop and accountability will stop being passed across UN agencies leading to inaction. (The Independent Panel recommends the creation of a “Coordination Unit in OHCHR reporting directly to the High Commissioner for Human Rights,” (p. xv)).

3. Clarifying confidentiality requirements so that UN personnel like the Director of the FOTCD do not get put under investigation for trying to take action to pursue accountability.

Promote a victim-centered process of accountability by:

1. Attending immediately to victim’s psychosocial, medical, and protective needs and following up to make sure these are being met (not only reporting violations but addressing the needs that they create).

2. Expediting investigations into SEA allegations so as not to obscure medical evidence that could aid victims.

3. Waiving the immunity of UN personnel for information-sharing for TCC investigations.

4. Ensuring transparency about accountability and prosecution processes for victims so that they know what actions are being taken on their behalf, especially if the process is happening in the TCC, and so that an appearance of inaction does not feed a culture of impunity regarding sexual violence.


Implications:

If the culture of impunity for SEA by peacekeepers within UN missions is not addressed, then there will be the real and/or perceived notion that perpetrators will not be held accountable. As such, peacekeepers may continue to sexually exploit and abuse vulnerable populations whom they are sent to protect. If peacekeepers sexually exploit and abuse the very populations whom they are sent to protect, this doubly-traumatizes this vulnerable host population as well as undercuts the population’s confidence in the mission and limits the benefits that the overall peacekeeping mission can provide to the host community.

If the fragmentation of responsibility within the UN is not reduced and/or eliminated, then various agencies will continue to pass on reported cases of SEA by peacekeepers, assuming someone else will take responsibility to address it, and the end result will be inaction. If no one in the UN takes responsibility for following up or addressing SEA/CRSV incidents, then victims may not have their needs met in a timely manner. Furthermore, investigations may be delayed or nonexistent, which will hamper accountability processes. If perpetrators are not held accountable, then a culture of impunity for SEA by peacekeepers within UN missions will grow (which leads to the above stated implications).
If accountability processes are not victim-centered, then victims may suffer either re-traumatization, lack of protection, lack of immediate care, lack of immediate evidence which will hurt their case, and/or lack of closure. If victims do not receive immediate psychosocial and physical attention, they may have more difficulty healing from the abuse. Furthermore, without protective measures, victims may suffer additional abuse. If the UN immunity policies are not waived or clarified or improved, then UN personnel may be unable to provide necessary information to investigations, which will cause delays. If victims are not given immediate attention by the investigation, there may be less physical evidence of the abuse that would aid victims’ case against the perpetrators. If there is no transparency in the investigative and accountability processes, then victims will not know what is happening and then they will have a lack of closure and their justice needs will not be met which may affect their ability to heal; furthermore, a lack of transparency about the process may make it appear as though no action has been taken against perpetrators, which will feed into the culture of impunity, which again will have the adverse effects as listed above.

Event Description:

This lesson was primarily based on the 17 December 2015 report, “Taking Action on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers: Report of an Independent Review on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by International Peacekeeping Forces in the Central African Republic,” by Marie Deschamps (Chair), Hassan B. Jallow, and Yasmin Sooka – an independent panel convened on 22 June 2015 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations “to conduct an independent external review of the response of the UN to the Allegations” (p. 7). (attached).

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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2016 - Liberian Women’s Mass Campaign for Peace Secures Women’s Interests in Peace Process

- **Created:** 22 Dec 2016
- **Last Updated:** 28 Dec 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #Africa; #WPS

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Governance and Participation
This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- GP 2.3 Civil Society and Media
- HS 1 Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- SE 7 Public Information and Communications

Observations:

Peace talks, such as those in Accra in 2003 to end Liberia’s civil war, are often structured for men’s participation, excluding women from substantial roles. Liberian women, however, exerted pressure on all sides at the negotiation table and secured a place for the women at the peace talks by organizing a Mass Campaign for Peace. This ensured that interests of ordinary Liberians were not forgotten in shaping a new Liberia and subsequently opened the doors for Liberian women’s continued involvement in decision-making in their country.

Discussion:

The Liberian civil war raged for 14 years from 1989 to 2003. After a brief settlement among warring parties in 1997, Charles Taylor became president and violence resumed. It is estimated that over 200,000 people were killed during the course of the conflict, at least 20,000 children participated as child soldiers in the fighting, and more than 1.5 million people were displaced by the violence.

Women and girls were involved in myriad ways in the lengthy Liberian conflict, from being captured and coerced to work as forced laborers or “wives” for combatants, often experiencing sexual assault, to directly participating – as peacemakers, informal mediators, or as combatants themselves. For the most part, however, despite their various roles, women were largely excluded from formal peace processes and nongovernmental organization initiatives.

Due to this marginalization of women, a regional peacebuilding organization, the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), prioritized establishing a peacebuilding program for women. The goal was to promote social justice through women’s peace activism that was “built on a particular ideology: that systematic violence against women such as rape, forced prostitution, mutilation, etc., was an expression of a deeper systemic disregard for women existing in West...
African societies," (Ekiyor & Gbowee, p. 134). After consulting with various women's groups across West Africa, WANEP launched the regional Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) in 2001. WIPNET was involved in a variety of activities to build peace and mobilize women across the region – including the development of a peacebuilding training manual, the organization of training workshops and regional women's peace networks, and various additional peacebuilding activities in Nigeria, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Mali. The most significant role of WIPNET, however, was in the Liberian peace process.

By 2003, WIPNET had grown in Liberia through a large network of community-based women's groups. As rebels advanced from the countryside towards the capital (Monrovia), WIPNET-Liberia decided to do something more active about the ongoing war. As such, they launched the Mass Action for Peace campaign, recruiting women from all levels of society including schools, markets, churches, displaced camps, and NGOs. Carrying the campaign message "We Want Peace; No More War," these Liberian women marched in the streets of Monrovia and prayed at the airfield – Muslims and Christians side-by-side.

At first, the women were not taken seriously. Organizing their campaign was difficult since public gatherings were prohibited in Liberia’s virtual police state; many women were regularly threatened by security forces. However, as their campaign continued daily regardless, it gained international media attention. The women were eventually successful in pressuring President Charles Taylor to meet with them where they outlined their demands for an immediate unconditional cease-fire, an intervention force, and dialogue for a negotiated settlement.

A peace conference was organized in Accra, Ghana, that May 2003. Despite the added expense due to the location, WIPNET sent seven women to Accra. Once there, they mobilized additional women, including many from the Buduburam refugee camp. These refugee women demonstrated in front of the conference center where peace talks were taking place with placards calling for peace and for a UN intervention force. “Since the women were seen as speaking for ‘ordinary Liberians,’ all sides, including the rebels, sought to forge alliances with them, which meant that they had extra-ordinary access,” (Ekiyor & Gbowee, p. 136). WIPNET met with the different conflict parties and the mediators of the peace process, including the chief mediator, Abdusalami Abubakar. They also collaborated with other women’s organizations and organized the Liberian Women’s Forum alongside the peace talks for women to reflect on the progress at the talks.

As little progress was made in the talks and the fighting in Liberia continued, the women decided to adopt harsher nonviolent strategies. When the talks stalled, the women barricaded the entrance to the conference room where the peace talks were being held and threatened not to let the warring parties, mediators, or delegates exit the venue until they committed to reaching an agreement. This strategy succeeded in gaining the women an invitation to participate in several political/security meetings with rebels and mediators. This solidified the Liberian women as real stakeholders in the conflict in Liberia with a role to play in the peace process.

On 17 June, a ceasefire agreement was reached. However, in the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement, the violence continued. Since “[i]t seemed as if the Liberians were being held hostage by the delegates,” (Ekiyor & Gbowee, p. 137), the women this time barricaded the entrance to the negotiation room so that no one could enter. This got the attention of the press, and the talks resumed. On 11 August, President Taylor agreed to resign. By 18 August, a peace deal, known as the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement, was formulated and signed. Shortly thereafter, on 19
September, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established via UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1509 to support the implementation of the peace process and ceasefire agreement.

After the peace talks, WIPNET remained an active organization, monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement. The women partnered with UNMIL in promoting disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation initiatives. WIPNET’s actions also served to ensure that women would continue to play a part in the decision-making of their country. WIPNET members were appointed by the transitional government to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as the National Human Rights Commission of Liberia. Moreover, in Liberia’s 2006 national election, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became the first democratically elected female president in Africa.

Recommendation:

1. **To civil society:** Organize civil society and women’s groups to demand a spot at the negotiation table for peace talks through sustained nonviolent efforts which provide a human face to the conflict. Ensure broad issues/concerns are addressed by the peace process and be as inclusive as possible, crossing ethnic and religious divides for this advocacy.

2. **To international stakeholders:** Support civil society and women’s groups with appropriate funding and resources. (In Accra, for example, limited funding was a challenge the women faced in continuing their campaign for peace once the peace conference was convened in another country). Use international clout to require women’s formal and meaningful participation in a peace process as a prerequisite for international support for the process.

3. **To negotiators/mediators of a peace process:** Include all stakeholders in peace talks regardless of gender or identity (all those affected by the conflict in the society), not just the warring parties. Consult civil society and women’s groups in the design of peace processes and in the implementation of peace agreements.

Implications:

If civil society and women’s groups sustain nonviolent actions that provide a human face to the conflict, they may succeed in achieving a place at the negotiation table. If such groups organize across various ethnic and religious lines, they show that ongoing violent conflicts affect all identity groups, and they may have a more powerful voice calling for peace.

If civil society and women’s groups are supported by adequate funding and resources, then they may be able to more effectively campaign for inclusion in peace talks. If international organizations require women’s formal participation in peace processes through quotas, then more women may become participants, and the peace process will be more likely to address women’s interests.

If various civil society and women’s groups are included as stakeholders in peace processes, the formulated agreements are more likely to address a broad basis of issues that are relevant to the local populations affected by the conflict and not just pander to international interests. If women participate in peace processes in a meaningful way, this brings more legitimacy to women’s involvement in decision-making and may open doors for the continued participation of women in official government roles.
Event Description:

This lesson is based on an article written by two women involved with the leadership and coordination of WIPNET – Thelma Arimiebi Ekiyor, WIPNET's founder, and Leymah Gbowee, who was later awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace prize for her peacebuilding efforts in Liberia. The article they wrote is entitled: "Women’s Peace Activism in West Africa: The WIPNET Experience," found in People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society (Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder, CO (2005); edited by: Paul van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, and Juliette Verhoeven). Their story is also told in the 2008 documentary film Pray the Devil Back to Hell.


See also: “From the ground up: Women’s roles in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone” – Actionaid, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Womankind Worldwide (September 2012); attached.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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2016 - Afghanistan National Solidarity Program Increases Participation of Local Women in Governance

- **Created:** 18 Nov 2016
- **Last Updated:** 09 Dec 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** WPS _ General
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #Afghanistan; #WPS; #medical; #StabOps; #BPC

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Medical Services / Hospitals
- Governance and Participation
- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Economic Stabilization and Infrastructure
This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- Economic Stabilization and Infrastructure
- Governance and Participation

Observations:

Due to both village cultural traditions of male leadership and implications of Taliban control, women were often less involved in public governance and decision-making in rural Afghanistan at the beginning of U.S. military operations there. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which became the largest development program in Afghanistan, was developed with this in mind, mandating a quota of women’s participation in local governance decisions for funded projects so that women as well as men would have a say in the development projects and services that would affect their lives. According to an impact evaluation of the NSP, over time, this increased male acceptance for female participation in public life.

Discussion:

The National Solidarity Program was implemented by the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development with funding through the World Bank. The goal of the NSP was twofold: improve basic services access for rural villagers while strengthening village governance through female participation and democratic processes. These goals were pursued through two major interventions at the village-level. One intervention involved the disbursement of block grants of up to a community maximum of $60,000 (valued at $200 per household) for village projects. In order to access this funding, however, villages were required to create gender-balanced Community Development Councils (CDCs) through secret-ballot universal suffrage elections. CDCs would then select and design village-level projects funded by the block grants in consultation with villagers.

Including female participation and representation on the Community Development Councils was mandatory. At first, some villages were hesitant to participate in the program for this reason, since they had traditional male village leadership. However, as they saw other villages reaping the ensuing benefits of development projects, some villages became less resistant to the idea and more open to forming a CDC with women’s participation. On a practical level, villages could choose projects varying from schools, health centers, bridges and roads, to basic utility services such as electricity and water. Each village had the autonomy to choose projects based on consultation with their communities. The disbursed funds covered the physical costs of materials for these
development projects. As much of the labor was volunteer, this created a sense of community ownership.

During the second phase of the NSP (2007-2011), a large-scale quantitative multi-year randomized control study was performed to measure the impact of this program on the Afghan communities, utilizing various economic, political, and social indicators. The NSP Impact Evaluation (NSP-IE) compared 250 villages which had received NSP with 250 comparable ‘control’ villages which had not yet received NSP. Initial baseline data was collected in 2007, with interim data partway through in 2009, and final data in 2011 after sub-projects had been completed. In 2013, the findings of this study were published to show the impact of the NSP on the Afghan communities, specifically in terms of village access to utilities/services/infrastructure, economic welfare, local governance, political attitudes, and social norms (especially concerning women).

In all, over 65,000 development projects were financed through the NSP since the project’s inception in 2003. These development projects reached 361 districts in each of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces, with a total of 32,000 Community Development Councils being created within villages. The infusion of block grants contributed to a short-term economic boost, although there is less evidence for the NSP affecting more durable economic outcomes. Overall, development projects focusing on utilities and increasing access to drinking water and electricity were more effective than infrastructure projects. The impact evaluation showed success particularly in terms of improving the access of all villagers to basic utilities, and improving the access, specifically for women, to education, health care, and counseling services. In terms of local governance, the NSP impacted the structure by increasing the number of local assemblies containing at least one woman.

Unlike many other women’s programs in Afghanistan, some of which were perceived as a foreign imposition, since the NSP was Afghan-run, it was not perceived as a threat in the same way as other women’s programs. As such, increasing the participation of women through the CDCs did not result in a huge backlash against women. Instead, according to the Executive Summary of the NSP-IE, “The mandating of female participation by NSP – and the consequent female participation in project implementation – results in increased male acceptance of female participation in public life and broad-based improvements in women’s lives, encompassing increases in participation in local governance, access to counseling, and mobility. These and other economic, institutional, and social impacts of NSP further drive increases in girls’ school attendance and in women’s access to medical services, as well as improved economic perceptions and optimism among women in NSP villages.” (p. 5).

Recommendation:

1. Allow villagers and communities in future development programs to have a say in determining the priorities for development projects in their areas – such as through the use of the Community Development Council model, as tailored to be appropriate for other contexts.

2. Require quotas of women (and minority groups, youth, etc.) to be represented on decision-making councils as a pre-condition for the release of certain development funding, so that development efforts will be more likely to address the concerns of the entire community. Make sure these development efforts are implemented by national agencies as much as possible to reduce foreign imposition which may have a backlash on the women and women’s programs.
3. Continue to plan and implement integrated projects that address several issues at once in a coordinated way (i.e., governance, female participation, community development, basic services).

Implications:

If villages and communities have a say in determining which are the priority development projects in their areas, they may have an increased sense of ownership for these projects; as a result, they may continue to utilize them in ways that benefit the entire community. Furthermore, if villages determine for themselves which kinds of development projects to implement, the projects are more likely to be relevant to the felt needs of that community. If decision-making councils are required to include quotas of women, then women will have more of a say in determining projects that will improve their lives. If men interact with women who are representatives on such decision-making councils, men may become more open to the continued participation of women in public life. If development projects include women in a sensitive way and not through foreign intervention, there is less likelihood that women will suffer backlash from being involved in public life. If integrated projects are planned and coordinated to address priority community development concerns, this will be more effective for achieving overall stabilization.

Event Description:

This lesson was written using information from the “Randomized Impact Evaluation of Afghanistan’s National Solidarity Programme: Executive Summary of the Final Report” (Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov), (18 September 2013), Attached. See also: “Missing Elements of a Comprehensive Strategy in Afghanistan,” Lisa Schirch – Huffington Post, (25 May 2011); Found at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisa-schirch/missing-elements-of-a-com_b_360505.html. Supplemental information was provided by Dr. Lisa Schirch, Research Professor at the Center for Justice & Peacebuilding, Eastern Mennonite University.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2016 - Women’s Participation in Peace Processes Contributes to Sustainability of Peace Agreements**

- **Created:** 22 Dec 2016
- **Last Updated:** 28 Dec 2016
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #WPS;
This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Governance and Participation
- Justice and Reconciliation
- Transition/Transformation
- Women, Peace & Security
- Political
- Information
- Social/Societal
- Policy

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- GP 2 Participation
- HS 10 Public Information and Communications
- JR 10 Community Rebuilding

Observations:

Recidivism rates for countries returning to civil war are extremely high; studies suggest that 90% of civil wars in the 2000s took place in nations that had previously experienced civil war in the past 30 years. Peace treaties for such conflicts have also had low success rates, as almost half of such agreements formulated in the 1990s broke down within five years. Many of these agreements were missing a critical strategy to reduce this return to conflict, however – the inclusion of women. Evidence suggests that women’s participation in formal peace processes contributes to the sustainability of peace agreements.

Discussion:

Women have largely been excluded from formal representation or roles in most peace processes, with peace agreements also frequently omitting reference to women’s unique conflict experiences. Between 1992 and 2011, for example, only 2% of chief mediators, 9 percent of negotiators for peace agreements, and less than 4 percent of signatories to such peace treaties were women (See attachment, "Women's Roles in Major Peace Processes"). Such low representation of women is often found in other formal roles in the government and security sectors globally: women consisted of only 3 percent of UN peacekeeper personnel in 2015, for example.

Despite this low representation of women in official roles, evidence indicates that when women are included and do participate in peace processes, the subsequent agreements prove more sustainable. One study found peace agreements to be 35% more likely to last at least 15 years when women were participants in the peace process (as negotiators/mediators, witnesses, or signatories); this was based on an examination of 181 peace agreements signed since 1989. Another study analyzing peace agreements post-Cold War found that peace agreements were
64% less likely to fail if civil society groups (and women’s organizations) were included in the peace process/negotiations.

The reasons vary for why women’s participation in formal peace processes has been shown to contribute to achieving sustainable peace agreements. One reason has to do with perception. Since women have so often been excluded from formal peace processes, women are more likely to be seen as honest and impartial brokers, and, as such, they may be better situated to build trust with the conflict parties, encouraging negotiation and compromise. This perception of women’s reliability in peace processes has grounding; one review of 40 peace processes since 1990 revealed that no women’s group had attempted to thwart a peace process.

Furthermore, women often have unique perspectives due to gender roles and responsibilities; the information that women bring because of these experiences can be vital to rounding out the understanding of a conflict situation and finding ways to negotiate. In Darfur, for example, negotiations in 2006 reached a deadlock due to disagreement over control of a certain river. The main negotiating parties in this peace process were male, some of whom were part of the diaspora. Since local women bore the responsibility of fetching water, they were keenly aware of the local water situation – and in this case, were able to advise the parties that this particular river had dried up years before. This critical information was essential in getting the talks back on track.

Another reason why the inclusion of women may be more effective in achieving peace settlements is that women have often proven to take a collaborative approach, organizing across cultural and sectarian divides. In this way, concerns from a more diverse demographic are addressed, which is more sustainable for long-term conflict resolution and transformation. Case studies have documented women building coalitions across political, religious, and ethnic divides in Colombia, Guatemala, Iraq, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Somalia, and South Africa. In the Philippines Mindanao peace process in 2014, women were involved in both formal and informal negotiations. When tensions in the conflict escalated, an evaluation found that the Moro women preserved interethnic alliances more effectively than the men, leading to better communication about the peace process and helping to keep it on track.

The participation of women not only ensures that this type of important information from multiple demographics is considered as part of negotiations, but also often ensures that a broader basis of issues is addressed in an agreement. Women have been shown to often raise social issues that extend beyond military and territorial concerns; these social issues are often critical for a society to heal and move beyond a violent conflict – such as transitional justice, human rights, education, and healthcare – or issues of vulnerable groups, such as sexual violence. In Northern Ireland, for example, it was women who secured language in the Good Friday Peace Agreement that addressed victim’s rights, education, and housing.

More international attention has been paid in recent years to this growing evidence of women’s positive contributions to sustainability of peace efforts, which has resulted in multiple relevant international and national policies. In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 recognizing women’s roles in conflict resolution and security through Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This was followed by seven additional resolutions expanding and affirming support for WPS. Along with UNSC resolutions on WPS, over 60 countries (as of 2016) have adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS in order to promote efforts to more fully integrate women into conflict prevention, resolution and protection. The United States Government formed a US NAP on WPS in
2011, updated in 2016, with requirements for various government agencies to report on WPS initiatives and progress.

However, “[d]espite the strong evidence-based case for women’s participation in peace processes, decision-makers – including government officials, conflict or negotiation parties, mediators, and other international actors – often consider women’s inclusion to be a normative duty rather than a strategic need that would benefit the process and improve the sustainability of peace agreements” (Bigio & Vogelstein, p. 19). Although international and national policy frameworks on WPS have been strengthened, women’s participation itself still remains low – inadequately supported with finances, resources and staffing. Any support that does go towards women’s participation in peace processes, however, lays a foundation for women’s strengthened political/social participation beyond the conflict, which may diminish the chance of recidivism.

Recommendation:

The Council on Foreign Relations’ Background Paper on which this lesson is based recommends the following courses of action for the United States Government:

1. “Given clear evidence of women’s contributions to peace and security efforts, the United States should promote women’s participation in peace and security processes by establishing as precondition to its involvement in a peace or transition process that negotiating bodies and mediating teams include a significant representation of women in formal roles – with a target of at least 30 percent, a threshold that research suggests affords a critical mass to enable women’s influence,” (p. 21).

2. “Given that women are consistently underrepresented in international delegations to peace and security processes, such as observer missions and mediation support teams, the U.S. government should also ensure that its delegations consist of at least 30 percent women – and encourage the European Union, United Nations, and other international actors to do the same,” (p. 22).

3. “To increase representation of women at all levels of government in postconflict countries, U.S. support for public institutions – including the armed forces, police services, and the judiciary – should include technical assistance to promote the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women,” (p. 22).

4. “To maximize the return on defense investments, the U.S. government should increase resources to facilitate women’s involvement in peace and security processes by adopting the United Nations’ funding target to provide a minimum of 15 percent of all peace-building and security assistance for conflict-affected countries to promote women’s participation and protection,” (p. 22).

Implications:

If women and civil society are not included in peace processes, this may decrease the likelihood that a peace agreement will cover a broad base of comprehensive issues, and as such may decrease the sustainability of such agreement. If, however, the United States and other international organizations require meaningful participation of women in formal roles in peace processes, the participation of women in such processes would increase, thereby increasing the likelihood of a more enduring peace. Investing in technical training/support and resources to facilitate women’s involvement in designing, implementing, and evaluating peace processes will contribute to strengthening women’s continued involvement in building and sustaining peace.
Event Description:

This lesson is based on the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)' October 2016 Discussion Paper titled “How Women’s Participation in Conflict Prevention and Resolution Advances U.S. Interests,” (written by: Jamille Bigio & Rachel Vogelstein). This paper can be found at: http://www.cfr.org/peacekeeping/womens-participation-conflict-prevention-resolution-advances-us-interests/p38416. This discussion paper pulls together, analyzes, and cites several pertinent studies about women’s participation in peace processes. It is suggested that the reader consult the bibliography of the CFR discussion paper for further research on this subject and for original sources for the quantitative analyses referenced in this lesson.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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- **Created:** 05 Sep 2017
- **Last Updated:** 05 Sep 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #WPS; #POC; #UNPKO; #Africa

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Women, Peace & Security
- Protection of Civilians (PoC)
- Information

**Observations:**

- The United Nations (UN) Headquarters (HQ) staff learnt that Congolese women’s voices need to be heard in order to have better situational awareness. It was apparent that the experiences of women in the village were different than the men’s and that they had more relevant information about the illegally armed groups than the men;
Military Commanders often don’t consider the importance of having women military personnel engage with local women as part of understanding the human terrain;

- A woman peacekeeper with linguistic skills can be more useful than a male Swahili speaking (in this case) Community Liaison Officer;
- The mere presence of senior UN military leadership at a meeting with women can lift the status of women in the eyes of their community;(the UN Force Commander and his insistence on speaking to the Congolese women was a lesson to the Congolese Territorial Administrator who was at first dismissive of including the women of the community in engagement with the UN);
- The Congolese women felt more empowered than before as the UN had made an effort to hear their side of the story;
- The UN’s reputation may have slightly improved for showing both that it wanted to hear from both women as well as men and that it took time and resources to visit an isolated location;
- There is a possibility that the information from the woman which was fed into the military component’s planning cycle led to a reduction in attacks in the Eringetti region – but this is difficult to assess.

Discussion:

Eringetti, North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – November 2014

The Force Head Quarters (FHQ) of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) had received several reports that villagers (mainly women) were being attacked in the area north of Beni on the perimeter with Virunga National Park. The Military Gender Adviser approached the Force Commander and asked if it would be possible to take some Swahili speaking women soldiers from the Tanzanian Battalion (Bn). She hoped they could meet and talk with the women in the villages affected by the attacks.

Initially the FHQ was reluctant to release the assets needed – a helicopter to get to the city of Beni and then to go north the next day to the village of Eringetti. The Force Commander did at last agree and stated that he would visit the area too.

When the UN Military Gender Adviser asked the Tanzanian Bn Commander if she could take a couple of his women soldiers to meet with the Congolese women, the Commander was puzzled. He offered up 16 of his Special Forces troops (all men) and struggled to understand why the FHQ staff only wanted women. Eventually the Bn Commander nominated a military police woman to accompany the Military Gender Adviser. It should be noted that at that time there were no women peacekeepers in the Tanzanian patrols nor in the Nepalese patrols. These units were the closest to Eringetti and the lack of women peacekeepers made engagement with the local women quite challenging.

The following day the helicopter landed on a cleared area very close to the Eringetti Administrators’ hut. A crowd gathered and followed the Force Commander, his close protection team, the Military Gender Adviser, and the Tanzanian military police woman. The (male)
Community Liaison Assistant met the HQ entourage and took the Force Commander to meet with the (male) Territorial Administrator.

The Territorial Administrator was perplexed – why had the Force Commander come all this way to talk to the women? The Force Commander briefly looked equally perplexed but then recalled that the Military Gender Adviser had said that it would help to enhance the understanding of the situation if the UN could meet with the women. Still bemused and unimpressed, the Territorial Administrator negotiated that the UN envoy could meet with the women, but that the Force Commander would speak with both women and men beforehand.

The Force Commander held a meeting with local men and women and listened to their concerns. He then left and the local women remained to talk with the Tanzanian military police woman and the Military Gender Adviser. Initially, the discussion was about more trivial matters such as nail varnish and clothing. After a while, however, the women explained that when they were tending their crops, they were being attacked. They also said that Congolese security forces in the area (known as the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or “FARCD”) took the women as wives, but that when these troops left to go to another area, they would not take the “wives” with them, some of whom were pregnant.

The women drew a map of the farming land and pointed to the fields next to the bushes and wooded area of Virunga National Park. They explained that this was where the men hid before attacking them and then running away. Attacks took place during the day in isolated fields, and sometimes the illegally armed men would attack the villagers in their huts during the night.

The Military Gender Adviser took the notes she had taken and the hand-drawn map back to Goma HQ and shared it with the Intelligence and Operations branches. As a result, the troops near Eringetti were directed to conduct patrols near the fields where the women worked and to carry out night time patrols to deter the illegally armed groups from attacking the villages.

**Recommendation:**

- Ensure each mission has a Military Gender Adviser who can prompt and remind the leadership of the need to speak with women and men in order to better understand the human terrain;
- Remind the Military leadership to meet with and listen to women from local communities, as well as to set up regular meetings with Civil Society;
- Ensure there are women military personnel deployed and that they are trained and able to join patrols and key leader engagement meetings;
- Use women with linguistic skills to meet and talk with women;
- Ensure each mission has a Female Engagement Team (FET) capability; (in a UN mission context, FET refers to 30 women added to an Infantry Bn for the purpose of going on patrol with male soldiers and creating a mixed patrol);
- Ensure the Intelligence and Operations staff receive a back brief from the meetings in order to feed information into the planning cycle and to enhance situational awareness;
- Allocate resources to support Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) in the field.
Implications:
If these recommendations are not followed, then:

• Situational awareness will be poor which leads to weak protection of civilians strategies;
• Civilians will continue to be attacked;
• The reputation of the UN will be undermined as it is not protecting civilians.

Event Description:
This lesson is based on the personal experience of the MONUSCO Military Child Protection and Gender Adviser 2014, Major Rachel Grimes (UK) in Eringetti, North Kivu, DRC 2014.

Note: This lesson was written by Rachel Grimes, MONUSCO Military Child Protection and Gender Adviser 2014. It was submitted to the SOLLIMS database on her behalf by Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI.

2017 - Reintegrating Child Soldiers from Prison in Yemen

• Created: 30 Aug 2017
• Last Updated: 28 Sep 2017
• Status: Active
• Event:
• Unit: PKSOI Staff - PKM
• Focus: #MiddleEast; #children #DDR

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:
• Social/Societal

Observations:
Amidst Yemen’s devastating and ongoing civil war, grave violations against children have increased. Children have been recruited into various armed factions and some have been imprisoned for their association with armed groups. One local women-led peacebuilding
organization, the Prisoner’s Relief Initiative, successfully reintegrated child soldiers from prison in a port city in Yemen.

**Discussion:**

Yemen has been devastated by a recent war following the failure of a political transition. Armed conflict erupted between followers of the current internationally-recognized President Hadi and the Houthis loyal to former authoritarian President Saleh, who was forced to hand over power after an uprising in 2011. The conflict escalated in March 2015 when a multinational coalition led by Saudi Arabia intervened with an intensive air campaign which has had a devastating effect on the population. Grave violations against children have increased dramatically. (Saudi Arabia has been supported by the UK, U.S., France, Sudan, Egypt, and some members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in their ongoing operation in Yemen).

Since the intensification of the conflict in March 2015, over 42,000 people have been injured and 7,600 killed, most from air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition. The ongoing conflict has precipitated a humanitarian disaster, with 70% of the population in need of aid, compounded by the spread of the world’s worst-ever cholera outbreak. According to UNICEF as of July 2017, 20.7 million people need humanitarian assistance in Yemen, including 11.3 million children.

The ongoing armed conflict in combination with poverty, malnutrition, and diseases has had damaging consequences for children’s psychosocial health and led to vulnerabilities in child protection issues such as early dropout from education, early marriage, child labor, and child recruitment. By June 2017, 230 schools were destroyed with an additional 1,348 partially damaged from airstrikes, with many teachers not receiving pay for months, threatening the access of millions of students to education.

In March 2014, UNICEF launched the campaign “Children, Not Soldiers” to end the use of children in conflict by government security forces. Later that year, Yemen signed an action plan with the United Nations to prevent the recruitment of children. However, from 2014 to 2015, the United Nations reported a fivefold increase in the number of children recruited into armed groups, with over 700 cases verified – 72% by the Houthis, 15% by pro-government popular committees, 9% by Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, and 4% by other groups. This same year saw a sixfold increase in the number of children killed/maimed – with almost 2,000 child casualties. Furthermore, the United Nations observed a shift from voluntary enlistment to coercive recruitment, based on incentives and misleading information. Many boys were deprived of their liberty and placed in prison due to their association with armed groups.

Some of these child soldiers ended up in a prison in the port city of Aden, which was regularly screened by the organization Prisoners Relief Initiative (PRI) to document the human rights status of prisoners. During a routine check, the co-founder of PRI, Warda bin Sumayt, noticed high numbers of children in the prisons. In response, PRI developed a program to target child prisoners ages 10-17, presenting these children as victims in need of support to rehabilitate, and successfully negotiating access to the children in prison. There, they spent time with the children, offering drawing sessions to give the children a space to process their feelings and trauma that they had experienced and organizing educational sessions on topics such as acceptance, diversity, and social cohesion.
PRI faced much resistance from some parts of the public (including various community members, prison guards, and the 'Popular Resistance' in Aden) in reaching out to these children, since they were seen by many as 'criminals' who had attacked and killed people in Aden. The organization received threats from armed groups who accused them of supporting sides of the conflict. PRI personnel also faced barriers due to lack of funding and training on child soldier issues. Nevertheless, they persisted. Thanks to the efforts of the local women’s peacebuilding initiative PRI, many of the children were safely returned to their families instead of included on prisoner exchange lists, which may decrease their likelihood of being returned to armed groups.

**Recommendation:**

1. Donors (across the international community, regional organizations, development organizations, etc.) should consider providing support to non-governmental organizations and women-led peacebuilding initiatives that seek to reintegrate child soldiers. While PRI managed to achieve success with limited resources, additional funding and training for such groups/initiatives could augment a positive impact in this area.

2. Ensure that community needs are addressed when children have perpetrated harm amidst armed conflicts. If there is resistance to the reintegration of child soldiers, potentially use restorative justice mechanisms to address community concerns.

3. Work to improve access to education/schools so that there are less factors that drive children to enlist in armed groups/forces.

Recommendations from the Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict include:

- “I encourage the Member States concerned by the “Children, Not Soldiers” campaign to redouble their efforts to fully implement their action plans in the coming year and invite regional organizations, the international community and all relevant partners to provide increased support to those making progress.”

- “I urge Member States to hand over children encountered during military operations to civilian child protection actors as soon as possible, in accordance with their international obligations and the best interests of the child. It is crucial that there be appropriate resources for the reintegration of the children separated from parties to conflict, with attention given to psychosocial support and the needs of girls.”

- “I call upon Member States to treat children associated with armed groups, including those engaged in violent extremism, as victims entitled to full protection of their human rights and to urgently put in place alternatives to the detention and prosecution of children.”

**Implications:**

If campaigns such as “Children, Not Soldiers” raise awareness about the detrimental consequences of children fighting in armed conflict, then efforts may be put in place to prevent child recruitment. If child soldiers are protected and reintegrated, then they may not have to face detention and prosecution which may push them further into the cycle of violence.

If harms that children have done to the community are not addressed during the process of reintegration, then the community may harbor resentment or pain and feel unable to accept the
children. If, however, both parties' harms and needs are addressed, reintegration is likely to be more sustainable.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on information in the following sources:


- United Nations Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (20 April 2016), Attached.

- “We Are Children Not Soldiers,” Yemen Fact Sheet, UNICEF, (September 2016), Attached.


See also the U.S. Civil Society Working Group (CSWG) Policy Brief (August 2017): "Bringing Peace to Yemen by Having Women at the Table: What the U.S. Must Do and Why It Matters," attached.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2017 - Early Warning Systems to Prevent Extremist Violence in Kenya**

- **Created:** 18 Aug 2017
- **Last Updated:** 08 Sep 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #Africa; #GP

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Population Control
- Rioting / Criminal Acts
• Governance and Participation
• Women, Peace & Security
• Information

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:
• GP 2.1 Elections
• GP 2.3 Civil Society and Media

Observations:
Election seasons unearth deep-seated divisions within a nation and can trigger violence as a result. Women’s participation in early warning mechanisms can mitigate this instability during tense election cycles. This was evident in Kenya’s 2013 election, when citizens’ use of mobile phone technologies to report violent incidents, dispel incorrect rumors, and disseminate peace messages prevented extreme violence.

Discussion:
Following the 2007/08 Kenyan presidential elections, the country divulged into protracted violence which killed 1,300 people and displaced 650,000. The violence was fed by land disputes and ethnic divisions and especially by perceptions of electoral manipulation. Available technologies (phone, email, and internet) accelerated the pace at which election misinformation spread, escalating local rumors to a national audience within minutes, which contributed to a general sense of panic. Participants in the post-election violence used text messaging to spread rumors, promulgate distribution of weapons, and mobilize attacks.

The non-governmental organization Sisi Ni Amani Kenya (“We are Peace Kenya,” in Swahili) was founded by a forward-thinking woman in the aftermath of this election violence to affect social change through easily-accessible technology. Sisi Ni Amani Kenya (SNA-K) collaborated with local peacebuilders from Narok and from Nairobi’s Eastlands to analyze conflict dynamics, specifically concerning gaps in communications by local peacebuilders. Since many people in the general population did not have adequate information or means to question rumors, they were highly vulnerable to manipulation and violence. SNA-K identified that text messaging was a key component of spreading misinformation, rumors, and calls to violence. Since internet and mobile phones had been used effectively in 2007/08 to incite violence, SNA-K determined that those same mediums of communication could be used in future election seasons to incite peace.

As such, SNA-K established an SMS (Short Message Service, i.e. text messaging) platform in partnership with over fifty local organizations as well as the large telecom company Safaricom, which donated 50 million text messages. SNA-K built free SMS programming based on behavior chains outlining each step of how (mis)information could lead to violence. These behavior chains identified what types of messages were needed to break the link to violent responses, covering various scenarios such as election fraud or cattle theft.

SNA-K conducted participatory focus groups with target demographic groups (including young women, young men, older women, older men, community leaders, and people working in transit or commerce who tend to spread information, such as vendors on the road side) to expound on these
behavior chains. Members of each group were asked what kind of messages would influence them not to participate in violence. For example, messages could be sent to people at an outdoor market urging them to question a rumor before automatically spreading it. The types of messages differed for each demographic group, which was why it was so important to include a variety of identities and differentiate by gender. (Male) youths who had physically participated in the violence previously required different types of de-escalating messaging than (female) vendors who typically spread information in their marketplaces. These messages then became the template for what kind of messages to send from SNA-K during an actual crisis. Messages were also created for civic education, to reduce community vulnerability from misinformation about the election process. Voter education messages were vetted by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to ensure accuracy.

By the 2013 election, SNA-K’s platform had over 65,000 subscribers in over 20 locations. Each subscriber to this free platform identified factors such as their gender and their location, so that the SNA-K team could send targeted messages. Throughout the election cycle, SNA-K monitored the situation and sent tailored messages to inform community members about the election process, to encourage peaceful choices, and to intervene in specific instances of violence in local communities. Due in part to the efforts of SNA-K volunteers and many other peacebuilding organizations aimed at responding to and preventing electoral violence (such as Women’s Situation Rooms – “innovative, real-time groups convened around election cycles to anticipate and combat electoral violence,” (Biglio/Vogelstein, p. 4)), the 2013 election was relatively peaceful.

Recommendation:

1. Use easily accessible technology as a platform to incite peace through communication instead of violence, as Sisi Ni Amani Kenya did in the 2013 elections.

2. Consult with women and other identity groups including age, ethnic, disability, etc., to devise messaging to break misinformation paths that incite violence.

3. Include women in violence-prevention initiatives in volatile election seasons. Incorporate women and other identity groups on the ground to report emergent and actual violent incidents to enable efficient and relevant response.

Implications:

If various identity groups (including women, men, various ages and ethnicities, etc.) are not consulted in the development of messaging to prevent electoral violence, these messages will be less likely to effectively convince people to remain peaceful. If women are not consulted in the development of strategies to prevent violence, efforts are less likely to effectively reach the entire population, especially because women have unique perspectives which encompass experiences from roles in which they may engage large segments of the public, such as vendors, etc. However, if women are included, “research shows that women’s participation in early warning mechanisms can help mitigate instability during election cycles that are frequently marred by violence triggered by perceptions of flawed electoral processes or political and ethnic tensions,” (Bigio/Vogelstein, p. 4).

Event Description:

This lesson is based on these sources:


Posted By: Gehman, Katrina Ms.
Email: Katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
Phone:
Rank: Civilian
Unit: PKSOI

2017 - Institutionalizing a Gender Perspective in the Development of Partner Capacity to Counter WMD

Created: 10 May 2017
Last Updated: 10 May 2017
Status: Active
Event:
Unit:
Focus: #GP; #BPC; #WPS

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

Building / Enabling Partnerships
Women, Peace & Security
Military
Training
Personnel

Observations:
DOD COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD) POLICY (DODD 2060.02, January 27, 2017) states that DOD will “Increase barriers to WMD acquisition, proliferation, and use, in concert with other elements of U.S. national power” by, inter alia, “working with other USG departments and agencies and with international organizations and partners to secure and limit the availability of WMD-related capabilities through tailored risk-reduction programs”. These programs include COCOMs initiatives to train partner nations’ contingency response teams to operate within a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) environment, exercise CBRN response plans, and integrate civilian and military assets. Proactively seeking to achieve a gender balance of appropriately skilled and capable men and women when building USG trainers teams will likely enhance CBRN counter WMD training by including a gender perspective when providing instruction on CBRN consequence management topics. DOD should also seek to increase host nation’s women participation in such training events.

Discussion:

(1) The 2009 USCENTCOM executed the Cooperative Defense Program (CDP) aiming to increase Bahrain’s indigenous WMD consequence management and CBRN Passive Defense (CBRN PD) capability through the conduct of targeted workshops and situational training exercises designed to evaluate existing plans, and validate military and civilian capabilities. Training was conducted on the Bahrain Defense Forces (BDF)' Al Dhila Base in Manama. The training audience consisted of about 45 members of the BDF and Ministry of Interior Civil Defense Directorate. There were no women trainees and only one of the five DOD trainers was a woman.

(2) Upon conclusion of the 2010 Southern Caucasus Workshop on Public Health, Security, and Law Enforcement Partnership in Bio-Incident Pre-Planning and Response (which included the Bioterrorism Tabletop Exercise Southern Caucasus BioShield 2010), one Azeri participant expressed his admiration for the organizational and technical skills of the two (US and Georgian) organizers (both female): “you were so good like you were men”. The interpreter emphasized to US participant that was a compliment.

(3) The 2017 USEUCOM Diablo Shield training event in Georgia was conducted in collaboration with FBI WMD Directorate, as part of USEUCOM’s Diablo Pathways series of engagements supporting the development of WMD detection, border surveillance interdiction, and other counterproliferation capabilities in SE Europe and Black Sea region. Diablo Pathways series supports USEUCOM countering WMD objectives: (i) Use or proliferation of WMD or WMD-related materials, technology, and expertise into, out of, and through the USEUCOM AOR is deterred, disrupted, or defeated; and (ii) Loss of control of WMD and associated materials, technology, and expertise is prevented. The Diablo Shield training event involved FBI-trained Georgian instructors from the Department of Emergency Management of Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) who imparted their knowledge and expertise via classroom and hands-on training to other MoIA contingency response teams, primarily Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) and HazMat response units. A locally employed security staff team from US Embassy also participated as trainees and three Azeri observed the training. There were no women in the SWAT and HazMat response units trained or among the MoIA instructors. DOD team included one woman and FBI team included two.

Recommendation:

At the tactical/operational level: COCOMs should proactively seek to include women trainers in counter CBRN WMD international programs and activities.
At the strategic level: DOD should also seek to increase host nation's women participation in counter CBRN WMD international programs and activities. This effort should be complemented by programs and initiatives enabling increased women participation in decision making processes related to WMD treaties negotiations, implementation, and verification.

Implications:

Disregarding gender considerations in counter WMD programs and initiatives would fault the development of a gender responsive culture and its contribution to effective CBRN response plans and strategies. Areas primarily affected may include the assessment of the disproportionate impact of a WMD on women, the psychosocial aspects of mass decontamination, and understanding the needs of vulnerable populations (or at-risk-individuals) during decontamination (as well as generally during response and recovery operations).

Event Description:

Based on personal experiences with Bahrain Cooperative Defense Program- CBRN Passive Defense, Southern Caucasus BioShield, and Diablo Shield missions, and the following references:


Perkins D. 2015. Women in Biosecurity, personal presentation at the 6th Annual International Symposium Biosafety and Biosecurity: Future Trends and Solutions, 4-6 November 2015, Milan,


- **Posted By:** Perkins, Dana Small Group Leader
- **Email:** doctor.perkins@gmail.com
- **Phone:** 4104467256
- **Rank:** Military - Officer
- **Unit:** 10th-80th OES BN, 97 TNG BDE (CGSOC)

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### 2017 - Including All Listeners in Radio Communication in Afghanistan

- **Created:** 09 May 2017
- **Last Updated:** 23 May 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** WPS _ General
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #Afghanistan; #medical; #IO; #WPS

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Medical Services / Hospitals
- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Women, Peace & Security
- Public Health
- Information
- Social/Societal
- Doctrine
- Training
- Personnel

**This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:**

- Humanitarian Assistance and Social Well-Being
This lesson has the following Files associated with it:

Observations:
A U.S. military communications group developed extensive radio programming for eastern Afghanistan without taking into consideration the gender of listeners. After programming was adjusted to account for this crucial missing element – the gender dimension – many lives were saved in that region.

Discussion:
The Communications Action Group for Regional Command-East was responsible for coordinating information operations (IO) and public affairs in eastern Afghanistan. This group developed an intricate system to consistently communicate the military campaign plan with the Afghan people. Over 500,000 hand cranked radios were handed out to Afghan villagers in a vast coverage area. These radios caught signals from 54 high-powered radio stations staffed by Afghan disk jockeys. Over 50 officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were involved in an extensive effort to train Afghans and broadcast culturally appropriate program content and public service messages.

However, despite hours and hours of pre-deployment training, cultural awareness briefings, and mission analysis, these officers missed one crucial element - the vital component of gender analysis. Even though Afghan women play key roles in society (albeit often from behind the scenes), they had been completely omitted from consideration by the U.S. Communications Action Group since the group had not seen or interacted with Afghan women. As such, the content of the radio programming was constructed for Afghan men. Yet, many Afghan men were outside of the home during the day – working, farming, or fighting – not at home listening to the radios. Instead, Afghan women were the main people who had access to the radios at home and who listened to the programming.

A brigade IO officer in eastern Afghanistan brought this omission to the attention of the director of the Communications Action Group. This officer had spoken to a female engagement team in the area who was familiar with the local women. From this team, he had learned that many mothers and babies were dying in childbirth and that a primary concern of Afghan women was healthcare. For cultural and religious reasons, these Afghan women were not comfortable going to a male doctor; however, female physicians had either fled or been killed and so were not available.

The officer suggested that radio programming be shifted immediately to reach these Afghan women by broadcasting female Afghan doctors discussing pre-natal health. The director decided to support this suggested initiative with resources, contracts, and coordination. Within a week, two hours of broadcasting time each day was devoted to female physicians. These broadcasts reached across all of eastern Afghanistan.

Within six months of this shift in programming, incidents of death in childbirth and infant mortality decreased by 50% across eastern Afghanistan. There were also reports of an increase of tipline calls to the radio station. Furthermore, this shift raised awareness among military units and local politicians, changing attitudes about the importance of women in Afghan society. Many lives were saved by incorporating gender considerations into this initiative, reaching out to women and not just to men.
“My young major had given me a lot to ponder. Somehow, after all our pre-deployment training, hours of cultural awareness briefings, mission analysis and pre-mission rehearsals, we had missed something vital and important. We’d been wearing blinders without knowing it. Years of experience in Afghanistan hadn’t exposed it, nor had our doctrine, lessons learned systems or transitions with outgoing units. Our commanders at all levels were tough and hardnosed and knew how to fight. But this was a game we had to go back to school on.” (- Director of the Communications Action Group, as quoted in the November 2014 edition of *Army Magazine*, p. 68).

**Recommendation:**

Incorporate gender dynamics awareness training into standard pre-deployment training. Analyze gender considerations in all programming as part of standard analysis processes to determine factors and variables in decision-making, so that half of a population will not be missed.

**Implications:**

If gender considerations are not taken into account when planning and executing programming, vital information could be missed which may render an entire effort unsuitable. If, however, gender considerations are taken into account and women are included, lives may be saved.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on the personal experience of U.S. Army COL (retired) Richard D. Hooker, Jr., who wrote an article entitled “We’re in Business!” in the November 2014 edition of Army Magazine (Vol. 64 Issue 11, p. 68). He was the director for the Communications Action Group for Regional Command - East in Afghanistan. A copy of his article can be found via EBSCOhost at: [http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/99053886/were-business](http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/99053886/were-business).

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2017 - Incorporating Inclusive Security in the Colombia-FARC Peace Process**

- **Created:** 28 Apr 2017
- **Last Updated:** 01 May 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #SouthAmerica; #DDR; #SSR; #femalecombatants

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**
This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- Governance and Participation
- Justice and Reconciliation

Observations:

People from various identity groups and populations have suffered in different ways throughout Colombia’s past half century of war. The recent and historic peace process between the government of Colombia and the largest leftist rebel group, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP, or FARC), provides an opportunity for provisions for these various groups to be taken into account during implementation of the peace accords – especially gender-sensitivity in demobilization and reintegration processes.

Discussion:

Colombia’s 52-year armed conflict with the FARC has left over 220,000 dead and more than 5 million people displaced. The FARC was one of several insurgent groups founded by leftist peasants following La Violencia, Colombia’s decade-long brutal civil war between Liberal and Conservative political parties. In the mid-1960s, it originally operated as a self-defense force, concerned by political exclusion, vast land inequality, and lack of state resources. By the 1980s, however, the FARC began to use extortion, kidnapping, and the drug trade to finance its activities.

Myriad atrocities have occurred during the past half-century of the Colombian conflict by armed actors on all sides of the conflict, producing emotional/psychological, moral, political, and sociocultural damage. The impact of the Colombian conflict has been varied across various identity and population groups, by gender, age, regional provenance, and ethnicity (including indigenous, Afro-descent, etc.). Men have been more likely than women to be kidnapped, tortured, or forcibly recruited, while women were more likely to be displaced or subject to sexual violence and enslavement. All groups have been stigmatized and criminalized, while minorities and certain human rights defenders have been targeted for their work.

The most recent peace process with the FARC follows several other attempts at peace in Colombia’s tumultuous history. Several other armed groups had already demobilized; five of Colombia’s
insurgent groups signed peace agreements with the Colombian government by the 1990s. The FARC itself was involved in three major prior peace efforts since the 1980s. Women's groups such as Movimiento Social de Mujeres Contra la Guerra, Ruta Pacífica, and the Organización Femenina Popular, have demanded a negotiated solution to the war for two decades, preparing the way for the recent 2012-2016 talks in Havana.

The current peace process between the government of Colombia and the FARC covered a span of five long years. Initial clandestine talks were held on the border with Venezuela in spring 2011 before secret negotiations started in Havana, Cuba, in February 2012. Four years of official public talks started in October 2012. The negotiators first agreed on a fixed agenda of six points (rural reform, political participation, illicit drugs, victims, end of conflict/demobilization, and peace deal implementation) before starting the official process.

Initially, few women were included in official roles in the talks. However, after women's and LGBT groups protested the absence of female negotiators and a gender perspective in the agreement, the table expanded. In November 2013, two high-level women were appointed as negotiators. Furthermore, in an unprecedented move, a subcommission on gender was established in the peace delegation in September 2014. The subcommission worked through texts that had already been finalized, introducing recommendations for gendered language as well as specific substantial gender issues, such as a group to study sexual violence. These recommendations were then taken into consideration in the main negotiations, although there was no guarantee that they would be included.

In 2014, in another attempt to include representation of various groups affected by the conflict in the peace accords, delegations of victims (60% of whom were women) traveled to Havana to meet with the negotiating teams. These delegations gave voice to their various traumatic experiences, including impacts of sexual violence in armed conflict. This humanized the victim experience for the negotiators and ensured their renewed commitment to end the conflict; as a direct result of the victim delegations, the FARC initiated a process of acknowledgement and apology. Such engagement of victims at a peace table was unprecedented and has contributed to initiating the possibility of repairing inequalities and discrimination faced by many across society during the war.

After all of this input, the peace deal was completed and signed on 26 September 2016 and presented to the Colombian people through a plebiscite referendum on 2 October 2016, in which they had the opportunity to accept or reject the peace deal with a 'Yes' or 'No' vote. In a shocking turn of events, 'No' won with 50.21% of the vote mere days before Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring peace to this war-torn country.

There were several reasons why the 'No' vote gained such popularity. While the peace process had gained much international legitimacy, buy-in from Colombians themselves was more divided. The vote was largely split along urban/rural lines, with rural communities who have remained more deeply affected by the ongoing violence voting 'Yes.' Ironically, the inclusion of a gender perspective in the accords also led to some groups – namely, conservatives and Evangelicals – voting 'No,' since they feared that language about reparations to people of "diverse sexual orientations and identities" was a threat to traditional family structure.

However, once the 'No' vote won, former President Álvaro Uribe, who led the peace process opposition, stated that “the victory of ‘no’ should not be interpreted as a desire to return to war, but rather as the need to improve the accord,” (Segura & Mechoulan, p.2). Following the rejection of
the deal, the opposition, religious leaders, and other civil society groups opposed to the deal submitted some 400 proposed changes; the Colombian government and the FARC then reviewed and agreed on several modifications to the original deal. An amended peace deal was put before Colombia’s Congress and passed. The FARC and the government of Colombia signed a final peace agreement on 24 November 2016.

The revised deal maintained the original focus on gender, addressing inequalities and victimizations in the conflict. However, the new agreement will no longer be entirely incorporated into Colombia’s constitution, and the FARC will now be required to hand over assets for victim reparations. A controversial part of the accord that remains is the allowance of 10 congressional seats for the FARC for which rebel leaders can run for political office. President Santos has underlined that “It is very important Colombians understand that the reason for all peace processes in the world is precisely that rebels lay down arms and can participate in legal politics [...] Our process with the FARC is not and cannot be an exception” (Nikolau, Humanosphere).

Although a gender perspective was incorporated in the final Havana agreement, the challenge will be to implement this agreement. One of the main difficulties in implementation is providing a reintegration process that addresses the needs of both men and women. Between 2003-2012, about 20% of guerilla participants in government reintegration programs in Colombia were women. However, past disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs have tended to stereotype women leaving guerilla groups, offering limited domestic types of job training for female ex-combatants. Government reintegration support was not marketed effectively to these women, encouraging them to demobilize in order to feel like women again and to become mothers. This provided a mismatch between female ex-combatant “lived roles and experiences” and societal perception. As such, many Colombian women who have demobilized in the past have chosen to reintegrate without government support.

Some 3000 of the approximately 7500 FARC combatants to demobilize from the recent peace process will be women. Approximately 40% of the FARC are women, and most joined voluntarily to fight as equals with men, obtaining positions of military and political authority. While some have faced sexual violence or forced abortions within the ranks, others found gender equality within the FARC. Yet, Colombian society at large still stigmatizes many of these women for fighting instead of pursuing more domestic roles.

If implementation of the recent peace process does not take female ex-combatants’ actual “lived roles and experiences” into account, FARC women may not participate, which may negatively impact the peace accords. According to the UN Women Background Paper “Gender and the Role of Women in Colombia’s Peace Process,” “War often leads to rapid changes in gender roles and relations, and these must be considered in the transitions back to peace. [...] A peace process is more than just the signing of an agreement at the peace table; it offers the opportunity to address the underlying social inequities and injustices of a society that are at the roots of a conflict,” (p. 23, 27). As such, it is important that the implementation of the DDR for the Havana accords does not revert women ex-combatants back to traditional constraints that they have fought to escape.

**Recommendation:**

1. As the Colombia-FARC peace process is implemented, it is important that Colombians of various ages, gender identities, ethnicities, and regions not be marginalized. International organizations and actors should continue to encourage the government of Colombia to listen to and include
perspectives from a wide sector of society, especially since the 'No' vote shows that many are still quite divided within the country.

2. The government of Colombia and any partner/international organizations should incorporate gender analysis into the implementation of DDR processes for the FARC, expanding DDR reintegration job opportunity options for women so that they are not shoehorned into traditional roles or domestic careers. Consult with female ex-combatants in the process design, and market the DDR opportunities and process in a way which will attract female fighters so that they will obtain governmental support during this difficult transition phase. Provide health-specific psychosocial support for female ex-combatants who survived rape, forced abortions, and other types of sexual violence during the war.

Note: Inclusive Security provides a briefing on “Engaging Women in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Insights for Colombia,” (Jacqueline O’Neill, (31 March 2015)) with several specific recommendations for designing and implementing DDR processes which will adequately support the approximately 40% of FARC ex-combatants who are women. This report is attached and can be found at: https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/research-and-publications-library/?places=colombia.

Implications:

As apparent from the 'No' vote, Colombia is still a deeply divided society. The more that concerns of all people are addressed in the ongoing implementation of the peace process, the more legitimacy the process will gain in society as it is implemented. If women are not fully engaged and included, it is more likely that the peace will not be sustainable.

Creating and implementing a peace process is an opportunity to address underlying social inequities and injustices in a society, including power dynamics between men and women. This is important to remember, especially in the context of DDR, since many female ex-combatants had experienced a degree of gender equality and leadership within the ranks of the FARC. Implementing a DDR process which includes respectful and equal opportunities for both men and women can begin to address the root of underlying inequities and contribute to a safer and more peaceful Colombia.

Event Description:

This lesson is primarily based on the following sources:

“To Be a Guerrilla, and a Woman, in Colombia,” by Megan Alpert, (28 Sep 2016); Found at: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/09/farc-deal-female-fighters/501644/


See also Colombia Reports for more information on the peace talks: http://colombiareports.com/colombia-peace-talks-fact-sheet/

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2017 - Necessity for Pre-Deployment Training on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence**

- **Created:** 28 Apr 2017
- **Last Updated:** 02 May 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** Afghanistan_General
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #CRSV; #SGBV; #SSR; #BPC; #POC; #SOF; #SEA #Afghanistan;

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Security Sector Reform
- Justice and Reconciliation
- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Building / Enabling Partnerships
- Women, Peace & Security
- Protection of Civilians (PoC)
- Military
- Information
- Social/Societal
- Training
• Leadership/Education
• Policy

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:
• HS 8 Social Protection
• JR 6 Human Rights
• SE 3 Public Order and Safety

Observations:
A decorated Green Beret was almost forcibly retired from the military due to physically confronting an American-backed Afghan police commander who raped a boy in Afghanistan in 2011. The New York Times reported that Soldiers had been instructed to look the other way to such incidents of child abuse, calling them ‘cultural practices.’ Lack of clarity/guidance in not only reporting such violations but also taking action against them set the scene for Soldiers to be punished when they tried to actually do something about a human rights violation. This underlines the importance of clear policy to protect child abuse victims and clear guidance and training for Soldiers on responses to and 2nd/3rd order effects of sexual violence downrange.

Discussion:
In 2010 and 2011, American Special Forces teams began forming local Afghan police militias to hold villages that had been retaken from the Taliban. However, in some of these areas, the pushback of the Taliban opened a vacuum for other unintended consequences. In some of these rural areas, a ‘cultural’ practice that had been outlawed by the Taliban was re-emerging. Known as 

*bacha bazi*, or boy play, powerful Afghan men used teenage boys as sex slaves for dancing and entertainment. Most of these boys were from poor families without means; they became a status symbol for these men. In some cases, the same police officers who had been funded by Americans to defeat the Taliban and protect the villages were participating in this exploitive practice, even though sexual violence is one of the six grave violations against children recognized by the United Nations.

Soldiers would come in contact with this exploitive practice and other forms of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) during deployments. However, guidance was not always clear for Soldiers as to how to respond to these human rights violations. According to an article in the New York Times, based on interviews and court records, American Soldiers and Marines were instructed not to intervene in the practice of 

*bacha bazi*, even when these boys were being abused by Afghan allies on military bases. The NY Times asserts that “The American policy of nonintervention is intended to maintain good relations with the Afghan police and militia units the United States has trained to fight the Taliban. It also reflects a reluctance to impose cultural values in a country where pederasty is rife, particularly among powerful men, for whom being surrounded by young teenagers can be a mark of social status.” (This claim was later denied by General Campbell, according to an Oct 2015 SIGAR report, who maintained that a policy since 2011 instructs U.S. service members to report human-rights violations to the chain-of-command, who will report to Afghan authorities; in September 2015, he
issued a statement for suspicions of sexual abuse to immediately be reported to the chain-of-command.)

In summer 2011, two Green Berets were deployed in their second tour in northern Kunduz Province where some of these Afghan Local Police (ALP) units were stationed – Special Forces Captain Daniel Quinn (the detachment commander), and Sergeant 1st Class (SFC) Charles Martland, who was highly regarded by his peers and had received a Bronze Star for actions taken during a Taliban ambush. These Soldiers began to hear serious complaints against the police. Upon hearing about the rape of a 14-15-year-old girl by a police commander, Captain Quinn informed the provincial police chief. However, the perpetrator only got one day in jail and then the girl was forced to marry him. So, Captain Quinn informed his superior officer who said that there was nothing else he could do since he had already told local officials. Captain Quinn witnessed several other violations without repercussions; after each incident, he would lecture the Afghan police commanders on human rights. Meanwhile, village elders and villagers were getting more and more upset at the behavior of these American-backed commanders who were committing atrocities which many locals saw as worse than the Taliban.

In September 2011, a mother with visible bruising came to their American base with her limping 12-year old son, explaining how he had been abducted, tied to a post, and raped repeatedly by a local American-backed police commander, Abdul Rahman. The woman had also been beaten, and she wanted to make sure that the abuse to her son would not happen again, especially because, being good-looking, he was coveted as a status symbol by local commanders. Upon hearing the account, Captain Quinn confronted Rahman. The police commander admitted this was true, but laughed it off when Quinn lectured him on how a higher standard was expected from him. At this point, Captain Quinn and SFC Martland threw Rahman to the ground so that he would know that such behavior would not be tolerated.

After this physical confrontation, both Captain Quinn and SFC Martland were given a “relief for cause” from that 2011 deployment. Both Soldiers were removed from that camp in Kunduz Province and eventually sent home from Afghanistan. Reports vary as to extent of injuries to the police officer, although another Afghan officer corroborated that they were not serious. It is unclear whether there were positive or negative repercussions for the boy or his mother as a result of the physical confrontation between the Green Berets and the police commander; news outlets have not reported whether or not the child was abused again.

After being forced to leave Afghanistan, Captain Quinn left the military. Sergeant 1st Class (SFC) Charles Martland, however, decided to continue his military career. In 2015, however, under the Army’s Qualitative Management Program (QMP) – a process for downsizing the military by involuntary separation of Soldiers with black marks on their records – SFC Martland was selected to be separated from the Army due to the incident of shoving the child rapist, even though SFC Martland was highly decorated. SFC Martland appealed his case with high support from Representative Duncan Hunter, R-California, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and petitions from outraged citizens. After months of advocacy, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records reviewed his case and removed him from the QMP list.

Although SFC Martland in the end was not actually separated from service, these types of challenging situations continue to face Soldiers. The realities of human rights abuses and sexual violence continue, and Soldiers need to be prepared to deal with them in a constructive way,
without turning a blind eye. CRSV is a threat to security and will become increasingly dangerous if not addressed by commanders and other leaders. Of Afghanistan, Captain Quinn reiterated that, “The reason we were here is because we heard the terrible things the Taliban were doing to people, how they were taking away human rights. [...] But we were putting people into power who would do things that were worse than the Taliban did — that was something village elders voiced to me.” SFC Martland wrote a letter to the Army that he and Captain Quinn “felt that morally we could no longer stand by and allow our ALP to commit atrocities.”

**Recommendation:**

1. Do not use the idea of “cultural norms” as an excuse not to protect children experiencing sexual violence as one of the Six Grave Violations against children recognized by the United Nations. Authorities should hold perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable and protect victims.

2. Provide training for all deployed Soldiers on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and other threats of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) which they may encounter downrange. Ensure that they are trained on the protocols for how to respond to these situations in order to protect civilians – so that they do not turn a blind eye and also do not exacerbate a situation. This training falls under the wider umbrella of training on gender dynamics and Women, Peace & Security (WPS).

3. Create and implement clear policy and authority regarding reporting requirements for Soldiers for cases of human rights abuses, child abuse, and sexual exploitation; in this policy, include clear instruction on how to respond to incidents to protect civilian victims when local authorities are implicit and/or are not taking responsibility for responding to such crimes. Commanders should not punish subordinate leaders (e.g. should not issue a "relief for cause") for instances in which they were taking action to protect people from human rights abuses. The Army could/should address this issue in a number of ways, one of which would be through specific instruction on this subject during pre-command courses.

**Implications:**

Without clear policy, Soldiers may turn a blind eye to such abuses or not know how to handle these situations. Without training on CRSV, GBV, and other topics under the purview of WPS, Soldiers may not be prepared to see or handle such incidents downrange; furthermore, without clear training on how to respond if local authorities do not take action, Soldiers may respond in a way that has potential negative 2nd and 3rd order effects for victim families. (It is not known whether or not the shoved police officer returned to rape the boy and beat his mother.) With proper training, Soldiers may respond to such incidents in a way that both addresses the human rights violation and protects the dignity and human rights of the victim(s) as well as not putting themselves in danger.

If human rights abuses are tolerated or viewed as merely ‘cultural practices,’ this can have dire consequences, both for local victims and for the forces. According to the New York Times, “the American policy of treating child sexual abuse as a cultural issue has often alienated the villages whose children are being preyed upon.”If this type of abuse is perpetrated by American-funded/backed allies with no repercussions or accountability, victims of the abuse will continue to suffer. Furthermore, the legitimacy of the allied police will be undermined and sentiment against Americans may grow. On military.com, SFC Martland claimed that “the Afghan Local Police had
been ‘committing atrocities,’ raising concerns that many locals viewed as ‘worse than the Taliban’ – and if locals returned to the Taliban, attacks against U.S. forces would increase.”

Event Description:

This lesson is based on articles concerning the events surrounding SFC Martland, such as:


“Green Beret who beat up accused child rapist can stay in Army,” (by Kyle Jahner, 28 April 2016 – Army Times); Found at: https://www.armytimes.com/story/military/2016/04/28/green-beret-who-beat-up-accused-child-rapist-can-stay-army/83679604/

For more information on the exploitive practice of bacha bazi, see the documentary “Dancing Boys of Afghanistan” by Afghan investigative journalist Najibullah Quraishi. This 2010 documentary film can be found at PBS Frontline here: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/dancingboys/.

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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2017 - Recruitment & Retention of Policewomen/Leaders in the Afghan National Police

- **Created:** 31 Jan 2017
- **Last Updated:** 02 Feb 2017
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:** PKSOI Staff - PKM
- **Focus:** #police; #Afghanistan;

Observations:
The inclusion of women in national police forces such as the Afghan National Police (ANP) can increase security effectiveness, community access to justice, and women’s leadership in the governance/security sector. However, Afghan women have faced barriers to both recruitment and retention in the ANP due to cultural attitudes, security threats, and lack of institutional support – as indicated in a 2016 study by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

Discussion:

Including women in national police forces allows a society to rebuild with diverse input from more of its members and also improves capacity for a police force to serve its community more effectively. The Afghan National Police (ANP) in particular has not always served all community members well, particularly in cases of violence against women. From 2011-2013, for example, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) found that almost 15% of sexual assaults and honor killings were actually committed by policemen. If women survive sexual violence, evidence from Sierra Leone, India, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo indicates that they will be more likely to report these crimes to women police officers than to male officers. Also, policewomen can be more appropriate/effective than policemen for performing key tasks such as body searches (of women) and house searches (when women residents are present) in societies with cultural restrictions. As such, the inclusion of women in the national police is not only important in terms of allowing all people to play a part in building/supporting/leading their homeland, but also in terms of effectively serving an entire community of constituents.

As national/international actors have pushed the ANP to become more inclusive through efforts such as the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), there has been a slight increase in the number of female personnel in the ANP. In 2005, the ANP only had 180 women out of 53,400 personnel; by July 2013, this number had grown to 1,551 policewomen out of 157,000 total personnel. A Ten Year Vision hopes to bring women staff in the ANP and the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) up to 10% by 2024. While progress has been made, women currently only compose about 2% of the national police force, and although 3,249 jobs are reserved for female civil servants and police officers in the ANP, less than half of these jobs are filled by women, due to barriers women face in entering the force.

To learn more about the motivations and barriers for Afghan policewomen, field research was conducted in October 2015 with Afghan policewomen who were participating in a seven-month basic police officer training program at the Siva Police Training Academy in Turkey. (Security concerns prevented researchers from conducting research at ANP training facilities in Afghanistan). In-depth survey questionnaires were filled out by 378/389 female Afghan trainees (97% collection rate), and there were 29 focus group discussions with 232 participants and 31 individual semi-structured interviews. Although male police officers were not interviewed as part of this study, perspectives from staff from the Ministry of the Interior and mentors from the Sivas Police Training Academy were included.

The women participants in this study were between the ages of 18-37 (93% were 18-24 years old), and all had at least a high school diploma. While most had been newly recruited to the police force (in April of 2015), some had served as police officers prior to training. These recruits had diverse backgrounds of socioeconomic status, education level, and family composition, although they were overall more highly educated than most Afghan women, the majority of whom have no formal
schooling. Most recruits came from ethnic minorities – 60% Hazara and only 8.3% Pashtun, even though the Pashtun are the majority ethnic group in Afghanistan (40%) and the Hazara are a minority (9%).

These recruits had a variety of motivations for joining the police force, both personal and professional. Some recruits had experienced poverty, discrimination, or sexual-and-gender-based violence and wanted to work to transform Afghan society by protecting the rights of women. The survey showed that one of the top three reasons 30.4% of recruit respondents decided to join the police force was to pursue justice for perpetrators of violence against women/children. Others had had childhood dreams of becoming police officers. These dreams were influenced by the visibility of Afghan women police officers at local police stations and those portrayed as effective role models in television and movies. Approximately 20% of respondents had police officers as members of their families and many wanted to honor the sacrifices made by their family members in security forces.

For many recruits, police work was also an opportunity for career development. At least 25% planned to use their earnings from the police to finance future education, preparing for vocations such as lawyers, doctors, pilots, or politicians. Another 25% of recruit respondents indicated that financial support for their families was one of their strongest motivators for joining the police force, due to families dealing with debt, unemployment, or ill health. Police officer salaries would provide reliable income of $165/month, in a context with limited professional opportunities for women.

Despite these various motivations/aspirations, many recruits experienced barriers to joining the police force. Although 86.7% of those surveyed affirmed that there was someone supportive of their decision to become a police officer, 77.9% of respondents also noted that someone opposed this choice. Family members had a strong influence on a recruit’s professional choices. For those recruits who joined the police, a supportive environment was essential to following through on their decision. Many others, however, were discouraged by their families from joining the ANP due to concerns about security risks and social issues.

These concerns were not unfounded. Traditional culture in parts of Afghanistan prescribed strict gender segregation, restricting the free movement of women, and limiting women’s educational and professional opportunities. The presence of women in the police force alongside men challenged many of these social mores (since policewomen would work with men in the office and have to spend some nights away from home), and as such, brought with it community resistance. Many Afghan communities at large rejected police work as being suitable for women, with only 41.4% of Afghans believing that it is appropriate for women to work in the police and the army.

Being in the police force could also be dangerous for women officers. Especially those in visible positions of leadership have faced threats of targeted violence either from insurgents for being part of the police or from communities for being a woman challenging traditions by working in a male-dominated environment. Many also have faced discrimination from their own male colleagues within the police force. Women lack basic items (uniforms) that men are given, receive little training, and are asked to perform menial tasks. Many have also been subject to derogatory comments and sexual harassment from their male colleagues. Furthermore, the work environment is not responsive to women’s needs. Although infrastructure is provided for male officers, many police offices lack women-specific bathrooms/changing rooms which forces women police officers
to walk to work in their uniforms, increasing their security risk, and aggravating negative public perception.

“According to women with police experience, regardless of policewomen’s level of education and capacity, unless policemen are aware and supportive of their role, they have limited space to play an active role and exercise leadership. In this respect, it is important to work with male officers to facilitate training on women’s rights and support for women officers,” to support Afghan policewomen asserting themselves as leaders in their communities and as role models for the next generation (JICA, p. 37).

**Recommendation:**

In order to build a more inclusive and effective police force, increase recruitment and retention of policewomen.

1) Address barriers to women’s recruitment into security institutions. Shift the cultural mindset towards acceptance of women in the police force by promoting civic education through awareness-raising, advocacy campaigns, senior public leader testimonies, and TV/radio programming in order to build trust with communities/families.

2) Make security institutions more women-friendly.
   
   A) Provide necessary infrastructure (changing rooms, bathrooms, and restrooms specific to women). This will also decrease security risks for women so they will not have to travel to work in uniform.
   
   B) Enable support from male colleagues by providing sensitization training to change mindsets and accountability measures to decrease harassment.
   
   C) Build individual capacity for policewomen through practical training tailored to their police duties. Include leadership and communication training, since, due to Afghanistan’s largely gender-segregated society, “[s]ome of the women in this study noted that they do not feel confident or able to express themselves, which is a barrier to their participation and leadership in security,” (p. 36).
   
   D) Provide psychological support to address violence that many of the women police officers have experienced before or during their time in the force.
   
   E) Create and expand professional networks for women police officers.

**Implications:**

If more women are recruited and retained into the national police force, the police force will be more diverse and representative of the social situation, which may improve police operation effectiveness, better equip police institutions to serve people/communities, augment community access to justice services, and increase women’s leadership roles in security/government sectors.

“As revealed in the interviews with participants surveyed for this study, the receptivity and response of family members, community leaders, and the general public towards the recruitment and presence of women police officers are significantly consequential. Lack of supportive environments not only hampers the ability of women officers to perform their jobs as needed, but also discourages new recruits from joining the police force,” (JICA, p. 37). If, however, communities and male colleagues in the police become more accepting of women working in the security sector,
this significantly reduces a barrier for women seeking to join and serve in the police force. In addition, if infrastructure, training, psychological aid, and professional networks are designed and implemented to be supportive of policewomen, it is much more likely that the national police force will retain its policewomen and expand recruitment of additional women to the force.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on a case study on Afghanistan: “Strengthening the Afghan National Police: Recruitment & Retention of Women Officers,” (2016), assembled by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, found at: https://giwps.georgetown.edu/sites/giwps/files/strengthening_the_afghan_national_police-recruitment_and_retention_of_women_officers-min.pdf

- **Posted By:** Gehman, Katrina Ms.
- **Email:** katrina.gehman@my.wheaton.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

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**2018 - Community Action Plans vs. Arms Proliferation in South Sudan**

- **Created:** 19 Sep 2018
- **Last Updated:** 19 Sep 2018
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #Africa; #DDR;

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Women, Peace & Security
- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
- Military
- Social/Societal
- Training
- Policy

**This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:**

- GP 2.3 Civil Society and Media
Observations:
A community-based project launched by Saferworld in 2017 in South Sudan achieved notable, positive impacts in reducing the dangers posed by widespread proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Although not tied to a broader national level program, this Saferworld intervention made a significant dent in “disarmament” across several communities and offers lessons with regard to building and expanding community capacity to effect change in conjunction with local officials.

Discussion:
In April 2017, Saferworld, with support from the United Nations Mines Action Service (UNMAS), implemented a 1-year project that built capacity in three major communities of South Sudan – Kuajok, Rumbek Central, and Rumbek East – to address the problems posed by the widespread availability and access to SALW. Saferworld organized and facilitated several educational, experience-sharing events in these communities – attended by 90 community members that included people from civil society organizations (CSOs), women’s groups, youth groups, and local authorities. UNMAS essentially brought community members together to share ideas and inclusively develop “community action plans” to help solve their local SALW problems. The objectives of the “community action plans” were: to build community capacity, raise community awareness of the dangers posed by SALW proliferation, tackle the demand for SALW by addressing the root causes of localized conflicts, and engage local authorities through advocacy meetings to encourage the adoption of measures to improve citizen security.

Best practices and key ideas that surfaced in the “community action plans” were: (1) Improving knowledge and influencing attitudes and behaviors, (2) Building local knowledge and capacity of communities and local authorities, (3) Addressing demand for SALW, and (4) Mitigating dangers posed by SALW in communities.

(1) Improving knowledge and influencing attitudes and behaviors (i.e., Information/awareness campaign):

- The most successful campaigns used media such as radio, television, print media and social media platforms, as well as employed physical distribution of information/educational materials through posters, flyers, banners, t-shirts, etc.

- Campaigns that collected data on deaths, injuries, robberies and sexual and gender-based violence involving the use of SALW and that then “armed” community members to report the facts to local authorities (with requests for action) proved to be powerful. Within Rumbek Central County, this resulted in prompt action by the local authority in Nyotikangui, who came to realize – through the data & analysis presented to him – the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in his community.

- After participating in the community action group meetings, women of Rumbek Central and Rumbek East began to reject the storage of arms in their houses and spread this message: “It is unsafe to keep firearms where our children are playing.”
Youth-centered awareness-raising campaigns, during which students marched with posters depicting their disapproval of the proliferation and misuse of SALW in their communities, persuaded other youths to stop loitering with guns in public places and encouraged the county commissioner and police to increase their presence in those places.

(2) Building local knowledge and capacity of communities and local authorities (i.e., **Inclusive capacity-building & follow-up activities**):

- Saferworld and partners provided initial training that focused on “participatory action planning” – so that community members and local authorities could share knowledge on SALW issues (including the proliferation of weapons and unexploded ordnance), build local capacity for developing “community action plans,” and then implement them.

- After implementation, groups came back together to discuss actions/approaches that worked well in particular locations and those that worked less well. They measured the impacts achieved – to better understand and highlight what worked best.

- A certain member of the community action group in Kuajok talked about how his group had saved school children in the area from the dangers of unexploded ordnance. Children had retrieved a rocket-propelled grenade shell from a hole near their school and had begun to play with it. However, owing to the training he had received from Saferworld and UNMAS, he recognized the shell as a weapon/hazard and took it from the children. He then called UN personnel over to the area to have them search for other unexploded ordnance, which they then safely detonated away from the area. This community member emphasized that the training received should help his whole community deal with various SALW threats.

(3) Addressing demand for SALW through **Dialogue**:

- Saferworld emphasized holding **peace dialogues to address local intra- and inter-communal disputes**, because such communal disputes had been a major source of armed violence – and an underlying factor that had compelled many individuals to acquire weapons. The peace dialogues brought together community leaders such as chiefs, women leaders, and youth leaders, as well as CSO members and local government authorities.

- Saferworld organized **advocacy meetings with local authorities to influence decisions, policies and legislation to address SALW problems**. From one such advocacy meeting in Rumbek East, the commissioner acted on a request by the chiefs and community action groups to create gun free zones for public places (e.g., markets, schools, health clinics, and public gathering places). This new policy helped to reduce crimes involving firearms, such as armed robbery and random shootings. Likewise, in Kuajok, after a series of meetings that brought together community action groups, partners and local authorities, government representatives initiated state-level legislation to regulate the possession and use of SALW by civilians.

(4) Mitigating dangers posed by SALW in communities through **Tailored Training**:

- Saferworld conducted tailored training sessions (tailored to the specific community/context) that focused on the risks of civilians possessing automatic firearms.

- As an outcome of this training, leaders in one community/cattle camp initiated a practice of collecting all firearms to keep them in one place – an arms storage site guarded by selected...
individuals on a regular basis. This practice had a positive impact in reducing the number of shootouts – which previously had been quite common in the cattle camp and which often had resulted in injuries and killings.

Outside of these local actions/best practices, community action groups recommended that larger efforts be undertaken to lobby the national government to demand increased security at South Sudan’s porous borders in the interest of preventing the smuggling of SALW from neighboring countries. Also, noting that members of government security forces had been selling guns and ammunition to civilians, another recommendation was for the proper storage of arms and ammunition, controlled dispatch and inventory management, and proper registration/tagging/marking of weapons assigned to security forces. Finally, community action groups recommended that a comprehensive, well-coordinated, and nationwide voluntary disarmament program be embarked upon.

Recommendation:

1. In contexts where the proliferation and misuse of SALW has been a pervasive problem, consider resourcing projects aimed at building local/community capacity (inclusive of local authorities, women, men, youth, and CSOs) to help effect change. Consider incorporation of the best practices discussed above: information/awareness campaigns; inclusive capacity-building & follow-up activities; intra- and inter-communal peace dialogues for purposes of resolution and influence; and, training tailored to specific communities/context.

2. If national-level disarmament programs are initiated, ensure that lower/community-level stakeholders are fully informed and included, and that steps are taken to synchronize local/community disarmament actions with the overarching national-level program.

Implications:

Event Description:

This lesson is based on the following source: “Communities Tackling Small Arms and Light Weapons in South Sudan: Lessons Learnt and Best Practices,” Saferworld, July 2018.
This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Women, Peace & Security
- Political
- Social/Societal
- Leadership/Education

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- HS 1 Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- HS 7 Education
- HS 8 Social Protection

Observations:

Education and women’s leadership are critical to effective humanitarian response. By building the capacity of women and girls, humanitarian aid workers can improve their protection within camps and other refugee settings and ensure the affected population is informed about their rights and the services available to them. While outside of the scope of traditional humanitarian work, this should be accompanied by reversing legislation that restricts the livelihoods of refugees in their respective host countries.

Discussion:

At the present moment, the Syrian conflict is the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II. Over 13.5 million people have been killed or forced to leave their homes since fighting broke out between Alawite supporters of President Bashar al-Assad and Sunni dissidents—unrest carried over from the Arab Spring. Of the affected population, 4.1 million have been women and girls of reproductive age, including 360,000 pregnant women. International organizations such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) prioritize these women and girls in their humanitarian efforts, focusing on protection and health services.

Syrians in diaspora are often met with hostility or a lack of resources in neighboring host countries as well as a severe lack of international funding to meet their needs as refugees. It would require $4.5 billion to meet the needs of the most vulnerable Syrians, but the UN has only raised $2.9 billion to respond to the crisis. Migration has overwhelmed already weak and impoverished governments with 4.8 million Syrian refugees seeking safety in neighboring countries. Large numbers have been displaced to Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. One in four people living within Lebanon’s state borders is now a Syrian refugee.
Syrians—and particularly women and girls—are vulnerable to exploitation in such conditions. Displacement into neighboring countries has led to an increase in early marriage for Syrian girls. While early marriage does occur in Syria, human rights and humanitarian assistance organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are increasingly finding that the rates at which it takes place are exacerbated by families’ lack of economic opportunities and inability to provide for themselves. Girls are increasingly married off—not because of any cultural or societal drivers but because of desperate economic conditions, restricted educational opportunities, and their parents’ limited possibilities for employment in host country labor markets. As a result, 23 percent of Syrian women are married before the age of 18.[5]

Education and empowerment initiatives for young women are working to address unusually high rates of child marriage through peer-to-peer training. In Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, a girl named Saba and her mother, Izdihar, are working together to warn other young women about the dangers of early marriage. By advocating for her peers and encouraging parents to educate their daughters instead of marrying them off, Saba feels that she is able to make a difference in her camp. She says, “The girls that are in schools are the ones most likely not to get married. .......When a girl gets an education and a diploma, she has a chance to get a good job instead of a husband who controls her.”[6]

Training young women as educators has a clear impact on addressing cultural expectations around early marriage that put Syrian women and girls at risk. However, it does little to successfully address the socioeconomic conditions that Syrian families find themselves in that lead parents to turn to the option of early marriage in the first place. Humanitarian efforts to protect and empower women and girls affected by the Syrian crisis need to be accompanied by livelihood support for Syrian families—either through increasing aid, finding work for them in refugee settlements and camps, or working with host countries to provide them with legal permission to work and move about the country freely.

Iraq is the only state in which Syrian refugees can gain status as residents with full permission to work.[7] While Syrian refugees do have the right to work in Turkey and Jordan, those rights are limited. In Lebanon, refugees are labeled as “displaced persons,” which denies them the right to work in the state altogether.[8] While humanitarian agencies and donors have been advocating for improved rights to work in host countries for Syrian refugees, these efforts need to be successful to counteract key vulnerabilities that incentivize early marriage among displaced Syrian populations.


Recommendation:
Engage women and girls as leaders in humanitarian response efforts. At the same time, pair humanitarian efforts with legislative efforts to improve the status of refugees in host countries where their rights are restricted.

Implications:
Women and girls have the capacity to lead and will contribute to increased effectiveness in humanitarian response when their capacity is built to do so. When capacity-building initiatives are accompanied by host country legislation that allows refugees access to human rights and economic stability, women and girls will experience reduced rates of sexualized violence and will have the ability to meaningfully participate as leaders in displaced communities.

Event Description:
The author of this lesson holds a certificate in Humanitarian Assistance from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies and has worked as a humanitarian researcher for a variety of organizations, including Oxfam America, the International Rescue Committee, the International Medical Corps, and the Sphere Handbook for Humanitarian Action.

- **Posted By:** Fowler, Catie Project Coordinator
- **Email:** cfowler@oneearthfuture.org
- **Phone:** 3035196811
- **Rank:** NGO Member
- **Unit:** Our Secure Future: Women Make the Difference
2018 - Considering Women’s Agency and Equality in the Humanitarian Response to Rwanda’s Genocide

- **Created:** 31 Jul 2018
- **Last Updated:** 08 Aug 2018
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #HADR; #Africa; #GP

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Rioting / Criminal Acts
- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
- Women, Peace & Security
- Mass Atrocities / Genocide
- Social/Societal

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- HS 8 Social Protection

**Observations:**

Humanitarian responses that focus on the post-conflict needs of women should address the needs of all women and not just specific groups. Successful humanitarian responses will distribute needed goods and services among all members of the affected population regardless of victim identity or their perceived political affiliation.

**Discussion:**

From 2011 through 2013, I served as a Peace Corps volunteer and English instructor in Rwanda. I was evacuated in December of 2013 due to insecurity and unrest. My experience in a post-conflict country was colored by the dark past shared by the Rwandan people, as well as by current politics that made it almost impossible to have an open dialogue about elements of that history.

In 1994, following the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana, Rwanda erupted into genocide. Provoked by members of the former president’s party and influential radio personalities, both Rwandan military personnel and Hutu civilians, called Interhamwe, were mobilized to eradicate the Tutsi ethnic group. In the span of 100 days from April to July, approximately 800,000 people were killed. In that time, thousands of women and also men experienced rape as a weapon of war. Although there are a variety of different estimates, it is widely reported that approximately 250,000 women were raped in this time. Humanitarian response to the genocide emphasized aid for women survivors of the genocide. As the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) gained power in
Rwanda, many Hutus fled to neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) out of fear that they would be killed by the new regime if they stayed. As a result, the international community rallied around Tutsi victims who remained in the country, providing them with funding and services. These efforts failed to acknowledge that Hutu women now living in refugee camps in the DRC were also the targets of violence, either because they were moderates, married or related to Hutus, or because they were targeted by members of the Rwandan Patriotic Army, now affiliated with the RPF and the current ruling party of Rwanda.

The response created a "hierarchy of victimhood," which valued the experiences of Tutsi women over those of Hutu women. Naturally, this hierarchy was not without consequence. The international community had created a dynamic in which women's primary identity was one of "victim," which stripped women of their ability to be identified as anything else. This was problematic in instances where women had actually served as combatants under the RPF or were in need of assistance because they had lost their spouse, family members, home, or property. Further, by focusing on experiences of sexual violence, the international community failed to see or address the needs of women who may not have needed services for sexual or gender-based violence but rather had become widowed or lost family members. Notably, there were discrepancies in reporting between international organizations and local courts. Women were encouraged to report rape to international aid organizations but were discouraged from reporting to local courts due to the stigma they might face from their communities for sharing their stories in public. In the years I lived in Rwanda, the remnants of unevenly distributed aid were still apparent in the un-talked-about race relations between Rwandans who still identified as either Hutu or Tutsi despite government censorship of the use of those terms.

While global concern for women who had been raped because of the genocide did, in many ways, catalyze systems that led to better awareness, resources, and inclusion of those victims, those systems remained imperfect and, in many ways, allowed for the continued exclusion of Hutu women as well as marginalized women who were known victims in their communities. The short-term consequence of unevenly distributed aid was that preferential treatment for Tutsi women led to the exclusion and silencing of Hutu women who had similar needs and experiences. In the long term, women who fell outside this category remained on the margins and continue to be disenfranchised by their government despite the Rwandan government’s gaining international recognition for its promotion of gender equality and women in government. Today, Rwanda boasts a lower house that is comprised of 64 percent women, most of whom are wealthy, anglophone, and affiliated with the RPF—all traits that most likely also mean they are Tutsi. Women who do not fit this description continue to be marginalized. The exclusion of Hutu women from current Rwandan politics was not solely caused by international intervention, but it was certainly exacerbated by it.

While perhaps unintentional, the manner in which the humanitarian community neglected the needs of Hutu victims was in direct conflict with the humanitarian principle of impartiality—that is, that all populations should be provided with the same level of aid. An approach that adhered to this principle and to the standards of a gendered perspective for humanitarian assistance would have recognized the diverse needs of multiple populations impacted by the Rwandan genocide and addressed those needs with neutrality. This case study, therefore, serves as an example of how humanitarian efforts can be improved in future conflict-related emergencies by encouraging better situational reporting and gender analysis of the affected populations.

**Recommendation:**
Future responses to complex emergencies should apply a gender perspective that considers gender, ethnicity, religion, age, and other group identities in the situational analysis before acting. To collect and document this information, affected populations should be consulted to determine what kind of aid is most needed, as well as the requirements for receiving that aid. This will help to guarantee better impartiality and more effective assistance for all affected populations.

Implications:

To neglect the needs of some victims in favor of others has long-term impacts that can lead to continued inequities and conflict in the future, in addition to neglecting the needs of certain groups or identities in the short term. Taking a gendered approach should inherently encompass a multitude of women, men, boys, and girls in any humanitarian response in a way that considers all categories of protected identities in addition to gender and ensures fair provision of services to recipients who may not even have identities that commonly need protection.

Event Description:

This lesson is based on the author's personal experience while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Rwanda, and on news articles, humanitarian reports, and academic critiques of the response. The author of this lesson holds a certificate in Humanitarian Assistance from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies and has worked as a humanitarian researcher for a variety of organizations, including Oxfam America, the International Rescue Committee, the International Medical Corps, and the Sphere Handbook for Humanitarian Action.

- **Posted By:** Fowler, Catie Project Coordinator
- **Email:** cfowler@oneearthfuture.org
- **Phone:** 3035196811
- **Rank:** NGO Member
- **Unit:** Our Secure Future: Women Make the Difference

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**2018 - Peace Huts in Liberia Prevent Escalation of Local Conflict**

- **Created:** 30 Jul 2018
- **Last Updated:** 14 Aug 2018
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #Africa; #WPS

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Justice and Reconciliation
- Humanitarian and Social Welfare
This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- HS 8 Social Protection
- JR 1 Interim Criminal Justice System
- JR 10 Community Rebuilding

Observations:

Peace huts run by local women in Liberia following Liberia’s brutal civil war have reduced and prevented violence in local communities by providing mediation services and liaising with local police to avert conflict outbreaks.

Discussion:

When Liberia’s civil war persisted for years with ongoing brutality, women decided to take matters into their own hands. Women from different walks of life, Christian and Muslim alike, influenced Liberian people to seek peace, convinced the president to attend peace talks, and pressured negotiators to establish a cease fire. Due largely to the political activism of the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2003, bringing an end to over a decade of civil war.

After the civil war ended, women began implementing peace huts across Liberia in the hopes of consolidating the gains made by the peace agreement. Before the war, palava huts under the leadership of men were utilized for traditional methods of conflict resolution in Liberian communities. The peace huts created in Liberia during the civil war, however, were led by women, many of whom had participated in the nonviolent movement which brought an end to the war. Initially, these women-led huts provided services to counsel women and child soldiers who had been traumatized by the war. By 2006, however, peace huts began hearing cases and assisting with mediation for local disputes, supporting the facilitation of fair agreements. By 2012, there were 16 peace huts in Liberia with the support of UN Women.

These peace huts have performed a variety of different roles in local communities. The huts were primarily established to mediate local disputes and to refer victims to counseling. In addition to this function, women of the huts have raised awareness about important events such as the need for peacebuilding during election seasons. Women-led peace huts have also promoted tangible connections with the security sector through liaison with the police. The Liberian National Police provided mobile phones and a free hotline to women at the huts, so that the women could call the police directly with any security concerns or for collaboration on a case. In Weala, Liberia, for example, after peace huts were established in 2011, there were initially frequent calls between the women and the police, but the frequency has reduced since then due to the women's success at de-escalation of local conflicts. According to local police, the women have defused tensions and stopped disputes from becoming violent, serving an important role in conflict prevention.
In addition to their mediation capacity, some peace huts have also had an economic component. In 2012, for example, UN Women and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) provided support for economic initiatives for the women peace leaders of the huts. Groups of these women developed and operated small businesses (bakeries or fish processing centers, etc.) in order to support themselves while continuing their peace work. Furthermore, several huts developed village savings loan associations. In this way, members of the associations would pool their money and lend it to members. Some huts also offered vocational skills programming, teaching adult literacy and skills in soap making and tailoring.

The peace huts have had a tangible impact in local communities across Liberia. The indigenous local ownership and grassroots basis for the peace huts has increased their sustainability, even during ongoing challenges in Liberia, such as the Ebola outbreak. The huts have made connections with the justice system, including by reporting cases to authorities when needed. They have increased community members’ access to justice, which has increased local security. The huts have also reduced the work of the police since interpersonal disputes are resolved before they escalate to a point where they would require additional intervention by security personnel. Since women have played such a central role in these peace huts, women’s participation in decision-making and political leadership has increased.

The United Nations and World Bank commissioned a study on the cost-effectiveness of peace huts as a background paper for the 2018 flagship study on conflict prevention. The study found that the financial costs of establishing and maintaining the peace huts (including building capacity and facilitating trainings) is approximately $1.5 million total annually, which comes to about $62,000 per hut per year. These costs can be compared to the vast amount spent in annual response to crisis - US$10 billion towards peacekeeping/aid or US$95 million in the domestic justice sector. Peace huts thus represent a very small financial investment which has paid high dividends in terms of conflict resolution and prevention.

Recommendation:
1. Provide access to traditional forms of justice and mediation as a form of conflict prevention in high-risk environments. Traditional forms of justice, such as the peace huts, may contribute to resolving disputes and preventing local violence as well as reducing the toll of state justice systems. Liaise with additional community services, such as the police, as needed.

2. The international community should continue to support grassroots women’s peacebuilding efforts such as the peace huts in Liberia (through entities such as UN Women, etc.). Such resources enable women to start small businesses to support themselves while they continue their peace work.

3. In the aftermath of civil war, provide justice services for women and girls who are affected by sexual violence and domestic harm. Such efforts fall under the umbrella of Women, Peace, and Security.

Implications:
Without local grassroots conflict prevention mechanisms (such as peace huts), disputes may spiral into violence. In the absence of the promotion of traditional forms of justice, many rural local people may not have access to state forms of justice.
If only the traditional *pavala* hut system had been used instead of the peace huts, many women would still not have access to justice. However, the peace huts continue the momentum established by women of all identities and religions in Liberia who demanded and forged an end to the civil war. With the ongoing witness of these powerful women who stand up for women and girls who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, both women and men receive a fair hearing during disputes and victims can be referred to counseling and support services. The continuing presence of peace huts in communities across Liberia tangibly contributes to sustaining peace in Liberia and preventing relapse into armed conflict.

**Event Description:**


Other relevant sources include:


For information about the history of how women in Liberia brought an end to the civil war, see:


For additional reading, see:


Or, watch this short film clip:
Human security is composed of three key principles; freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from indignity. Civil society peacebuilding efforts, using a ‘people first’ human security approach, provide a framework that ensures the most vulnerable will be active stakeholders in creating sustainable peace.

**Discussion:**

In early 2012, I resourced a peacebuilding project for a Dutch humanitarian organization in Afghanistan. The project was to strengthen civil society capacities in four Afghan provinces in effectively resolving and mitigating conflict while enhancing the status and inclusion of women and opening a national debate on peace & conflict resolution. The project included linking state and non-state actors in these peacebuilding efforts. The project covered Bamyan, Faryab, Kandahar and Takhar provinces.
The first task of the project called for a baseline survey. My job was to train data collectors in the fundamentals of peacebuilding and then help design the survey questions. At the end I then aggregated data from a baseline survey coming from these four provinces. When the data was all collected, I was surprised that the security concerns that I expected to see as most pressing, were in fact, at the bottom of the list...if listed at all. I expected terrorism, local warlords and attacks from the Taliban or ISAF forces to be the biggest threats to security. Instead, what the residents in rural areas of the country were far more concerned with were things such as poverty, unemployment, conflicts with neighbors, family feuds, cultural conflicts of early/forced marriages as well as land and water disputes. Many of these, survey respondents reported, could escalate into serious violence if not contained. This gap in what I, as an outsider, speculated and what local people experienced as the most pressing insecurities, was quite profound. By focusing on the wrong insecurities, I could have inadvertently and unintentionally increased their insecurity. Designing the most useful programming came about by taking the time to listen to their concerns through the mechanism of a baseline survey.

A security sector response to localized violence through the lenses of the national security threats would have missed the mark in terms of addressing the most imminent security needs on the ground in these provinces. Programs to equip and train local security forces to respond to terrorism, for example, would not have addressed issues of land claims. What was more effective in reducing the local conflicts was an enhancement of the negotiating and mediating capacity of the local elders (Shurah). In conflict affected areas a human security approach develops processes that listen to civil society perspectives, trusting that through their access and connections they know best what their constituent security needs are.

Developing 'people first' processes is complicated, takes time and perhaps most significantly takes trust between security stakeholders. Partnering with civic groups is effective because they have entré, trust and cultural competencies to interpret the local context and realities. Because of this access, civil society groups have constraints that need to be understood and appreciated by outsiders. The trust given to civil society by local communities necessitate that they are not viewed as partial to one or the other side in a conflict and have an independence from parties vested in the conflict. They work at empowerment of vulnerable citizens and their access is based on mutual consent and transparency. As such, these civil society groups sometimes have direct access to key conflict affected areas and even combatants. Civil society groups do not think in terms of 'good guys and bad guys' rather conflict stakeholders. Thus, sitting on coordinating bodies that include one side of an armed conflict and not another may jeopardize the ability of these civic groups to consent to join an evolving human security roundtable. Sometimes civil society, develops its own representative/coordination body in order to insulate themselves from direct combatants.

Because of their intimate and often localized perspectives, civil society is diverse and regularly disagrees on key issues. However, the key benefit for outsiders expending time and effort in developing these fora is that the process of listening has a validating effect. To be listened to and have one's opinion considered, is addressing the last of the human security pillars; dignity. That will have a positive ripple effect on more effective humanitarian programs which meet human need and ultimately lead to a reduction in violence and fear.

**Recommendation:**
Understanding the principles of human security will help reframe the discussions and actions toward a people first approach. Resources, including case studies of human security and training manual entitled *Handbook on Human Security: A Civil-Military-Police Curriculum*, is available at [http://www.humansecuritycoordination.org/](http://www.humansecuritycoordination.org/). Jointly written by civil society and members of the police and military security sector, this curriculum provides a helpful starting point for all sectors wishing to explore human centered security. Specific recommendations . . .

1. . . for the military, understand the operational requirements, limitations and constraints of civic groups in conflict affected areas by using the above-mentioned curriculum to develop multi-stakeholder human security processes.

2. . . for civil society, use the above-mentioned curriculum to become familiar with various approaches to security. In addition, seek to understand the points of contact and liaison with the security sector. If it is too risky to engage these actors directly, develop representative structure whose role it is to represent the local perspective on any security coordinating body.

**Implications:**

To ignore a people centric, human security approach is to make security decisions based on an incomplete perspective and understanding of any given location. To do so increases the risks of not addressing civilian fears, ignoring their basic needs and exacerbating the indignity they feel. This will, in the best case fail to secure the peace and in the worst case, exacerbate an already violence prone situation.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on personal experience in Afghanistan working as a peacebuilding mentor, researcher and trainer for Oxfam GB between September 2011 and October 2012 in Afghanistan. While in Kabul, I was contracted with Oxfam Novib to conduct a training and baseline study in the first half of 2012 for the Building Afghan Peace Locally (BAPL) project.

As Senior Advisor for Human Security at the Alliance for Peacebuilding, [http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/](http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/), one of our main reference points is a Human Security Curriculum that was developed in conjunction with police, military and NGO personnel and released in December of 2015. See [http://www.humansecuritycoordination.org/](http://www.humansecuritycoordination.org/) for the curriculum and case studies.


- **Posted By:** Rudy, Jonathan Peacemaker-in-Residence
- **Email:** rudyje@etown.edu
- **Phone:**
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** Elizabethtown College
2018 - Findings from a Cross-National Study on Women in Non-State Armed Groups

- **Created:** 15 Feb 2018
- **Last Updated:** 15 Feb 2018
- **Status:** Active
- **Focus:** #WPS; #DDR; #femalecombatant

This Lesson has implications in the following areas:

- Women, Peace & Security
- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
- Political
- Military
- Social/Societal
- Policy

This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:

- SE 1 Disposition of Armed and Other Security Forces, Intelligence Services and Belligerents

Observations:

Globally, women have been involved in the majority of insurgent and terrorist groups active in the post-Cold War era. While approximately one-third of groups analyzed cross-nationally engaged women in active combat operations, about one-quarter incorporated women into their leadership ranks, and nearly all groups that engage women incorporate them in supporting functions.

Discussion:

While the involvement of women in non-state armed groups (NSAGs) has been documented throughout modern history, attempts to study this phenomenon systematically and cross-nationally are a more recent development. Specifically, the lack of available cross-national data has limited our understanding of how women engage in NSAGs worldwide.

Drawing on primary and secondary sources, I compiled data assessing women's involvement in a random sample of 72 NSAGs active in the post-Cold War era. This data examines not only the presence of women in each group, but also whether women acted as combatants, noncombatants, or leaders (broadly defined), and whether there was evidence that women were forced into participation (e.g., through kidnapping or the use of child soldiers). This exercise reveals the presence of women in the majority of all NSAGs examined (approximately 60% of the total), with women engaged in armed attacks on behalf of about one-third of all groups and in leadership roles in just over one-quarter of all groups. The majority of women's engagement occurred in groups that relied primarily on voluntary recruitment.
This research additionally looks at the relationship between ideology and the participation of women in NSAGs. A quantitative analysis of the data demonstrates that women are most likely to participate in organizations with a leftist, redistributive ideology. Women are statistically more likely to appear as combatants, noncombatants, and leaders in such groups. Women are also more likely to appear as noncombatants/supporters and leaders in groups engaged in an ethnic or religious struggle, with the exception of jihadist organizations. Promises by an NSAG to pursue greater rights for women in the political arena appear to have no statistically significant relationship to the engagement of women in rank-and-file positions within an organization.

A closer examination of armed movements including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Islamic State (ISIS), and leftist armed groups in India, raise additional questions about the impact that women’s involvement has on organizational strategy and conflict outcomes. Specifically, there is a call to closer examination of the role that human security concerns (such as food scarcity and freedom from everyday violence at the level of the community) may play in motivating women. While some cases point to this as a significant consideration for women, it does not appear to be a systematic explanation for their involvement. Additionally, the research raises questions about the ways in which women’s roles defy easy categorization into static typologies like “combatant” and “noncombatant.” Case-based examination suggests that women can move between roles, and that in some cases women may be performing tasks for which they do not receive formal recognition.

**Recommendation:**

1. Those developing programs aimed at countering violent extremism should take into account the frequency with which women are engaged in non-state armed groups, as well as the fact that coercion or forced recruitment does not explain the bulk of women’s participation.

2. Individuals engaged in designing and evaluating demobilization programs should be aware of the ways that, for women in particular, involvement with armed groups defies simple categories like “combatant” or “noncombatant.” The fluidity of women’s roles should be taken into consideration, with programs aimed at defining membership and participation in armed groups broadly.

3. Policymakers should consider continuing and/or expanding gender-inclusive programs aimed at development and social inclusion. Given the high presence of women in armed groups that promise to alleviate poverty and address ethnic or religious concerns, initiatives that anticipate and address these grievances may make armed struggle less appealing to women.

**Implications:**

Failure to account for the importance of women’s roles in armed insurgency risks future conflict recurrence. Where women are not adequately served by disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programming, they may retain a sense of grievance against the state. This could result in their return to political violence in the future, or to the transmission of feelings of grievance to the members of their household or community—thus laying the groundwork for future armed struggle. Likewise, the large-scale exclusion of rebel women from peace talks should be addressed, as it may impact the outcomes of such negotiations.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on:

- **Posted By:** Henshaw, Alexis Professor
- **Email:** alexis.henshaw@duke.edu
- **Phone:** 585-314-3938
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** Duke University

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**2018 - “Haste Makes Waste” – Security Sector Reform in Timor Leste**

- **Created:** 15 Oct 2018
- **Last Updated:** 15 Oct 2018
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:**
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #SSR; #IndoPacific; #UNPKO

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Security Sector Reform
- Building / Enabling Partnerships
- Civil - Military Cooperation
- Women, Peace & Security
- Political
- Military
- Social/Societal
- Doctrine
- Organization
- Training

**This lesson has the following Essential tasks associated with it:**

- GP 1.4 Legislative Strengthening
- GP 1.5 Local Governance
- GP 1.6 Transparency and Anti-Corruption
This lesson has the following Files associated with it:

Observations:
Two international missions – UNTAET and UNMIT, as well as their United Nations Police (UNPOL) component – fared poorly in their efforts to reform the security sector of Timor Leste in the 2000-2008 timeframe. UNTAET focused its security sector reform (SSR) efforts on training and equipping the local police, but: neglected the work of institutional reform; failed to include key societal groups; failed to connect disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) to SSR; failed to give due diligence to vetting of recruits; rushed into security training programs without sufficient expertise or standards; and, gave little-to-no attention to local political influences and illicit/disruptive practices. Ultimately, the security sector collapsed in April 2006, with clashes occurring between military and police. UNMIT deployed several months later, repeated several mistakes made by UNTAET, and fared no better.

Discussion:
From the outset, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) rushed into security sector reform actions without a thoughtful strategy, after inheriting police reform efforts from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET). “The mandates to conduct SSR were initially separated between UNTAET and INTERFET, where UNTAET focused on governance and oversight matters, while INTERFET attended to providing interim security and creating the Timor-Leste Police Service (PNTL) ... In 2000, UNTAET took control over INTERFET.” (Armstrong, p. 4)

In 2000, UNTAET adopted a plan proposed by King’s College to establish a defense force: the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste (F-FDTL). However, “UNTAET delegated the [recruitment] process completely to the former commander of Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste, (FALINTIL), Taur Matan Ruak, and his staff. The recruitment process drew heavy public criticism from political observers for disregarding important steps of DDR, such as a thorough screening of recruits for their past crimes and lack of reliability and loyalty to the constitution. Eventually, the recruitment process was biased toward men from the eastern provinces of Timor-Leste” (Kocak, p. 352). In fact, women who had served in the FALINTIL and other resistance groups were excluded from the DDR process, despite their crucial role during the independence struggle.

While Ruak filled the F-FDTL primarily with former FALINTIL personnel, the UN – in stark contrast – built up the ranks of the PNTL with a high proportion of former Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia (POLRI) members. The POLRI had been the national police force during the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste. By and large, the Timorese population was displeased with seeing former POLRI members filling the ranks of the PNTL. POLRI’s history was one of collaboration with the former occupiers, including use of repressive tactics. Yet, the UN not only partnered with POLRI and heavily recruited POLRI into the PNTL, but also placed POLRI personnel into the higher/leadership positions of the PNTL/police corps. Along with the historical repression issue,
there were also societal/ethnic issues involved in the formation of both military and police forces. Specifically, most of the FALINTIL (filling the military/F-FDTL) came from the Firaku ethnic group, while most of the POLRI (filling the PNTL/police) were Kaladis – people from the western provinces of Timor-Leste. As time progressed, these ethnic (and political) orientations hardened within both the F-FDTL and the PNTL, and the two organizations (with their ethnic/political biases) developed intense competition for authorities, responsibilities, resources, and power.

Training of security personnel was rushed. The former POLRI members now filling the PNTL underwent only 1 month of training before assuming duties in the new police service. Pressures within the UN to establish a functioning local police force resulted in an approach of train-and-equip as soon as possible – rather than taking sufficient time to deliberately develop an effective and democratically-controlled police/security institution. Neither UNTAET nor its eventual successor (UNMIT) developed an officially published policy or strategy for SSR, nor did they pursue working closely with government ministries/committees/leaders to implement democratic oversight over the F-FDTL and PNTL. Essentially, the UN missions missed an opportunity to incorporate trusted and competent Timorese politicians into the SSR process, while others with self- and group-interests subverted with the process.

Not only was training rushed and thoughtful partnering minimized, the UN missions and UNPOL elements themselves were not properly resourced or prepared to conduct comprehensive, professional training of police personnel:

“A further problem was UNPOL’s own heterogeneous composition. Most of the deployed international police officers had no experience instructing police recruits and also lacked the language skills to be effective. As a result, UNPOL officers relied on their individual policing experience in their home countries and tried to communicate them to the PNTL recruits. Since this ad hoc approach lacked any form of standardization, UNPOL’s police training created confusion, rather than a coherent understanding of professional police practice, among the local recruits.”

(Kocak, pp. 354-355)

The security sector of Timor Leste essentially collapsed in April 2006, when clashes occurred between various PNTL and F-FDTL elements, joined by youth gangs and semi-organized groups of armed civilians. The incumbent administration was unable to establish public order. At the end of May 2006, an Australian-led stabilization force intervened (Operation ASTUTE) to end the violence. Then, in August 2006, the UN Security Council established/mandated the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to rebuild and reform the institutions of the security sector, conduct and supervise rehabilitation of the PNTL, and provide security in Timor Leste with UNPOL.

Once again, however, the international mission (now UNMIT) did not devote sufficient planning, resourcing, or diligence to SSR actions: vetting was poor with insufficient investigations (e.g., although the F-FDTL was one of the main initiators of the violent clashes in 2006, UNMIT failed to subject the F-FDTL to any sort of robust vetting process); training & mentoring for new recruits was conducted over a mere 8-week timeframe; partnering with Timorese ministries and officials was minimized (with various figures then obstructing the process); and, UNMIT and its UNPOL component were not adequately resourced with trainers/advisers possessing requisite professional expertise – nor were UN personnel provided sufficient cultural knowledge. In all these shortcomings, UNMIT was repeating the same mistakes of UNTAET.
Timorese government officials, displeased with the lack of UN-ministerial partnering and the net results of the international interventions (i.e., a disjointed security sector), eventually took matters into their own hands. The opportunity for Timorese senior leaders to change course and assert their autonomy in security matters arose in 2008. After assassination attempts by rebels against the president and the prime minister in February, the Council of Ministers declared a state of emergency and the formation of a “Joint F-FDTL and PNTL Command.” This merger of the security organizations was not only a declaration of Timorese sovereignty, but also a rejection of the externally imposed design/formation of the security sector by international/UN missions and the repeated mistakes, namely:

- rushed actions to train-and-equip security personnel, rather than approaching SSR and DDR interventions with a long-term commitment
- neglect of the local sociopolitical and historical context (evidenced by partnering with, and empowering, certain actors who had inflicted grave harm on large segments of the population
- failure to have an integrated approach (i.e., external actors working hand-in-hand with host nation ministries/officials) in planning, implementation, and oversight of SSR and DDR
- failure to “include” the voices of all former combatant groups/members – including women
- lack of due diligence in vetting recruits for the security forces

“In the Timorese case, the recruitment of partisan former guerrilla fighters into the newly founded Timorese military, as well as UNPOL’s unobservant recruitment of former POLRI officers into the Timorese civilian police, laid the foundation of a politicized and troubled Timorese security sector. … [and] in the rush to get military and policing boots on the ground, opportunities to create a culture of public service, accountability to the law, and professionalism may have been lost.” (Kocak, pp. 362 and 365)

Recommendation:

1. Utilize a holistic approach to SSR. SSR strategy should cover the entire security network within the host nation – local security actors (military forces, national police, local police, border security, etc.) and all relevant institutions (ministries of interior, defense, and finance; national parliament; parliamentary committees that deal with security matters; etc.).

2. Incorporate measures aimed at preventing illicit practices throughout the security network. Develop oversight mechanisms, objectives, and benchmarks for the purpose of eliminating corruption, abuse of office, etc. which could otherwise adversely affect reform efforts.

3. Understand the local historical and sociopolitical context. This will help external actors choose local partners for inclusion in various SSR activities. An in-depth knowledge of the local context is crucial to being able to identify stakeholders, attitudes, connections, etc. within the security sector and the affected communities.

4. Closely align SSR and DDR. Linking SSR and DDR items/issues/concerns from the outset in program design will help to avoid duplication and ensure that activities reflect common objectives.

5. Plan and carry out SSR and DDR processes according to well-documented guidelines – which must be appropriately tailored to the given context. Avoid pressures to focus on only the major
tasks or to effect change as quickly as possible. Shortcuts – in vetting, training, etc. – can undermine the security sector in the long run.

**Implications:**

**Event Description:**

Sources:

Primary: This lesson is based on the article: “Security Sector Reconstruction in Post-Conflict: The Lessons from Timor-Leste,” by Deniz Kocak, in Impunity: Countering Illicit Power in War and Transition, Center for Complex Operations (CCO), National Defense University (NDU), 12 April 2016.

Other references:


- **Posted By:** Mosinski, David Mr.
- **Email:** david.a.mosinski.civ@mail.mil
- **Phone:** 256-651-3678
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI

**2019 - Women, Peace, and Security Partnering**

- **Created:** 09 Dec 2019
- **Last Updated:** 20 Dec 2019
- **Status:** Active
- **Event:** WPS _ General
- **Unit:**
- **Focus:** #WPS; #training

**This Lesson has implications in the following areas:**

- Governance and Participation
- Women, Peace & Security
- Training
In 2017, The President signed into law the Women, Peace, and Security Act (WPS) “aimed to increase the United States efforts to enhance the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of overseas conflict prevention (Source: NSC Press Guidance, June 11 2019).” The subsequent National Strategy on WPS (June 2019) specifically addressed within one of its four Lines of Effort (LOE) an agenda around Partnering.

Discussion:

The National Strategy on WPS states, “Encourage partner governments to adopt policies, plans, and capacity to improve the meaningful participation of women in processes connected to peace and security and decision-making institutions.” Following this, the subsequent drafted Department of Defense WPS Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan (as of October 2019) further aligned two Defense Objectives (each with two complimenting Intermediate Defense Objectives) around Partner Nation engagement. Under these Objectives a total of fifteen Tasks specifically identified the Defense Security Cooperation Agency one of the implementing bodies. This Report aims to discuss the application of these various tasks within recent activities observed across the DoD related to the Security Cooperation environment. The Report summarizes some proposed recommendations based on assessment of these observations in implementation of the plan for WPS thus far.

The Department of Defense WPS Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan’s Defense Objective 2 states that women in partner nations meaningfully participate and serve at all ranks and in all occupations in defense and security sectors. Its Intermediate Defense Objective 2.1 states that DoD promotes women’s meaningful participation within partner nation defense and security sectors. It consists of:

Effect 2.1.1 – Partner nation women have increased access to and participation in U.S. security cooperation and assistance programs, resources, training, and education opportunities.

Task 2.1.1.2 – Encourage the composition of partner nation delegations participating in U.S. 414 training, education, and engagements reflect, at minimum, the gender composition of the targeted unit, branch, service, or other defense organization within the partner nation's defense and security force. (The Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR) are the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), Combatant Commands (CCMD), and the Services)

Task 2.1.1.4 – In alignment with existing reporting policies and procedures, collect and report on sex- and age-disaggregated data within annual U.S. security cooperation activities. (OPR: DSCA, CCMDs)

Further, Intermediate Defense Objective 2.2 states that DoD works with partner nation defense and security sectors to strengthen their recruitment, employment, development, retention, and promotion of women. It consists of:

Effect 2.2.1 – The Department is postured to provide training and education to partner nations on recruitment, employment, development, retention, and promotion of women in their defense and security sectors.

Task 2.2.1.2 – Conduct research, outreach, and engagements to examine best practices for advancing women's meaningful participation in partner nation defense and security sectors. (OPR: Joint Staff, DSCA, CCMDs, Services)
Currently, under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) policy employed as a Security Cooperation activity, partner and allied nations send their most qualified individuals (officer and enlisted) to the U.S. to attend selected schools for training. IMET is a title 22 activity funded by the Department of State for implementation by the Department of Defense. Selection for attending these training opportunities is made through each Geographical Combatant Command (GCC) to the Security Cooperation office in each country. It is up to the partner and allied nation to provide the name of the individual to attend training. Each attendee is vetted (Leahy Amendment) to ensure the individual can attend the specified training. This affords the U.S. an opportunity to ensure that qualified women who are in the military are selected to attend training (pending they pass the qualification of education, military training, and physical qualifications i.e. airborne school, air assault school, flight school).

The Department of Defense WPS Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan's Defense Objective 3 states that partner nation defense and security sectors ensure women and girls are safe and secure and that their human rights are protected, especially during conflict and crisis. Its Intermediate Defense Objective 3.1 states that DoD works with partner nation defense and security sectors to strengthen their commitment to international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). It consists of:

Effect 3.1.2 – Partner nation defense and security sectors have increased knowledge of IHL and IHRL.

Task 3.1.2.2 – Identify and implement opportunities for including human rights and protection of civilians, with an emphasis on women and girls, within annual U.S. security cooperation activities. (OPR: DSCA, CCMDs)

Task 3.1.2.3 – Work with partner nation defense and security institutions to build the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their legal personnel on IHL and IHRL. (OPR: DSCA, CCMDs)

Task 3.1.2.4 – Work with partner nation defense and security forces to build the knowledge, skills and abilities of their operators on IHL and IHRL. (OPR: DSCA, CCMDs)

Task 3.1.2.5 – Build the capacity of partner nation officers, NCOs, and civilians to incorporate standards of conduct into planning, training, exercising, and operations. (OPR: DSCA, CCMDs)

The Geneva Convention IV-Civilians on the Battlefield outlines the requirements to protect civilians during armed conflict. The Lieber Code existed regarding the need to distinguish between combatants and civilians. By the early twentieth century, two methodologies for regulation of the conduct of war developed under international law. The Hague Tradition developed a focus on limiting the means and methods used in combat. Protection during hostilities implies the seizure of destruction of civilian property and the protection of civilians during occupation. There exists under the Geneva Conventions no clear definition of “civilian”, the International Committee of the Red Cross lists what constitutes civilians and guidance to protect. Protection of civilians must be considered and integrated during all military operations. Civilians are protected persons. Women, children, and the old are at risk of violence, to include sexual assault. It is imperative that military planners and personnel conducting operations understand civilian risks, the need to protect civilians during operations, and the need to shape a protective environment.

Recommendation:
IMET provides a good opportunity to ensure Intermediate Defense Objective 2.1 – DoD promotes women’s meaningful participation within partner nation defense and security sectors, and Intermediate Defense Objective 2.2 – DoD works with partner nation defense and security sectors to strengthen their recruitment, employment, development, retention, and promotion of women is tracked to ensure women possess the opportunity to advance in their military organizations. Additionally, women from the partner and allied nations who attend training should be monitored after their IMET training to ensure that their skills received in attending training are utilized and they are afforded the opportunity with favorable assignments to advance their careers.

The women from the partner and allied nations who attend training should receive instruction on the Rule of Law, Law of Armed Conflict, and Protection of Civilians. This Program of Instruction could be a block during IMET school training and an export version designed for Mobile Training Teams (MTT).

**Implications:**

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on input from COL Veronica Oswald-Hruktay, U.S. Army War College Women, Peace, and Security Lead, and Mr. Toney Lieto, PKSOI Joint Proponent Analysit for Governance and Participation and Rule of Law.

- **Posted By:** Dougherty, John Lessons Learned Analyst
- **Email:** john.m.dougherty4.ctr@mail.mil
- **Phone:** (717) 245-3834
- **Rank:** Civilian
- **Unit:** PKSOI