

# Leading the Way to a More Equal Peace: Senior Management and Gender Mainstreaming

## BACKGROUND PAPER

CHALLENGES FORUM  
20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

United Nations Peace Operations  
2020: The United Nations Reviews  
and Their Implications for Tomorrow's  
Missions

8-9 May 2016, New York, USA

‘There is a prevailing erroneous notion that women and peace and security is "a woman's issue" that can be addressed only by women, instead of being understood as a peace and security issue for men and women and for society as a whole.’

### High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations Report

‘The United Nations has still to put into practice many of its policy commitments... The Panel proposes a number of ways to more effectively integrate women, peace and security and human rights throughout mission life cycles and across mandated tasks, including through strengthened back-stopping and advice and promoting accountability for integrating gender and human rights at the senior mission leadership level.’

### Global Study on Implementing UNSCR 1325

## Introduction

The UN Secretary-General's reports following up on the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Global Study on UNSCR 1325 have in common the emphasis on robust leadership for peace operations to reach concrete results on the ground.<sup>1</sup> For efforts to be successful, the Challenges Forum's report *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations* underlines ‘the need for gender-sensitive approaches to the restoration of peace and stability...in all aspects of peacekeeping operations’, i.e. gender mainstreaming.<sup>2</sup> Gender mainstreaming is a central approach to enforce as current peace operations are ‘...called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate political processes, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support constitutional processes and the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law and extending legitimate state authority.’<sup>3</sup> These are all areas where we know that men and women can be affected unequally if implementation is not adapted to their respective situation, needs and experiences.

**DR LOUISE OLSSON** is Senior Advisor at the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Dr Olsson has worked extensively with research and policy on mainstreaming gender in international peace operations and missions. Among her many tasks at FBA, she has developed a Gender Coach Program for the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which is a training program for senior management. She began her career in 1999 by contributing to the UN project Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations. Dr Olsson holds a PhD from Uppsala University which focused on the United Nations Peace Operations in Timor-Leste.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinion or position of the Challenges Forum Partnership.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, *The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, and *Report of the Secretary General on women, peace and security*, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Challenges Forum, *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations*, Stockholm, 2014, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Maintain International Peace and Security*, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/maintain-international-peace-and-security/index.html> (accessed on 3 April 2016).



As the above quote from the Global Study states, the most senior mission leadership, such as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and Force Commanders, are central actors for ensuring progress. Without leadership, the much needed, more strategic form of, gender mainstreaming – through decisions taken in the regular chain of command – will not be possible. Without that, we will not see mainstreaming enforced throughout a mission’s life cycle. The reason is that to succeed with gender mainstreaming requires demanding decisions on mandate interpretation and translation, on organizational capacity (including expert functions and consultation mechanisms), and, hence, on resource distribution. In effect, leadership responsibilities. As identified in the Challenges Forum’s report *Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, this includes an obligation:

‘...to lead by example and to champion policies and strategies – both within the mission and in all dealings with national and local authorities – that incorporate gender perspectives at both the political and organizational level.’<sup>4</sup>

*Without leadership, the much needed, more strategic form of, gender mainstreaming – through decisions taken in the regular chain of command – will not be possible.*

## From policy to action: key questions, challenges and examples

‘In 2014, I attended the Chief of the Defence Force’s Conference on Defence Women in Peace and Security. It was a transformational event for me... we immediately went about introducing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) into all aspects of sea training.’

Captain Heath Robertson, Royal Australian Navy<sup>5</sup>

Over the years, the importance of the gender perspective has become increasingly prominent in UN peacekeeping, something which has been reflected in the work of the Challenges Forum.<sup>6</sup> This is central, as articulated already in 2005 by former Special Rapporteur for Violence against Women, Yakin Ertürk, since the work for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations ultimately rests on the efforts of Member States.<sup>7</sup> Historically, peacekeeping operations were one of the later areas in the UN system to be reached by pressure to gender mainstream and by the ideas of including the voices of local women in the core work. For example, in the Secretary-General’s report on Gender Mainstreaming from 1997, it is observed that ‘[g]ender as a factor has not been considered, for example, in the political and security field or in the work of the First Committee of the Assembly or its Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.’<sup>8</sup> To begin to remedy this more systematically, in 1999, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ (DPKO) Lessons

<sup>4</sup> International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations, *Considerations for Mission Leadership in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, Edita Västra Aros AB, Stockholm, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Heath Robertson, ‘Gender awakening for a “somewhat typical” male naval officer’ in Helena Studdert and Sarah Shteir (eds.) *Women, Peace and Security Reflections from Australian Male Leaders*, Civil-Military Occasional Paper, 4/2015.

<sup>6</sup> See [www.challengesforum.org](http://www.challengesforum.org) for more examples of ongoing work by the Forum and its Partners

<sup>7</sup> Yakin Ertürk, *The UN agenda for women’s rights and gender equality*, Perceptions, Summer 2005, pp. 91-113

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, *Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system*, Report of the Secretary-General, E/1997/66, 12 June 1997.

Learned Unit undertook a project called ‘Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Support Operations.’ This project was to result in the *Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action*, recognized by the General Assembly and mentioned in Security Council resolution 1325, both realized through the efforts of Namibia.<sup>9</sup> The result of the continuous policy developments on gender mainstreaming were labors to strengthen the organizational capacity, for example at DPKO and in its operations. Support functions were gradually developed. The first designated gender advisers were utilized by SRSB Sergio Viera de Mello in Kosovo and Timor-Lest in 1999.<sup>10</sup>

Today, well over 15 year later, evaluations taking place in time for the anniversary of the first thematic Security Council resolution on women, peace and security, bring up examples of many successes from implementation. It is vital to continue to build on this work. The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operation’s Report (the so called HIPPO Report) and the Global Study on Implementing UNSCR 1325 (henceforth the Global Study), as well as the Secretary-General’s following reports, all underline the substantial amount of work which remains for senior management to undertake. This is not least so for multidimensional peacekeeping operations<sup>11</sup>, which need to become better at delivering effectively on the components of the resolutions on women, peace and security.<sup>12</sup>

How can senior management then more strategically progress the process of gender mainstreaming the mandate implementation in their operations? And, equally important, what are central reasons for why leadership every so often has been less than successful in ensuring such progress? Continuing to build on the *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations* report, this paper brings out key questions, challenges and examples for senior leadership in a multidimensional peacekeeping operation based on suggestions primarily from the HIPPO Report, complemented with examples from the Global Study, and the subsequent Secretary-General’s reports. Two areas are in focus for which senior management leadership is absolutely necessary for moving from policy to practice: mandate interpretation and organizational capacity development.

---

<sup>9</sup> For more information about these earlier phases, see also Louise Olsson, ‘Mainstreaming Gender in Multidimensional Peacekeeping: A Field Perspective’, *International Peacekeeping*, 7(3), 2000, pp. 1-16; Louise Olsson and Torunn Tryggestad (eds.), ‘Special Issue on Women and International Peacekeeping’, *International Peacekeeping*, 8(2), 2001; and Torunn L. Tryggestad, ‘Trick or Treat? The UN and Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security’, *Global Governance*, 15(4), 2009, pp. 539-557.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, for an overview United Nations DPKO/DFS, *Gender Equality in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, Policy, Ref. 2010.25, 26 July 2010; United Nations, *Women, Peace and Security: Report of the Secretary General*, S/2010/498, 28 September 2010; United Nations Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015; UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015; and Challenges Forum *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations*, Stockholm, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Naturally, the width of the UNSCRs on the Women, Peace and Security agenda includes the entire process and tools available, from prevention of conflict to reconstruction in the post-conflict setting. In order to enable a more concrete discussion, however, the main focus of this paper is on the more (relatively) short-term mandates of multidimensional peacekeeping operations. That said, the work of an individual operation must be coordinated with the full set of other UN tools. Another essential point to note is that the focus here is on mainstreaming and not on women’s participation among peacekeeping personnel. The latter is an additional central area but in order to avoid contributing to a mix-up between mandate delivery and participation, this report focuses only on mandate delivery. For a discussion on participation, see for example Institute for Security Studies, *Women in peace operations: the unsung champions of human rights*, 21 March 2016, <https://www.issafrika.org/iss-today/women-in-peace-operations-the-unsung-champions-of-human-rights> (accessed on 15 April 2016).

<sup>12</sup> See United Nations, *Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015; UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015.

## Mandate interpretation: what should and can we deliver?

‘Despite annual debates on women and peace and security of the Security Council, there is inconsistent application of the agenda during the rest of the year, including during mandate formulation and renewal consultations, which is exacerbated by the lack of attention to those issues in briefings and reports to the Council by the Secretariat and senior mission leaders.’<sup>13</sup>

The resolutions on women, peace and security by now encompass most issues and themes on the Security Council’s entire agenda. Moreover, the resolutions include everything from specific task-related information to more generic approaches to international peace and security. In addition, the resolutions encapsulate almost visionary views of how peace should be understood and achieved. When moving from policy to practice, however, it is central to keep in mind that a specific multidimensional peacekeeping operation has a much more concrete and limited mandate – in terms of scope – than the women, peace and security resolutions. Moreover, given time and resource constraints, an operation might only be able to address a few minor sub-themes of the resolutions. This starting point should not be understood as a justification for evasion. Rather the opposite; once the mandate content has been determined for a specific operation, the pressure to actually deliver increases.<sup>14</sup>

For a senior manager, the initial task to undertake is therefore to ensure that the mandate is interpreted in a manner which leads to a more gender-sensitive execution. In essence, this entails identifying what can and should be done. Interpretation is key, as a main challenge for many multidimensional peacekeeping operations has been the lack of understanding of what gender mainstreaming actually means for their mandated tasks.<sup>15</sup> The result has been substantial organizational frustration and several tugs-of-war between different mission components and functions. In this context, it is important to recognize that the challenges of interpretation are not unique to gender. We need to incorporate this discussion into the broader ongoing debate about mandates for peace operations, where the HIPPO Report argues that mandates in general need to be made more ‘clear, credible and achievable’.<sup>16</sup> A further complication has been that gender mainstreaming, or the resolutions on women, peace and security, are often mentioned in mandates as standardized phrases, so called ‘template language’, rather than more ‘operative language’ to specify for which tasks a gender-sensitive approach is fundamental. In combination with the growing concern, as pointed out in the HIPPO Report, that ‘...mandates have become lengthier and more specific, and at times less realistic or manageable’<sup>17</sup>, the use of template language on gender can result in

*Interpretation is key, as a main challenge for many multidimensional peacekeeping operations has been the lack of understanding of what gender mainstreaming actually means for their mandated tasks.*

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 79.

<sup>14</sup> This delivery must also be set in relation to the role that this specific operation plays in the larger political approach by undertaken by the UN.

<sup>15</sup> See Robert Egnell et al. *Implementing a Gender Perspective in Military Organisations and Operations. The Swedish Armed Forces Model*, Report 98, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2013, for a discussion on resistance to change.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 60.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

gender sensitivity being considered as an unnecessary add-on. This is particularly so if there is lack of capacity to understand how the gender perspective is already part of existing mandate tasks.

Succeeding with strategic gender mainstreaming therefore means that the interpretation of the mandate and its translation into operational documents must be clear. The responsibility of senior management is, hence, to guide and decide on the suitable interpretation to turn gender-sensitive implementation into something much more explicit; i.e. articulating what it means for the specific mandated tasks of the operation. Considerations need to include what is possible to achieve given time and resource constraints. These decisions must be turned into action through the operational plans and assignments in a manner which makes it possible to follow-up, also on the senior management level.<sup>18</sup>

## Examples of what gender mainstreaming means

A central challenge when seeking to interpret and translate the mandate is to identify what mainstreaming can mean in a specific context. Starting with the most basic, it might not always be crystal clear what gender mainstreaming as an approach actually entails. The approach originates in the central lessons learned from the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985) on how to forward equality. The actual definition was then adopted in 1997 by the Economic and Social Council, which decides that:

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

Ergo, implementing a mandate in a gender-sensitive way means considering what effects the entire operation’s daily activities have for men and women living in the area of responsibility. In addition, we have to consider how the operation affects ongoing gender equality processes. We cannot just assume that the peace supported will be equal.

While this is a fairly overarching definition, an even more concrete question might be to ask; what does gender mainstreaming actually mean for the practice of the operation? As can be observed in the quote, the answer depends on both the specific mandate and the specific context. Furthermore, the time aspect is central. As the definition clearly indicates, there is a need to think in terms of phases of implementation, where they all taken together should lead toward a more equal peace for men

*...implementing a mandate in a gender-sensitive way means considering what effects the entire operation’s daily activities have for men and women living in the area of responsibility.*

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

and women.<sup>19</sup> An example of how this has been applied is DPKO's/ Department of Field Support's (DFS) policy on integrating a gender perspective in peacekeeping which suggests that the mandated tasks can be divided into a short term and a longer term<sup>20</sup>, where the latter phase relates to broader peacebuilding activities.<sup>21</sup>

For a short-term mandate, gender mainstreaming can in essence ensure that proper considerations are made on the consequences of the operation for women's and men's security, rights and access to resources. Mainstreaming can also involve striving to limit the negative consequences that war has on gender equality. For example, by ensuring that women's and girl's security situations are explicitly included in the work to create freedom of movement when operating in an area where there is yet no peace to keep. This is vital in order to uphold women's ability to continue fulfilling economic, political and social roles, and for girls to continue to go to school. In addition, an operation must actively seek to avoid negative consequences for future equality developments, which can be the effect of gender-blind implementation or the lack of professional behavior.

What gender mainstreaming concretely means for a specific operation naturally depends on the context. However, to illustrate what has been undertaken during the last 15 years, here are a few examples:

- **Effective security presence and protection of civilian** measures: Peace operations with a protection mandate can contribute to a more secure environment for both men and women. This can be done, for example, through increased patrols, or joint protection teams against sexual violence.<sup>22</sup> Another aspect can be to ensure a gender-sensitive freedom of movement. This means analyzing what forms of threats men and women face respectively in specific areas, and then working strategically to adapt, for example, patrol patterns and capacities accordingly. Effective security presence naturally also involves ensuring the forceful handling of situations where members of the peace operation become the threat to the local population.<sup>23</sup>
- **Support to law enforcement and justice:** Contributing to strengthening law enforcement capacities and institutions that consider both men's and women's security and rights could involve supporting the national counterparts to uphold laws also on women's rights, including inheritance laws, and domestic violence laws.<sup>24</sup> In the Global Study, legal rights and justice (short and long term) are considered as fundamental to all other security undertakings. Women's and men's equal access to justice and addressing impunity for crimes against women, such as sexual and gender-based violence, are seen to be key. In addition, 'ensuring that

*...an operation must actively seek to avoid negative consequences for future equality developments, which can be the effect of gender-blind implementation or the lack of professional behavior.*

<sup>19</sup> In that sense, the definition clearly follow the same line of thinking as is now outlined in the discussions around the peace operations concept on how a specific peacekeeping operation fits into the larger UN toolbox.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations DPKO/DFS, Policy, Ref. 2010.25, 26 July 2010, pp. 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> See also General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, A/69/19, 17 March 2015.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations, S/2010/498, 28 September 2010, p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35; UN Security Council, resolution 2272, S/RES/2272 (2016), 11 March 2016; and Ragnhild Nordås and Siri C. A. Rustad, 'Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers: Understanding Variation', *International Interactions*, 39(4), 2013, pp. 511-534.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations, S/2010/498, 28 September 2010.

mechanisms are in place to protect the security and dignity of victims and witnesses' are considered central.<sup>25</sup>

- Ensure inclusive and aware **disarmament, demobilization and reintegration** (DDR) processes: DDR was mentioned specifically already in resolution 1325 as it had become apparent that women were often excluded from such processes.<sup>26</sup> Ensuring a fair inclusion of former women soldiers and women associated with fighting forces is therefore key. Here, the Secretary-General's report from 2015 on women, peace and security finds an increase in the percentage of women benefitting from UN DDR support. That said, there remains a clear difference in what form of support they receive. One example from Haiti shows that women receive more support from smaller projects whereas the larger projects, including legal assistance, primarily have male recipients.<sup>27</sup> Research results from Liberia underline that these gender-sensitive considerations must apply also to the transition period when peacekeeping hands over the process of more long-term integration of former combatants to peacebuilding efforts.<sup>28</sup>

- **Strengthening security sector reform** (SSR): Security forces, not least of the state, can have been the perpetrators of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, against all segments of the population.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, violence and security threats in war tend to follow gender-specific patterns, i.e. women and men are targets of different forms of violence and threats.<sup>30</sup> How SSR support is designed can therefore potentially affect men and women in different ways. A gender perspective can include ensuring the inclusion of women's organizations in the civilian oversight functions, or promoting vetting of recruits for crimes such as sexual and gender based violence. When seeking to contribute to more long-term reform of state security services, support to the establishment of special units working to address sexual and gender-based violence has increased.<sup>31</sup>

More long-term tasks relate to establishing the conditions for sustainable peace. These take place in several areas which all need to be addressed in a gender-sensitive manner. One case in point is support to **constitutional processes**. If a mission is called on to support a constitutional process, this should include support to national efforts for gender-sensitive constitutional reform.<sup>32</sup> In the short and long term, gender-aware **human rights protection** is also central. Given the growing focus on human rights, it is central to include a gender perspective.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the indicators for implementing UNSCR 1325, which were developed for the 10th anniversary of the resolution, prescribe that operations

<sup>25</sup> UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 18 and 21.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, DPKO, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in a Peacekeeping Environment: Principles and Guidelines*, 1999, <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-dpko-ddr-guidelines-1999.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> United Nations, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Helen Basini, 'Gender Mainstreaming Unraveled', *International Interactions*, 39(4), pp. 535-557, 2013.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Dara Cohen and Ragnhild Nordås (2014). 'Sexual violence in armed conflict: Introducing the SVAC dataset, 1989-2009', *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(3), pp. 414-428, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> For an overview, see Elin Bjarnegard et al. 'Gender, peace and armed conflict' in *SIPRI Yearbook 2015: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, SIPRI: Stockholm, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015, pp. 12-13.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations, S/2010/498, 28 September 2010, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015, pp. 33-34.

should include reporting on women's human rights to the Security Council.<sup>34</sup> In the broader work, supporting the development of a **public administration** and other national efforts in a manner which also promotes gender equality is central<sup>35</sup>, not least considering the aims of goal 5 and the other relevant sustainable development goals on the 2030 Agenda.<sup>36</sup>

A key concern to keep in mind, and which the Secretary-General's report on Women, Peace and Security from 2015 shows, is that at present, gender-aware formulations are more common with regard to enforcing protection rather than ensuring a more gender-equal peace in the institutional sense or with regard to women's participation.<sup>37</sup> This has been criticized for what it means for how we see women's agency. As the foundation of the resolutions rests on women's contribution to peace, it is central that 'women as victims' do not become a too dominant narrative; without losing track of the fact that women and men both require protection from the threats that affect them.<sup>38</sup>

## Organizational conditions for gender mainstreaming

There are a number of organizational conditions which need to be considered when addressing a more strategic form of gender mainstreaming. We will here discuss those related to capacity, consultations mechanisms, and expert support.

### *Organizational capacity*

In order to gender mainstream successfully, the conflict analysis needs to include a description of men's and women's situations and ongoing gender-equality developments.<sup>39</sup> This improved level of detail in the conflict analysis means that a gender perspective can more easily be tailored into the core of the operation from the outset by the senior management when translating the mandate into practice. That said, such an increased precision in the conflict description needs to be joined by sufficient capacity in other parts of the organization to understand and address the information. In addition, an operation needs to be able to collect its own information, or intelligence, in a gender-sensitive manner. The knowledge of how to then use this information in the analysis and planning is central in the continued translation into operational documents and practical tasks. This is underscored in the HIPPO Report

*This improved level of detail in the conflict analysis means that a gender perspective can more easily be tailored into the core of the operation from the outset by the senior management when translating the mandate into practice.*

<sup>34</sup> United Nations, S/2010/498, 28 September 2010, p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/RES/10/1, 21 October 2015.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015, p. 26.

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion, see for example, Nadine Puechguirbal, 'Discourses on Gender, Patriarchy and Resolution 1325: A Textual Analysis of UN Documents' *International Peacekeeping*, 2010, 17(2), pp. 172-187 and Kara Ellerby, '(En)gendered Security? The Complexities of Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes, *International Interaction*, 2013, 39(4), pp. 435-460.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 12.

which calls for increased analytical and planning capacity of peace operations in general but particularly notes that this capacity has to include an understanding of how to integrate a gender perspective into the process:

‘Gender-sensitive analysis should be conducted throughout the mission planning, mandate development, implementation, review and mission drawdown processes. This requires that the analysis and planning capacity called for in paragraph 173 and missions have the requisite gender and conflict analysis capability to draw on expertise from local women leaders, women’s organizations, relevant United Nations entities and other partners.’<sup>40</sup>

How the operation succeeds with gender mainstreaming the implementation then has to be reflected in reporting, benchmarking and evaluations explicitly.<sup>41</sup> I.e. gender mainstreaming has to be implemented throughout a mission’s life cycle. This form of strategic thinking is today also present in states sending peacekeeping personnel. For example, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) state that:

‘Armed conflict, natural disasters and humanitarian crises affect diverse men, women, boys and girls differently. As part of military operations, CAF members travel to countries around the world where cultural norms and gender roles, among other factors, differ widely from those in Canada. Incorporating gender perspectives into the preparation, conduct, and evaluation of missions enables the CAF to increase operational effectiveness and enhance understanding of the challenges faced by populations at risk in areas of armed conflict or natural disaster.’<sup>42</sup>

### *Consultation mechanisms*

In order to collect gender-sensitive data and information and in order to understand how to best gender mainstream the mandate implementation, there is a need to establish consultation mechanisms. The Global Study underlines the role of national ownership, and the importance of consulting women leaders and women’s organizations when making judgments of what are effective and grounded ways to gender mainstream a mandate implementation.<sup>43</sup> Likewise, the HIPPO Report suggests that:

‘The strategy should include the creation of forums in which senior mission leadership can participate in structured, regular engagement with local communities, including women, youth, religious and other leaders who can provide feedback to the mission on its work (United Nations 2015a, 79).’

This is central as it has been found that ‘...[o]utreach to women leaders and women’s civil society organizations, especially at the senior mission level, is often irregular or informal. This is a critically missed opportunity

---

<sup>40</sup> United Nations, 17 June 2015, p. 79.

<sup>41</sup> For examples, see William J. Durch *Implementing ‘Uniting Our Strengths for Peace’: An approach to benchmarking ‘HIPPO’ recommendations in five key areas*, Forthcoming Occasional Paper, Challenges Forum, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> Canadian Armed Forces, *Integrating gender perspectives into military planning and operations*, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/operations-how/perspectives.page> (accessed April 15, 2016).

<sup>43</sup> UN Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace. A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 2015.

to engage women in contributing to the work of the mission.’ This can, in turn, bring with it missed opportunities for identifying local capacities.<sup>44</sup> Research supports this finding and shows that when actively interacting with women’s organizations, the work for peace can be much more effective.<sup>45</sup> The identification of partners must be part of the conflict analysis, in line with the HIPPO Report cautioning us about making assumptions on representation.<sup>46</sup>

### *Expert support*

A central support function for providing the senior leadership with the expertise required to gender mainstream a mandate and its implementation, is the senior gender advisor. To strengthen the function, the Secretary-General’s report decides that the senior gender adviser should be placed in the office of the SRSG with support from ‘functional mission components’.<sup>47</sup> A similar format is used in many Member States.<sup>48</sup> Central lessons learned from past missions underline the need to consider how the interaction between senior management and the expert function can be enhanced and consolidated. Moreover, the approach should differ depending on which senior manager the adviser is to support.<sup>49</sup>

*A key challenge is to clarify what constitutes expertise and who can hold it.*

In addition to a gender adviser, mechanisms to support the operations with both content and technical expertise should be set in place.<sup>50</sup> This relates not least to the coordination with other UN actors in the field such as UN Women, UNDP, and UN country teams.<sup>51</sup> Such coordination is important in order to ensure that the contribution of the multidimensional peacekeeping operation is in line with the broader and more long-term work of the UN in the host country.

A key challenge is to clarify what constitutes expertise and who can hold it. A central caution is not to mix up gender expertise with the representation of women. There is no automatic connection between being born female and to have the capacity to understand or apply a gender perspective. Rather, attitudes to gender equality is central in combination with the capacity to translate it into relevant actions.<sup>52</sup> There are many men, not least male SRSGs and Force Commanders, who have contributed to paving the way for more gender-sensitive peacekeeping operations. Hence, male and female leadership alike are required in order to take gender mainstreaming further. To be successful, they both need to know how to make best use of the gender

<sup>44</sup> United Nations, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, pp. 77-78.

<sup>45</sup> Theodora-Ismene Gizelis, ‘Gender Empowerment and United Nations Peacebuilding’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(4): 505-523, 2009, and ‘A Country of their Own: Women and Peacebuilding’, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 28(5): 522-542, 2011.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 78.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, *Whose Security? Practical Examples of Gender Perspectives in Military Operations*, Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, Stockholm, 2015.

<sup>49</sup> For guidelines for police gender advisers, see for example Institute for Security Studies, *Women in peace operations: the unsung champions of human rights*, 21 March 2016, <https://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/women-in-peace-operations-the-unsung-champions-of-human-rights>.

<sup>50</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations, S/2015/716, 16 September 2015, p. 39.

<sup>52</sup> Elin Bjarnegard et al. ‘Gender, peace and armed conflict’ in *SIPRI Yearbook 2015: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, SIPRI: Stockholm, 2015.

experts available to them in the field.<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusions

Developing the ideas from the *Designing Mandates and Capabilities for Future Peace Operations* report with material from the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operation report, the Global Study on UNSCR 1325, and the following Secretary General's reports, this paper has discussed key questions, challenges and lessons for senior management of multidimensional peacekeeping operations when they seek to implement a gender-mainstreamed operation. In sum, when gender mainstreaming is enforced more strategically through the regular chain of command as outlined in the reports.

In essence, the paper has discussed how the senior management can more concretely interpret the mandated tasks to identify what gender-sensitive implementation means when seeking to move from policy to practice. Moreover, it has considered what organizational capacity is needed, how to ensure national ownership and context adaptation, and how to institutionalize consultations with women leaders and women's organizations from the host community. Last but not least, the paper has addressed how senior management can more instrumentally ensure an effective use of the expertise of the senior gender adviser. While all material for this paper underline that we have a long way to go in order to deliver more effectively on the decisions taken in the resolutions on women, peace and security, there is by now many lessons and developed policy to build on in order to create a more gender-equal peace.

## Questions

1. a) What have been factors for success when senior management has achieved a higher degree of strategic mainstreaming? b) What are the main challenges for management to successfully lead the process of gender mainstreaming?
2. What would need to be included in a conflict analysis to make it possible to translate the mandate into practice in a gender-sensitive manner?
3. How can the Secretary-General's decision on including a senior gender adviser function directly attached to the senior management best be realized in order to forward gender-sensitive implementation?
4. a) What are possible forms of consultation mechanisms with local women leaders and organizations that can be established in order to ensure dialogue on how to enforce gender-sensitive mandate implementation? b) How should these be coordinated with other UN actors operating in the same area?

---

<sup>53</sup> That said, if a peace operation's rhetoric on the importance of gender equality is to be taken seriously, ensuring a fair gender balance among personnel holds a very strong symbolic power. See, for example, Ann Marie Goetz and Rob Jenkins 'Missed Opportunities: Gender and the UN's Peacebuilding and Peace Operations Reports', *Global Peace Operations Review*, June 30, 2015. <http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/missed-opportunities-gender-and-the-uns-peacebuilding-and-peace-operations-reports/>.