



# Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations

BASELINE STUDY

Marta Ghittoni, Léa Lehouck and Callum Watson

GENEVA, JULY 2018



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## **Baseline Study**

**Geneva, July 2018**

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# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU (African Union)

DDRR (Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration)

DPKO (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations)

EU (European Union)

FFPU (Formed All-female Police Unit)

FPU (Formed Police Units)

GAC (Global Affairs Canada)

HIPPO (United Nations High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations)

LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex)

MPAC (Military and Police Advisory Committee)

MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti)

MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)

PKOs (Peacekeeping Operations)

SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence)

TI (Transparency International)

TPCCs (Troop and Police Contributing Countries)

UN (United Nations)

UNAMSIL (United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone)

UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus)

UNMC (United Nations Millennium Campaign)

UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo)

UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia)

UNSCR (United Nations Security Council Resolution)

WPS (Women, Peace and Security)

# Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations

## Executive Summary

This baseline study has been commissioned by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) in the framework of the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations. The Elsie Initiative aims to develop innovative measures in order to “move from slow, incremental progress to transformational change regarding women’s meaningful participation in peace operations.”<sup>1</sup> The main objectives of this study are to describe the current situation as concerns women’s participation in military and police roles in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations, document international good practice to increase such participation, and identify challenges and barriers to the recruitment, training, retention, deployment and promotion of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations.

The increased proportion of female police and military peacekeepers in the last decade remains well below targets, oscillating between 2% and 4% for military personnel and between 6% and 10% for police personnel. This is partly due to low numbers of female military and police at the national level, but surprisingly, research suggests that the main reason behind the small proportion of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKOs) seems to be a variety of challenges and barriers to uniformed women deploying to PKOs. The UN has set a series of ambitious targets to increase women’s participation in PKOs, especially since the 1990s, which thus far have not been met.

An increase in the percentage of uniformed women in PKOs is generally recognized by the UN and its member states as a needed and desirable goal for a variety of reasons: a more gender-balanced peacekeeping force may improve operational effectiveness and it may enable PKOs to better achieve the goals set by the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). Additionally, an increase in the number of women is considered a worthy goal in itself, as it fulfils women’s right to serve in police and armed forces in all capacities. Some of those arguments are documented in section three of this study.

The study identifies and describes 14 barriers to the deployment of uniformed women in PKOs, which can be organized in six main categories: (1) equal access to opportunities, (2) deployment criteria, (3) the working environment, (4) family constraints, (5) equal treatment during deployment, and (6) career-advancement opportunities. These barriers are considered through a series of questions examining, among other things, whether women are actually given equal opportunities to deploy; whether deployment criteria are set in a way that effectively excludes a large number of otherwise eligible women; whether inadequate infrastructure or institutional culture is preventing women from being deployed; the impact of family-related constraints; whether the experience of deployment prevents or dissuades women from redeploying in future PKOs; and whether deployment in PKOs has a positive or negative effect in uniformed women’s careers in their home institutions. In addition to documenting barriers, the study provides recommendations for actions that would address them.

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<sup>1</sup> Global Affairs Canada, Backgrounder: The Elsie Initiative on Women in Peace Operations, Government of Canada, March 2018, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2018/03/the-elsie-initiative-on-women-in-peace-operations.html>.

The challenge with increasing women's participation in peacekeeping is that barriers that prevent women's participation are often context specific and significantly vary between troop and police contributing countries (TPCCs) and peacekeeping operations. Further, evidence regarding measures to increase women's participation is largely anecdotal and has not been systematically gathered and analysed into one coherent study. Finally, it is difficult to analyse trends and participation of women in peacekeeping as the data does not include information on ranks and is inconsistently reported.

A number of areas and topics that would require more research are also identified and described in the study. Among those are assessing the relative impact of the identified barriers and the degree to which they vary from country to country; doing gender analysis of national recruitment initiatives; identifying the extent of discriminatory treatment experienced by deployed uniformed women; and quantifying to what extent deployed uniformed women find themselves performing tasks for which they are not equipped and which provide little or no opportunity for advancement.

Further research should include country and mission specific barrier assessments, with specific recommendations for TPCCs and the UN on measures that could be taken at the national and peacekeeping levels. This study is a first attempt at systematically gathering, analysing and categorising the barriers for deployment of uniformed women in PKOs. The study establishes the baseline required to guide further research and inform policy decisions by GAC, members of the Elsie Initiative Contact Group, TPCCs, the UN and other stakeholders. A summary of the identified barriers, potential solutions and areas for further research can be found in an annex to this study.

# 01

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## Introduction

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Historic evolution of uniformed women's participation in UN peacekeeping operations

Gender imbalance in UN peacekeeping operations has been a recurrent issue throughout the last 40 years. Over the course of the UN Decade of Women (1975-1985), female staff questioned the UN's male-dominated recruitment procedures for peacekeeping operations, which were often (inadvertently) preferential towards men and resulted in women being unable to access deployment opportunities.<sup>2</sup> During the establishment of the UN Mission in Namibia (1989), the UN announced a fairer recruitment process, based on personal qualifications and competencies through which "only the most competent individuals would be enrolled".<sup>3</sup> In 1994, the General Assembly set the goal to reach gender parity (50% of men and 50% of women) throughout the Secretariat by 2000.<sup>4</sup> In 1995, the Secretary-General extended this parity goal to all "field mission and mission replacements posts."<sup>5</sup>

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) adopted the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action in 2000, with detailed recommendations aimed at increasing gender equality in peacekeeping and gender balance by promoting women's participation through, among other measures, recruitment, training and leadership opportunities.<sup>6</sup> This decision also sought to address DPKO's "awkward position" of "advocating for more women in national police forces than it has in its own ranks."<sup>7</sup>

The UN's commitment to gender equality was reinforced with the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in 2000, its first ever on the topic of women, peace and security. In addition to acknowledging the specific impact of conflict on women and children and urging greater inclusion of women in peace processes, it specifically calls for more uniformed women in peacekeeping operations.<sup>8</sup> This resolution was subsequently followed by seven more, which together constitute the normative framework of the WPS Agenda.

In 2002, the Secretary-General's Report on Women, Peace and Security noted that the UN was still far from its targets when it came to the participation of women in all aspects of peace operations.<sup>9</sup> In 2006, DPKO called on member states to "double the number of female service uniformed peacekeepers every year for the next few years"<sup>10</sup> while adopting the UN Policy Directive on Gender Equality in Peacekeeping Operations,<sup>11</sup> which contains provisions aimed at promoting greater gender balance amongst DPKO personnel.

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2 Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, "Women's participation in international operations and missions" in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, eds., *Gender, Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), p. 37.

3 *ibid.*

4 UN General Assembly, *Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat*, Report of the Secretary-General, UN Document A/50/691, para.59, 27 October 1995.

5 *ibid.*

6 UN General Assembly, Letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, UN Document A/55/138-S/2000/693, 14 July 2000.

7 Declaration by Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno of the DPKO at an open meeting on Women, Peace and Security, October 2003 – available on UN News Centre, *More Women Needed to Join, Sensitize UN Missions*.

8 UN Security Council, Resolution 1325 (2000), UN Document S/RES/1325 (2000), adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting on 31 October 2000.

9 Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security, UN Document S/2002/1154, 16 October 2002.

10 United Nations Peace Operations, *Year in Review, 2006*, New challenges, new horizons, wanted: Female peacekeepers, p.18, 2006.

11 United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *DPKO Policy Directive, Gender Equality*, November 2006.

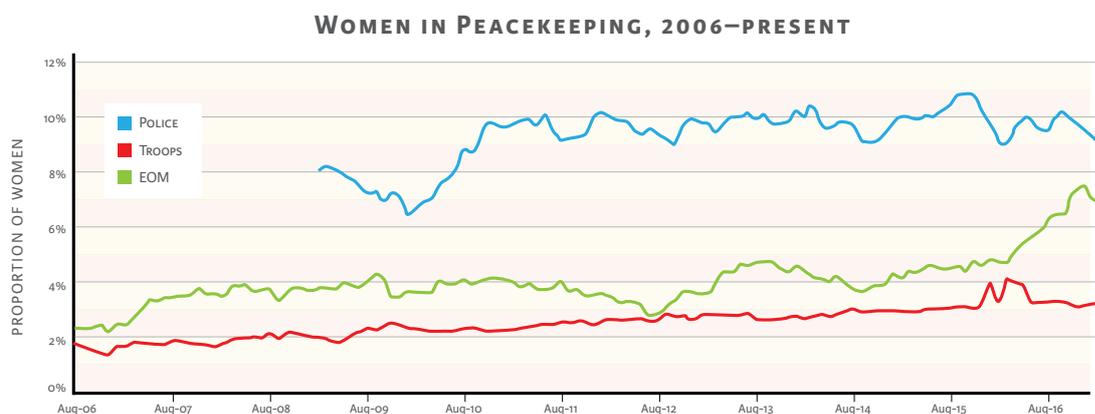
In 2009, just before the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the total number of female peacekeepers was still stagnating at around 1%.<sup>12</sup> The UN Police then decided to launch the Global Effort<sup>13</sup> with the aim of increasing the number of female police officers in PKOs to 20% by 2014. In 2015, UNSCR 2242 called upon “the Secretary-General to initiate, in collaboration with Member States, a revised strategy, within existing resources, to double the numbers of women in military and police contingents of UN peacekeeping operations over the next five years”.<sup>14</sup>

In his 2017 Report on WPS, the Secretary-General requested his “leadership group to take measures to address the structural barriers that limit women’s meaningful participation in both the uniformed and civilian components of peacekeeping.”<sup>15</sup>

DPKO introduced a new rule in 2018 stating that TPCCs will lose some of their allocated places if they do not reach 15% of women deployed for military observers and staff officers. In actual numbers, this only represents a handful of women for most countries; for example, a country with 40 allocated places only needs to deploy six women to meet its 15% quota.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.2. Current situation of women’s participation in UN peacekeeping operations

Despite all these efforts and aspirations, the overall percentage of women deployed to UN peacekeeping operations has been growing at a very slow rate, as shown by Graph 1.<sup>17</sup> Disaggregated data on police personnel was only made available in 2009, which is why the graph only starts to show data from that time. Police figures are generally higher than military numbers, probably because there are more women in national police forces than in the armed forces.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, some countries’ armed forces do not allow women in combat units, which are the most likely to be deployed in contingents. Furthermore, the exclusion of women from these units also deprives them of operational experience, a prerequisite for deployment as a military observer or staff officer. Thus, the pool of women eligible for deployment is larger in the police than in the armed forces.<sup>19</sup>



**GRAPH 1: Percentage of female police, troops and experts on mission (EOM) in UN Peacekeeping 2006–2016. Source: Centre on International Cooperation.**

<sup>12</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, Not Just a Numbers Game: Increasing Women’s Participation in UN Peacekeeping, International Peace Institute, July 2013.

<sup>13</sup> UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, United Nations in Global Effort to Increase Number of Female Police in Peacekeeping Operations, Press release PKO/218-WOM/1751, 7 August 2009, available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2009/pko218.doc.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015), UN Document S/RES/2242 (2015), adopted by the Security Council at its Adopted by the Security Council at its 7533rd meeting, on 13 October 2015.

<sup>15</sup> UNSG, Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security, UN Document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Interviewee 4, 06.04.2018.

<sup>17</sup> Data by United Nations, prepared by the Centre on International Cooperation, cited by Global Peace Operations Review [http://peaceoperationsreview.org/featured-data#usg\\_senior\\_gender](http://peaceoperationsreview.org/featured-data#usg_senior_gender).

<sup>18</sup> Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> See for example, the case of the Serbian Police: Milošević, Marko, Challenges of Women’s Participation in Serbian Peacekeeping Missions, Policy Paper, Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, June 2012, pp. 4–6, available at: [http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/challenges\\_of\\_womens\\_participation\\_in\\_serbian\\_peac.pdf](http://www.bezbednost.org/upload/document/challenges_of_womens_participation_in_serbian_peac.pdf).

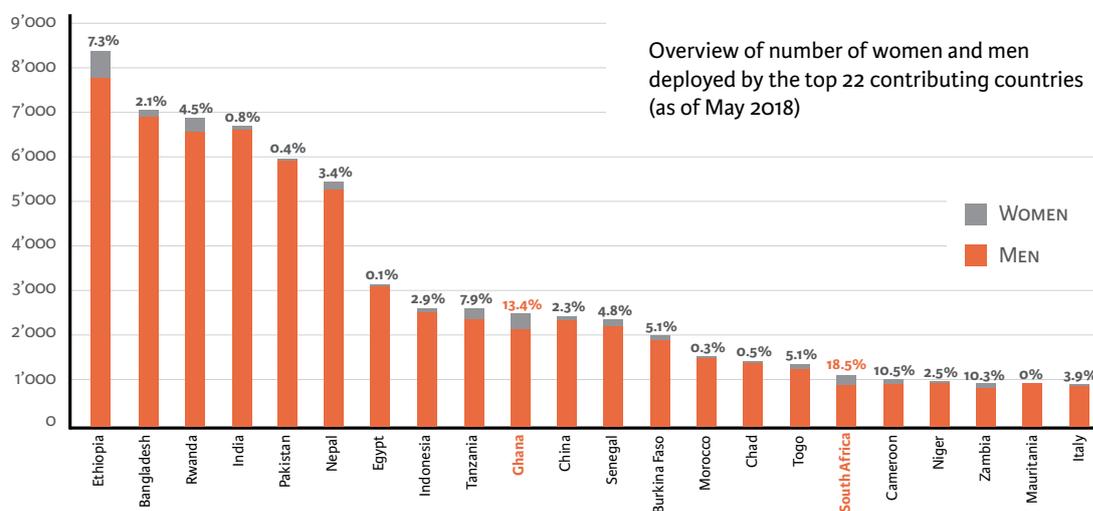
When comparing variance in gender balance between PKOs, the ones with the highest percentage of female uniformed personnel, as of December 2017, were UNMIL (11%, 83 women and 661 men), UNFICYP (11%, 100 women and 847 men) and UNMC (13%, 57 women and 391 men).<sup>20</sup> PKOs that include military combat units tend to have fewer women, which is unsurprising as national combat units generally have few women.<sup>21</sup>

As of the end of November 2017, only 21 countries deployed 14% or more female peacekeepers out of their total contributions, including staff officers, contingent level troops and military observers, excluding police. As of the end of 2017, 29 TPCCs did not contribute any women as police, UN military experts on mission, staff officers or contingent level troops.<sup>22</sup>

### United Nations' targets to increase women's participation in peacekeeping operations:

In late 2017, DPKO called on Member States to realize their commitments<sup>23</sup> to double the numbers of women in military and police contingents of UN peacekeeping operations by 2020, including deploying, at minimum, 15% female military staff officers and observers and 20% female police.<sup>24</sup>

The percentage of deployed military women is approximately 4%, and has not increased significantly since the end of 2009. The percentage of deployed police women is approximately 10%, and has not increased significantly since 2010. Given the higher representation of women police officers relative to the rest of the uniformed personnel in peacekeeping operations, the size of the police contingent thus seem to be an important determinant of the overall proportion of women in a peacekeeping operation.<sup>25</sup> For this reason, it is important to analyse the trends for military and police contingents separately.



GRAPH 2: Troop and police contributors, country contributions detailed by post, May 2018.

Data source: DPKO.

20 United Nations, prepared by the Centre on International Cooperation, available at: [http://peaceoperationsreview.org/featured-data#usg\\_senior\\_gender](http://peaceoperationsreview.org/featured-data#usg_senior_gender).

21 Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, op. cit., p. 42.

22 DPKO, Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking. 31.12.2017, available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.

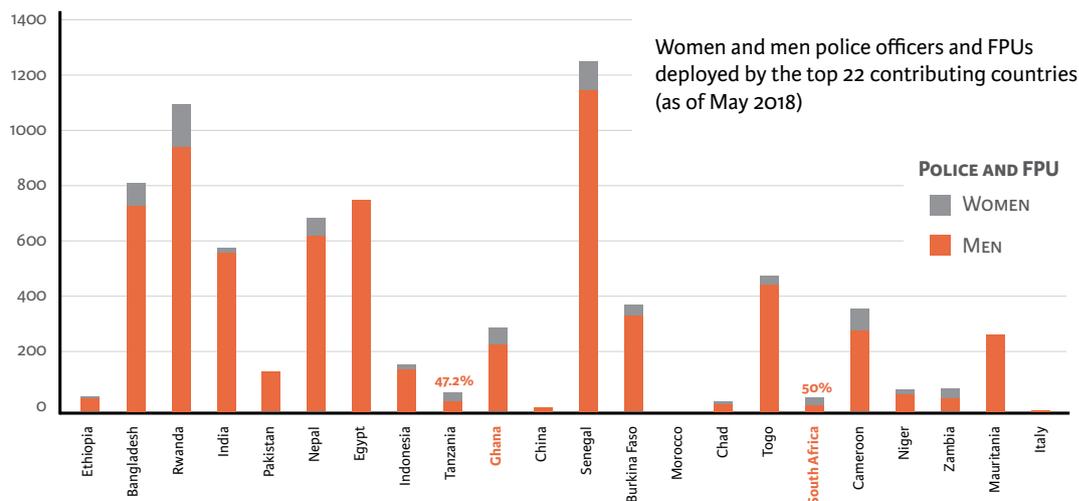
23 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial: London Communiqué, September 2016, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial-london-communication>.

24 United Nations, Note to Correspondents: UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Communiqué, available at: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-11-16/note-correspondents-un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial>.

25 Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, op. cit., pp 39-42.

As of May 2018, 22 countries deployed more than 1,000 men and women overall<sup>26</sup> to ongoing peacekeeping operations. Graph 2 includes all women and men deployed as individual police, formed police units (FPUs), experts on missions and contingent troops.<sup>27</sup> Ethiopia is the first ranked contributing country and also the one deploying the most women in terms of absolute numbers (612 women were deployed in three different peacekeeping operations, at the end of May 2018). However, South Africa and Ghana are the two countries with the highest percentage of women deployed compared to their total contribution (with 18.5% and 13.4% respectively of women peacekeepers deployed).

The four charts below highlight country contributions detailed by post, as of May 2018. A brief overview of the four categories (police and formed police units, experts on missions, staff officers and contingent troops) clearly highlights that only very few women are deployed as part of contingent troops. In terms of absolute numbers, contingent troops are the biggest contribution amongst all four categories and yet women only represent 3.3% of the contingent troops deployed by the 22 top contributors. This indicates that there are greater barriers to women’s participation as part of military contingents. In contrast, women represent 9.2% of all staff officers deployed by the 22 top contributing countries, 9.6% of all individual police and FPUs and 10.7% of all experts on missions. As mentioned previously, South Africa is the country with the most gender balanced contribution and it is also the country with the highest percentage of women deployed in three categories (with 50% of women deployed as individual police or as part of FPUs, 43% of women deployed as experts on missions, and 17% women deployed as part of contingent troops).

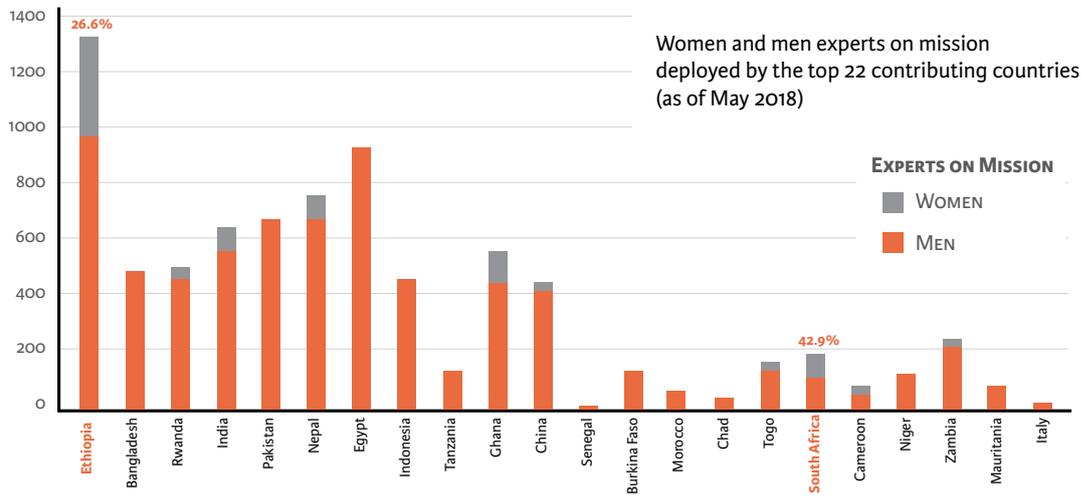


GRAPH 3: Police and FPU deployed by top contributing countries as of May 2018.  
Data source: DPKO.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> This threshold constitutes the limit of our data analysis and represents what we consider as top contributing countries.

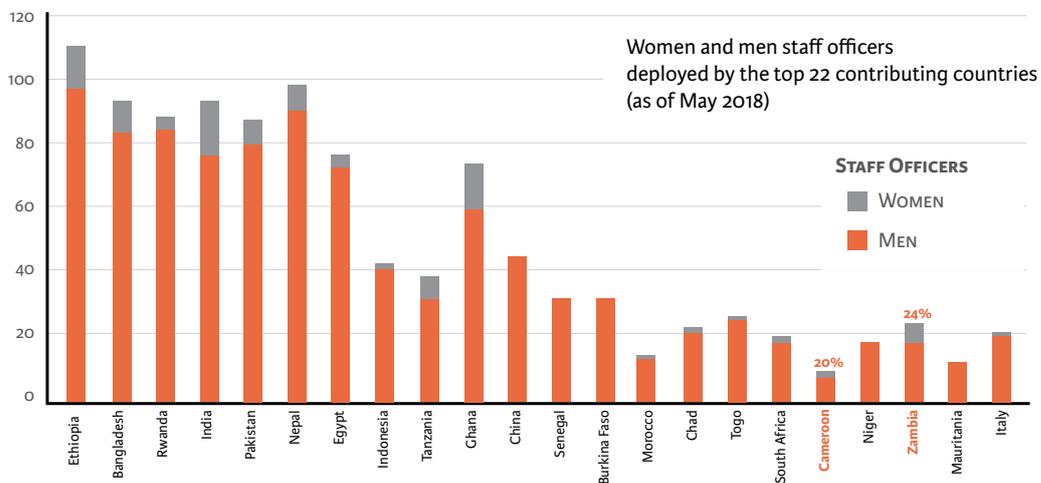
<sup>27</sup> Individual police, formed police units, experts on missions and contingent troops are the four categories used by the DPKO database upon which this graph is based.

<sup>28</sup> DPKO, Ranking of military and police contributions, 31.05.2018, available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.



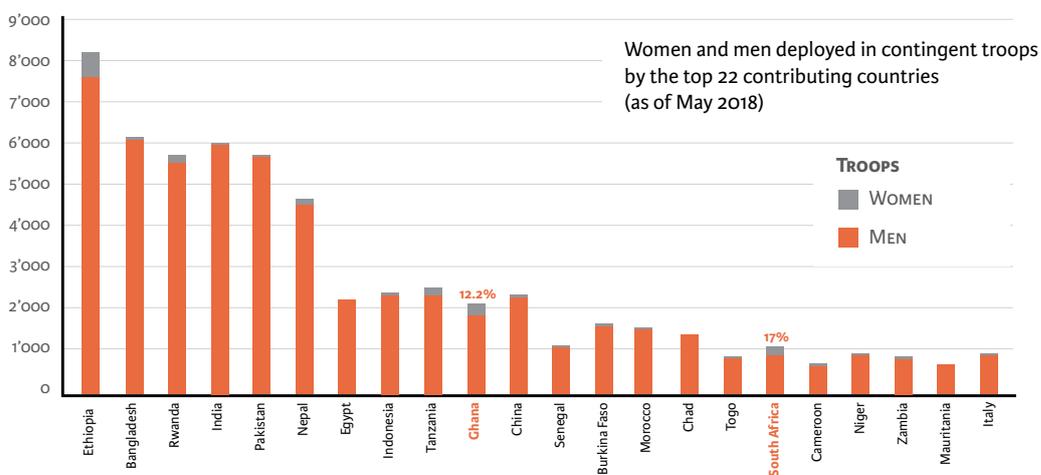
GRAPH 4: Experts on mission deployed by top contributing countries as of May 2018.

Data source: DPKO.<sup>29</sup>



GRAPH 5: Staff officers deployed by top contributing countries as of May 2018.

Data source: DPKO.<sup>30</sup>



GRAPH 6: Contingent troops deployed by top contributing countries as of May 2018.

Data source: DPKO.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> DPKO, Ranking of military and police contributions, 31.05.2018, available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.

<sup>30</sup> DPKO, Ranking of military and police contributions, 31.05.2018, available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.

<sup>31</sup> DPKO, Ranking of military and police contributions, 31.05.2018, available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>.

### 1.3. Women's participation in other peace operations

It is not only United Nations Peacekeeping Operations that face challenges regarding uniformed women's participation; women's participation in peace operations of the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the African Union (AU) is also very low.

The EU has had a policy of increasing participation of women in its Common Security and Defence missions since 2005.<sup>32</sup> The number of women steadily increased from 8% in 2006 to 20% in 2013, but the data mainly refers to civilian components. The increase in percentage of women is largely attributable to a numerical decrease in the number of men. The number of women in each EU mission fluctuates significantly, but this is not captured in existing data collection methodology.

NATO recognized the need to increase women's participation in all peacekeeping efforts in 2007 with the NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council policy for implementing UNSCR 1325.<sup>33</sup> NATO reporting is fairly detailed, as it provides not only data on national contributions to NATO missions, but also contributions to UN and EU missions, as well as national breakdown. Similarly to the EU, most countries report a steady increase of women's participation in peacekeeping missions. However, as of 2016, there are still only 7% of uniformed women in NATO operations.<sup>34</sup>

The OSCE committed to increasing women's participation in its missions in its 2004 Gender Equality Action Plan, and reiterated this in a ten-year review conference in 2014. OSCE missions have proportionately high numbers of women, ranging from 33% in 2006 to 37% in 2012. It is worth noting that OSCE missions are primarily composed of civilian staff; the only military personnel deployed by the OSCE are advisors in small numbers, as it does not engage in military operations. As with the EU, the increase in percentage is due to a greater decrease in the number of men serving – the overall number of people deployed declined steadily during this period.

As for the AU's peace operations, there is no gender-disaggregated data available making it difficult to identify trends.<sup>35</sup>

The following sections aim to identify barriers to uniformed women's meaningful participation in UN peacekeeping operations and present initiatives and recommendations which have, or could be, implemented to overcome those challenges.

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32 Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson op. cit., pp. 49-50.

33 NATO/EAPC Policy for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and Related Resolutions, 2007.

34 Summary of National Reports to the NCGP, 2016, available at: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_132342.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132342.htm).

35 World Peace Foundation, African Politics, African Peace – Report submitted to the African Union, p. 48, 2016.



# 02

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## Methodological limitations

This study is based on research focused on publicly available information from primary and secondary sources, mostly in English, and a comparative review of existing data. Additional research in other languages may have revealed additional information, but was outside the scope of the study. The literature review and analysis was confirmed and complemented by interviews with a limited number (seven women, one man) of experts and female peacekeepers with direct knowledge of deployment practices domestically and/or by the UN. The list of barriers and possible interventions is therefore not exhaustive, nor fully comprehensive. The study nonetheless establishes the baseline required to guide further research and inform policy decisions by GAC, members of the Elsie Initiative Contact Group, troop and police contributing countries, the UN and other stakeholders.

Reliable, comparable and comprehensive data on the participation of uniformed women in PKOs is not easily available. A large number of TPCCs do not release gender-disaggregated data on their security personnel. Furthermore, the data that is released by some TPCCs is not presented in a uniform way making it difficult to use in chronological or cross-country analysis. While some efforts have been made in recent years – most notably in 2015 under the aegis of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives<sup>36</sup> – to standardize gender-disaggregated reporting on the number of military personnel, finding reliable, basic information is still a challenge.

Similar challenges apply to documenting the criteria applied by different countries to select personnel for deployment, be it due to lack of transparency, bureaucratic complexity, lax implementation of written rules or the total absence of documented criteria. Data on the composition of national militaries and police forces, disaggregated by rank and gender, could help explain the composition of country contributions, but is not widely available. Based on publicly available data, it is difficult to identify trends in the number of female military and police peacekeepers, as well as in the role they play in UN operations. One of the main problems is that UN statistics are not consistently reported. Though gender-disaggregated data has been collected since 2000, only data after 2006 has been made publicly available.

The UN has not published gender-disaggregated data on police deployments before 2009. DPKO publishes monthly data on the numbers of personnel in missions and on the numbers of peacekeepers that each country deploys, disaggregated by gender and post, including military observers, staff officers, contingent troops, individual police and formed police units. Furthermore, several changes in data disaggregation and presentation over the years obscure longitudinal trends.

Deployed women's ranks are often not reported, which makes it hard to assess the role they play in a given PKO. Additionally, the proportion of women is often not reported, which gives little insight on the women to men ratio in PKOs and in deployments. Institutional assessments that seek to explain the data on women's participation in national forces or UN contributions are even less common.

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<sup>36</sup> NATO, Summary of the National Reports of NATO Member and Partner Nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives, available at: [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2017\\_01/20170113\\_2015\\_NCGP\\_National\\_Reports\\_Summary.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_01/20170113_2015_NCGP_National_Reports_Summary.pdf).

# 03

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Summary of  
arguments for  
increasing the  
participation of  
uniformed women  
in PKOs

*This section describes and analyses the arguments for increasing the number of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations. These can be sorted into three groups: the first concerns operational effectiveness; the second relates to the peacekeeping operation's capacity to support the implementation of the provisions on the WPS Agenda and the third is based on women's equal right to serve.*

## 3.1 Operational effectiveness

The most commonly cited reason for increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping operations has to do with operational effectiveness, due to women's purported impact in the operation's outreach to civilians, reduced use of lethal force and increased legitimacy as perceived by the local population. "Critical Mass Theory" would suggest, however, that the percentage of women currently serving, especially in military components, is far too low for women as a collective to have a significant impact on how peacekeeping operations function<sup>37</sup> and hence the evidence base for operational effectiveness arguments is largely anecdotal. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that when women serve in token proportions, they tend to adapt to the masculine culture of the male majority.<sup>38</sup> Research on the operational effectiveness argument is thus generally limited to exploring the additional capacities women can bring to a PKO. Few studies have examined whether increasing the number of women in senior positions could enhance strategic and operational planning or foster a more productive institutional culture. This is understandable, given the very small number of women in these positions.

### 3.1.i Reaching civilians

The first tenet of the operational effectiveness argument is that female peacekeepers are better able to reach out to women among the civilian population and thus mixed patrols would get a better understanding of the local population's needs.<sup>39</sup> Supporting the anecdotal evidence, data from 39 national police services found a positive correlation, e.g. between the number of female police officers and the percentage of women who reported sexual assault.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, rates of reporting of gender-based violence also increased in areas patrolled by the Indian FFPU (formed all-female police unit) in Liberia.<sup>41</sup> In national contexts, anecdotal evidence also suggests that many men prefer to report sexual violence to female police officers, especially if the perpetrator is male.<sup>42</sup> In addition, there is some evidence that male peacekeepers serving in small mixed teams feel more able to express empathy, which was seen as key for British military engagement with the local population in Afghanistan.<sup>43</sup>

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37 For a discussion on Critical Mass Theory, see for example Childs, Sara and Mona Lena Krook, "Critical Mass Theory and Women's Political Representation", *Political Studies* vol 56, no. 3 (October 2008): pp. 725-736, available at: [http://www.mlkrook.org/pdf/childs\\_krook\\_2008.pdf](http://www.mlkrook.org/pdf/childs_krook_2008.pdf).

38 Jennings, Kathleen M., *Women's Participation in UN peacekeeping operations: agents of change or stranded symbols?*, NOREF Report, September 2011, available at: <https://noref.no/Publications/Themes/Gender-and-inclusivity/Women-s-participation-in-UN-peacekeeping-operations-agents-of-change-or-stranded-symbols>, p. 6.

39 United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security*, UN document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017, para. 28.

40 Bigio, Jamille and Rachel Vogelstein, *How Women's Participation in Conflict Prevention and Resolution Advances U.S. Interests*, Discussion Paper, Council on Foreign Relations, October 2016, p. 9, available at: [https://www.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2016/10/Discussion\\_Paper\\_Bigio\\_Vogelstein\\_Women%20in%20CPR\\_OR.pdf](https://www.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2016/10/Discussion_Paper_Bigio_Vogelstein_Women%20in%20CPR_OR.pdf) and Turquet, Laura, *Progress of the World's Women in Pursuit of Justice*, (New York: UN Women, 2011), p. 59, available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2011/progress-of-the-worlds-women-2011-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2835>.

41 Turquet, Laura, *op cit.*, p. 60.

42 Watson, Callum, *Preventing and Responding to Sexual and Domestic Violence against Men: a Guidance Note for Security Sector Institutions*, (Geneva: DCAF, 2014), p. 57. Available at: <https://www.dcaf.ch/preventing-and-responding-sexual-and-domestic-violence-against-men-guidance-note-security-sector>.

43 Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *Equal Opportunity Peacekeeping*, Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 169.

There are several caveats to these assertions, however, beyond the anecdotal nature of the evidence. For deployed women to improve relations with local communities, they have to serve in functions that allow them to leave the compounds and make contact with the population, which is often not the case. There might also be a self-fulfilling prophecy: women who are deployed are specifically tasked with receiving complaints of sexual violence, a job that was not being done by the men that preceded them in the operation.<sup>44</sup> Some women may have been deployed because they specialize in this area, so the improvement in operational effectiveness has more to do with their skills and designated function than their gender as such.

### 3.1.ii Reducing negative effects of peacekeeping operations

There is also a claim that women improve operational effectiveness by dampening the negative impact of the PKO on the local population. Evidence from national contexts indicates that female police officers are more adept at resolving disputes without using force, and are less likely to use excessive force – either because of gender-determined expectations of behaviour or because violent men react differently to female officers.<sup>45</sup> Other research suggests that increasing the proportion of women reduces “demand” for sexual exploitation and abuse and makes male peacekeepers more reluctant to infringe on women’s rights.<sup>46</sup>

Critiques of these claims question whether it is simply the increase in the number of women – or the corresponding decrease in the number of men – that brings about these changes, or whether institutions with sound disciplinary procedures that uphold values of gender equality both attract more female staff and are more effective peacekeepers. While increasing the number of women may reduce levels of sexual exploitation and abuse, a comprehensive approach to addressing this problem involves holding those in leadership positions at all levels accountable for implementing good institutional policies. Women should not bear the burden for controlling the behaviour of their male colleagues purely on the basis of their gender. At best, this is an additional task that reduces the amount of time they have to perform their regular duties and at worst it puts them at risk of reprisals.

### 3.1.iii Legitimacy of peacekeeping operations

A third argument related to operational effectiveness is that mixed peacekeeping forces are seen as being more legitimate in the eyes of the local population.<sup>47</sup> This rationale has been used in Canada in support for increasing the number of women in the Canadian Forces.<sup>48</sup> Similar claims were made about UNMIL, in that women’s participation in peacekeeping, through India’s FFPU, both increased local support and inspired Liberian women to sign up for the Liberian National Police, which in turn gave the local police force more legitimacy.<sup>49</sup>

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44 Pruitt, Lesley J., *The Women in Blue Helmets: Gender, Policing, and the UN's First All-Female Peacekeeping Unit*, (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016), p. 114.

45 Bigio, Jamille and Rachel Vogelstein, op. cit., p. 9 and Milošević, Marko, op. cit., p.4.

46 Crawford, Kerry and Julia Macdonald, *Establishing a Marketplace of Women in Peacekeeping: An Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming and its Viability in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, ASPJ Africa & Francophonie (First quarter 2013): pp. 80-96 at pp. 86-87, available at: [http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/ASPJ\\_French/journals\\_E/Volume-04\\_Issue-1/Crawford\\_Macdonald\\_e.pdf](http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/ASPJ_French/journals_E/Volume-04_Issue-1/Crawford_Macdonald_e.pdf).

47 Rock, David and Heidi Grant, “Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter”, *Harvard Business Review*, 4 November 2016. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter>.

48 von Hlatky, Stéfanie and Meaghan Shoemaker, “The Battle to Get More Women into the Military”, *The Conversation*, Online article, 29 June 2017, available at: <https://theconversation.com/the-battle-to-get-more-women-into-the-military-79980>.

49 Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 163.

## 3.2 Capacity to support the implementation of the provisions on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

UN peacekeeping operations have an influential role in post-conflict peace settlements. Given that conflict settings are often characterized by high levels of gender inequality due to the kinds of rigid gender roles that promote violent forms of masculinity, it is crucial that UN operations have the capacity to conduct gender analysis in order to address the root causes of gender-based violence and promote gender equality through less restrictive gender roles. When PKOs do not prioritize gender mainstreaming, it will negatively affect the implementation of peace processes. UNMIK in Kosovo and the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration programme of UNMIL in Liberia have been cited as examples of such negative effects.<sup>50</sup>

Positive, albeit anecdotal examples, on the other hand, are FFPUs from India and Bangladesh in UNMIL (2007-2016<sup>51</sup>), MINUSTAH (from 2010<sup>52</sup>), and MONUSCO (from 2011<sup>53</sup>), which have been credited with facilitating the implementation of gender equality-related reforms in the security sector; the Gender Advisor at UNAMSIL (working from 2003 until the mission ended in 2005) was a key advocate for women's organizations within the UN bureaucracy, ensuring that the UN supported these organizations in their peacebuilding efforts<sup>54</sup>; and the high numbers of female military observers that facilitated the inclusion of women in the Colombian peace process.<sup>55</sup> In these cases, operation leadership was supportive of gender equality and allowed women to serve in influential roles, putting the PKO in a position to support the grassroots work of women's organizations in implementing the provisions of the WPS Agenda. The direction in causality between the number of uniformed women and the attitudes of operation leaders requires further research. In any case, it seems clear that the higher representation and visibility of women in peace implementation can have a positive impact on gender equality in the host country through the increased participation of women in the political, economic and security sectors.<sup>56</sup>

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50 Hall-Martin, Catherina H., "Gendered Violence and UNSCR 1325 in Kosovo" in Karen Barnes, 'Funmi Olonisakin and Eka Ikpe, eds., *Women, Peace and Security: Translating Policy into Practice* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 37-51 and pp. 47-48; Njoki Wamai, Emma, "UNSCR 1325 implementation in Liberia: Dilemmas and challenges" in Karen Barnes, 'Funmi Olonisakin and Eka Ikpe, eds., op. cit., pp. 52-63 and p. 63.

51 United Nations Mission in Liberia, *United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia Completes its Mandate*, 22 March 2018, available at: <https://unmil.unmissions.org/united-nations-peacekeeping-mission-liberia-completes-its-mandate-o>.

52 Peacewomen, Haiti: Female Contingent, 1 June 2010, available at: <http://www.peacewomen.org/content/haiti-female-contingent>.

53 Onekalit, Catherine A. "Women in Peacekeeping: The emergence of the all-female uniformed units in UNMIL and MONUSCO", *Conflict Trends*, Issue 2, 2013, pp. 42-46.

54 Barnes, Karen, "UNAMSIL, UNSCR 1325 and women building peace in Sierra Leone" in Karen Barnes, 'Funmi Olonisakin and Eka Ikpe, eds., op. cit., pp. 121-137 and p. 127.

55 Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, *Women, Peace and Security, an Essential Pillar in Global Affairs*, Statement at the Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, New York, 27 October 2017.

56 Olonisakin, 'Funmi and Eka Ikpe, "Conclusion", in Karen Barnes, 'Funmi Olonisakin and Eka Ikpe, op. cit., pp. 225-235 and p. 227 and Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, *Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing the Leadership Opportunities*, *Women in International Security*, June 2008, p. 7, available at: <https://www.socsci.uci.edu/files/docs/PeaceOpsExecSummary.pdf>.

Emerging research also indicates that the presence of Women’s Protection Advisers in a UN operation – positions almost exclusively staffed by women – correlates with a higher probability that the host country will subsequently adopt legal frameworks and political strategies that aim to prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).<sup>57</sup> Interviewees have stated that women in peacekeeping operations are more likely to be given work on SGBV and women and child protection that otherwise would not be done.<sup>58</sup> This observation points again to the correlation versus causation question: is it the increased number of women that produces positive effects, or the fact that this increase brings enhanced attention to SGBV and the protection of women as part of the PKO mandate? The available data does little to answer the question.

Some authors approach this question from another angle; when women are restricted to “feminine” jobs in peacekeeping operations, such as secretarial work and engaging with women in civil society, and excluded from more “prestigious” roles that involve the use of force, this can exacerbate gender inequality by entrenching both stereotypical roles and reinforcing the power structures that keep women in subordinate roles.<sup>59</sup> The debate, therefore, cannot be limited to whether and how women’s participation can benefit peacekeeping operations in achieving the objectives set for them by the UN, but should also take into account the detrimental effects of peacekeeping operations where women’s participation is minimal, tokenistic or only limited to less “prestigious” roles. This would undermine the operation’s ability to achieve its objectives, including those related to the WPS Agenda.

### 3.3 Women’s equal right to serve

While many operational effectiveness arguments imply that women should be allowed to serve as long as they make a positive contribution to achieving the PKO’s objectives, this is not in line with what most legal frameworks stipulate. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees equal rights between women and men in article 2, and article 21 (2) states that “[e]veryone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.”<sup>60</sup> When other historical restrictions on certain groups serving in the military and police were lifted, such as particular ethnic groups and LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) people, the reasons given were usually a combination of human rights-based arguments and the need to allow security institutions to recruit enough staff. Arguing that these groups must demonstrate their contribution to operational effectiveness would have been seen as absurd. Increasing women’s participation will lead to higher levels of gender equality in security institutions, which should be a goal in its own right.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

<sup>58</sup> Interviewees 5, 6 and 7, 13-18-20.04.2018.

<sup>59</sup> Baumgärtner, Ulrike, *Gender and Peacekeeping: A Process of Norm Adaptation in the United Nations Bureaucracy*, PhD Dissertation, University of St Gallen, 2014, p. 201, available at: [https://www1.unisg.ch/www/edis.nsf/SysLkpByIdentifier/4204/\\$FILE/dis4204.pdf](https://www1.unisg.ch/www/edis.nsf/SysLkpByIdentifier/4204/$FILE/dis4204.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> United Nations, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, arts 2, 21(2), available at: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

<sup>61</sup> Jennings, Kathleen M., *op. cit.*, p. 5.

Giving women a *de jure* right to serve involves changing legislation, but ensuring that women have a *de facto* right to serve involves changing the institutions themselves. Institutions characterized by male-dominated ‘locker room’ mentalities require women to adapt to (or even adopt) masculine behaviours in order to be successful in their work, thus placing the onus on women to “prove themselves.” Changing this institutional culture to create a level playing field for women and men happens in stages. Several anecdotal reports from female peacekeepers suggest that the mere presence of women encourages male peacekeepers to be more reflective of their own roles<sup>62</sup> leading to a less hostile environment for women (and for many men too, in fact). When women subsequently reach senior positions, this can encourage more women to apply for deployment and, over time, the presence of women in peacekeeping operations will be perceived as the rule rather than the exception.<sup>63</sup> It is only at this point that we can begin to say that women have achieved a *de facto* right to serve.

While operational effectiveness-based arguments for increasing women’s representation often resonate more strongly with senior military and police personnel, they put pressure on women to demonstrate their added value in an environment that is not adapted to their needs.<sup>64</sup> Arguments based on equal rights, however, place the burden on the institution to adapt. In other words, it shifts public discourses on women in peacekeeping to focus not on what women can do for peacekeeping, but what peacekeeping can do for women.

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62 Ní Aoláin, Fionnuala, Dina Francesca Haynes and Naomi Cahn, *On the Frontlines: Gender, War and the Post-Conflict Process* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 127-128.

63 Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

64 Jennings, Kathleen M., *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

# 04

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Barriers to the  
deployment of  
uniformed women  
in peacekeeping  
operations

# 4.1 Are women given equal opportunity to deploy in peacekeeping operations?

## 4.1.i Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

This section explores whether political and military leadership plays a role in consciously or unconsciously limiting deployment opportunities for female personnel. According to the UN Secretary-General, “[s]low progress [in increasing the number of women among military and police personnel deployed to United Nations peacekeeping operations] is linked to low rates of women in national military and police forces”<sup>65</sup> and hence, “[i]ncreasing women’s participation in national uniformed services may contribute to an increase in the number of women deployed in United Nations missions.”<sup>66</sup> This might seem logical but research suggests that the linkages are more complex.

An analysis of the data suggests there is a correlation between the proportion of women in national security institutions and the number of women deployed, but that it is not statistically significant for police and only approaching statistical significance for armed forces.<sup>67</sup> A 5% increase in women in the national armed forces only translates into a 1-2% increase in the deployment of women.<sup>68</sup> With women representing about 4% of military peacekeeping roles in 2018, increasing the percentage of women in national forces alone will not allow the UN to reach its targets.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to the barriers women face to join national security institutions, the data suggests that there are additional barriers that prevent uniformed women from being deployed to peacekeeping operations. Further research is needed to assess the relative impact of these barriers and the degree in which they vary from country to country.

Financial mechanisms from the international community have been proposed to encourage TPCCs to more actively seek women for deployment. The UN High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (HIPPO) advocates “exploring incentives such as reimbursement premiums” in order to “develop a gender-sensitive force and police generation strategy to address the recruitment, retention and advancement of female uniformed personnel”.<sup>70</sup> The UN Women’s Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 elaborated on this proposal further, outlining options that could incentivize the opening of more deployment opportunities to women.<sup>71</sup>

A challenge for financial incentives could be to ensure that they support the long term objectives identified – increasing the number of women deployed – rather than serve to promote a time-limited surge in numbers that would disappear once incentives are removed. Additionally, incentives linked to numbers alone would not address qualitative criteria. An alternative proposal, suggested by UN Women, is to provide TPCCs with a

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65 United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security, UN Document S/2016/822, 29 September 2016, para. 24.

66 United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, UN Document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017, para. 27.

67 Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, eds., op. cit., pp. 74-77.

68 *ibid.*

69 See, for example, the target of 15 per cent women military observers and staff officers set for December 2017. United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security, UN document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017, para. 30.

70 United Nations, United our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnership and People: Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (HIPPO), 16 June 2015, p. 54, para. 201.

71 Bigio, Jamille, Financial Incentives to Increase Female Participation in Peacekeeping Operations, paper presented at Elsie Initiative Design Workshop, Ottawa, February 2018.

gender-balance premium which could be included alongside the United Nations' new risk premium and readiness premium that were proposed by the Special Advisory Group on Reimbursement Rates for Peacekeeping Troops.<sup>72</sup> The option would likely include criteria such as the “percentage of women in the contingent, their rank and function, the specialized training on gender issues that the contingent has undergone, including pre-deployment training on conflict-related sexual violence and in compliance with the existing Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel...”<sup>73</sup>

## 4.1.ii Barriers and responses

### BARRIER 1: *A lack of information on deployment opportunities*

#### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Despite many states endorsing the rhetoric of increasing the number of uniformed women in peacekeeping, women in national services have reported that they do not feel actively recruited for such operations.<sup>74</sup> Lack of information with regard to peacekeeping opportunities has been cited as an obstacle,<sup>75</sup> as has a lack of familiarity with the recruitment process, and unawareness of the positions their institution provides to peacekeeping operations. Interviews have also shed light on the need to encourage women to apply and to show them their participation will be meaningful.<sup>76</sup>

Much of the current evidence base for this barrier is anecdotal. Further research could systematically compare the knowledge of male and female staff of security institutions regarding opportunities to deploy and how to take advantage of them. In addition, a gender analysis of national peace operation recruitment initiatives could assess the degree to which women are specifically targeted, whether the language and imagery is inclusive of women and men, and whether there is a gender balance of deployment experience among the staff tasked with promoting deployment opportunities.

#### Current and Potential Responses

One way to reach out to and encourage women to join national forces could be targeted recruitment campaigns featuring former female peacekeepers. Women who have been deployed serve as role models within their own institutions, and can do so also through participating in or supporting recruitment campaigns in TPCCs where women's participation is low, as is currently happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>77</sup>

72 UN Women, Exploratory Options on Using Financial Incentives to Increase the Percentage of Military Women In UN Peacekeeping Missions, UN Women Policy Brief, January 2015, p. 2. Available at: <http://wps.unwomen.org/resources/briefs/financial.pdf>.

73 A 'key enablers' premium based on competencies was proposed but its adoption is still pending. UN Women, Inputs for the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations: Financial Incentives to Increase the Percentage of Military Women in Peace Operations, 2015. Available at: <http://wps.unwomen.org/resources/briefs/financial.pdf>.

74 Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 106.

75 See, for example, Hadjipavlou, Maria, Gender, Conflict and Peace-keeping Operations, in Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies [Online Edition], (New York: Oxford University Press USA, 2017), p. 16, available at: <http://internationalstudies.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-190>; Schoeman, Maxi, South African Female Peacekeepers on Mission in Africa: Progress, Challenges and Policy Options for Increased Participation, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet Policy Notes 2010/1, January 2010, p. 4, available at: [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/113152/2010\\_1.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/113152/2010_1.pdf).

76 Interview 1 and 3, 27.03.2018 and 04.04.2018.

77 Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op.cit., pp. 186-7; Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley in Gizelis and Olsson, op.cit., p 78.

Along a similar line, while informal networks of uniformed women do exist and have led to women volunteering for deployments, this could be reinforced with greater financial and logistical support.<sup>78</sup> One proposal is to encourage South-South mentoring networks between major TPCCs, possibly within a UN framework.<sup>79</sup> Various financial mechanisms could be used to fund participation in existing national or transnational networks of past, current and potential deployed women, or to create new ones where necessary.

Moreover, research suggests that peacekeeping does not tend to be the primary motivation for women, or men, to sign up to national institutions in the first place; many women who join the police, for example, do so because they want to serve their local community.<sup>80</sup> With this in mind, if national recruitment campaigns highlight peacekeeping operations as a potential career track, there may be a greater likelihood that some women will join national institutions also with the goal of deploying in a PKO at some point during their careers.<sup>81</sup>

## BARRIER 2: *Corruption in deployment selection*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Allegations of UN recruitment being corrupt or dominated by systems of patronage is nothing new; the need to break the “old boys’ club” was a central theme of the UN Decade for Women 1975-1985 and resulted in the participation pillar of the WPS Agenda.<sup>82</sup> Anecdotal evidence of corruption in the nomination and selection of peacekeepers has not been conclusively backed by academic research, and evidence would be difficult to collect. Ghanaian newspapers have, however, covered cases of corruption in the selection of police for UN peacekeeping operations. The Ghanaian Armed Forces supplemented standard deployment selection processes with a “protocol list” of individuals nominated by their commanders, sometimes in return for a share of their lucrative peacekeeper salary.<sup>83</sup> Following a government enquiry, procedures in Ghana are now more transparent and merit-based.<sup>84</sup>

Ghana is by no means alone in this practice and there may be available information on this case precisely because the government reacted. According to Transparency International (TI), political allegiance and patronage in recruitment to peacekeeping operations has also been reported in Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Morocco, Rwanda and South Africa while “[f]avouritism, nepotism and bribery are important factors in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Senegal.”<sup>85</sup> TI argues that countering the risk of corruption at all levels in UN peacekeeping requires strong political support along with solid technical guidance in line with the model

78 Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, op. cit., p. 7, available at: <https://www.socsci.uci.edu/files/docs/PeaceOpsExecSummary.pdf>.

79 Jennings, Kathleen M., op.cit., p. 11.

80 Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 105.

81 This is current practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 78, and Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley in Gizelis and Olsson op. cit., p 186.

82 Olsson, Louise, Anita Schjølset and Frida Möller, in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, op. cit., p. 37.

83 Aning, Kwesi, “Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations for Troop-Contributing Countries from West Africa: The Case of Ghana,” in Aoi, Chiyuki, Cedric de Coning and Ramesh Thakur, *Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping Operations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007), pp.146-147.

84 Aning, Kwesi, op. cit., p.141.

85 Transparency International Defence & Security, *Corruption & Peace Operations: Risks and recommendations for Troop Contributing Countries and the United Nations*, (no date), available at: <http://ti-defence.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/160330CorruptionRiskTCCsTIIDSPFIN.pdf>.

used for other cross-cutting issues such as gender.<sup>86</sup> It highlights that of all UN troop contributing countries, Canada is the only one to have made its peacekeeper selection procedures transparent.<sup>87</sup>

While it is generally recognized that more research is needed on the topic, existing scholarship suggests that patronage networks are male dominated, and hence women would have less opportunity to participate in corruption when it comes to peacekeeper selection, for example. Corruption is also highly gendered in the sense that while men usually have to pay bribes monetarily, the currency of corruption where women are involved is often sexualized.<sup>88</sup> For this reason, corruption in decisions over who is nominated for deployment is likely to have a disproportionate effect on the number of women deployed.

## Current and Potential Responses

Research into whether some groups of personnel in national security forces are not informed about opportunities for deployment, as well as data on who is and who is not deployed, would be a first step in highlighting whether certain groups benefit from corruption. This would then allow parliamentary and civil society oversight of deployment, as was the case in Ghana.

Where corruption exists as a barrier to women's participation, there may also be a risk that financial incentives aimed at increasing the numbers of women are squandered if safeguards are not put in place. Any financial incentive scheme should be paired with strong transparency and accountability requirements at the national level.

## BARRIER 3: *Women seen as needing protection rather than as potential protectors by senior leaders*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

An analysis of deployment data indicates that as the number of fatalities in a PKO increases, the proportion of women deployed in military contingents decreases.<sup>89</sup> Women also make up a smaller proportion of deployments to countries that are significantly poorer.<sup>90</sup> Karim and Beardsley hypothesize that this is due to a conceptual clash between how decision makers subconsciously interpret the 'participation' and 'protection' pillars of the WPS Agenda at the decision-making levels, which creates a barrier to the deployment of women peacekeepers. This phenomenon is probably amplified by social gender norms. Public opinion in societies that strongly support women's rights can be less resilient to female military casualties. In addition, servicewomen themselves may be pressured by family and friends not to accept deployments where there is a risk of combat.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Pyman, Mark, Sir Stewart Eldon, Nick Seymour, James Cohen, Hiruy Gossaye and Ben Webster, *Corruption & Peacekeeping: Strengthened Peacekeeping and the United Nations*, Transparency International UK Defence and Security Programme, 9 October 2013, p.52.

<sup>87</sup> Pyman, Mark, Sir Stewart Eldon, Nick Seymour, James Cohen, Hiruy Gossaye and Ben Webster, *op. cit.*, p.34.

<sup>88</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Gender Mainstreaming in the Work of UNODC*, Guidance note for UNODC Staff, New York, June 2013, pp.56-7.

<sup>89</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-81.

<sup>90</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>91</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-77.

At the international level, the lack of a clear narrative when it comes to women's participation in peacekeeping operations within the WPS Agenda also undermines the motivation of some member states to deploy more women. Interviews<sup>92</sup> have revealed that some state representatives have a very narrow understanding of the WPS Agenda, centred largely on the apparent need to deploy women in order to achieve gender equality – an argument that they find unconvincing. This could also be further reinforced by a common misconception that equal participation equates to gender parity (a 50-50 quota). Additionally, others had difficulties linking policy to practice (and were unaware of the many supporting documents to this effect), and blamed the UN for not sufficiently communicating the purpose and goals of UNSCR 1325.<sup>93</sup>

While some of the challenges mentioned can no doubt be attributed to a form of resistance (namely de-prioritization) to addressing gender equality, there are indeed some issues with the way in which the WPS Agenda is presented. The first is the 'gendered protection norm'; those with a paternalistic attitude towards gender equality may be sympathetic towards the need to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict, but will struggle to see how deploying more women would be part of the solution.<sup>94</sup> Conversely, the narrative of the WPS Agenda is often so pared down in a bid to gain universal support that it is not seen as a rallying point for those who genuinely want to promote gender equality.<sup>95</sup>

More research is needed on the most effective ways to change both public and individual mind-sets in this regard.

## Current and Potential Responses

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This tendency to see women as needing protection rather than as protectors in their own right runs contrary to prevailing narratives that mixed-gender deployments are more effective, especially when it comes to protecting civilians. If this was implicit and more evidence was available, the need to deploy women in more fragile contexts would be given a higher priority.<sup>96</sup>

For this reason, encouraging the removal of barriers to women serving in combat roles at the national level might result in more women being deployed in peacekeeping operations. This is partly because more women would be given the requisite combat training to meet the minimum deployment criteria and would serve in deployable units. This could change institutional attitudes towards female staff and could result in more women being promoted to senior ranks (given that combat experience is often a de facto prerequisite for promotion).<sup>97</sup> Additional research might be needed, however, to clarify exactly how this would take place and the extent to which this would translate into changes in institutional culture.

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<sup>92</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

<sup>95</sup> Nalwa, Preeta, "Resolution 1325: Evolution of Gender Perspective in UN Peacekeeping Operations", *Journal of Defence Studies*, vol 5, no. 1 (January 2011), pp. 97-117, available at: [https://idsa.in/system/files/jds\\_5\\_1\\_pnalwa.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/jds_5_1_pnalwa.pdf).

<sup>96</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

<sup>97</sup> Skaine, Rosemarie, *Women in Combat: A Reference Handbook*, 1st ed. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011); cited in Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, eds., op. cit., p. 69.

Furthermore, researchers argue that reframing the WPS Agenda to better highlight its transformative character with regard to promoting gender equality in contexts where it has been historically lacking might reignite widespread interest, and help provide clarity on how the Agenda is supposed to achieve its objectives. In any case, just as ‘operational effectiveness’ arguments (see section 3.1) are designed to appeal to a military audience, a greater emphasis on socio-political arguments in favour of increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping might be needed to reconnect policy to practice in member states.

Greater conceptual clarity would also avoid rhetorical contradictions between the protection and participation pillars of the WPS Agenda. Statements claiming that ‘conflict disproportionately affects vulnerable women and children’ imply that women, like children, inevitably suffer more because of their inherent physical weakness and that “vulnerability” is inherent to their condition of women, instead of externally determined by the context. Reshaping the discourse to highlight how systematic discrimination and the failure to apply a gender perspective in conflict-related contexts put disproportionate numbers of women into vulnerable situations would make the need for greater women’s participation in all aspects of peace operations more evident.<sup>98</sup>

Notably, the human rights approach to the protection pillar as presented in Canada’s most recent National Action Plan is more in line with the original intentions of those advocating the adoption of UNSCR 1325 – which was to empower women to serve in peacekeeping operations:

“Promote and protect women’s and girls’ human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women’s and girls’ in fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings.”<sup>99</sup>

When it comes to changing the mind-sets of key leaders in the decision-making process and improving their ability to advance the WPS Agenda, the Swedish Gender Coach programme is often highlighted as a good example. The programme assembled a roster of gender coaches – experienced gender subject matter experts from civil society organizations, the private sector and academia.<sup>100</sup> Selected key leaders were tasked with developing a personal action plan for the implementation of the WPS Agenda within their own institution and were then allocated an appropriate gender coach, who was selected on the basis of seniority and expertise. The two would meet on a regular basis to discuss how to implement the action plan and monitor progress. The programme is credited with improving the motivation, competence and skills of key leaders to bring about change within their institutions. The programme was subsequently replicated in Montenegro.<sup>101</sup> Programmes of this nature could therefore be used to demonstrate to key leaders why and how they should ensure that their female personnel have opportunities to deploy.

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98 Examples from UN Missions in Liberia, Kosovo, Timor-Leste all indicate that successes in implementing elements of the Women, Peace and Security largely depend on the missions’ ability to collaborate with local women in civil society organizations. Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene and Louise Olsson, eds., op.cit.

99 Government of Canada, Canada’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2017–2022 – The implementation plans, 1 November 2017, p. 6, available at: [http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/assets/pdfs/issues\\_development-enjeux\\_developpement/cnap\\_implementation\\_plans\\_eng.pdf](http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/assets/pdfs/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/cnap_implementation_plans_eng.pdf).

100 Nathaly Levesque and Maka Petriashvili, “Mentoring and Coaching” in PfPC SSRWG and EDWG, Handbook on Teaching Gender in the Military (Geneva: DCAF and PfPC, 2016), p. 203–4, available at: <https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/imce/Teaching%20Gender%20in%20the%20Military/DCAF-PfPC-Teaching-Gender-Military-Ch10-Mentoring-Coaching.pdf>.

101 *ibid.*

### 4.1.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Ensure that women are actively recruited through targeted publicity campaigns;
- Ensure that information on the deployment application process is widely circulated;
- Use female former peacekeepers as role models in recruitment campaigns;
- Facilitate the development of national and international women's peacekeeper networks;
- Highlight peacekeeping opportunities in national recruitment campaigns;
- Ensure that the selection procedures are transparent and open to external oversight;
- Apply good practices related to corruption and patronage from other fields in the police and defence sectors, especially when it comes to deployment procedures;
- Provide TPCCs with a gender-balance premium based on percentage of women in the contingent, their rank and function, specialized training on gender issues and staff screening;
- Clarify the narrative on the objectives of the WPS agenda using arguments that convince policymakers;
- Clarify the reason for increasing women's participation (i.e. the 50-50 gender balance in peacekeeping is not the end-goal);
- Reshape international messaging surrounding the protection pillar to ensure coherence with the narrative on uniformed women's participation in PKOs;
- Create policy initiatives amongst 'coalitions of the willing' – countries that are willing to promote gender equality beyond the agreed minimum outlined in the WPS agenda;
- Gender coaching of senior leaders to challenge individual and institutional mind-sets;
- Facilitate women's access to roles where they are underrepresented, especially combat roles, both within national institutions and in peacekeeping contingents.

## 4.2 Do criteria for deployment exclude disproportionate numbers of women?

### 4.2.i Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

Even if facing no direct barriers to accessing deployment opportunities such as those explored in the previous section, women's access to PKOs can be limited by restrictive selection criteria. Basic requirements for deployment in peacekeeping operations include, amongst others, the ability to drive a manual shift 4x4 vehicle as well as skills in handling light or medium weapons. Some of those criteria constitute a significant barrier to women's participation in peacekeeping operations, due to unequal access to training and familiarization of such skills. Men are, for example, more likely to be taught how to drive than women during their young adult life, which eventually gives them a comparative advantage for being deployed. More studies are needed to understand the combination of economic, social, institutional and cultural factors behind those gaps in women's existing skillset.

### 4.2.ii Barriers and responses

#### BARRIER 4: *Years of requested experience for deployment*

##### Analysis of Existing Evidence

One of the most cited barriers for women's participation in peacekeeping operations is the number of years of experience a candidate must have, which is generally around five, and up to eight for heads of operation.<sup>102</sup> While those in their early twenties are probably the most willing to be deployed, many potential candidates will not qualify until they are in their late twenties or early thirties – the point at which many have, or are considering starting, families. Furthermore, in many countries women have enlisted later because of historical prohibitions on women serving (in police and military institutions overall or in particular roles), historical prohibitions on women attending police and military academies, or have their recorded years of service reduced due to family-related career interruptions.<sup>103</sup>

##### Current and Potential Responses

As previously mentioned, promoting the removal of barriers to women serving in combat roles already at the national level could result in more women meeting the required deployment criteria and therefore more women being deployed in peacekeeping operations. Reconsidering the criteria at the national institutional level and notably the number of years of experience requested for each position also appears as a potential solution to overcome this barrier.

<sup>102</sup> See, for example, Milošević, Marko, op. cit., p.7; Lessons Learned Unit, DPKO, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations, United Nations, July 2000, p. 21.

<sup>103</sup> See, for example, Milošević, Marko, op. cit., p.7.

The requirement of five years of experience only applies to personnel deployed individually as staff officers or experts on mission. Contingents are usually deployed as already formed units, so TPCCs willing to increase the percentage of women deployed could prioritize the assignment of female staff to those units in rotation for potential deployment.

## BARRIER 5: *Physical fitness tests*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

A second issue has to do with whether physical fitness tests justifiably or unjustifiably exclude a disproportionate number of women.<sup>104</sup> The degree to which physical fitness tests represent a barrier to the deployment of women is difficult to quantify but it is likely to be a significant obstacle to the recruitment of women for PKOs.

### Current and Potential Responses

The general good practice in this field is to place the onus on those setting physical fitness tests to demonstrate the link to the skills needed in a given role (ideally as defined by a gender balanced committee). Finally, once the case has been made for physical fitness standards, senior leaders need to demonstrate that they have provided adequate training for all candidates to have a fair chance of meeting the criteria. This might entail giving intensive physical fitness training to women over a longer period.<sup>105</sup>

## BARRIER 6: *UN minimum criteria for deployment*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

A third issue has to do with the standard UN criteria for deployment as stipulated by DPKO.<sup>106</sup> Driving a manual shift 4x4 vehicle, handling of light or medium weapons and language and computer skills are not routinely taught as part of the military and police roles where women tend to concentrate.<sup>107</sup> Social gender biases mean that, in many cases, women will not have had the same access to learning these skills before joining the military or police. Some of those criteria constitute a significant barrier to women's participation in peacekeeping operations and more studies are needed to understand the combination of economic, social, institutional and cultural factors behind those gaps in women's existing skillset. The absence of driving skills for women has been identified as a clear impediment to their deployment by three countries; Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>105</sup> Bastick, Megan, *Gender and Complaints Mechanisms: A Handbook for Armed Forces and Ombuds Institutions to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Related Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Abuse* (Geneva: DCAF, 2015), p. 15, available at: <https://www.dcaf.ch/handbook-gender-and-complaints-mechanisms-o>.

<sup>106</sup> See, for example, UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations, *Basic Requirements for Military Peacekeepers*, available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/minimumrequirements.pdf>; United Nations Police, *Information for Individual Police Officers*, available at: <https://police.un.org/en/information-individual-police-officers>.

<sup>107</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>108</sup> UN-INSTRAW, as part of UN Women, Swedish National Defence College and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), *Virtual Discussion on the Role of the Armed Forces in the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, Discussion Summary*, August 2010.

## Current and Potential Responses

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Relevant and appropriate training appears to be an effective step to increase women's participation in peacekeeping operations. Proficiency in those skills can be achieved through the creation of targeted training programmes in order to help women gain these basic requirements, and/or through scholarships for women to participate in training delivered by existing training centres.<sup>109</sup> For example, Nigeria has developed specific driving courses for women in order to support their participation in peacekeeping operations,<sup>110</sup> while Argentina was the first Latin American country to establish a training programme dedicated only to women in its peacekeeping training centre.<sup>111</sup>

### 4.2.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Ensure that women have equal recruitment opportunities in early adulthood (e.g. access to military and police academies);
- Reconsider justifications for the amount of experience required;
- Consider whether time spent on parental leave can be counted as part of length-of-service measurements;
- Reconsider whether national and international physical fitness criteria correspond with the requirements of the designated role;
- Ensure that training and education is based on gender-disaggregated needs assessments;
- Ensure that all police and military personnel are given sufficient training opportunities (resources and time) to achieve physical fitness targets;
- Ensure that all police and military personnel have learning opportunities for core deployment competencies (language skills, manual transmission driving skills, firearm skills, IT skills);
- Explore the feasibility of a “gender-balance premium”, potentially paid only by voluntary contributions, for deployments that meet several gender-equality related criteria.

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<sup>109</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Beardsley, Kyle, op. cit., pp. 180-181.

<sup>110</sup> Ikpe, Eka “Nigeria and the Implementation of UNSCR 1325” in Olonisaken ‘Funmi, Barnes Karen and Ikpe Eka, op. cit., pp. 87-103.

<sup>111</sup> Sotomayor Arturo C., *The Myth of the Democratic Peacekeeper: Civil-Military Relations and the United Nations*, p.79, John Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2014

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## 4.3 Are women provided with the necessary environment, facilities and equipment to deploy?

### 4.3.i. Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

The security institutions that provide the candidate pool for deployment are still largely designed for and by men; in fact, in most TPCCs, serving in the military and, to a lesser extent, the police are hallmarks of the very definition of traditional masculinity. It is not surprising, therefore, that the institutions that feed into PKOs have environments and infrastructures not adapted for, or that are even hostile to, women. The low percentages of women serving in these institutions reduce the pool of uniformed women eligible for deployment; further research could help to clarify to what extent infrastructure, environmental and cultural factors further decrease the deployment of women.

### 4.3.ii. Barriers and responses

#### BARRIER 7: *Ostracism within training cohorts*

##### Analysis of Existing Evidence

The reinforcement of group membership and solidarity often relies on denigration or hazing of those seen as not fitting the generic norm standard of the group, either because of their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, age or disability.<sup>112</sup> Sometimes initiation rituals involve denigrating behaviour – often of sexual nature – which especially targets the “out-group” reinforcing the distinction between those who are “entitled to be there” and those who are perceived as not entitled.

##### Current and Potential Responses

While training targeted only at women is needed for some skills, there is a need for women being trained alongside men in national contexts. Joint training will ensure that women and men are used to working together and allow them to be better prepared to deploy together in mixed teams. Further, military and police academies, as well as any other educational institutions, play an important part in shaping cultural and individual behaviour patterns. The socialization process in this early stage of the members’ professional career is likely to have a long-term effect on their attitudes, in particular as concerns gender equality.

In addition to helping prepare both women and men to deploy together in mixed teams, mixed training appears as a solution to tackle some of the disciplinary issues described above. Mixed training also better reflects the working environment of peacekeeping as underlined by one of the interviewees: “all-female ‘safe space’ [...] is not representative of the mission environment and not necessary, especially for those from countries where mixed spaces are the norm.”<sup>113</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Beardsley, Kyle, op. cit., pp. 180-181.

<sup>113</sup> Interviewee 4, 06.04.2018.

## BARRIER 8: *Inadequate accommodation, facilities and equipment*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

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Some peacekeeping operations are not equipped to take into account women's specific physiological and biological needs; facilities that are built with single gender deployments in mind with no separated bathrooms or dormitories for peacekeepers of different genders.<sup>114</sup> There is no legitimate reason – other than financial priorities – not to redesign some of the camps and bases in order to better accommodate women, in particular in long lasting operations.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, there are still issues with uniforms and equipment that are not adapted to fit women properly.<sup>116</sup> Adequate accommodation is essential for women's well-being while serving abroad, however its direct effect on the number of women willing to deploy is still quite unclear – “I've never heard of [the lack of adequate accommodation] as a reason for women not to deploy”, stated one of the interviewees.<sup>117</sup> Hardship conditions while on mission are expected by both women and men.

### Current and Potential Responses

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One way to start responding to these challenges would be to consult with various groups of women and men regarding designing, building and renovating mission facilities, and whether standard issue *uniforms* and equipment are sufficiently adapted to enable all relevant personnel to use them. In many cases, a change of supplier or minor adjustments to designs would have little to no financial cost but a significant impact on the ability of women to carry out their duties and, possibly, on the willingness of women to deploy or redeploy.

## BARRIER 9: *Lack of specific medical care*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

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Although DPKO has specifically recommended that every medical unit for deployment have at least one female physician as well as specialists in obstetrics and gynaecology and a counselling component, this does not appear to be a given in all contexts.<sup>118</sup>

### Current and Potential Responses

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A strong reiteration by DPKO on the necessity to apply this recommendation could help tackling this barrier.

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<sup>114</sup> Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>115</sup> Interviewee 4, 06.04.2018.

<sup>116</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., pp. 186-7.

<sup>117</sup> Interviewee 1, 27.05.2018.

<sup>118</sup> Lessons Learned Unit, DPKO, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations, United Nations, July 2000, para. 27, p. 25.

### 4.3.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Provide opportunities for women and men to teach others skills they learnt before joining the armed forces or the police;
- Ensure that socialization and group bonding processes do not involve behaviour that degrades new recruits;
- Ensure that these processes do not involve displaying discriminatory attitudes towards non-dominant groups;
- Ensure that socialization and group bonding processes are inclusive (especially when it comes to gender) and that junior leadership is assessed on the basis of creating group cohesion, not segmentation and the establishment of 'elite' inner circles;
- Ensure that gender-segregated dormitories and bathrooms are made available in all deployment locations;
- Ensure that all uniforms and equipment are adapted to fit women properly and adapted to the climate conditions and requirements of the PKO;
- Advertise measures that have been implemented to ensure that women's living and working conditions are on par with those of men;
- Ensure compliance with DPKO's recommendations for at least one female physician and obstetric and gynaecological specialists in medical teams.

## 4.4 Do family constraints prevent women from deploying?

### 4.4.i Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

Another oft-cited reason for women not seeking or accepting a deployment is family considerations, especially when servicewomen have young children or other family obligations. Although most deployments are to non-family duty stations, in some cases civilian staff are allowed to bring spouses and children to the same locations, so the designation may be due to the non-availability of facilities rather than the danger posed by the environment,<sup>119</sup> as well as the heightened financial burden of accommodating the families of those deployed.

However, one interviewee<sup>120</sup> stated that women from North America and Europe who she has met throughout her years of experience of deployments often cite family responsibilities as a barrier to deployment. Three African and Asian interviewees did cite this as a major issue.<sup>121</sup> It could be that socio-cultural factors – such as the existence of support networks from extended family – determine whether family duties or societal perceptions hinder women’s deployment, but this has yet to be explored in the literature.

Finally, in some cases, women felt that they were passed over for deployment simply because they were of childbearing age, even though they did not want to start families.<sup>122</sup> For example, Ukraine’s three-year maternity leave entitlement (with prohibitions on overtime, night work and hazardous work for mothers of children under three) was cited by one policewoman as a reason why peacekeeping opportunities are not extended to women.<sup>123</sup>

### 4.4.ii Barriers and responses

#### BARRIER 10: *Lack of adequate family-friendly policies*

##### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Many women report that national mechanisms for child support are insufficient or non-existent should they wish to deploy. The length of the tour being too long is often cited, although UN policy now states that the length of duty tour for women with young children should not exceed 6 months.<sup>124</sup>

119 Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, op.cit., Kuehnast, Kathleen and Shannon Zimmerman, “No Will, No Way: Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping Operations”, Peace & Stability Operations Journal Online, vol 3, issue 1, October 2012, available at: [http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/Vol3\\_Issue1\\_web\\_reduced.pdf](http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/Vol3_Issue1_web_reduced.pdf).

120 Interviewee 4, 02.03.2018.

121 Interviewee 5, 6 and 7, 13-18-20.04.2018.

122 Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 106.

123 ibid

124 United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security, UN document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017, para. 28.

## Current and Potential Responses

One rarely cited yet logical solution to this issue is that equality can only be achieved in this area if the other parent – the father in the vast majority of cases – takes on a child care role.<sup>125</sup> The provision of gender-neutral parental leave and family-friendly workplace policies, allowing the non-deploying parent to take parental leave and/or have flexible working hours and/or access to childcare facilities, would therefore have to be prioritized in order to enable mothers to deploy.<sup>126</sup> In a case reported to DCAF, a TPCC allowed two female officers with small children to split one six-month non-UN deployment tour between them.

Consultations with women and men both in-mission and in national institutions on their needs with regard to family and caregiving responsibilities could help to identify potential changes to family policies that would facilitate the deployment of women. Such consultations could be conducted in collaboration with female staff associations, gender/women's networks and Gender Advisors and could draw on relevant good practices from other TPCCs and the civilian components of peacekeeping operations.

### 4.4.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Consider whether civilian family duty stations can be classified as such (with the appropriate facilities) for police and military contingents;
- Consider reducing the minimum length of deployment for parents of young children;
- Consider shortening requirements for the minimum length of continuous parental leave (e.g. if longer than one year, allow mothers to take shorter leave);
- Ensure that support is provided for the children of a deployed parent (including support to other family caregivers);
- Ensure that national and institutional measures allow (and encourage) young fathers to take parental leave and receive support where needed in order to normalize this accommodation for all parents;
- Ban discrimination against women who wish to deploy on the basis that they are of childbearing age (and question deployment discrepancies);
- Consider whether more family duty stations can be created.

<sup>125</sup> For a full discussion, see the MenCare campaign. Parental Leave Platform, 10 ways to leave gender inequality behind and give our children the care they need, <https://men-care.org/what-we-do/advocacy/paid-parental-leave/>.

<sup>126</sup> Milošević, Marko, op. cit., p.8.

## 4.5 Are women treated equally on deployment and do they have equal opportunities and incentives for redeployment?

### 4.5.i Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

There exists substantial, largely anecdotal, evidence of unequal and even discriminatory treatment of deployed uniformed women, ranging from sexual-based harassment to limited opportunities or unrealistic expectations based on gender stereotyping. Some of these discriminatory behaviours are cited as among the most important barriers to women's participation in PKOs. Further research could help identify the extent to which these behaviours stem from biases and discriminatory practices in the TPCCs national institutions and to what extent they are created – or exacerbated – by the specific circumstances of the PKO. Identifying the source of the behaviours would help determine what interventions would be most effective at addressing the problem.

### 4.5.ii Barriers and responses

#### BARRIER 11: *Sexual and gender-based harassment*

##### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Sexual and gender-based harassment<sup>127</sup> has been cited as the second most significant barrier to women's full participation in peacekeeping operations after family considerations, according to a survey.<sup>128</sup> Research suggests that while sexual and gender-based harassment is pervasive in all security institutions, incidences are higher on deployment due to a sense of separation from one's home country leading to a relaxation of morals, rivalry between different units and cohorts, and the development of cliques characterized by "boys' club" mentalities.<sup>129</sup> The literature on improving women's participation in peacekeeping makes frequent reference to sexual and gender-based harassment. This is evidence that this is a common, serious obstacle and that prevention and response mechanisms are insufficient within both national institutions and the UN system. The UN Secretary-General recognized this in an open letter in 2017, reminding staff that they "...have a duty and an obligation to create an environment that is welcoming to all".<sup>130</sup>

127 Sexual and gender-based harassment refers to unwanted behaviours committed by peacekeepers against other peacekeepers. It is distinct from sexual exploitation and abuse, which refers to acts committed by peacekeepers against civilians; and sexual violence in conflict, that is violence committed within conflict settings against civilians or armed actors. While all are serious, the legal framework and institutional response are different for each of these issues.

128 Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 126-127.

129 Harris, Vandra and Andrew Goldsmith, "Gendering Transnational Policing: Experiences of Australian Women in International Policing Operations", *International Peacekeeping* vol. 17, no. 2 (April 2010), pp. 292-306 at pp. 301-303.

130 António Guterres and others, Staff Communication, 31 October 2017, available at: [http://www.ccisua.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/sg\\_letter\\_to\\_system\\_on\\_sexual\\_harassment.pdf](http://www.ccisua.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/sg_letter_to_system_on_sexual_harassment.pdf).

## Current and Potential Responses

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Measures to improve the situation could include strengthening UN policies, making reporting mechanisms more widely known and accessible, establishing internal and external oversight, naming and shaming TPCCs when sexual and gender-based harassment is reported, rewarding peacekeepers who denounce it and instituting sanctions for inaction.<sup>131</sup> There is also a suggestion that a critical mass of women (typically at least 20%) would de-normalize sexual and gender-based harassment and empower victims to report it, thus shaping the institutional culture.<sup>132</sup> On a short-term basis, ensuring that female personnel are able to contribute meaningfully during the initial planning phases of operations, as well as in the development of disciplinary mechanisms, can help to prevent sexual and gender-based harassment from taking place for little or no additional cost. For example, a number of US servicewomen in Iraq suffered high rates of dehydration-related illness because of the insecurity of sanitary facilities; several servicewomen were assaulted by fellow soldiers on their way to the latrines at night, so they stopped drinking water in the afternoon in spite of the extreme temperatures.<sup>133</sup> Having female personnel and veterans included in base design could potentially have helped provide safe access to sanitary facilities for these servicewomen.

When discussing the gender bias of deployment criteria, several researchers also make the point that if the ability to integrate a gender perspective is integral to peacekeeping operations' mandates, then general recruitment criteria should ensure that all peacekeepers are assessed on their attitudes towards gender equality and their ability to integrate a gender perspective. Those who are unable or unwilling to work respectfully alongside women would presumably be detrimental to the operation's effectiveness and should not be deployed, even if this means that fewer people are deployed overall.<sup>134</sup> In general, revisiting deployment criteria to ensure that it responds to the knowledge, attitudes and skills required in a modern peacekeeping operation and its various obligations in the area of women, peace and security would be advisable.

Several of the interviewees mentioned that effective and sustainable ways to best make use of financial mechanisms would be to institutionalize gender training and establish gender architecture (e.g. Gender Advisors) within national institutions through international partnerships.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 178, 182, 186; Lessons Learned Unit, DPKO, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multi-dimensional Peace Operations, United Nations, July 2000, p. 22.

<sup>132</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>133</sup> Wolf, Naomi, A culture of cover-up: rape in the ranks of the US military, The Guardian, 14 June 2012, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jun/14/culture-coverup-rape-ranks-us-military>.

<sup>134</sup> Karim, Sabrina and Kyle Beardsley, op. cit., p. 173.

<sup>135</sup> Interviewees 1 and 2, 27 and 28.03.2018.

## BARRIER 12: *Unequal opportunities on deployment and missed opportunities at home*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Despite being highly qualified in their national institutions, when deployed, many women find themselves confined to base in administrative tasks that lack visibility and any prospect for learning new skills or gaining leadership experience.<sup>136</sup> Some women testify that overseas deployments do not improve their promotion prospects and, in some cases, they miss opportunities for promotion in national institutions while they are deployed.<sup>137</sup> One oft-cited issue is the lack of opportunities for promotion from junior into mid-level decision-making positions.<sup>138</sup> In some cases, the assignment of women to less visible, lower-responsibility tasks may be due to overprotectiveness (see section 4.b.), but other research suggests that the real reason has more to do with some men not ‘tolerating’ women in roles they see as inherently masculine.<sup>139</sup>

If women’s roles in UN operations are limited specifically to the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, many women may be excluded because only a small proportion of women in the potential recruitment pool will have sufficient experience with this specific skill set.<sup>140</sup> It is therefore important to ensure that women and men are considered for diverse roles, and not just those stereotypically associated with their gender.

Additionally, the perception that women are allocated to safer, less “prestigious” posts and face greater pressure to perform<sup>141</sup> leads many women to believe that they are not able to meet these high expectations.<sup>142</sup> This, coupled with the fact that social gendered norms cause women in many cultural contexts to underestimate their own abilities and only apply to jobs where they meet 100% of the criteria, means that many women self-eliminate from recruitment processes for senior positions.<sup>143</sup>

However, cultural contexts may be relevant here; interviewees from Africa and Asia described their peacekeeping experiences as very valuable to their careers, and improved their operational knowledge significantly.<sup>144</sup> It appears that for women who worked in support roles in their national armed forces, peacekeeping is an opportunity to develop skills and experience they would not be able to learn in their national context.<sup>145</sup>

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136 Kenny, Charles, op. cit., and Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., pp. 16, 21.

137 Milošević, Marko, op. cit., p.8.

138 Kuehnast, Kathleen and Shannon Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 3; Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, op. cit., p. 6.

139 Nalwa, Preeta, op. cit., pp. 97-117.

140 Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 107.

141 Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, op. cit., pp. 5-7.

142 Jennings, Kathleen op. cit., p. 8.

143 Conaway, Camille Pampell and Jolynn Shoemaker, op. cit., p. 6.

144 Interviewees 5, 6 and 7, 13-18-20.04.2018.

145 Interviewees 5, 6, and 7, 13-18-20.04.2018.

## Current and Potential Responses

In response, the UN has sought to encourage member states to implement “policies known as ‘fast tracking’ to increase women’s representation in the higher echelons of the armed forces and creat[e] other opportunities for women’s professional advancement.”<sup>146</sup> The impact of these measures, however, is likely to be limited without a change in mind-set within the UN system towards women in senior peacekeeping roles. Additionally, in some TPCCs like Bangladesh, no women have been promoted to senior ranks, which can potentially limit their ability to apply to senior positions in peacekeeping operations.<sup>147</sup> TPCCs therefore need to ensure that experience in PKOs is duly considered in promotion decisions and that personnel can still apply for positions while on deployment.

The existing gender stereotypes present in the military tend to perpetuate aggressive forms of masculinity and define women as a “vulnerable” group in need of protection, as mentioned previously. Stereotypes could be challenged through the inclusion of feminist texts<sup>148</sup> and elements on “healthy masculinities” into military training, for example.<sup>149</sup> The expansion of the training curriculum would also contribute to reinforcing gender mainstreaming throughout the PKO and to broadening the gender approach fostered by the UN.

The UN has strongly encouraged its member states to develop national pre-deployment training programmes following specific UN standards since 1989.<sup>150</sup> The necessity to include gender training as part of this pre-deployment training, has also long been emphasized and UNSCR 1325 requested “the Secretary-General to provide Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures.”<sup>151</sup> DPKO developed gender-mainstreaming training tools, including the Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations published in 2004.<sup>152</sup> However, pre-deployment training still remains the sole responsibility of TPCCs which leads to great disparity amongst peacekeepers as concerns the kind of pre-deployment training they have received, its quality, length or even its existence.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, the gender component of this pre-deployment training might not address the relevant topics in the right manner – or there might not even be a gender component at all. As one interviewee put it: “Gender training for all is needed. Infantry units are meant to have pre-deployment training but this seems to comprise of PowerPoint slides and is not included in the scenarios”.<sup>154</sup>

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146 UNSG, Report on Women, Peace and Security, 2008.

147 Interviewee 6, 18.04.2018.

148 von Hlatky, Stéfanie and Meaghan Shoemaker, op. cit.

149 Karim, Sabrina and Beardsley, Kyle, op. cit.

150 Cutillo Alberto, Deploying the Best: Enhancing Training for United Nations Peacekeepers, Providing for Peacekeeping No.5, International Peace Institute, pp.1-3, August 2013.

151 UNSCR 1325 (2000), UN Doc.

152 Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations, Peacekeeping Best Practice Unit UN DPKO,2004, available at <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/gender-resource-package-for-peacekeeping-operations/>

153 Cutillo Alberto, Deploying the Best: Enhancing Training for United Nations Peacekeepers, Providing for Peacekeeping No.5, International Peace Institute, pp.7-8, August 2013.

154 Interviewee 4, 06.04.2018.

For gender mainstreaming to be efficient, gender training is not enough; wide support for gender equality amongst all PKO personnel, especially those in leadership positions needs to be ensured too. One way of doing this is to complement gender training with coaching programmes. The Swedish Armed Forces system of “gender coaches” within its peacekeeping forces could be duplicated at the UN level; for example, by a reinforced Military and Police Advisory Committee (MPAC) that could work in close cooperation with gender coaches.<sup>155</sup> This would not only allow gender coaches to strengthen their impact on senior leadership, it would also trigger the creation of a “network of male allies”<sup>156</sup> breaking down the cliché of gender training as an “all-women club”.

## BARRIER 13: *Unreasonable expectations*

### Analysis of Existing Evidence

Expectations placed on deployed women may be unreasonable or based on perceived strengths or weaknesses rather than actual skill set.<sup>157</sup> The deployment of the Indian formed female police units (FFPUs) provides some interesting insights in this regard. The country created all-female police units in 1986, initially in order to search for women who posed a threat in situations related to terrorism or rioting. The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) saw this as an opportunity for an experiment to see whether the deployment of FFPUs could successfully achieve a rapid increase in women’s participation in peacekeeping.<sup>158</sup> In all, nine rotations of the Indian FFPU served in Liberia from 2007-2016 and their positive contribution to the country was widely hailed by the UN and the Liberian president.<sup>159</sup> Aside from performing their regular police duties to a high standard, the FFPU is credited with improving links with the community; improving the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence; inspiring Liberian women to sign up for the national police force in much higher numbers; providing basic medical services to the local community; teaching map-reading skills to the national police; conducting classes on self-defence, sexual violence and HIV/AIDS with local schools; and volunteering at a local orphanage.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., p.21.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> Kuehnast, Kathleen and Shannon Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 3 and Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>158</sup> Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., pp. 27-31.

<sup>159</sup> See, for example, UN News Centre, Hailed as ‘role models,’ all-female Indian police unit departs UN mission in Liberia, Africa Renewal, 12 February 2016, available at: <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/hailed-%E2%80%99role-models%E2%80%99-all-female-indian-police-unit-departs-un-mission-liberia>.

<sup>160</sup> *ibid*; Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 18.

Critics, however, point out that many of the benefits brought by the Indian FFPUs are attributable to an unpaid “second shift” after their regular working hours.<sup>161</sup> Indeed, perceptions of the FFPUs’ positive contribution appears to be largely due to the fact that they volunteered to go above and beyond their regular duties,<sup>162</sup> perhaps because of gendered expectations for women to perform caregiving roles, or perhaps because deployment opportunities were rarely offered to Indian women and hence, feeling less entitled than some of their male counterparts, they felt an obligation to work harder in order to justify their position. In any case, male-dominated units do not have the same institutional expectations to contribute to society to this extent, and individual men are not under the same pressure to volunteer their time.<sup>163</sup> Despite the high value placed on community engagement and volunteering as a standard component of peacekeeping, not all peacekeepers are held to these standards or tested on their ability and willingness to engage in this work during the selection process.

## Current and Potential Responses

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In TPCCs that have all-female units in their national institutions, it is important to ensure that these units can deploy, in order to give women opportunities to work in peacekeeping. In national institutions where women and men generally work separately this is a straightforward way for TPCCs to meet their gender balance targets rather than creating mixed units for deployment. However, in TPCCs where women in national institutions serve in mixed units, creating all-female formed units for deployment could be logistically complicated and likely to create resistance from both women and men. Further, as mentioned before in the paragraphs on mixed training, mixed units are more likely to bring about transformational changes in institutional culture than gender-segregated units, as they allow women and men to learn to work together as equals.<sup>164</sup>

Where all-female units are deployed, care must be taken to ensure that they are held to expectations that are equivalent to those of any other unit. This might involve expecting all peacekeepers to volunteer or engage with the community in their spare time as a condition of deployment, or alternatively paying overtime to those who take on a “second shift”. In any case, women in FFPUs should feel that they have as much of a right to be deployed as any other unit and should not have to go to extra lengths to demonstrate their usefulness.

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<sup>161</sup> Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>162</sup> Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., pp. 112-114.

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> Interviewee 1, 27.05.2018.

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## 4.5.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Consider revising the UN guidelines towards a more comprehensive approach of the concept of gender and gender mainstreaming;
- Ensure that gender training is not regarded as an annex to core training, but as a requirement for all individuals being deployed in order to promote equal rights for everyone and to improve both the PKO efficacy and legitimacy;
- Ensure that there is a gender component of pre-deployment training and that it addresses the relevant topics with practical, action-oriented approaches, including scenarios and exercises;
- Ensure that experience in PKOs is duly considered in promotion decisions and that personnel can still apply for positions while on deployment;
- Ensure awareness of and access to UN mechanisms that receive reports and complaints related to sexual and gender-based harassment;
- Establish external and internal oversight mechanisms;
- Consider ‘naming and shaming’ TPCCs where sexual and gender-based harassment is prevalent;
- Ensure meaningful participation of women during the (initial) planning phases of operations, as well as in the development of disciplinary mechanisms;
- Ensure that women and men in a PKO are considered for diverse roles, and not just those stereotypically associated with their gender;
- Consider introducing ‘fast-tracking’ procedures for women within national institutions;
- Complement gender training with coaching programmes, to ensure wider support for gender equality amongst all PKO personnel;
- Ensure that women who have been deployed have the opportunity to take up senior positions in peacekeeping operations later in their career;
- Include gender-related knowledge and commitment to gender equality in senior deployment criteria;
- Ensure that those in gender-related positions (e.g. Gender Advisor) have prospects of being promoted;
- Ensure that the same expectations are placed on men and women in PKOs, including when it comes to voluntary community engagement and other “second shift” activities.

## 4.6 Do women have equal opportunities for career advancement through deployment, either on-mission or at home?

### 4.6.i Overview of existing evidence and identified research gaps

Despite being highly qualified in their national institutions, when deployed many women find themselves confined to base in administrative tasks that lack visibility and any prospect for learning new skills or gaining leadership experience.<sup>165</sup> Moreover, the expectations on deployed women may be disconnected to their skill set<sup>166</sup> and the requirements of their careers in the national institutions. In other words, women often find themselves doing menial jobs in a hostile work environment in which the senior leadership does not demonstrate any commitment to gender equality. Further research would help quantify to what extent deployed uniformed women find themselves performing tasks for which they are not professionally equipped and which provide little or no opportunities for advancement.

### 4.6.ii Barriers and responses

#### BARRIER 14: *Lack of support networks*

##### Analysis of Existing Evidence

The lack of support networks or alliance structures to enable access to people at different levels of national institutions while on deployment has often been cited as a challenge.<sup>167</sup> Women have less access to insider networks that would facilitate mentoring, sponsorship and information sharing and could eventually improve women's prospects of being promoted upon return from deployments. In recent times, professional networks of this kind have been established in some UN PKOs.<sup>168</sup> Perhaps a more important outcome of having more women participate in national institutions, including in leadership positions, at least in the short-term is the psychological effect this would have on the attitudes of national policymakers and leaders in security institutions and society at large on the role that women can play in insecure environments.

<sup>165</sup> Kenny, Charles, op. cit., and Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., p. 16, 21.

<sup>166</sup> Kuehnast, Kathleen and Shannon Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 3 and Pruitt, Lesley J., op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>167</sup> Dharmapuri, Sahana, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security, UN document S/2017/861, 16 October 2017, para. 26.

## Current and Potential Responses

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One interviewee described the possibility of having a women's officer, preferably uniformed and distinct from the Gender Advisor, who would be responsible for the welfare of deployed women. This women's officer could help set up an informal network in the PKO for women to share their knowledge on how their safety and welfare concerns can be addressed, for example.<sup>169</sup>

### 4.6.iii Recommendations for potential quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Ensure that women who have been deployed have the opportunity to take up senior positions in peacekeeping operations later in their career;
- Include gender-related knowledge and commitment to gender equality in senior deployment criteria;
- Ensure that those in gender-related positions (e.g. Gender Advisor) have prospects of being promoted;
- Reconsider whether criteria clearly relate to the work envisaged in the given post;
- Support formal and informal mentoring for women (by women and men).

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<sup>169</sup> Interviewee 4, 06.04.2018.



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## Conclusions

## 5. Conclusions

This study has highlighted that despite the general recognition by the UN and its member states of the need for more uniformed women in PKOs, ambitious targets and numerous initiatives have had little measurable impact. Moreover, academic research has highlighted that the low proportion of women in national defence and police institutions is not the main reason for the lack of women in PKOs. From the data presented in section 1, it is clear that for most TPCCs, achieving the DPKO targets on the deployment of women would only involve deploying a relatively small number of additional women. This study has identified 14 different barriers that can prevent women from deploying and hence progressively reduce their proportion in TPCC contributions. These barriers are organized in six main categories: (1) equal access to opportunities, (2) deployment criteria, (3) the working environment, (4) family constraints, (5) equal treatment during deployment and (6) career-advancement opportunities.

One of the challenges in increasing the number of uniformed women in deployments is that the relative importance of each of these barriers is very context specific. The situation varies significantly between TPCCs and between missions. For example, while family constraints play a significant role in limiting the number of women who are willing to deploy from Western countries; this is less of an issue in many Sub-Saharan African countries where it is common practice that extended family members take on parental roles. A comprehensive approach to increasing the representation of uniformed women in PKOs would therefore need to begin with a country and mission-specific barrier assessment. This would then allow for innovative, tailored interventions aimed at overcoming the most significant barriers in a given context (such as those suggested in the Annex) based on best practices and experiences from other settings. It would also help identify context-specific areas for further research.

Finally, it is currently difficult to assess how many women are serving in a given PKO, and at what role and rank, due to inconsistent data collection methodologies and gaps in existing datasets. In order to accurately assess the effectiveness of activities aimed at increasing the participation of uniformed women in PKOs, it would be beneficial to standardize and improve gender-disaggregated monitoring practices across the UN system and, ideally, within national institutions of major TPCCs.

A full summary of the barriers identified, possible solutions and areas for further research can be found in the Annex.

By highlighting areas for further research and possible solutions, this report should inform future policies and actions by GAC, members of the Elsie Initiative Contact Group, TPCCs, the UN and other stakeholders in achieving their commitments to increase the number of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations.

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### **List of Interviewees**

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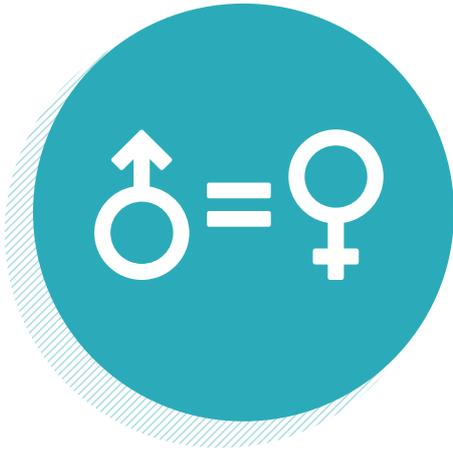
- Interviewee 1: **Cdr Ella van den Heuvel (res)**, Armed Forces of the Netherlands, 27.03.2018.
- Interviewee 2: **Col Nevena Miteva**, Social Policy Directorate, Bulgarian Armed Forces and Chair of the Bulgarian Armed Forces Women Association, 28.03.2018.
- Interviewee 3: **Vanja Matić**, Gender Officer, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 04.04.2018.
- Interviewee 4: **Lt Col Rachel Grimes**, former Military Gender Advisor, Office of Military Affairs, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 06.04.2018.
- Interviewee 5: Assistant Superintendent of Police, **Hawa Tina Momoh**, Sierra Leone Police, 13.04.2018.
- Interviewee 6: Member of Armed Forces of Bangladesh, 18.04.2018.
- Interviewee 7: Member of Kenya Defence Forces, 20.04.2018.
- Interviewee 8: **Jake Sherman**, Director, Brian Urquhart Center for Peace Operations, International Peace Institute, 25.04.2018.

ANNEX

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# Summary of recommendations

# Topic 1: Are women given equal opportunity to deploy in peacekeeping operations?



## General recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Provide TPCCs with a gender-balance premium based on percentage of women in the contingent, their rank and function, specialized training on gender issues, and staff screening

## Areas for further research

In addition to the barriers women face to join national security institutions, the data suggests that there are additional barriers that prevent uniformed women from being deployed to peace operations. Further research is needed to assess the relative impact of these barriers and the degree to which they vary from country to country. (Page 21)

## BARRIER 1: A lack of information on deployment opportunities

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure that women are actively recruited through targeted publicity campaigns;
- › Ensure that information on the deployment application process is widely circulated;
- › Use female former peacekeepers as role models in recruitment campaigns;
- › Facilitate the development of national and international women's peacekeeper networks;
- › Highlight peacekeeping opportunities in national recruitment campaigns.

### Areas for further research

- › Further research could systematically compare the knowledge of male and female staff of security institutions regarding opportunities to deploy and how to take advantage of them. In addition, a gender analysis of national peace operation recruitment initiatives could assess the degree to which women are specifically targeted, whether the language and imagery is inclusive of women and men, and whether there is a gender balance among the staff with deployment experience tasked with promoting deployment opportunities. (Page 22)

## BARRIER 2: Corruption in deployment selection

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure that the selection procedures are transparent and open to external oversight;
- › Apply good practices related to corruption and patronage from other fields in the police and defence sectors, especially when it comes to deployment procedures.

### Areas for further research

- › While it is generally recognized that more research is needed on the topic, existing scholarship suggests that patronage networks are male dominated, and hence women would have less opportunity to participate in corruption when it comes to peacekeeper selection, for example. (Page 24)
- › Research into whether some groups of personnel in national security forces are not informed about opportunities for deployment, as well as data on who is and who is not deployed, would be a first step in highlighting whether certain groups benefit from corruption. (Page 24)

## BARRIER 3: Women seen as needing protection rather than as protectors by senior leaders

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Clarify the narrative on the objectives of the Women, Peace and Security agenda using arguments that convince policymakers;
- › Clarify the reason for increasing women's participation (i.e. the 50-50 gender balance in peacekeeping is not the end-goal);
- › Reshape international messaging surrounding the protection pillar to ensure coherence with the narrative on women's participation;
- › Create policy initiatives amongst 'coalitions of the willing' – countries that are willing to promote gender equality beyond the agreed minimum outlines in the WPS agenda;
- › Gender coaching of senior leaders to challenge individual and institutional mind-sets;
- › Facilitate women's access to roles where they are underrepresented, especially combat roles, both within national institutions and in peacekeeping contingents.

### Areas for further research

- › More research is needed on the most effective ways to change both public and individual mind-sets in this regard. (Page 25)
- › Additional research might be needed to clarify how removing barriers to women serving in combat roles at the national level might result in more women being deployed in peacekeeping operations, and the extent to which this would translate into changes in institutional culture. (Page 25)

## **Topic 2:** Do criteria for deployment exclude disproportionate numbers of women?



### **General recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized**

- › Ensure that women have equal recruitment opportunities in early adulthood (e.g. access to military and police academies);
- › Explore the feasibility of a “gender-balance premium”, potentially paid only by voluntary contributions, for deployments that meet several gender-equality related criteria.

### **Areas for further research**

More studies are needed to understand the combination of economic, social, institutional and cultural factors behind gaps in women’s existing skillset. (Page 28)

## **BARRIER 4: Years of requested experience for deployment**

### **Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized**

- › Reconsider justifications for amount of experience required.
- › Consider whether time spent on parental leave can be counted as part of length-of-service measurements.

## BARRIER 5: Physical fitness tests

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

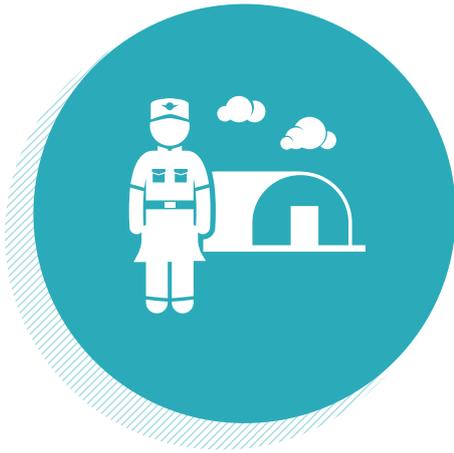
- Reconsider whether national and international physical fitness criteria correspond with the requirements of the designated role;
- Ensure that training and education is based on gender-disaggregated needs assessments;
- Ensure that all personnel are given sufficient training opportunities (resources and time) to achieve physical fitness targets.

## BARRIER 6: UN criteria for deployment measured by the Safety Awareness and Training exam

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- Ensure that all personnel have learning opportunities for core deployment competencies (language skills, manual transmission driving skills, firearm skills, IT skills).

## **Topic 3:** Are women provided with the necessary environment, facilities and equipment to deploy?



### **Areas for further research**

The low percentages of women serving in these institutions reduce the pool of uniformed women eligible for deployment; further research could help to clarify to what extent infrastructure, environmental, and cultural factors further decrease the deployment of women. (Page 31)

## **BARRIER 7: Ostracism within training cohorts**

### **Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized**

- › Provide opportunities for women and men to teach others skills they learnt before joining the armed forces or the police;
- › Ensure that socialization and group bonding processes do not involve behaviour that degrades new recruits;
- › Ensure that these processes do not involve displaying discriminatory attitudes towards non-dominant groups;
- › Ensure that socialization and group bonding processes are inclusive (especially when it comes to gender) and that junior leadership is assessed on the basis of creating group cohesion, not segmentation and the establishment of 'elite' inner circles.

## BARRIER 8: Inadequate accommodation, facilities and equipment

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure that gender-segregated dormitories and bathrooms are made available in all deployment locations;
- › Ensure that all uniforms and equipment are adapted to fit women properly and adapted to the climate conditions and requirements of the PKO;
- › Advertise measures that have been implemented to ensure that women's living and working conditions are on par with those of men.

## BARRIER 9: Lack of specific medical care

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure compliance with DPKO's recommendations for at least one female physician and obstetric and gynaecological specialists in medical teams.

## Topic 4: Do family constraints prevent women from deploying?



### Areas for further research

Further research could help understand the importance of socio-cultural factors – such as the existence of support networks from extended family – in determining whether family duties or societal perceptions hinder women’s deployment or not. (Page 34)

## BARRIER 10: Lack of adequate family-friendly policies

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Consider whether civilian family stations can be classified as such (with the appropriate facilities) for police and military contingents;
- › Consider reducing the minimum length of deployment for parents of young children;
- › Consider shortening requirements for the minimum length of continuous parental leave (e.g. if longer than 1 year, allow mothers to take shorter leave);
- › Ensure that support is provided for the children of deployed parents (including support to other family caregivers);
- › Ensure that national and institutional measures allow (and encourage) young fathers to take parental leave and receive support where needed in order to normalize this accommodation for all parents;
- › Ban discrimination against women who wish to deploy on the basis that they are of childbearing age (and question deployment discrepancies);
- › Consider whether more family duty stations can be created.

## Topic 5: Are women treated equally on deployment and do they have equal opportunities and incentives for redeployment?



### General recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Consider revising the UN guidelines towards a more comprehensive approach of the concept of gender and gender mainstreaming;
- › Ensure that gender training is not regarded as an annex to core training, but as a requirement for all individuals being deployed in order to promote equal rights for everyone and to improve both the PKO efficacy and legitimacy;
- › Ensure that there is a gender component of pre-deployment training and that it addresses the relevant topics with practical, action-oriented approaches, including scenarios and exercises;
- › Ensure that experience in PKOs is duly considered in promotion decisions and that personnel can still apply for positions while on deployment.

### Areas for further research

Further research could help identify the extent to which discriminatory treatment of deployed uniformed women (ranging from sexual-based harassment to limited opportunities or unreal expectations based on gender stereotyping) stem from biases and discriminatory practices in the TPCCs national institutions and to what extent they are created, or exacerbated, by the specific circumstances of the operation. (Page 36)

## BARRIER 11: Sexual and gender-based harassment

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure wide awareness of UN mechanisms that can receive reports and complaints related to sexual and gender-based harassment;
- › Establish external and internal oversight mechanisms;
- › Consider 'naming and shaming' TPCCs when sexual and gender-based harassment is reported;
- › Ensure meaningful participation of women during the (initial) planning phases of operations, as well as in the development of disciplinary mechanisms.

## BARRIER 12: Unequal opportunities on deployment and missed opportunities at home

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure that women and men in a PKO are considered for diverse roles, and not just those stereotypically associated with their gender;
- › Consider introducing ‘fast-tracking’ procedures for women within national institutions;
- › Complement gender training with coaching programmes, to ensure wider support for gender equality amongst all PKO personnel;
- › Ensure that women who have been deployed have the opportunity to take up senior positions in peacekeeping operations later in their career;
- › Include gender-related knowledge and commitment to gender equality in senior deployment criteria;
- › Ensure that those in gender-related positions (e.g. Gender Advisor) have prospects of being promoted.

## BARRIER 13: Unreasonable expectations

### Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized

- › Ensure that the same expectations are placed on men and women in PKOs, including when it comes to voluntary community engagement and other “second shift” activities.

## **Topic 6:** Do women have equal opportunities for career advancement through deployment, either on-mission or at home?



### **General recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized**

- › Ensure that women who have been deployed have the opportunity to take up senior positions in peacekeeping operations later in their career;
- › Include gender-related knowledge and commitment to gender equality in senior deployment criteria;
- › Ensure that those in gender-related positions (e.g. Gender Advisor) have prospects of being promoted;
- › Reconsider whether criteria clearly relate to the work envisaged in the given post.

### **Areas for further research**

Further research would help quantify to what extent deployed uniformed women find themselves performing tasks for which they are not professionally equipped and which provide little or no opportunities for advancement. (Page 43)

## **BARRIER 14: Lack of support networks**

### **Recommendations for quick wins and activities that could be incentivized**

- › Support formal and informal mentoring for women (by women and men).









This baseline study was conducted in the framework of the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations, launched by Global Affairs Canada. The report describes the current situation of women's participation in military and police roles in United Nations peacekeeping operations. It documents international good practice to increase such participation, and identifies challenges and barriers to the recruitment, training, retention, deployment and promotion of uniformed women in peacekeeping operations.

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