

# PEACE & STABILITY OPERATIONS JOURNAL ONLINE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2012

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE PEACEKEEPING & STABILITY OPERATIONS INSTITUTE



## INSIDE:

- **Female Engagement Teams: An Enduring Requirement with a Rocky Start**
- **Improving the Interactions between Child Soldiers and Security Forces**
- **Sex and Age Disaggregated Data: Solution to Lack of Gender Mainstreaming in Food Aid Projects in Complex Emergencies**
- **Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: A Conspiracy of Silence**
- **No Will, No Way: Women, Peace, and Security in Peacekeeping Operations**



[HTTP://PKSOI.ARMY.MIL](http://PKSOI.ARMY.MIL)

# PEACE & STABILITY OPERATIONS JOURNAL ONLINE

Volume 3, Issue 1

October 2012



## Features

 brings you back to main menu



2 No Will, No Way: Women, Peace, and Security in Peacekeeping Operations  
*by Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast and Shannon Zimmerman*

7 Female Engagement Teams: An Enduring Requirement with a Rocky Start  
*by Colonel Ellen Haring*

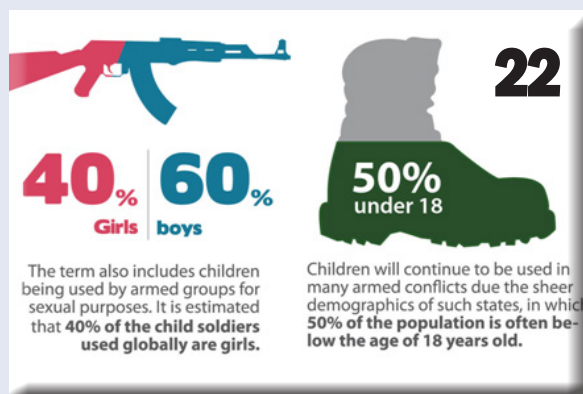
13 Sexual Violence In Armed Conflicts: A Conspiracy Of Silence  
*by Oanh-Nhi Nguyen*

22 “Improving the Interactions between Child Soldiers and Security Forces: The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Experiences from the Field”  
*by Dr. Shelly Whitman*

25 Gender Integration in Action  
*by Karen Finkenbinder*

27 Sex and Age Disaggregated Data: Solution to Lack of Gender Mainstreaming in Food Aid Projects in Complex Emergencies  
*by Meghan Loney*

32 SOLLIMS Update



You can view previous issues and sign up for our mailing list @ <http://PKSOI.army.mil>





It has been almost exactly 12 years since the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 calling for an increased role for women and gender perspectives in peace operations. Just last year, President Obama issued an Executive Order implementing a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, an initiative intended to increase the involvement of women in U.S. foreign policy, national security and



peacekeeping processes. With these major initiatives in mind, this edition of *The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Journal Online* takes a look at gender and child concerns related to peace and stability operations. While some of the content is disturbing to civilized sensibilities, the authors seek to raise awareness and offer solutions to some extraordinarily complex challenges through gender-centric strategies.

Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast and Shannon Zimmerman of the US Institute of Peace lead off this edition with their article, “No Will, No Way: Women, Peace, and Security in Peacekeeping Operations.” They look at the status of UN 1325, and where the international community is more than a decade after its adoption. While lauding the initiative and noting some progress to improve the status of women in peacekeeping, the authors highlight UN lessons learned to integrate gender mainstreaming into peacekeeping operations.


In her article “Female Engagement Teams: An Enduring Requirement with a Rocky Start,” Colonel Ellen Haring suggests FETs should be integral to stability operations because they strengthen civil society to the point of eclipsing the deleterious activities of militants. She highlights the militaries’ use of Female Engagement Teams (FET) which provide vital access to a major segment of Afghan society – women and children.

Oanh-Nhi Nguyen’s article, “Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: A Conspiracy of Silence” explores the horrific but common practice of sexual violence in conflict zones. She indicates this violence persists because a conspiracy of silence shrouds these activities from public scrutiny. However, thanks to the dedicated efforts of UN and humanitarian organizations, the veil is lifting, raising public awareness of this pernicious exploitation.

In another illuminating article, “Improving the Interactions between Child Soldiers and Security Forces: The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Experiences from the Field,” Dr. Shelly Whitman examines the plight of child soldiers and dangers they pose to deployed security forces. The Initiatives founder, Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire, was the commander of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) mission in 1994 and has dedicated his life to ending the practice of child soldiering.

PKSOI’s own research director, Professor Karen Finkenbinder, describes the progress of gender training in various UN training courses: “Gender Integration in Action.” Attending the United Nations Police Commanders’ Course (UNPCC) in Kunsgaden, Sweden, Professor Finkenbinder interviewed Norway’s Police Superintendent Ingrid Tronnes Maehre, who deployed twice to Afghanistan. Among her various duties, Superintendent Maehre recruited and trained Afghan police women as well as working on gender and human rights issues.

In the final article, “Sex and Age Disaggregated Data: Solution to Lack of Gender Mainstreaming in Food Aid Projects in Complex Emergencies,” Meghan Loney calls attention to the necessity to distribute food assistance by gender and age rather than indiscriminately. The author deftly argues, “Food security is inherently connected to gender since livelihoods and distribution of resources is typically divided within a society by gender and age.” Unfortunately, practice has yet to match policy, so Ms. Loney suggests a strategy to ensure the most responsible or needy segments in society receive food aid.

As this month’s articles reveal, PKSOI strives to explore newly identified issues and solutions which often overwhelm agencies and organizations involved in peace and support operations. As always, the intent is to inspire new ideas, stimulate discussion, and encourage article submissions for future issues. We value diverse and novel ways of looking at issues and encourage those that may not often work with the military to consider contributing to our Journal. Our next issue will explore the theme of Security Cooperation and its related tenets. 

# No Will, No Way: Women, Peace, and Security in Peacekeeping Operations

by Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast and Shannon Zimmerman,  
U.S. Institute of Peace



With a decade of gender mainstreaming under its belt, the United Nations has well documented its efforts and difficulties in achieving gender parity in the Secretariat, and its Departments and Offices. Although it was hoped that UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security would result in a surge of women's participation at all levels of peace processes and, de facto, at all levels of the UN, the gap between aspiration and action is still wide. With the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security less than a year old, it makes sense to revisit the UN's well-documented efforts, as outlined here in this "Cliffs Notes" version of the Secretary-General's ten reports on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.<sup>1</sup>

Along with the reports, the UN has passed eleven resolutions focused on closing the gender gap in its operations. Each of the reports, issued in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010, states the current status of women in the UN, summarizes the achievements of the intervening years, identifies problems, and issues recommendations for achieving gender parity.<sup>2</sup> The earlier reports were instrumental in encouraging the Secretariat to collect data on gender balances in the UN, which made the latter reports of keen analysis and recommendations possible.

For the purposes of this special edition of the Peacekeeping and Stability Journal, we take a more focused review of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Policy Directive issued in 2006, which laid out DPKO's intention of being the standard for institutional commitment to gender balance and the equal participation of women. Despite these positive steps, an overview of these reports reveals that women's parity in the UN has only marginally increased in the last decade. The problem appears to lie, not in a lack of understanding of the challenges preventing gender parity but in an overall lack of institutionalization within the UN, especially at the managerial level in terms of realizing the recommendations issued in the reports.

The Secretary-General's reports identify several key issues that prevent the recruitment and retention of qualified female personnel in the UN as a whole and in peacekeeping missions specifically. In addition other recurring issues are: lack of flex-



Police women march at the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) commemoration of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers at the Arc Compound. May 2012, UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran

ible work arrangements, poor mobility, weak departmental focal points, intangible and attitudinal factors, and weak accountability mechanisms for ensuring the application of gender parity initiatives. Every one of these issues has been noted in several reports by the UN as a challenge to improving the status of women in the UN system. A report issued by Women in International Security (WIIS) – a civil society organization devoted to advancing women's leadership in the peace and security field, noted these problems specifically as barriers to women's success in peacekeeping and issued a series of recommendations for removing them.<sup>3</sup> Despite the relative awareness of the challenges, they nevertheless remain obstacles for women's inclusion in the UN and the peacekeeping missions it deploys.

## Recruitment and Retention<sup>4</sup>

The UN recognized recruitment and retention of female staff as an issue early on. The Secretary-General's 2001 report stated the UN's intention to create a global staffing strategy for peacekeeping operations and established a Senior Appointments Group to assist the Secretary-General in the selection of personnel for mission leadership positions. However, subsequent reports identified poor recruitment mechanisms as one of the main

roadblocks excluding women from peacekeeping missions. The number of female applicants for vacancies remained low and they faced more stringent application of competency criteria than male applicants.<sup>5</sup> At lower levels the emphasis on military experience and overall vague language discouraged qualified women from applying at all.<sup>6</sup> As of 2006, little progress had been made and the report noted that improvement in recruitment varied across organizations ranging from no policies to regular gender audits. The report proposed more targeted outreach and recruitment strategies and began requiring the Offices of Human Resources Management to approve the hiring of male candidates when an equally qualified female candidate was available.<sup>7</sup> Regardless of many positive steps, as of 2009, eight peacekeeping missions still had no women in decision-making positions.

Once women make it into the United Nations system, many do not stay there for long. While women fill more than half of the entry-level posts in the UN<sup>8</sup>, their numbers drop dramatically at the mid and senior-levels.<sup>9</sup> Turnover for women in peacekeeping is much higher than that of men due to lack of career track and professional development and women often being placed in positions of low visibility with little prospect of reaching a decision-making position. Another key reason, highlighted in the WIIS report, is the low compensation and the non-family designation of many peacekeeping duty posts, despite the fact that other UN agencies allow families to accompany their staff to the very same locations.<sup>10</sup> The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is aware of these problems, but is still working on satisfactory solutions.

## Flexible Work Arrangements<sup>11</sup>

It has been shown that flexible work policies are essential for attracting and keeping competitive female staff. As of June 2004, all but two departments or offices of the United Nations had implemented some form of flexible working arrangements.<sup>12</sup> Surprisingly, the use of these flexible work arrangements has actually decreased by over half from 2004-2007.<sup>13</sup> In a place where heavy workloads are the norm, flexible work arrangements are not welcomed by supervisors or peers.<sup>14</sup> The managerial culture that exists in the UN casts such policies as detrimental to productivity and efficiency and fosters the perception that flexible work arrangements hinder performance and are applicable only to women. The Secretariat has made great effort to draw attention to the benefits of flexible work arrangements but their continued absence, perpetuated by lack of support from management, has been identified as a factor in hindering gender parity in the last six Secretary-General's reports on the subject.<sup>15</sup>

## Mobility<sup>16</sup>

Need for greater mobility between jobs, departments, and duty stations has also been identified as key to retaining skilled female personnel. The problem of mobility between and within departments was mentioned in 2004 and again in 2006 with concrete measures given to remove these challenges - measures that continually mirror those given in years before.<sup>17</sup> Women in peacekeeping face particular constraints owing to informal networking, the need to have a sponsor, and lack of proactive career planning, as well as family constraints.<sup>18</sup> Male and female peacekeeping staff indicated high levels of dissatisfaction with the recruitment, promotion and appraisal processes and the availability of job-related training, career planning, and guidance opportunities.<sup>19</sup> Overall limited career prospects and unfavorable contract terms were specifically mentioned as detrimental to retaining women staff and have resulted in women leaving the UN and peacekeeping at a much faster rate than their male counterparts.

## Departmental Focal Points<sup>20</sup>

Gender focal points within the UN are essential for ensuring application of gender parity initiatives and providing assistance to women within the system. A General Assembly resolution in 2004, specifically welcomed the commitment of the Secretary-General to better integrate departmental focal points on gender.<sup>21</sup> Despite their acknowledged importance, the role of the focal point still lacks clarity and needs to be adjusted to ensure the latter's effectiveness in establishing and monitoring the department's gender targets.<sup>22</sup> The 2006 report called for creating robust terms of reference for gender focal points to legitimize their role and ensure they have access to senior management.<sup>23</sup> By 2010, some progress had been made but gender focal points' access and inclusion is not yet systematized and the volunteer nature of the positions limits the ability of the focal point to adequately address all of the issues that fall within their domain. A separate survey by the DPKO for the same year underscored as well the need for stronger focal points.<sup>24</sup>

## Intangible and Attitudinal Factors<sup>25</sup>

Quite possibly the largest hurdle the UN faces in improving the status of women is the current managerial culture in the Secretariat. One report characterizes the UN organizational culture as marked by long work hours, negative attitudes about work/life balance, career timetables geared to male work/life patterns, the ethos of "presenteeism,"<sup>26</sup> and a male-oriented style of management, communication and leadership. There is the

perception among managers that work/life policies and flexible working arrangements only benefit women, are detrimental to productivity and incompatible with career advancement. The work culture casts people who take advantage of these policies as not fully committed to their careers. In addition, a perception exists that women are not as acceptable as men in more senior, managerial and technical posts, a stigma that seems to be amplified in military settings, such as peacekeeping.<sup>27</sup>

The 2006 report unequivocally states that the working climate and culture needs to change if the UN is to achieve a gender balance. The 2008 report connects the high attrition of female staff to four main factors, two of which were a hostile workplace culture and sense of isolation as one of the few females on the team.<sup>28</sup> To address these problems, the DPKO to its credit has conducted a study on promoting a positive work environment and established a senior-level positive work environment task force to address the recommendations emerging from the study.<sup>29</sup>

## Accountability Mechanisms<sup>30</sup>

Almost every report issued by the UN on increasing women's participation in peacekeeping mentions the lack of accountability mechanisms as a major hindrance to achieving gender parity. The UN International Civil Service Commission noted that there is a clear correlation between the promotion of gender-sensitive policies and an increase in the recruitment and status of women. The UN has made great efforts on assessing roadblocks for women and creating policies and practices to remove them. However, these policies and practices are only effective if managers buy into their value and are held accountable for promoting them.<sup>31</sup> A separate report by UN-INSTRAW,<sup>32</sup> part of UN Women, interviewed gender advisors and focal points who stressed that the political will of senior management is critical for the implementation of policy directives in peacekeeping missions.<sup>33</sup>

The 2004 and 2006 Secretary-General's reports called for the institutionalization of clear mechanisms for accountability. As of 2006, all organizations lacked effective enforcement mechanism to hold managers accountable and, to this day, no enforcement mechanism ensures program managers meet the gender balance targets in the human resources action plans or promote a culture that fosters gender parity.<sup>34 35</sup>

## Conclusion

The United Nations has set a positive example by investing significant time and resources in gathering gender related data,

conducting assessments, and crafting recommendations to improve the status of women in peacekeeping and in the UN as a whole. However, it has faced difficulties in translating intentions into institutional culture. The UN's findings nevertheless offer considerable lessons learned for other institutions or organizations seeking to integrate gender mainstreaming into their peacekeeping operations. These include:

### 1. *Consolidate Management Commitment to Gender Mandate*

Consecutive reports of the Secretary-General bemoan the consistent lack of progress with regard to women's parity. The 2006 report notes with some concern the lack of progress, even regression of the status of women in the UN since the previous report and urges a rethinking of UN policies – specifically, consolidating the commitment of managers to the mandate. In 2008, the report simply states that the previous reports and recommendations from the Expert Group meeting all mirror one another. While some of their suggested measures were being implemented, it identified almost exactly the same themes as challenges to increasing gender parity in the UN.<sup>36</sup>

### 2. *Establish Gender Monitoring*

The report of 2010 finally mentions the creation of a gender strategy to provide a positive framework to propel progress at an institutional level. In this report, 17 of 30 responding agencies have a gender strategy. In addition, the UN is encouraging a gender scorecard, which refers to the implementation of a quarter or semi-annual monitoring system incorporating gender balance data. In 2008, nine entities of 30 had gender scorecards but in 2010 that number had dropped to seven. Unfortunately, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has neither a gender strategy nor a gender scorecard. It also does not have any special measures to improve the status of women and still lacks strong gender focal points, things identified as key to women's progress.<sup>37</sup>

### 3. *Create a Culture of Gender Mainstreaming beyond Rhetoric*

With a lack of assessment and positive trend reports on improving women's status in the United Nations, there appears to be a lack of will and desire to change from within. For an institution that claims to champion women's equality, such marginal growth over a decade has been describe by the 2006 Report of the Secretary-General as a, "disappointing trend" which is likely to continue if the institution does not commit to more concrete actions.<sup>38</sup>

## 4. *Tie Performance Assessment to Action*

The recommendations identified in each UN report are the results of through research and analysis and the UN should continue to push for their implementation – especially those recommendations which target those issues which have been consistently identified as preventing women’s parity.

## 5. *Recruitment and Retention*

Reform and make transparent the selection and interview process at all levels, especially senior management positions. Ensure vacancies for peacekeeping positions avoid generic language and are not weighted unfairly towards military experience. Reach out to non-governmental organizations, women’s organizations, universities, and other entities to find the best women candidates. To ensure retention, invest in staff with benefits, compensation commensurate with their work, career planning and development, and by fostering a work life balance including allowing families to accompany staff when possible and facilitating spousal employment.

## 6. *Flexible Work Arrangements*

Highlight the benefits of flexible work arrangements such as enhanced job satisfaction and organizational productivity and hold managers accountable for promoting such arrangements. Measure productivity based on output, rather than time and physical location. Ensure that, when possible, many types of flexible work arrangements are available.

## 7. *Mobility*

Promote inter-agency mobility. With regards to peacekeeping operations, work with host countries to encourage spousal employment. Offer a support system for staff in hardship posts and take this service into account when assessing promotions.

## 8. *Gender Focal Points*

Make the job of gender focal point a dedicated position rather than voluntary. Implement the terms of reference for gender focal points issued in 2008. Ensure that gender focal points have access to decision makers at all levels and input in the hiring process as well as the ability and weight to establish and monitor department’s gender targets.


## 9. *Intangible and Attitudinal Factors*

Educate staff, especially management, on gender sensitivity, work/life balance and the benefits of gender parity. Foster an organizational culture, through training and advocacy, which promotes these ideals. Address informal barriers such

as negative attitudes about work/life balance, assumptions of women in managerial posts, biased performance ratings, and reliance on informal networks.

## 10. *Accountability Mechanisms*

Consider enacting a gender scorecard as a part of a gender strategy. Establish well-defined roles and responsibilities for management in achieving gender balance. Senior managers should report gender statistics and be held accountable for consistently missing gender balance targets.<sup>39</sup>

The United Nations has set an important standard in terms of identifying challenges to achieving women’s parity within their institution. Other organizations and institutions can glean a great deal from the UNs processes and how it is now working to overcome the final challenge of institutionalizing the policies and practices necessary to achieve gender parity. 

## Authors:

Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast is the director of the Center for Gender and Peacebuilding at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Shannon Zimmerman is a Boren Fellow in the Center for Gender and Peacebuilding at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> *CliffsNotes* is a series of short study guides that collects information on a subject into short pamphlet form. The term Cliffs-Notes has now become the generic noun for all products of this nature. Wikipedia -CliffsNotes, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CliffsNotes>

<sup>2</sup> The Secretary-General’s report on the *Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System* for 2012 has not been released yet.

<sup>3</sup> Camille Pampell Conaway and Jolynn Shoemaker, “Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing the Leadership Opportunities”, *Women in International Security*. (June 2008). <http://csis.org/program/wiis>.

<sup>4</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) *Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General*.

<sup>6</sup> Camille Pampell Conaway and Jolynn Shoemaker, “Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing the Leadership Opportunities”, *Women in International Security*. (June 2008). <http://csis.org/program/wiis>.

<sup>7</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) *Improvement of the Status of*

Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>8</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>9</sup> Camille Pampell Conaway and Jolynn Shoemaker, “Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing the Leadership Opportunities”, *Women in International Security*. (June 2008). <http://csis.org/program/wiis>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> A/59/357 (20 September 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>13</sup> A/63/564 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>14</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>15</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>16</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>18</sup> A/59/357 (20 September 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>19</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>20</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2004, 2008, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> A/RES/58/144 (19 February 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Resolution adopted by the General Assembly.

<sup>22</sup> A/59/357 (20 September 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>23</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>24</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of

Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>25</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2001, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> “Presenteeism,” as cited here is most in line with Simpson’s definition (1998) which identified presenteeism as “the tendency to stay at work beyond the time needed for effective performance on the job.” Simpson, R. (1998). Presenteeism, power and organizational change: Long hours as a career barrier and the impact on the working lives of women managers. *British Journal of Management*, 9, S37–S50. doi:10.1111/1467-8551.9.s1.5.

<sup>27</sup> A/59/357 (20 September 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>28</sup> A/63/564 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>29</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>30</sup> Drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2001, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

<sup>33</sup> Francesco Bertolazzi. “Women with a Blue Helmet: The Integration of Women and Gender Issues in UN Peacekeeping Missions,” UN-INSTRRAW, Working Paper Series. 2010.

<sup>34</sup> A/61/318 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>35</sup> A/59/357 (20 September 2004) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>36</sup> A/63/564 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>37</sup> A/65/334 (7 September 2006) Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System – Report of the Secretary-General.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> All recommendations are drawn from the Secretary-General Reports on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations System: 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, and the WIIS report of 2008.



# Female Engagement Teams: An Enduring Requirement with a Rocky Start

by Colonel Ellen Haring



*“Co-opting neutral or friendly women, through targeted social and economic programs, builds networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine the insurgents. Win the women, and you own the family unit. Own the family and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population.” D.J.Kilcullen, Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency*

## Introduction

On October 22, 2011, First Lieutenant Ashley White, a cultural support team member died, with two Army Rangers, when their detachment detonated an improvised explosive device. Media coverage of the incident describes the two rangers as part of an assault force that were killed during combat operations. Media coverage of Ashley White’s death says she was killed by a roadside bomb (Moore, 2011). In fact, Ashley White died side-by-side with her two Army team members when she was part of a military initiative that imbeds female service members in tactical combat units. Ashley volunteered for this program and her involvement represents the shared commitment and sacrifice being undertaken daily by female soldiers who are dedicated to the counterinsurgency mission in Afghanistan.

## Background

Women and children comprise approximately 71% of the population in Afghanistan but, until recently, the dialogue and all actions with regard to Afghanistan’s future were directed at and by men. Afghanistan is a highly traditional Islamic society where women and children were thought to have no power and no opportunity to influence the future of their country. However, after years of trying and failing to curb a growing insurgency the international coalition searched for new avenues to influence Afghanistan’s future. Surprisingly, but perhaps too late, attention turned to Afghan women.

A slowly emerging understanding that women are not just passive victims who play no role in conflict led to an examination of what role women may play. According to Ambassador Swanee Hunt, founder of Women Waging Peace, “because women are not wielding the weapons and are not in positions of formal leadership, those in power consider them less threaten-



3rd BDE, 10th MTN Division Female Engagement Team member Sgt. Lidya Admounabdfany writes down information from a local woman at the Woman’s Center near the Zhari District Center outside of Forward Operating Base Pasab, Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Dec. 17, 2011. Cover photo, taken by 55th Combat Camera Team member SPC Kristina Truluck.

ing, allowing them to work unimpeded. They hold up families, not rifles. They can reach across conflict lines” (Hunt in Chedelin & Eliatamby, 2011, 106). She further asserts that women “have a huge investment in the stability of their communities. And since women know their communities, they can sense tensions prior to conflict, articulate a peace process during violence, and figure out how to shape a post-war peace agreement that will be accepted by the community” (Hunt in Chedelin & Eliatamby, 2011, 107). The U.S. military stumbled upon this realization after years of operating in Afghanistan focused on men. .

The origin of the Female Engagement Team program in Afghanistan is somewhat contested. Various bodies have had limited interactions with women in Afghanistan since U.S. and coalition forces entered the country 10 years ago. However, it wasn’t until late 2008 that the U.S. Marines formalized a program directed at interacting with Afghan women (Russo, 2011, 3). They identified a need to engage Afghan women in rural communities that are highly gender-segregated but in which the all-male combat units were culturally prohibited from interacting with Afghan women. Hence, the birth of Female

Engagement Teams (FET), nominally trained teams of coalition women, attached to ground combat units with the express purpose of “engaging” Afghan women.

## A Rocky Start: Mission and Training

Early uses of FETs included everything from body searches of female Afghans at security checkpoints, to home searches of women’s quarters, to development projects aimed at empowering Afghan women. In late 2009, the Naval Post Graduate School Research and Analysis Center conducted a six month in-country study of the potential and appropriate uses of Female Engagement Teams (FET). The study resulted in an extensive report to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander that outlined and recommended uses of FETs (Vedder, 2011). In May of 2010, General Stanley McChrystal, the ISAF Commander, published a directive requiring ground combat units to employ FETs in their areas of operations (McChrystal, 2010).

The 2010 directive loosely defined the roles and mission of the FETs and some of the female-specific strategies appropriate to achieving the counterinsurgency mission. First, it acknowledged the importance of Afghan women by asserting that “their influence on Afghan society is considerable even when considering local social norms” (McChrystal, 2010, p.1-2). Second, it provided general guidance for team recruitment, composition and training. Third, and most importantly it directed FETs to “develop trust-based, enduring, and dynamic information-sharing relationships that assist GIRoA (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan) and the battle space owner in addressing the sources of instability in the area” (McChrystal, 2010, p. 3). Finally, the directive specifically prohibited using FETs for deliberate intelligence gathering.

Various military units and activities interpreted this directive differently and the result is a diverse approach to FET employment. Some organizations made no immediate effort to create this capability. It took a subsequent Army Vice- Chief of Staff executive order to ensure deployment of this capability in the Army. Army brigade combat teams were directed to have a minimum number of dedicated and trained teams for every deploying unit with a deadline for employment by August 2011 (Haring, 2011). Two groups, the Marines and the Special Operations Command, had already developed and begun training FETs in the U.S. for deployments to Afghanistan (Haring, 2011). The Civil Affairs community had established an in-country training program for currently deployed women (Wolfgang, 2011). Army brigade combat teams had no estab-

lished recruitment or training program and they were directed to use the newly established Special Forces training program as their training model.

Each of these organizations identifies a different mission focus, recruits teams differently and provides a whole range of training that lasts between 1 week and 4 months. As with any newly emerging requirement and associated capability there is a period of trial and error. The problem in this case is that there are few, if any, people in the military or in academia who fully understand the role of gender and, more specifically, women in conflict because until recently it received little attention. A 2011 publication by the U.S. Institute of Peace entitled “Women & War” identifies the dearth of research on this topic as problematic for developing programs and policies for a gendered approach to working with women in conflict environments (Kuehnast, 2011, 5-8). For the military the result has been a focus on Afghan culture, customs and tactical skills rather than a focus, more specifically, on gender and what women, in particular, are capable of doing in conflict environments.

## An Enduring Requirement

Some people have questioned the enduring nature of the female engagement team program. They view Afghanistan as a uniquely gender segregated society that has driven the requirement for female focused teams that will not be necessary when peace is achieved in Afghanistan. Others have asserted that if the U.S. military were itself fully gender integrated it would not need to establish special teams of women who can interact with women in foreign conflicts because that capability would exist at all levels and in all units. On the surface these points hold merit but a closer examination is required.

The view that female engagement teams are a unique requirement of the culture of Afghanistan illustrates a failure to understand, more broadly, how conflict affects men and women differently and how both sexes must be considered as two different identity groups within the same culture. Women experience conflict differently and they operate differently from men within every culture. According to Dr. Sandra Cheldelin, a gender and conflict expert, “When it comes to war and peace, conflict and violence — gender matters” (Cheldelin & Eliat-amby, 2011, 11). Recognizing this, studying its importance and then training and deploying gender focused teams are critically important to creating stability and ensuring a lasting peace.

Why are women important in conflict environments? First and foremost, women can be leveraged as non-violent activists



The members of 12th Combat Aviation Brigade female engagement team, SGT Raaya Lock, SPC Mackenzie Almand and SGT LaToya Congress, accompany local officials to an engagement site in Samangan, Afghanistan. Photo taken by SFC Klaus Riessner

with powerful influences within the family and the community. Extensive research reveals that women are far less likely to engage in violence to achieve their objectives than men. For the past 700 years, historical records show that violence is almost the exclusive activity of men. Women account for between 5% and 12% of all violent deaths across all cultures throughout recorded history (Muchembled, 2012, 40). Recent events in the countries of the Arab Spring reveal that “women in these countries have been a central force in non-violent activism, and they remain most visible in civil society because formal political structures, religious movements and organizations tend to exclude them from leadership (ICSAN, 2011, 2).” Dr. David Kilcullen, a noted expert on insurgencies, asserts that, “co-opting neutral or friendly women, through targeted social and economic programs, builds networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine the insurgents (Kilcullen, 2006, 7).” He further posits that when you “win the women ... you own the family unit. Own the family and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population (Ibid, 7).” Finally, according to Afghan village elder Fouzai Mohmoud, “women see and hear it all. If you can hear the voice of the Afghan woman, and address the needs of her children, you will defeat those that hurt you and take your freedom away.” (Mohmoud, 2009). This data and these anecdotal examples support the view that women can and do play an important role in stabilizing communities and reducing the influence of hostile actors. But their influence is harder to recognize and is not well understood nor has it been extensively studied or documented.

Because women operate largely in private spaces, versus the public domain, their role in conflict receives little attention. Recent work by a few institutions and a new five part PBS documentary entitled “Women, War and Peace” reveal the powerful impact that women can have during and after conflict. Part II of the series entitled, “Pray the Devil Back to Hell”, chronicles the work of the women of Liberia during the Liberian civil war. In 1998, women from all tribes, religions and ethnic groups united in their common quest to end the violence. They mobilized women in the private sector, across Liberia, to force a negotiated settlement. Their tactics were many and varied. Their demonstrations and sit-ins during peace negotiations, from which they were completely excluded, are credited with forcing the parties in conflict to sign the Accra Peace Accord. After the peace accord was signed the women travelled throughout Liberia to support the disarmament process. When Liberia held peaceful democratic elections in 2005 the women helped elect President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa’s first female head of state. Today the work of these women continues and this year two of them received the Nobel Peace Prize (PBS Online). The women of Liberia demonstrate the power of “networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine insurgents (Kilcullen, 2006,7)”.

Additional research has linked the stability of communities to the role and empowerment of women. According to a team of researchers who studied data on inequality throughout the world, when women are empowered to act as agents of social change the result is reduced violence where “people trust each other more and community life is stronger (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009, 270).” Researchers at Harvard University conducted an extensive study of the linkage between a state’s stability and the security of women. They found that “there is a strong and statistically significant relationship between the physical security of women and three measures capturing the relative peacefulness of states (Hudson, 2009, 41).” What they found is that a state’s stability cannot be predicted by its level of wealth, its level of democracy, or its commitment to Islam. It can be predicted by the level of security enjoyed by its women (Ibid, 41). An MIT study on the collective intelligence of groups unexpectedly found that groups that include women are collectively more intelligent than groups where women are absent (Woolley, Chabris, Pentland, Hashmi & Malone, 2010). If the security of women and more equal societies are at the core of reducing violence and stabilizing communities and if decision making groups that include women are collectively more intelligent than all male groups then Female Engagement Teams meet a critical need. They provide mixed gender teams when paired with male units, which are trained on female engagement and

empowerment to assist local women in bringing peace, stability and reconstruction to any conflict or humanitarian emergency.

Female Engagement Teams (FETs) are relevant across a wide range of military operations. The UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations actively recruits female peacekeepers and in 2007 deployed an all female Indian peacekeeping force to Liberia. They found that there were immediate qualitative and quantifiable effects to employing women security forces in communities in conflict. The effects included: empowering women in the host community; screening and assisting female ex-combatants during the process of demobilization and reintegration; widening the net of information gathering; performing cordon and search of women; interviewing survivors of gender-based violence; recruiting and mentoring female cadets at police and military academies; interacting with women in societies where women are prohibited from speaking to men; helping to reduce conflict and confrontation; improving access and support for local women; providing a greater sense of security to local populations; creating a safer and less fearful environment for women; and, they highlight diversity, inclusion and gender equality (UN Peacekeeping, 2011). Measurable effects directly attributed to female peacekeepers include a reduction in gender based violence against women and children and a threefold increase in the number of women recruits for Liberia's police and military (Cordell, 2009). The U.S. military's use of gender focused teams is an enduring requirement that is relevant to any community in conflict or in upheaval.

## Correcting Course

FETs should and largely do provide non-lethal approaches to increasing security and stabilizing communities. However, because the program is new and not clearly defined, FETs receive a whole range of diverse training and commanders use their FETs in a wide range of missions. If the intent of FETs is to “develop trust-based, enduring, and dynamic information-sharing relationships that assist ...in addressing the sources of instability in an area (McCrystal, 2010, 3)” then there are specific activities with associated goals and objectives that should be pursued. And, there is specific training that FET teams must receive to achieve these goals and objectives. The current ad hoc method of allowing every organization to define the roles and responsibilities of FETs and to develop their own training is counterproductive to a very hopeful focus on women as agents of peaceful social change in conflict.

So far the mission has repeatedly been to “engage” Afghan women. Engage them for what reason? The answer is: engage



U.S. Army Capt. Iajaira Perez, Female Engagement Team commander, HHC, 116th Infantry Battalion, speaks with the female National Police working in Qalat after a class on literature, Afghanistan, Dec. 3, 2011. Capt. Perez's team discussed the issues that the women are having with the uniforms and communication. Photo taken by Joint Combat Camera Team member SPC. Chrystal Davis

them so that they are better connected to and understand the role of the Afghan government and the purpose of coalition forces in Afghanistan. The thinking is that if Afghan women feel more connected to their government and safer around coalition forces then they will make efforts to marginalize Taliban insurgents. This premise is based on faulty logic. It presupposes that Afghan women will/can/want to develop a connection to the central government and will be able to choose the government over local actors. What is possible if a longer view is taken within the cultural realities of a largely rural, traditional and very conservative society? If Afghan women are assisted to become agents of change, then they must be “empowered” within the confines of their communities to make those changes and their very limited connection to a central government must be acknowledged. This approach presupposes that Afghan women will act as agents of peaceful change.

Dr. Sandra Cheldelin and Maneshka Eliatamby conducted an extensive review of case studies and reports focused on women's roles and activities before during and after violent conflict in their newly released book, “Women Waging War and Peace”. They found several common activities successfully pursued by women in their quest for peace. Women across multiple conflicts were able to reduce violence and affect peace by working through grass roots social networks. Women connected and mobilized around issues of the private domain and brought them into public focus. They “created coalitions of support

among civil society groups” that made it possible “to mobilize supporters and recruit sympathizers, locally and globally” (Cheldelin, 2011, 287). Specific activities that female peace builders pursued that FETs should be trained to support include: 1) connecting women across communities, 2) assisting women in building sustainable networks, 3) support locally identified needs with local solutions, 4) work creatively within the cultural framework to avoid resentment or backlash, and, 5) assist in getting capacity building initiatives funded and resourced (Cheldelin, 2011, 287-289). A whole host of activities lend themselves to this type of empowerment in Afghanistan. Some are being pursued by FETs. Within the context of Afghan society women’s shuras can be organized. Women’s community centers can be built and women’s markets can be established. These are all actions that FETs can support but it is imperative that FETs act as enablers to the efforts of local women, not leaders of the activities. FETs must be trained and resourced to pursue these activities with local women.


The United Nation’s “Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women”, the United States Institute of Peace’s “Gender and Peacebuilding Center” and a few gender-focused, non-governmental organizations such as the “Institute for Inclusive Security” deserve credit for developing strategies for empowering women in conflict environments. The Department of Defense would do well to study and adopt many of their strategies. All of these organizations support women’s empowerment programs focused on creating economic and educational opportunities. They generally advocate economic empowerment as the starting point for giving women agency within their communities.

A review of the work of the aforementioned organizations recommends the following strategy for the military. First, clarify the mission with supporting goals, objectives and recommended strategies. The mission should be changed from “engage” to “empower” local women to act as agents of social change with the expectation that it will lead to greater peace and stability. Second, develop training that supports achievement of the goals. FET members should be trained not only in the cultural aspects of countries in conflict but in programs directed at: 1) networking women 2) economic empowerment of women, and 3) educational opportunities for women. Finally, FETs should be trained on how to conduct population focused assessments to see what effect women focused programs are having within the population. Finally, there must be some sort of assessment process to determine if FET activities are helping or hurting Afghan women.



Gamaruddin Jabarkhiel (right), the cultural adviser for Regional Command Southwest, speaks to U.S. and U.K. female engagement teams and their linguists during training at the Afghan Cultural Center on Camp Leatherneck, May 16. The FETs met to discuss progress made, share experiences and give advice regarding how to reach out to Afghan women. Photo taken by Marine Lance Corporal Katherine Solano.

## Conclusion

As with any new initiative, there will be a period of trial and error. However, leaving the FET mission in the hands of the “battle space owner” or even the unit commander is a mistake. These Commanders, almost all of whom are combat arms military officers, will naturally default to an enemy focused approach that fails to take a gendered, long view of what is possible when women are mobilized for peace and stability. There is an extensive body of work in social systems theory that advocates ignoring social disruptors (insurgents) while focusing on social strengths (Afghan families) to develop strong stable social systems. The majority of our resources have been focused on killing or capturing insurgents at the expense of civil society. This program is a step in the right direction but it needs an executive steering body that can carefully oversee and manage the program and training of the men and women who are volunteering to execute this important mission. Knocking on people’s doors in the vain hope of establishing enduring relationships that will yield information about insurgents is the worst approach for FETs to take and will not empower Afghan women to act as agents of peaceful social change. 

## Bibliography

- Commander's Guide to Female Engagement Teams v3. (2011). Center for Army Lessons Learned, FT Leavenworth, KS.
- Cheldelin, Sandra and Ann F. Lucas. (2003). *Conflict Resolution*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Cheldelin, Sandra I. and Maneshka Eliatamby. (2011). *Women Waging War and Peace*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Cordell, Kristen. (2009). *Liberia: Women Peacekeepers and Human Security*. Accessed November 30, 2011 from Inclusive Democracy at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/blog/liberia/kristen-cordell/2009/10/08/liberia-women-peacekeepers-and-human-security>
- Government Accounting Office. *Gender Issues: Information on DODs Assignment Policy and Direct Ground Combat Definition*. (1998). Government Accounting Office: Washington, D.C.
- Haring, Ellen. (2011). *Female Engagement Team Working Group*. Notes compiled by author during working group conducted on 3-4 April 2011 at FT Meade, MD.
- Hudson, Valerie M., Mary Caprioli, Bonnie Balif-Spanvill, Rose McDermott and Chad F. Emmett. *The Heart of the Matter: Women's Security and the Security of States*. (2009). *International Security*, vol. 33 Harvard College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. [http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/IS3303\\_pp007-045.pdf](http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/IS3303_pp007-045.pdf) accessed 1/11/2011.
- International Civil Society Action Network (ICSAN). (2011). *What the Women Say: The Arab Spring & Implications for Women*. Brief 1: December 2011. Washington, D.C.
- Killcullen, David, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency," *Small Wars Journal*, (2006): 7. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/>
- Kuehnast, Kathleen, et al. *Women & War: power and protection in the 21st century*. (2011). U.S. Institute of Peace: Washington, D.C
- McChrystal, Stanley A. General. *Engagement with Afghan Females Directive*. (2010). International Security Assistance Force/United States Forces-Afghanistan.
- Mohib, Lael A. (2012). *Foreign Policy*. Afghan Solutions for Afghans Women. [http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/01/13/afghan\\_solutions\\_for\\_afghan\\_women](http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/01/13/afghan_solutions_for_afghan_women)
- Mohmoud, Fouzai. *USMC 2nd MEB-Afghanistan FET Brief* (2009) Shavkhzai Village, Afghanistan.
- Moore, Heather. *Goldsboro-based National Guard Soldier Killed in Afghanistan*. (2011). TWEAN News Channel of Raleigh, NC. Web site accessed on November, 13, 2011. <http://charlotte.news14.com/content/military/648825/goldsboro-based-national-guard-soldier-killed-in-afghanistan>
- Muchembled, Robert. *A History of Violence*. (2012). Polity Press: Cambridge, UK.
- PBS Online. 2011. "Pray the Devil Back to Hell," *Women, War and Peace*, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/category/full-episodes/>
- Russo, Clair and Shannon Spann. *Female Networking Operations: A Tactical Tool for Strategic Advantage*. (2011). Orbis Operations, LLC: Arlington, VA.
- United Nations Peacekeeping web page. *Women in Peacekeeping*. Accessed November 13, 2011, from <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/womeninpk.shtml>
- Vedder, Maria Major. *Engaging the Female Populace*. (2011). Naval Postgraduate School, TRADOC Research and Analysis Center, Monterey, California.
- Vedder, Maria. *Video Interview with Army Major Maria Vedder*. (2010). Accessed October, 30, 2011. <http://www.nps.edu/video/portal/Video.aspx?enc=nZI9929DI%2bGSuxHOesGct28avIPH9dCf>
- Watson, Julia MSgt. (2011) *The Marine Corps Gazette*. *Female Engagement Teams: The Case for More Female Civil Affairs Marines*. <http://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/article/female-engagement-teams-case-more-female-civil-affairs-marines> accessed 11/1/2011.
- Wilkinson, Richard, and Kate Pickett. *The Spirit Level*. 2009. Bloomsbury Press, New York.
- Wolfgang, Teresa LTC and Dr. Lisa Brooks. "Welcome FET Trainees". 2011. Briefing provided to FET members at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.
- Woolley, Anita Williams, Christopher Chabris, Alex Pentland, Nada Hashmi, Thomas Malone. (2010, November 10). *Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in Human Groups*. *Science Magazine*, 330, 669-688. <http://karlulrich.pbworks.com/f/Evidence+for+collective+intelligence,+brief.pdf>

# Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts: A Conspiracy of Silence

by Oanh-Nhi Nguyen



In the aftermath of the Cold War, small arms and light weapons became easily accessible in intrastate conflicts, turning any field into a battlefield. During armed conflicts and post-conflicts, an estimated 75 percent of civilians, many of which are women and children, become victims of violence.<sup>1</sup> The pillaging and destruction of villages by warring factions (e.g., militia, rebel, paramilitary, and even government forces) intimately involves civilians, and as expressed by Janie Leatherman, unlike “wars of liberation” these “new wars” do not vie for the support of civilians, instead the population, specifically women and children, bear the brunt of this rapacity.<sup>2</sup> Whether collecting wood, walking to the market, stopping at checkpoints, or even in the comfort of their homes, females face the threat of sexual violence, which is pervasive in conflict zones.

The International Criminal Tribunal (ICTY) for the former Yugoslavia in 1993 was the first ruling to condemn rape “as a form of torture and for sexual enslavement as crime against humanity.”<sup>3</sup> Although this represents a fundamental step in international recognition and condemnation of sexual violence, according to the UNIFEM, “out of approximately 300 peace agreements reached in 45 conflicts since the end of the Cold War, only ten peace processes even mentioned sexual violence.”<sup>4</sup> The use of sexual violence in an armed conflict is readily accessible, available, and of no cost to a perpetrator. It becomes one of the most effective and powerful tools of warfare in destroying a community. As Jan Egeland, Director of Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, argues:

It may be one of the biggest conspiracies of silence [in] history... because it has continued up until this day. In the peace process, the one thing that two sides or many sides seem to agree on is ‘Let’s not touch it because we’ve all had our hands bloodied and dirtied by this.’

The Geneva Convention of 1950 became the first international law to proclaim the protection of women against violence: “Women shall be especially protected from any attack upon their honour, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault.”<sup>5</sup> Numerous national and international laws and resolutions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(CEDAW: 1970) and UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1889, emphasize the need for leadership of women in society, whether in the reintegration and peace process of armed conflicts or political participation in their respective governments. Despite these conventions that underscore the protection of women, it is simply unconscionable when state and non-state actors ignore these UN principles perpetrate sexual violence on civilians.

This essay introduces accepted definitions of sexual violence, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and literature on selected case studies that demonstrate the motives and effects of sexual violence. Additionally, it provides recommendations for creating a sustainable system that supports victims and reduces future cases of sexual violence. Sexual violence is an abuse of economic, political and human rights and an obstacle to development. While sexual violence is pervasive and persistent, it must not be accepted as a norm. Effort must be taken to end the suffering of more than half of the world’s population. The prevention of future victims is conducive to the protection of civilians in stabilizing a population, rebuilding a country, and maintaining international peace and security.

## Definitions

**Victims:** Any gender can be a victim; women in general: pregnant women, married women, adolescent girls, female-headed households, orphans and unaccompanied minors, young girls and boys, and men.<sup>6</sup>

**Perpetrators:** Any gender can be a perpetrator; in some armed conflicts perpetrators mostly include conflict actors, government and military officials, peacekeepers, and civilians.

**Rape:** Sexual assault through penetration using a body part or other object, including vaginal copulation, or oral and anal penetration.

**Gang Rape:** Perpetrated by two or more persons “often as a spectacle, with non-voluntary (family, other victims, local population) and voluntary (military and militia) spectators.”<sup>7</sup>

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE INCLUDES:**

- Rape within marriage or dating relationships
- Rape by strangers
- Systematic rape during armed conflict
- Unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment, including demanding sex in return for favors
- Sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people
- Sexual abuse of children, forced marriage, or cohabitation including the marriage of children
- Denial of the right to use contraception or adopt other measures to protect against STIs
- Forced abortion
- Violent acts against the integrity of women, including female genital mutilation, cannibalism, torture, forced miscarriage, forced incest, beating, killing, and obligatory inspections for virginity
- Forced prostitution and trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation

**CONFLICT RELATED  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
(CRSV)**

- Based on the UN Action Sexual Violence Against in Conflict ,CRSV refers to incidents or patterns of sexual violence that is:
- "Rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity against women, men or children. "
- "Such incidents or patterns occur in conflict or post-conflict settings . They also have a direct or indirect nexus with the conflict [or political strife] itself, that is, a temporal, geographical and /or causal link."

**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION  
AND ABUSE  
(SEA)**

- The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- The victim is usually in a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust.

**SEXUAL GENDER-  
BASED VIOLENCE  
(SGBV)**

- "Physical, sexual, and psychological violence against both men and women that occurs within the family and the community and is perpetrated or condoned by the state. In conflict situations, it is committed against civilians and soldiers. It is not an accidental side effect of war, but a crime against the individual and an act of aggression against the entire community or nation. "



## Conceptualizing Sexual Violence

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “Worldwide, one in five women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape.”<sup>9</sup> Women and young girls compose the majority of victims; however, men and young boys have also experienced sexual violence. In fact, a study from the Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW) on Sexual Violence in African Conflicts, reveals that out of 20 sample African countries, 42 percent of the conflict actors had committed acts of sexual violence. The study notes that during wartime, sexual violence is not always the prevalent form of violence perpetrated against women. For instance, Elizabeth Wood and Dara Kay Cohen state that “in the thousands of testimonies given to the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, forced displacement and killing were far more frequently reported than any form of sexual violence.”<sup>10</sup> Thus sexual violence is neither the most common form of violence in every conflict nor is it inevitable.

Women and girls are not always the victims of sexual violence; in some conflicts, such as the Rwandan Genocide, an estimated 3,000 women helped execute the genocide. Moreover, during the civil war in Sierra Leone, women were notorious for conducting and encouraging sexual violence such as the castration of male victims. In “Recognizing Gender-Based Violence Against Civilian Men and Boys in Conflict Situations,” Charli Carpenter assesses that rarely is information available to “assess the extent of men’s vulnerability to sexual assault” in armed conflict; thus victims comprised of men and boys remain unheard of. In many conflicts, men and boys have been subjected to rape and genital mutilation in order to humiliate and emasculate them; additionally some are forced to commit rape or incest. Sexual violence can be used indiscriminately against any gender, ethnic, and political group; however, motives and effects of sexual violence demonstrate the common destruction it brings upon an individual and community.

## Motives of Sexual Violence

Women are indispensable resources to society as laborers, caretakers, and especially binding forces of families. According to Anne Brouwer, in Ancient Greece the pervasiveness of rape in war was “socially acceptable behavior [and] well within the rules of warfare, an act without stigma for warriors who viewed the women they conquered legitimate booty, useful as wives, concubines, slave labor or battle-camp trophy.”<sup>11</sup> Historically, in tribal and ethnic conflicts the abduction of women became a means to reward soldiers, humiliate enemy males, and exterminate an ethnic community. A raped woman signaled a man’s failure to protect, as she became “devalued property.” Rape symbolized

a failed nation: “at once polluted and occupied the territory of the nation, transgressed its boundaries, defeated its protectors.”<sup>12</sup> In modern conflicts, these notions of rape as decoration and humiliation still exist. A report of sexual violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo conducted by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) and Oxfam America states that the use of sexual violence to defeat a community is “the ultimate display of power and dominance . . . used by the opposing force to signify the weakness and inadequacy of the men in the targeted social grouping of a community. These men absorb this message, perceiving their inability to protect women against assault as their own final humiliation in the war.”<sup>13</sup>

Community factors such as laws, customs, and social norms greatly impact violence perpetrated against women; as a result, a lack of laws and customs protecting women can evidently exacerbate gender inequality and fuel sexual violence during conflict. The disintegration of a state and society decreases the security of its population by reducing “safeguards for women and social constraints on men.”<sup>14</sup> Thus the polarization of gender roles accentuates beliefs, specifically in patriarchal societies, emphasizing societal attitudes of subordinate and inferior women and beliefs in male superiority and exaggeration of masculinity such as male entitlement to sex. As Elizabeth Wood states, “men resort more frequently to violence to enforce gender roles.”<sup>15</sup> The occurrence of sexual violence, especially in these specific societies can result in normalizing sexual violence and encouraging impunity. These basic societal norms during peacetime can exaggerate masculinity and further promote gender inequality, which is only to be escalated during wartime. Significantly in the aftermath of a conflict, where traditional gender roles are deeply embedded into society, this community will face numerous challenges and obstacles to further reconstruct the fabric of their society and reintegrate a victim of sexual violence.

## Sexual Desire

Although many scholars agree that sexual desire is a motive of sexual violence due to the sexual arousal of perpetrators, some believe that sexual violence is used to establish power and control. After analyzing 10,000 allegations of the Former Yugoslav conflict, the UN commission reasoned that sexual purposes were included in the pattern of sexual violence. Similarly, rebels during the Sierra Leone conflict asserted to their victims that rape was the rebels’ “reward for having endured hardship.”<sup>16</sup> Moreover, in certain peacekeeping operations, UN peacekeepers and aid agencies workers have also had a hand in the sexual exploitation and abuse of young boys and girls as well as men and women. When havoc in a war-zone persists, some have indulged in the environment of impunity instead of fully serv-

ing their duties as protectors of civilians. Although motives of peacekeepers as perpetrators are not thoroughly researched, one of the motives that can be explicitly observed is sexual desire, as peacekeepers have exchanged commodities for sex. A report by Save the Children highlights that “children as young as six are trading sex with aid workers and peacekeepers in exchange of food, money, soap, and in a very few cases, luxury items such as mobile phones.”<sup>17</sup> These acts committed by those meant to serve a community place civilians at risk, distort a civilians’ sense of safety, and create an untrustworthy relationship with peacekeepers or aid workers. In Southern Sudan, a young boy states the following testimony of a girl raped by a peacekeeper:

*Although the peacekeepers are not based here, they have abused girls here. They come here a few days at a time where they stay in a local compound. This compound is near to the water pump where everyone collects water. In the evening hours the peacekeepers come out and stand near to the water pump. Some of the girls from the village will come and collect water. The men call to the girls and they go with them into the compound. One of them became pregnant and then went (to the) mission. We still do not know where she is. This happened in 2007.<sup>18</sup>*

This sexual exploitation of peacekeepers and aid agencies has been exacerbated in a desensitized manner, with a lack of respect for the population they are meant to protect.

### Power, Control, and Masculinity

In time of conflicts, the prospect for sexual violence increases as some conflict actors conduct raids and prey on civilians for money, food, and clothing. This unobstructed opportunity for armed perpetrators to commit acts conveys a sense of power and control driven by exaggerated masculinity, and satisfying any desire, at times, is inevitable. These depredations enhance a perpetrator’s masculinity by creating a sense of empowerment, an occasion to render fear into another being, and to acquire power that some previously never possessed. A failing state and a loss of the rule of law contributes to their mental fantasy of a new, and yet temporary, identity. In concentrating on the exertion of power and dominance, rapists become desensitized, and as a result, dehumanize their victims. During the Vietnam War, a U.S. soldier explaining rape against Vietnamese women stated, “[The soldiers] are in an all-male environment. . . . There are women available. Those women are of another culture, another colour [sic], another society. . . . You’ve got an M-16. What do you need to pay a lady for? You go down to the village and you take what you want.”<sup>19</sup> This detachment of a victim’s personality is emphasized in similar conflicts worldwide; at times the

acts are committed arbitrarily.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, in the 1937 “Rape of Nanking,” 50,000 Japanese soldiers participated in the mass torture, mutilation, and rape of 500,000 civilians and 90,000 Chinese troops, totaling the deaths of 300,000 civilians.<sup>21</sup> The perverseness of the crimes desensitized the soldiers, as one soldier recalled his first encounter watching a killing: “[It was] so appalling that I felt I couldn’t breathe, but everyone became a demon within three months.”<sup>22</sup> This identity is further cultivated in a groupthink mentality of masculinity within small units that incites sexual violence, such as participating in gang rape, and at times fueled by drugs and alcohol.

In *War and Gender*, Joshua Goldstein argues that within small units loyalty becomes a powerful bonding force but all observes, “small group bonding can also encourage a drug subculture, antiwar activities, and collective indiscipline.”<sup>23</sup> Norms of accepting sexual violence within a military structure, especially in small units, creates conformity and status within the group that repeatedly encourages impunity. Gang rape occurs to solidify a group and to increase morale, and in fact, comprises 90 percent of rapes in war.<sup>24</sup> In an interview, a former Bosnian Serb fighter named Borislav Herak, describes the order he and other fighters received to rape. Three of the soldiers who had gang-raped Amara were in charge of her execution. Borislav’s fear of disobeying and betraying his fellow soldiers demonstrates the fearful perceptions of becoming an outlier. As Goldstein states, rape is used to “control a chaotic and fearsome external world while proving manhood and toughness to one’s buddies within the military ‘family.’”<sup>25</sup>

Gang rape is also facilitated by the use of drugs and alcohol because it removes the inhibitions and abilities to question the acts being conducted. The removal of self-inhibition over time desensitizes these groups to the violence they perpetrate and reaffirms the groupthink mentality. The World Report on Violence and Health states that the connection between alcohol consumption and violence is socially learned; alcohol attributes to a lack of accountability, and “some forms of group sexual violence are also associated with drinking. In these settings, consuming alcohol [or] using drugs is an act of group bonding, where inhibitions are collectively reduced and individual judgment cede in favor of that of the group.”<sup>26</sup> Gang rape is certainly not a new phenomenon; as a report by HRW states, “Gang-rape was used as a bonding mechanism for forcibly recruited rebels during the civil war in Sierra Leone, and constructed as the action of a ‘successful soldier’ during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.”<sup>27</sup> Today, HHI and Oxfam America report that in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, out of 4,311 records of sexual violence victims, over 60 percent suffered gang rape.<sup>28</sup>

## Terror and Fear

Sexual violence is used by perpetrators for “entertainment” to torture sexually the victim or family in public, such as in fields, detention camps, government buildings, schools, churches and roadblocks, thus denying refuge to any civilian. Forms of sexual violence have included forced rape, forced incest, cannibalism, and genital mutation. During the Rwandan genocide, many testimonies recount the bodies of victims that were mercilessly “left spread-eagled . . . as a reminder of the brutality and power of the genocide’s perpetrators.”<sup>29</sup> After a gang rape of a woman in the Congo, militiamen “deliberately inflicted major damage to her genitals before sending her back to her village.”<sup>30</sup> Terror is wrought by brutally conducting cannibalism and genital mutation, in some cases; women were shot in the vagina, raped by a gun, and/or dismembered. In armed conflicts of sexual violence, this tactic is powerful. Cases of cannibalism have been used as perverse versions of sexual violence, some in the presence of family members, thus rendering them mentally scarred.

Acts of sexual violence did not always leave the victim to death; however, genital mutilation is used to create a constant reminder of their horrific experience. As a HRW report, “The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo,” highlights, perpetrators injured their victims by “penetrating their vaginas with sticks or other objects by mutilating their sexual organs with such weapons as knives or razor blades.”<sup>31</sup> A gynecologist who treated numerous victims witnessed cases such as “clitoris and vagina lips [that] had been cut off with razor blades.”<sup>32</sup> He expressed complete astonishment of the atrocities his patients underwent, and as a father of four daughters concluded, “I have the feeling that if you are born a woman in this country you are condemned to death at birth. . . . Why are we silent about this?”<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, victims are not the only ones silent about their experiences, their family members and friends are as well.

Sexual warfare attempts to break taboo and succeeds in disintegrating support networks of victims where the stigmatization of victims is prevalent. Just as some perpetrators reform their identity, they strive to reconstruct the identity of an individual and in some cases, the essence of a family. By forcing incest, rape, and punishing members of a family by witnessing the rape of a loved one, the perpetrator intentionally strives to create a fatal situation that results in the breakdown of a family. In Cote d’Ivoire, men, women, and children were “forced to watch sexual violence as a punishment.”<sup>34</sup> Some husbands were forced to watch the rape of their wives, creating a sense of powerlessness and shame. As an investigation of sexual violence in eastern

Democratic Republic of Congo conducted by the HHI and Oxfam America states, “The shame and humiliation inflicted by these crimes is intended to prohibit recovery and re-integration into society, and to thereby destroy the victims’ families and communities.”<sup>35</sup>

## Ethnic Cleansing

Victims of sexual violence are mostly indiscriminate in some conflicts; however, perpetrators also targeted certain people based on ethnicity, nationality and political affiliations. According to the HRW Report, “Rape in conflict serves as a strategic function and acts as a tool for achieving specific military or political objectives.”<sup>36</sup> In the conflict of Cote d’Ivoire, political motivation was used to commit sexual violence against women who were affiliated with pro-government supporters (such as fathers, uncles, and husbands). In the same vein, rebels of the eight-year civil war in Sierra Leone arbitrarily targeted civilians under the belief that some women “should be punished for what they perceived to be their support for the existing government.” In the rape camps of Foca, Bosnian Serb soldiers systematically raped an estimated 20,000 to 50,000 Muslim women and girls; female prisoners were explicitly selected and sexually abused, some even subjected to enslavement and death. Women recalled threats of having “Chetnik babies.”

During the Rwandan Genocide an estimated 250,000 to 500,000 rapes occurred against Tutsi women and girls. Perpetrators included the Hutu militia Interahamwe and military soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR), Presidential Guard, and civilians.<sup>37</sup> Victims were mainly indiscriminate and composed of predominantly Tutsi women, pregnant women, girls of all ages, men, boys, and Hutu moderates. Many leaders encouraged and participated in these violent acts by portraying Tutsis as inferiors who needed to be “cleansed” in order to expand the Hutu population. Before the conflict, gender-based printed propaganda portrayed “Tutsi women and moderate Hutu Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana . . . as sexual objects,”<sup>38</sup> and the radio of Hutu Power, Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), contrasted Tutsi women as snobbish, deceitful and more beautiful than Hutus. These statements fomented the rape of the Tutsis, as some perpetrators expressed, “You Tutsi women think that you are too good for us,” and “Let us see what a Tutsi woman tastes like.”<sup>39</sup> Perpetrators who carried the HIV/AIDS virus intentionally spread the virus by raping Tutsi women. Rape is used as a multifaceted tool that instills fear in victims and power in perpetrators, terror to communities, and victory to perpetrators. Moreover, it engrains a hatred that further fuels their next acts of violence.

## Prevention and Solutions

The lack of structure and accountability in all sectors: justice, health and psychological care, and law enforcement further contribute to the silence of victims. Moreover, the lack of guidance for dealing with sexual violence results from “an absence of clear mandates, tailored training, dedicated resources and incentive structures that encourage proactive protection and preparedness.”<sup>40</sup> Many efforts to address sexual violence in armed conflict have been short-term rather than long-term.

Through information sharing and cross-fertilizing ideas, we must aid sexual violence survivors by “replacing improvisation with systematization.” To eliminate economic and social barriers, survivors of sexual violence must have “access to health, education, property rights, and positive redistributive measures.”<sup>41</sup> Although it may be a gradual change and it may take a couple of generations, creating a sustainable system for preventing future victims will ensure peace and international stability. Below is a list of actors that can partake in this movement.

**Allies**—It is critical for military officials, peacekeepers and aid workers to:

- Gain education on gender inequality.
- Implement training on gender issues through hypothetical scenarios, such as understanding cultural norms of the local population.<sup>42</sup>
- Have stricter guidelines governing the recruitment, briefing, and training of peacekeepers. Abide by rule of conduct, be accountable: for instance, emphasize “professionalism and the responsibility to protect in the design of training curriculum.”<sup>43</sup> As well as on behavior: “special attention should be given to the question of social relations with host populations to prevent foreign troops from sexually exploiting local women.
- Test forces for STIs “when they enter and leave the country.”<sup>44</sup>
- Expect superiors to be exemplars of moral consciousness and decision-making. Thus, create mechanisms in which each organization’s superior must also be held accountable to ensure that the responsibilities that workers are entrusted with are carried out.

- Coordinate efforts with the military, international non-governmental, humanitarian assistance organizations, AND civil society organizations by sharing information and ideas; for instance, providing information for the military with zones that have a high percentage of sexual violence.
- Use Female Engagement Teams and Women Peacekeepers to consult and survey the vulnerabilities that local women face.
- Create and standardize a local mechanism for each group to combine logging and reporting of cases.

### Local

- **Media**—Radio talk shows and propaganda or live-concerts that condemn sexual violence
- **Religious groups**—The use of religious figures that can reach and preach to wide audience on medical and legal resources, and even condemn perpetrators of sexual violence
- **Family units**—Support from spouses, family members, and communities can have a great role in helping a victim to recover, and address gender inequality.
- **Awareness and education programs** on “societal norms for male control of, and access to, women’s bodies, recognition of the rights of victims.”<sup>45</sup>
  - ▷ At fifteen years old, Dumisani Rebombo, a South African, faced a test of character when his peers taunted him for his lack of masculinity. His solution to gain acceptance was to gang rape a girl, and to his expectation, his peers responded with praise. Experiences, encounters, and surroundings unarguably shape our character. After living in remorse for twenty years, Rebombo sought forgiveness from the woman he had damaged and although the woman tearfully forgave him, she was a survivor of two other rapes. Today Rebombo is a gender activist and speaks to young men of his village on the hardships and consequences survivors face.
  - ▷ According to a report Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women conducted by World Health Organization (WHO), school-based programs aimed to prevent child sexual abuse are “effective at strengthening knowledge and protective behaviours against this type of abuse”; however, evidence of its long-term impact is lacking.<sup>46</sup>

- Active involvement of women, girls, and boys in local and national political processes such as community building projects/events (for instance, have local sexual violence advocates to speak/translate for victims along with NGOs) and peace processes.

- ▷ In Liberia, the common vision of Liberian women of Christian and Muslim faith in ending daily killings and rapes catalyzed the closure of a decade-long civil war. Under the leadership of Leymah Gbowee, a Liberian activist and Nobel Laureate, the women courageously mobilized throughout the Liberia peace talks in 2003 to ensure the success of their efforts. The courage of Leymah and her followers led to the presidential and democratic election of the first female head of state in Africa, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. This is an example of the power of women in the political process.

## Resources

- Local Law Enforcement

- ▷ Police officers can take an active role in reporting and logging cases of sexual violence
  - ▷ Bring accountability to perpetrators and ensure safety of victims who testify.
  - ▷ Better witness protection programs and referral networks are also crucial.
  - ▷ Bring awareness of gender inequality and have programs on self-defense; for instance, according to Gender, Development and Equality, in Sierra Leone, “a female police officer took the initiative to address some of the reporting challenges that survivors face. With the support and guidance of a UN Mission British officer in Sierra Leone, she established a domestic violence police unit, created protocols and training to respond to survivors of rape and domestic violence, and started collecting police report data on violence against women.”<sup>47</sup> Moreover in Liberia, “UNMIL’s all female FPU has proactively promoted women’s security, including by initiating self-defense (“unarmed combat”) training for women/girls in schools and community centres. Their example has encouraged more women to join the Liberian National Police (LNP, contributing to a three-fold increase in the number of applications from women. This has a powerful effect on communities not accustomed to seeing women in uniform or performing official, public functions. They have also been credited by the local police with encouraging increased reporting of sexual abuse.”<sup>48</sup>

- Medical Resources

- ▷ Method to access quick information to create a sustainable system: Develop a metric to evaluate incidents of sexual abuse. Have an excel spread sheet that asks these questions: Name, Birthday, Village, education level, type of sexual transgression, date of transgression, location of transgression, relationship to perpetrator(s), number of perpetrators, help sought afterward, health ailments stemming from transgression, family member reaction, number of family members in household. Through asking questions like this one can form a quantitative analysis of a population’s sexual violence situation. This will allow organizations to better understand a community and reduce cultural barriers to care. This type of study allows an organization to determine at risk groups and develop better strategies to serve a population.
  - ▷ One stop centers that offer “medical care, psychological counseling, access to police investigators and legal assistance in one location are proving to be successful at mitigating secondary victimization, reducing delays, [and increasing] conviction rates.”<sup>49</sup>

- Legal Resources

- ▷ Judiciary response for survivors will help also end cultural impunity. There is a great need to strengthen the accountability of domestic justice courts. With more legal aid and support, women become empowered and increase the prosecution of perpetrators. As the UN- Secretary General Report on CRSV in 2012 notes, “through support to legal aid training of public defenders and paralegal assistance, rights awareness and lose engagement with informal justice leaders, access to justice programming has led to significant increases in convictions for violent crimes, including SGBV.”<sup>50</sup>
  - ▷ The use of properly resourced and managed Truth Commissions to enhance confidence and trust, ex: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone criminalized domestic violence, and ultimately enhanced women’s rights and security.
  - ▷ Criminalizing sexual violence. Evidently in many cultures, rape is perceived as “a social problem, not a crime,” which inhibits the prosecution of perpetrators. A national government must create legal reforms and policies against sexual violence; these two examples demonstrate the lack of a strong judiciary system.
    - In Nepal: “The civil code chapter on rape requires that when the victim is over 16 years old, evidence of non-consent must be provided. In addition, the

35 day statute of limitation for filing complaints related to rape and other sexual offences impedes further the reporting of cases of a crime that is severely under-reported thereby undermining the chances of a successful prosecution. Although the Supreme Court has issued orders to review the existing legislation, no progress has been made.” (18)

• Sudan: “Of the 66 incidents noted by UNAMID, 35 were reported to the Government police, and investigations have commenced on 26 of the 35 cases. In one instance, a police officer was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment by the Court of Appeal for raping a 3 year old girl, although the case was initially dismissed by the Zalingei General Court due to the statutory immunity that some Government forces enjoy.”<sup>51</sup>

▷ Non-profit organizations can provide training for “prosecutors, judges and sexual assault nurse examiners to provide training on improving medical and criminal justice response to sexual violence.” AEquitas is an example of these efforts, the organization aims to educate criminal justice professionals to “recognize that these crimes often co-occur and may be missed if those professionals do not understand common victim behaviors, e.g., delays in reporting, or allow their perception of these crimes to be clouded by myth and misperception.”<sup>52</sup> In training local individuals involved in the legal and medical aspect of sexual violence, non-profits can greatly legitimize a sustainable system in a country of post-conflict.

## Conclusion

This essay hopes to raise awareness and empower the reader to have a hand in crafting a safer world where sexual violence ceases to be a tool of destruction and a tolerated practice worldwide. Survivors must have a trustful resource to rebuild their society, to not obtain efficient help to bear the brunt of the burden that was brutally trespassed upon them is intolerable. A lack of accountability contributes to the cycle of re-victimization and prevents the development of infrastructures to counteract the proliferation of sexual violence. To construct a safer future for women and men alike, the collaboration between local populations and overseeing institutions must take the next step in bringing awareness to this universal shame.



## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Samantha Power and Graham Allison, *Realizing Human Rights: Moving from Inspiration to Impact*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 312.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Secretary-General. 2001. Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (S/2001/331).

<sup>3</sup> International Criminal Tribunal, “Crimes of Sexual Violence.” <http://www.icty.org/sid/10312>.

<sup>4</sup> UN News Centre, “UN experts tackle ‘conspiracy of silence’ over sexual violence in wartime,” <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31258&Cr=sexual+violence&Cr1>.

<sup>5</sup> IRIN Global, “Justice for Lawless World?” <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=7&ReportId=59493>

<sup>6</sup> Janie Leatherman, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts*, (Massachusetts: Polity Press, 2011), 9.

<sup>7</sup> Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). “Women in an Insecure World: Violence against Women Facts, Figure and Analysis.” Edited by Marie Vlachoud and Lea Bison, (Geneva: DCAF, 2005): 14.

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organization, “Mental health and Psychosocial Support for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Principles and Interventions,” 12, no. 1; UN Conduct and Discipline, “Policy: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy,”

<http://cdu.unlb.org/Policy/SexualExploitationandAbusePolicy.aspx>; Maureen Farrell, “Approaches to military Training to Combat Sexual and Gender Based Violence,” AFRICOM 33.

<sup>9</sup> UN Secretary-General’s Campaign: Unite to End Violence Against Women, February 2008, [http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/pdf/UNiTE\\_TheSituation\\_EN.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/pdf/UNiTE_TheSituation_EN.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Micah Zenko, “Ask the Experts: Preventing Sexual Violence,” Council of Foreign Relations, June 11, 2012, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Marie de Brouwer, *Supranational Criminal Prosecution of Sexual Violence*, (Oxford: Intersentia, 2009), 4.

<sup>12</sup> Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 362.

<sup>13</sup> Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) and Oxfam, “‘Now, The World is Without Me’: An Investigation of Sexual Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,” (April 2010): 5.

<sup>14</sup> Megan Gerecke, “Explaining Sexual Violence in Conflict Situations,” in *Gender, War, Militarism*, ed. Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2010), 140.

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth J. Wood, “Variation in Sexual Violence During War,” *POLITICS & SOCIETY* 34, no. 3 (September 2006): 325.

<sup>16</sup> HRW, “Getting Away from Murder,” 36.

<sup>17</sup> Corinna Csaky, “No One to Turn To: The under-reporting of child sexual exploitation and abuse by Aid workers and peace-

keepers,” (London: Save the Children, 2008), 5.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>19</sup> Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 365.

<sup>20</sup> Human Rights Watch, “The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo,” (June 2002): 52.

<sup>21</sup> Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, (Basic Books: New York, 1997), 58.

<sup>22</sup> Chang, 58.

<sup>23</sup> Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 198.

<sup>24</sup> DCAF, *Women in an Insecure World*, 14.

<sup>25</sup> Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 325.

<sup>26</sup> World Health Organization, “World Report on Violence and Health: summary,” (2002): 159.

<sup>27</sup> UNIFEM, “Addressing Conflict Related Sexual Violence: An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice,” [http://nobel-womensinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/UN\\_Analytical\\_Inventory.pdf](http://nobel-womensinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/UN_Analytical_Inventory.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> HHI and Oxfam, *Now the world is without me*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> Leatherman, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, 43.

<sup>30</sup> Juhie Bhatia, “DRC: Rape Epidemic Fuels Fistula Cases,” *Global Voices*, July 29, 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Human Rights Watch, “My Heart is Cut,” *Human Rights Watch* 19, no. 11 (August 2007): 94.

<sup>35</sup> HHI, “Now the World is Without Me,” 36.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>37</sup> Brouwer, *Supranational Criminal Prosecution of Sexual Violence*, 13.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> UN Secretary-General (UNSG), *Conflict-related sexual violence: report of the Secretary-General*, 13 January 2012, A/66/657\*-S/2012/33\*, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4f27a19c2.html>, 15.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>42</sup> See Scenario-Based Training on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence by Major General Patrick Cammaert. The guide includes four hypothetical situations for peacekeepers to confront instances of sexual violence, and “formulates courses of action in the context of a particular mission’s mandate and rules of engagement.” (Cammaert 1) More situations would be extremely beneficial.

<sup>43</sup> See U.S. Africa Command’s “Approaches to Military Training to Combat Sexual and Gender Based Violence” by Maureen Farrell (pages 20 to 22) on recommendations, “focusing on efforts on achieving short and medium-term behavior modi-

fication goals and improving response mechanism rather than changing deeply-rooted gender norms,” and monitoring the impact of training programs.

<sup>44</sup> Tsjeard Bouta, Georg Frerks, Ian Bannon, *Gender, Conflict, and Development* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2005), 46

<sup>45</sup> Rachel Jewkes, “Preventing Sexual Violence: a rights-based approach,” *The Lancet*, October 5, 2002.

<sup>46</sup> World Health Organization, “Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women,” 43.

<sup>47</sup> Bouta, *Gender, Conflict, and Development*, 43.

<sup>48</sup> UNIFEM, “Addressing Conflict Related Sexual Violence: An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice,” 29.

<sup>49</sup> UNSG, *CRSV*, 13.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>52</sup> Jennifer Long, interview by author, Carlisle, PA, August, 2012.

# “Improving the Interactions between Child Soldiers and Security Forces: The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Experiences from the Field”

by Dr. Shelly Whitman, Executive Director



Today, it is estimated that 250,000 child soldiers are taking part in armed conflicts around the world.<sup>1</sup> In 2009, there were over 50 parties, state and non-state, listed by the Special Representative for the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict for using child soldiers. Girls and boys are used by adults to commit unspeakable atrocities amongst their own communities. There are an estimated 2.2 billion people in the world below the age of 18 years and 2 billion of these children live in the developing world. (World Population Awareness 2010) Yet, despite such demographics, we often fail to hear the voices of young people and even worse, we fail to address their needs.

The Paris Principles define a child soldier as: ‘any person under the age of 18 years who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or group in any capacity, including, but not limited [to] children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes.’ (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2007) This definition includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and for forced marriage. It does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.

Children who are vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups are often those who come from the poorest sections of society, who do not have families, and who are located in conflict zones. (Brett and McCallin 1998, p. 20) Some children are forcibly taken and others are considered “volunteers.” For those children who are forcibly taken or recruited, they often are faced with the choice of joining or death. In addition, many must watch their families murdered by the armed groups and others must commit the murders themselves. Graça Machel points out that joining an armed group is often a response to a variety of pressures – economic, social and cultural. (Machel 2001, p. 12) There is much evidence to point to the need for survival as the primary reason for joining an armed group.

Children are often utilised as soldiers for a variety of reasons. Their comparative agility, small size, ease with which they can be psychologically controlled, are all advantageous to armed groups. Small arms and light weapons have made it easy for children to manipulate and carry such weapons. Children are also used as spies, messengers, porters, cooks, sentries, landmine clearance, thieves and foragers as well as participating in



The term also includes children being used by armed groups for sexual purposes. It is estimated that **40% of the child soldiers used globally are girls.**



Children will continue to be used in many armed conflicts due the sheer demographics of such states, in which **50% of the population is often below the age of 18 years old.**



combat roles. Armed groups see children as a cheap and easily obtained human resource in many parts of the world. (Singer 2006) Child soldiers are often plied with alcohol and drugs prior to going into battle. This assists with creating a sense of fearlessness and distance from the brutality of their duties. Many children are maimed or killed in battle and the physical consequences are lifelong reminders for these children. There are many psychological consequences of children's participation in armed conflict that range from aggression and revenge to anxiety to fear, grief and depression. It can also result in low self-esteem, guilt and violent behaviour, shame, and a lack of trust in others. (Machel 2001, p. 19)

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative is a global partnership committed to ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers worldwide – through prevention – by developing practical solutions through research, advocating for policy change, and conducting comprehensive, security-sector training. While many groups have been working to demobilize, reintegrate and rehabilitate child soldiers, the global response has largely been reactive. Our unique approach of working with the military, police and peacekeeping forces – often the first point of contact for child soldiers – is breaking new ground, and a critical part of interrupting the cycle of recruitment of children by armed groups. Through our approach we create the necessary tools and training that will better protect children from their military recruitment and use.

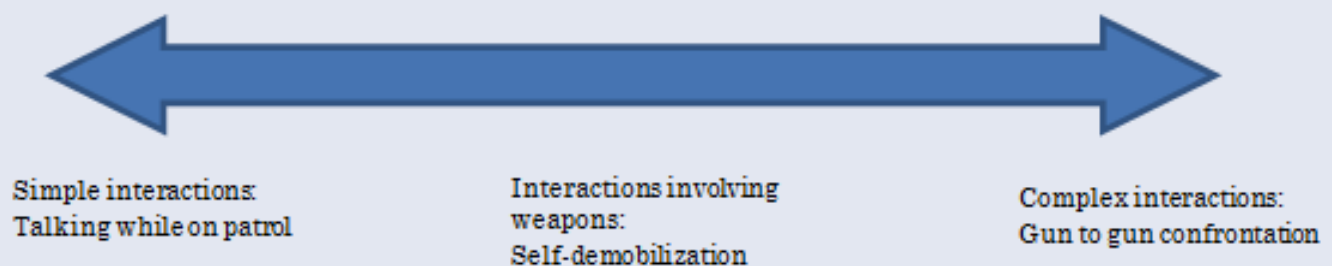
Security forces have a significant role to play in the prevention of child recruitment by armed groups—a view universally embraced by over 400 military personnel and police officers from more than 34 countries, whom our Initiative trained. Despite this, potential beneficial role for security personnel, it remains critically under-appreciated by the security sector as a whole, so the child soldier problem continues to be seen as falling within the exclusive purview of humanitarian actors.

Until we elevate the issue within the security agenda, the international community will continue to squander excellent opportunities to prevent the recruitment of children into armed groups. A comparison could be made to the international communities' efforts to halt the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. As Margot Wallstrom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, stated on 6 April 2011, "Sexual violence has been recognized by the international community as a security threat that demands a security response."<sup>2</sup> The use of children by armed groups, should likewise be considered a "security threat that demands a security response". This in no way undermines the human rights framework that has been developed to protect the most vulnerable; on the contrary, it intensifies our practical ability to respond to gross human rights violations.

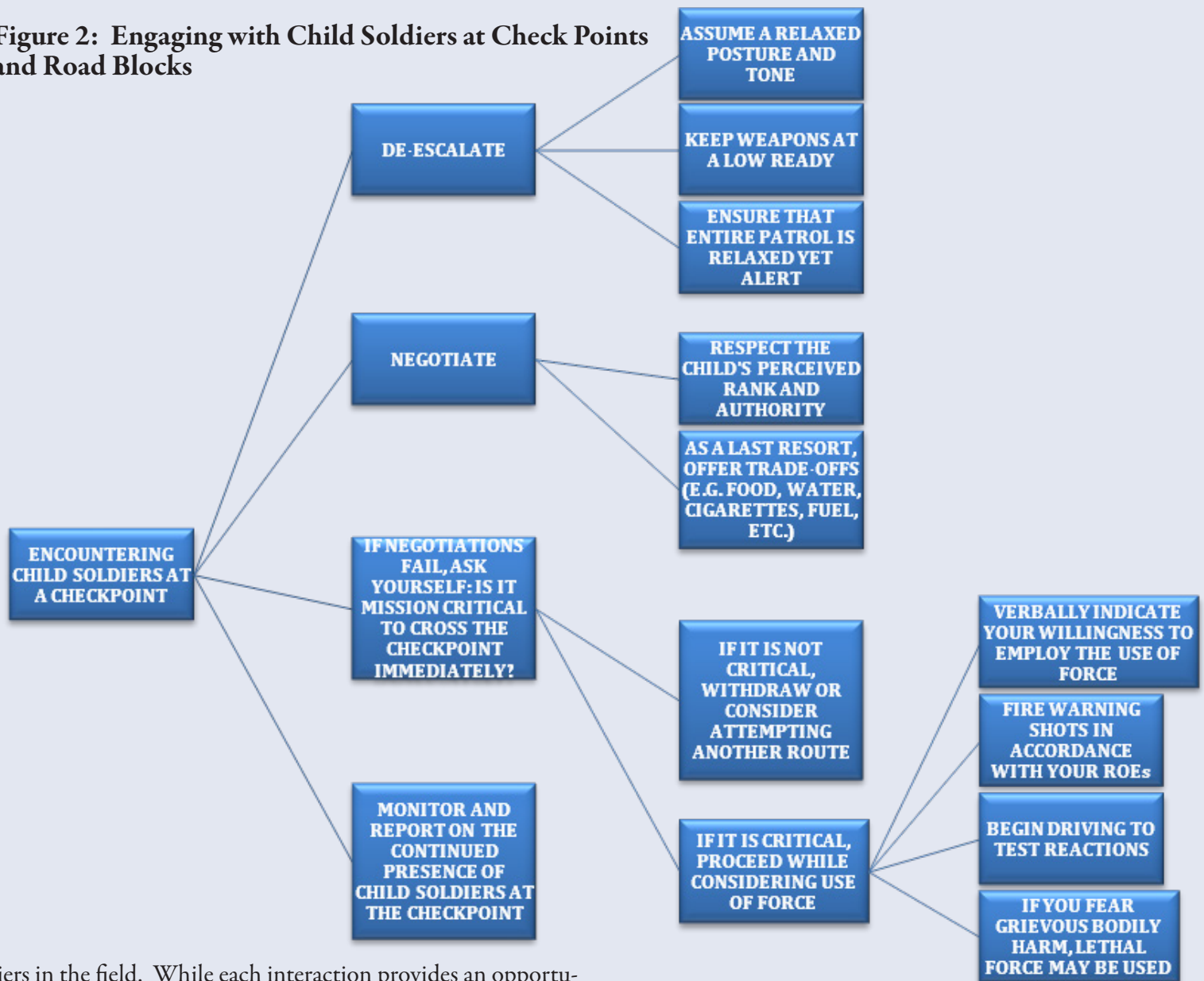
Lt. General Roméo Dallaire, the former Head of the UNAMIR mission in 1994, came face to face with the reality of the use of child soldiers. His experience has shaped his quest, through the creation of the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, to push the limits of the global efforts to end the use of child soldiers. In particular, we are guided by the notion that children are used as a weapon system by immoral actors. How does one prevent such an option from being used?

No individual country or regional organisation has yet developed coherent policies, or military and police doctrine which addresses child soldiers in complex peace operations. There is a need to prepare soldiers and police for their interactions with child soldiers, both here at home and abroad (Figure 1). Such preparation requires preventive measures training to the security sector. Our training reflects several years of research, culminating in a training manual which reinforces the roles that security sector actors can play in protecting all children affected by war. It also provides practical guidance for security actors who, by design or accident, are in direct contact with child sol-

**Figure 1: Spectrum of Interactions**




**Figure 2: Engaging with Child Soldiers at Check Points and Road Blocks**



diers in the field. While each interaction provides an opportunity for a soldier to protect a child, it also poses a security threat to the soldier as well.

At present there is very little research addressing the psychological impact on adult soldiers interacting with child soldiers. However, it is clear that uncertainty and hesitation can have fatal consequences for both troops and child soldiers. Hence, pre-deployment training should include scenarios, role playing, and discussion on the various suggested responses to prepare soldiers for the interaction with child soldiers.

In addition, the opportunity to educate and train security sector actors deploying to states involving child soldiers presents unique opportunities to adjust attitudes and behaviors properly. The work of the Initiative in countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has demonstrated the potential impact of such awareness and education. As one officer related, “I

have now become physically allergic to anyone who uses child soldiers.” Professionalization training of military and police officers requires time and attention on the subject of child soldiers. In many cases the very officers that may become the “new and integrated militaries” have either used child soldiers or have been child soldiers themselves. Breaking the cycle of recruitment requires an understanding of this dynamic. 

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> UN Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

<sup>2</sup> UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, “Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Expectations of the International Community,” at the Peacekeeping Vision 2015: Capabilities for Future Mandates, New Delhi, 6 April 2011.

## Gender Integration in Action

by Karen Finkenbinder, PKSOI Research Director



The United Nations Police Commanders' Course (UNPCC) recently finished a session in Kunsgaden, Sweden. I was fortunate enough to be invited to attend the three-week course and was able to watch a UN training center institute a gender-perspective throughout its courses. During the UNPCC course, a Civilian Staff Officers Course (CIVSOC) and a Military Staff Officers' Course (UNSOC) were also conducted. Each course culminated with a joint exercise in which the integrated mission planning process was executed. Though a bit difficult, as the UNPCC students are working at the strategic level and the CIVSOC and UNSOC students are focused on the operational level – the exercise was a good opportunity to see the cross-cutting issue of gender considerations being implemented. This opportunity generated a lot of discussion, suggestions, and experiences.

But what does gender integration mean in practice, particularly at the Mission level? The UNPCC course had 13 students from nine countries. During this time, I interviewed Norway's Police Superintendent Ingrid Tronnes Maehre. Superintendent Maehre entered police service in 1988, starting out in patrol and later moving into K9 as a dog handler. She and her dog worked in Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) from 1996-2011. During this time she worked in two UN missions, both in Afghanistan, and both deployments focused on gender issues. She is currently the Chief of Operations in Agder-So, Sweden and is expected to deploy to another UN mission in 2013.

In 2008, Superintendent Maehre worked in Kabul, as a mentor to the highest ranking female police officer, a general, in Afghanistan. She also worked in the development of training for the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) as well as recruiting and training women police in all of Afghanistan. It was during this time that she worked with the Norwegian Special Forces and was nicknamed Heksa Fra Kabul (HFK), which translates to the "Witch of Kabul." She laughs at the moniker as she believes it was given fondly as a testament to her candid and decisive manner, perfected with almost twenty-five years of policing experience. In 2011, she returned to Afghanistan to work with gender and human rights issues in Faryab Province. This included developing prisons, implementing women into policing, and ensuring that women police are provided training opportunities with the police.



Norway's Police Superintendent Ingrid Tronnes Maehre shown above while attending the United Nations Police Commanders Course (UNPCC) in Kunsgaden, Sweden.

What did Supt. Maehre observe in gender integration? Surprisingly, her frustrations were not with the integration of Afghan women, but rather with the integration of women police serving as mentors and advisors, in general. She focused her observations on Norway but they are observations to be considered by all police contributing countries (PCC). She noted that in Norway, they have had a hard time recruiting women police officers to go into missions. Initially, an officer had to serve six years as a police officer before being qualified to enter a mission. In order to recruit women, the Norwegian Police lowered this standard to three years. The result has been that women entering missions are ill-equipped to deal with mission requirements. In her estimation, these women do not have the requisite experience to mentor and advise. To make matters worse, they are often young, unmarried and without children, which in some



Andrew Hughes, United Nations Police Adviser, and Ann-Marie Orlor, Deputy United Nations Police Adviser, are presenting initiatives by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) calling for an increased representation of female police in peacekeeping operations and encouraging the recruitment of women in national police services. 07 August 2009, United Nations, New York, UN Photo/Evan Schneider

countries, particularly Afghanistan, means they are not respected or listened to. Supt. Maehre strongly believes that police contributing countries need to recruit only qualified people and this means raising the required number of years of experience. She proposes that they focus their recruiting efforts on women that have 15-20 years of experience.


She admits that Norwegians are more fortunate than most PCCs. Norwegian police officers in UN missions go home six times a year. A policy requiring more years of experience may mean fewer women, but they will be women more suited to the requirements. She noted that married women seem to have an easier time in places like Afghanistan. As a mature married mother, she felt that she did not have to deal with some of the issues young women had to suffer through.

Superintendent Maehre, along with other students in the UNPCC, expressed similar concerns. Rather than just recruit women, for the sake of implementing gender considerations, recruit qualified women. In the long run, this seems to be an approach that will be more likely to meet the “spirit of gender integration” and all women to demonstrate competency. The host nation will then see the benefits of gender integration and be more likely to continue to implement the practice once the mission leaves.

But, one consideration continues to show itself. In Supt. Maehre’s city, out of 60 patrol officers, only two are women. The

rest of the women worked the streets for a short time and then moved to inside positions, a practice that puts many women in traditionally-female positions and does little to integrate them into the police service. This is particularly salient when considering that Norway’s police are comprised of 30% women. Though Norway’s police service can be commended for achieving such a percentage, for true integration into policing, women must have a robust presence in the patrol force. This is where they are most visible and accessible to the community. In Supt. Maehre’s area, this would mean that 20 of the 60 patrol officers would be women, not 2!

Should we be surprised? I think not. As Charlotte Anderholt observed in her recently released report on the integration of women in Formed Police Units (FPUs), “even countries with excellent track records for supporting the goals of Resolution 1325 and gender mainstreaming, face serious obstacles to integrating women in FPUs and other police units.” Ms. Anderholt makes several recommendations to better integrate women into the police service. Of these, one is most relevant to countries, like Norway, which do a good job of recruiting women into the police but have difficulty recruiting them for missions. She recommends addressing the barriers faced by women when deciding to deploy to a peacekeeping mission. Such barriers often involve family responsibilities, such as child bearing, that are unique or common to women. But, if as Supt. Maehre suggests, the focus should be on recruiting senior female officers, then another recommendation comes to mind – make deployment to a UN mission a career enhancer. In other words, provide a preference for promotion and more desirable positions, for those that deploy. This is not unlike current U.S. policy which provides employment preference to returning war veterans for civil service positions.

It just seems that if we are to encourage gender integration, women must also be in the field: at home and in the missions. Such a policy would encourage women to deploy so they would be better able to compete for other positions. And by deploying, they might find that a UN mission is an incredibly worthy, virtuous, and humbling pursuit. 

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Anderholt, Charlotte (2012). Female Participation in Formed Police Units: A Report on the Integration of Women in Formed Police Units of Peacekeeping Operations. PKSOI Papers. Carlisle, PA: Army War College.

# Sex and Age Disaggregated Data: Solution to Lack of Gender Mainstreaming in Food Aid Projects in Complex Emergencies

by Meghan Loney



## Why is it so important to mainstream gender in food cluster?

The lack of gender<sup>1</sup> mainstreaming in food security projects is problematic, because complex emergencies are rudimentarily discriminatory. The degree to which an individual will be affected by the situation is determined by pre-existing structures and social conditions; some will be subject to paying a higher price than others.<sup>2</sup> Food security is inherently connected to gender since livelihoods and distribution of resources is typically divided within a society by gender and age.<sup>3</sup> As such, it is pivotal to mainstream gender perspectives throughout the needs assessments, activity implementation and monitoring of outcomes to ensure that vulnerable groups are given the same opportunity for aid as other groups. Despite existing social structures and conditions, every individual has the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to non-discrimination in accessing food. This right to an adequate standard of living is guaranteed under Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 11 of the international Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (ICESCR).<sup>4</sup>

Food Security encompasses four dimensions—availability, access, utilization and stability/vulnerability—that can be acutely influenced by gender and generational roles existing in a society or that have changed due to the circumstances of the complex emergency. Thus, food security projects cannot be effective if they do not address gender. As the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)<sup>5</sup> states, “Distributing food... will not automatically guarantee their optimal use of a positive impact on individuals or on the affected population; only a gender-sensitive approach at all stages of the project cycle can help ensure that an adequate and efficient response is provided.”<sup>6</sup> It is possible for projects to further augment the vulnerability of particular groups if gender is not analyzed in needs assessment, the planning of activities or the monitoring of outcomes of food security projects. Using the do no harm framework set by Mary B. Anderson in her book of the same name, humanitarian actors can use gender sensitivity to ensure the prevention of feeding into group vulnerabilities and victimization. Instead, humanitarian actors should use gender as a way to identify connectors and room for promoting gender equality.



The UN World Food Programme, World Health Organization, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund and Haitian Ministry of Health coordinate the distribution of high-energy biscuits and fortified foods for pregnant women and infants in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. 17 February 2010 Port-au-Prince, Haiti, UN Photo/Sophia Paris

## How gender mainstreaming can be/ should be incorporated into the food cluster

Understanding that humanitarian actors would benefit from guidelines for implementation—gender has only recently been realized as a priority for humanitarian actors—the IASC developed the Gender Handbook. This handbook provides practical guidance for gender mainstreaming in humanitarian crises by identifying and addressing the disparate needs of women, girls, men and boys in complex situations. According to the handbook, humanitarian actors aim to offer protection and distribute aid, but this can be undermined by lack of attention to the different needs of and the different threats to individuals determined by their sex and age.<sup>7</sup> The handbook has specific chapters devoted to each cluster. The chapter on food security (divided into sub-chapters on food security, food distribution and nutrition) outlines how to include gender in the planning of food security response programming and how to ensure gender equality in food security programming. Following the handbook's guidelines, knowledge of the demo-

graphic, social, economic, political, institutional, and security factors—sensitized to gender—are key to planning and implementing effective gender responsive food security programs in complex emergencies.<sup>8</sup> How these factors have been affected by the complex emergency is also noteworthy when planning and implementing projects. The IASC Gender Handbook gauges all of these factors without assuming victimization on behalf of women and children, but rather poses questions that analyze the social and cultural dynamics between and among sex and ages groups. This is deviation, an important one, from the misuse of ‘gender as a synonym for ‘women’ that permeates literature on gender and humanitarian aid. In this same chapter, the handbook also outlines actions that humanitarian actors should take to ensure gender equality in programming. Assessments of household food supply and food access, of gender-sensitive needs and of emergency livelihoods coupled with a gendered and generational analysis of participation should be used to make sure that no one group is alienated by the structure of the food security programs. The checklist at the end of the chapter can guide food security actors on how to assess the social and cultural power dynamics within the context of the complex emergency to which they are responding.

### Continued problems in food cluster

Despite these guidelines and plans of action outlined specific to gender and food security, the summary reports of the 2011 CAP<sup>9</sup> demonstrate that integrating gender into planning, implementation, and monitoring of food security programming does not translate to the level of practice. This is evidence that gender equality is relatively well articulated in humanitarian policy and standards; however, there is a disconnect between that level and the level of practical application and implementation on the ground. Policies exist for the integration of gender and humanitarian projects responding to food insecurity, but projects fail to adhere to these policies, ignoring the gender dimensions that greatly influence their effectiveness and efficiency. This gap between policy and practice boils down to the lack of consideration of Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD) by humanitarian actors during planning and execution of programs. According to a collaborative study by Tufts University, with support by UNOCHA and CARE International, almost all major standards, handbooks and guidelines require the collection and analysis of SADD; however, the use of SADD is “limited, ad hoc, and sporadic.”<sup>10</sup> That is to say that SADD is rarely integrated into humanitarian projects, and if it is incorporated, it is as an afterthought and without a systematic approach. The study found “almost no documented and published cases in which lead agencies within the five sectors under



Pakistanis affected by their country’s widespread, torrential floods receive wheat flour and other provisions from the UN World Food Programme (WFP) in Alipur, in the Muzaffargarh district of Punjab Province, Alipur, Pakistan 18 August 2010, UN Photo/WFP/Amjad Jamal

study collected SADD properly, analyzed the data in context, used those findings to influence programming, and then carried out proper monitoring and evaluation to determine the effect on programming.”<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the current use of SADD, a 2009 IASC Gender Sub-Working Group Report on SADD in Emergency Response found that “gender awareness, understanding and knowledge transfer requires constant reinforcement at all levels to ensure the consistent collection of SADD,” that “having the right data at the right time is critical in emergency settings” and that “information about sex/gender and age is not being used to its full potential.”<sup>12</sup> Humanitarian projects, specifically those responding to food insecurity, cannot afford to use SADD as an afterthought; timing is vital and can prevent further victimization of vulnerable groups. Even when it is collected, SADD actors do not know how to use it to inform their planning and implementation of projects.<sup>13</sup> This is reflected in the summary reports of the GenCap advisors regarding the 2011 CAP projects. For almost all of the 2011 CAP projects, even those with increasing gender mainstreaming, the GenCap advisors noted that there was little to no collection, use and analysis of (SADD). It is necessary to train humanitarian actors on the values and on practical approaches of collecting SADD and applying within food security projects.

To ensure that the SADD encompasses the gendered experience resulting from complex emergencies, a combination of

quantitative and qualitative data should be gathered through surveys, distribution lists, clinic records, census samples, etc. Numbers alone do not reflect the nuances of social and cultural power dynamics that are derived from gender and age; they may identify vulnerable groups, but they fail to provide explanations for why and how these groups are vulnerable. Understanding power dynamics is core to planning and implementing effective and efficient food security programming, since they shape gender roles and determine the relative accessibility of resources and constraints of individuals, all of which are factors that affect food security.<sup>14</sup> Humanitarian Aid, including the food security cluster, is people-centered and needs-driven, thus it works to assign resources to the most urgent needs first.<sup>15</sup> The collection of SADD is both time and resource consuming, and it can be perceived as a hindrance to responding in a timely manner to food security issues, particularly food distribution in emergency situations. As stated in the Sphere Handbook's core standards, "Detailed disaggregation is rarely possible initially, but is of crucial importance to identify the different needs and rights of children and adults of all ages."<sup>16</sup> While SADD does take time and resources, collecting and appropriately translating the knowledge to planning and implementation of food security programs ensure effective and efficient results and limit the possibility of contributing to existing inequalities.

### Lessons Learned: Gender Mainstream Success in Pakistan

The multi-cluster approach to the complex situation resulting from the 2010 severe flooding in four provinces of Pakistan is one example of the importance of collecting and SADD to food security projects. A needs assessment was conducted to gather SADD using teams of male and female researchers that held separate focus groups for males and females within 27 communities. The results from the surveys demonstrated disparities in food distribution: 95% of men received were recipients of food aid, while only 55% of females were recipients of food aid. In addition, the surveys found that women had more awareness about the needs of infants and children, which contrasted against the lack of knowledge of newly widowed males who did not have a firm understanding about the nutritional needs of and available assistance for their children.<sup>17</sup> Collecting SADD helped humanitarian actors to respond accordingly to the needs of the population, without assumptions of generalized needs. They ensured that their approach was context specific, through the collection of SADD and appropriate translation of the data into programming.

## Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook

second edition



### Lessons Learned: Disconnect between data collection and practice

Ethiopia is an example of why SADD is necessary, but it is a case in which the lack of translating collected SADD into programming had negative impacts on the population that the projects were supposed to be aiding. A World Food Program (WFP) food for work project was aimed at women, however in the data collection phase, it was iterated that women were not able to make it to the distribution center to participate and receive assistance during the allocated time frame due to obligations at home. Chores at home caused them to arrive up to an hour late to the program and caused them to have to leave up to an hour earlier. This decreased the amount of food they were able to receive; however they could not shirk their household duties. The program failed to integrate this knowledge into the program. As a result, many of the women that initially participated in the project were forced to abandon the project or compensate for the inconvenience by working later hours at home to complete their household duties.<sup>18</sup>

## Obstacles to gender mainstreaming

Despite the benefits, there are a myriad of reasons why humanitarian actors ignore SADD and thus fail to design and implement gender mainstreamed projects. Humanitarian Aid is needs driven, not evidence driven and therefore the distribution of food aid is prioritized over SADD. The Tufts' study on SADD found that cluster leads lack training and understanding of need for and how to collect, analyze and translate SADD into programming. Limited interest and undervaluing of SADD among cluster leaders and donor agencies does not give humanitarian actors incentives or reasons to prioritize SADD in the planning and implementation of gender mainstreamed projects. This is something that the standardization of the GM in all CAP projects is working to address. It was also discovered, through the course of the study's research, that there are no routinely, harmonized methods of collecting, managing and analyzing data to inform programming in the field.<sup>19</sup>

While gender mainstreaming permeates policy, these barriers to gender mainstreaming originate from issues with practical application in the field. They can be eliminated through widespread training on cluster-specific, gender mainstreaming at levels of policy and practice. Humanitarian actors need to not only understand the value of, but also understand the application of SADD to their projects. There are resources available that are focused on food security and gender mainstreaming: the FAO Rome Declaration on Food Security, the Sphere Handbook, the WFP 2009 Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook and the IASC Gender Handbook. With further prioritization of SADD, food security projects will no longer be among the clusters with the lowest percentages of gender-mainstreamed projects. The necessary immediate response of food distribution does not excuse lack of integrating gender through SADD in the planning, execution and monitoring of food security projects. As advocated by the IASC, "Every project has gender implications: it is the humanitarian community's obligation to go beyond 'doing no harm' to advance gender equality."<sup>20</sup>



### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Here, gender is defined as the malleable, social and cultural constructs differing between women, men, girls and boys. 'Gender' is not synonymous with 'women,' but uses sex and age disaggregation to analyze roles, responsibilities, access to resources, constraints, opportunities, needs, perceptions, views etc. within a household and within and among cultures.

<sup>2</sup> Oxfam, "The Tsunami's Impact on Women." Oxfam Briefing Note 30. March 2005, p.2. Available at

[http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1502\\_bn050326tsunami-women.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/1502_bn050326tsunami-women.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, "Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies." Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, August 2011, p.43. Available at <https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Sex+and+Age+Matter>

<sup>4</sup> See n.10 above.

<sup>5</sup> The IASC, established in 1992, is a mechanism of humanitarian assistance that fosters coordination among the major humanitarian actors, both UN and non-UN organizations.

<sup>6</sup> IASC. "Gender Marker Tip Sheet, Food Security 1 (Food Assistance)." July 2011. Available at [http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/publicdocuments/Food%20Security%201%20\(Food%20Assistance\)%20Gender%20Marker%20Tip-sheet%20July%202011.pdf](http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/publicdocuments/Food%20Security%201%20(Food%20Assistance)%20Gender%20Marker%20Tip-sheet%20July%202011.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See n.10 above, p.i.

<sup>8</sup> IASC. "Gender and Food Security in Emergencies." Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs – Equal Opportunities. IASC. December 2006, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> The Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is a funding mechanism for humanitarian action developed by aid organizations that addresses the planning, implementation, and monitoring of all humanitarian projects within a country or region. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA) manages the development of the CAP.

<sup>10</sup> Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, "Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies." Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, August 2011, p. 79.

<sup>11</sup> See n. 25 above, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Sub-Working Group. "Sex and Age Disaggregated Data in Humanitarian Action": SADD Project. IASC: New York. May 2009, p. 80.

<sup>13</sup> See n.25 above, p. 79.

<sup>14</sup> See n.25 above, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> See n. 25 above, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> See n. 12 above, p. 63.

<sup>17</sup> OCHA. "Multi Cluster Humanitarian Needs Assessment: After the Severe Flooding on People of 4 Provinces in Pakistan: Information Collected in the Field." August 2010.

<sup>18</sup> Bryson, Judy, et al. Gender and Food Aid. United States Agency for International Development: Washington. 1992.

<sup>19</sup> See n. 25, p. 81.

<sup>20</sup> Consultation on the IASC Gender Marker. Summary Report. Geneva. 17-18 February 2010. IASC Gender Marker Consultation Report



## Bibliography

Bryson, Judy, et al. *Gender and Food Aid*. United States Agency for International Development: Washington. 1992.

Dyan Mazurana, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta and Peter Walker, "Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies." Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, August 2011, p.43. Available at <https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Sex+and+Age+Matter>

IASC. "IASC Gender Marker Frequently Asked Questions." July 2011.

IASC. "Final Summary Report: Chad." 2011. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

IASC. "Final Summary Report: Ethiopia." 2011. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

IASC. "Final Summary Report: Niger." 2011. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

IASC. "Final Summary Report: Occupied Palestinian Territory." 2011. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

IASC. "Gender Marker Tip Sheet, Food Security 1 (Food Assistance)." July 2011. Available at [http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/publicdocuments/Food%20Security%201%20\(Food%20Assistance\)%20Gender%20Marker%20Tip-sheet%20July%202011.pdf](http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/publicdocuments/Food%20Security%201%20(Food%20Assistance)%20Gender%20Marker%20Tip-sheet%20July%202011.pdf)

IASC. "Gender Marker Summary Report: An exploration of lessons learned from the 2010 implementation of the IASC Gender Marker to inform the next steps in the global rollout." February 2011. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Gender%20Marker%20Materials/2011%20Gender%20Marker%20Consultation%20Report%20Final.pdf>

IASC. "Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs – Equal Opportunities." IASC. December 2006, p. vii. Available at <http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Documents/IASC%20Gender%20Handbook%20Final.pdf>

IASC Gender Sub-Working Group. "Sex and Age Disaggregat-

ed Data in Humanitarian Action": SADD Project. IASC: New York. May 2009.

Moser, C. "Gender Planning and Development: Theory Practice and Training." Routledge: London. 1993.

OCHA. "Multi Cluster Humanitarian Needs Assessment: After the Severe Flooding on People of 4 Provinces in Pakistan: Information Collected in the Field." August 2010.

Oxford Pocket Dictionary. 1992.

Schlitt, C. *Gendering Sphere*. Humanitarian Practice Network Paper. HPN: London. 2000.

The Sphere Project. *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*. Practical Action Publishing: United Kingdom. 2011, p. 15. Available at <http://www.sphere-project.org/content/view/720/200/lang,english/>

Van Dijkhorst, Hilde and Suzette VonHof. "Gender and Humanitarian Aid: A Literature Review of Policy and Practice." *Disaster Studies*: Wagenheim University. December 2005, p.5.

Oxfam, "The Tsunami's Impact on Women." Oxfam Briefing Note 30. March 2005, p.2. Available at

# SOLLIMS



Stability Operations Lessons Learned & Information Management Systems

## Introduction

For the next few PKSOI Journals, we will provide “Lessons Learned Program Notes” which are short overviews on how organizations can apply a lessons learned program within/ during organizational events, other than operational missions, to capture valuable OIL (Observations, Insights, Lessons). “Notes” will normally be set in a peace/stability/reconstruction operations environment. The “Notes” for this edition focus on the collection/capture of OIL during unit, command and staff training Exercises and Experiments.

## General

Exercises and Experiments provide an ideal environment from which to capture both perishable and enduring ‘lessons’ / OIL - (Observations, Insights, Lessons) – consider how this can be applied in the area of CIV-MIL interaction and interoperability – a key functionality within the construct of peace and stability operations (P/SO). Many of the key, national level, GCC and Joint Staff level-sponsored exercises/experiments have specific objectives and MSEL (Master Scenario Events List) events that are intended to ‘exercise’ or test concepts relating to CIV-MIL cooperation – e.g. integration of Interagency (IA) elements and other NGO/IGO agencies into military staff MDMP processes; CIV-MIL communications; synchronization of programs/projects and coordination between the military commander’s and civilian Head-of-Mission’s stability/reconstruction program objectives; related activities of military units on the ground and IA objectives and activity in the military commander’s AO. Many “lessons” can be gleaned from these events; which are usually lost after the event occurs – even though a comprehensive AAR is prepared. The AAR information is often not entered into a true ‘database’ environment to allow subsequent recall of the information in a clear and usable format. The process below outlines “a way” that organizational staff can better capture, and then make available for analysis observations, issues and ‘lessons’ from E&E events.

## Collection Opportunities

The primary E&E events usually include the IPC (Initial Planning Conference), MSEL (Master Scenario Events List)

development seminars/working groups, Mid and Final Planning Conferences (MPC/FPC), the exercise/experiment itself and then AAR/backbrief. During each of these events there are tremendous opportunities to capture, ‘learn’ – disseminate and integrate – lessons, articulate key observations, and identify stability operations related issues that are of significant value to the Pewace, Stability Operations / Reconstruction community writ large.

## Exercise & Experiment Data Collection

Specific activities include:

➡ Prior to Departure: A designated organizational/ LL collection coordinator obtains information about the exercise (via eMail, website, TSCMIS, JTIMS ?) – e.g. exercise objectives; plan for Interagency integration, if any; names of Interagency players; initial concept for stability operations “play” during the exercise. Organizational rep/collection coordinator then reviews a general collection plan – e.g. PKSOI’s Standing Collection Plan, the commander’s CCIR, or other guidance to form a Collection Plan which identifies the appropriate areas and questions for the upcoming E&E event; develops event/exercise specific data collection plan as appropriate – organizational rep/collection coordinator can share this with the Exercise Director to help shape/form the Interagency/stability operations “play” during the exercise. The lessons learned system team – e.g. PKSOI Chief LL and tech support contractor, ensures that SOLLIMS data collection environment is prepared to support any E&E unique requirements and reviews data entry procedures with organizational rep/collection coordinator.

➡ During event: Organizational rep/collection coordinator completes at least one data entry per day of event – **“don’t quit until you submit”** becomes the mantra; this is achieved by either personal observation or by working with Joint / Multi-National / IA participants/partners – relating to previously reviewed items/questions from the Collection Plan or coming from discussion / dialogue with these individuals. (For SOLLIMS, tutorials, both online and hard-copy have been prepared to instruct users how to submit data into the SOLLIMS collection tool.) The organizational rep/collection coordinator should be proactive in initiating dialogue to gain new insights

# SOLLIMS



Stability Operations Lessons Learned & Information Management Systems

appropriate as data points for their unit/staff Lessons Learned program. Organizational rep should demonstrate the data entry process for the lessons learned system – i.e. PKSOI Stability Operations Lessons Learned and Information Management System (SOLLIMS) and assist, in particular, Interagency/NGO reps/counterparts with registering and submitting independent data/observations. The organizational lessons learned manager or other designated Command Lesson Manager (CLM) reviews submitted lessons/OIL and passes to appropriate functional SME/analyst to begin data vetting process (Data Vetting Procedures will be described in a future Journal.) Data should be marked as either “Pending” or “Hold” until an SME/analyst completes vetting. As appropriate, the organizational rep/SME/analyst can enter an ongoing Forums/Discussion Groups/CoP and/or initiate new Forums/Discussion Groups/CoP to continue knowledge development on a particular topic. The organizational rep should monitor exercise ‘flow’ to track for P/SO inject events; complete a data entry, as a minimum, of one data entries per day / per ‘inject’ event; assist other Service, IA, multi-national players with lessons learned system (SOLLIMS) data entry. It is also recommended that the organizational rep develop an exercise SPECIAL COLLECTIONS folder to consolidate related ‘OIL’ collection; and to identify input for a post-exercise LESSON REPORT.

➡ Post event: Organizational rep/collection coordinator ensures he/she has copy (hard copy and digits if possible) of AAR or other reports (operational, not technical) generated during the exercise itself. Upon return to home station, organizational rep/collection coordinator works with appropriate other analysts/SMEs, within an existing SME network/group as available. Once vetted, the CLM changes status of submitted OIL/lesson to “ACTIVE” creating open-access status.

➡ Other related activities: Review exercise/event operational AAR and add lessons as SOLLIMS’ data entries; make sure appropriate lessons are moved to the SPECIAL COLLECTIONS folder; move lessons to report builder and generate exercise/event LESSON REPORT. Print and disseminate the E&E LESSON REPORT. Additional activities may include the development of an E&E Initial Impressions Report (IIR), an article in a professional journal, a new Paper/issue Handbook development or to provide input for ongoing research and development efforts.

It is also important to coordinate with exercise/experiment and operational planners to ensure that recently acquired lessons are implemented in the planning and execution of future exercises, experiments and operations and to ensure that lessons emerging from exercises are captured and made available for future use – e.g. for policy/doctrine development and possible integration within POI/curricula, training venues. Readers are encouraged to visit the SOLLIMS’ Austere Challenge 09 Portal as a good example of a well-planned and executed data collection effort.

**\*\*NOTE: Procedures outlined here for the capture of OIL from E&E events can also be easily applied to the capture of OIL from conferences, seminars and working group attendance.**

## SOLLIMS Program Hi-Lights

▷ **Medical aspects of Stability Operations.** Our latest SOLLIMS Sampler looks at an often overlooked aspect of peace and stability operation – medical support. The Medical Sampler pulls lessons and insights from recent HA/DR events and ongoing medical challenges in the USAFRICOM AOR. See Medical Sampler in this Journal or by going to: [https://www.pksoi.org/document\\_repository/doc\\_lib/SOLLIMS\\_Sampler\\_Medical\\_Oct2012.pdf](https://www.pksoi.org/document_repository/doc_lib/SOLLIMS_Sampler_Medical_Oct2012.pdf)

▷ **eSOLLIMS Mobile App.** eSOLLIMS will allow users to access SOLLIMS resources and submit lessons/insights in low-to-no Internet environments using existing cellular networks. PKSOI will be beta-testing the eSOLLIMS mobile app during Oct-Nov 2012. Final project release is still targeted for March 2013. Submit your recommendations for the eSOLLIMS mobile app icon/graphic using the “Contact Us” link at the bottom of the SOLLIMS homepage or by emailing to: [usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.sollims@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.sollims@mail.mil). Graphic should be in JPEG format and not larger than 100 x 100 pixels.





Volume 3, Issue 1

October 2012

The views expressed in this journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army, PKSOI, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. This journal is published quarterly by the Publications and Knowledge Management Division and cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited. Content is not copyrighted. Material may be reprinted if credit is given to the original author.

Staff

**DIRECTOR**  
Colonel Cliff Crofford

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Mr. Chris Browne

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR**  
Colonel Lorelei Coplen

**EDITORS**  
Ms. Karen Finkenbinder  
Ms. Barbara Glasgow

You could be in the next Peace & Stability Operations Journal Online!



Announcing the January 2013 theme: Security Cooperation in Peacekeeping and Stability Operations. If you are interested in contributing to the journal, send your letter or articles for submission to the PKSOI Publications Coordinator: [usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.pksoiresearchandpublications@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.pksoiresearchandpublications@mail.mil) no later than 15 December 2012 for consideration. Also provide sufficient contact information. Note that articles should reflect the topic of, Security Cooperation in Peacekeeping and Stability operations. The Journal editing team may make changes for format, length, and inappropriate content only, and in coordination with the original author.

