

Mainstreaming or Maneuvering?

Gender and Peacekeeping in West Africa

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

When the first United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission was established in 1948, warfare in many respects was straightforward.¹ Conflicts tended to be interstate, the belligerents unambiguous, and interventions primarily military. Peacekeeping operations usually included the insertion of military observers or forces to monitor already secured cease-fire agreements.² The number of actors involved was generally limited to the UN Security Council, the Secretary-General, a few troop-contributing countries, and the conflicting parties. Determining the success or failure of such missions was relatively easy; if the conflict ceased or remained frozen, then the operation was considered to be a success.³

The UN, and specifically the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), was forced to evolve in order to adapt to the rapidly changing nature and demography of post-Cold War combat.⁴ After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world began to witness a disturbing proliferation of armed contention throughout the globe. These new conflicts are primarily intrastate, include numerous actors with varying interests, blurred boundaries, and marked with increased civilian casualties. The small arms and light weapons from the old Soviet Bloc flooded Africa and other parts of the world and significantly increased the ability for all to participate in armed conflict. Women and children increasingly entered the fray as combatants. Robbing, looting, and physical and sexual violence, long seen as consequences of warfare, increasingly became part of the war aims of belligerents, with women and girls disproportionately targeted and victimized.

As part of the international response to these developments, contemporary peacekeeping operations evolved into long-term, multifaceted, multi agency, interventions, which include military forces as well as police and civilian mission components.⁵ Mission

¹ UN peacekeeping was born when troops were sent to monitor the cease-fire agreement between Israel and the Arab nations in 1948. The operation was called the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).

² Peacekeeping, according to the United Nations, refers to a United Nations presence in the field (normally involving civilian and military personnel) that, with the consent of the conflicting parties, implements or monitors arrangements relating to the control of conflicts and their resolution, or ensures the safe delivery of humanitarian relief.

³ Mark Malan, *Mandates and Compliance-Towards a Basic Framework for Assessing Performance in Peace Operations*, Ninth International Seminar in the Series “Challenges of Peace Keeping and Peace Support: Into the 21st Century”, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 21-24 August 2001.

⁴ For more information on the United Nation’s Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) see <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp>

⁵ Due to the ever-increasing, multi-faceted nature of peacekeeping operations, they are now commonly termed “peace support operations” or PSO. While the UN itself has not adopted the term PSO, it is a

mandates now cover a broad array of activities such as disarming and demobilizing warring factions; integrating regular and irregular forces into a unified army; reorganizing and retraining the police; re-establishing or reforming the judiciary; providing food, water, sanitation, medical services, housing, and road repairs; and facilitating or observing national elections.

Determining the success of Peace Support Operations (PSO) in the 21st century is therefore a challenge. What is required for this type of analysis is a longitudinal evaluation of where a country stands, years after conflict has officially ended.⁶ How sustainable is the “peace” and “stability” that was achieved during the mission? How mature are the democratic, economic, and social institutions? Were pre-war inequalities in relation to gender, socio-economic status, and ethnicity transformed or rather exacerbated? The expanded nature of peacekeeping operations signifies that a mission can have a potential effect in many areas and that the success or failure has far-reaching implications not only for the host country but also for the region as a whole.

It has increasingly been recognized that although under-utilized and often not appreciated, women have significant contributions to make towards conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. The marginalization of women in these processes has had and continues to have a detrimental impact on the development of post-conflict societies. The inclusion and participation of both men and women is essential in supporting a social transformation of traditionally subjugated groups towards a more equitable society. This realization led many women’s groups and civil society organizations to come together and pressure their governments and the UN to recognize and aid in mitigating such disparities, not only for fairness and equality, but also for survival and a chance at sustainable peace.⁷

On 31 October 2000, Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security was unanimously adopted. For the first time, the Security Council officially avowed the need to integrate a gender perspective and to ensure women’s participation in all decision-making processes throughout all stages of armed conflict. Resolution 1325 calls for the inclusion of women and gender perspectives at all levels and in all areas of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

However, the Secretary-General, in his 2004 follow-up report to resolution 1325, stated that gender perspectives still have not been systematically included in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting within any area of peace and security.⁸ There

concept used by NATO, the UK, and by many African armed forces and regional training centers, such as the KAIPTC.

⁶ Malan, *op. cit.*

⁷ The terms “civil society”, “grassroots”, and “community based organizations” are used interchangeably in this study to describe associations or groups that exist independent of the state and maintain a degree of autonomy. They have the potential to provide alternative views, policies, and actions than those advocated by the state and often liaise between the government and its citizens while at the same time acting as agents of change.

⁸ United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security, S/2004/814, 13 October 2004. <http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/1325/SGReportWPS2004.pdf>

continues to be a need to fill information gaps on the specific shortcomings of gender mainstreaming strategies in PSO. This has serious implications for how future plans, priorities, and budgets are conceived with regard to gender within the UN system.⁹

A clearer understanding on how to coordinate the work of various groups in the field with that of the gender experts in the mission, relevant UN agencies, civil society, and stakeholders is essential to ensuring the proper implementation of the resolution. This study highlights some priority areas that should be integrated into various phases and aspects of peacekeeping missions by policy makers, managers in missions, and those at DPKO. It is argued here that without proper knowledge of key areas, decisions, and policies, resolution 1325 will never be fully or effectively implemented, and consequently, hamper the overall success of a mission.

The cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia provide a valuable opportunity to evaluate, compare, and contrast the different gender policies of the two missions. There are obvious similarities between the two states; geographic contiguity, duration of the conflicts, levels of brutality during and after their respective civil wars, women's traditional roles in society as well as the prevalence of females engaged in non-traditional roles during conflict, such as armed combatants and "bread winners" of the family. On the other hand, the UN interventions in these two countries have very different mandates and organizational structures pertaining to gender.

AIM, FOCUS, AND LIMITATIONS

The aim of this study is to evaluate the roles and impact of Gender Advisors (GA) and gender mainstreaming strategies in UN peacekeeping missions, with specific reference to Sierra Leone and Liberia as case studies. These countries and missions are selected because the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was adopted before Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security was passed, hence only vague references to women and gender issues are made. In contrast, the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was adopted post-resolution 1325, and makes gender mainstreaming in all aspects and at all levels of the operation a priority.

The study addresses two broad questions. First, has resolution 1325 impacted UN peacekeeping missions at an operational level and if so, how? Secondly, what effect does having an Office of the Gender Advisor (OGA) situated within a peacekeeping mission have in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of resolution 1325?

⁹ The International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO), and eleven other independent organizations are known as "specialized agencies" and are connected to the UN through cooperative agreements. In addition, a number of UN offices, programs, and funds such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Development Program (UNDP), and the United Nations fund for Women (UNIFEM) report to the UN General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). All of these organizations have their own governing bodies, budgets, and secretariats. Together with the UN, they are known as the 'UN system'.

While this study prioritizes the peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, examples from other UN missions and additional aspects relating to women, peace, and security are made and noted wherever relevant. The major focus is on examining the organizational structure of the missions as they relate to the planning, implementation, and monitoring of resolution 1325, rather than on any one specific functional aspect of the missions.

The research methods include a literature review of how the inclusion or exclusion of women in various operational areas positively or negatively affects the stated goals of a mission. Primary source interviews were conducted from 1-18 November 2004, with a variety of representatives from UNAMSIL and UNMIL, including the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, two UNMIL Gender Officers, a number of gender focal points within the UN Country Teams (UNCT) from both countries, representatives from both international and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), and local women's groups.

Although time in the field with both missions was relatively brief, the authors were able to interview nearly forty individuals from various organizations. The findings of the field research were refined and further expanded during a workshop at KAIPTC in early December 2004.¹⁰ Participants included the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, the Gender Advisors from UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), and UN DPKO. There were also representatives from various UN agencies, international and local NGOs, and women's groups working in West Africa.

While an attempt was made to examine multiple areas of the missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, it is acknowledged that the sheer scope of the peacebuilding process in both countries combined with the authors' limited time in the field made it impossible to examine each area in depth. For instance, while attention is paid to gender and Disarmament, Demobilizations, and Reintegration (DDR); assistance and protection of women and girls in Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps; and protection against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), other areas such as restructuring of the national armies and police forces, and reforming the judiciary, have not been covered in any detail.

SCOPE

Chapter I has provided some general information on the evolution of peace support operations and a brief rationale for including a gender perspective into all aspects of these operations, and expresses the aim, scope, and limitations of the study. Chapter II traces the development of laws and codes within the international system relating to gender and the advancement of women as well as initiatives aimed at their protection during armed conflict. It concludes with an evaluation of the importance of Security Council

¹⁰ *Gender and Peacekeeping in the West African Context Workshop*, 1-3 December 2004, jointly hosted by the KAIPTC and The Conflict Research Unit (CRU) of the Research Department of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, also known as 'Clingendael'.

Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security and its envisioned impact on UN peacekeeping operations.

Chapter III gives an overview of the historical context of the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia and describes the complex roles women and girls played as victims, perpetrators, and peacemakers. Chapter IV focuses on the organizational structure of UNAMSIL and specifically on the Gender Specialist's position in the Human Rights Division. The chapter concludes with a focus on how gender issues are being integrated into mission activities, including some of the mission achievements with regard to gender as well as many of the challenges women and girls continue to face in Sierra Leone.

Chapter V begins by highlighting the gender references in the mission mandate of UNMIL and then proceeds by noting the difference in the organizational structure of the mission as compared with UNAMSIL, with specific reference to the OGA. The programmatic integration of gender into key mission activities is then evaluated. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the coordination between the mission and other stakeholders working in the field.

Chapter VI draws together a number of conclusions and advances some recommendations to Member States, the UN, and Gender Advisors in the field on how the UN might improve the overall efficacy of the OGA and gender mainstreaming strategies employed throughout peace support operations.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN'S CENTRALITY TO PEACE

INTRODUCTION

During the First World War, approximately 5% of casualties were civilians; those numbers rose exponentially in the 1990s to around 90%.¹¹ Contemporary conflicts are marked with extremely high levels of violence, where torture, mutilation, abduction, amputation, execution, systematic rape, and scorched earth tactics are regularly employed. Women and girls are often seen as bearers of cultural identity and subsequently specifically targeted. In addition, traditional responsibilities in and outside of the household often put them in compromising positions during conflict. However, they are not only victims: they are also active participants and have helped sustain wars, engaging in both military and non-military functions. Some women have also been at the forefront of grassroots initiatives to rebuild, repair, and strengthen the economic, social, political, and cultural fabric of their societies. Unfortunately they are usually pushed to the background during official peace processes and peace support operations that follow.¹²

Although conflict breeds instability, poverty, trauma, and many other ills, it also challenges norms and assumptions regarding gender roles and the participation of women in decision-making processes within the household, civil society, and in the political sphere.¹³ This redefinition of social relationships can provide an opportunity for women and girls to capitalize on the skills and even the few gains they may have made during conflict, in order to transform gender roles in a more equitable fashion.¹⁴ The UN has a great responsibility to aid this transformation. In fact, the UN Charter became the first global treaty to emphasize gender equality as a basic human right. In it, the UN sought to “reaffirm faith in the equal rights of men and women”.¹⁵ Despite its relatively progressive view at the time, the UN has and continues to evolve in an attempt to address women’s varied and changing roles in conflict and to meet its own goals and mandates relating to human rights, non-discrimination, and gender equality.

¹¹ United Nations, Report of the Expert of the Secretary-General, Ms. Graca Machel: Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, A/51/306, 26 August 1996, par. 24.

¹² United Nations, Women, Peace and Security: Study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), 2002, par. 10. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/eWPS.pdf> 2002

¹³ United Nations, Women, Peace and Security: Study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), *op. cit.*, par. 11.

¹⁴ Gender is a social construct as opposed to sex, which is biological. Gender roles, responsibilities, opportunities, needs, and constraints vary between women, men, girls, and boys. These differences are observed across cultures and can change over time and in different situations. Importantly, gender roles are learned, therefore, can be changed.

¹⁵ United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, 25 June 1945, Preamble (2). <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/>

THE ROAD TO RESOLUTION 1325

During the first three decades of the UN's existence, gender related initiatives were concentrated on the codification of women's legal and civil rights, formulating International Humanitarian Law (IHL),¹⁶ and the gathering of data and publication of various studies to determine the status of women and girls around the world. Other related work centered on women's roles in economic and social development and increasing access to health and education for girls. However, by the 1970s it was becoming apparent that legal mechanisms alone were not enough to ensure the protection or rights of women and girls in both conflict and non-conflict situations. Moreover, the idea that women may have meaningful contributions to make in the areas of UN peace operations was not yet prominent at policy or decision-making levels.

This eventually led the UN to move away from the formulation of more codes and laws, towards the development of specific strategies to support and enforce the ones that were already in place. Significantly, NGOs, civil society organizations, and ordinary women and men from around the world were the driving force behind this movement. Women's groups and grassroots organizations began to pressure their national governments as well as the UN to address their problems and concerns, and more importantly to demand that their voices be heard in policy and decision-making processes. The UN listened and acted, declaring 1976-1985, "The United Nations Decade for Women". The following ten years were characterized by the development of specific plans of action for the advancement of women. The process began with the first UN Conference on Women, coinciding with UN International Women's Day, in Mexico City (1975), and continued in Copenhagen (1980), and Nairobi (1985). The idea that there could be no development without the full and equal participation of women emerged as general consensus within the UN system.¹⁷ It was also recognized that the welfare of women is fundamental to the welfare of the communities and societies in which they reside.¹⁸ All of these initiatives, and indeed others, led to the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the General Assembly in 1979, which became the central treaty relating to women's equality with men.¹⁹

The Fourth UN Conference held in Beijing (1995), made significant contributions to the evolution of women in the peace and security realms. Representatives from organizations around the world, including Sierra Leone and Liberia, attended the Beijing Conference. A

¹⁶ IHL refers to the body of laws that are meant to safeguard those individuals whom are not participating in combat during wartime. The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the two Additional Protocols of 1977 are the main instruments of IHL. The rules apply to governments, their national armies, opposition groups, and any other parties to the conflict. Although few references to women and girls are specifically made, the Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocol of 1977 make sexual violence during conflict an international war crime. Other provisions are meant to ensure the safety of all individuals, men, women, and children whom have chosen not to fight. Although the UN does not specifically make laws, it does negotiate treaties and provide a forum to help resolve international disputes and develop global norms.

¹⁷ United Nations Department of Public Information, *Global Gender Agenda and the United Nations*, DPI/1890, February 1997. <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/gender.htm>

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ The treaty entered into force in 1981.

consensus was built around two documents that were negotiated and produced; the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action were adopted by eighty-nine delegations. The Platform for Action includes an entire chapter devoted to women and armed conflict where it recognizes that men, women, boys, and girls experience peace, conflict, and the recovery phases differently. Moreover, it constitutes a comprehensive action plan for the political and social empowerment of women that, if implemented, will be a tremendous force in advancing women's rights. Undoubtedly there has been progress in executing the Platform for Action but there have been difficulties involved as well. Many activists from the global South assert that the liberalization of international trade and increasing globalization has hurt women in their societies while benefiting those in the North. There has also been a decline of donor allocations to the developed world, which has hampered UN implementation plans and programs. Despite these divisions, five years later in June 1990, 2,300 delegates from 178 Member States and more than 1,000 accredited NGOs represented by 2,000 additional delegates attended the UN General Assembly Special Session for Beijing, otherwise known as "Beijing Plus Five".²⁰ Here, commitments to the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action were reaffirmed and participants once again called for the full inclusion of women in and at all levels of decision-making in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN also made major contributions towards the recognition and advancement of women within the UN system. In 1997, ECOSOC prioritized the coordination aspect of gender equality. The ECOSOC-initiated discussions eventually led to the Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, in which gender mainstreaming became a consensually accepted blueprint for including gender in all policies and programs within the UN. It also set benchmarks for determining and assessing accountability and progress. The ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions define gender mainstreaming as:

“The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”²¹

On 31 May 2000, the Lessons Learned Unit of the DPKO organized a seminar on *Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations*. The Namibian Government in Windhoek, Namibia hosted the seminar. The resulting Windhoek Declaration and the Namibian Plan of Action also proved to be a crucial step in leading to the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325. In it, it was asserted that:

²⁰ In addition, there were approximately 1,000 NGO participants attending parallel events for education and the celebration of Beijing Plus Five.

²¹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, A/52/3, Chap IV (4).

“In order to ensure the effectiveness of peace support operations, the principles of gender equality must permeate the entire mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process— from peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building, towards a situation of political stability in which women and men play an equal part in the political, economic and social development of their country.”²²

On 23 October 2000, a week before the adoption of resolution 1325, an Arria formula²³ meeting was convened. Women representatives from NGOs in Guatemala, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Zambia were provided an opportunity to discuss their personal experiences in dealing with the impact of armed conflict on women and girls with Council members. They also voiced the concerns of women’s grassroots organizations dedicated to preventing and resolving conflict and bringing peace, security, and sustainable development to their communities. This meeting was followed the next day by the first ever thematic open session on the topic of women, peace, and security. The session allowed members from all governments to voice their opinions, not just the fifteen that comprise the UN Security Council. Over forty individuals chose to speak, and one by one stood up to reaffirm their belief that both women and men were essential to achieving and maintaining peace and security. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan stated that; “For generations, women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have been instrumental in building bridges rather than walls.”²⁴ It was further stated that if half the population’s skills and commitment to change were ignored, peace would be that much more difficult to attain and sustain. Moreover, the fact that women and girls have become increasingly involved in armed combat ensures that if they are sidelined they have the potential to become a security threat in their own right.

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325

On 31 October 2000, Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security was unanimously adopted. For the first time, the Security Council officially avowed the need to integrate a gender perspective and to ensure women’s participation in all decision-making processes throughout all stages of armed conflict. Drawing upon the UN Charter, numerous resolutions, and the commitment to uphold the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as the outcome document of the twenty-third Special

²²United Nations, The Windhoek Declaration: The Namibia Plan of Action on ‘Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Peace Support Operations’, 31 May 2000, pg 2 (3).

http://www.reliefweb.int/library/GHARKit/FilesFeb2001/windhoek_declaration.htm

²³ The ‘Arria Formula’ was implemented in March 1992 as an informal agreement, which permits the Security Council members to meet with an expert or experts in a specific matter of concern outside of the Council chambers. Traditionally, only delegations, high government officials, and United Nations Officials are permitted to speak at Council meetings; therefore, this arrangement has given the Security Council an opportunity to be briefed on international peace and security matters by representatives of NGOs and others working in the field.

²⁴ Cited from Sabine Hub, *Backgrounder: Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, Liu Institute for Global Issues, April 2004. Additional statements by speakers at the open session can be found at, <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/countrystatements/annan.pdf>

Session of the United Nations General Assembly; the Security Council recognized women's varying roles and disproportional victimization during conflict and the expressed need for the inclusion of women in all aspects and all levels of peace support operations.²⁵

The sheer scope of the resolution is a monumental achievement in that it calls for the active participation of women and the inclusion of gender perspectives in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, decision-making, refugee camps, mine-clearance, sanctions, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Special emphasis is placed on the need for mechanisms to protect women and girls and respect their rights under CEDAW, IHL, and other relevant conventions and resolutions. More importantly, it implicitly recognizes the high degree of change required in the way business is conducted within the UN system; changes in procedure, assessment, delivery, attitudes, and habits.²⁶

Gender mainstreaming necessitates specialized expertise and training and specifically, it requires programmatic integration of gender into all elements of an operational section. Without adequate information and analysis regarding the differential impact of armed conflict on women, men, girls, and boys and their varying roles in peacebuilding, it will be extremely difficult to mainstream gender into mission work. It is therefore vital to develop formal gender-sensitive approaches to monitoring, reporting, and evaluating the political, humanitarian, and human rights aspects of conflict. Progress made should be documented along with the obstacles that remain. The incorporation of gender perspectives into all UN work also requires the development of systems that hold personnel and institutions accountable in achieving the goals and benchmarks that they set. Key aspects of this effort include the collection and dissemination of sex disaggregated data and a compilation of lessons learned from other UN missions and activities. This entails not only interagency but also cross-regional collaboration with a variety of actors. Finally, in order to accomplish these objectives, a sufficient amount of human and economic resources as well as a long-term political commitment are needed to ensure the visibility of women and girls. Resolution 1325 is not simply a mechanism to advance women's rights, but rather a tool in which, if used properly will facilitate a more holistic approach to conflict prevention and resolution and the transition to post-conflict reconstruction and equitable and sustainable development.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

In order to effectively implement gender mainstreaming strategies, they must be employed and coordinated at both the Headquarter and mission levels. Due to budgeting constraints however, the Headquarter Gender Advisor position remained vacant until 2004 when the DPKO Best Practices Unit finally staffed the Senior Gender Advisor

²⁵ Security Council Resolution 1325 specifically draws on resolutions 1261 and 1314 on the theme of Children and Armed Conflict and resolutions 1265 and 1296 on the theme of Civilians and Armed Conflict.

²⁶ United Nations Development Fund for Women, Getting it Right, Doing it Right: Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, New York, NY, October 2004.

post.²⁷ The expectation is that with the fulfillment of this position, the task of gender mainstreaming throughout all peace support operations will become more systematic. However, success continues to be largely dependent on the commitment of sufficient budgetary provisions by Member States. The DPKO Senior Gender Advisor's major duties are to act as the gender focal point for mainstreaming within the department as well as to provide support to the missions. This includes providing training modules that are distributed to Member States and used in pre-deployment training for military and civilian police personnel.²⁸ In addition to ensuring gender mainstreaming policies in the field, DPKO works towards gender equality among the staff of peacekeeping operations. This is a difficult task due to cultural and political obstacles and women continue to represent less than a quarter of the civilian professional staff, and close to none of the civilian police or military personnel.²⁹

Ultimately, all staff members in a mission, particularly senior management and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) are responsible for ensuring gender perspectives are incorporated into their work. It is therefore important that the mission mandate, which determines the nature and scope of activities to be undertaken, explicitly commits to gender equality, affirms the principles of gender mainstreaming and gender balance, and references the various human rights frameworks including CEDAW. It should also highlight the importance of monitoring and reporting on these issues.

There are currently multiple challenges to implementing resolution 1325 in peace support operations. One often overlooked issue is the difficulty some may have in properly conceptualizing such terms as "gender perspective" and "gender mainstreaming". The fact remains that many managers and professional staff are still uncertain as to what relevant gender issues exist in their area of work and how they should integrate these different views into their daily activities.³⁰ In order to provide the crucial support to UN personnel, many integrated missions have adopted an OGA.

The OGA is usually staffed with one Senior Gender Advisor and a limited number of Gender Officers, UN Volunteers, and other support staff. It is important that the OGA be situated in the Office of the SRSG. This enables the Gender Advisor to provide input into policy formulation. There are currently seventeen UN peace operations; ten have Gender Advisors and/or offices.³¹ If well resourced and strategically placed, these offices can provide effective gender mainstreaming guidance to the head of the mission.³²

²⁷ Anna Shotton as Acting Gender Advisor filled this position temporarily, from October 2003 to August 2004. The current Senior Gender Advisor at DPKO is Comfort Lamptey.

²⁸ Department of Peacekeeping Operations Best Practices, *About the Gender Advisory Area*.
<http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbpu/genderadv.aspx>

²⁹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Women, Gender and Peacekeeping*.
<http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/pkindex.html>

³⁰ United Nations, Women, Peace and Security: Report by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), *op. cit.*, par. 237.

³¹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *op. cit.*

³² United Nations, Women, Peace and Security: Report by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), *op. cit.*, par. 254.

The effectiveness of the Gender Advisor depends on a variety of other factors stemming from when she was hired and to what extent she has leverage on how decisions are made.³³ It is often the case that gender posts are filled only after many of the mission plans and priorities have been solidified. It is then the responsibility of the Gender Advisor to fit into those pre-arranged structures and create her work plan within these limits. Many of their programs are therefore subject to the will and commitment of the SRSG, who may or may not be supportive in the promotion of gender mainstreaming objectives.³⁴ Additional obstacles include the limited availability of human and financial resources, both at UN Headquarters and the mission level. Gender Advisors situated in West African peace missions, if not all peace support operations, have encountered enormous hurdles that continually challenge the road to gender mainstreaming and in turn gender equality. Their ability to accomplish their tasks is often dependent on the amount of logistical support they receive, including the very existence of an office, and availability of sufficient staff and adequate resources to implement programs.

Before the creation and arrival of Gender Advisors, missions relied on “gender focal points” that worked on a part-time or *ad hoc* basis, attempting to ensure gender consideration in the missions. These focal points have continued to be utilized in missions with complex, multi-faceted mandates. They are individuals who work in a particular department or agency connected with the mission and act as the point of contact for gender related issues such as recruitment, promotions, employment discrimination, and sexual harassment. However, they are not necessarily gender experts and usually perform other tasks as well.³⁵ Many missions have regular meetings where the gender focal points from the different agencies and the mission come together to discuss problems and to coordinate their work. The duties of people acting as gender focal points are distinctly different to those of a Gender Advisor.³⁶ As with other positions though, limited resources and other barriers make the job extremely challenging.

The chart below³⁷ describes how collaboration among the various components and sections of a mission can help enable the gender mainstreaming process. By realizing the areas in which partnerships can advance gender issues, there can be progress towards a more comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy within peace support operations.

³³ The female pronoun is used for the sake of simplicity, and because women generally hold all gender posts in the missions (though there are a few exceptions).

³⁴ This issue was discussed during the KAIPTC/Clingendael Workshop, *op. cit.*, where the MONUC Gender Advisor stated the overwhelming support she receives from the SRSG, while the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist and UNMIL Gender Advisor expressed concern at the level of support they receive in their missions.

³⁵ Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, *op. cit.*

³⁶ It is also difficult to specifically describe the job functions of Gender Advisors, as the role they play in their missions often varies by situation, context, and person.

³⁷ United Nations Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, *Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations*, July 2004, pp. 25.

Section(s)	Possible Areas of Collaboration
Civilian Police	Collect data on services available to victims of sexual violence and develop a strategy on services for such victims.
Rule of Law	Provide advice on gender equality provisions in comparative constitutions, where a national constitution is being developed. This is typically done in collaboration with, amongst others, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Civilian Police, the Human Rights Unit and national women's organizations.
Personnel	Provide gender-awareness training during induction courses.
Public Information	Develop public relations materials such as brochures or fact sheets for informing the local population on key gender issues (e.g., participation of women in elections); provide media coverage on radio and TV of specific events such as International Women's Day.
Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration (DDR) of former combatants	Use women's networks to identify the number, roles and specific needs of women and girls in armed groups; integrate messages on violence against women into training programs for former combatants; and identify potential constraints to the participation of former female combatants in reintegration programs.
Human Rights	Advise on women's rights issues to be included in human rights training for national police forces; build the capacity of women's organizations to conduct human rights monitoring.
Humanitarian	Advise on incorporating local women's views into the planning, implementation, and monitoring of quick-impact projects (QIPS).

CONCLUSION

The United Nations was developed and conceived as a global instrument of consensus. With regard to gender and the advancement of women, the early years focused on the creation of legal instruments to safeguard women and children during armed contention. However, at the urging of civil society, the UN began to realize that women were not exclusively victims. As with men, women are dynamic individuals capable of creating and sustaining war and can have a detrimental impact on peace prospects if their concerns are not adequately addressed. They are also capable of contributing important information, initiatives, and capacity that if given the opportunity will add to the effectiveness of UN peace support operations and enhance mandate achievement. Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security binds Member States to mainstream gender in all decisions, policies, and programs, at all levels of UN peace support operations with the ultimate goal of gender equality.

Currently, Gender Advisors are placed in missions to help facilitate and prioritize gender issues in many aspects of UN work. Due to limited resources and capacity within the mission, it is often the Gender Advisor's role to decide which priorities and concerns they will undertake at any given time. This may depend on the situation on the ground and the problems facing a particular country. These priorities are also created within certain constraints of time, logistics, and available funds. However, the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, within DPKO is developing into an important vehicle for sharing

information across missions and providing guidance on how mistakes can be avoided in ongoing and future missions. In light of the many limitations, the need for coordination and cooperation on gender issues, especially between the gender experts, focal points, and the variety of international and local actors working on the ground, is one of the most essential and universal lessons noted to date.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN, GIRLS, AND WAR IN SIERRA LEONE AND LIBERIA

INTRODUCTION

The root causes and underlying basis for the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia have many similar elements; historic ties, foreign influences, and struggle for control over natural resources. Additionally, a long history of government mismanagement, political corruption and oppression, mixed with impunity for unaccountable leaders, provided an impetus for both brutal civil wars. They are also endemically poor countries with populations that exhibit low education levels, high unemployment rates, and large percentages who are either internally or externally displaced. Moreover, their geographic contiguity ensures that the peace and stability of one is inextricably linked to the other. During the conflicts in Sierra Leone (1991-2002) and Liberia (1989-1996 and 1999-2003), fighters were known to cross borders to fight as mercenaries in the other's civil war. Even after the arrival of UN peacekeeping forces, it is an extreme understatement to say that life for anyone living within these countries has been difficult. Years of violence left both with decimated infrastructure, institutions, and economic prospects. The societies continue to live with memories of sexual and physical violence, which were commonplace, as was the forced recruitment and abduction of children.³⁸ These hardships are heightened for women and girls who suffered a significant amount of the violence during and after the conflicts and face unequal prospects for integrating themselves into the political, economic, and social life of their post-conflict communities.³⁹

The two countries also have some notable variations that make the civil wars and subsequent UN interventions somewhat dissimilar. While the British government has played an active and prominent role in resolving the conflict in Sierra Leone, there has been a slow and apathetic response to the Liberian conflict in general by the international community.⁴⁰ Furthermore, due to amnesty clauses in the Accra Agreement, there is less attention being paid to issues of reconciliation and justice in Liberia. In contrast, Sierra Leone has undertaken judicial reforms, established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that has recently submitted its final report, and the Special Court for

³⁸ According to reports by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and other organizations, sexual and physical violence is still frequently occurring both in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Women and girls living in refugee or IDP camps are easier targets for those trying to exploit the precarious situation, leaving these women in especially vulnerable states.

³⁹ Although some argue that Liberia has not yet reached the "post-conflict" stage, Disarmament and Demobilization is complete and the main efforts of UNMIL are now geared towards the holding of elections in October 2005.

⁴⁰ The UN and the West were reluctant to intervene, partly due to the fact the UN was already engaged in the first Gulf War from 1990 to 1991. Available forces were limited and resources already stretched thin. Liberia was not seen as vital to Member States' interests so there was little desire to become involved. Furthermore, Liberia was never colonized as Sierra Leone was, although it does have special ties with the United States.

Sierra Leone is trying those who held the greatest responsibility for war crimes and gross human rights abuses. For evaluative purposes, however, there are enough common variables that make a comparison of UN gender policies plausible. Furthermore, Sierra Leone has already held its first democratic elections and transitioned into the resettlement and development phases of its reconstruction efforts. The lessons learned in Sierra Leone, if considered and applied, have the potential to make a positive impact on the sustainable resolution of the conflict in Liberia.

SIERRA LEONE

Like most countries in the West African sub-region, Sierra Leone is a religious and ethnically heterogeneous nation.⁴¹ It became more so when in 1787 about 400 British settlers, 300 freed African slaves, and 100 English peasants established “the province of Freedom”, now the capital, Freetown.⁴² Officially colonized in 1792, Sierra Leone became one of Britain’s first West African protectorates. The descendants of the original black settlers adopted many customs similar to those in the West; this group became known as the Krio and comprises a large percentage of the population today. The Krio were afforded certain privileges over other indigenous groups due to their ability to assimilate into the British lifestyle and culture. This led to struggles within the country by other ethnic groups opposed to British rule and Krio domination.⁴³ Indigenous populations eventually rose up against the colonialists, paving the way for the creation of a constitution and a largely peaceful transition to independence on 27 April 1961.

The Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) led by Sir Milton Margai controlled the country following independence, until his death in May 1962 when his half-brother, Sir Albert Margai succeeded him. Strongly opposed by the All People’s Congress (APC), Margai was prevented from establishing the one-party state he desired and Siaka Stevens of the APC eventually won the closely contested elections in March 1967. Sierra Leone’s multi-party democracy was eventually transformed into a one-party socialist state where Stevens ruled for seventeen years. Deteriorating infrastructure, declining social services, and extreme corruption marked the APC rule. It was under these conditions that Joseph Saidu Momoh, Steven’s chosen successor, was elected in a one-party referendum in 1985.

As the country’s social and economic structures continued to decline, the overwhelming majority of the population suffered. The dire state of the country led it to fall to the bottom of the Human Development Index, which measures a country’s achievement in overall quality of life.⁴⁴ Despite the abundance of natural resources, such as diamonds,

⁴¹ The indigenous population is made up of around twenty different ethnic groups and the religious composition is approximately 60% Muslim, 30% Christian, and the remaining practicing traditional beliefs. U.S. Department of State, *Background Note: Sierra Leone*, Bureau of African Affairs, January 2005. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.html>

⁴² U.S. Department of State, *State Post Report*, Bureau of Administration, 19 January 2004. http://foia.state.gov/MMS/posrpt/pr_view_all.asp?CntryID=130

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ For more information on the Sierra Leone Human Development Report, see http://hdr.undp.org/reports/view_reports.cfm?year=0&country=C206®ion=0&type=0&theme=0

gold, rutile, and bauxite, the state of Sierra Leone continued to worsen. Government corruption, poverty, and increasing foreign debt, coupled with inflation led to a declaration of an economic emergency in 1987. Opposition groups began to form throughout Sierra Leone as well as in neighboring countries. Middle class students, unemployed, and otherwise disenfranchised youth eventually formed the core of the resistance movement against the government and indeed it was these groups that would eventually constitute a majority of the fighting forces on all sides.⁴⁵

Between 1987 and 1988, a number of Sierra Leonean men traveled to Libya to learn the “art of revolution”.⁴⁶ One of these individuals was Foday Saybana Sankoh. It was the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under Sankoh’s command that ignited the civil war in 1991, ahead of the general elections scheduled for the following year. Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) had begun launching attacks against the Doe regime two years earlier in Liberia. Taylor had amassed a large amount of wealth, which he used to support Sankoh and his guerilla movement.⁴⁷ The RUF invaded from their base in Liberia and began attacking villages in eastern Sierra Leone and on the Liberian border and quickly gained notoriety throughout the region for the trail of dead bodies and amputees they left in their wake.

The force strength of the RUF peaked at around 45,000 combatants.⁴⁸ It is estimated that up to 10,000 of those were women or girls who fought with or accompanied the group as “wives”, human shields, messengers, domestics, spies, or slaves.⁴⁹ Many actively chose to join the RUF; however, propaganda tactics, abduction, intimidation, and forced recruitment were commonly employed. While some of the women and girls committed atrocities in their own right,⁵⁰ evidence also suggests that many others regularly attempted to protect abducted women and girls attached to the rebels. Out of the approximately 22,500 child soldiers who served in the RUF, sixty percent are thought to have been girls, many of them abducted.⁵¹ Forced drug use was especially common among these children as it kept them submissive or made them “fearless” and willing to commit deplorable acts of violence.⁵² Rape and other forms of GBV were encouraged by

⁴⁵ For a detailed history of the conflict in Sierra Leone from a youth and resource perspective see, I Abdullah, “Bush Path to destruction: the origin and character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2, 1998, pp. 203-235. Notably however, Abdullah ignores the roles that girls played in the conflict.

⁴⁶ Global Security, *The Revolutionary United Front (RUF)*.

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/ruf.htm>

⁴⁷ Taylor also has connections to Libya and it is believed that this is where he first came into contact with Sankoh.

⁴⁸ Dyan Mazurana and Kristopher Carlson, *From Combat to Community: Women and Girls in Sierra Leone*, Women Waging Peace, January 2004.

<http://womenwagingpeace.net/content/articles/SierraLeoneExecSummary.pdf>

⁴⁹ The African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), *Gender and the Conflict in Sierra Leone*, September/October 1997. <http://www.c-r.org/pubs/occpapers/briefing5.html>

⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch received one report of a woman being manually raped by a female combatant and two cases of females raping men. Cited from UNIFEM, *Gender Profile of the Conflict in Sierra Leone*. http://www.womenwarpeace.org/sierra_leone/sierra_leone.htm

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch, *We’ll Kill You if You Cry: Sexual Violence in the Sierra Leone Conflict*, January 2003. <http://hrw.org/reports/2003/sierraleone/sierleone0103.pdf>

⁵² *Ibid.*

the RUF leadership as a means of punishing, terrorizing, and ultimately, controlling the local populations. Women and girls within the RUF were not exempt from violence either. They remained extremely vulnerable to the brutality that many were trying to avoid by joining the group in the first place. The RUF grew in numbers and in strength as it continued to gain control of the prosperous diamond mining regions in the Kono District, which subsequently led to widespread displacement of individuals living in those areas.

In an attempt to combat the RUF movement, President Momoh doubled the size of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) from 3,000 to nearly 6,000 soldiers.⁵³ He largely drew new recruits from the poor and unemployed who resided in Freetown. With the crumbling economy, Momoh did not have the means to pay them, which led to widespread disaffection throughout the SLA. Regional forces from the Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervened in support of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) and the SLA; together fighting against the RUF. However, less than a year later, in April 1992, the SLA turned against the government and ECOMOG and overthrew APC President Momoh sending him into exile in Guinea.

The military coup led to a new leader in the form of Army Captain, Valentine Strasser, who subsequently formed the National Provision Ruling Council (NPRC), but the RUF continued their attacks and refused to cooperate with the NPRC or ECOMOG. In the end, the NPRC was just as ineffective in fending off the RUF as the previous government. The poor state of the SLA persisted and it soon became unclear who was perpetrating what offenses against the civilian communities. The SLA became known as “sobels”, soldiers by day-rebels by night, due to their tendency to remove their uniforms in the evening in order to pillage the diamond mining areas and rape and loot in the surrounding villages.

As a result of the RUF and SLA attacks, local civilians transformed their traditional hunters, or “Kamajors”⁵⁴ into pro-government militias known as the Civil Defense Forces (CDF). The CDF provided protection for their communities, with women and girls playing integral roles within the forces: they were commanders, fighters, spies, cooks, medics, and even spiritual leaders. These contributions have only recently come to light as the CDF and its communities have been reluctant to acknowledge that girls and women were involved in the traditionally male-dominated hunting societies.⁵⁵ Consequently, females tended to be silent contributors while witnessing numerous atrocities and often suffering brutal sexual violence in the process. The CDF is largely considered a heroic force within Sierra Leone, responsible for protecting civilians from RUF and SLA excesses.⁵⁶ Women and girls have not been afforded the same praise and recognition as their male colleagues.

⁵³ Global Security, *op. cit.*

⁵⁴ Kamajor is a Mende word, meaning ‘hunter’.

⁵⁵ Mazurana et al., *op. cit.*

⁵⁶ Although viewed in a more positive light than other fighting factions, the Kamajors have also been accused of human rights violations. Sam Hinga Norman, previous Minister for Internal Affairs and the National Coordinator for the CDF, has been indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. It is alleged

By early 1995, the security situation had become desperate. The RUF had gained control over much of the country with fighters positioned only miles outside of Freetown. The NPRC was forced to hire hundreds of mercenaries from the private South African security company, Executive Outcomes (EO) and was ultimately successful in driving the RUF further from the city. With the success of EO and the Kamajors, the RUF had been pushed out of the diamond mining regions that funded its activities and was nearing a breaking point, forcing the RUF leadership to finally agree to a ceasefire and peace talks to be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

In February 1995, the UN Secretary-General appointed a Special Envoy, Mr. Berhanu Dinka of Ethiopia to work alongside the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS in coming to a settlement. At this point, it is estimated that 10,000 individuals, many of them civilians, had been killed and countless others disfigured, raped and/or displaced. Due to mounting internal and international pressure, presidential and parliamentary elections were held just days after the Abidjan peace talks began and before an agreement had been reached. After two rounds of voting, Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was sworn in as President.

In November 1996 the RUF and the GoSL signed the Abidjan Accords. The RUF appears to have gained the most by the agreement by attaining political positions in the government, a certain degree of legitimacy, and amnesty for past abuses. Due to the RUF's weakened state, President Kabbah relented to RUF pressure and expelled EO forces from the country. Sankoh, who was given a position in government, also refused the sanctioning of a 720-member UN peacekeeping force. Therefore, when fighting ensued over a leadership disagreement, the government was left with little reliable security beyond the Kamajors and ECOMOG troops.

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), under the command of Major Johnny Paul Koroma, overthrew President Kabbah in May 1997, forcing him and his government into exile in Guinea. This caused banks, schools, government offices, and commercial services to effectively collapse, along with the little that remained of the rule of law and the economy. Instead, rape and looting became the norm.⁵⁷ To compound matters, the AFRC then invited the RUF to join the "government". The UN (and new Special Envoy, Mr. Francis G. Okelo) along with the international community strongly condemned this development and tried to persuade the military junta to allow Kabbah to resume power but not surprisingly they refused. This spurred the UN to impose an oil and arms embargo in 1997 and authorized ECOWAS to ensure its implementation.

Another especially brutal militia group began gaining prominence at this time. It is believed this group; composed mainly of young men and boys, were Koroma supporters. They called themselves "The West Side Boys" and immediately began setting up roadblocks around Masiaka and exacting bribes while generally harassing the population.

that he ordered the CDF to shoot, hack or burn to death men, women, and children suspected of supporting the RUF/Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC).

⁵⁷ Global Security, *op. cit.*

They were also responsible for raping women and girls and looting the communities they entered. This group has been characterized as a gang of bandits who took advantage of a chaotic and lawless situation, rather than a politically motivated fighting force.⁵⁸

In February 1998 ECOMOG troops entered Freetown in order to help restore Kabbah to power. Fighting erupted and thousands of civilians were killed, mutilated or raped. Others were abducted or displaced when the AFRC/RUF rampaged throughout the city before returning to the bush. In the end though, Kabbah was restored to office. He immediately took steps to begin demobilizing the army and the UN subsequently lifted the oil and arms embargos. Additionally, forty-seven individuals were arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death on charges of treason and other abuses of power within the AFRC/RUF government, Foday Sankoh being one of them.⁵⁹ This, however, did not mark the end of the fighting.

In January 1999 an RUF offensive codenamed “Operation No Living Thing”, took both ECOMOG and the GoSL off guard. Using women and children as human shields, the RUF along with Liberian mercenaries entered Freetown in an attempt to retake the city. An estimated 6,000 civilians were killed, including cabinet ministers, journalists, and lawyers who were specifically targeted.⁶⁰ Large portions of the city were burned and nearly 3,000 children were abducted as they tried to flee. Doctors from Medecins Sans Frontiers, an international NGO, treated 1,862 victims of sexual violence.⁶¹ Fifty-five percent were gang raped and 200 were left pregnant.⁶² Many of those previously in jail awaiting the imposition of death sentences were freed, although Sankoh remained in custody. Later the same month ECOMOG was able to successfully push the rebels outside of Freetown yet again but the damage had been done.

This visible humanitarian catastrophe is widely credited as the factor forcing the international community into action. The next month the GoSL and the RUF signed the Lomé Accord, which led to the establishment of UNAMSIL on 22 October 1999.⁶³ The war that displaced over half the pre-war population, left nearly 50,000 dead, 100,000 with amputated limbs or other disfigurements, and witnessed the rape of over a quarter of a million women and girls, was officially declared over by President Kabbah on 18 January 2002.⁶⁴

The end of the war, in many respects, marked the beginning of a new range of problems facing women and girls in Sierra Leone and once again they have had to adapt in order to meet these challenges. The presence of so many disabled and traumatized people has affected their roles within their families and communities. As the traditional caregivers,

⁵⁸ British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News, *Who are the West Side Boys?* 31 August 2000.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/901209.stm>

⁵⁹ Global Security, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ IDP Project, “Sierra Leone Profile”, Global IDP Database, October 2003.

<http://www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/wCountries/Sierra+Leone>

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ As part of the Accord, Sankoh was given the Vice Presidency position.

⁶⁴ UNIFEM, *Gender Profile of the Conflict in Sierra Leone, op. cit.*

they bear the majority of the burden of caring for those damaged mentally and physically by the violence. There are also many health consequences of the war that are gender specific. For instance, Sierra Leonean women have the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the world.⁶⁵ This is at least partially due to the high number of forced marriages, where young girls often had several children before their bodies had properly matured. Furthermore, the rape that so many have endured over the years has not only left emotional scars but physical ones as well. The sexual assaults perpetrated by the various factions were characterized by extreme brutality. The man, or in many cases men who attacked women and girls, often left them with severe genital tearing. This condition is referred to as ‘fistula’ and it is estimated that up to 5,000 Sierra Leonean women currently suffer from this disability.⁶⁶ It is also common for HIV/AIDS to increase during military and peacekeeping operations as the high incidence of sexual violence combined with the common occurrence of “survival sex”, or prostitution, makes women and girls especially vulnerable. Another factor that has contributed to the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases is the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which is common in Sierra Leone.⁶⁷ All of these issues are compounded by extremely high poverty levels and limited access to health, psychosocial counseling, and educational and employment opportunities.

Most violence directed at women and girls, including rape, were committed by the RUF, AFRC, and West Side Boys. They were indiscriminating with their victims: the women came from all socioeconomic backgrounds, age groups, and marital statuses, although virgins were preferred. Sexual violence proved to be an effective political and military strategy, used as a means of dominating and degrading not only the victim, but also their community. By doing so they were successfully able to break social bonds that held communities together. Husbands and fathers watched their wives and daughters being raped; boys assaulted pregnant and nursing women, some old enough to be their mothers or grandmothers.

Women were not only victims, but also greatly contributed to the sustenance and resilience of the war in Sierra Leone. Thousands of women and girls were abducted by fighting factions and forced into sexual slavery; again the RUF, AFRC, and West Side Boys committing most of the violations. However, there were documented cases of abuse by the SLA, CDF, and ECOMOG and UNAMSIL peacekeepers as well.⁶⁸ In addition to sexual servitude, girls and women were domestics, cooks, “wives”, fighters, spies, human shields, and messengers. Though largely victims, thousands undoubtedly joined various fighting forces voluntarily and committed violence against other factions, civilians, and others like them.

⁶⁵ Save the Children, “Mother’s Index”, *State of the World’s Mothers*, 2003.
<http://www.savethechildren.org/sowm2003/index.shtml>

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ World Health Organization, *Female Genital Mutilation: Fact Sheet 241*, June 2000.
<http://www.who.int/inf-fs/en/fact241.html>

⁶⁸ Human Rights Watch, *op. cit.*, par. 4-5.

LIBERIA

Liberia was “founded” in 1821 by a group of freed American slaves sponsored by the American Colonization Society (ACS). This group of settlers became known as the Americo-Liberians and with the aid of large European and American loans, began early on to exert political and economic dominance over the indigenous populations. This resulted in the locals instigating numerous attacks on the settlers, but despite the conflicts between the Americo-Liberian and indigenous groups, more settlers flocked to the territory. By 1938, most of the settlements combined to form one, which inhabited Monrovia and consisted of up to 20,000 individuals. The descendants of these Americo-Liberian settlers make up around 5% of the Liberian population today.⁶⁹

Following independence in 1847, the Republic of Liberia developed into a one-party state controlled by the privileged Americo-Liberian minority. This changed on 12 April 1980 when the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) entered the political arena. Under the command of Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe, an indigenous Krahn, junior officers ousted and killed President William Tolbert in a coup. It was a popular rebellion that was widely accepted as the emergence of the oppressed local majority into the political sphere.

Doe later ordered the public execution of more than a dozen members of Tolbert’s cabinet. Under his leadership the government and the AFL effectively ended the political Americo-Liberian leadership for the time being. Doe suspended the constitution and assumed full executive and legislative powers. The AFL, technically the official national army through most of the conflict, would eventually be responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Liberia’s history. This essentially relegated them in the eyes of most Liberians to nothing more than another fighting faction. The relative calm of Liberia began to dissolve as the political, social, and economic institutions deteriorated under Doe’s ten-year rule, which was characterized by corruption, nepotism, mismanagement, and oppression.

By 1984, Doe was coming under intense political pressure from Washington and other creditors to allow the return of opposition parties and to hold free and fair elections. Doe eventually conceded and elections were held on 15 October 1985. Unsurprisingly though, they were characterized by widespread fraud and rigging that resulted in Doe being “elected” for another term. There was an increase in human rights abuses and government corruption after the elections in an attempt to contain protests and prevent the formation of opposition groups, but instead this only served to increase divisions throughout the country.⁷⁰

The flawed elections led, in part, to the explosion of violence on 12 November 1985, when a former ally of Samuel Doe, General Thomas Quiwonkpa, an indigenous Gio, led an invasion from Sierra Leone in an attempt to remove Doe from power. However, President Doe was forewarned and was able to avoid capture and kill Quiwonkpa and his

⁶⁹ U.S. Department of State, *Founding of Liberia*. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/dwe/16337.htm>

⁷⁰ Global Security, *Liberia-Civil War*. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1985.htm>

colleagues. Doe and the AFL, in retaliation led attacks against the Gio and Mano tribes in Nimba County, killing and displacing thousands.

On 24 December 1989, Taylor spearheaded an insurgent movement, the NPFL to overthrow the Government of President Samuel Doe. Predictably, most of the fighters were drawn from the Gio and Mano ethnic groups who had been heavily persecuted over the years. The NPFL made rapid military gains and by the middle of June 1990 were fighting in the vicinity of the Liberian capital, Monrovia. The combatants respected neither life nor property and killed Liberian nationals and foreigners indiscriminately. Civilians were particularly targeted in the conflict. They were murdered in the thousands and in the most brutal manner. Other atrocities included massacres, rapes, tortures, kidnappings, and a number of political assassinations. The result was a massive refugee problem as thousands fled to neighboring countries. This weakened their claims of liberation as it soon became apparent that the group was fighting for political and economic power more than for the ideology they espoused.

On 7 August 1990, with all semblance of government having disappeared in Liberia, ECOWAS took a decision to send a military force to intervene in the conflict. Troops were contributed by Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. The ECOMOG Force was placed under the command of a Ghanaian general, while the bulk of the land and naval forces and the entire air force was contributed by Nigeria. ECOMOG was given the mandate to restore law and order in Liberia, to create an environment that will allow humanitarian operations, and to secure a peaceful atmosphere, which will facilitate cease-fire negotiations.⁷¹

As the fighting raged on, three distinct parties to the conflict emerged, Doe and forces loyal to him, Charles Taylor and the NPFL, and Prince Yormie Johnson and his Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL). Johnson was originally associated with the NPFL but split when he and Taylor had a dispute over policy issues.

On 9 September 1990, President Doe ventured out of his besieged residence at the Executive Mansion, in an attempt to pay an official visit to General Quainoo, head of ECOMOG. Instead, he was captured by Prince Yormie Johnson's INPFL forces and later tortured and murdered. His execution was followed by widespread chaos, extreme violence, and a spate of summary executions. Finally, in December 1990 the three major forces (the AFL, NPFL, and the INPFL) met in Banjul, Gambia, agreeing to constitute an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU).⁷² Charles Taylor and the NPFL, upset over the fact that ECOMOG had kept NPFL forces out of Monrovia and undermined their power, eventually refused to cooperate. As a result, in January 1991 Taylor and the NPFL set up their own government, located in Gbarnga, which they called National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly (NPRA).

⁷¹ Mitikishie Maxwell Khobe, The evolution and conduct of ECOMOG operations in West Africa, in Mark Malan (ed.) *Boundaries of Peace Support Operations: The African Dimension*, ISS Monograph No. 44, February 2000.

⁷² For a more in-depth analysis of the various peace agreements and contributing factors to their failure, see Festus B Aboagye, *ECOMOG: A Sub-Regional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management and Peacekeeping in Liberia*, Accra, Sedco Publishing, 1999.

Around the same time in June 1991 another faction entered the conflict. The former AFL and Doe supporters who fled to Sierra Leone and Guinea established the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO). While ULIMO remained strong, the INPFL's power quickly began to wane due to internal disputes that arose out of concern for their level of co-operation with the Transitional Government, ECOMOG, and the NPFL.⁷³ By late 1992, the INPFL had formally disbanded and Prince Yormie Johnson fled to Nigeria. However, the fighting continued and ULIMO, the NPFL, and the IGNU's military wing, the AFL, were accused of massacring civilians.

On 19 July 1997, Liberians went into an electoral process under the auspices of ECOWAS, pursuant to the Abuja Accords.⁷⁴ Of a population of at least 2.5 million, only 750,000 were registered to vote. Taylor emerged overwhelmingly victorious and the UN declared the elections, "free and fair". However, Taylor had controlled most of the country for a number of years and insufficient time had elapsed for the formation of other strong political parties. Therefore, even though it is true that most Liberians who voted cast their ballot in favor of Taylor, it is also true that they did so out of fear that if he did not win he would continue to fight.⁷⁵ Although defeated, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the world's first female Finance Minister in 1979, ran a fairly competitive race against Taylor. The Liberian Women's Initiative (LWI) also played a key role in the collection of arms, following the elections.

The elections were intended to have produced a government that would guarantee the safety and security of the existence of political parties in particular and the Liberian people in general. Instead, Taylor proceeded to marginalize the national army, the AFL, because he questioned their loyalty. Members of the northern Krahn ethnicity, against whom Taylor had been fighting since 1989, dominated the AFL and many were recruited under the late President Samuel Doe. Instead of unifying and professionalizing the security sector, Taylor created a network of competing security units and militias, headed by longstanding supporters, many of whom had been child soldiers who fought with him when he was a rebel leader. Most prominent among these was the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), headed by Taylor's son, "Chucky". The ATU specifically targeted women and girls at checkpoints and are reported to have regularly raped them, some as young as twelve. Those that resisted, were beaten, kicked, stabbed, and threatened with reprisals.⁷⁶

⁷³ In 1994 ULIMO effectively split in two along ethnic lines. ULIMO-J became the Krahn dominated faction led by General Roosevelt Johnson, while ULIMO-K, led by Alhaji Kromah, was overwhelmingly Muslim/Mandingo. While ULIMO-K was relatively united under Kromah, ULIMO-J was sidelined by emerging authorities and remained internally fractious and disbanded after the 1997 disarmament program following the Abuja Accord.

⁷⁴ After 13 failed peace accords, the Abuja Accords were signed in September 1995. Under the supervision of ECOWAS, the Abuja Accords created the Liberian Council of State, which composed of seven warring factions.

⁷⁵ A common pro-Taylor slogan used in the July 1997 elections was, "He killed my ma, he killed my pa. I'll vote for him anyway."

⁷⁶ Global Security, *Liberia-Civil War*, *op. cit.*

Others groups were simply informally organized units of boys led by a slightly older boy who had been with Taylor during his days in the bush.⁷⁷

Charles Taylor aggravated already weak social structures by ensuring that the judiciary and legislative branches remained fragile in order to consolidate his power. He labeled human rights organizations undemocratic and punished them accordingly as traitors to the state. The press was also subjected to censorship by his government and grassroots organizations and average people faced intimidation, arrest, jail time, and even torture for anything that could potentially be viewed as opposing the government.⁷⁸ There were also a large number of “disappearances” of prominent Taylor critics.⁷⁹ In order to further disrupt the social fabric of Liberian society and quash potential opposition, several “civil society” organizations were created under the auspices of the NPFL with the explicit purpose of disseminating propaganda. The existence of these organizations prevented efforts to bring civil society together as one unified force against Charles Taylor or to work toward any particular goal. With “token” organizations undermining the work of other human rights and peacebuilding groups, the democratization process was brought to a standstill.

While Liberians experienced little true peace and security under Taylor’s presidency, the second war began in earnest in 2001, after the emergence of Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), which was created from remnants of die-hard anti-Taylor factions. The core of LURD was made up of ex-ULIMO fighters, many who had disarmed just before the 1997 elections. Finding Taylor’s misrule and predatory violence insufferable, fighters regrouped in the forest regions of Guinea, bordering Liberia, where they were joined by other groups of disgruntled Liberians.

The conflict soon assumed truly regional dimensions, with the government of Guinea providing considerable logistical and some military support to LURD rebels who operated from Guinean territory. It also allowed LURD to use refugee camps in Guinea as a base from which to recruit.⁸⁰ Moreover, as efforts continued to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone, hundreds of former fighters in Sierra Leone’s civil war crossed into Liberia to fight as mercenaries either for the Liberian government or for LURD. Recognizing the regional element, the Mano River Union Women Peace Network (MARWOPNET), founded by women from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, put forth an initiative to mediate the conflict between Guinea and Liberia and sent delegations to the heads of states in the region to appeal for end to the conflict while simultaneously issuing statements urging ECOWAS and the UN to intervene.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Amnesty International, *Liberia’ Killings, Torture and Rape Continue in Lofa County*, WIRE, 1 August 2001. <http://web.amnesty.org/library/eng-lbr/reports>

⁷⁸ International Peace Academy, *Civil Society Dialogue Report: Civil Society Perspectives from the Mano River Union*. http://www.ipacademy.org/PDF_Reports/MANO_RIVER_UNION.pdf#search='peacebuilding%20support%20office%20Liberia

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1999*. <http://hrw.org/worldreport99/africa/liberia/html>

⁸⁰ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2003*. <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/africa7.html>

⁸¹ MARWOPNET’s efforts were commended by the United Nations within resolution 1408.

ECOWAS-sponsored peace talks eventually began on 4 June 2003 in Accra, Ghana. As the peace talks opened, the Special Prosecutor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, David Crane, unsealed the indictment against President Charles Taylor for war crimes committed during Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war. Fearing his possible arrest, President Taylor hurriedly left the peace conference and returned to Monrovia. Meanwhile, the LURD saw the indictment as a license to attack Monrovia, hoping to force him out of power. LURD reached the outskirts of the capital on 5 June 2003 – the day after the indictment of Charles Taylor. The dramatic and quick-moving advance of LURD exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation in Monrovia.

As the conflict heightened in Liberia, an ECOWAS mediation team arrived in the capital on 10 June 2003 to speak to President Taylor about ways forward for the peace process. A ceasefire agreement was finally negotiated on 17 June, which called for the formation of a transitional government within 30 days. It also stipulated President Taylor's exclusion from the new government. However, the ceasefire agreement held for less than a week before the launch of a second attack brought rebels back into Monrovia's industrial area, Bushrod Island, where many civilians were killed and others trapped with no food or water.

Peace talks continued in Accra and in order to ensure the inclusion of women and gender sensitivity during the negotiations and eventual peace operation, representatives from Liberian women's organizations met at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Accra to analyze the peace agreement and strategize on how to include gender in the implementation of the accords. At one point the peace talks nearly broke down when LURD threatened to walk out, but representatives from the Women in Peace-Building Network (WiPNET) barricaded the doors by sitting in front of them and demanding the parties stay inside until they reached an agreement. This highly symbolic and public gesture was credited for putting pressure on the factions to reach an understanding.

Recognizing his imminent defeat, President Taylor handed over power to Vice-President Moses Blah on 11 August 2003 and, at the invitation of the President of Nigeria, left Liberia for Calabar, Nigeria on 18 August 2003. The various Liberian groups finally signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Accra after more than two months of ECOWAS-brokered negotiations. By this time, nearly one million Liberians, or a third of the population, remained displaced.⁸² The most vulnerable women, refugees and the internally displaced were most likely to fall victim to abuses due to poor conditions in overcrowded IDP camps, where food and other necessities had to be found outside of the camps.⁸³ The situation was further complicated by the instability in Côte d'Ivoire as an influx of Ivorian refugees has overwhelmed an already unstable situation.⁸⁴

⁸² United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on Liberia, S/2003/875, 11 September 2003.

⁸³ Human Rights Watch, *Liberia: Greater Protection Required for Civilians Still at Risk*, Briefing Paper. <http://hrw.org/press/2003/09/liberia090903bp.htm>

⁸⁴ UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) reported that in July 2003, humanitarian workers were prohibited access to nearly seventy percent of the Liberian refugee and IDP populations within camps.

Human Rights violations in Liberia's civil war, like those in Sierra Leone, were widely perpetrated. Terrorizing civilians, especially women and children, became a well-known and effective strategy for demoralizing the opposing side. Rape and sexual violence was and remains pervasive. Countless women and girls not only live with the scars and memories of war, but also in many cases are shamed or alienated by family and community members when discovered to be a victim. Many are even considered unmarriageable according to cultural norms. Actors from all sides, including the government, government-backed militia groups such as the ATU, and rebel groups like LURD and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL)⁸⁵ have perpetrated abuses. It is no secret that in Liberia many of these abuses are still occurring and because of amnesty clauses in the Accra Agreement, many perpetrators of the worst crimes have seemingly been rewarded with impunity. Furthermore, the fact that the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) is largely made-up of ex-fighters and faction leaders, which obviously prevents them from requesting a Special International Court, like that in Sierra Leone.

Girls and women in Liberia were recruited into government forces in order to provide services, sexual favours, or to act as spies or soldiers. Many joined voluntarily at the height of the conflict in order to receive food rations when food shortages and hunger were widespread.⁸⁶ The LURD promised to end the recruitment of child soldiers but many boys and some girls were still found in their ranks at the end of the war. This is true for other rebel groups and fighting factions as well. It is very difficult to estimate the number of girls attached to the various factions during the war, as numbers have not been fully disclosed by commanders. However, the large number of women and girls that disarmed during the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DDRR) process is telling of the numbers who were active in the conflict.⁸⁷ Many of these women joined the ranks of fighting forces for protection and in order to prevent being raped by other groups.

CONCLUSION

Women as traditional caretakers of the community and household have many responsibilities during wartime situations, which can support the escalation or prolonging of conflict.⁸⁸ Furthermore, women and girls perform many essential tasks inside and outside of the home including; fieldwork, care taking, and promoting community peace, which often puts them in more exposed situations during conflicts. In many ways this

⁸⁵ The Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) was another rebel group, which appeared in early 2003 and perpetuated many abuses. As one of the main fighting factions at the end of the war they were party to the Accra Agreement and hold positions of power together with LURD within the National Transitional Government to this day.

⁸⁶ This Day, *Gender and Poverty: Views from West Africa*, Lagos, July 2003.
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200307070359.html>

⁸⁷ Upon completion of phase three of the DDRR program, 102,193 individuals disarmed and out of those, 22,020 were women and 2,517 were girls.

⁸⁸ Indirect support can include spreading discriminatory propaganda, raising children to hate the "enemy", providing moral encouragement to soldiers etc. More direct measure of support includes the active participation of women and girls as combatants or caretakers for those who are fighting.

also makes them perfect targets for criminal fighting factions attempting to destroy the enemy by disrupting and destabilizing whole communities. War is no longer played out solely on the battlefield. It has arrived at the doorsteps of families and confronted their homes and communities, with women and girls bearing much of the burden. The atrocities committed in Sierra Leone and Liberia are no different. As individuals who provided for, catered to, and fought alongside Sierra Leonean and Liberian men, women were oppressed before the war, suffered through it, and continue to be marginalized today.

It has already been demonstrated that the UN has the potential to improve the status of women in most societies but countries in the post-conflict transitional stage are especially ripe for change. Alternatively, the UN may inadvertently reinforce or perpetuate old inequalities or grievances within a country. Therefore, they have an immense responsibility to uphold gender mainstreaming while undertaking not only their explicitly mandated tasks but also abiding by their more implicitly stated goals relating to human rights and non discrimination. The passage of resolution 1325 pushes the issue of gender parity to the forefront of UN peacekeeping missions. However, with UNAMSIL currently in its drawdown phase, the extent to which it has the ability to systematically institutionalize measures aimed at enhancing the participation and capacity of local women in continuing the rebuilding process in their communities remains limited. A permanent government has been installed and the institution-building process is well on its way in Sierra Leone.

Although these are positive steps in many regards, they also mean that the authority of the UN is increasingly limited and that it is the national government that must be primarily relied upon to guarantee that the needs of women and girls are being met and their rights respected - whether or not there is sufficient capacity, resources, and political will to accomplish this task. This does not imply that the UN is completely out of the picture or devoid of responsibility. Rather, the UN agencies, together with the INGOs remaining in Sierra Leone need to accept responsibility for ensuring proper gender consideration in their individual programs, while also monitoring and supporting local NGO and governmental initiatives that still have far-reaching impact on the lives of the local population.

UNMIL, on the other hand, remains the most prominent agency in Liberia. This provides the mission a greater opportunity to implement and coordinate UN programs specifically geared towards promoting gender equality. These may include effective rehabilitation and skills training programs of survivors of sexual violence and women in general; supporting the full and equal participation of women in the political process; and reforming the judiciary, corrections, and other state-run institutions in a more equitable fashion. Furthermore, UNMIL has the advantage of learning from the experiences of UNAMSIL. Women have valuable contributions to make and information and expertise to provide.⁸⁹ Although for years suppressed by corrupt and unaccountable leaders, the

⁸⁹ Consultations with local women and women's groups are essential. For instance, the UN and other international organizations have traditionally relied on men for information on the whereabouts of small arms and light weapons during the final moping up phases of a disarmament program. However, the

voice of civil society within each of these countries is slowly being heard. Women, among these people, are striving to gain access to the structures and people in power that continue to dictate their lives. With proper acknowledgment, encouragement, and support from the UN and other international actors there remain many opportunities for rebuilding Sierra Leone and Liberia in a more holistic, fair, and efficient manner. This would increase the likelihood of sustainable peace and development in both countries and throughout the sub-region.

importance of women in this area is increasingly being realized as they often know the locations of stashed weapons and, because of their heavy victimization, often have greater incentives to provide information only if asked.

CHAPTER IV

PEACEKEEPING PRE-RESOLUTION 1325: THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

INTRODUCTION

Framework-substantive peace agreements⁹⁰ are usually comprehensive in nature and generally capture a consensus on points of departure, institutional frameworks to handle the transition from a conflict situation into a post-conflict situation, and schedules for implementing the agreement (that is disarmament, demobilization or encampment, reintegration and electioneering processes). They signal an end to the conflict and outline a framework for reconstructing political, legal, economic, and social institutions within the country.

Peace agreements have traditionally been framed in gender-neutral language under the assumption that the rules and regulations apply to everyone, despite how differently women, men, boys, and girls experience both conflict and recovery. At best, this ignores gender-specific issues, and can potentially further institutionalize the marginalization of certain groups. During the Lomé talks only two women were present, and only one specific (and sweeping) reference was made to women in the peace agreement: *“Given that women have been particularly victimized during the war, special attention shall be accorded to their needs and potentials in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes, to enable them to play a central role in the moral, physical and social reconstruction of Sierra Leone.”*⁹¹

On 22 October 1999, the UN terminated the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL)⁹² and authorized the establishment of UNAMSIL to assist with the implementation of the Lomé Accord. The following year, ECOMOG forces were “re-hatted” as UN peacekeepers, and UNAMSIL’s mission mandate was extended to cover a number of tasks including: assisting the government with implementing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs for ex-combatants; facilitating the free flow of goods, people, and humanitarian assistance along specified thoroughfares; supporting human rights and civil affairs officers; and providing electoral support.⁹³ However, shortly after the signing of the Lomé Accord, the RUF began violating the agreement,

⁹⁰ This term is part of a classification use by Christine Chinkin, in “Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender Equality and Ensuring Participation of Women” for a United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) Expert Group Meeting, EGM/PEACE/2003/BP.1, 31 October 2003.

⁹¹ Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Lomé Peace Accords, July 1999.
<http://www.sierra-leone.org/lomeaccord.html>

⁹² UNOMSIL was established in July 1998 to monitor the military and security situation in Sierra Leone, as well as the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants. Under the protection of ECOMOG, UNOMSIL forces documented numerous atrocities committed against civilians by the RUF and AFRC.

⁹³ To view the UNAMSIL mandate in its entirety, see
<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamsil/mandate.html>

most notably by taking UNAMSIL peacekeepers hostage and capturing their arms and ammunition supplies. On 8 May 2000, protesters demonstrating outside Sankoh's residence against the violations were fired upon by the RUF and at least twenty were killed.⁹⁴ These abuses revoked certain amnesty clauses in the peace agreement; and as a result, Sankoh and other RUF members were arrested and stripped of their positions in government to be later tried by the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL).⁹⁵

Due to these events, a new ceasefire agreement was signed in November 2000, the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement (Abuja I). Fighting persisted however, and the DDR program was halted until a second agreement, the Abuja Ceasefire Review Agreement (Abuja II), was signed in May 2001. With the resumption of the DDR program, hostilities were significantly reduced and the British withdrew a 200 man military contingent that had been in the country since the summer of 2000 leaving behind a team to help with retraining the national army.⁹⁶ President Kabbah declared the war officially over on 18 January 2002. At its peak, UNAMSIL had an authorized strength of 17,500 military personnel and 260 military observers.⁹⁷ Troops were originally scheduled to leave by the end of 2004, however, fears that violence would break out after the peacekeepers departed, prompted UNAMSIL to extend the mission to, at a minimum, the end of June 2005.⁹⁸ These concerns are also linked to possible instability and further insecurity in Liberia.⁹⁹

Most of the UNAMSIL mission components are standard to integrated UN peacekeeping operations worldwide. However, the Child Protection Advisor (CPA), positioned in the Human Rights Section holds a new focus of attention on children. This post was advocated for in the Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (July 2000).¹⁰⁰ The development of the CPA within the mission can be traced back to the Lomé peace agreement, where it was agreed by all sides that children experienced conflict differently and should be specifically protected. Unfortunately, a specific focus on gender did not arise until 2003, three years after the passage of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, when an *ad hoc* Gender Specialist post was created within the Human Rights Section. Her duties are to oversee the incorporation of gender issues into human rights training, education, and monitoring programs.

⁹⁴ U.S. Department of State, *State Post Reports*, 19 January 2004.
http://foia.state.gov/MMS/postrpt/pr_view_all.asp?CntryID=130

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ The British International Military Advisory and Assistance Team (IMATT) trainers are committed to security sector training and reform in Sierra Leone until 2010. Additionally, the British Government has vowed to intervene within 48-72 hours, should serious renewed fighting break out.

⁹⁷ After resolution 1270, establishing UNAMSIL, the mission mandate and has been revised and extended three times, through Security Council resolutions 1289, 1299, and 1346.

⁹⁸ UNAMSIL is currently maintaining a residual force of 3,500 soldiers and military observers.

⁹⁹ International Crisis Group, *Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States*, Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, 8 December 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Mark Malan, Phenyio Rakate, and Angela McIntyre, *Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone: UNAMISL Hits the Home Straight*, Institute for Security Studies, Monograph N°68, 2002.
<http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No68/Chap4.html>

While UNAMSIL has taken the lead in the peacekeeping, and many reconstruction, and peacebuilding efforts, they are working in conjunction with other UN agencies, as well as with international and local NGOs, including local women's groups. In collaboration with the United Nations Country Team and other partners, UNAMSIL has continued to promote women's rights in Sierra Leone. However, due to the complex nature of multidimensional peace support operations it is often difficult to recognize which agency, program, or fund is responsible for which duties and how to effectively coordinate their tasks in a way that ensures the incorporation of gender issues across all mission components. This is evident in that many of those doing gender issues within a particular agency are not aware of what is being done in other areas and especially true in the case of UNAMSIL where gender mainstreaming was never systematically incorporated into mission activities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF UNAMSIL

The organizational structure of UNAMSIL is complex, consisting of various components with differing mandates, size, and available resources. The mission is headed by SRSG, Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago of Tanzania. As a representative of the United Nations, Mr. Mwakawago has the responsibility to translate political and strategic guidance into plans, orders, and functions that facilitate and lead to the success of the mission. The SRSG with the help of a Deputy SRSG (or Executive Director) usually oversee seven other components within the mission. The Office of the SRSG is composed of a Special Assistant, Legal Affairs, and Political and Civil Affairs Section. The other sections include: the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO/DOA), the Civilian Police (CIVPOL) Commissioner, the Force Commander (FC), Humanitarian Affairs Coordination, Electoral Division, Public Information Division, and Human Rights Division. Each section has a specific responsibility to uphold gender mainstreaming policies within their plans and programs according to resolution 1325, which passed one year after the establishment of the UNAMSIL mandate. However, lacking adequate expertise, monitoring or reporting mechanisms, the extent to which the provisions of this resolution have been implemented in highly questionable.

Political and Civil Affairs

The Political and Civil Affairs Section in UNAMSIL is situated in the Office of the SRSG and provides significant input into policy formulation for the mission. It also has acted as a liaison between the RUF, CDF, and the GoSL in implementing the Lomé Accords while working with the government to plan and establish new political institutions under the transitional government, including the TRC and the SCSL. These activities have guided the inclusiveness of democratic, social, economic, and political institutions throughout the country.

The Political Affairs Department is the principal unit initiating peacemaking and mediation efforts as well as supporting the negotiation of peace agreements amongst the various parties. Political and Civil Affairs Officers are also responsible for conducting the fact-finding and assessment missions in the country, which establish or lead to revisions

in UN peacekeeping operations. This task necessitates the collection and evaluation of information, with the objective of documenting trends throughout time.¹⁰¹ In addition to collaborating with other UN entities, Military Observers (MILOBS), and international NGOs, it is important to work with a variety of host country nationals including women. This will not only help to identify ways in which to support women's participation in the peace process and implementation of provisions within the peace agreement, but will also help to identify key gender issues affecting the host country and the entire sub-region. This information can then be used in monitoring the security situation, conducting political analysis, and planning for new specific and tailored operational phases of the mission.

Sexual and gender-based violence, its prevalence, and effects throughout the country, is an important area of focus. However, a report by the Physicians for Human Rights (supported by UNAMSIL)¹⁰² in 2002 which detailed widespread abuse of IDP's throughout Sierra Leone, seems to be one of the few documents which records the situation of sexual and gender based violence in the country. Another report by Refugees International, calls on UNAMSIL to improve its support for women's rights and protection in Sierra Leone. According to the report, UNAMSIL has not responded adequately to practices that are harmful to women nor has it tailored responses in reaction to the situation on the ground or met with local women's groups while planning for the withdrawal of the mission.¹⁰³

Public Information Section

The objective of the Public Information Section is to help facilitate the spreading of information throughout the country. While initially focusing on the DDR process, the Public Information Section soon concentrated on preparing for democratic elections through supporting the National Elections Commission (NEC). This was enabled through the UNAMSIL Radio¹⁰⁴, which reached a majority of the population and dispersed information surrounding the elections, political parties, candidates and the results, as they were available.¹⁰⁵ Although radio was quite effective, other means were also used to spread information to a largely illiterate population, including posters, plays, and cartoonist drawings. The Public Information Section has demonstrated its ability to address many crosscutting issues in a culturally appropriate and cost effective manner. For instance, the Section has worked with local women's groups to organize and put on plays dealing with reconciliation, the DDR process, and the need for community

¹⁰¹ Malan et al., *op. cit.*

¹⁰² Physicians for Human Rights, *War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone: A Population-Based Assessment*, 2002. http://www.phrusa.org/research/sierra_leone/report.html

¹⁰³ Sarah Martin and Cliff Bernath, *Sierra Leone: Promotion of Human Rights and Protection for Women Still Required*, Refugees International, 18 March 2004.

http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Sierra_Leone/RIUNAMSIL2004.html

¹⁰⁴ Representatives from the women's network have been interviewed on Radio UNAMSIL and featured on the television programme 'Kapu Sens'.

¹⁰⁵ To help with civil society involvement in the elections, a radio station was created called 'Elections Watch', where candidates were given airtime to promote their platform.

acceptance of ex-fighters, as well as sensitizing communities about the elections and overall political process.

While this section has demonstrated considerable success in reaching areas outside of the cities and including women and gender perspectives into its work, it has also been argued that these initiatives were separate and not necessarily institutionalized within the section. Also, the section did not initially exist with the creation of the mission and has needed to define its scope and areas of focus after that of the other sections. The overall effectiveness in recognizing and promoting gender issues was dependant upon the individual officers, which is highly subject to variation.¹⁰⁶

The Human Rights Section

The Human Rights Section within UNAMSIL has implemented a three-fold approach to improving respect for human rights. It monitors and reports on violations of human rights and international humanitarian law; conducts training for elements of the Sierra Leonean Police (SLP), the SLA, and civil society organizations; and conducts in-house training for peacekeepers and UN CIVPOL officers. The Section also provides technical assistance in building the capacity of national institutions that promote respect for the rule of law, such as the TRC. This includes visits to police stations, prisons and courts, with a special focus on the treatment of women and girls.¹⁰⁷

By 2003, UNAMSIL had completed the first round of training for members of the SLP in charge of the Family Support Units (FSUs). The officers in the FSUs have a mandate to investigate and prosecute offenses against those more vulnerable, including women and children, in a gender and age-sensitive manner. The training led to twelve convictions of gender-based violence in 2004, as well as the prosecution and sentencing of several individuals for indecent assaults on under-age children.¹⁰⁸ These prove to be positive developments Sierra Leone, because in the past these cases were rarely brought in front of the court, and even more rarely prosecuted, if at all.

However, the reach and overall effectiveness of the FSUs are not without controversy. Researchers have found that private rooms, which should be available for interviewing sexual and gender-based violence survivors at police headquarters, are often absent.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, in the case of rape, women (or men) must first obtain a certificate by a

¹⁰⁶ This issue was raised during the KAIPTC/Clingendael Workshop, *op. cit.* The UNAMSIL Gender Specialist stated the overwhelming support of the Mission Spokesperson and Head of Public Information Section, Ms. Margaret Novicki, who later transferred to UNMIL. After her departure from UNAMSIL, the level of gender awareness seemed to decline within the section. The UNMIL Senior Gender Advisor also stated that when Ms. Novicki left UNMIL in October 2004, the quality of gender-sensitive reporting by Public Information officers declined.

¹⁰⁷ United Nations, Eighteenth Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2003/663, 23 June 2003.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N03/489/20/IMG/N0348920.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, Twenty-Second Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2004/536, 6 July 2004.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/404/90/IMG/N0440490.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁰⁹ Sarah Martin et al., *op. cit.*

doctor to “prove” they have been assaulted. Unfortunately, there are very few doctors throughout the country and most are situated in the capital or larger towns. To further compound difficulties, these certificates have become “marketable commodities” with doctors charging high fees, making them unattainable for most survivors.¹¹⁰ International Organizations such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have attempted to alleviate the situation by offering free medical check-ups and certificates of rape.¹¹¹ However, the scope and reach of these organizations is limited and the majority of the local populations, who live outside of Freetown or other main cities, rarely have access. UNAMSIL appears to have done little to address this serious gap in the protection of women and girls in Sierra Leone.¹¹²

The UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, Theresa Kombobe, was hired in 2003. She remains the sole individual within the mission whose primary responsibility is incorporating gender issues into their work.¹¹³ It should be noted, however, that she is responsible for working within the Human Rights Section, not necessarily throughout the mission. Although the Lomé Accord only made one specific reference to gender, later resolutions recognized the gender dimension and, “in particular the widespread violation of the human rights of women and children, including sexual violence” (S/RES/1370/2001) while reiterating the importance of “paying special attention to the protection of women and children” (S/RES/1400/2002).¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, a systematic focus on gender has generally come as an afterthought, inhibiting the elevation of gender mainstreaming as a priority within the mission.

Ms. Kombobe works as the sole Gender Specialist within UNAMSIL. Nonetheless, she conducts her duties without a separate office, support staff, or leverage to implement programs that she deems a priority. In fact, she reports directly to the Chief Human Rights Officer within the Human Rights Division, not the SRSG, and does not attend senior staff meetings. This restricts her ability to implement programs at her discretion as a specialist on gender, due to the fact her supervisor may or may not agree with her assessment of priority areas that she has identified. This is the case with the issue of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), where the Chief Human Rights Officer sees the issue

¹¹⁰ Interviews conducted in Freetown, November 2004.

¹¹¹ Interview with International Rescue Committee, November 2004.

¹¹² Sarah Martin et al., *op cit*. While conducting interviews with UNAMSIL personnel and international and local organizations, the researchers talked about this subject and discovered the practice (of requiring a rape certificate) is common knowledge and everyone interviewed admitted it was problematic. However, seemingly the only organization interviewed actually doing something to rectify or mitigate the impact of this law on local women was the IRC.

¹¹³ In April 2003, UNAMSIL acted as a facilitator in an exercise to field-test gender mainstreaming, developed by a team from the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

¹¹⁴ These gender references were added *de facto* in an *ad hoc* manner as the security situation in Sierra Leone deteriorated. Security Council Resolutions expressed growing concern with the widespread violation of the human rights of women and children, including sexual violence. S/RES/1478/2003 encourages “civil society initiatives in the region, including those of the Mano River Union Women's Peace network, to continue their contribution towards regional peace.” S/RES/1435/2002 and S/RES/1400/2002 mention UNAMSIL peacekeepers and expresses concern over the allegations of human rights violations against them.

as a lesser priority compared to other human rights issues, while the Gender Specialist believes it to be critical to the human security situation throughout the country.¹¹⁵ However, because FGM is a very politically charged topic, the Sierra Leone Government does not want to address it, and UNAMSIL as well as other UN agencies have been reluctant to push the issue, despite the calls from gender activists, local women's groups, and the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist.

Ms. Kombobe is also at a disadvantage in trying to reach the thousands of staff members who are tasked with carrying out a variety of affairs for the mission. Most of Ms. Kombobe's work continues to be in reaction to shortcomings that were noticed and her ability to be proactive in her work is largely non-existent. Instead, she relies heavily on information gained from NGOs, researchers, and those situated in the UN to guide her activities.¹¹⁶ In terms of resources, she does not have the ability to implement gender programs or policies, to the extent she would like or even thinks is necessary. There is no budget specifically allocated for gender training or sensitization campaigns. The money or support she does receive comes from the Human Rights Division where she must compete to implement gender projects over other human rights initiatives.¹¹⁷ In short, a majority of her time is spent trying to find money for programs she feels are important as well as the training she is mandated to carry out. This also limits her ability to move outside of Freetown where gender awareness and sensitization campaigns are needed most.

Finally, the largest obstacle facing the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist in advocating for women and girls in Sierra Leone is the traditional culture, which can be described as a "culture of silence". This means that women are seen but not heard on many different levels. Their traditionally low education levels combined with domestic roles mean that most women have little experience speaking in groups or participating in activities, which may be socially and economically beneficial. This necessitates the use of civil society organizations to better understand and implement programs that are culturally and socially relevant and sustainable while forming new and equitable structures within society. In addition, an increase in collaboration with local organizations and individuals on the ground, to build capacity through training and education, will ultimately enable a smoother transition from peacekeeping to long-term development.

The United Nations Country Team¹¹⁸

The UNCT is comprised of seven UN agencies, funds, and programs that work in collaboration with UNAMSIL and local and international NGOs but have their own mission mandates. The UNCT is central to transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and from relief to recovery and development. Most members of the UNCT

¹¹⁵ Interview with Theresa Kombobe, UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, November 2004.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Ms. Kombobe has managed to receive some financial support, from INGO's and the UNIFEM.

¹¹⁸ The UNCT in Sierra Leone is led by the Resident Coordinator, and is comprised of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Program (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

will remain in the country long after the mission has left and have been present before it arrived. Therefore it is vital that they also employ gender mainstreaming strategies in their programs.

In collaboration with the UNCT and other partners, UNAMSIL has continued to promote women's rights in Sierra Leone and to coordinate their activities in order to overcome the personnel, financial, and logistical obstacles they face. The gender focal points, specialists and advisors within the UNCT, through the UNCT Gender Theme Group, are scheduled to convene once a month to discuss and coordinate efforts. These meetings are important for cooperating and sharing best practices, while making the most of the specialization of each agency. While they seem to be meeting monthly, Theme Group Members also admitted to difficulties in the past with attendance.¹¹⁹ The success of these meetings can in part contribute to coordination that limits duplication and fills in gaps that are observed in the field, especially since the capabilities of the UNCT are limited without communication and interaction.

PROGRAMMIC INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO MISSION ACTIVITIES

Gender mainstreaming in Sierra Leone is not a straightforward or simple process. The complex nature of the peace support operation leaves the responsibility for including a gender perspective with each individual in each entity working in the field. Yet, in reality, a lack of leadership and cooperation allows the issue to fall through the cracks in a variety of ways. Without the existence of a Gender Advisor, tasked with the responsibility to facilitate gender mainstreaming throughout the mission, there is little possibility that gender systematic mainstreaming can succeed.

The nature of the mission in Sierra Leone allows actors to point fingers and transfer blame, when gender policy has been poorly implemented. While not able to cover the expansive nature of the mission, looking at key areas and how they have succeeded or failed with respect to gender mainstreaming can help give a holistic view of how policy may, or may not be, translated into reality in the field.

Training for mission personnel

With the help of civil society and cooperation with other actors in the field, there continues to be increased awareness and progress towards the prevention of abuse in Sierra Leone, by local and international actors, including peacekeepers. In response to a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)/Save the Children Fund UK (SCFUK)¹²⁰ report, the issue of SGBV has become a prominent area of concern within the UN. In highlighting sexual abuse by humanitarian workers, some argue that the report has made positive strides in bringing the women's issues to the forefront, while others

¹¹⁹ Interview with UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, *op. cit.*

¹²⁰ The UNHCR/SCFUK report was unofficially leaked to the press in February 2002. In it, there were detailed accounts of the sexual exploitation and abuse of refugees and IDPs by those in power, including; teachers, refugee leaders, UNAMSIL peacekeepers, and humanitarian aid workers from UN agencies and international NGOs.

believe it pushed the topic underground¹²¹, making it more difficult to assess how often and where violence may be occurring, and by which actors.

The incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and other forms of GBV supports the need for policy and training that attends to the issue within the United Nations system. In Sierra Leone, the need for increased monitoring and regulation led to the emergence of the Coordination Committee on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CCSEA) and the UNAMSIL Personnel Conduct Committee (UPCC). The UPCC specifically, is responsible for enforcing the ‘zero tolerance’ policy employed throughout UNAMSIL and facilitating comprehension of the UN Code of Conduct.¹²² Although, training and conduct committees do not always bring about desired results¹²³, these strategies recognize the problems and challenges within the mission, and have the potentiality of ceasing the extent to which violence occurs. The importance of monitoring and follow-up, however, should not be underestimated as *ad hoc* training or punishment does not always help institute a culture of protection within the system.

Gender training has not only been targeted at peacekeepers but CIVPOL officers as well. While gender training upon arrival to the mission is a good introduction to cultural differences and context in which officers will be working, it is not enough just to infuse a gender perspective into people’s work upon arrival in the mission. It is critical that the host country provide initial instruction for those about to be deployed to a peace support operations. While some countries offer training of this nature, others commonly lack the resources or know-how to partake in such a policy. This endangers the local population as the deployment of untrained peacekeepers and CIVPOL officers cannot ensure the protection that is needed. Including periodic and follow-up gender training can stress to UN personnel the importance of being gender aware, the consequences involved in engaging in inappropriate behavior, and also potentially prevent violence in the future.

It is important that the consequences of abuse by mission personnel are taken seriously and attended to as a criminal violation. To keep good relations with the local population and uphold the integrity of the mission, repercussions must be implemented and publicized, including appropriate protocol for reporting abuse and following-up on the progression of the case.¹²⁴ These strategies also tend to be reactive and don’t necessarily replace the mission, including the Gender Specialist’s role¹²⁵, to provide proactive response or action to abuse, such as SGBV. Documenting trends can also lead to

¹²¹ Paul Higate, *Gender and Peacekeeping Case Studies: The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone*, ISS Monograph No. 91, March 2004. <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/Monographs/No91/Chap2.pdf>.

¹²² The U.N. Code of Conduct for peacekeepers provides that peacekeepers should not commit any act that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to members of the local population, especially women and children

¹²³ Paul Higate, *op. cit.*

¹²⁴ While conducting this research, the authors interviewed a UNAMSIL DDR officer in Kenema and encountered harassment from the officer. The extent to which abuse is unknown and undocumented is entirely plausible, seeing as the researchers experienced such treatment upon their first trip to the country.

¹²⁵ Some people argue that it is not the sole responsibility or role of the Gender Specialist or Gender Advisor to provide response to SGBV. They also argue that it is not realistic to think this one person can attend to the problem.

understanding of the people and regions of the country that engage in the worst abuse of policy, to create tailored strategies and approaches for confronting those that engage in such violence.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

As one of the first stages in the post-conflict transition process, a DDR program can have lasting effects on ex-combatants attempting to start their lives again. During the planning stages of the Sierra Leone DDR process, the specific needs of female combatants and women and girls in supporting roles who gained the title of “camp followers,” were not taken into consideration. At these stages, the Gender Specialist had not been hired or situated in her post and therefore had no impact on the resulting process. As a result, and due to the lack of gender consideration and consultation, the design and implementation of the disarmament program was desperately lacking in specifically attending to the needs and roles of women. According to studies done on the effect of the Sierra Leone DDR process on women and girls, only 6.5% or 4,751 of the adults who participated were women, while 9.4% or 506 of the children were girls.¹²⁶ This compares to the 10 to 30 percent of women and girls who formally participated in the fighting.¹²⁷

During the planning stages of the DDR program, those that designed requirements for entry and the definition of “combatant” used strict definitions of what it meant to be a “fighter”, often limiting the inclusion of women. Although many women were captured or abducted for use in non-fighting roles, DDR operations are slowly realizing that their inclusion, as contributors to war on all sides, is essential to the maintenance of peace and security. Women, serving many roles within fighting factions, also held multiple roles where fighting may not have been their primary duty, but one of many. Therefore, a strict application of identity, according to the terms “combatant”, “camp-follower”, or “supporter”, used to determine the inclusion and hence distribution of benefits in the DDR process, can not entirely match or manage the reality of the situation.

Due to the limitations placed on the DDR process through entry requirements that were too narrow, the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDRR) subsequently planned for and took into consideration a total of 12 percent combatants who were women, among the total number of participants expected to partake in the process.¹²⁸ In the end, a much lower level of women took part, for reasons attributed to poor planning and gender consideration. Many women did not possess their own weapons and thus could not enter the program, while others, it was highly known, had guns that were taken away from them so that commanders could reap the benefits. Others still, were uneducated on the protection or payments they would receive, keeping them from coming forward and classifying themselves as combatants.

The outcome was that many women, being frequently identified with their non-fighting roles in conflict situations, were not formally included, prohibiting them from gaining

¹²⁶ At the end of the DDR process, 70,000 fighters had disarmed altogether. For more information, see http://www.womenwarpeace.org/sierra_leone/sierra_leone.htm

¹²⁷ Dyan Mazurana et al., *op. cit.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

any education or training benefits that come with participating in a formal DDR process. For example, policy targeted towards women dependents required them to present and identify themselves to NCDDR alongside of a man. In doing this, they could qualify for certain gender specific programs such as micro-credit loans. The policy, however, led to further alienation as many women were reluctant to come forward or their men were often unsupportive of their inclusion. Pushed to accept and help reintegrate ex-combatants back into their community, few women were effectively able to benefit from the DDR process yet were tasked with the responsibility to care for those that had.

Rehabilitation and reintegration programs that assist women are even more deficient and restricted than the immediate benefits received from a DDR program. Many people, including the Gender Specialist, recognize the importance of social and psychological services to attend to the post-conflict rehabilitation needs of women. The existence of such services continues to be in short supply and gender-specific initiatives are even rarer. It is well known that the reintegration portion of a 'DDR' program often lacks the resources that the initial programs receive. Additionally, very few programs effectively take into consideration the extent of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) that occurred throughout the war.¹²⁹ A lack of services, including reproductive health care, protection from repeated abuse, and help reintegrating after facing the stigma confronting survivors of abduction and rape, are also well-known obstacles through the country.

Internally Displaced Persons Camps

Exploitative relationships were well known in refugee and IDP camps throughout Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the West African sub-region where sexual exploitation of women, girls, and boys occurs by armed groups, humanitarian workers, and peacekeepers alike.¹³⁰ It is known that these actors, in positions of relative power, can exploit the local population through the abuse of basic necessity items such as shelter, food and water. In doing this, they can use basic provisions as leverage to receive 'favors' from the local population. At the height of displacement, the Gender Specialist still had not arrived in her position in the mission, and therefore had little contact, input, or influence on the human rights situation in IDP camps. Due to limited funding after arrival, her reach outside of Freetown was strained while access for other organizations was similarly poor, attributed to frequent security constraints. While some NGOs were working in rural areas, many agencies and international organizations were prevented from moving beyond Freetown for substantial amounts of time, before the security situation was cleared. This prohibited the extent of documentation of abuse that is integral to understanding the scope of activity within Sierra Leone.

For agencies and organizations specifically mandated to attend to refugee and some IDP situations, such as the UNHCR, there was no question that SGBV and other abuse was

¹²⁹ The International Rescue Committee has set up three Rainbow Centers throughout Sierra Leone to provide services and attend to the needs of those who have been sexually abused. Although the centers are working at maximum efficiency, there is still a need for services and programs that reach more of the country and communities.

¹³⁰ In Sierra Leone, it is estimated that 70 to 90 percent of survivors of rape, contracted sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

present and wide-spread among this vulnerable population. The security in IDP camps would commonly enable this violence, through planning that left women susceptible and removed from decision-making processes. As a result, camps that didn't take into consideration the negative consequences associated with non-central water pumps, poor lighting, or the need for women to leave their homes to collect firewood, left women in danger and at increased risk.¹³¹ Despite this reality, the reporting of abuse was infrequent and protocol related to holding perpetrators accountable was confusing, unknown, misunderstood or inaccessible. If reports did arise, a lack of monitoring and follow-up meant there was little known of the outcome or action that was taken, if any.

When asked if women participated in camp management or formed groups within the camps to attend to gender-specific needs, men usually reply with a positive answer. However, cultural barriers kept women away from planning committees and being actively involved in the decisions throughout displaced camps. If present at all, women rarely spoke out, owing to men that would overpower decision-making processes or women who were uneducated and unconfident with their ability to articulate and provide answers to difficult situations. A lack of leadership training has also been ascribed to women's low participation at authority levels, something solved through education and empowerment programs.

While some agencies, such as the World Food Programme¹³², have created elaborate gender mainstreaming guidelines, to lead their effort in food distribution throughout refugee and IDP camps, others have implemented programs on a more *ad hoc* basis. Yet, even WFP admitted to difficulty gaining the support of senior management in implementing gender-specific programs. After some time and changes within the organization such as improved access and decision-making power, the gender focal point expressed satisfaction at the level of support she was receiving throughout the organization, despite how late it was in the process. This support enabled the registration, distribution, and monitoring of food disbursements to be more gender-specific and tailored to the protection needs of women. Increasingly, agencies are recognizing their ability to either widen or mitigate gender disparity through the application of their programs. The responsibility for implementation, however, remains largely up to individuals and their discretion or openness to gender-specific efforts.

There is also difficulty for women attempting to support their families and having lost their husbands during conflict. Tasked to bear the responsibility for caring for the young, sick, elderly, and wounded, women are severely burdened. In addition, the UN and other NGOs providing training and education often fail to take into account an extensive cultural and economic analysis of the current situation, before providing services. Throughout West Africa, women are learning how to make soap, weave, and tie-and-dye

¹³¹ UNHCR admitted that women were often left out of the planning of IDP and refugee camps. This combined with the fact that local women often have little decision-making power within the camps means their considerations are not always taken into account.

¹³² In addition to WFP's Commitments to Women (1996-2001), WFP's attention to gender mainstreaming includes the eight Enhanced Commitments to Women (2003-2007), which focus on programming, advocacy and human resources.

as skills that are meant to help them support the family. These programs reinforce cultural stereotypes, lack creativity, and prevent women from moving up the social ladder. Women often break outside of traditional roles during conflict and learn new skills. Post conflict development should build on this expertise and allow women to advance and support their communities in the process of development.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone

In 1994, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights appointed a Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. Since her inception, the work of the Special Rapporteur has covered “all violations of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, and in particular, murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy ...”¹³³ In dealing with violence against women, the Rapporteur issued a number of reports including the report of March 2002, which highlighted violence against women in Sierra Leone. Specifically, it focused on the need to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for rape and other forms of gender-based violence.¹³⁴ Since this report, the Gender Specialist along with other agencies, organizations, and individuals have assisted in bringing a gender perspective to both the Special Court and the TRC, including gathering information and providing expert advice in the preparation stages, in search of holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

One of the main accomplishments in the gender arena in Sierra Leone continues to be the inclusion of women and women’s needs into the TRC.¹³⁵ Encouraged to play an active role in the healing of Sierra Leonean society, the TRC with support from the Gender Specialist has recommended the development of policy, including psychological assistance, to victims of violence. This suggestion came out of the Women’s Task Force of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC was also pushed to promote the reform of customary and common laws, which often allow for gender-based violence and discrimination against women.

In addition to working with the TRC, the Gender Specialist and the mission alongside women’s organizations have been active in collaborating with the Special Court of Sierra Leone to bring gender perspectives into the court and ensure that GBV, including rape, is punished similar to other crimes.¹³⁶ The Statute of the Special Court subsequently includes provisions, which support gender equality and understanding. In doing this, the Special Court conveys a comprehension of the implication of armed conflict on women and girls, which is often different from that of men and boys. This is important if women are to ever be recognized in having specific needs and grievances that call for appropriate

¹³³ United Nations, Women, Peace and Security Study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), *op. cit.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ At the three-day Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings held in May 2003 in Freetown on the effects of war on women and girls there was overwhelming and substantive participation of women’s groups.

¹³⁶ United Nations, Eighteenth Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, *op. cit.*

redress. It also supports and reinforces the critical aspect of gender issues within the international legal arena.¹³⁷

It should not be underestimated, however, that the extent of implementation of such recommendations by the United Nations and follow through on the part of the national government is hindered by limited expertise, capacity, and will. The large extent to which rape was used as a tool of war, lends to the numbers of women and girls that were abused. Along those lines, not all of these individuals can seek or receive justice through the TRC or Special Court. In addition, although facilitating reconciliation, many women still live with the physical and psychological scars of war which will forever stay with them. Limited international funding for rehabilitation of these members of society means that justice may be served, but upon returning home, women and girls continue to live extremely difficult lives.

The Government of Sierra Leone and the Electoral Process

Since her arrival in the mission, the Gender Specialist has acted as a liaison between UNAMSIL and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs within the government. The ability, however, for the Ministry to effectively promote gender equality is severely limited by its current capacity and available resources. Due to a shortage of personnel, money, training, and infrastructure, the Ministry is slowly gaining the ability to act on behalf of the government in promoting the rights of women and children. The capacity, however, for the Ministry to effectively take over the programs and activities previously implemented by the mission, with the pulling out of UNAMSIL in mid-2005, is highly in question as they continue to recover from the destruction that war brought to the country.

The Gender Specialist along with other agencies has attempted to create an awareness and understanding of the provisions of CEDAW, which Sierra Leone ratified in 1988. The goal is to reconcile laws within Sierra Leone and the provisions upheld and promoted within the convention. There also, as of quite recently, continues to be a push to include CEDAW principles in the drafting of the country's laws in order to formally incorporate women's rights throughout the country.¹³⁸ As expected, working to reform the law has proved to be a slow and tedious task, despite current efforts.

The mission, in collaboration with its partners, has continued to provide training to the government to help raise the profile of women's rights within the political arena in Sierra Leone. For instance, with outside support the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs organized a three-day workshop on women's law reform.¹³⁹ Additionally, the Law Reform Commission, established in 2004, works with the Ministry

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ United Nations, Twenty-fourth Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2004/965, 10 December 2004.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/637/41/PDF/N0463741.pdf?OpenElement>

¹³⁹ United Nations, Nineteenth Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, *op. cit.*

of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to review discriminatory laws that unequally affect women. As of September 2004, the United Nations Security Council stated that women's participation in the government and the judicial system was positively growing.¹⁴⁰

Democratic presidential elections in May 2002 provided a chance for women to achieve political power throughout the country. Civil society organizations, such as the 50/50 Group, have pushed for the inclusion and representation of women in the government arena. As a result, the 10 political parties competing in parliamentary elections placed 165 women on their running ballot.¹⁴¹ The effort, however, continues as women vie for a space in the political arena. As of 22 May 2004, the Secretary-General stated an advance in good governance throughout Sierra Leone. Accordingly, 107 candidates out of 1,115 approved to run in local elections by the NEC, were women.¹⁴² Awareness of women candidates and elected parliamentarian are still in progress as democratic institutions are solidifying throughout the country.

Civil society remains an obvious and visible option for implementing and carrying out the multitude of tasks that remain to be done in Sierra Leone. Local organizations, including women's groups, continue to be an active force, pushing for development and peace. For example, in May 2000, a women's march in Sierra Leone paved the way for the march of parliamentarians and civil society organizations a few days later. Onlookers commented that if it was not for the women proving that peaceful expression was possible, the subsequent march could not have been possible. Although civil society has made great strides in Sierra Leone and continues to be an active force despite years of conflict and repression, it remains essential that the mission and international NGOs actively promote and support their work to ensure long-term sustainability of projects, programs, and ideas. This includes dispersing information relevant to civil society actors and including them in the work of the mission, at all times and in all ways, in their own language as relevant to their situation.

CONCLUSION

With the appointment of the Senior Gender Adviser at the DPKO Headquarters in 2004, it is anticipated that the task of gender mainstreaming throughout all peace support operations will become more systematic. Although progress has been made, this objective has not yet been realized. UNAMSIL is a perfect example of what can happen without proper protocol on the establishment of a Gender Advisor or an Office of the Gender Advisor. While it is generally agreed that it is the responsibility of the SRSG and the mission managers to ensure the implementation resolution 1325, they do not often

¹⁴⁰ United Nations, Twenty-third Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2004/724, 9 September 2004.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/501/66/IMG/N0450166.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁴¹ National Democratic Institute (NDI), *Women in Sierra Leonean Politics*.

http://www.ndi.org/globalp/women/onepagars/sierraleone_tif.pdf

¹⁴² United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Situation in Sierra Leone, 6 July 2004.

have the expertise to recognize whether or not gender mainstreaming strategies are properly employed and how to accurately monitor progress.

The UNAMSIL mandate, pursuant to SC/RES/562 (2004), was extended to 30 June 2005 to cover the drawdown phase of the mission throughout the country. Nevertheless, there continues to be a threat for renewed instability and a need for UN personnel throughout the country. As part of her duties, the Gender Specialist will remain in her post through the draw down phase, but will be transferred from being situated in the Human Rights Division to the office of the SRSG. This position will provide her more access to decision-making levels allowing her to maneuver more freely, without the constraints of the Human Rights Division. It will also allow the Gender Specialist and the SRSG to have more direct communication on issues concerning gender. Although a very positive and welcome change, the affect that this repositioning will have remains unknown. A huge impact so late in the peacekeeping process and at the tail end of the mission is highly unlikely.

CHAPTER V

PEACEKEEPING POST-RESOLUTION 1325: THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN LIBERIA

INTRODUCTION

On 18 August 2003, the various groups to the Liberian conflict finally signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Accra after more than two months of ECOWAS-brokered negotiations. The CPA declared an immediate end to the war and provided for the establishment of a National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), a transitional or caretaker government giving equal power to the Liberian government and each of the two rebel groups, LURD and MODEL. The NTGL was to replace the interim government on 14 October 2003. Mr. Gyude Bryant, a businessman and leader of the Liberian Action Party, was nominated by the warring factions to head the NTGL. While women were grossly underrepresented at the peace talks, a number of representatives from Liberian women's groups traveled to Accra and met at the Golden Tulip Hotel to organize and strategize on how to include gender perspectives, pursuant to resolution 1325, into the transitional government, existing and in-coming institutions as well as proposed post-conflict peacebuilding structures.¹⁴³ Under the CPA the various parties requested that the United Nations deploy a peacekeeping force to Liberia under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1509 on 19 September 2003, authorizing the establishment of UNMIL. As scheduled, UNMIL took over peacekeeping duties from ECOWAS forces on 1 October 2003. Their broad mandate is to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protect United Nations staff, facilities, and civilians; support humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assist in national security sector reform, including national police training and the formation of a new, restructured military. Specifically, UNMIL is to assist the transitional Government in reestablishing national authority within the country, including the establishment of functioning administrative structures at both the national and local levels. Importantly, UNMIL is also mandated to assist the transitional government, in conjunction with ECOWAS and other international partners, in preparing for national elections scheduled for October 2005.

Notably, resolution 1509 reaffirms, “the importance of a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace-building in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000)” and “recalls the need to address violence against women and girls as a tool

¹⁴³ To view the Golden Tulip Declarations see, <http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Liberia/GoldenTulip.html>

of warfare, and encourages UNMIL as well as the Liberian parties to actively address these issues”.¹⁴⁴

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF UNMIL

The organizational structure of UNMIL is similar to that of UNAMSIL and indeed most complex peacekeeping operations. The major difference between the two missions with regard to gender is the presence of the Office of the Gender Advisor situated within the Office of the SRSG.¹⁴⁵ It is important to note however, that no gender expert was present during the planning, assessment or concept of operation phase of most of the mission activities. Nonetheless, this placement provides the Senior Gender Advisor (SGA) access to the SRSG and senior management through daily briefings and other high-level meetings. This is necessary in order to facilitate the mainstreaming of gender perspectives throughout the pillars of the mission and to provide expertise and training to mission managers while pushing them for regular monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of their activities. The extent to which the SRSG and other components of the mission are receptive to the SGA’s input, however, varies by individual personality and sensitivity to gender issues. Particularly, the gender unit has the responsibility to:

“...design and develop a strategy for gender mainstreaming to ensure that gender issues are adequately addressed in the implementation of the mission’s mandate, ensure that the process of DDRR takes into account the different needs of female and male ex-combatants, encourage national institutions to incorporate gender concerns in their programmes and activities and ensure the involvement of women as participants and beneficiaries of these activities...”¹⁴⁶

Like the UNAMSIL Gender Specialist, the UNMIL OGA has no official budget. While the OGA claim to have the full support of senior management, including the ability to approach the UNMIL Administrative Office for money, they also complain that due to budgeting constraints, the work of the Office has not yet extended beyond Monrovia.¹⁴⁷ Nonetheless, a number of staff¹⁴⁸ support the SGA and together they have been working with the NGTL, the Ministry of Gender and Development, the United Nations Country Team, International and local NGOs, and women’s groups in building sustainable peace in the country.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1509 (2003)*, adopted on 19 September 2003, par. 11. <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N03/525/70/PDF/N0352570.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁴⁵ The UNMIL SRSG is Mr. Jacques Klein.

¹⁴⁶ For more details see, mandate of the Gender Unit, UNMIL, Monrovia, Liberia, cited from Festus B. Aboagye and Alhaji M. S. Bah, *Liberia at a Crossroads: A preliminary look at the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the protection of civilians*, ISS Paper 95, November 2004.

¹⁴⁷ Interviews with UNMIL Gender Officers, Monrovia, 9 November 2004.

¹⁴⁸ The Senior Gender Advisor, Ms. Joana Foster, heads the OGA. Two Gender Advisors, three Administrators, and two UN Volunteers support her.

PROGRAMMING INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO MISSION ACTIVITIES

There are two major responsibilities in respect of gender mainstreaming throughout UNMIL activities. The first is to ensure that gender perspectives are incorporated into the work of the UN, which includes both military and civilian components. The second responsibility is to provide assistance to Liberians for promoting gender equality within their work - including that related to restructuring administrative structures, institution-building, enforcing the rule of law, and implementing other post-conflict and nation-building activities. Overall accountability lies with senior management and ultimately the SRSG, although the extent to which UN Headquarters holds these actors accountable for gender mainstreaming policies is often irregular. However, the OGA staff has the duty to support top management in carrying out gender mainstreaming strategies in their operational areas. The key is to identify possible areas of intervention that are in line with the mission mandate and where limited resources can have the maximum effect. Some of the areas in which the UNMIL OGA has intervened are training for mission personnel and the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration of ex-combatants.¹⁴⁹ The SGA is in charge of specifying what areas will be the primary focus for implementing a gender perspective within the mission. This requires prioritizing gender issues, as it is impossible to cover the entire spectrum with very limited resources and staff. In the meantime, however, other areas may get overlooked and pushed to the background, whether deservedly or not.

Training of Mission Personnel

One of the major and most obvious goals of the mission in Liberia is to maintain peace throughout the country; thereby reducing Liberia's destabilizing impact on the entire West African region. Both the military and civilian personnel work together towards this goal. While the absence of violence in Liberia, or any country for that matter, will inevitably benefit society, peacekeeping staff must ensure that efforts to secure peace do not inadvertently reinforce past discrimination, including gender inequalities. Furthermore, the mission should attempt to rectify the social inequalities that fall within the scope of the mission mandate and can often more easily be reversed during the transition from a conflict to a post-conflict society. In order to do this, UN personnel must have adequate knowledge of the different issues facing men, women, boys, and girls during conflict and post-conflict reconstruction and how to integrate these different perspectives into their daily work.

It is not surprising then, that the induction training programs provided by the OGA to UNMIL personnel, including peacekeepers, CIVPOL officers, and civilian staff is regarded as one of their biggest accomplishments.¹⁵⁰ The training is designed to teach mission employees about the different concepts related to gender, the affects of war on gender relations, and the UN code of conduct for peacekeepers.¹⁵¹ A gender resource

¹⁴⁹ Aboagye et al., *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁰ Interviews with UNMIL Gender Officers, *op. cit.*

¹⁵¹To view the UN Codes of Conduct, see UN General Assembly A/57/465, "Gender and Codes of Conduct".

package has also been developed by the DPKO Best Practices¹⁵² Unit and distributed to mission personnel. This package provides an overview of the concept of “gender mainstreaming” and how to include gender issues into the planning and operational phases of the various functional areas of peacekeeping operations. It also includes checklists and guides on implementation. While training and knowledge about these key areas is a necessary prerequisite for the full implementation of resolution 1325, it has not, nor will ever be completely sufficient.

Language and cultural barriers within the UN system itself often make promoting respect for gender equality within post-conflict situations especially difficult. It has therefore been recognized that there is a need for some form of pre-deployment training in this area. To fill this requirement, the Training and Evaluation Services (TES) of the military division has produced a generic training package on *Gender and Peacekeeping Operations* for the use of Member States in pre-deployment training for both military and civilian personnel as part of Standardized Training Modules (SGTM), Level one.¹⁵³ The TES is also in the process of preparing modules for middle and senior level personnel. This is an important step but one that has largely been left up to the will of individual Member States, many of whom do not have the cleanest record in respecting the basic human rights of their citizens.¹⁵⁴ The inherent problem is the contradictory nature of this arrangement. Additionally, the behavioral change necessary to support gender mainstreaming is a slow and long-term process that cannot simply be left to a fifty-minute training video on gender equality. To ‘teach’ gender sensitivity, training courses should be supplemented with other programs, and followed-up in regular intervals to attend to gaps and areas that may have been missed or glossed over. It has been suggested that misconduct within the UN system should be treated as a criminal violation and punished accordingly, which is the rationale behind the UN Codes of Conduct.¹⁵⁵

The lack of female MILOBS has been one of the most frequently cited challenges to implementing gender perspectives into the work of military personnel in accordance with resolution 1325.¹⁵⁶ MILOBS are responsible for monitoring the human rights situation as well compliance with the CPA in areas outside of the capital. Liberian women have been

¹⁵² The DPKO collaborated with a number of UN entities on this project, including; UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI) as well as a number of additional UN partners.

¹⁵³ UN military forces and civilian personnel should be working together to achieve a set of common objectives during peace operations. However, currently they all come into conflict situations with varying levels and types of training, which is further hampered by a lack of proper coordination and standardized operational procedures. To address these issues, the UN Training and Evaluation Service (TES) of the Military Division (MD) initiated a project in January of 2002 to develop standardized training modules (STM).

¹⁵⁴ The majority of peacekeeping military personnel come from developing countries, the top ten being: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Ethiopia, South Africa, Jordan, and Kenya.

¹⁵⁵ This topic was brought up in the KAIPTC/Clingendael Workshop, *op. cit.* Participants agreed that the problem of GBV and misconduct perpetrated by UN military and civilian personnel were too great for an OGA to be responsible for. However, the Gender Advisors from all countries believed that the biggest threat to women in post-conflict societies is not UN personnel but the men and boys in their own societies and that all the attention being given to the UN has pushed this factor to the background.

¹⁵⁶ The Senior Gender Advisors from all missions raised this issue during the KAIPTC/Clingendael Workshop, *op. cit.*

very reluctant to speak with men, about past and ongoing sexual and gender-based violence, especially from the military.¹⁵⁷ This is partially due to cultural norms and the fact that military men, on all sides, have been the primary perpetrators of the gross human rights violations committed against women. It will most likely take years of professional military service in the country in order to regain the trust of the general population. Female MILOBS do not simply gain the confidence of the local citizens either, as female MILOBS are not necessarily more gender sensitive by virtue of being a woman. It has, however, been shown that female MILOBS are more likely to recognize and be sensitive to gender issues. Furthermore, they tend to be more approachable by the standards of local women. This is especially important given the fact that civil authority has not yet been reestablished throughout the country, and reports by local women regarding violence against women in rural areas can give the UN the insight it requires to meet gender-specific health and psychosocial needs. The compiling and analysis of these reports could be a job for the UNMIL gender unit if it were not for budgeting constraints, preventing the UNMIL OGA office's reach outside of Monrovia. Instead, the OGA relies of network of INGOs and women's groups throughout the country to receive and spread information. However, the effectiveness of this arrangement is doubtful, as there seems to be little to no coordination between the various groups, and even less within the UN system itself.¹⁵⁸

The Disarmament and Demobilization of Ex-Combatants

The disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone was largely considered a success in so far as it collected many of the weapons throughout the country and demobilized most of the men and boys from the various fighting forces, helping to secure the peace throughout the country. At the same time it was heavily criticized by International NGOs, women's groups, and even those within the UN system for leaving girls and women out of the process which in turn, violated not only their right to participate but undermined the long-term goal of the sustainable and equitable development of Sierra Leone. When the DDR process began in Liberia, it was hoped that the mistakes of UNAMSIL would not be repeated and in fact, significant improvements were made in including women and girls in the process. Yet, despite the gender sensitive mandates, language, and targets, as well as the presence of the OGA, women and girls have faced gender-specific obstacles and have not gone through the process in proportion to their actual participation numbers.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ This phenomenon has been witnessed all over the world but is particularly relevant in West Africa where national armies have perpetrated some of the worst atrocities. This was also seen in the UNMIL DDRR programs where women have preferred to demobilize in centers run by NGOs rather than UNMIL peacekeepers.

¹⁵⁸ The Women in Peacebuilding Network (WiPNET) and the Mano River Union Women Peace Network (MARWOPNET), the two networks of local women's NGOs in the region, have effectively coordinated many peace and development efforts within the sub-region. However, they also admit that their reach beyond the capital cities is somewhat limited due to poor communication systems, infrastructure, and lack of transport, among other reasons.

¹⁵⁹ UNIFEM, Getting it Right, Doing it Right: Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, *op. cit.*

The CPA outlined the details regarding the cantonment, disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration of former combatants. It was agreed that UNMIL would take the lead, while being supported by a National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (NCDDRR). To support the implementation of the political and development goals articulated in the Accra Accords, the World Bank, UN agencies, donors, and other stakeholders developed a Results-Focused Transition Framework (RFTF), which was thereafter endorsed by the NGTL. The RFTF sets forth goals, target groups, priorities, timelines, and benchmarks to measure the outcomes of activities undertaken. The RFTF also identifies DDRR as a priority cluster and originally defined success as the “*disarmament and demobilization of 38,000-58,000 female and male ex-combatants, including children and disabled; collection and destruction of 70,000 weapons by December 2004; counseling and referral services initiated for all ex-combatants; and at least 50 per cent of adult ex-combatants reintegrated into Liberian society by December 2005.*” The initial target number of women to be demobilized was only 2,000, which was somewhat surprising given that as many as 10,000 women and girls are believed to have fought with the various fighting forces with many more accompanying the groups providing supporting functions.¹⁶⁰

These acute underestimates can be partly attributed to the strict definition of ‘combatant’ that was adopted. A combatant was defined as a fighter and a one-gun-one-person entry requirement was enacted. This overlooked the thousands who engaged in valuable supporting functions as well as the wives and dependents of the ex-fighters. Although the CPA and the UNMIL mandate both contained provisions and language meant to ensure the inclusion of women and girls, in practice, the program began very much in the same fashion as the UNAMSIL DDR program with the exception of specific provisions made for women and girls at the Liberian cantonment sites. These gender-specific accommodations included separate placement in interim care centers¹⁶¹ in addition to receiving special assistance in areas such as reproductive health, counseling, education, training on women’s rights, and sexual trauma support. The fact that women combatants were targeted in these ways was a major improvement over previous DDR programs that have traditionally not considered women at all, but the gross under-estimation of female fighters is inexcusable considering the lessons learned from Sierra Leone. This knowledge could and should have influenced the DDR planning in Liberia but seemingly did not. This might be at least partially attributed to the fact that a gender advisor was not present during the deliberations or initial planning stages.

Disarmament and demobilization began on 7 December 2003. However, it barely got off the ground when combatants overwhelmed demobilization centers and demanded the \$300 cash payment that was offered as incentive to turn in their weapons.¹⁶² One site that

¹⁶⁰ UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

¹⁶¹ Interim care centers are residential facilities for child ex-combatants. The children can stay for up to twelve weeks with the ultimate goal of reuniting the child with his or her family. If family cannot be found the hope is to place the child in foster care in his or her community of origin.

¹⁶² There was initial confusion regarding the payouts as the combatants believed they would get the full \$300 right then, while UNMIL’s policy was to give half after leaving the cantonment site and the other half when they returned to their communities.

was built to accommodate 1,000 individuals had over 12,000 fighters show up.¹⁶³ When UNMIL didn't have the money to distribute benefits or facilities to house ex-combatants, violence erupted throughout Monrovia and in and around the cantonment centers and the program had to be officially halted.¹⁶⁴ Fortunately, UNMIL personnel from the OGA and the Public Information Section had been working with the WiPNET to disseminate information to the public in general, and women in particular, about the DDRR process. So when violence threatened the peace process, women from WiPNET offered to go to the cantonment sites and calm angry combatants who were firing guns in the air and threatening to resume the fighting. Although initially hesitant due to insecurity, UNMIL eventually supported the effort. The local women were able to talk to the men with the moral authority of women and mothers and calm them without the use of military force or threat, in a way that the UN had been unable to do.¹⁶⁵ This is particularly admirable when considering these unarmed, civilian women with no training or equipment, were able to perform the tasks usually assigned to fortified military personnel.¹⁶⁶ This may have been the first time UNMIL realized the extent to which local women could act as liaisons between the combatants and the other, largely international, organizations. This relationship has continued throughout the DDRR process and spread to other operational areas as well. Furthermore, it provides an excellent example of the potential benefits of including and forming relationships with local women's organizations.

The DDRR program officially resumed on 15 April 2004 and the definition of combatant was extended to include those associated with the fighting forces and the requirement for entry was adapted to allow turning in a weapon, 150 rounds of ammunition or both. The \$300 cash incentive remained, with half being paid upon discharge at the cantonment site and the other half after the ex-combatant returned to his or her home community. This new, more inclusive requirement was due to pressure from the OGA, International NGOs, local women's groups, and UN agencies, specifically the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in support of the Cape Town Principles¹⁶⁷ and resolution 1325 to include children and women into the process.¹⁶⁸

The United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), with the support of UNMIL, commissioned a consultant to visit cantonment sites and NGO-run Interim Care Center's (ICCs) in the town of Gbarnga, to determine the extent to which the mission had complied with the provisions detailed in resolution 1325.¹⁶⁹ The first problem encountered was that the lists of those to be disarmed provided by faction commanders of

¹⁶³ UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁴ Three days before the DDRR program was officially halted, a group of Liberian women calling themselves "Concerned Women of Liberia", held a press conference where they highlighted the failings of the process, which were contributing to the chaotic situation. They specifically emphasized the communication and information gap between UNMIL and the combatants. UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Margaret Novicki, Accra, 2 December 2004.

¹⁶⁶ UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁷ The Cape Town Principles were adopted on 30 April 1997 and focus on the prevention of recruitment of children into armed forces and the demobilization and social reintegration of child soldiers in Africa.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Sari Nurro, UNMIL DDRR Officer, Monrovia, 16 November 2004 and Margaret Novicki, *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁹ To read more about this study, see UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

those under their command were incomplete or in some cases non-existent.¹⁷⁰ It is reasonable to assume that if commanders were not providing full accurate lists, women and girls were the most likely groups to be excluded. Furthermore, the consultant then discovered that although there had been a public information campaign aimed at women and girls claiming that special provisions had been made at the disarmament sites to accommodate them, this proved to not necessarily be the case and by the sixth day, only 65 adult women disarmed, which was well below expectations.¹⁷¹

At the cantonment sites, the unarmed Liberian representatives of the NCDDRR were responsible for maintaining security. However, it has been reported by UNIFEM as well as other organizations that the NCDDRR only responded to general disturbances and not specific incidents of violence or harassment that was reported.¹⁷² The major issue was the entrances to the camps. The ex-combatants, both men and women, entered and exited their respective compounds through the same gates where the women faced considerable harassment from the men. Although there were separate gates available, they were not used due to the heavy collection of mud and rainwater around them.

On a positive note, the structure of the cantonment sites complied with resolution 1325 and reflected a gender perspective in the planning and design.¹⁷³ There were separate housing facilities and gender and age appropriate assessments, medical, and counseling services. The OGA was also permitted free access to the camps to inspect the facilities and arrangements.¹⁷⁴ In the case of the ICCs, “[facilities] were impressive for their comprehensive nature of their efforts to address the needs of the child ex-combatants and, in their provision of gender-specific and age-appropriate programme activities, and their compliance with Security Council Resolution 1325 was readily apparent.”¹⁷⁵

Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants

While UNMIL performed most of the military functions of the DDRR program, such as weapons collection and destruction, other activities in the rehabilitation and reintegration stages are covered by UN agencies, local and international NGOs, line ministries, and community-based structures in cooperation with UNMIL. All of these activities are designed to provide an actual, as well as symbolic break between combatant and civilian

¹⁷⁰ This is probably more telling of the faction leaders than of UNMIL. Margaret Novicki, a Public Information Officer in Sierra Leone and then Liberia, pointed to the fact that the RUF had a much clearer command structure than the relatively newly formed LURD and MODEL groups.

¹⁷¹ UNIFEM, *op. cit.*

¹⁷² UNIFEM, *op. cit.* Information was gathered at a Sexual/Gender-Based Coordination Meeting, UNHCR, Monrovia, 22 April 2004.

¹⁷³ While the UNIFEM commissioned consultant found the sites in and around Gbarnga for the most part in compliance of Security Council Resolution 1325, another security report by the Norwegian Refugee Council, of the Tubmanburg Cantonment site found the camp layout less favorable to women. The kitchen and eating facilities as well as toilet facilities were in need of immediate improvement.

¹⁷⁴ While the gender officers found the sites to demonstrate considerable compliance to resolution 1325, they did discover some incidents where there was improper lighting in facilities for nursing mothers. They brought this to the attention of the camp managers and the problems were quickly remedied, Interviews with Gender Officers, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁵ UNIFEM, *op. cit.*, pp 17, par 7.

life. In doing so, old skills (fighting) are replaced with new ones (carpentry, tailoring, etc.) through various education and skills training projects. The ultimate goal is to reintegrate combatants into society and transform them into productive, law-abiding citizens.

It is at the cantonment sites where ex-combatants decide what type of reintegration package they want. While most men prefer formal education, women generally opt for vocational training as opposed to agriculture and immediate employment opportunities, which very few men or women have chosen.¹⁷⁶ There is also a clear preference of resettling in Montserrado County, Monrovia in particular. This is problematic as large numbers of ex-combatants and IDPs migrate to the capital all seemingly having been taught the same skills.¹⁷⁷ Men usually learn mechanics, tailoring, carpentry or masonry, while women are usually taught tie-and-dye, cooking, or soap making.¹⁷⁸ This has resulted in Monrovia being flooded with thousands of ex-combatants and IDPs with few marketable skills but plenty of tie-and-dye and soap. This is at best a prescription for sustained poverty, at worst a prescription for disaffection and renewed violence.

The small percentage of ex-combatants, men and women, choosing to return to the rural areas and farm is troubling as agriculture is one of the few sectors with potential for economic growth.¹⁷⁹ The International Crisis Group (ICG) reports that traditional practices and customary law in rural communities have contributed to this trend. The way land is distributed among the populous is very discriminatory against young men and all women. Land access and has traditionally been organized around patriarchal lineage lines, meaning elder men within the rural communities have considerable control over the land while women and young men face insecurity. The ICG has identified three major resulting social effects. First, it has increased ethnic tensions between the Loma, Mano, and Gio “landowners” and Mandingo “newcomers”.¹⁸⁰ Secondly, it has created clear and

¹⁷⁶ According to Aboagye et al., *op. cit.*, as of April 2004, out of the 85,629 ex-combatants to disarm, 47% opted for vocational training, 41% for formal education, 4% for agriculture, and .65% for immediate employment.

¹⁷⁷ Refugees and IDPs are also given skills training in camps, where the options are similar to those offered to ex-combatants.

¹⁷⁸ In fact, all organizations interviewed by the authors, from UNHCR to local groups, offered the same skills training opportunities, seemingly without regard for the fact that there was little market for these trades. One UNHCR representative admitted outright that the skills training they offered to women such as cooking, soap making, tie-and-dye etc. are not very profitable enterprises to enter into but stated they offered them anyway because “that is what they said they wanted to do”. The UNMIL Office of the Gender Advisor has been successful in discouraging local women’s groups from learning these skills by simply suggesting more feasible alternatives.

¹⁷⁹ International Crisis Group (ICG), *Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States*, Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, 8 December 2004. Other potentially profitable sectors such as diamonds, gold, and timber currently have sanctions restricting sales. There have been calls by the NGTL for lifting them, but Liberian civil society and the UN are understandably weary of this prospect due to the role natural resources have played in fueling and sustaining the conflicts within the West African sub-region. Additionally, the high corruption levels in the transitional government as well as the lack of capacity and infrastructure to properly control and monitor the revenue from these activities make these potentially profitable activities, potentially contentious as well.

¹⁸⁰ These ethnic tensions contributed to the violence experienced in Monrovia during the beginning of October 2004. Nineteen were killed and hundreds more were injured or jailed after violence arose over a

distinct hierarchies between various groups creating a kind of class distinction. Lastly, women and youth are distinctly discriminated against. The West African “disaffected youth phenomenon” is widely credited with providing the fuel for the chaos, which has engulfed the region for years. It would be a serious mistake to not address this prejudicial dimension.

In Sierra Leone, the British government spent millions of pounds reinstating and strengthening the paramount Chieftaincy in the mistaken belief that it would encourage people to return to the villages.¹⁸¹ However, it was discovered that the discriminatory system only gave rise to the same unjust conditions that originally contributed to the war.¹⁸² Liberian lawyers, mainly from the Association of Female Lawyers in Liberia (AFELL)¹⁸³, on the other hand, have advanced many laws that banned many discriminatory practices. These include: doing away with a husband’s ability to reclaim bride payments from ex-wife’s family in the case of divorce; giving women inheritance rights; and banning elder men’s use of young wives to lure in lovers who would then become indentured servants.¹⁸⁴ These are undoubtedly improvements but without the proper monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, the impact of these laws will remain low. Furthermore, there still remain many discriminatory laws. As in Sierra Leone, women must get a certificate to prove they were raped before they can go to the police. There is also the issue of FGM, which is also commonly practiced Liberia.¹⁸⁵

Continuing reintegration and rehabilitation initiatives are expected to enhance the willingness and ability of former fighters to assimilate into society, hence determining the overall efficacy of a DDRR program. Success or failure is therefore heavily reliant upon not only what skills are learned but also whether or not sufficient provisions and resources for rehabilitation and reintegration activities exist.¹⁸⁶ Unfortunately the new more inclusive eligibility requirements have led to a severe funding shortage as twice as many individuals have qualified for programs than originally planned for. In October

land dispute, with others quickly jumping on board. The ethnic element was observed in the way Mandingo mosques were specifically targeted for burning while others were generally left alone.

¹⁸¹ International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*

¹⁸² These conditions were noted in the UK Department for International Development’s (DfID) own internal evaluations in R. Fanthorpe, A. Jay, V. Kamara, “Sierra Leone: A Review of the Chiefdom Governance Reform Program, Incorporating an Analysis of Chiefdom Administration in Sierra Leone”, UK Department for International Development internal paper, November 2002, cited from International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*

¹⁸³ AFELL, while active in the past, has recently experienced personnel shortages due to the fact many of the women previously working in the association have been recruited for government ministry positions, interviews with UNMIL Gender Officers, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁴ International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁵ FGM has traditionally been considered an important rite of passage for girls in Liberia and Sierra Leone where the cutting was originally done in conjunction with rituals of womanhood, and lessons on child care, health etc. However, as war disrupted many cultural practices in both countries, FGM became increasingly associated solely with the act of cutting. Furthermore it has been performed on girls at much younger ages than before the war. The youthfulness of the girls, combined with high incidents of sexual violence, early marriages and pregnancies, and lack of health care make these girls and women extremely vulnerable to the negative health affects associated with the practice while gaining none of the potential benefits.

¹⁸⁶ United Nations General Assembly, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility: Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change*, A/59/565, 02 December 2004, Par. 229.

2004, Gyude Bryant was forced to make a second appeal to the international community for additional funding of US\$44 million in order to finance the rest of the DDRR program.¹⁸⁷ This demonstrates that while rehabilitation and reintegration efforts are ongoing, the struggle for critical resources is slowing the process down.

There are thousands of former fighters who congregate in Monrovia waiting for promised education or skills training that may never be forthcoming due to funding constraints. The inability to absorb these demobilized combatants into some form of training institution has resulted in increased rioting and violence, and has clearly exacerbated the unrest of October 2004. This problem lies not only in the realm of occupational skills training, but also in the capacity to provide basic education to former combatants. For example, on 13 January 2005 over 500 former combatants were expelled from school due to failure of the NCDDRR to pay their school fees. According to an official of the NCDDRR, the commission expects "...that about 4,000 ex-combatants [will] be thrown out of classes for this academic year since [the commission] cannot afford their school bills..."¹⁸⁸ It should be recognized that UNMIL was the first mission where money for DD was actually included in the regular peacekeeping budget, and that money for the DD and RR generally comes from outside donors such as the World Bank. Regardless of the funding sources however, the fact remains there are not enough resources coming from donors or the UN to carry the RR processes forward. Given food shortages, high unemployment rates, and overall disillusionment, reintegration programs are seriously lacking and insufficient.

In so far as rehabilitation goes, there is also a serious lack of programs that offer long-term counseling that addresses the sexual and psychosocial needs of the population in general and women in particular. The UN offers extremely short-term services to those in demobilization camps but follow-up activities are rare. Organizations working in the capacity-building and skills training fields have the additional burden of maintaining a balance between allowing ex-combatants to "own the process" by choosing what skill they would like to learn, while also being sure to provide training that is relevant to the Liberian context. It has been suggested that the UN or NGOs offering training should complete a market analysis of the proposed skill before offering it. This would eliminate ones that offer little hope for economic gain. Data provided by the NCDDRR Joint Implementation Unit (JIU), indicate that as of 24 November 2004; 102,193 ex-combatants have been disarmed and demobilized. Of these numbers, 67% are adult males, 22% adult females, 9% boys, and 2% are girls. These numbers suggest that many girls and women are being reached in the disarmament and demobilization phases, but rehabilitation and reintegration have yet to be assessed.

Coordination of UN Agencies¹⁸⁹ and Local Women's Groups

¹⁸⁷ IRIN, *Liberia: Lack of funds to retrain ex-fighters poses security threat*, 7 October 2004.

¹⁸⁸ IRIN, *Liberia: Former combatants expelled from school after failure to pay fees*, 13 January 2005.

¹⁸⁹ The United Nations Country Team in Liberia is headed by the Resident Coordinator, Mr. Marc Destanne de Bernis, and includes the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Peace Building Support Office in Liberia

The integrated nature of both the UNAMSIL and UNMIL missions has intensified the difficulties faced with attempting to mainstream gender through all programs at all levels. The fact is that while the UN missions may be taking the lead in their respective countries, they are working in conjunction with other UN agencies, as well as with international and local NGOs. In order to partly address this issue, all UN agencies working in country have designated gender focal points within their agencies, and together these focal points form the UNCT Gender Theme Group. This provides an opportunity for all the UN agencies to come together once a month to discuss and collaborate on various gender-related issues in order to find the gaps in implementation and prevent duplication in programming. While in theory this is a good idea, both missions have faced problems.

Both UNCTs have gender focal points within their agencies, but only Sierra Leone seems to be meeting monthly although they have faced difficulties in the past with attendance.¹⁹⁰ In Liberia, the UNCT gender focal points actually express quite a bit of animosity towards the UNMIL OGA.¹⁹¹ One Gender Officer within the UNCT actually stated that that, “UNMIL had somehow dampened the enthusiasm of the different agencies to work together.”¹⁹² He described a situation where the UNCT Gender Theme Group was working together quite well until UNMIL came in and said that they would be taking the lead, but then did nothing to follow-up on that claim. Another acting gender focal point (many of the agencies did not have permanent gender focal points only individuals standing in until such a time as one could be appointed) questioned how dedicated UNMIL was to chairing the meetings.¹⁹³ She felt that at times they came in with a lot of enthusiasm but then none of the agencies would hear anything from them for weeks. In Liberia, the only individuals who claimed there was sufficient inter-agency collaboration were the staff in the OGA.

Not surprisingly, given the history of both countries, local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) although ubiquitous, have been weak in producing actual results. The CSOs often claim this is because the UN limits their ability to be part of relief and rehabilitation operations. For instance, WiPNET representatives in Liberia have been in contact with women’s groups throughout the various IDP camps surrounding Monrovia and they have been receiving some serious complaints regarding the distribution of food.¹⁹⁴ While WiPNET has been encouraging the women to report these incidences to the camp field monitors or the food distribution committees, the women have been reluctant to do so for various logistical reasons (they often don’t know who to report incidents to) and cultural norms, which preventing the women from addressing authority figures. WiPNET has been trying, unsuccessfully, to gain access to the camps in order to act as a liaison

(UNOL), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Food Program (WFP), and the World Health Organization.

¹⁹⁰ Interviews with the Sierra Leone UNCT gender focal points, Freetown, 3 November 2004.

¹⁹¹ Interviews with Liberia UNCT gender focal points, Monrovia, 8-16 November 2004.

¹⁹² Interview with a Liberia UNCT gender focal point, Monrovia, 11 November 2004.

¹⁹³ Interview with Liberia UNCT acting gender focal point, Monrovia, 9 November 2004.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with WiPNET Program Assistant, Monrovia, 11 November 2004.

between the women and the UN agencies, and other NGOs because of their trusted relationship within the community.

On the other hand, some UN agencies admitted outright that they were extremely wary of working with local CSOs. One UNDP Human Rights Officer in Liberia went as far as to say that 80% of the local NGOs were formed by people who woke up one day, decided they wanted to earn some money, and went to the Ministry of Planning to register as an NGO. In her opinion, what the local NGOs need is technical capacity building programs where they can learn how to lobby governments, NGOs, and donors. Particularly, local NGOs would need to set goals, articulate a strategic vision and be able to write a basic but coherent project proposal. However, the UNDP officer also admitted that it was really not in the best interests of the UN or INGOs to offer this type of capacity building, because in reality they were all fighting for the same pot of funding.

Nearly every UN agency and INGO in Liberia is familiar with the gender mainstreaming strategy and most identify women as one of their priority areas. However, when a problem arises they are quick to pawn it off as another agency's responsibility – something that is easy enough to do, given the complex interdependency these groups have with each other, especially in regard to IDP camps. Furthermore, most groups, including local NGOs, are quick to point out statistics which showed that women are members of decision-making committees and have been consulted throughout the planning and implementation phases of their programs. However, when asked how well the women have been able to really participate and what contributions they have specifically made, the reply is usually, “it is a problem”. The women are there, but they are still not speaking.

CONCLUSION

Though there are certain differences between the organizational structure of UNAMSIL and that of UNMIL, including the inclusion and placement of the Senior Gender Advisor, the realities and challenges in the field remain very similar. With the passage of resolution 1325, women and girls have been highlighted at the policy-making levels, yet this policy has not always translated into action. At an operational level, resolution 1325 has made many notable strides, especially with respect to personnel training; gender-specific accommodations and facilities for female ex-combatants; increased collaboration with local women's groups; and raising overall awareness throughout the mission about the importance of including different perspectives into their work and providing sex-disaggregated data. However, along with the achievements, there have also been shortcomings. The Senior Gender Advisor post was filled after many of the operational plans had already been established. This forced the GA to address many gender issues in an *ad hoc* manner, which is exactly what she was hired to prevent. Furthermore, budgeting constraints seriously restrict the number and reach of initiatives undertaken especially outside of Monrovia. Additionally, there are issues that seem to be beyond the reach of both missions. These problems stem from the reliance on contributing Member States to properly train their military troops and CIVPOL officers, as well as the availability of qualified women to work within the mission. Many of these problems

could be overcome through fostering more cooperative and less competitive working relationships between the different stakeholders working in Liberia. This includes the relationships between UNMIL and the UNCT, in which the presence of the OGA seems to have exacerbated rather than eased tensions. While these challenges must be acknowledged, the improvements made should not go unnoticed either.

The mission in Liberia along with International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and the National Elections Commission (NEC) are preparing for Liberia's first democratic elections after years of war. Scheduled for late 2005, this election will be critically important for the future of Liberia.¹⁹⁵ These elections will also determine the nature and duration of the ongoing UN mission. Thus far, preparations for the elections have been slow and fraught with a lack of resources. Many organizations warn that without the inclusion of refugees and IDPs, women, ex-combatants, and the uneducated in the elections process, fighting may be a reality in Liberia's future. For women, their status in society has remained fundamentally the same; largely sidelined by the political process.¹⁹⁶ If their exclusion in the national elections follows this trend, women will continue to fare poorly within Liberian society. The positive note is that civil society is vibrant and fighting for a place within the political arena and that UNMIL formally recognizes the importance of women in Liberia; it is now a question of how much these advancements will impact gender relations in the long-term.

¹⁹⁵ UNHCR is also helping with the efforts of registering IDPs throughout the country in time for the national elections. Other efforts by UNHCR include a mass repatriation effort to get Liberians back and settled in their place of origin in order to participate in the electoral process.

¹⁹⁶ The Senior Gender Advisor has expended a considerable amount of her time working to include gender-sensitive language into the National Elections Bill, which she was ultimately successful in accomplishing. However, a UN Volunteer in the UNMIL Electoral Assistance Division expressed serious doubts over the capability of the NGTL to carry out the elections at all, let alone make special provisions to ensure the participation of women as voters or candidates. In his opinion, if the elections were going to happen in any free and fair way, UNMIL must take the lead, although they are mandated to "support" the NGTL. The interview was conducted one year before the elections were scheduled and little had been done beyond developing a general information campaign. The UNMIL Volunteer could not recall any specific measures aimed towards women although he was aware of resolution 1325 and some of the work the OGA was doing.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The August 2000 Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations (the Brahimi Report) identified key areas in need of improvement within multidimensional peacekeeping operations. Included were specific recommendations aimed at enhancing the capacity of the DPKO in executing its core mission, which is carrying out the planning and management of integrated civilian and military peacekeeping operations. Regrettably, however, scant attention was given to the importance of gender consideration into these missions. This oversight was partially mitigated two months later with the passage of Security Council Resolution 1325, when the Security Council officially recognized that gender equality is critical to peace and security. The impact of the resolution can be seen in the UN's recent emphasis on gender within its work. Yet, like many of the Report's recommendations, systematic institutionalization of new policies and lessons learned has been a challenge. This can often be attributed to Member States' lack of will and inadequate financial support. The UN is the sum of its parts, and Member States must recognize and accept that they possess primary responsibility for UN reform. Failure to provide the necessary support and resources has contributed to the creation of a UN system that is frequently disjointed and peace support operations that are largely reactive. This UN system is deficient in addressing the needs as well as utilizing the skills of women, and ultimately including gender-specific planning and implementation into peace support operations.

While we ponder these challenges, women and girls in war-torn countries are being tortured and abused at levels that constitute genocide, war crimes, and grave violations of humanitarian law. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in a 63-page draft report entitled "*In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*", presented to the General Assembly on 21 March 2005, calls for radical change in UN functioning. Specifically, Annan urges Member states to adopt "the most far-reaching reforms in the history of the UN."¹⁹⁷ These reforms should extend to the DPKO and translate into improved operational performance in the field. This will better protect women and girls, as well as further promote the gender equality goal implicit in Security Council Resolution 1325.

The recommendations that follow – to the UN Member States, to the UN (particularly, DPKO) and to the Gender Advisors themselves – do not purport to cover the entirety of necessary reform. Rather, the recommendations are a reflection of insight gained in the field and offer operational-level perspectives on what should and can be done with a little more effort and 'political will'.

¹⁹⁷ United Nations General Assembly. Fifty-ninth session, A/59/2005, 21 March 2005. <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/report-largerfreedom.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEMBER STATES

The Participation of Women in National Armies

National armies should implement specific measures to increase the participation of women in their security forces. These actions should specifically focus on units and individuals earmarked for peacekeeping operations, and more critically, on recruiting women in Military Observer positions. This should be particular priority for the top ten UN troop-contributing countries: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Ethiopia, South Africa, Uruguay, Jordan, and Kenya. Increasing the number of women in missions will have many benefits including making troops in the field more approachable, and maintaining a diverse force that can better identify and attend to gender-specific issues in the field. However, the presence of women in missions will not necessarily translate into less misconduct by UN personnel. Therefore, there must be simultaneous measures to increase the accountability of mission staff.

Increasing the Accountability UN Personnel

Member States should hold civilian and military personnel, as highly visible representatives of the UN, accountable for their actions. This can be accomplished by implementing clear and transparent accountability measures. For example, if an individual is dismissed from a mission for violating the UN Code of Conduct, the government should provide the UN with the status of that individual - whether he or she has been prosecuted, reprimanded, etc. It must be made clear to troops during their pre-deployment training that they will be disciplined for any violation of the Geneva Conventions, UN codes, international humanitarian and human rights law, or any other relevant codes or conventions. This is required for creating and maintaining a professional working environment for civilian and military staff.

The Obligation of Member States to Contribute

Member States should promptly pay their assessed contributions to all missions. Delays may seriously hinder the ability of a mission to carry out their work in the field. Contributing countries must also provide agreed upon human and material resources without impediments. Countries, especially the more developed, must support the long-term rehabilitation and reintegration of former combatants, internally displaced persons, and others in need. This will enable the UN to continue to address the more short-term security imperatives while also addressing the long-term peacebuilding needs of a country.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

The Participation of Women in UN Missions

The UN should encourage Member States to contribute female personnel to missions. Providing incentives to Member States to increase gender parity in their security forces may aid in achieving this objective. Recruitment of female personnel is particularly important for mission leadership positions, including Military Observer and Civilian Police posts. This can only be done after gender-appropriate housing, medical facilities, etc. have been established for female personnel serving in missions.

Early Hiring and Promotion of Gender Positions

The UN has recognized that Senior Gender Advisor positions are essential to each mission. Therefore, the UN should hire the Senior Gender Advisor during the planning phases of each mission and mission survey teams should include a gender expert. This may require the DPKO Senior Gender Advisor to create a pool of qualified candidates that are available for immediate hire and deployment. Placement of this post or office should ensure a direct reporting line to the SRSG, and appropriate access to senior staff.

Appropriate Resource Allocation for the Office of the Gender Advisor

To ensure that the OGA's staffing and programmatic needs are met, DPKO should provide each OGA with a specific and adequate budget. Moreover, the gender experts in the field should be allocated a modest budget so they are not reliant on the will of others in the mission to undertake initiatives within their specific line of expertise.

Increased Accountability for Senior Staff

The UN must place a greater emphasis on the responsibility of the SRSG and mission managers to gender mainstream their policies and programs. UN Headquarters should conduct an exit interview at the end of each mission to ensure that that senior staff are not redeployed if they have disregarded gender policy.

Increased Collaboration of Gender Experts in the Field

The UN should provide a forum for collaboration among Gender Advisors. The DPKO Senior Gender Advisor could chair annual meetings in New York, in order to share individual experiences and expertise. This would increase information sharing between the missions and aid in institutionalizing gender mainstreaming. It is especially important to provide these opportunities for Gender Advisors serving within the same region, such as between UNAMSIL, UNMIL, and UNOCI, in order to collaborate and develop cross-regional strategies.¹⁹⁸ This would help to identify lessons learned and best practices between missions.

¹⁹⁸ The UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) could play a coordinating role in this.

Improved Complaint Procedures

The DPKO and the SRSG should place greater importance on disseminating information on procedures by which complaints can be lodged against UN staff - to all UN personnel, international and local NGOs, and host communities. Furthermore, when grievances are made, they should be followed by transparent investigative mechanisms and communication with the appropriate parties.

Making Skills Training “Marketable”

The UN should conduct a market analysis before skills-training programs are offered as part of reintegration and rehabilitation processes. This analysis should survey the value of each potential employment option and the viability of participants to assume those types of employment. Skills training assessments should be regionally appropriate (i.e. which cities are in need of mechanics, what regions are ideal for growing which crops, etc.). The resulting analysis should be shared with international and local NGOs to enable them to disperse their own resources to appropriate populations and regions. This may contribute to a reduction in the large numbers of ex-combatants and displaced persons relocating to capital cities without marketable skills. Assessments should include gender-disaggregated data so that training does not reinforce gender stereotypes.

Non-Traditional Skills Training

The UN should encourage men and women, where interest is expressed, to engage in activities outside their traditional gender roles. For example, the UN could encourage women to become mechanics, etc. This would help dispel stereotypes regarding gender capabilities. These options may be especially appealing to female ex-combatants who have often experienced changing gender roles with their military service.

Supporting the Resettlement of Ex-Combatants and the Internally Displaced

The UN must provide incentives for ex-combatants and the internally displaced to resettle in their communities of origin. This requires support for host communities attempting to reintegrate ex-combatants and the internally displaced. Implementation of this recommendation would require close collaboration between the OGA and the Public Information Section. While there may be budgetary implications, it also could be a highly cost-effective way of promoting sustainable peace in rural areas as has been the case in many missions such as UNMIL.

Document “Best Practices”

The UN should document successful initiatives that focus on gender perspectives at the mission level. For example, the Public Information Section in Liberia should document and share the successes they have had working with women’s groups throughout the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER ADVISORS

Development of a ‘Concept of Operations’

The Senior Gender Advisor should develop a ‘Concept of Operations’ in addition to their work plan, to detail their specific role within the mission. This should be distributed to senior management and made available to all mission personnel. Doing so would reduce confusion regarding the duties of the Gender Advisor. This recommendation was emphasized during the KAIPTC/Clingendael Workshop. At this Workshop, Gender Advisors stated that other mission personnel were often unaware of their work or what their responsibilities entailed. Consequently, this created mistrust, especially between military personnel and the Gender Advisors. The Gender Advisor, through a detailed Concept of Operations would be able to interact more effectively with military personnel by adopting this military-based operational tool.

Conducting UNCT Gender Theme Group Meetings

The Senior Gender Advisors must consider whether or not they can effectively chair UNCT Gender Theme Group meetings. UN missions generally lead and coordinate all aspects of peace implementation, including such meetings. However, the Senior Gender Advisors must objectively evaluate whether their schedules allow them to play this role. One alternative would be to elect a leader from outside the mission to lead the meetings. Collaboration with UN agencies and local groups can be mutually beneficial if strong and productive partnerships are formed.

Partnering with Civil Society Groups

Finally, Gender Advisors should continue to do their utmost to facilitate meaningful interaction with civil society groups. This is instrumental in transferring capacity from international to local organizations. Local civil society organizations, especially women’s groups that are closest to communities and can greatly improve the UN’s monitoring and implementation capacity. Such organizations can act as gender mainstreaming ‘force multipliers’ - for the mission, UN agencies, and INGOs.

APPENDIX 1

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously on 31 October 2000. Resolution (S/RES/1325) is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. The text of Resolution 1325 reads as follows:

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. **Urges** Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. **Encourages** the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. **Urges** the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. **Further** urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. **Expresses** its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide to 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 peace-building measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in

preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. **Urges** Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. **Calls** on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements; (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. **Calls** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention Security Council - 5 - Press Release SC/6942 4213th Meeting (PM) 31 October 2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. **Calls** on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. **Emphasizes** the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. **Calls** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998;

13. **Encourages** all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. **Reaffirms** its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. **Expresses** its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. **Invites** the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. **Requests** the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter."¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1325 (2000), 31 October 2000.
http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf

APPENDIX 2**LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS**

ACS	American Colonization Society
AFELL	Association of Female Lawyers in Liberia
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All Peoples Congress
ATU	Anti-Terrorism Unit
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CCSEA	Coordination Committee on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
CDF	Civil Defense Forces
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIVPOL	Civilian Police
Clingendael	Conflict Research Unit of the Research Department of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations
CPA	Child Protection Advisor
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization & Reintegration
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECW	Enhanced Commitments to Women
EO	Executive Outcomes
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FC	Force Commander
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FSU	Family Support Unit
GA	Gender Advisor
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	Interim Care Center
ICG	International Crisis Group

IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGNU	Interim Government of National Unity
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IMATT	International Military Advisory and Assistance Team
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
JIU	Joint Implementation Unit
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
LWI	Liberian Women's Initiative
MARWOPNET	Mano River Union Women Peace Network
MILOBS	Military Observers
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
NCDDR	National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
NCDDRR	National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
NEC	National Elections Commission
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRA	National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly
NPRC	National Provision Ruling Council
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
NUPI	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OGA	Office of the Gender Advisor
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women
PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
PSO	Peace Support Operations
QIPS	Quick-impact Projects
RFTF	Results-Focused Transition Framework
RUF	Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone
SCSL	Special Court for Sierra Leone
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGA	Senior Gender Advisor
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SGTM	Standardized Generic Training Modules
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLPP	Sierra Leone Peoples Party
Sobels	Soldiers by day, rebels by night

SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
STM	Standardized Training Module
TES	Training and Evaluation Service
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement of Liberia
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte D'Ivoire
UNOL	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Liberia
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UPCC	UNAMSIL Personnel Conduct Committee
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WiPNET	Women in Peacebuilding Network

