

Lesson 2.7



Women, Peace and Security

Aim, Relevance and Learning Outcomes

Aim

To explain the duties of UN peacekeepers in implementing the women, peace and security (WPS) mandate of the UN Security Council.

Relevance

As UN peacekeepers, the UN expects you to protect and promote human rights, including the human rights of women and girls. You have a duty to protect the human rights of women and girls affected by conflict. This includes protecting women and girls from sexual violence and helping victims and survivors.

This lesson explains the importance of promoting the UN standard of equality between men and women and boys and girls, especially after conflict. You must be a role model and promote gender equality in all your conduct – in your work and in your leisure time while deployed.

Slide 1



2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Aim

- To explain the duties of UN peacekeepers in implementing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) mandate of the UN Security Council

Relevance

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- You have a duty to protect the human rights of women and girls affected by conflict. This includes protecting women and girls from sexual violence and helping victims and survivors.

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Learning Outcomes

Learners will be able to:

1. Explain the differences between sex and gender and the importance of gender equality, and gender mainstreaming to effective mandate implementation, with reference to other key terms in the UN's approach.
2. Explain the different impact that conflict has on women and girls, men and boys.
3. Explain how women are both victims of conflict and key partners and leaders for peace in the activities of UN peacekeeping operations.
4. List actions that support gender equality in UN peacekeeping – understand them and be ready to take or support needed actions when deployed.

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Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the differences between sex and gender and the importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming to effective mandate implementation, with reference to other key terms in the UN's approach.
2. Explain the different impact that conflict has on women and girls, men and boys.
3. Explain how women are both victims of conflict and key partners and leaders for peace in the activities of UN peacekeeping operations.
4. List actions that support gender equality in UN peacekeeping – understand them and be ready to take or support needed actions when deployed.

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Trainer Tips: Use introductory slides to introduce the aim, relevance, learning outcomes and lesson overview. Key messages in this lesson may be a challenge to explain and to absorb. Refer to Lesson Support for a broader guide and explanation of how to begin this lesson and utilize key messages effectively.

Lesson Map



Minimum lesson duration: 45 minutes (including *Learning Activity 2.7.1*).

Lesson Content	Pages	Slides
Required Learning Activity 2.7.1: Differences between women and men – sex or gender?	4	3
Definitions	5–10	4–6
The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in UN Peacekeeping	11–15	7–9
Legal Framework	16–19	10–11
Policy Guidance	20–21	12
Partnerships in Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda	22–23	13
Roles and Responsibilities in the Peacekeeping Mission	23–28	14–16
How Individual UN Peacekeepers Support the Women, Peace and Security Agenda	29–30	17
Lesson Closing	31	-
Handout - Summary of Key Messages	32–33	-

Optional Learning Activities	
Learning Activity 2.7.2: Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls	See <i>2.7 Learning Support</i>
Learning Activity 2.7.3: Women, Peace, Power - 20 years of UNSCR 1325	
Learning Activity 2.7.4: Equal Treatment – Unequal Results	



Trainer Tips: See 2.7 Learning Support for tips on starting the lesson, learning activity instructions, optional learning activities, learning evaluation and references.

The Lesson



Key Message 1: As a UN peacekeeper it is your **responsibility to protect** the human rights of women and girls affected by conflict and promote UN standards of equality between men and women and boys and girls – especially after conflict.

Required Learning Activity 2.7.1

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Required Learning Activity 2.7.1: Differences between Men and Women – Sex or Gender?

Purpose: To distinguish sex-based differences from gender-based differences between men and women

Time: 15 minutes

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Differences Between Men and Women – Sex or Gender?

Method	Brainstorm, discussion – with option of group work
Purpose	To distinguish sex-based differences from gender-based differences between men and women, and consider how peacekeepers need to understand these differences and common gender stereotypes so their attitudes and stereotypes don't undermine equality and human rights.
Time	10–15 minutes

See 2.7 Learning Support for instructions.

Definitions

Key Words and Terms - Sex, Gender, Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming



Trainer Tips: Note that definitions of key words and terms for the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda and gender equality are introduced incrementally in the lesson, not all at once. This first section introduces core terms of sex and gender and gender equality. Following this, their application and relevance in peacekeeping is covered, followed by expanded definitions of key words and terms that explain the UN's approach to this cross-cutting thematic priority (gender mainstreaming, gender balance, gender parity, gender equity).

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Definitions

The sex of a person is:	The gender of a person:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biologically defined• Usually determined at birth• Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is socially constructed• Differs and varies across cultures and times• Results in different roles, responsibilities, opportunities, needs and constraints for women and men, girls and boys

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Key Message 2: Gender and sex have different meanings. The differences are significant to peacekeepers' understanding of UN values and approaches. One key difference is that the sex of a person is biologically defined while gender is socially constructed.

Sex and Gender Explained

Sex refers to biological differences between women and men. Examples are chromosomes, anatomy and hormones. "Men's voices break at puberty, women's do not" is a statement about the sexual differences between women and men.

A person's sex is:

- Biologically defined
- Usually determined at birth
- Universal.

Gender refers to what a society considers proper or fitting for women and men – behaviour, actions, expectations and roles. For example: “In Ancient Egypt, men stayed at home and wove cloth. Women handled family business. Women inherited property and men did not.” These are statements about gender differences. These differences vary in different eras or times, societies and cultures. Some cultures recognize more than two genders.



Trainer Tips: *Ask participants to reflect on their own societies and who is responsible for different kinds of work:*

- *Mainly men or mainly women?*
- *Who cares for children?*
- *Who is active in politics?*
- *Who teaches?*
- *Who is in private business?*
- *Who joins the military?*

Certain work that a society associates primarily with one sex illustrates how gender applies in reality.

Gender is:

- Social characteristics – not biological differences – that define a woman's or a man's social meaning and the value given to being a woman or a man
- Socially constructed, which means it is learned and can change (e.g. in some societies girls are given baby dolls as toys while boys are given weapons, a typical example of socialization of gender from childhood)
- Variable and differs within cultures and between cultures, and over time (e.g. in some countries, women are presidents and prime ministers, while in others, women are not permitted to speak in public). Two hundred years ago, there were no female doctors in the world, but nowadays women are doctors, lawyers and peacekeepers.
- The main influence on different roles, responsibilities, opportunities, needs and constraints for women, men, girls and boys in a society.

What gender does:

- It defines what a society expects women and men to do and to be in a culture.
- It shapes expectations, behaviour and roles for people, including what women and men deserve.
- Sets rules, norms, customs and practices through which biological differences may become social differences.



Trainer Tips: *Instructors are encouraged to use guided brainstorming to clarify the differences between the concepts and words sex and gender as used in the English language incrementally through the lesson. Many languages lack an accurate translation for the word gender, so it is often difficult to directly translate.*

If you are working with translators or interpreters in a training session, meet with them in advance to confirm clarity on all key concepts in the lesson. Reinforce the point that biological differences are not the same as differences in how societies shape the behaviour of men and women. The word gender is used to describe such learned behaviour. Refer to the flipchart sheet with notes from brainstorming with learners about differences between the lives of their grandparents and their own generation, as detailed in the Learning Support file.

Ask participants if any of the noted points suggest stereotypes. Be ready with some examples from different relevant social contexts to prompt thought. For example: "Women are not good at maths and don't make good engineers." "Men don't show their feelings and never cry." "Women are the ones who have to look after children." "Men do not cook" or "Men do not make good nurses."

Draw learners' attention to gender stereotypes that surface throughout a training. Consistently use the ideas of gender and gender equality to reinforce clear understanding by showing how stereotypes undermine full equality.

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Definitions

Gender Equality

- Women and men, girls and boys have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities
- The interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration

Gender Mainstreaming

- International community's approach to greater gender equality
- Integrates gender considerations

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Key Message 3: Inequality exists between men and women in all societies. Gender stereotypes are at the root of discrimination against women. All UN Member States have committed to increase gender equality.



Trainer Tips: *Pause the lesson for a moment. Ask participants if they have any questions. Are the basic ideas clear? Does gender as a social construct make sense, distinct from biological sex? If not, take more time to build foundational understanding. If yes, ask: "So what do you think gender equality means?" Encourage open discussion. Note key words from points learners raise, grouping related ones together. Refer to points on the flipchart sheet as you move through the rest of the lesson, building on participants' knowledge.*

Gender equality means that women and men and boys and girls have equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities. It means no discrimination because of sex or gender. It means a society where women and men and boys and girls can equally fulfil their potential in all private and public areas – social, economic, political, religious. Equal treatment means the interests, needs and priorities of women and men receive the same consideration and weight.

Equality does not mean women and men become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.

Gender equality is a social issue that concerns and engages men as well as women and is important as:

- A fundamental human right
- A precondition for and indicator of sustainable peace and development.

Gender mainstreaming is the approach the international community takes to achieving greater gender equality. Gender mainstreaming integrates gender considerations into all planned actions for all people, both women and men.

Slide 6



2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Definitions

Gender Mainstreaming

- The process of assessing implications of planned action for women and men.
- The ultimate goal is gender equality.

Gender Mainstreaming in UN Peacekeeping

- Strong understanding of how conflict affects women, compared with men, and girls compared with boys
- Better-informed: does not reinforce past discriminations and social inequalities

UN CPTM 2025 Slide 6



Key Message 4: Discriminatory laws, policies and practices prevent women and girls from enjoying equal rights. They also perpetuate gender inequality. The UN and Member States support equality, including through gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming as an approach is also described as **integrating a gender perspective**. It means:

- To consistently consider gender and integrate gender considerations into decisions and actions
- To assess the implications of any planned action – legislation, policies, programmes and decisions – for women and men and girls and boys and take necessary actions to promote **equal results**.

The goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective is greater gender equality.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective integrates the concerns and experiences of women and men into all work, to ensure that:

- Women and men benefit equally
- Inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of both men and women.



Trainer Tips: *This definition of gender mainstreaming comes from the 1997 agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).*

Gender Mainstreaming in UN Peacekeeping Contexts

Gender mainstreaming leads to:

- A good understanding of different needs, priorities and potentials of women and men and girls and boys in a country that can improve mandate implementation
- An equally strong understanding of how conflict has affected the lives of women compared with men, and girls compared with boys
- Better-informed decisions about actions for greater equality, e.g. legislation, policies, programmes and decisions, ensuring that actions:
 - Do not make matters worse for any groups in the local population or reinforce past discrimination
 - Redress social inequalities in a host country such as women not being involved in decision-making processes.



Trainer Tips: *Bridge into the next part of the lesson by noting that conflict affects people in both the same ways and in different ways, building directly on Lesson 2.4 and related coverage in Module 1.*

Ask:

- *What effects are the same for men and women?*
- *What effects are different for men and women?*

Use the lesson text to fill in gaps and deepen understanding.

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in UN Peacekeeping

Slide 7



2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls

- Women and girls often experience conflict differently from men and boys
- They are more at risk of violence due to social inequalities
- They are vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation – rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, and trafficking.



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Key Message 5: UN peacekeeping gives special attention to women and girls in conflict as they experience conflict differently to men and boys due to gender norms and roles. This is known as the **women, peace and security (WPS) agenda**, which is guided by international law and UN Security Council resolutions.

Women and girls and men and boys experience conflict in the same ways and in different ways. During armed conflict civilians may die, be forcibly displaced, injured by landmines or other weapons and lose their livelihoods. Women and girls and men and boys **share these experiences and are equally at risk**. However, there are **important differences** in the experiences of women and girls and men and boys.

Women and girls are highly disadvantaged and at heightened risk of violence in times of conflict. They also have less access to power, authority, negotiation and decision-making because of discrimination.

Lesson 2.6 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence provides more information.



Trainer Tips: Invite learners to identify specific ways that women's and men's lives change during and after violent conflict. Use the following lists to prompt and amplify points made by training participants. Refer to content covered in *Lesson 2.5 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* and *Lesson 2.6 Child Protection*.

During a conflict:

- Women and girls must work harder to get food, fuel and water, which are tasks associated with their gender roles, and they may be at risk while doing these daily tasks
- Men find it harder to support their families as providers, which is often part of their society's gender identity for men
- Men may take up arms in large numbers and women may take up or be forced to take up roles in armed groups, including as combatants
- Women may be left in communities taking on new roles while men engage in fighting
- Women may have more people to take care of, including injured people, and may have fewer resources to do so
- Combatants may abduct and rape women and girls, use them as sex slaves and "bush wives"
- Combatants may forcefully conscript boys into combat and use them as servants or sex slaves.

After a conflict:

- Men and women may be unable to find work or a way to get money to live on
- Women in particular struggle with breaks in food and water supplies
- Men may be traumatized, become disillusioned and frustrated and resort to violence, and women may too
- Men returning to families and communities may resent that women have taken on new roles, experiencing these as a threat to their gender identities
- Family and community may reject abducted women and girls and finding partners may be difficult for them, especially if they have had children from rape and conflict-related sexual violence
- Women may resort to prostitution or trading of sex to survive
- Men may engage in formal peace negotiations while women may only be able to take part in informal peacebuilding activities
- Crimes committed during conflict may never be punished, including sexual violence targeted at women and girls.

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Key Partners in Peace

- Women and girls are not just victims in conflict
- They are actors in conflict and peace
- They have a critical role in peace and security
- They are sources of authority, information and change



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Key Message 6: The UN in its women, peace and security (WPS) agenda gives special attention to women and girls as **key partners** for conflict resolution and promoting peace. Women and girls are not only victims and survivors in armed conflict. They are also active participants in conflict and peace, and active agents of change.

Women and girls have a critical role in peace and security that is not always recognized or tapped. Women and girls are key partners as:

- Sources of authority
- Sources of information
- Agents of positive and transformative change.

Women may have more informal decision-making powers in a community than might be expected. When men go to war, women take on the responsibilities of the absent men. As heads of the family or households, they provide for their families and make all family decisions.

Women also have access to valuable information about:

- How the community works
- Fighting or tensions in the community
- Arms caches and planned violence
- Potential threats.

Women combatants may have valuable information about fighting forces. In some countries, the moral authority of women as mothers, wives and daughters has been drawn upon to put an end to conflict.



Example – Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace

In 2003, a peace movement was started by women in Liberia to end the civil war. However, formal peace processes continue to exclude women. Men dominated at negotiation tables, but women were more prominent in informal peace activities, for example, peace marches, advocacy campaigns and civil society consultations. The pressure exerted by these activities led to the signing of a peace agreement. A leader of the group, Leymah Gbowee, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her work.

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Gender Equality

Gender equality is:

- An important goal in itself
- An issue of human rights
- Meaningful gender equality in post-conflict contexts:
 - Benefits peace and security
 - Contributes to durable and lasting peace.

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Key Message 7: Gender equality is an issue of human rights. It is relevant to peacekeepers because promoting greater gender equality benefits peace and security. When women are meaningfully involved in peace processes, research shows those processes are more effective and outcomes more durable and lasting.

Gender equality benefits society as a whole. Peace and security can only be achieved and sustained if all members of a society have equal access to opportunities, protection, resources and services, decision-making and basic rights.



Trainer Tips: *Human rights are introduced in Lesson 2.3. Reinforce links between human rights and the goal of maintaining peace and security. Connections between violent conflict and denial or violation or abuse of a group's human rights are not always clear, however strong, and do not always mean that one thing has caused the other. Help learners understand these links will assist them in connecting new learning about human rights to their UN peacekeeping role.*

Peace and security efforts that neglect women do not achieve their goals and can have negative impacts. Wrongs done to women in conflict often are not considered as serious as violations and abuses against men.

Ignoring human rights violations and abuses committed against women may:

- Slow national reconciliation and healing
- Negatively affect a peace process
- Perpetuate historical inequality and discrimination.

Research shows that peace processes are more effective and their outcomes more robust and long lasting when women are meaningfully involved. When women participate in peace talks, an agreement is more likely to be reached. The subsequent agreement is 35 per cent more likely to last at least 15 years. In numerous settings, women have demonstrated their ability to effectively promote dialogue and build trust between negotiating parties. Women have also shown that they can bridge divides and mobilize local and national coalitions that cross ethnic, religious, political and other divides that drive conflict.

Both men and women can contribute to ending discrimination. They can challenge attitudes, change behaviours and transform social roles.

UN peacekeeping operations and peacekeepers contribute to greater equality when they:

- Consult equally with women and girls as they do with men and boys about needs and priorities
- Provide women with equal chances to express their needs and priorities and take those into account in mission plans
- Argue for women having a full part in peace and political processes and their implementation
- Support the creation of safe and enabling environments for women taking part in in peace and political processes.

Legal Framework

Slide 10



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Legal Framework

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (UDHR, 1948)
- International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966)
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979)
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- Agreed Conclusions of ECOSOC Coordination Segment on Gender Mainstreaming (1997)
- Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
- Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action (2000).

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Key Message 8: The legal framework that guides UN peacekeeping obligates UN peacekeeping operations to promote gender equality and implement the WPS agenda. This obligation comes from:

- International human rights norms and standards
- UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.



Trainer Tips: Reinforce Key Message 8 by projecting and referencing Slide 10. Encourage trainees to continue to learn more about the legal frameworks that guide peacekeeping. Reinforce the legal framework introduced in Module One.

Gender equality is a goal to which governments and international organizations have committed. The UN Charter and other international instruments contain this goal.

International Human Rights Norms and Standards on Gender Equality

Obligations and commitments for States are found in the:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (UDHR, 1948)
- International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966)
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979)
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- Agreed Conclusions of ECOSOC Coordination Segment on Gender Mainstreaming (1997)
- Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
- Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action (2000).

Where Gender Equality and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda Fit in UN Peacekeeping Priorities



Trainer Tips: Consider making a poster or visual of the timeline for the WPS agenda, with key dates and the Security Council resolutions listed below. Use it to show how the Security Council have increased the attention they pay to this issue. Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is part of WPS and part of protection of civilians (POC). Note that most learners do not need to know the full set of Security Council resolutions that form the WPS agenda. They do need to know that they exist and that the agenda has evolved over time with additional key measures.



Key Message 9: In 2000, the UN Security Council passed **resolution 1325**, the ground-breaking resolution on women, peace and security (WPS). Since then, the Security Council has adopted additional resolutions to guide the international community's commitments to women's rights in conflicts. These resolutions reflect the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Four Pillars of the WPS Agenda

- **Participation:** calls for women to participate equally with men in peace, political and security decision-making processes.
- **Protection:** ensures that women and girls' rights are protected and promoted in conflict-affected situations and includes protection from SGBV.
- **Prevention** of all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict affected situations and includes fighting impunity – inclusion in conflict prevention.
- **Relief and recovery** focus on meeting women's and girl's specific humanitarian needs and reinforce women's capacities to act as leaders.

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Key Message 10: The four main pillars of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda are: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

Four pillars of the WPS agenda:

Security Council resolution 1325 in 2000 introduced the four pillars of the WPS agenda:

- **Participation**, which calls for women to participate equally with men in peace, political and security decision-making processes at national, local, regional and international levels.
- **Protection**, which seeks to ensure that women's and girls' rights are protected and promoted in conflict-affected situations and includes protection from sexual and gender-based violence.
- **Prevention**, which refers to the prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict-affected situations and includes fighting impunity and involving women in conflict prevention.
- **Relief and recovery**, which are focused on meeting women's and girls' specific humanitarian needs and reinforcing women's capacities to act as leaders in relief and recovery.

The Security Council resolutions on WPS include the following, which together form the WPS agenda:

- Security Council resolution 1325 (2000): Stresses the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in preventing and resolving conflicts, peacebuilding and peacekeeping.
- Security Council resolution 1820 (2008): Reinforces resolution 1325 by directly linking sexual violence as a tactic of war with women, peace and security issues.
- Security Council resolution 1888 (2009): Calls for the UN to deploy women protection advisers (WPAs) and sets up the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC). A follow-up to resolution 1820.
- Security Council resolution 1889 (2009): Calls for the development of indicators to monitor and measure progress on resolution 1325.
- Security Council resolution 1960 (2010): Focuses on monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements (MARA) on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).
- Security Council resolution 2106 (2013): Focuses on protection; builds on and deepens the WPS agenda on CRSV.
- Security Council resolution 2122 (2013): Focuses on participation; calls for further strengthening of women's engagement at all levels of decision-making.
- Security Council resolution 2242 (2015): Focuses on using gender analysis at all stages of the mission from start-up to drawdown and on increased accountability by senior mission leaders on gender equality.
- Security Council resolution 2467 (2019): Stresses justice and accountability, calls for support for women's civil society organizations and requests a gap assessment and recommendations on support for local, national and regional efforts for survivors of sexual violence in conflict.
- Security Council resolution 2493 (2019): Calls for the implementation of the previous nine resolutions and incorporates the WPS Commitments in Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

These SCRs elaborate on the four pillars of the WPS agenda and guide UN peacekeeping operations in advancing gender equality in post-conflict societies. Most peacekeeping missions have robust women, peace and security priorities integrated in their mandates, included as prioritized tasks of missions.

Policy Guidance

Gender-Responsive UN Peacekeeping Operations Policy (2024)

Slide 12



2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Gender Responsiveness UN Peacekeeping Policy (2024)

The principles that guide DPO on gender equality:

- Accountability
- Inclusiveness
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Full, equal and meaningful participation of women

Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security **perspectives** should be **systemically integrated** in all plans, policies, analysis and reports of the UN peacekeeping operations.

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Key Message 11: The **Gender-Responsive UN Peacekeeping Operations Policy (2024)** guides peacekeeping staff on how to operationalize gender equality and the women, peace and security (WPS) mandates in compliance with the 10 Security Council resolutions.

The aim of the policy is to ensure a strong institutional culture that promotes accountability and leadership in peacekeeping operations at headquarters, regional centres and missions. Compliance with the 2024 policy is required:

- By military, police and civilians
- In the field and at headquarters
- By contractors and consultants.

The following principles guide the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) on gender equality:

Accountability: Ensuring that all uniformed and civilian staff and senior leadership advance the principles of gender equality and WPS mandates, in peacekeeping operations, priorities and functions.

Inclusiveness: Ensuring men, women, boys and girls and other population group's needs, priorities and contributions in peacekeeping settings are valued, included and addressed.

Equality and non-discrimination: Ensuring that women and men equally participate in and benefit from policies, programmes, opportunities and activities in peacekeeping.

Full, equal and meaningful participation of women: Ensuring women's participation whether direct or indirect (i.e. through people acting on their behalf), substantive engagement and influence on outcomes in mission processes.

The policy also emphasizes gender parity, ensuring that:

Staffing profiles at headquarters and in missions reflects institutional commitments to the equal representation of women and men in all positions, ranks and levels.

This includes the following:

- Recruitment and procurement policies and practices, training and communications initiatives, are to be in line with the System-wide Gender Parity Strategy and the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy
- Targets are to be achieved as set out in these strategies
- Gender-responsive leadership is promoted
- All peacekeepers are empowered to live up to their fullest potential through enabling, safe and respectful environments.

The policy requires a gender perspective to be integrated in all plans, policies, activities, analyses and reports. This is done through the gender mainstreaming approach introduced above.

Gender analysis always uses data disaggregated by sex and age for comparison and for monitoring trends. All reports need to present this information and analysis.



Trainer Tips: *The information on gender analysis helps further clarify the difference between the two key ideas, sex and gender, introduced at the beginning of the lesson. Reinforce learners' shared understanding. Remind them that sex is biological while gender is social. The relationship between them is as important as clear definitions. Gender analysis informs decision-making, planning and intervention, to better support gender equality. All information needs to be analysed separately for men and boys and women and girls.*

Partnerships in Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Slide 13



Key Message 12: Implementing the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda requires close strategic partnerships across UN agencies, national governments and all key stakeholders including women's organizations.

WPS resolutions and mandates have wide scope. **All UN entities in conflict contexts are to implement the WPS agenda in their work.**

Different entities focus on different parts:

- UN Women
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

National governments hold primary responsibility for human rights and equality, as duty bearers. The peacekeeping mission and its UN partners support national partners. They advocate for and promote gender equality, women's rights, women's empowerment and the WPS agenda, through:

- National defence and police institutions
- Non-governmental and community-based organizations

- Women's and women-led organizations and groups
- Feminist movements
- Local communities and leaders
- Faith based associations.

Local women's organizations have been typically overlooked as partners, but they hold great practical and strategic potential to positively influence peace.

Their gender expertise and familiarity with local gender perspectives can help strengthen and guide peace operations' programmes to ensure relevance to the local population.

Partnerships are also an opportunity for the peace operations to educate civil society and local actors on the mandate of a peacekeeping mission, the role of peacekeepers in supporting gender equality and the WPS agenda.

Men and women who serve as peacekeepers may need to advocate strongly with other national partners to ensure that local and national women-led organizations and women's human rights defenders have a legitimate place at every peace table. Equal representation does not happen automatically. The mission representatives have to advocate for it, create opportunities for it and hold other partners accountable for ensuring local women are taken seriously.

Roles and Responsibilities in the Peacekeeping Mission

Slide 14



2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Roles and Responsibilities in the Mission

Gender Advisers

- Provide strategic advice to SRSG/HOM
- Coordinate WPS implementation with all mission components
- Partner with host country, regional, local, community organizations

Gender Units

- Support gender mainstreaming in mission work
- Support political processes and governance structures; human rights protection and promotion

UN CPTM 2025 Slide 14



Key Message 13: The gender adviser or gender unit of the mission, where present, leads on facilitating the implementation of women, peace and security (WPS) mandates. Gender focal points are appointed in missions with no gender units or advisers to support implementing the WPS agenda.

Gender Advisers and Gender Units

In coordination with other divisions, sections and units, the gender unit undertakes the following tasks based on its mandate and scope of work:

- Providing strategic advice, guidance and technical support to senior leadership
- Operationalizing, facilitating and coordinating the implementation of the gender policy
- Strengthening the capacity of DPO and field mission personnel – civilian, police, military – to advance gender responsiveness, gender equality and WPS
- Conduct gender-responsive conflict analysis to inform mandate implementation
- Support the implementation of UN system-wide Gender Parity Strategy in collaboration with UN headquarters
- Forge strategic partnerships with relevant actors, such as host countries, communities, women civil society organizations and actors, regional and international partners, academia and think tanks
- Coordinate with military and police gender advisers on gender equality and WPS implementation to enhance capacities and facilitate smooth transitions during rotations.

The **gender unit** supports gender mainstreaming in mission priority areas, for example:

- Political processes and governance structures
- Human rights protection and promotion
- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)
- Security sector reform and governance (SSR&G)
- Mine action
- Legal, judicial and corrections reforms
- Prevention, protection and response to sex- and gender-based violence (SGBV)
- POC and CRSV.

Gender/WPS Focal Points are also appointed in UN peacekeeping operations without gender units.

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Related Roles

- **Gender Focal Points:** liaise and coordinate with the Gender Unit on gender equality/WPS, identify entry points for gender integration, bridge capacity and knowledge gaps and provide data and information.
- **Women Protection Advisers:** advise mission leadership, military, police and civilian components on addressing CRSV.
- **Military Gender Advisers:** advise military commanders and act as bridge between civilian and military components. Design and maintain the military gender action plan.
- **Police Gender Advisers:** assist UNPOL management in gender integration and lead efforts on integrating women's rights and gender equality.

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Key Message 14: Implementing the WPS agenda is also supported by civilian and uniformed gender or women, peace and security focal points, women's protection advisers and focal points for gender parity. The role of Women Protection Advisers is covered in more detail in *Lesson 2.5 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*.

Gender or Women, Peace and Security Focal Points

All substantive sections and units in DPO and field missions also appoint gender or women, peace and security focal points to support the implementation of WPS mandates. Their roles are to:

- Liaise and coordinate with the gender unit in the advancement and institutionalization of gender equality and WPS in their respective area of work, keeping abreast with gendered aspects of their mandate, WPS commitments and overall progress in their thematic area of coverage
- Identify entry points for gender integration in their area of work, forge partnerships and collaboration with gender units towards greater coherent and gender-responsive approaches
- Bridge capacity and knowledge gaps on gender equality and women, peace and security in relation to existing thematic area of peacekeeping work for better results
- Provide data and information on results, progress and gaps on gender integration in their area of work.

Military Gender Advisers and Focal Points

All UN Peace Operations are to have a force headquarters (FHQ) military gender adviser (MGA). The MGA will provide strategic advice on policy, doctrine and strategies on gender-responsive measures to the force commander.

The focal points are to:

- Ensure the participation of women and girls in early warning mechanisms and protection of civilians (POC) working groups
- Know how to respond to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and to whom to report incidents
- Know why and how they must conduct patrols that will prevent and protect civilians from CRSV and other human rights violations
- Provide monthly gender reports to the FHQ MGA, directly or through their sector level MGA where appropriate.

How the Military Component Implements the WPS Mandate

The military component is a cornerstone of UN peacekeeping. To effectively address the needs of women, men, girls and boys in a mission:

- The four pillars of SCR 1325 (2000) must be integrated.
- A gender perspective must be included in the work of the military component at strategic, operational and tactical levels, addressing:
 - The effective participation of women and girls
 - Meaningful opportunities for women and girls to articulate their needs and interests and take responsibilities, for example, in early warning mechanisms, protection strategies and quick impact projects.

The Office of Military Affairs is introducing a new engagement team (ET) capability. In time, all infantry battalions will ensure mixed patrolling is possible by incorporating trained ETs into their force structure, with at least 50 per cent women.

Police Gender Advisers and Focal Points

Police gender advisers implement the WPS mandate and related DPO policies and directives on gender integration and POC under the guidance and supervision of the head of police component (HOPC).

The police gender adviser:

- Assists UN Police (UNPOL) management in developing strategies, policies and programmes that integrate gender equality considerations

- Leads efforts to integrate women’s rights and gender equality commitments into the host State’s police and other law enforcement agencies.

Police gender focal points are identified in various departments, sections, sectors and team sites to:

- Complement the efforts of the police gender adviser
- Better coordinate efforts and promote gender integration.

Police gender advisers and focal points provide strategic advice to the police commissioner on gender equality and gender perspectives ensuring the specific needs of men, women, boys and girls and of any other groups present in the State are considered in UN Police operations activities and reports.

They should work closely with local law enforcement agencies, local communities and other stakeholders to mentor, train and ensure that (i) police response and posture is gender sensitive and responsive; (ii) community engagements are inclusive and representative; (iii) gender data and analysis feeds into situational awareness and early warning systems; and (iv) that decision-making is gender-responsive at all levels of policing work.

Police gender advisers and focal points also support efforts to have an equal number of men and women in uniformed components and the promotion of an enabling environment in mission settings.

How the Police Component Implements the WPS Mandate

UNPOL plays an integral role in supporting mandated tasks across peace operations, including POC. To effectively address the needs of women and girls, UNPOL integrates the four WPS pillars into its work at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. UNPOL has also adopted a gender-responsive approach in all police activities, including:

- The prevention, detection and investigation of crime
- The protection of persons and property
- The maintenance of public order and safety.

Please see the *DPO Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security Resource Package* for more detailed guidance on how peacekeepers implement the WPS mandate.



Reference

- DPO Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security Resource Package (2000).

Women's Protection Advisers (WPAs)

Women's protection advisers (WPAs) advise mission leadership, military, police and civilian components on addressing conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), which was covered in Lesson 2.6.

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

Other Units Contributing to WPS agenda

- Political affairs
- Civil affairs
- Human rights
- Child protection
- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
- Humanitarian affairs
- Security officers
- Military
- UN Police

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Key Message 15: All peacekeeping personnel should contribute to implementing women, peace and security (WPS) mandates in their daily work.

All UN peacekeeping personnel have a duty to promote gender equality in their work.

A cross section of units contributes to gender equality and the protection and participation of women and girls. Their work may involve:

- Security and political assessments of local communities
- Participation of women in political and peace processes
- Prevention and protection of women and girls from sexual violence
- Rebuilding of local institutions.

As part of integrating gender perspectives and the WPS agenda, these units must:

- Recognize women and girls as key partners
- Ensure their equal participation
- Engage with them as important sources of authority, information and support for positive change.

How Individual UN Peacekeepers Support the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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2.7 Women, Peace and Security 

What Individual Peacekeepers Can Do

- Consult widely
- Promote equality
- Observe carefully
- Investigate properly
- Report accurately
- Behave respectfully



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Key Message 16: All UN peacekeeping personnel have a duty to promote, protect and respect human rights and implement the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Through their official roles and personal conduct, all peacekeeping personnel contribute to ending discrimination against women and gender inequality.

Every society creates certain expectations about what women and men can and should do, say or how they can act. As UN peacekeeping personnel, your job is to uphold what is fair and just according to UN standards. **As UN personnel, you must promote UN standards of equality between men and women.**

Peacekeepers are ambassadors. They represent the UN and their country.

To eliminate discrimination against women and gender inequality and to implement the WPS mandate, all peacekeeping personnel must take action.

Individual peacekeepers support the WPS agenda in different ways.

You should be gender responsive. See things through a gender lens, which means taking on a gender perspective that looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles and relationships. Make sure you mainstream a gender perspective into all analysis, plans, policies, activities and reports.

Consult widely:

- Consult women and men – separately and together
- Consult elderly people and those who care for them
- Gather perspectives on the status of the community, its needs, threats to it, the impact of the conflict and the highest priorities of each group
- Get perspectives from different community leaders and groups
- Ensure no group is left out, especially groups of people who are more vulnerable or marginalized.

Promote equality. Make sure that as peacekeepers all help you give, any service you provide, any jobs or contracts you create benefit women and men equally. Support women’s empowerment, ensuring that as many women as men take a full part in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding forums.

Observe carefully. On patrol, or during any task, observe different activities of men and women. When and where do they carry them out? Where do women go to get food, fuel and water? Are they safe? Are special measures needed to ensure that women are and feel as safe as men? Consider security issues for children on the way to school and the different risks for boys and girls.

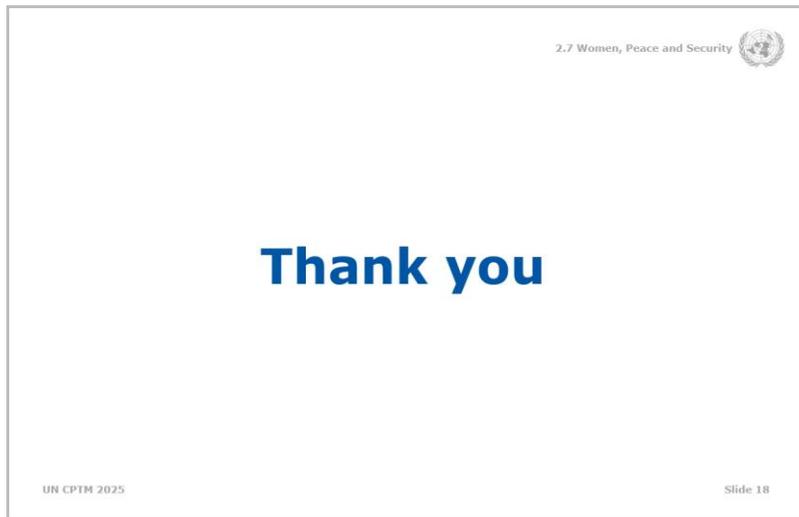
Investigate properly. Talk to women and men for a full picture. Do not assume that men can give you the whole picture or that they know what women think. Local women may be more comfortable talking to female peacekeeping personnel or talking in a group. Talk to women and men separately. Have both men and women in the interview teams and be in contact with diverse groups of local women, and women-led organizations. Where culturally challenging, have female peacekeeping personnel encourage women’s participation and trust. Make sure interpreters and translators understand the importance of accuracy and assigning of equal weight to inputs from women and men.

Report accurately. Make sure your reports reflect the realities for both women and men. Use a checklist of issues to cover in reports. Include relevant facts about the situations of women and men. Disaggregate data (i.e. list it separately) by sex and age in reports. Provide accurate summaries of differences between women’s and men’s views and inputs. Please refer to the chapter on *Collecting and Utilizing Data* in the *DPO Gender Equality and WPS Resource Package* for detailed guidance for data collection, analysis and reporting on gender and WPS.

Behave respectfully. Your behaviour can have a far-reaching impact. Support dignity and equality between women and men. Be aware of the power imbalance between peacekeeping personnel and the host population. You have money, mobility and access to food, water and other goods. The UN does not tolerate exploitation of local people. Women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. The UN has a strict zero-tolerance policy prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse. *Lesson 3.3 Conduct and Discipline* and *Lesson 3.4 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* establish UN standards in this regard.

Lesson Closing

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Trainer Tips: *If you have time, summarize the lesson, recalling the aim and learning objectives. Mention that the key messages support the learning objectives. Ask participants if they have questions. Ensure you distribute the Handout – Summary of Key Messages to all participants.*

Handout - Summary of Key Messages

Key Message 1: As a UN peacekeeper it is your **responsibility to protect** the human rights of women and girls affected by conflict and promote UN standards of equality between men and women and boys and girls – especially after conflict.

Key Message 2: Gender and sex have different meanings. The differences are significant to peacekeepers' understanding of UN values and approaches. One key difference is that the sex of a person is biologically defined while gender is socially constructed.

Key Message 3: Inequality exists between men and women in all societies. Gender stereotypes are at the root of discrimination against women. All UN Member States have committed to increase gender equality.

Key Message 4: Discriminatory laws, policies and practices prevent women and girls from enjoying equal rights. They also perpetuate gender inequality. The UN and Member States support equality, including through gender mainstreaming.

Key Message 5: UN peacekeeping gives special attention to women and girls in conflict as they experience conflict differently to men and boys due to gender norms and roles. This is known as the **women, peace and security (WPS) agenda**, which is guided by international law and UN Security Council resolutions.

Key Message 6: The UN in its women, peace and security (WPS) agenda gives special attention to women and girls as **key partners** for conflict resolution and promoting peace. Women and girls are not only victims and survivors in armed conflict. They are also active participants in conflict and peace, and active agents of change.

Key Message 7: Gender equality is an issue of human rights. It is relevant to peacekeepers because promoting greater gender equality benefits peace and security. When women are meaningfully involved in peace processes, research shows those processes are more effective and outcomes more durable and lasting.

Key Message 8: The legal framework that guides UN peacekeeping obligates UN peacekeeping operations to promote gender equality and implement the WPS agenda. This obligation comes from:

- International human rights norms and standards
- UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.

Key Message 9: In 2000, the UN Security Council passed **resolution 1325**, the ground-breaking resolution on women, peace and security (WPS). Since then, the Security Council has adopted additional resolutions to guide the international community's commitments to women's rights in conflicts. These resolutions reflect the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

Key Message 10: The four main pillars of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda are: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

Key Message 11: The **Gender-Responsive UN Peacekeeping Operations Policy (2024)** guides peacekeeping staff on how to operationalize gender equality and the women, peace and security (WPS) mandates in compliance with the 10 Security Council resolutions.

Key Message 12: Implementing the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda requires close strategic partnerships across UN agencies, national governments and all key stakeholders including women's organizations.

Key Message 13: The gender adviser or gender unit of the mission, where present, leads on facilitating the implementation of women, peace and security (WPS) mandates. Gender focal points are appointed in missions with no gender units or advisers to support implementing the WPS agenda.

Key Message 14: Implementing the WPS agenda is also supported by civilian and uniformed gender or women, peace and security focal points, women's protection advisers and focal points for gender parity. The role of Women Protection Advisers is covered in more detail in *Lesson 2.5 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*.

Key Message 15: All peacekeeping personnel should contribute to implementing women, peace and security (WPS) mandates in their daily work.

Key Message 16: All UN peacekeeping personnel have a duty to promote, protect and respect human rights and implement the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Through their official roles and personal conduct, all peacekeeping personnel contribute to ending discrimination against women and gender inequality.