# Whose Security?

Practical Examples of Gender Perspectives in Military Operations. 2015

NORDIC CENTRE FOR GENDER IN MILITARY OPERATIONS
NCGM

# Whose Security?

Practical Examples of Gender Perspectives in Military Operations. 2015

Edited by the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations

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*Photo: Magnus Lindstedt, PAO FS16, Swedish Armed Forces*

*Photo: Rickard Carlsson, FHS, Swedish Armed Forces*

# A selection of courses and seminars provided by NCGM:

## Gender Field Advisor (GFA) course (NATO Selected)

– Prepares Gender Field Advisors on how to advise their Commander or Head of Mission on integrating a gender perspective into the planning, execution and evaluation of military operations.

## Gender Training of Trainers (GTOT) course (NATO Selected)

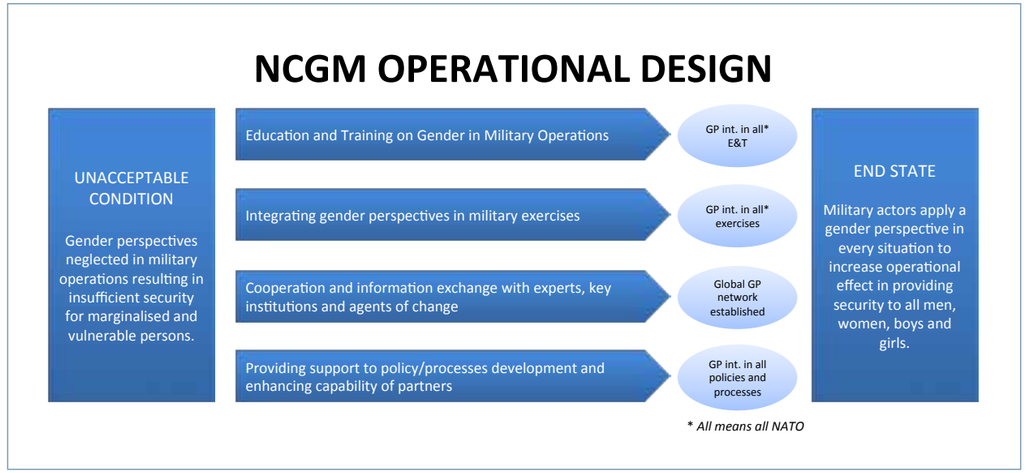
– Prepares instructors and trainers to plan and conduct pre-deployment training and education on gender perspectives in military operations.

## Gender Key Leader Seminar (NATO Selected)

– Focuses on how the implementation of gender perspectives will contribute to an increase in the achievement of the overall political, military, strategic and operational objectives.

## Gender Commanding Officer seminar

– Focuses on how Commanding Officers and Chief of Staffs can integrate gender perspective into military operations on operational and tactical level.






# Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations

*Jan Dunmurray, Commander. Photo: Thorsten Hagelberg, SWEDINT*

Peace support operations have always been challenging, and always will be. In order to establish sustainable peace and build a secure and democratic state, modern conflict resolution requires a comprehensive approach to ensure that the entire population – women, men, girls and boys – is involved, considered and addressed. Today we know that the implementation of gender perspective is vital for increasing the operational effect of missions. If we do not succeed in handling the dimension of gender in societies, we will not achieve the political nor the military operational objectives or the end-state of our mission.

The need for a hub of knowledge, a common platform for training and education, information sharing and a comprehensive approach including gender perspectives in operations led to the establishment of the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM). Today NCGM provides several courses for different levels, as well as expert support on gender and development of manuals, guidelines and handbooks on gender in military operations. NCGM also organizes seminars, expert meetings and conferences. Courses can also be conducted through Mobile Education and Training Teams (METTs).

In February 2013, NCGM was appointed NATO Department Head concerning gender. NCGM works closely with NATO, its member nations, and partners nations, as well as the UN and other Education and Training Centres aiming at implementing a gender perspective in all relevant aspects of military operations by focusing on education and training.

*As the leading international centre on gender in military operations, NCGM strives to enable actors to apply a gender perspective to every situation in order to increase operational effectiveness in providing security to women, men, girls and boys.*

As the Commander of the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, I invite you to be inspired by these examples and join us in developing and sharing good examples of using a gender perspective in military operations.

Jan Dunmurray, Commander

To stay updated on NCGM's events and courses visit **www.mil.se/swedint**. You can also contact NCGM directly by emailing **swedint-gender-centre-lg@mil.se**.

# Gender perspective in military operations

## What is the difference between sex and gender?

| Sex | Gender |
|---|---|
| **Sex** refers to the biological characteristics of men and women. These characteristics are genetic and their differences are limited to physiological reproductive functions. | **Gender** refers to the social attributes associated with being male and female, which are learned through socialization and determine a person's position and value in a given context. These attributes are socially constructed and are not biological, hence not constant and could be changed over time.<br>Notably, "gender" does not equate to women[1] |

## What is a gender perspective?

**Gender perspective** is the ability to detect if and when men, women, boys and girls are being affected differently by a situation due to their gender.

## What is a gender analysis?

**Gender analysis** is defined as the systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify and understand inequities based on gender.

For example:

– Military planning activities should assess the different security concerns of women, men, girls and boys in the area of operation

– Understanding how customary conflict-resolution mechanisms affect women and men differently and how their social status may change as a result of war

In order to make a gender analysis, you need sex-disaggregated data from your area of operations.

## What is the use of Sex-disaggregated data?

In order to make a gender analysis, you need sex-disaggregated data from your area of operations.

Sex-disaggregated data is the separate collection and presentation of statistics on women, men, girls and boys. Note that gender is one of many factors that affect individuals' roles in societies, for example ethnicity, age, religion etc[2].

**For example, by using a gender perspective you can enhance your situational awareness:**

In order to carry out mandate ➔ Substantial situational awareness ➔ Information on both men and women ➔ information from both men and women ➔ Liaison and engaging with both local women and men.

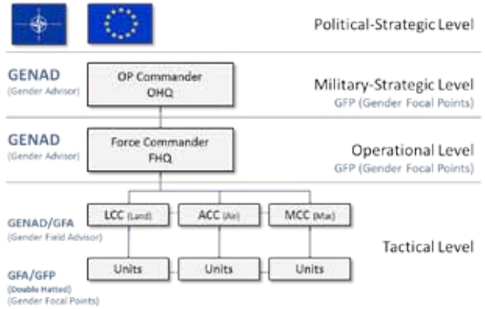
| **To receive information on both men and women one needs to consider:** | |
|---|---|
| **Not just asking:** | **Also asking:** |
| Who is talking? | Who is listening? |
| What does the population do? | Who does what? |
| Who is included? | Who participates? |
| Who is invited? | Who is present? |
| What has changed? | Who is affected by the change? |

1 *NATO BI-SC Dir 40-1*
2 *Ibid*



# Gender advisory functions

Given that not all Commanders and staff are yet fully trained on and accustomed to using gender perspective in the planning, execution and evaluation of operations and that their training still is on-going, Gender Advisors (GENADs) and Gender Field Advisors (GFAs) continue to be much needed to support the Commander in order to ensure that gender is an integrated part of any operations. GENAD and GFA positions are full-time positions that require adequate training, education and experience. GENADs and GFAs should be posted throughout the command structure, including deployable/deployed HQs, as well as in exercises.




**GENAD** – serves in a peacetime HQ and at strategic/operational HQ levels. The GENAD should have direct access to the Commander/Command Group in order to be able to communicate promptly and directly with decision makers. The GENAD maintains functional contact with other GENADs, GFAs and GFPs in higher and subordinate commands.

**GFA** – is deployed in an operation area. The GFA reports directly to the Commander and provides support to ensure that planning, execution and evaluation properly integrate gender perspective.

**GFP** – is a dual-hatted position that supports the Commander in implementing directives and procedures with gender perspective. The GFP maintains functional dialogue with the GENAD/GFA but reports within the chain of command. At the tactical level the GFP ensures that gender perspective is fully integrated into the daily tasks of the operation.

The Commander and senior management of the mission are responsible for the integration of gender perspective.[3]

3 *The gender advisory functions may look different in different structures, for example within NATO, UN, EU and AU. In international missions or in national structures. This is a generic structure that provides the general outline and purpose of the different gender advisory functions.*

The Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations would like to extend our greatest appreciation to the nations whose personnel contributed to the Centre and to this publication.



# Why these examples?

The awareness of and interest in gender perspectives in military operations is increasing all over the world, and so is the demand for practical examples.

As a result, the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operation is collecting relevant examples on the subject from former course and seminar participants, and with the help of our pool of Subject Matter Experts with whom we have maintained contact. This group of individuals consists of a number of military officers and soldiers of all ranks who, in different ways, have been using gender perspective in the field. A large number of people have been interviewed for this publication. It would not have been possible without the unique contributions from military personnel with mission experience from all over the world, including respondents featured in this publication and those who were not.

This publication provides examples of how using a gender perspective in the planning, execution and evaluation of military operations has enhanced the operational effect. The respondents have been given a chance to share their experiences and actions. Each respondent has also reviewed his or her article before publication. The reliability of the examples is thus entrusted to the respondents.

*Whose Security?* should not be seen as a handbook from which examples or methods described can be directly applied in another context. All examples must be read and understood within the context in which they took place, as well as taking into consideration the culture, mandate, mission and organization. Rather, this publication should be seen as a source of inspiration, lessons observed and creative ideas on how gender perspectives could be integrated into your everyday work in the field. Hopefully, it will encourage more military personnel and missions to integrate a gender perspective into all its functions and generate even more good examples.

These examples are not an exhaustive collection of using a gender perspective, but rather a selection of experiences with some initial positive outcomes. Our aim at the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations is that *Whose Security?* will be a publication that can be updated with new examples as we improve the integration of gender perspectives into military organizations and operations around the globe.

Do you have an example suitable for our second version of *Whose Security?*

Contact us at: **swedint-gender-centre-lg@mil.se**

Photo: Thorbjörn Gustavsson, Swedish Armed Forces

# Gender analysis of patrol route detected potential security risk

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2013, Capt Mikael Wallentin Åström

Capt Wallentin Åström served as a Gender Field Advisor to the commander of the Nordic-Baltic Transition Support Unit in Mazar-E-Sharif, Afghanistan, during 2013. One of his tasks was to advise in the operational planning process. When requested to advise on a task concerning the patrol route, he recognized the coordinates of the patrolling area from a previous report from the Regional Command North. He recalled this area to be a bazaar where only women were allowed according to local customs. Capt Åström could also recognize from the call sign of the company that there were no female soldiers in the unit.

*"Male soldiers walking into the female bazaar could have created a security situation that would have been a potential risk to both their own troops as well as local national women in the bazaar"*

Capt Åström's advice to the unit's plan officers at the operations office was to either change the patrol route or include a balanced number of female soldiers in the unit. Thus, the female soldiers could go into the bazaar while the men held the security positions outside. Male soldiers walking into the female bazaar could have created a security situation that would have been a potential risk to both their own troops as well as local national women in the bazaar. It would have been insensitive towards the women present and such a situation would also be harmful to the reputation of ISAF.

The repercussions of any military action must always be taken into consideration when planning an operation. By using a gender perspective both men's and women's need for protection (military personnel or civilians) will be taken into consideration in any future situation or actual situation at hand.

The result of gender analysis in the operational planning process was that the patrolling route was changed and potential risks against troops and civilians were identified and contained early on. With a gender perspective a better situational awareness was obtained and force protection was improved.

Here it is important to note that it does not necessarily have to constitute a security risk for male soldiers to enter a market. However, if a certain market is restricted to women the security considerations of male soldiers entering the market must be analysed. An observation is also the importance of having an organization that is capable of responding to all situations. In this example, the ability to provide female soldiers to take part in patrolling would have made it possible for the mission to patrol the bazaar without unnecessary security risks.

A gender analysis of the patrol route can detect potential security risks. Deploying women and providing gender balanced patrol units could in this case be a way to minimize the risk.

*Photo provided by: Maj Elisabeth Schleicher and Maj Andy Young*

# Gender analysis identified that roadblocks affected men, women, boys and girls differently

Maj Elisabeth Schleicher and Maj Andy Young, KFOR, 2011-2012

Maj Elisabeth Schleicher was deployed as Gender Advisor (GENAD) to COM KFOR for 18 months between 2011 and 2012. She advised COM KFOR and other key leaders in KFOR on integrating a gender perspective into operations. She emphasized that understanding the mission and gaining the support of leadership within KFOR was key to their success. Her work contributed to KFOR's situational awareness and operational effectiveness by ensuring that KFOR engaged with men, women, boys and girls. To optimize the effect of her office, she created a Gender Team working closely together with Maj Andy Young.

COM KFOR identified the north of Kosovo as a centre of gravity for the mission. In the north, ethnic tensions had recently resulted in violence. The frustrations of the Kosovo Serbians boiled into civil unrest and led to them setting up roadblocks. The roadblocks decreased freedom of movement, which was a part of the KFOR mandate. As GENAD, Maj Schleicher integrated a gender perspective at the start of the planning process, ensuring a holistic approach and understanding throughout the organization.

A major element of the gender analysis was to assess the effect of the roadblocks on the population. It was identified that it was mostly unemployed men who worked with the roadblocks. They were paid to guard them and thus were motivated to keep them in place. It was also identified that the roadblocks interrupted the supply of food and supplies to the communities. This impacted women and children more than the men since some of the men had begun to establish new resupply routes. It also prevented the children from attending school. KFOR concluded that the communities could not resupply themselves and thus the roadblocks were not sustainable for more than two months.

*Photo provided by: Maj Elisabeth Schleicher and Maj Andy Young*

> *"… the situation would get worse for the local population but at different speed for men, women, boys and girls …"*

This realization – that the situation would get worse for the local population but at different speeds for men, women, boys and girls – led COM KFOR to accelerate the process and perform a complete encirclement of the communities to further reduce supplies. Cutting off the new resupply routes as well as the official roads would put more pressure on the leaders and push them to the tipping point more quickly. It would also shorten the crisis and thus lessen its impact on women and children. Force would only be used at a few critical roadblocks. Throughout the mission, causalities were kept to a minimum and the relationship between KFOR and the Kosovo Serbian community did not deteriorate.

For this successful operation to take place, key leaders in KFOR had to understand the value of a gender perspective in operations. Maj Schleicher's implementation had three levels: KFOR Command Group, HQ KFOR Staff, and Subordinate units and Liaison Monitoring Teams. She tailor-made training for each level in KFOR. At the Command Group, she focused on establishing higher-level relations and the Commander's guidance. At the operational level, she trained on integrating a gender perspective into Operational Planning. Lastly, at the tactical level, she trained how to liaise with the local population and how to recognize and report on how the situation affected people based on their gender.

Maj Schleicher ascribes her success to her early work in understanding the mission and gaining the trust of the command team. Early on, the gender team was seen as a contributor to the mission's success.

*Photo provided by: Maj Elisabeth Schleicher and Maj Andy Young*

Men, women, boys and girls are often affected differently by crisis situations because of their gender. A military mission can mitigate these differences and result in enhanced security for the whole population.

# The different impact on men and women factored into planning of logistics

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2011, Cdr Urban Rådestad

"As a Gender Field Advisor (GFA) you need to have the ability to analyse how and in what situations men, women, boys and girls are affected or treated differently due to their gender, for example in an operation. If injustice or disproportional harm is directed towards one group based on their gender the GFA needs to step in and suggest alternative ways of action."

This is how Cdr Urban Rådestad explained his role as a GFA. In 2011 Cdr Rådestad was deployed to Afghanistan as a GFA to the Commander for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-E-Sharif. As GFA he prepared background materials and gave advice for the commander's consideration when planning the future direction of the mission. As a GFA, you might have to advise on the gender perspective of some unexpected planning considerations, such as the choice of vehicles.

The PRT unit that Cdr Rådestad advised was planning an operation for late autumn. They planned for a large-scale operation with heavy vehicles and maximum force protection. As a GFA, Cdr Rådestad advised on planning considerations such as the choice of vehicles. Rain and snow were likely to appear during the time period in which the operation was scheduled to take place. This meant a likelihood that heavy vehicles in combination with the weather would damage the roads. Cdr Rådestad considered what consequences this could have on the local population, meaning men, women, boys and girls, in the remote villages in the mountains.

The unit analysed the composition of the population in the villages and observed that there were mostly women and children in the area since the men were working elsewhere. The women and children used the roads every day. For example, the children had a long way to travel to school and were dependent on buses to get there. Women also had to go by bus to reach midwives when giving birth. By using a more traditional means of transport, for example riding a donkey, the distance would take approximately eight hours to a neighbouring village where the nearest midwife worked. This meant that the women and children were dependent on the roads in their everyday lives. Without functioning roads, their freedom of movement would possibly be limited. Through a proper gender analysis of the living conditions of both men and women, the everyday necessity of the roads, especially for women and children, became clear.

*"If injustice or disproportional harm is directed towards one group based on their gender the GFA needs to step in and suggest alternative ways of action"*

Cdr Rådestad was able to foresee these dire consequences resulting from the operation and advised the commander to try finding different solutions for the transportation if continuing with the operation. His contribution to the planning process was to emphasize how women and children were dependent on the roads in their everyday lives for basic services such as education and health care. This was valuable input to the planning process where different security concerns and factors were considered. Alternative systems for reconnaissance of the area in advance of the operation were used and enabled the unit to ultimately decide on performing the operation with lighter vehicles as well as excluding certain areas. The roads could therefore be kept in better condition and the impact on the everyday lives of the population would be limited. In Cdr Rådestad's example, a gender analysis revealed the necessity of the roads, especially for women and children, which served as one of the factors informing the choice of vehicles and the area in which to operate.

It is important to involve a gender perspective and the support of the GFA in all planning considerations. Most operations will affect men, women, boys and girls differently and knowing how operations affect these groups is valuable information for the planning process.

*Photo: Thorbjörn Gustavsson, Swedish Armed Forces.*

*Photo: Srg Anna Norén, Swedish Armed Forces.*
*Note that the persons in this photo have no connections to the content of the article.*

# Consulting the whole local population on their security situation

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2012, Capt Håkan Lundberg

Capt Håkan Lundberg was deployed as Gender Field Advisor to ISAF 2012 with the Swedish-Finnish Task Force Northern Lights (TFNL). Within the area of responsibility there was a village that suffered from a poor security situation due to the presence of insurgents. It was considered to be a "trouble hot-spot" by ISAF and was therefore periodically patrolled by TFNL. Among other thing, the village had experienced events including Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

The village had a large school with around 3000 students. The boys and girls did not attend the school at the same time. Usually the girls attended school in the morning and boys in the afternoon. With the help of a CIMIC team, Capt Lundberg found out that almost every female teacher had left the school because of the poor security situation. They had felt endangered going to work, especially since they taught girls and this was not always approved of among the insurgents. As a result the girls were left without education since female teachers were the only ones allowed to teach girls. Normally the school had around 20 female teachers but now only one female teacher remained at school.

*"the female teachers had a say in the position of the checkpoint in order to give optimal security for the school"*

In order to improve the overall security in the village, ISAF decided to set up a checkpoint in the village. The checkpoint gave the expected result to improve the security. Notably, some of the female teachers returned to the school. In Capt Lundberg's opinion, the checkpoint might have limited the freedom of movement of the insurgents and decreased their influence on the female teachers. Because of these successful results, ISAF decided on a second checkpoint at a different location in the village. This time, bearing in mind the positive effects of female teachers returning to the schools, Capt Lundberg advised the CIMIC branch to talk to the school personnel, especially the female teachers and ask for their opinion on where to place the second checkpoint. In this way the female teachers had a say in the position of the checkpoint in order to give optimal security for the school. Their advice was followed and the second checkpoint also had a positive effect on the security situation. Within months, about 15 female teachers returned to teaching. This resulted in the school resuming its activities providing education to the girls as well as to the boys.

The male headmaster of the school had previously not paid attention to the female teachers' interaction with ISAF personnel. However, seeing the effects on the security situation and the school's ability to provide education, the headmaster started to participate in the visits to the ISAF camp together with his female staff members. During these meetings, important information was exchanged between the CIMIC branch and the headmaster, with Capt Lundberg and local interpreters present. After a couple of meetings, the school's personnel felt confident enough to share information regarding the security situation in the village. The message was that there had been a significant decrease in numbers of IEDs in the village since the checkpoints were established. This was new and valuable information for the ISAF mission and consequently the operational planning guiding the patrol routes in order to avoid security threats.

"This is an example on how we, by helping the ones we are there to protect, can gain information that increases the success of the mission," says Capt Lundberg. "I am pretty sure we would not have received this information in any other way."

*Photo: Srg Anna Norén, Swedish Armed Forces*
*Note that the persons in this photo have no connections to the content of the article.*

By talking to and seeking advice from the people feeling insecure, we will enhance the operational effect in providing a safe and secure environment. These connections can also give the mission valuable information that it would not have received in any other way.

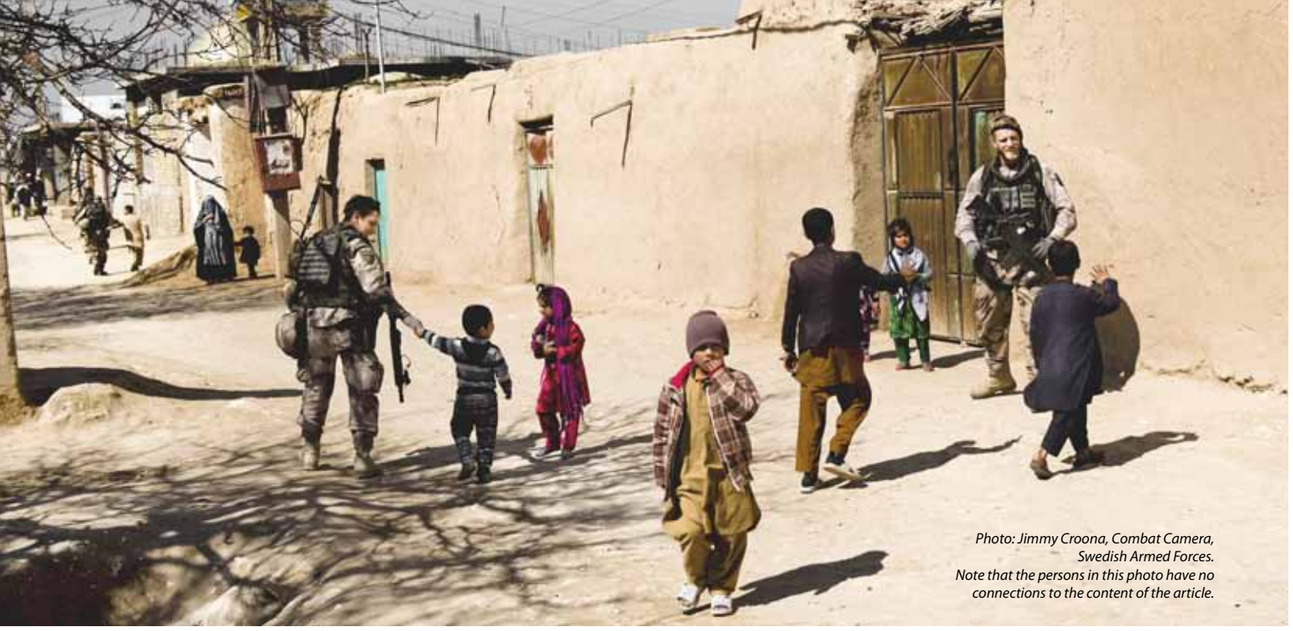


*Photo: Jimmy Croona, Combat Camera, Swedish Armed Forces.*
*Note that the persons in this photo have no connections to the content of the article.*

# Counter-insurgency and after actions following kinetic operations

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2010, Lt Col Per Nilsson

In 2010 Lt Col Per Nilsson was deployed to ISAF as ACOS G3 (Chief of Operations) of the Swedish/Finish Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazar-E-Sharif. During his deployment he took part in several counter-insurgency operations with frequent firefights. Many of them were kinetic operations in which insurgents were killed. The insurgents often had family in the villages close by. Lt Col Nilsson was able to analyse the consequences of the kinetic operations on the family members left behind.

"These operations were always difficult and emotional. When you take a man out he most certainly leaves a family behind. It is very important for us to plan not only what we do during the operation, but also how we act afterwards," says Lt Col Nilsson.

Lt Col Nilsson and his team conducted a follow-up analysis of the family members of the insurgents. Many of the families had lost a husband and/or a father. These families were left very exposed to different security risks. They were also rarely self-supporting without the male family member. Traditionally, the men of the family are the breadwinners. Without a male head of the household, many families were at risk of extreme poverty or starvation. In such an exposed position, families are likely to accept help from whoever is offering it. If the insurgents reached out to the family, they were likely to continue their recruitment of new members from that community.

*"Lt Col Nilsson and his team made sure that specific projects were aimed towards the populations of villages that had lost many members after kinetic operations"*

Having realized this challenge, Lt Col Nilsson and his team made sure that specific projects were aimed towards the populations of villages that had lost many members after kinetic operations.

"If we don´t reach out to these families, explain to them the reason for our actions and offer them help, someone else will. We need to act preventively," says Lt Col Nilsson. "Even if they are not our enemy today, they could be tomorrow. All because we failed in providing security in the aftermath of our actions."

Teenage boys were at especially high risk of being recruited by the insurgents. Teenage boys without employment could be in a vulnerable position and take up arms to support their family. Without a father, they might feel responsible for their family's survival. The insurgents know this and can therefore target these boys for recruitment. However, if the families can support themselves the pressure on the boys to make a living is not as high and the incentive to join an armed group is lower.

Lt Col Nilsson and his team put into practice a plan to visit these villages with Mixed Engagement teams in cooperation with local security forces after a kinetic operation. Through the Mixed Engagement, they could reach out to the village and explain the courses of events. They were also able to collaborate with development aid agencies in the area that could offer projects especially directed towards villages that had lost many members. These were mostly farming projects but also projects in the security sector. The projects aimed to help families who had lost their breadwinner get back on their feet and become self-supporting.

Lt Col Nilsson used a gender perspective to analyse the situation of the family members left behind after the kinetic operations. By addressing their vulnerable situation they could to some degree reduce the risk of insurgent recruitment. In this way, the counter-insurgency operation benefitted from integrating a gender perspective into their planning.

An operation does not end with killing the insurgent. A gender analysis of the family members left behind can also reduce future recruitment to insurgent groups and be useful as a counter-insurgency strategy.

# The gender perspective was a highly valued tool to the Commander

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2012-2013, BG Michael Claesson

BG Michael Claesson served as Commanding Officer for a Multi-National Task Force in the ISAF mission during 2012-2013 (then as Colonel). Although holding Area of Responsibility for three provinces in northern Afghanistan, the main camp was in Mazar-E-Sharif. Their primary tasks were to train, advise, assist, mentor, and support relevant units and functions as well as the leadership of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Furthermore, their tasks were to continue the transition of security responsibility from ISAF to ANSF, including the handing over of camps and installations in an orderly manner. In particular the supporting role towards the ANSF required a thorough analysis including the need to understand Afghan society and culture.

For BG Claesson, a good situational awareness is key to a successful mission. He argues that you simply have to apply a gender perspective in order to build and maintain a good situational awareness. In Afghanistan, he realized that only if he understood the different pillars of society, and the different gender roles played by men, women, boys and girls, could he and his mission have a full picture of the society in which they were operating.

For BG Claesson to realize this objective, he needed his Gender Field Advisor (GFA) to take part in the planning process and operational analysis from the beginning. If the GFA comes late to the process his or her input can be easily disregarded which BG Claesson refused to see happen. Integrating a gender perspective is the responsibility of the Commander and is therefore a leadership issue. This also underlines the importance of giving all staff members and parts of the unit leadership adequate training on how to integrate gender aspects into all parts of the Command and Control processes.

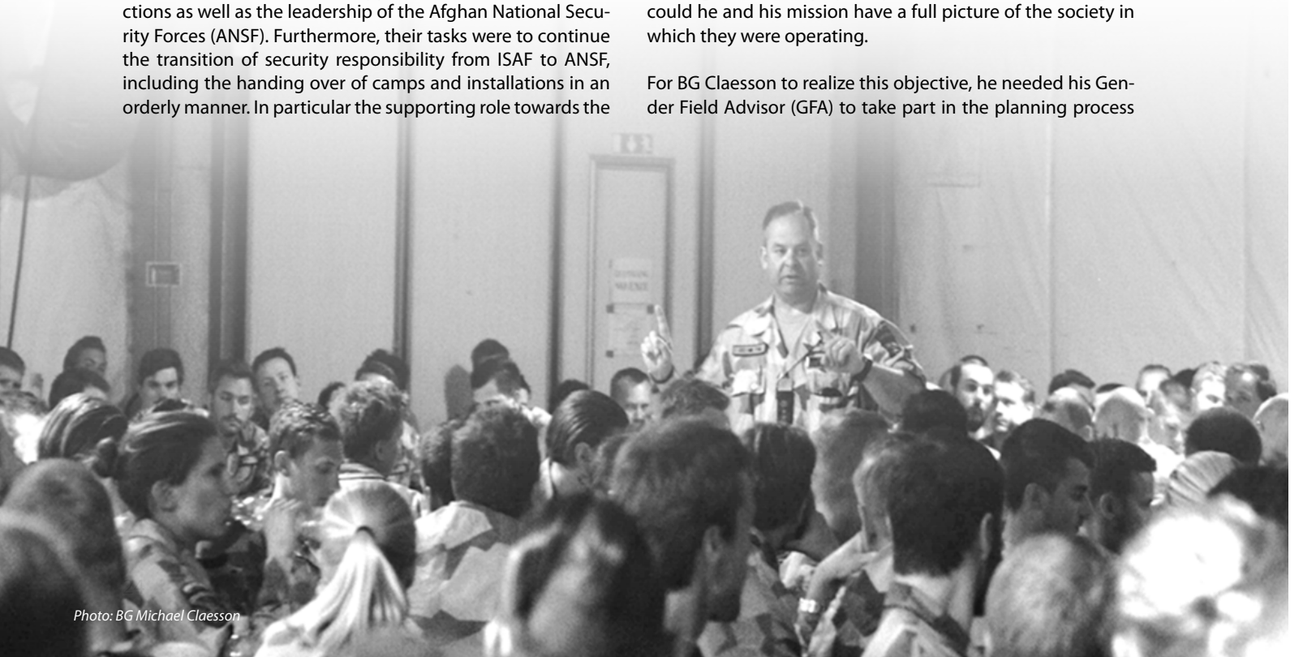


Photo: BG Michael Claesson

> *"…a gender perspective is much more than female members in the team. It is about having and using knowledge about the gender roles and situations of both men and women in all the activities of the mission"*

"In order to gain results by using gender perspectives I have to show my troops that I truly believe in the work. I told my troops that it is all about understanding the society as whole, which is a part of our normal military methods. I also pushed the military effect we get if our analyses of the society are better grounded," says BG Claesson.

During BG Claesson's operational tour, ISAF enhanced its supporting role to the ANSF. An important task was to support the ANSF to integrate a gender perspective into their activities.

"In a way, they were ahead of us in planning with a gender perspective. For them, it was natural that men and women had different needs and needed different consideration," says BG Claesson. They also faced a lot of challenges in supporting their Afghan colleagues in using a gender perspective and met a lot of resistance. "When facing resistance, I could recall our own experiences when a gender perspective had enhanced the effect of an operation," says BG Claesson. "We could share a dialogue with them on the security risks and mistakes that tends to occur when planning without applying a gender perspective."

BG Claesson highly values a gender balanced contingent and sees clear advantages to having as many female soldiers and officers as male ones. However, he stresses that a gender perspective is much more than female members in the team. It is about having and using knowledge about the gender roles and situations of both men and women in all the activities of the mission. Both men and women can and should employ this skill in their work as a military.

Looking back, BG Claesson sees how a gender perspective could have been even more integrated into their planning but also into pre-deployment training including staff training. It is clear to him that planning with a gender perspective could help to avoid unnecessary security risks, both for the mission and for the population. For this reason, he valued the contributions from the GFA. The participation of the whole troop in using a gender perspective was essential to the success of the mission.

Photo: BG Michael Claesson

Integrating a gender perspective into operational planning is a leadership issue. A strong support from the leadership will enable a gender perspective to be integrated and enhance operational effect.

Photo provided by Wg Joseph Ekwale

# Discovering agents for changes through gender analysis of the local community

## Darfur (Sudan), UNAMID, 2009-2012, Wg Cdr Joseph Ekwale

Between 2009 and 2012, Wg Cdr Joseph Ekwale served as a Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Officer in the civilian component of the United Nation - African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). The UNAMID had the mandate to support the implementation of the peace agreement and protection of civilians. To this end, the mission facilitated the implementation of DDR projects together with the Sudanese government.

By working closely with the community when planning and conducting the DDR program, the DDR section of the mission gained an understanding of the gender relations in the Sudanese culture. The DDR section consisted of 32% women, which also enabled them to properly engage with local women. The section could use these observations to analyse how they should improve their work by using a gender perspective. They realized that Darfuri women took part in the peace process to a large extent. The women were often responsible for most of the household activities, which made them active in advocating for the safety of their family and visible in the community.

The DDR section learned that in both war and peacetime, women were involved in mobilizing the community. Especially groups called Hakamas who used singing as a method of activating people. In peacetime, their singing would maintain social order in the community. In wartime, they sang to encourage their sons and husbands to fight at the front. The Hakamas sometimes travelled with the armed forces to the battlefield and their singing would spur the fighters. Having this function, the women were influential in local communities in both war and peacetime.

> *" Without knowing about the gender roles in the culture of the Darfuri communities, the DDR section would have missed out on the effect of the Hakamas."*

Having attained this knowledge of gender relations, and of the Hakamas specifically, the mission's DDR section considered how the Hakamas and their role during the war could impact their work. The DDR section realized that when transitioning the forces from the atrocities of war into a peaceful society, the Hakamas had to be involved. The DDR section started contracting the Hakamas and training them on the purpose of DDR, peace-building, gender and human rights. With this training, the Hakamas could develop songs that instead of urging men to fight were about peace and a better future. The Hakamas performed their newly written songs at ceremonies and large events.

Thanks to the knowledge of the gender relations in the community, the DDR team could identify the influence of the Hakamas and partner with them in changing the direction

for Sudanese youths. The section could use a force of the community that had been a prominent part of the war and enable them to also be part of the peace-building process. Without knowing about the gender roles in the culture of the Darfuri communities, the DDR section would have missed out on the effect of the Hakamas.

Gender relations that were used during the war can also be used in the peace process. Gender analysis and knowledge about gender roles can help the team to discover these patterns for change.

*Photo provided by Wg Joseph Ekwale*

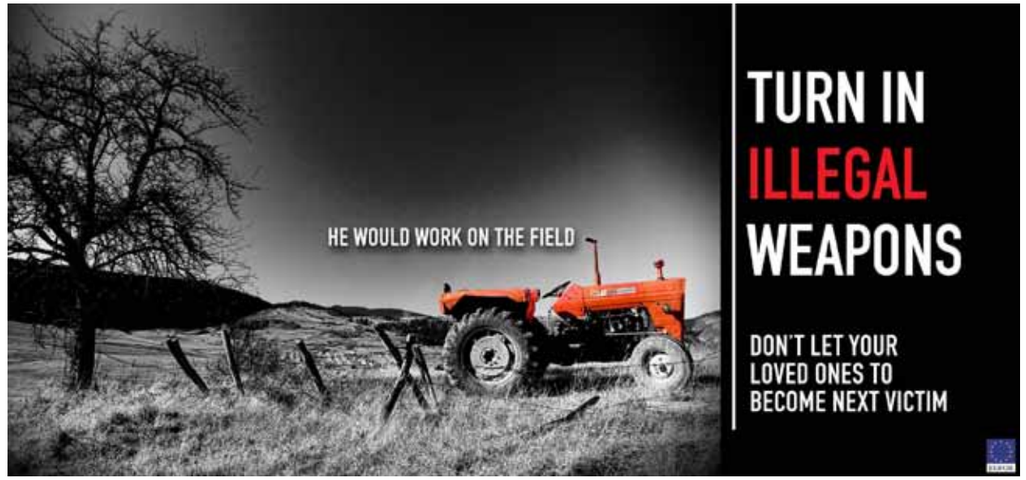



*Photo: © EUFOR Althea*

# Using gender roles to collect illegal weapons more efficiently

## Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR, 2005-2006, Ms. Nikolina Marceta

Ms. Marceta used to work for the NATO-led Stabilization Forces (SFOR; 2000-2005) as an assistant to the legal and political advisor and then later EUFOR Althea operation (2005-present) in Bosnia and Herzegovina as one of the legal assistants and Gender Advisor to Commander HQ EUFOR Althea (since 2009). One of the main tasks of the SFOR and later EUFOR operation was to carry out Harvest Operations, which collected illegal weapons. One aim of the Harvest Operations media campaign was to raise the awareness in the local population of the dangers of illegal weapons and to collect illegal weapons in the area. The local authorities had issued amnesty laws under which locals could hand in illegal weapons without legal consequences. To inform and encourage handing in weapons, the SFOR and later on EUFOR mission supported extensive media campaigns all over the country. The campaigns were mostly directed towards men, especially during the SFOR operation times. Traditionally, males in the family were more likely to see themselves as the security providers for the family in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The male population was considered to be more likely to possess weapons and therefore be the primary target group for the Harvest Operations media campaign.

Nevertheless, many still kept their weapons, despite the media campaigns and the amnesty laws. Large numbers of illegal weapons still circulated on the streets and in homes. It became evident that the work of the media campaigns in support of Harvest Operations was not yet finished and so the mission continued to convince the population of the advantages of handing in illegal weapons, further improving the media campaigns after 2005 in order to target a wider audience, including women.

*"Target the ones who have little or nothing to win by having weapons in their homes"*

SFOR had never had a Gender Advisor and EUFOR established this structure in 2007. A strategy to target women as well as men with the media campaigns was developed, drawing for the most part on the specific security concerns of women. For example, the EUFOR mission received reports of accidents involving children playing with weapons. "In addition to targeting the men, who claimed that they needed to keep their weapons in order to protect their family, the campaign should have also targeted the mothers who are afraid to lose their kids in any of the accidents involving weapons. Target the ones who have little or nothing to win by having weapons in their homes" says Ms. Marceta. The concept of security for the children is not necessarily the same for mothers and fathers, although they are both driven by the same amount of love and a desire to protect their children.

The idea of targeting women with the message of handing in illegal weapons was put to the test in 2006 and in 2007. Speaking from the perspective of the Multinational Task Force North West as part of the EUFOR mission, located in Banja Luka, Ms. Marceta recalls that a number of commanding officers of the troops on the ground conducting Harvest Operations recognized and utilized the power of female populations in their areas of responsibility. They started talking to the local women about the illegal weapons, informing them about the risks associated with having illegal weapons in the home, especially for children. For example, they could present the numbers of children injured and killed due to illegal weapons being kept in the home.

The increased rate of illegal weapons collected and destroyed after approaching women directly and informing them about the security risks connected with weapons shows how the Harvest Operations could have benefited earlier from planning with an integrated gender perspective.

"If we had targeted the women earlier – both in the media campaigns but also using gender analysis when establishing the strategy for house searches – we might have been able to collect more weapons," says Ms. Marceta. She stressed that this was the experience of the Multinational Task Force North-West as part of the EUFOR Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina led by the British forces. She could not comment on the results achieved by any of the remaining two task forces within the EUFOR structure at the time in relation to Harvest Operations.

A gender analysis of the target audience might present new solutions and courses of action for the operation.

# Women's patterns of movement as indicators of the security situation

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2010-2011, Lt Joachim Ottosson

During his deployment to Afghanistan, Lt Joachim Ottosson worked in the Intelligence Unit of the Swedish Contingent in Mazar-e-Sharif. As an intelligence office, he wanted to know as much as possible about the area of operations before he started his work. Before his deployment, he studied previous reports and material closely to learn what the society and community looked like. "Afghanistan is an environment very different from what I knew," says Lt Ottosson.

In the Swedish contingent, the intelligence team came from many different backgrounds. They had many interesting discussions about the challenges and the new environment facing them in Mazar-E-Sharif. Among other things, they discussed the women's situation in the country and how it was affected by the operations by the Swedish troops. Lt Ottosson remembered the gender training he had received in predeployment training. Back then he did not know how gender could relate to his work. However, during the discussion within the intelligence unit and with other branches they got a better insight into how they could benefit from using a gender perspective. They realized that analyzing women´s patterns of movement and the way they acted could result in a better understanding of how both men and women were affected by the military operation. Furthermore, the patterns of movement of women and the way they acted could send them a message about the situation on the ground.

Because of the separation between men and women in most Afghan communities, the mission had mostly liaised with the male elders. Sometimes they would not receive accurate information from them on, for example, the security situation. Many times the male elders would have an agenda behind the kind of information they gave to the mission. The idea Lt Ottosson and his team got was that the way the women acted could also be an indicator of the security situation. If there were any dangerous elements present or if some violent actions were planned in the area, it was likely that either most men would ensure that their women stayed at home or women would stay away on their own initiative. Also, since women were primarily responsible for the children they were also likely to have a good understanding of the security situation in order to protect their children. The intelligence team could therefore work with the hypothesis that if the women were not present in the village or acted differently than normal it could possibly be an indicator of a change for the worse in the security situation. These observations could then give a more nuanced image of the situation and complement the information they received from the village elders. While the leaders of the society might say one thing, the actions of the population could reflect how they perceived the security situation.

*"The intelligence team could therefore work with the hypothesis that if the women were not present in the village or acted differently than normal it could possibly be an indicator of a change for the worse in the security situation"*

"We asked the patrolling units questions about the presence of women, how they acted and where they were" says Lt Ottosson. "In that way, we could establish an idea of normality and be able to note when something changed to the worse." In this way, every soldier out patrolling could contribute by collecting sex-disaggregated data and simply take note of the actions and presence of women. By collecting answers to the questions from the intelligence team, every soldier could use a gender perspective.

The intelligence team envisioned the outcome of this strategy to be two-fold. First of all, how the population acted around the mission could indicate their attitudes towards the mission. Depending on if they perceived ISAF as a threat or as a protection, they would act differently. This is valuable information since an essential part of the counter-insurgency strategy is to have the population on the side of the mission. Secondly, a better understanding of the security situation would limit the risk of unfriendly fire or kinetic actions during operations.

When discussing how to use a gender perspective in military operations, the importance of liaising with both men and women in order to get information from the whole population is often stressed. Additionally, the gender analysis of the population and collecting sex-disaggregated data of what they do and how they act can contribute to the intelligence gathering of the mission.

Gender analysis of the everyday observations of the whole population can offer valuable indicators to the mission.

*Photo: Johan Lunddahl, Combat Camera, Swedish Armed Forces.*
*Note that the persons in this photo have no connections to the content of the article.*

*"We covered a wider part of the population which increased the mission's situational awareness and gave KFOR the possibility to enhance operational effect"*

*Photo provided by Maj Jörgen Sävmark*

# Gender-mixed Liaison and Monitoring Teams enhanced the credibility of the mission

## Kosovo, KFOR, 2007-2008, Maj Jörgen Sävmark

In 2007-2008 Maj Jörgen Sävmark was deployed to the KFOR mission in Kosovo as team leader for a Liaison and Monitoring Team (LMT) located in Pristina. The role of LMTs was to serve as the eyes and ears of the Commander of KFOR while observing the situation in the field.

The reason for the LMTs originated from complaints from the population saying that the KFOR was missing information from the field. KFOR was seldom up-to-date with what was going on in their surroundings. With information missing they sometimes responded late to large demonstrations, for example. It became the task for the LMTs to monitor and observe the situation. This mostly involved contacting key leaders, organizations, agencies, and religious authorities to get a more complete picture of the ongoing activities in the local society and among the local population. The nature of the task led to Maj Sävmark realizing that he would need a mixed team. In order to deliver on the task and learn from the population, he would have to be able to communicate with both men and women on their terms. He put together a team consisting of two women and four men. "By having a more gender balanced team we managed to communicate with organizations and parts of society that previously had been closed to us," he says.

The gender-mixed LMT received more information than the battalions in the area of operations and also more – and more useful – information than the other male-only LMTs. The LMT was also able to choose if they wanted a female or a male interpreter. Two teams shared an interpreter pool of two women and three men with the different language skills needed to address large parts of the diverse population. In this way they could tailor their team to whomever they were meeting, being able to address female key leaders with a female interpreter as needed. The composition of the team gave them higher credibility in the society, since they reflected society in their gender composition to a larger extent. Their readiness to address both men and women on their terms enhanced their credibility to actually be able to improve the security for the whole population.

*Photo: Evelina Bomark, Swedish Armed Forces*

The ability of the gender-mixed LMT to receive unique information tied the team closer to the Commander of KFOR. The Commander KFOR gave numerous direct orders to the Maj Sävmark's LMTs on where to operate and what information to look for when the Commander wanted specific information. The Commander KFOR also requested advice from the members of the gender-mixed LMTs since they were able to have a more nuanced image of the society as a whole. "We covered a wider part of the population which increased the mission's situational awareness and gave KFOR the possibility to enhance operational effect", says Maj Sävmark.

A Liaison and Monitoring Team that reflects the gender composition of the area in which they are operating will be able to get a better understanding of the society.

# Using creative methods to engage with local women

## DR Congo, MONUSCO, 2011, Maj Jan Mathiesen

In 2011, Maj Jan Mathiesen took part of the MONUSCO mission in DR Congo as a military observer. He was team leader at one of the team sites in the country. As a military observer in a UN mission you report on the current security situation in your area of responsibility through a chain of command which informs the UN Security Council. Maj Mathiesen and his team covered a rather large area (100 x 150 km) with a lot of small villages but only three roads. Due to the poor infrastructure it was hard to reach villages and meeting places other then those located by the roads. Nonetheless Maj Mathiesen and his team systematically visited two villages a day. The patterns of the gender structures were similar in all the villages his team visited. During the day the men were mostly active in the village whereas the women worked outside of the village, fetching water, doing laundry, farming or going to the market. As the teams visited the villages during daytime they rarely communicated with the women.

The previous year, Ms Margot Wallström, at that time the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, had visited the area after 380 women had been systematically raped there. Hence it was clearly stated in the mandates that the women's security situation needed to be reported on. When allegations about women being subjected to several rapes in the areas arose, the Security Council asked all the teams to look into the reliability of these accusations. In order to receive this information and observe the issue, the team contacted women at the market. However, they suspected that these women were not from their area of responsibility.

One day driving to a village Maj Mathiesen spotted a number of women by the river doing laundry. They signaled to receive the attention of the women. They then stepped out of the car to show that they were interested in communicating. After a while a few women approached them. Through their interpreter, the team could inform the women that they were interested in talking to local women from the area. Together with the women they decided that when they drove by the next day the team would signal with their horn and stay for a while giving the women the chance to approach them. The turnout of women the next day was far above their expectations. Approximately 100 women approached them after hearing the signal.

*Photo: Swedish Armed Forces*

The women had little or no knowledge of the purpose of MONUSCO. They had seen the UN cars and the military observers but had never thought they might be interested in talking to women. This created an opportunity to inform and communicate with the local women who the observers otherwise rarely came into contact with. From these meetings the observers received information contradicting the allegations about the rapes. In this area the women stated that they felt safe and were not being subjected to sexual violence. They said that if they were not feeling safe they would not do laundry in the river away from their village. The new information received from the women was deemed credible and resulted in the team restructuring their patrol routes since the monitoring of rapes in that area could be down-prioritized now that the rape allegations could not be confirmed. It also taught the observer team that the women doing laundry in the river could serve as an indicator of the security situation being acceptable. Reflecting afterwards Maj Mathisen figured that the information provided by the women could be triangulated in order to verify it. By receiving facts the driving routes did not have to be planned based on assumptions and hence resources could be put into other areas where rape allegations and therefore possible rapes were still taking place. By creating a system to liaise with the women the allegations and other information received could be followed up and addressed.

*"We were six men in my team and had no idea how we could reach out to women"*

"We were six men in my team and had no idea how we could reach out to women in the villages, since they were unavailable when we passed through. Until that day it never occurred to us that of course we could get in contact with the women, as long as we did it on their terms. Talk to women – but do it in a manner acceptable to them." says Maj Mathiesen.

*Photo provided by Maj Jan Mathiesen*

It is impossible to report on the security situation in an area if both women and men are not addressed. In many cultures, men can still communicate directly to women, as long as it is in a culturally accepted manner.

*Photo provided by Maj Jan Mathiesen*

# Receiving new information by discovering informal female networks

*"The fact that someone had requested to meet with local women specifically had given them the chance to gather in a network."*

*Photo provided by Lt Col Monica Larsson*

## Chad, EUFOR Chad/RCA, 2008-2009, Lt Col Monica Larsson

Lt Col Monica Larsson worked as the Gender Advisor to European Union Force (EUFOR) Chad and Central African Republic (RCA) between July 2008 and April 2009. The EUFOR Chad was a bridging mission that would handover to a UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) in 2009. At the beginning of the mission Lt Col Larsson and her predecessor visited the Northern part of the mission area of operations where a EUFOR battalion was operating. The battalion reported that in the first meetings with the local key leadership they had urged the mission's personnel to be culturally sensitive and to not contact the local women. The battalion followed this appeal and expressed to Lt Col Larsson that they would not engage with local women.

A couple of months later, Lt Col Larsson returned to the same area along with some female staff colleagues and a female interpreter. She had the expectation that this team would be successful in liaising with some local women. She advised the Liaison and Observation teams to communicate in advance to the local women, through their male connections, that a female team from EUFOR Chad/RCA would visit the area. At the meeting with the local women, Lt Col Larsson met a well-educated woman who had started a network of local women. The area of operations was quite large and rivalry existed between the villages, and between the villages and the refugee camps, because they shared the same resources. Despite these obstacles, the woman had managed to gather representatives from the different villages and areas in the network. The woman explained to Lt Col Larsson that the network had been created with the purpose of meeting the female team from EUFOR Chad/RCA. The fact that someone had requested to meet with local women specifically had given them the chance to gather in a network. This was the first time that women from the different villages and areas had come together.

During the meeting between the female team from EUFOR Chad/RCA and the network, everyday problems such as the shortage of water were debated among the women. The women also discussed their physical security and security threats in the area. Women had stopped collecting firewood from certain areas because of the presence of armed men. They could inform the team from EUFOR Chad/RCA about these areas which, of course, was valuable information for the mission. The female team from EUFOR Chad/RCA also understood that the mission had a bad reputation among the local population. The female network could explain that this was because of their cooperation with the local police included in the Security Sector Reform (SSR). On several occasions, the local police had repeatedly harassed and stolen from the population and was considered a prominent security threat. The female team from EUFOR Chad/RCA could then inform the network that they trained the police to not violate human rights and that the mission firmly condemned these activities.

The meeting and newly created network showed the will of the local women to communicate and liaise with the mission, despite what the male leadership had claimed in the initial meetings with the battalion. After the meeting, the network continued to exist with the purpose of working against opposition and rivalry between the villages and the refugee camps in this area. The network was also able to discuss and organize steps concerning humanitarian assistance that was a part of the EUFOR Chad/RCA mission's mandate. When the EUFOR Chad/RCA mission ended, contact with the network was handed over to the MINURCAT mission. By listening and engaging with local women directly, instead of relying on second-hand information, Lt Col Larsson managed to establish useful contact with the women. The meetings with EUFOR Chad/RCA also presented a networking opportunity to the local women.

Be aware of the gender relations in the culture and make sure you are getting the advice from accurate sources. Women are also actors of peace and often have a strong influence in their societies.

# Misconceptions about the attitude of the local population towards the mission

## Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR, 2008, Col. Stefan Kirchebner

Col Stefan Kirchebner was the Commanding Officer of the Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) in the Tuzla region of the EUFOR mission in 2008. During this time, he commanded a number of Liaison and Observation Teams (LOTs) operating in the local community as the link between the local population and local authorities and the operation HQ. In other words, the LOTs were "the eyes and ears on the ground" of the operation HQ, able to truly feel the pulse of the local community. Despite the efforts of Col Kirchebner and others to reach gender-balanced LOTs, most of the teams under his command were all-men units at the time.

As part of a joint project with the European Union Police Mission and UNIFEM with the aim of increasing the number of the women in the security sector of BIH, a number of local workshops were arranged in which influential women, female NGOs and representatives from the local and international police departments and military forces participated. The project was implemented, among other locations, in the Tuzla region, where Col Kirchebner was in command and EUFOR LOTs actively participated.

During these workshops it became apparent that the female population did not understand the purpose of the LOTs and thus was very reluctant to be approached by the LOT members. This was simply because no one had directly told them what a LOT is. The women present explained that they were under the impression that the LOTs were intelligence officers and spies and did not want to be seen talking to them. It was revealed that the women's reluctance to talk to the LOTs had little to do with them consisting of mostly male soldiers. Most women had no problem talking to the mission's male

*"Our job is to maintain a safe and secure environment for everybody. For this reason, we need to know to whom we are providing it, what their needs are and how to proceed"*

soldiers and when they found out the purpose of the LOTs they had a lot of information to share. Luckily, the project workshops finally offered the opportunity to communicate the mission and the purpose of the LOT activities to the local women. Once this was done, it became evident that the women were not aware of the purpose of their presence in the country and that direct contact with the female population needed to be increased.

During the workshops, women were able to discuss their specific security concerns, often relating to domestic violence. The women explained that the illegal weapons that still existed in the home were often involved in threats and domestic violence. The presence of illegal weapons in the home often facilitated domestic violence since these weapons can enforce already destructive power relations in the home. This was valuable information for the mission, especially in regard to monitoring the overall levels of safety and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was also relevant to the potential influence that domestic violence might have on the safety and security of an environment. These reports of domestic violence could also later on serve as indicators of where lots of weapons still existed in the mission's Area of Operations.

The local women could also report on conflict-related sexual violence. Since rape as a weapon of war is considered a war crime, this information was highly valuable to the operation.

"Our job is to maintain a safe and secure environment for everybody. For this reason, we need to know to whom we are providing it, what their needs are and how to proceed," says Col Kirchebner

Following the new information revealed during the workshop, the LOTs were given training in gender perspectives. They were taught how to conduct gender analysis and to give the same amount of attention to men's and women's needs and experiences. With this knowledge about local gender relations, stereotypes such as the idea that local women cannot talk to male soldiers could be rejected. Moving past stereotypes and engaging with the local communities not only benefits the population, it also enhances the operational effect to have a complete image including the gender roles and social structures.

Gender analysis based on actual facts about the local population will avoid stereotypes and assumption. Only with a complete and correct image of the local population can information be communicated and exchanged.

Photo provided by Capt Deidre Carbery

# Reporting on sex-disaggregated data gave operational results

## Lebanon, UNIFIL, 2013, Capt Deidre Carbery

Capt Deirdre Carbery was deployed with the Irish 42nd Infantry Group, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 2013. She was Platoon Commander in an Infantry Group but also worked as a Gender Advisor within the contingent's Gender Unit. When she arrived in the mission area and started her work it became evident that there was a need to gather further data to make gender analyses of the society. To be able to effectively analyze gender relations in a society, sex-disaggregated data on men, women, boys and girls is essential. Existing reporting systems in the mission were updated to take into consideration that men, women, boys and girls have different patterns of movement, do different activities and participate in different parts of civil society. All of this is important information for the mission to be able to analyze how the whole population is affected by any of the mission's operations or activities.

In order to gather this information, Capt Carbery established a Gender Report Proforma on sex-disaggregated reporting of data. The necessity for disaggregated data and the importance of gender reporting was instilled in Capt Carbery prior to her arrival in the mission area during unit level gender awareness training and during the pre-deployment phase of the overseas mission. The Gender Report Proforma was an integrated part of the regular patrol reports. For this reason, the report Proforma was completed by every Patrol Commander after their daily patrols. As a result, the Patrol Commander could deliver up-to-date and usable data to the Commander. For example, data was collected on the percentages of males and females in each town and village within the Area of Operations (AO), the age groups of men and women and their main occupations and sources of income. Using the proforma, the patrols could also report on both male and female key leaders and key actors in the area.

> *"This newly acquired sex-disaggregated data made sure that the mission based its operational planning on actual facts about the whole population, not assumptions or stereotypes"*

This newly acquired sex-disaggregated data made sure that the mission based its operational planning on actual facts about the whole population, not assumptions or stereotypes. This resulted in several successful and improved effects of operations on behalf of UNIFIL.

- The sex-disaggregated data collected through the patrols informed the Gender Unit that 95% of the agricultural workers in their patrolling area were women. However the patrol units were all male and had difficulties establishing contacts with the women. Capt Carbery advised the Patrol Commander to include female soldiers in the units. This enabled the units to actively engage with the female agricultural workers. Without reporting on the proportion of women working in the field, Capt Carbery would not have known that the mission in this case needed female soldiers patrolling to engage with the agricultural workers.

- By engaging with the agricultural workers, the patrol teams received information on the needs of the workers that could assist them. The workers told them about the lack of water for the crops. This information could be passed on the CIMIC team who liaised with the local authorities and the local mayor. Therefore, using the information gathered and in collaboration with the local authorities, a large irrigation system could be installed to water the crops thereby lessening the labour intensive task of carrying water across the fields.

- The patrol teams, using the proforma, reported that they observed few women participating in social activities in public. When they saw groups of men socializing, they mostly saw women running errands or attending the market. From this observation, women seemed to have limited access to the public sphere and the Gender Unit prioritized increased participation of women in the community. This meant that the mission strived to ensure all activities and operations would have minimum negative impact on the social and public lives of women. This prioritization was made possible through the sex-disaggregated data gathered by the patrols using the Gender Report proforma. For example, women and children often attended the markets during the day so the commanders took this into account when planning their patrol routes and times to make sure that this group was not affected disproportionally. Therefore, by changing patrol routes, the local population, especially women, would be less limited in their access to social activities.

- The Irish troops of the 42nd Inf Group were, however, careful not to lose the connection with local women and even though the patrolling units tried not to disturb wo-

*Photo provided by Capt Deidre Carbery*

men more than necessary, the mission still sought out ways to engage with local women. By using the Gender Reporting Proforma, the mission received information about local women's groups and communities. Through meeting these communities, they could learn about their situations and about possible security threats to women. The women were able to put forward their opinions and their desire to participate in the political development and governance of their towns and country.

The Gender Reporting Proforma initiated by the Gender Unit of the 42nd Inf Group gave the mission essential information about the composition of the local population and its situation. By using the real facts and information, they could address the local population and engage with them in a manner sensitive to their everyday lives.

A functioning reporting system providing sex-disaggregated data is key to integrating a gender perspective into operational planning.



# Facts on gender relations instead of gender stereotypes when planning DDR projects

## Liberia, UNMIL, 2004-2005, Maj Per Nilsson

Between 2004 and 2005 Maj Per Nilsson was deployed to United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) as Company Commander in the Mechanised Infantry Company at Swedish-Irish Quick Reaction Battalion and was located near the headquarters in Monrovia. During this deployment, his team took part in a patrol quite far south of Monrovia. One of the aims of the patrol was to report back on the situation of ex-combatants: where they were, if they had returned to their villages, and the security situation in the area. This information would feed into the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) projects planned by UNMIL. Some DDR projects focused in particular on the large number of children used as soldiers left behind after the war. The projects were planned for the children to return to their villages where their families, and especially their mothers, would wait for them and be able to take care of them. This plan relied heavily on the mothers' ability to take their children back, regardless of what had happened during the war.

*"…the return of the child soldiers to their home villages could threaten their security, making them a vulnerable group"*

The patrolling team were able to ask the villagers they passed for their reflections and input to the DDR projects. They especially sought to communicate with the women, since their role was essential to the success of the return of the child soldiers. First they had challenges to reach out to the women. Instead of giving up they took their time to first communicate with the children approaching them, then to men and lastly the women who then opened up.

Their efforts to reach out to the women paid off when they realized that the return of child soldiers to their home villages would be difficult. The women they talked to were clear in their message: the child ex-combatants were not welcome to return. The atrocities committed by the combatants, both old and young, had caused them too much pain and they were not welcome back, not at this point. The men of the villages reaffirmed this view. This was very valuable information for the team who could report back to the DDR unit that child soldiers could meet resistance when returning home. Potentially, the return of the child soldiers to their home villages could threaten their security, making them a vulnerable group. With the new information, the DDR projects could be revised and ensure a more secure reintegration for the child ex-combatants.

The information gained by communicating with the women showed that the gender stereotype of a mother taking their child back no matter what turned out not to be true. The example shows the dangers of relying on gender stereotypes in the planning process instead of actual facts gathered from local men and women.

When applying a gender perspective, do not rely on your preconceived gender stereotypes. Conduct a proper analysis of the situation based on facts gather from the local community.

*Photo provided by NCGM. Note that the persons in this photo have no connections to the content of the article. The photo is from a different context than the article but shows an example of the utility of female soldiers in search operations.*

# Deploying female soldiers essential to living up to the mandate

## Iraq, Operation Antica Babilonia, 2003, Maj Gen Luciano Portolano

In 2003, Maj Gen Luciano Portolano (then Colonel) was deployed to Nassiriya in Iraq in the Italian Operation ANTICA BABILONIA under the UN Security Council Resolution 1483. He was positioned as Joint Task Group Commander.

One of the main tasks of the mission was to provide security around the humanitarian aid for the most vulnerable, who were mainly women and young children. While deployed it became clear that the largest obstacle was the difficulty for local women to access the services facilitated by the Italian

> *"Today Maj Gen Portolano remains convinced that the mission would not have been able to live up to the mandate if female soldiers had not been deployed."*

military personnel. Women approached the camp to get humanitarian aid (food, clothes, school materials) and looking for medical support for themselves and for their children. The Italian contingent had difficulties at the base check point in searching everyone who passed the checkpoint. With only men in the team, they could not search women properly at the checkpoint.

Luckily, at the same time the first ever Italian female soldiers deployed on mission. This meant that 40 female soldiers had just deployed to Iraq. These soldiers were immediately positioned to both search teams and aid distribution. The result was that women could be searched properly and thus access the humanitarian aid efficiently. Having female soldiers deployed was key to meeting the humanitarian needs of the local women. Today Maj Gen Portolano remains convinced that the mission would not have been able to live up to the mandate if female soldiers had not been deployed.

Deploying women to international missions is crucial to being able to successfully implement the mandate.

*"The women of the camp opened up to the female soldiers and were able to give them information about the situation within the camp"*

Photo by Albert Gonzalez Farran, UNAMID

# Capacity to increase prevention of sexual violence in IDP camps

## Darfur (Sudan), UNAMID, Oct 2010 - Nov 2011, Maj Titilayo Agbomabini

The UN Mission to Darfur (UNAMID) is a joint African Union and United Nations Peacekeeping Mission and with the mandate to bring stability to the Darfur region while the peace talks on the final settlement proceed. Within the mission, the Nigerian contingents together with the Nigerian police Forces conducted joint patrolling around several Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) camps. Whereas the Nigerian military patrolled the area outside of the camps, the Nigerian Police were able to patrol inside the camp. Maj Titilayo Agbomabini was deployed as a Special Investigator to the mission and worked closely with the Conduct and Discipline Unit, Gender Unit and Board of Inquiry (BOI). In her position, she could testify to the security needs of men and women in the IDP camps.

Initially, the patrolling units consisted of only male participants. Quite soon, when analysing the gender perspective of the operation, the troops realized that the women of the IDP camp were not comfortable talking to men. The mission then ordered females to be included into all patrolling teams. The women of the camp opened up to the female soldiers and were able to give them information about the situation within the camp. For example, the women could testify to violations of human rights such as sexual violence and sexual harassment harming the women.

The information that the female soldiers in the patrolling units received from the women of the IDP camp informed and influenced the operational planning. Since these violations mostly occurred during the night, the joint patrolling units could increase their patrolling within the camp during nighttime and especially in the sections of the camp where women lived. Even though the soldiers did not make any arrests within the camp, their presence around the camp increased security.

The new information about the violations of human rights led to changed patrol routes that increased the security for both men and women inside the camp. This was an important step towards fulfilling the mission's task of providing security for the camp.

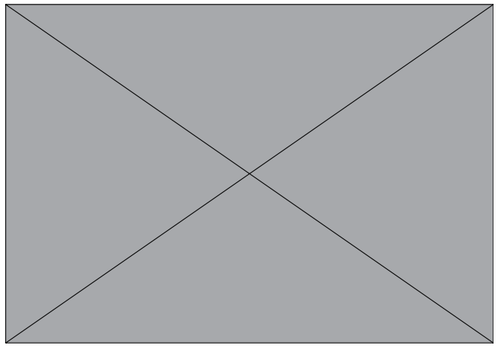


*Photo: From UNAMID webpage. Photographer: Albert Gonzalez Farran*

In some cultures, women are more likely to open up to women in uniform than to men in uniform, especially in cases of sexual violence. To have mixed teams is therefore an important consideration in order to be able to detect all crimes.

*Photo provided by Ms Cynthia Petrigh*

# Gender and human rights in both theory and practical exercises

## Mali, EUTM, 2013-2014, Ms. Cynthia Petrigh

Ms. Cynthia Petrigh was deployed to European Union Training Mission (EUTM) to Mali from June 2013 to May 2014. She worked as a training coordinator on human rights and protection of civilians as part of the UK Government Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative. The mission trained the combatants of the Malian army on everything from tactical training to international humanitarian law.

Ms. Petrigh wanted to custom-make the training for the group and started by analysing her training audience. She noted that they were mostly male, with little experience of formal education and most of them had no previous knowledge of international humanitarian law and human rights.

One challenge would be convincing her training audience to follow laws and resolutions even though they haven't heard about them before. She felt she could only do that if it was presented as part of the main curriculum: if behaviour is part of what makes a good soldier. A key message of the training was that international law prohibits conflict-related sexual violence. In one of the training audience analysis questionnaires a student has answered that "rape is the beauty of war."

"I had to make it feel relevant to all of them, connecting it to a personal level. For instance I often talked to them about their honour and reputation," says Ms Petrigh. She explained that the population put their trust in soldiers in uniform. Wearing a uniform should be seen as an honour and therefore soldiers must be trustworthy and act responsibly. If Malian soldiers are walking in the street and people get scared of them, the war is lost. Regarding sexual violence, she connected to the families of the soldiers. "What if it was your daughter, mother, wife or sister?" she used to ask.

During their training, the Malian soldiers increased their commitment of protecting women and children, of treating the population with humanity, of thinking of the population as their own family members, and of considering the honour in wearing a uniform.

*"What if it was your daughter, mother, wife or sister?"*

In cooperation with the military trainers, exercises were developed in which the Malian soldiers could practice their theoretical training. By monitoring these exercises, Ms. Petrigh could ensure that the knowledge received during her training showed in attitudes manifested by the soldiers. The exercises were based on real situations that soldiers are likely to encounter during conflict situations. For example, Ms. Petrigh brought in role-players, for instance getting someone to act as a pregnant woman about to give birth in a car during a checkpoint exercise. This exercise was based on a real situation reported by the humanitarian agencies in which a pregnant woman was denied crossing the checkpoint and suffered from complications. Ms. Petrigh could observe the soldiers' ability to respect and protect the woman and make sure that the male soldiers didn't search her improperly. When she was able to watch and evaluate the soldiers' actions, she concluded that her training on human rights and international humanitarian law had resulted in changing the behaviours and attitude of the soldiers. Even the soldier who commenting that rape was the beauty of war later answered the same question "I will treat women as I treat my sisters and my mother" when the training was finished.

Cynthia Petrigh wrote a training manual for combatants in which she describes this experience and the steps that need to be taken for this to become a tailored and successful training: Even Wars Have Limits: An IHL training manual, Beyond (Peace), Paris, August 2014.

Training on gender awareness in relation to human rights and humanitarian law is an important preventive measure when addressing gender-based security threats during conflict. A proper training audience analysis is essential when communicating the message.

*Photo provided by Ms Cynthia Petrigh*

*Photo provided by Ms Cynthia Petrigh*

# Male and female border police in joint training

## Afghanistan, ISAF, 2012, Capt Ann-Charlotte Lyman

One of the ongoing activities for Gender Field Advisors (GFAs) in ISAF has been the mentoring and training of Afghan Border Police. When Capt Ann-Charlotte Lyman deployed in 2012 to Mazar-E-Sharif, she met very well-trained female border police. The female police had knowledge of how to search, shoot and drive cars. However, their skills were only applied on special occasions when the security situation became worse and more police were needed. For instance, close to the Afghan New Year the population in Mazar-E-Sharif almost doubles. This means higher pressure on the border police to conduct searches. At these events, the female border police were used at the border checkpoints. However, Capt Lyman noticed that the female border police rarely took part in the everyday tasks of the border police. The main tasks were given to men. For example, she often saw women sitting inside the booth by the checkpoint, only to come out whenever a woman needed to be searched.

A way to mitigate this development would be if the male and female border police were trained together as it would be visible to everyone that the men and women had learnt the same skill. This could make men and women more inclined to work together side-by-side.

Capt Lyman had been told that it was unlikely that the women would want to be trained side-by-side with the men. Considering the Afghan society in general, where men and women who are not family live separate lives, the thought of male and female border police training together seemed far-fetched. Capt. Lyman was not content with this information and wanted to inquire into the situation herself. She simply asked the female and male border police she had met if they would have any problems being trained together. They answered that it was not a problem. They only had a couple of conditions. The women said that if anyone were to touch them it had to be a woman and if they at any point needed to remove their veils all men had to turn around. Capt Lyman also found out that it was no problem having male instructors as long as they did not touch the women. This led to Capt. Lyman advising her commander to offer the Afghan Border Police combined training for men and women in order for them to reach full capacity together.

*Photo provided by Capt. Ann-Charlotte Lyman*

The result was that men and women training together were essential for the team spirit. The male and female border police could themselves see that they were given the same training and that no special attention was given to anyone due to their gender. They could also recognize areas and tasks in which men and women working together could increase the operational effect of the Afghan Border Police.

Gender analysis and simply asking those receiving the training could increase the operational effect of training local security forces. Do not let assumptions get in the way providing the best suitable training.

*"…Capt Lyman advising her commander to offer the Afghan Border Police combined training for men and women in order for them to reach full capacity together"*

*Photo provided by Capt. Ann-Charlotte Lyman*

*Photo provided by Comdt Garry Mckeon*

# Training on gender perspective led to changed actions in the field

## Uganda, EUTM, 2012 Comdt Garry McKeon

Comdt Garry McKeon was deployed to EUTM Uganda in 2012 where he trained Somalian soldiers on human rights and gender. His training audience consisted of 600 soldiers, almost all male, many illiterate, and with little or no knowledge of, for example, human rights, international humanitarian law or gender perspectives.

*"This resulted in the soldiers themselves arguing against rape as a weapon of war and the consequences it had."*

Instead of telling his audience what was right and what was wrong, he asked them questions and had them discuss among themselves. Rape as a weapon of war caused long discussions between the ones in favor and those against. This resulted in the soldiers themselves arguing against rape as a weapon of war and the consequences it had. Comdt McKeon also related the topic to the families of the victims.

The training ended with a scenario exercise and Comdt McKeon included a situation in which the soldiers searched a presumed empty barrack that turned out to be a suspected brothel containing possible victims of human trafficking. The soldiers helped the female role-players out of the building and handed them over to the care providers for assistance. Afterwards, many of the trained soldiers pointed to their training in human rights and gender as to why they acted in that way. Comdt McKeon could conclude that the way the soldiers acted in the exercise showed that their discussions on human rights and gender had had an effect. Soldiers trained with a gender perspective will benefit the re-building of a country and possible improve the situation for men, women, boys and girls in the future.

*Photo provided by Comdt Garry Mckeon*

When training host nations forces on gender, a combination of theoretical and practical training is very efficient to make sure the message gets through.

# International framework on Women, Peace and Security

In October 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) was adopted. The resolution was a huge leap for women's organizations that had worked for decades to get women's and children's situations during war and armed conflict classified as a security matter raised at the highest level. Following UNSCR 1325, six resolutions have been adopted, all stressing and developing certain parts of UNSCR 1325. The resolutions are gathered under the Women, Peace and Security agenda and are built around three pillars: Protection, Participation and Prevention.

**1325** (2000) Address the significant and disproportionate impact that armed conflict has on women and girls, as well as recognizing the under-valued and under-utilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. It stresses the importance of training for peacekeeping personnel on protection, special needs and the human rights of women in armed conflict.

**1820** (2008) Builds on 1325 and focuses on sexual violence in conflict and sexual violence as a tactic of war. Calls for accountability in order to end impunity.

**1888, 1889 & 1960** (2009 & 2010) Creating an international framework for the implementation of gender perspective in the pursuit of international security and the conduct of peace operations.

- Appointment of Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.
- Calls for indicators to be developed to evaluate the work being done within Women, Peace and Security Agenda
- Stresses the need for more female peacekeepers

**2106** (2013) Affirms that sexual violence as a tactic of war can prolong situations of armed conflict. Stresses the importance of reporting and monitoring the different situations for men, women, boys and girls. Mentions for the first time men and boys in the context of sexual violence in armed conflict. .

**2122** (2013) Strengthening women's roles in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution. Explicitly links women´s empowerment and gender equality to the maintenance of peace and security.

## NATO Bi-SC Directive 40-1 (Rev.1)

The Bi-SC Directive aims to ensure implementation of UNSCR 1325, related resolutions and integration of gender perspective in military organizations and forces in the NATO Command Structure (NCS) and NATO Force Structure (NFS) of the Alliance and within NATO-led operations. The Directive provides guidance for the integration of Resolutions, Conventions, Protocols and gender perspective into the planning and conduct of NATO-led operations. It establishes and clarifies the role of Gender Advisor (GENAD), Gender Field Advisor (GFA) and Gender Focal Point (GFP), as the providers of specific advice and operational support on gender dimensions to the Commander and NATO personnel.[4] The directive also gives advice on tasks concerning gender perspectives to the different branches and units (J1-9)

***Military Reading Guide on UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, among other relevant material, can be found on the NCGM webpage. Visit www.mil.se/swedint and click on the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations.***

4 *NATO Bi-SC Dir 40-1*

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