



WOMEN, PEACE AND IDENTIFYING SECURITY: PILOTING MILITARY GENDER GUIDELINES IN UNIFIL

FINAL REPORT - JUNE 2014



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ACRONYMS

CIMIC	Civil Military Coordination
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
J1	Personnel Branch
J3	Operations Staff Branch
J5	Plans and Policy Staff Branch
J7	Training and Best Practices Branch
JOC	Joint Operations Command
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OGL	Observer Group Lebanon
OMA	Office of Military Affairs
TCC	Troop Contributing Country
MCOU	Military Coordination and Outreach Unit
NATO	North American Treaty Organisation
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMOs	United Nations Military Observers
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

From the planning to implementation, this project has truly been a collective effort of talented and committed individuals.

Thanks must go, first and foremost, to the Government of Ireland, without whose support this would not have been possible, in particular thanks to Col. Seamus McDermott.

I especially wish to thank Rana Rahal and Samar Zalghout, the UNIFIL Gender Team, whose unwavering support and dedication to this project made it a resounding success. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the numerous individuals who gave freely of their time to assist and guide us, including Capt. David Duff, Nadine Puechguirbal, Samuli Harju and the Gender team at DPKO/DFS Headquarters.

Special thanks to the Senior Management of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in particular Major General Paolo Serra, UNIFIL Head of Mission & Force Commander, whose support and commitment to promoting the goal of gender equality has allowed for the successful integration of gender perspectives across the Mission.

Gratitude is also given to all the battalions that participate in the UNIFIL Gender Military Task Force and the Gender Focal Points who have dedicated time and energy to guaranteeing that gender is made an essential part of the work of each battalion. A special thanks to the women and men of the Irish/Finn Battalion, for their openness and generosity in supporting this project and all the mainstreaming efforts of the Gender Team in UNIFIL.

On behalf of the Gender Team, I would like to extend special heartfelt thanks to the Municipalities of Bint Jbeil, Marjayoun and Tyre and in particular the courageous, remarkable women of South Lebanon, for their openness and enthusiasm and for inspiring us with their stories and hope for a peaceful and secure future.

With deepest thanks to you all.

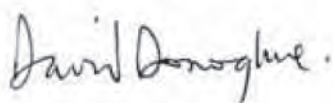


Clare Hutchinson
Gender Adviser
UNIFIL

Ireland is pleased to support the publication of this report and, through the involvement of the Irish-Finnish UNIFIL Battalion, to have had the opportunity to participate in the pilot programme. As a longstanding contributor to UN peacekeeping Missions, we are fully committed to supporting the integration of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations.

The implementation of UNSCR 1325 is an integral part of the pre-deployment training of Irish peacekeepers and their overseas assignments; it is a key element in enabling them to fully implement the operational duties of the peacekeeping Missions at which they serve. The Irish Defence Force is currently finalising its own Action Plan on 1325 which will ensure that a gender perspective is embedded across all elements of the organisation. The experience of participation in this pilot programme will also contribute to the continued development of policy and training in this area.

I believe that the approach to this project, in particular the strong support of the UNIFIL Force Commander and the inclusion of the local female population in this process, and the outcomes set out in this report can provide useful orientations for those responsible for integrating a gender perspective at other UN Missions and equally the regional organisations which conduct peacekeeping operations on behalf of the UN.



HE Ambassador David Donoghue
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

In October 2000 the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security. The resolution was hailed as a landmark resolution in that for the first time, the Security Council recognised the contribution women make during and post-conflict.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325, attention to gender perspectives within the international peace agenda has firmly been placed within the broader peace and security framework. Responding to the resolution, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support has committed to reinforcing the gendered aspects of peacekeeping in all its operations.

Integrating gender into the work of the military is built upon the understanding that women and men have different perceptions of security which demands appropriate action to be taken that includes assimilating both female and male perspectives into all areas of post-conflict peacemaking and peacekeeping.

For peacekeeping operations, the integration of a gender perspective is essential to effectively fulfil operational tasks. Consequently, it is imperative for peacekeeping personnel, at all levels, to respond appropriately to the different ways that women and men are affected by armed conflict and its aftermath. Women's particular interests and rights must be taken into consideration and the differential impact that conflict has on women and men must be addressed - especially by those who are mandated to serve and protect the post - conflict community.

As UNIFIL Force Commander, I am especially conscious that the activities of military components have a direct impact on the local population. Therefore, identifying and responding to all members of the community – women and men - is a necessary strategy to ensure that the concerns of all are taken into consideration and addressed.

In UNIFIL we are proud of the work that has taken place to incorporate a gender perspective into all elements of our military tasks. As one of the early adopters of the “DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military”, we have established a number of operationally effective mechanisms with which to implement a gender perspective across the Mission, including the implementation of a Military Gender Task Force and mandatory gender training for all military personnel.

Additionally, we actively promote best practices in gender mainstreaming; including the initiation of sporting activities specifically designed for local women; the establishment of medical clinics for women in the local community and the deployment of women peacekeepers whenever there is a need to interact with women of the community.

We are also working hard to ensure that throughout the Mission we are promoting gender balance and integrating a gender perspective into all our work. We have a robust network of military gender focal points who act as gender ambassadors in their battalions.

The issue of gender and security is a complex issue; and while resolution 1325 provides a foundation for engendering peace and security, it still requires constant vigilance. We therefore need to ensure that we make every attempt to institutionalise our efforts; to make the integration of gender sustainable and transferable, both as a concept and an operational tool.

Effectively integrating gender into peacekeeping military practice is no longer an option, it is an operational imperative.


Major General Paolo Serra
UNIFIL Head of Mission & Force Commander





WOMEN, PEACE AND IDENTIFYING SECURITY: PILOTING MILITARY GENDER GUIDELINES IN UNIFIL

Chapter 1

BACKGROUND

October 2000 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security. This ground-breaking resolution was the first to link women's experiences of conflict to the international peace and security agenda. The resolution emphasised the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and recognised the under-valued contributions women make in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The resolution also highlighted the necessity of engaging women in the on-going dialogue concerning peace and security.

Conflict causes tremendous suffering for all citizens equally, but women and men are affected differently. A woman's understanding of peace comes directly from her experience in conflict. It is therefore critical for all who work in post conflict settings to understand that a woman's different perception of peace and security must be taken into account especially by those who are mandated to serve and protect the post-conflict community.

Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 the United Nations has attempted on various levels, to assimilate gender issues throughout the organisation. Specifically, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) was requested to incorporate gender perspectives into all peacekeeping operations through the implementation of several actions including, ensuring that UN field operations include a gender component (OP5) and the development of gender training for peacekeeping personnel (OP6).

In 2006, DPKO convened a '*Policy Dialogue with Troop and Police Contributing Countries*' in New York on gender perspectives. The purpose of the dialogue was to review options, challenges and good practices with regards to achieving a greater gender balance in UN peacekeeping operations, and to agree on actions that address the current shortfall of female personnel serving as uniformed peacekeepers.

One of the key outcomes of the *Policy Dialogue* was the establishment of a pilot project with four Troop Contributing Countries [TCCs] - Argentina, Pakistan, Nigeria and South Africa - to begin the process of nurturing good gender practices in their deployment strategies, including comprehensive pre-deployment training and procedures to increase numbers of women in their national forces.

The *Policy Dialogue* noted that specific guidance and training was needed to assist peacekeepers on the understanding and implementation of issues related to women peace and security. The expanded mandates of peacekeeping operations have made the integration of gender issues and the understanding of how to practically apply them in a post-conflict setting critical. Thus, training on gender and the implementation of SCR 1325 was deemed essential to increase military operational effectiveness. The *Dialogue* also highlighted the need for pre-deployment training on gender to be a core component of peacekeeping preparations.

In response, DPKO/DFS issued *Guidelines on Integrating a Gender Perspective in the Work of the Military in UN Peacekeeping Operations (2010)*. The Guidelines, jointly developed by the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) and the DPKO/DFS Gender Unit, were designed to translate Security Council mandates on women, peace and security into strategic, operational and tactical levels. The guidelines were aimed at ensuring the security priorities and concerns of women and men are taken into consideration in the planning process and operational activities of the military.

In order to strengthen the reach and effectiveness of the guidelines, training modules corresponding with each level were to be developed. In conjunction with the DPKO/DFS Integrated Training Service (ITS) and the Office of Military Affairs, the Gender team adapted the guidelines into draft training modules.

INTRODUCTION

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325, gender training has been promoted as a key strategy in efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, and although important gains have been made by integrating gender awareness into both pre-deployment and in-Mission training, gaps still remain¹.

Gender training for uniformed peacekeepers is intended to improve their capacity to fulfil the mandate of the Mission through:

¹ In order to support TCC's prepare their contingents for deployment; DPKO/DFS developed 'Standardised Generic Training Modules' (SGTM). At present, these standardised modules include generic content on Gender and Peacekeeping Operations. The standardised training materials on gender are a mandatory element of the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials.



- Building a common understanding of UN values when working for the United Nations, in order to reinforce the principles of equality between women and men;
- Helping peacekeepers understand the social context in which peacekeeping operations are carried out in so far as the way relationships between men and women and gender roles and responsibilities are transformed by violent conflict;
- Promoting awareness of positive or negative impacts that the actions of peacekeepers can have on the host country through gender analysis.

In 2008, a Strategic Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment undertaken by the Integrated Training Service highlighted that Member States believed the content of the pre-deployment modules on gender was too generic and voluminous, and did not adequately address key operational and Mission specific challenges. The assessment also revealed that only 69 % of the military and 68 % of the police responded that they had received training on gender awareness and mainstreaming, however none of them considered the training as relevant to their jobs.

Although TCC's have primary responsibility for pre-deployment training, the needs assessment highlighted that the levels of training vary from country to country and within militaries from higher to lower ranks. There is also little documentation with regard to the effectiveness and impact of gender training. Many of the countries who contribute the bulk of peacekeeping personnel have limited capacity and resources to train their contingents on gender and gender modules that are part of the training standards by DPKO/DFS are often omitted from pre-deployment training.

Research conducted by the DPKO/DFS Gender Team also highlighted that content and delivery of gender training is delivered on an ad-hoc basis, varies from Mission to Mission, and is dependant on the fluctuating support of Mission personnel and management. Additionally there is a lack of coordinated approach between Missions on the content and delivery of gender training offered to military peacekeepers that is reflected in the disparity in time allocated and quality of material received on gender training.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The objective of this pilot project was to assess the extant peacekeeping training materials on gender and to strengthen the content where needed. The project is part of a wider implementation strategy that endeavours to raise awareness of gender within a military peacekeeping context and provide guidance to the military on strategic gender interventions within mandated tasks.

The implementation strategy consists of 4 key elements:

1. **Outreach** activities to support dissemination of the guidelines to potential users and other key stakeholders;
2. **Training** activities for military peacekeepers to enhance their understanding and application of the substantive messages conveyed in the guidelines;
3. **Pilot** activities to support innovative and focused interventions that advance implementation of the guidelines;
4. **Monitoring** activities to assess progress and impact of implementation of the guidelines.

The pilot project in UNIFIL was conducted in two phases. The first included consultations in New York, between OMA, the Irish Military Adviser and the Gender Unit on the process and the training methodology. Discussions at Mission level also took place with UNIFIL branches, sectors and Force Headquarters, on good practice approaches and identifying the challenges to the current training materials.

Secondly, roundtable discussions were held with local women that included representatives of local women's organisations from three regions in the South [under UNIFIL geographical mandate] Tyre, Marjayoon, and Bint Jbeil. These roundtables concentrated on the issue of perceptions of safety and security, differing impacts conflicts have on women and men, the role of peacekeeping operations and female peacekeepers, and most importantly, how interaction between peacekeepers and local women can be improved.

THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established through the adoption of Security Council Resolution 425 and 426 in 1978. UNIFIL was mandated to confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and help the Government of Lebanon reinstate its effective authority in the area. The first UNIFIL troops were deployed in 23 March 1978.

Following the July/August 2006 crisis, the Security Council enhanced the original mandate, adopting resolution 1701, to include monitoring the cessation of hostilities, accompanying and supporting the Lebanese Armed Forces as they deploy throughout the South of Lebanon and extend assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.

Although the mandate of UNIFIL is limited and specific, [UNIFIL is mandated to serve only South of the Litani river, which constitutes a relatively small geographical area of operation] and is primarily a military-centric Mission, UNIFIL has long been committed to working closely with the local population in the area.



The close relationship with the community, developed through the many conflicts since 1978 has allowed for a number of best practice initiatives to take place over the years, including the delivery of Quick Impact Projects² and other CIMIC activities. Although not a humanitarian or development agency, UNIFIL has a strong humanitarian disposition and its contingents are recognised for providing free medical, dental, veterinary and such other assistance to the local population as well as providing various training programmes.

² Quick Impact Projects are small-scale, low-cost projects that are planned and implemented by Peacekeeping Operations within a short timeframe intended to build confidence in the mission. While QIP's benefit the local population, they are not intended to be humanitarian or long-term development support.

The distinctive attributes of UNIFIL, including its excellent relationship with the community and the good practices already established in the Mission, were some of the reasons the Mission was selected as a partner Mission for the pilot project. Additionally, there are currently over 11,000..check the current number, not sure over 11,000 troops deployed to UNIFIL from 37 different nations, including Italy, Ghana, Ireland, Tanzania, El Salvador and Nepal.

UNIFIL differs from many of the peacekeeping Missions, in that it receives a large number of European troops who have previously deployed under NATO authority and that the wide geographical balance of troops in the Mission provides a broader scope in terms of peacekeeping experience. By piloting in UNIFIL the project benefited from the different military and global perceptions, as well as the robust mechanisms currently working to provide a foundation on which to build.

Finally, UNIFIL serves as an example of leadership commitment to integrating a gender perspective, exemplified by a Force Commander directive mandating gender training for all military peacekeepers.

METHODOLOGY

After initial discussions at DPKO/DFS Headquarters, the pilot project in UNIFIL was conducted over a period of six weeks. The pilot project was conceived to include interviews with different branches at Force HQ (Naqoura) as well as the Sector Commanders, through to the battalion level engagement. During the course of the project a number of consultations took place to identify entry points for integration of gender perspectives and further development of existing training modules.

A. Primary Interviews:

The first phase of the project included one-on-one interviews with Chiefs of Branches and Staff Officers working at the Force Headquarters.

The interviews focused on:

- The role of gender in peacekeeping Missions.
- General understanding of the operational necessity of gender in military operations.
- Identification of good practices in integrating gender into military tasks.
- The value-add of training on gender concepts and gender-responsive practices.
- Recommendations to strengthen current gender training materials.

B. Content Design:

Based on the interviews in UNIFIL and research previously conducted by OMA and the Gender Unit (HQ), it was recognised that the current gender training materials did not take into account on-the-ground challenges for deployed forces and should be revised to incorporate current Mission-related military realities.

Using an andragogical approach to learning development, the draft package was structured based on:

Good Practice:

Training Participation

Whenever possible identify and include some gender-aware, previously trained participants in the session.

The more experienced gender-aware participants often explain why gender training is important presenting the most convincing arguments.

1. Adults need to know the reason for learning something (Need to Know).
2. Experience provides the basis for learning activities (Foundation).
3. Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction (Self-concept).
4. Adults are most interested in learning subjects having immediate relevance to their work (Readiness).
5. Adult learning is problem-centred rather than content-oriented (Orientation).
6. Adults respond better to internal versus external motivators (Motivation).

The content was thus aimed at reinforcing the basic awareness of gender with more attention given to the commonly identified weaker elements of the current training, including practical application of gender into the functional tasks at the operational level.

The content development process remained faithful to operational realities on the ground. Based on the conversations with UNIFIL military personnel the content was more clearly divided; delineating the policy driven theoretical aspects of gender integration from the practical tactical implementation.

The final material was then tested with the Irish/Finn Battalion and selected individuals who validated the final content.

C. Delivery of Training:

Two training sessions were organised comprised of representatives of the Military Gender Task Force³. Through the support of J7 Branch, the Gender Focal Points were invited to participate in one of two separate sessions in HQ (Naqoura) and/or Sector East.

The introductory training using the draft materials provided an overview of core concepts and discussion of key areas of gender in a military context. The session offered definitions of gender, how gender roles affect the security roles and needs of women and men, the importance of force diversity, conduct issues, and cultural norms and myths.

Additionally, DPKO/DFS is increasingly moving from traditional learning approaches to an active learning paradigm through the employment of scenario based training. The use of scenario-based exercises allows participants to be open and share experiences which may not otherwise be discussed. For topics like gender, it was found that this type of delivery would be the most successful.



ANALYSIS OF INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO FORCE HEADQUARTERS TASKS

UNIFIL is a unique peacekeeping Mission in its structure and mandate. A Mission that leans towards a more traditional mandate of peacekeeping [resolution 1701] but that also encompasses a Protection of Civilians mandate and a robust civilian section. The role of the military peacekeepers deployed to UNIFIL working with the local population is less expansive than other Missions.

In order to implement its mandate as defined by UN Security Council resolution 1701, UNIFIL carries out a range of operations across its Area of Operations between the Litani River in the north and the Blue Line (Line of Withdrawal of the Israel Defence Forces) in the South. These include day and night-time patrols, establishment of observation points, monitoring of the Blue Line, and carrying out clearance of unexploded ordnance and cluster munitions.

However, this restricted mandate and specific cultural setting also allows for a unique perspective on gender to be applied in a more complex setting.

³The Military Gender Task Force was established under the auspices of the Force Commander, comprised of Gender Focal Points appointed from each battalion and divided into two sectors, East and West. The Focal Points are provided with specific training on gender so they can oversee the integration of gender and fully represent their battalion in the Task Force. [See Annex 2, Terms of Reference]

Dialogue with the various military branches in UNIFIL HQ was insightful as it demonstrated how gender is currently being integrated and entry points were identified by the discussants on how to strengthen gender in UNIFIL military tasks.

Military Coordination and Outreach Unit (MCOU)

Community outreach is a key priority for the UNIFIL to ensure regular flow of information to and from the communities. A dedicated Military Coordination and Outreach Unit (MCOU) focuses on communicating details of UNIFIL's aims, objectives and activities to the local population, while at the same time gaining valuable feedback in relation to UNIFIL's operations. The unit conducts its tasks with the help of language assistants, some of whom are female.

In Lebanon there are perceived cultural challenges to working with local women. Representatives of local authorities are overwhelmingly men and therefore outreach and communications is primarily with and through the men of the community. Local women are engaged mainly through local education activities.

Gender integration into MCOU:

- Guarantee that women are included in community meetings to allow access to the entire community. Alternately, separate meetings for women could take place with local women led by female peacekeepers and female Gender/Civil Affairs Officers.

- Target women specifically on messaging related to the Mission Mandate. The use of women's forums can guarantee the messages are spread widely to all members of the community.
- Cultural sensitivities must be taken into consideration during MCOU outreach. Local women observed that often when armored vehicles passed by houses located on or near the road women can be observed in their homes uncovered (without veils). Joint patrolling with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to mitigate possible sensitivities of local population and the utilisation of mixed teams of male and female peacekeepers in advance patrols could also remedy this obstacle.

J1 - Administration Branch

J1 branch is generally responsible for personnel and administration systems. J1 functions as the essential administrative liaison between the subordinate units and Force Headquarters, with regards to personnel actions. J1 is generally holder of all staffing information, including force statistics and internal policies.

Gender integration into J1:

- Include specific language on gender in generic job descriptions.
- Highlight the strategic level issue of women peacekeepers in certain roles to ensure that female candidates are preferred as a part of the force generation process.

J3 - Staffing and Operations Branch

J3 is the Operations Office, with responsibility for planning and coordinating, and undertakes all aspects of sustaining UNIFIL's operations, planning future operations, and planning and executing all unit training.

Gender integration into J3:

- Promote the integration of a gender perspective on operational issues (patrols, information operations, etc).
- Guarantee that gender training is utilised and Gender Focal Points are appointed as liaisons.
- Provide gender related guidance on operational reporting, including guidance on the development and analysis of sex disaggregated data.
- Ensure women are also targeted in engagement activities through coordination with Mukhtars and community elders.
- Actively include information on any security threats to women and girls when reporting subMissions at the operational and tactical levels.

Good Practice:

Leadership

The top-down approach ensures the sustainability of gender training initiatives. Attendance by senior ranking officers highlights accountability and ordinance.

The Commander of Sector West attended the follow-up Gender Military Task Force training and so translated the message that the training was both compulsory for all and a requirement for operational efficiency.

By visibly demonstrating his personal commitment to the issues, the Commander created a precedent for the training – all troops were to take serious the training and issues presented.

J5 - Planning and Strategy Branch

J5 is responsible for the development and implementation of strategic planning in the Mission including civil-military operations strategy planning. The planning branch is the main body where gender perspectives should be firmly situated in all strategic and operational level planning.

Gender integration into J5:

- Integrate a gender perspective into Operational Planning mechanisms such as Operation Orders (OPORDERS) and Fragmentary Orders (FRAGOS) to take into consideration specific threats to women and girls.
- Include a gender perspective into operational planning to ensure local women are included as a target audience for local formal and informal dialogue.
- Military Concept of Operations should include language on gender mainstreaming.
- Integrate sex-disaggregated data into all planning processes especially if specific issues that concern women and men are reported as pertaining to the local population in general.

Good Practice:

Case Studies

Concrete case studies and/or scenarios based on real life experiences and operations-based training can better demonstrate good gender practice.

By allowing the participants to identify their own examples, the participants have a sense of ownership of the content.

J7 - Training and Best Practices Branch

J7 is the coordinator of all military training. In UNIFIL, J7 has demonstrated a commitment to gender by including a one hour induction session on gender and cultural practices in Lebanon delivered by the Gender Unit. All military at Force HQ are therefore trained and provided with gender awareness material on arrival. A Gender Focal Point is appointed in J7 to work directly on the delivery of training to all contingents.

Gender integration into J7:

- Strengthen the gender contribution to the training of national security forces, (LAF). Sessions on gender awareness could be integrated into basic training modules.
- Continued enhancement of the relationship between J7 and gender through regular interaction and coordination on the delivery and improvement of gender training materials.

Observer Group Lebanon (OGL)

In carrying out its mandate UNIFIL is assisted by approximately 50 military observers belonging to Observer Group Lebanon (OGL). An unarmed UN military observer Mission present in Lebanon since 1949, OGL is part of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). The military observers conduct patrols in villages and along the Blue Line as a confidence building measure for the area.

Gender integration into OGL

OGL recognises the impact of gender as a comprehensive approach – bringing the perspectives of both women and men into consideration. The added value of female military observers was also acknowledged as essential as female MILOBS can interact with women in the community when culture dictates.

- Guarantee that all reports are sex-disaggregated for enhanced analysis.
- Utilise female MILOBS to interact with local women, and strengthen the community engagement.

Joint Operations Centre (JOC)

The discussions with the Joint Operations Centre concerned the importance of using sex-disaggregated data in reporting. The requirement for use of sex-disaggregated data was previously not included in guidance given to operational reporting.

Gender integration into JOC:

- Include language on use of sex-disaggregated data in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on reporting.

Civil-Military Cooperation Unit (CIMIC)

UNIFIL attaches great importance to maintaining good relations with the local population among whom the peacekeepers operate. There are several facets to this relationship that includes: informing the people of South Lebanon about UNIFIL's mandate and activities; providing or facilitating limited assistance when needed;



respecting and sharing in local culture, customs and concerns; participating in community events and ensuring minimum disturbance to normal daily life from UNIFIL's operations in the area. To this end, interaction with the communities is regularly conducted at every level.

Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC) is one of the main interlocutors between UNIFIL and the local community. UNIFIL battalions deliver a range of basic services to communities using the skills and technical expertise of peacekeepers, additionally assistance is provided to the local population through limited employment of UNIFIL's engineering and other operational resources. The Civil-Military Cooperation Unit can propose projects to be implemented as Quick Impact Projects by the Mission and by the battalions.

Gender integration into CIMIC:

- The CIMIC Unit partnered with the Gender Unit and J7 branch to initiate the process of integrating gender training to UNIFIL military personnel and drafted the MOU which was submitted to the Force Commander for making gender training compulsory for UNIFIL military forces.
- Continued support for the delivery of specific gender training to all CIMIC personnel.
- Ongoing collaboration on the Village Assessment Questionnaire to integrate information related to women in the local communities.
- In 2010, during the Open Day on Women, Peace and Security, local women requested support for children who had dropped out of school. The data was sex-disaggregated showing that girls drop-out more than boys in certain public schools. UNIFIL Civil Affairs and the CIMIC devised a project that would tutor the children at risk. This project could be expanded across the AOR
- The unit also initiated a mapping of women NGOs in the AOR to guarantee that they were engaging with the whole population – this initiative should be on-going.

Good Practice:

Sex-disaggregated data enhances effectiveness and efficiency of outreach programmes to all members of the community.

Regular dental and medical support is provided by a number of battalions especially in remote villages.

However women were not using the services frequently. When the data was analysed by the gender team it was found that the opening times of the clinics excluded access for women because of their family obligations.

After consultation with local women – new times of operation were introduced – and the number of women attending increased exponentially.

GENERAL FINDINGS ON GENDER INTEGRATION AND TRAINING FOR MILITARY COMPONENTS

Military personnel who participated in the pilot project indicated that although there was a basic awareness of both the Military Guidelines and the overall concept of gender, the application at Mission level was unclear. For example the utility of gender in a military environment was not apparent, and training materials, if available and utilised, had not gone far enough to transform the understanding of gender into one useful for military tasks.

The pilot participants suggested that the foundation for effective training should make obvious why gender is an essential component of military operations in peacekeeping. Training participants need to be 'enticed' through opening engaging discussions that make the participants think critically about gender issues and specific security needs of women and men.

Exploring the conceptual basis of gender issues in an accessible way is one of the preconditions for successful gender training. The language used in gender training must be tailored and pragmatic, avoiding any form of jargon and made specific to the needs of the military in a peacekeeping context.

Finding's Summary

a) The basic concept of gender and terminologies related to gender, mainstreaming and women, peace and security were unclear.

b) Gender was verified as an 'important' issue, but there is less clarity on why and how to apply it at the tactical and operational level. In some cases the participants reiterated the importance of gender but were not convinced of its validity in a military context.

**“
..at times female soldiers are
not going on patrols, with this
training I will advise my
commander to include female
soldiers in almost all patrols ...”**

”

c) Confusion remains (for civilian and military) on the difference between gender mainstreaming and gender balance issues. The concentration on increasing the numbers of women in military, often takes away from the issue of mandated task requirements and how to integrate gender into the current structures. The confusion is creating obstacles to full implementation of gender policies at the field level. Gender perspectives for operational effectiveness reach beyond increasing numbers of women in the military. This needs to be reinforced.

d) It is apparent that there is a lack of appreciation on the practical application of gender outside of the generic normative values. This was obvious through the discussions with the individual branches and participants at the basic training. The constant use of normative references [resolutions, policies etc.] is of little importance to battalions deployed in the field. The practical adaption of gender within military tasks is the key area of interest for the troops. The term 'mainstreaming' needs to be better clarified and stronger examples developed that relate to peacekeeping.

e) A large percentage of the deployed contingents to UNIFIL admitted they had not seen the guidelines prior to the pilot project, indicating that the dissemination and awareness package needs to be strengthened.

f) While the guidelines contain practical recommendations, responsibility for implementing the recommendations is not allocated. The generic division between operational and tactical needs to be reinforced within the guidelines and training. The discussions with different branches and units were particularly helpful in highlighting which parts of the guidelines are relevant to each branch and unit.

g) There is a need to strengthen gender pre-deployment training. Some contingents highlighted that while they are aware of the issues, gender was not part of core pre-deployment training. The participants

**“
“The training opened
my mind and helped me
focus on specific [gender] issues
I rarely thought of before”**

”

indicated they would find it beneficial to receive pre-deployment training on gender and culture.

h) Further analysis on the different perceptions that women and men have regarding peacemaking and community engagement, and how this impacts military response, should take place. The lack of understanding that women suffer from conflict differently – as the root of gender integration – needs to be addressed with more clarity. If the basic realisation that women have a different reality in conflict is not made apparent, then any training on gender will be redundant. To that end the core level understanding must be strengthened.

“

“The word gender is [generally] not liked among soldiers, when they think that issues of gender arise it is still linked to the idea of women, special treatment and women’s issues. It is not identified as an operational necessity.”

”





WOMEN, PEACE AND IDENTIFYING SECURITY: PILOTING MILITARY GENDER GUIDELINES IN UNIFIL

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND ON GENDER ISSUES IN LEBANON

Lebanon's historical, geographic, and political characteristics have had a significant impact on the status of women over the years. The emergence of women's rights within Lebanon is entrenched within a multifaceted political context. Lebanon is a country characterised by a vibrant political and sectarian atmosphere in which religious sects play pivotal roles; gender power relations and gender roles have thus inevitably been shaped by this complex reality.

In 1943 after Lebanon achieved independence, sectarian discord prevented the women's movement from advancing until 1952 when the Lebanese Women's Council was officially established and all Lebanese women received the right to vote.

The Lebanese Constitution asserts, "*All Lebanese are equal under the law, enjoying equally civil and political rights, and performing duties and public responsibility without any discrimination among them*"⁴, therefore, while the spirit of Lebanon's constitution guarantees women's equality before the law, there are no specific provisions to protect women's rights and end gender discrimination. As a result, many laws adopted under the constitution fail to ensure protections for women's fundamental freedoms.

Today, Lebanese women still have one of the lowest levels of political participation in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region. The combination of patriarchy and confessionalism form a potent obstacle towards women's public and political participation. Although women in Lebanon have enjoyed the right to vote since 1952, they remain woefully underrepresented in politics. Men still dominate the leadership of political parties and among the major parties women's participation remains under 10 per cent.

While women comprise 53 % of the population, Lebanese society continues to be heavily influenced by patriarchal culture, making it a daunting challenge for women to achieve political influence and power.

Representation is apportioned on a sectarian basis, with powerful political families retaining the leadership of their respective communities, leaving women with only a token presence in decision-making positions. Prevailing patriarchal views on gender roles, reinforced by the blending of political and religious identity, discourage female political participation, and women have difficulty matching the financial resources of male incumbents during electoral campaigns. Those women who have managed to gain political leverage are invariably connected to strong political families, replacing their spouse or family member⁵.

Recently in an attempt to address the pervasive imbalance of women's political engagement, a proposed draft electoral law requesting a quota of 30% of women was tabled. The support for quotas for women to increase their political seat share is extensive throughout Lebanon, with reports indicating that 67% of women and 65% of Lebanese men support the introduction of gender quotas.⁶

At the municipal level, civil society organisations and local and national institutions have implemented a number of awareness sessions to increase women candidature in local elections. However, women have reported encountering some problems of "class and gender barriers", particularly while performing their municipal duties and participating in the decision making process. Additionally, women's access to political power and political participation is severely hindered by patriarchy, conservative religious interpretations, cultural stereotyping, and traditional sectarian and family-based systems.

The debate over the Electoral Law has exacerbated the demands to address a number of other discriminatory laws impeding women's rights and full equality; including the Nationality Law, Personal Status Law, Labour and Social Security Laws, the Penal Code⁷ and amendments to legal provisions that discriminate against women.

Despite ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997, Lebanese women still face discrimination in many areas of social, political and economic life.⁸ Lebanon ranks low on the scale of global gender statistics, placing 122 out of 135 countries in women's access to economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment.⁹

⁴ Constitution of Lebanon, Article 7 May 1923

⁵ The first Lebanese female Member of Parliament took office in 1963, having run unopposed to complete the term of her father, who had died without leaving a male heir. After her term ended, Lebanon did not have another female lawmaker until 1991, when one woman was appointed to replace her deceased husband. Three women were elected to the 128-seat parliament in 1992, and the number remained unchanged in the 1996 and 2000 elections, finally rising to six in 2005. In most of these instances, the successful candidates either belonged to traditional political families or were related to prominent male politicians.

⁶ Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWMENA) Project.

⁷ In 2011 the Lebanese Parliament voted to revoke Article 562 from the Penal Code that allowed for mitigation of a crime of honour.

⁸ Lebanon ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on April 21, 1997, with reservations on Articles 9 (2), 16 (1) (c) (d) (f) and (g) and 29 (2). Article 9 of CEDAW addresses equal rights for men and women with respect to citizenship and nationality, and Article 16 commits the state to eliminate discrimination against women in matters of the family and marriage.

⁹ The Global Gender Gap Report, World Economic Forum, 2012.

While Lebanon has made significant progress towards achieving gender equality in educational attainment, [school enrolment rates for both males and females are high and primary education is almost universal], significant differences prevail in the nature of men and women's participation in the labour force. Female employment remains characterised by low access to positions of responsibility and decision-making. Gender differences in distribution per professional categories are also evident, with more concentration of the female workers in the service industry, and unskilled labour categories, compared to higher male worker concentration in management and skilled workers categories.



The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2012 Women's Economic Index ranked Lebanon 79th among countries globally. The index is based on five indicators – labour policy, access to finance, education and training, women's legal and social status, and the general business environment. In Lebanon, only 3 per cent of loans are granted to female entrepreneurs. However, economic opportunities targeting women groups have begun to emerge with many initiatives starting to boost economic freedom for women in Lebanon and bridge Lebanon's persistent gender gap.

While there are no official statistics available in Lebanon on domestic violence, data collected by one of the leading NGO's addressing domestic violence, reports about 35% of Lebanese women have been subject to some form of gender-based violence. One of the most pressing issues related to limitations on women's empowerment and equal rights is the lack of protection afforded to women from all forms of violence. Lebanese NGO's have been tirelessly working on advocating for the promulgation of a Law to protect women from sexual and gender based violence including spousal rape, which is not recognised as a sexual violation in Lebanon [the definition of spousal rape is under the discretion of religious councils]. In this regard a Draft Law was passed by the Council of Ministers in 2010, albeit with dramatic revisions, that included a change in focus from violence against women to that of protection of the family from violence. One of the most controversial clauses deleted from the draft Law was reference to marital rape, giving religious courts increased authority overseeing such cases. The draft was submitted to a special Parliamentary Committee, and in July 2013 the "Law on the 'Protection of Women and All Family Members from Domestic Violence' was approved. Among the most important aspects of the new law is the inclusion of stronger protection mechanisms for women, the creation of a specialised section within the Internal Security Forces with female officers trained to deal with domestic abuse, provisions for perpetrators to be tried in a civilian rather than religious court and the clarification of abuse penalties. However, women's right advocates expressed disappointment that the new Law does not recognise marital rape as sexual assault.

Despite the ratification of CEDAW, Lebanon has maintained some specific reservations, including that of Article 9 (2) regarding 'Marriage and Family Life'. This reservation permits the legality of 'Nationality Law' (No. 15 of 1925) which states that within the Lebanese legislative framework foreign husbands of Lebanese women and their children are prohibited from obtaining Lebanese nationality.

The first article of the Nationality Law states that citizenship is inherited through the father or acquired by birth on Lebanese territory. Citizenship laws prioritise patrilineal descent, and a Lebanese woman who marries a foreign national cannot pass her citizenship on to her husband or the children of this union. On the other hand, under Article 5, a foreign woman married to a Lebanese man may become a Lebanese citizen after one year of marriage. The children resulting from this union are automatically considered Lebanese. This limit on transference of citizenship affects the children's rights to work, own property, and access governmental resources. *[There are two exceptions: if the woman is a naturalized Lebanese citizen she can pass on Lebanese citizenship to her non-Lebanese children after the death of her husband; or if a Lebanese woman is unmarried and no one claims paternity over her illegitimate child within the first year.]*

SITUATION OF SOUTH LEBANON

The years of civil war and occupation in the South of Lebanon have left a distinct imprint on the region affecting the material and emotional life of the inhabitants.

During the years of prolonged conflict in South Lebanon, State institutions were relatively absent, creating economic marginalisation leading to high levels of emigration, displacement and poverty.

As a result of the country's history of conflict and wars, the priorities of the South including that of women have been focused on economic and social needs especially in rural areas where there has been limited access to resources.

High unemployment, youth migration, environmental insecurity and lack of access to health care are the leading general causes of insecurity in the South while physical security is one that appears to be geographically related¹⁰.

While it is reported that the South experienced an unprecedented period of stability and order after the 2006 war, the area continues to suffer from high migration rates due to the lack of opportunities and basic services such as electricity provision and the rising food prices. The youth remain particularly at risk, with 21% unemployment and a prevailing lack of means for social expression outside the major political parties.

Female-headed households are also among the most vulnerable, and constitute 16% of all households in South Lebanon. According to the 2009 National Human Development Report more than 50% of households headed by women make less than \$400/month, falling well below the poverty line. Additionally, the South lacks many services for women and there are limited numbers of NGOs that specialise on women's affairs, those that do have limited capacities.



¹⁰ HUMAN SECURITY IN SOUTH LEBANON ASSESSMENT REPORT, 2012, Ilina Slavova.

METHODOLOGY

At the heart of landmark resolution 1325 (2000) are commitments to enable women's contributions to all stages of, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention. However, the inclusion of women's voices in areas related to peace and security and advances in women's participation in all forms of decision making remain a challenge. While awareness has increased on the understanding that during and post conflict significant gender implications need to be addressed, systematic efforts to implement a gender perspective are still exceptional in practice. It is increasingly apparent that the voices and concerns of women remain on the periphery of peace and security dialogue.

The efficacy of peacekeeping operations is dependant on the trust and respect of the local community. The "DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Integrating a Gender Perspective into the work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping Operations" launched in 2010, highlight the importance of working with the local community - women and men - as partners seeking peace. The guidelines demonstrate that the success of peacekeeping in the community also means that women, as key stakeholders in peacekeeping interventions, must be part of the peace and security dialogue. To bring a women's perspective into the mainstream, awareness of the perceptions of women and men must be equally integrated into peacekeeping policy and practice.

As part of this pilot project, it was recognised that in order to develop comprehensive, overarching and inclusive training to complement the guidelines, discussion with women from the local community was necessary. The direct inclusion of women's perceptions into peacekeeping is something that has often been sidelined, resulting in imbalanced and unequal peacekeeping practice that does not reflect the concerns of over 50% of the population in any post-conflict environment.

An essential element of this project was the inclusion of women from South Lebanon in the discussion on the role of peacekeepers in a post-conflict setting. Over 100 women were invited to participate in three roundtable meetings organised in the districts of Marjayoon, Bint Jbeil and Tyre within UNIFIL Area of Operation.

The women from the three areas are members of the Gender Working Group in the South which was formed as part of the Lebanese Open Day on Peace and Security in 2012. The selected women are representative of the very diverse local communities, religiously and politically. The women were identified by local official authorities in each area, mainly the municipality and the Community Development Centres of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The goal of these meetings was to understand perceptions of women related to peacekeeping and as a result generate messages that can be incorporated into peacekeeping training and used as a mechanism to strengthen mandate implementation.

As the women were eager for the opportunity to communicate directly their thoughts and concerns to the uniformed peacekeepers, it was decided to open the roundtable meetings to representatives from the Military Gender Task Force and Force Headquarters [in particular MCOU, J5 and CIMIC branches]. This was warmly welcomed by both the military peacekeepers and the women who appreciated the opportunity to interact directly with UNIFIL personnel on issues regarding women, peace and security. For some women it was the first time they had been afforded the opportunity to discuss such issues in an open forum.

The agenda for the roundtable meetings were set during pre-consultations and topics included definitions of peacekeeping, safety, global gendered impact of conflict, the role of peacekeepers male and female, and how to improve interaction between peacekeepers and the local women.

To allow for fluid discussion and communication between the Lebanese women and UNIFIL participants, simultaneous translation was organised and three women were hired as rapporteurs from the local community to record in detail the conversations and recommendations.

¹¹ Open Days on Peace and Security is an annual event, initiated during the occasion of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 (2010). The Open Days were introduced as a way to promote dialogue on peace and security issues in post-conflict settings. The Open Days have been heralded as a best practice in allowing women in post-conflict environments to present their concerns, directly, to the highest level of representation in the UN system. The South Lebanon Gender Working Group is supported and guided by the UN through the UNIFIL Gender Unit.

“
***You know when you see the
white [UN] vehicle that
peacekeepers are here and you
feel safe”***

”

PERCEPTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

In general, women in the South exhibit fundamental awareness about the role of peacekeeping and the mandate of UNIFIL in monitoring the blue line¹². The communities in the South credit UNIFIL with supporting the return of displaced families after the war, successful de-mining of populated areas, and in particular providing general security as well as psychological and medical services to the people of the region.

It was suggested that the communities in the South are more aware of peacekeeping operations, because of the deployment of UNIFIL. Regular troop movement and military community engagement, has aided in the awareness of peacekeeping. The active engagement of UNIFIL with the local community was hailed as a 'good practice', especially the functions of the Military Coordination Unit whose task is to explain and transmit messages related to the Mission Mandate to the community at large. It was suggested that this level of awareness has created a platform of trust within the communities across the South. It would appear that the longevity of the Mission and its continued mandate have also contributed to the understanding of the role of peacekeeping.



In comparison to women's groups in Beirut who are relatively unclear about the role of peacekeeping in the South, the discussions with the participants highlighted that the physical proximity to peacekeeping operations raises awareness of the functions and mandates of a mission. It would seem, the more awareness and interaction between peacekeepers and the local population, the higher the likelihood of trust.

The towns that were logistically proximate to peacekeeping obviously were more informed about the role of a peacekeeping operation, but towns and villages outside of the main routes of peacekeeping traffic were also both positive and knowledgeable about the role of peacekeeping. When asked to describe the roles of peacekeeping, the women highlighted the responsibility of establishing peace in region without discrimination and protection of people and establishing lines of protection, as well as monitoring for peace and security violations.

All participants responded that their understanding of peacekeeping is related to monitoring the fulfilment of peace-agreements between parties to a conflict, as well as the provision of services and assistance to local populations, communication and cooperation with civil society and charitable associations, and contribution to the local economy by, for example, promoting local produce.

The women expressed that peacekeeping was important to their area as it brings employment and increases awareness of both Lebanese culture and of other cultures. Some of the battalions interact with the local community by providing language lessons and medical services that are not otherwise available.

However, the participants also indicated that UNIFIL peacekeepers do not speak directly to women. While the military force provide many services, including medical services to women associations, there is generally an overall lack of direct contact between women and uniformed peacekeepers. Many of the women suggested that the lack of direct interaction was a form of cultural sensitivity, albeit misplaced.¹³ It was proposed that UNIFIL could use the Gender Working Group as a foundation in which to interact on a regular level with women.

It was also suggested that interaction with the community could sometimes benefit from a civilian presence instead of large uniformed presence to build trust with the most vulnerable and traumatised elements of the population.

The deployment of female peacekeepers was mentioned as contributing to women's sense of safety, and providing a good example of role modelling for gender equality. The presence of female peacekeepers was

¹²The Blue Line is the line of withdrawal, identified in the year 2000 by the United Nations, in cooperation with Lebanese and Israeli officials, for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) from Lebanese territory in conformity with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

¹³ Conversations with the Military Gender Task Force indicated that the deployed troops were conscious of cultural practices in a predominately Muslim environment and wished to display respect. However, the women highlighted that practices that were common in other Islamic environments were not common-place in Lebanon. Men can easily interact with women in Lebanon without causing disrespect. More enhanced training and awareness on specific Lebanese practices needs to be put in place prior to deployment.

mentioned to have had a lasting impact with the local population and was hailed as an opportunity to empower young women. The participants suggested that the use of female peacekeepers is important because women often relate better to other women. However it was reported that women don't have to be only in leading roles to be considered role models. [This important observation has long been a criticism of peacekeeping that women must be observed in positions of power for affect actual change]. It was suggested that if female peacekeepers were present in municipality meetings more women would come to meetings with other women.

FINDINGS FROM THE ROUNDTABLES

"We don't want it to be said anymore that behind every great man stands a woman. We want her to be in the front and not in the shadow"

Roundtable Participant

The general theme of the discussions was *"What is safety and security in your community?"* The responses were not unique in that women from post-conflict environments have oft cited the same concerns and challenges. However, characteristic of Lebanon, that while women's perception of safety and security varied from one geographical area to another there were common issues and concerns that crossed geographical and confessional lines related to environmental, health, education and employment security.

As in most post-conflict settings there are some universal issues that women perceive as risks to safety and security.. For example, women view their exclusion from making decisions as having a direct correlation to their quality of life and well-being. Challenges to women's political participation were identified as - cultural obstacles pertaining to the traditional image of leadership and decision-making; women's perception of their own capabilities - their belief that they are not qualified to take on responsibility and political leadership; and the need for skills and training that would prepare them to engage politically. These challenges identified by Lebanese women correlate with the global perceptions of women vis-à-vis security.

Another common perception of "Safety" for women in South Lebanon is the lack of full citizenship and equal access in their community. The participants reported that they are not consulted in the planning or needs assessment in their communities, including by international organisations, based on the assumption that women's needs would reflect those of men. Women highlighted that their concerns varied to men's in many areas and expressed that their insecurity is related to the lack of participation in identifying the hazards and risks facing their communities.

Access to resources was also a recurring issue with women expressing their frustration that in times of disaster or conflict, despite being the most affected during and post disaster or conflict, they are systematically left out of consultations related to disaster relief or distribution of aid. The women highlighted that they have a better understanding of what is needed post disaster in their communities than men, but this did not alter international assumptions about who should be consulted.

The roundtable meetings included women from all levels of the community

Participants included mothers, wives, academics, business owners, as well as NGO's and community activists. Women who had the opportunity, for the first time, to discuss some of the issues that affect their lives and their communities.

It was important to bring together women who do not usually have access to UNIFIL or the UN. They could discuss openly issues of peace and security that reach beyond the traditional concepts.

For many of the women from this area of Lebanon, it was a unique experience and one that they requested to repeat.

Women also requested that their views and concerns be recognised on an equal basis to men's by the international community. The international community should heighten strengthen the support to empower women through enhanced capacity building opportunities to assist women to take responsibility for their own safety, including: training on emergency preparedness, evacuation procedures and medical support. Building capacities for women on preventative conflict intervention for youth would also be welcomed, as well as increasing the skills of women in decision-making pertaining to their communities and sustaining their presence in the decision making process.

"Women in the Middle East are more educated than men and more secure than men ... Women complement men"



A: Perception of Security and Safety

While there is no simple definition of security, traditional notions of security have encompassed more stringent identification of the issue related to physical protection. Women's perceptions of security are generally reflected in a broader understanding of security, categorised by community and equality.

The participants highlighted that physical security was basically the same for women and men, the fundamental association of security in South Lebanon means security of borders and freedom from conflict. However, when the issues were further expanded it was clear there were variations in how freedom from conflict was understood through a social conceptualisation of safety and security.

The women highlighted that there is a distinction between the terms safety and security, as one participant stated, *'we have same security needs, but, different safety needs'*. Their overall understanding of safety is embedded within the collective stability of the community and access to resources.

Defining security is critical to understanding baseline community engagement, however this basic awareness of security does not reflect women's views. Women in the South of Lebanon highlight that security should be seen through a broader lens, making reference to stability of family and community, economic stability, including financial independence for women, freedom to of movement, freedom from social restrictions, and empowerment.

In terms of physical security, women understand threats and vulnerabilities differently depending on immediate proximity to danger. What constitutes danger is highly gendered, with the participants agreeing that men understand danger and threat in a traditional construct more than women. Some of the participants highlighted that tanks and armoured vehicles travelling through their streets constituted danger, while to men it communicated safety for the neighbourhood.

"In our tradition men have more rights. [But] the roles change after the war – women assume the responsibility without having their rights – they do not ask for change they just take on the role."

In general, issues such as education, employment and economy, environment and health care were mentioned to impact the sense of safety for women. Economic empowerment is a source of safety – to be independent was considered important although the majority of the women indicated that they were not individually financially independent but are reliant on their husbands' economic status. They did, however, highlight that their role in support to their husbands and family was the basis of the strong community and their support to the men was critical.

Issues of displacement are of particular concern, given that women identify themselves as emotional heads of the family. The women explained that forced evacuation during conflict is harder for women than for men because of their connection to the home and family.

Some of the participants noted that security for women is attached to legal frameworks, for example, on domestic violence. Some of the participants explained that tolerance of domestic violence by the Lebanese society contributed to women's sense of insecurity. Women described in detail that issues of security are related to not being abused and having legal protection against violence.¹⁴

B: Issues in Conflict

Women expressed that they are more at risk than men, especially during war, given that they face both the violence of war and violence against their bodies. Simply by being women, the participants expressed that they felt at risk to all forms of violence which is heightened during war and disaster. The women participants also highlighted that the emotional impact of war is greater for women. Collectively, women described that men have opportunities to join the military and fight back, to 'do something to demonstrate resistance, to protect themselves and their families, but women can only 'stay and suffer', often unprotected. Women are left behind to care for the family and the house so the emotional impact during conflict of 'being left behind' is greater for women.

"When you are unable to actively do something to protect your land and loved ones, the long term effect is great"

The participants noted the differences in the impact of conflict on women and men. It was generally agreed that women bore the brunt of the 2006 conflict¹⁵, given that many of the men left to join the fighting, women were required to provide for 'the needs of the community and the family'. However, post-conflict, the changing roles were not recognised and they were expected to carry more responsibilities without assuming more rights.

It was suggested that during the war women are both 'father and mother' to children as they take on double roles when the men are not around [fighting or imprisoned]. However, when the conflict dies down, the roles change back to traditional gendered norms. However, the participants also highlighted that while they assume the roles of men during conflict, they do not have their full and equal rights – it is seen as a temporary solution and one that does not afford full partnership or citizenship rights. It is interesting to note the women collectively also criticised their own role in this changing dynamic, highlighting, that as women they just take on the assigned role without demanding their rights.



¹⁴ July 2013 the draft Law for the Protection of Women and All Family Members from Domestic Violence was passed by the Parliamentary Joint Committee after a three year postponement. The draft Law is pending final adoption by Parliament at the time of writing.

¹⁵ The 2006 Lebanon War, and known in Lebanon as the July War was a 34-day military conflict in Lebanon, northern Israel and the Golan Heights. The principal parties were Hezbollah paramilitary forces and the Israeli military. The conflict started on July 12, 2006, and continued until a United Nations-brokered ceasefire went into effect in the morning on August 14, 2006.

“Every woman should have the spirit to remove all the barriers that she might encounter in order to reach her dreams.”

Childcare was mentioned as a particular responsibility of women, which had specific consequences for women's safety during conflict. In this regard, displacement was mentioned as a particular threat for women, posing challenges related to providing for nutrition, shelter and clothes for children. It was suggested that displaced women were specifically at risk from increased psychological trauma during this time.

The participants identified the increased risks and threats confronting the disabled, as well as the risks to women as care-givers. The plight of people with disabilities during conflict was raised as an obstacle to women's security, given women are the primary care-givers for the disabled and therefore leaving their communities to seek shelter was often impossible. Women were unable to move to safety because of their role in looking after the elderly and disabled.

The participants, however, highlighted that they feel more prepared to deal with possible future conflicts, or natural disasters because of their experiences. They do however, need more training in preparedness for natural disasters and relief activities, as government services in this regard were found lacking.

C: Environmental Security

Environmental security examines threats posed by environmental events and trends to individuals, communities or nations. It may focus on the impact of human conflict and international relations on the environment, or on how environmental problems cross state borders.

Environmental challenges are of concern to all communities in the South of Lebanon. Human security, an element of which is related to the environment – resonates with women across the South of the country.

Women in the UNIFIL Area of Operation identified a number of environmental factors that they consider heightened risks for the community, including insufficient number of sanitary landfills, lack of or inappropriate management of waste processing plants, lack of awareness of garbage separation and composting at the household level, and the prevailing practice of burning trash at garbage dumps with immediate detrimental impact on the environment.

“Peace is the ability to move easily and work freely in society. A man has more peace than a woman; women's opportunities are limited and restricted to certain places.”

With more than 700 illegal and unsafe waste dump sites across Lebanon, the impact on the underground water sources, the soil and the air quality was identified as an immediate risk factor to the safety of the community. It is noted that women more than men recognised the threat of environmental damage and the risk posed to children. For example, a number of the participants highlighted that an initiative had been undertaken in one community to collectively recycle and compost waste. The municipalities did not find composting a cost-effective initiative and discontinued the project. However, women from all neighbouring villages began a recycling and composting project using their own resources.

D: Political Security

The participants were primarily focused on the issue of trying to engage more women in the political process in municipalities and identified the lack of women political participation as a major obstacle to their personal security. It was made clear through the discussions that women understood their lack of political engagement as a serious challenge to personal security. Women strongly identified with full and equal participation in political processes as an element of feeling secure in their communities.

Some of the limits to political participation were identified as specific cultural obstacles pertaining to the traditional image of leadership, most specifically that decision-making is the domain of men and the structure of the Lebanese community that excludes women from the power structure - which is based on family institutional representation in the political and decision making arena. The women suggested that the disadvantages of not being engaged in political life are manifold especially the disregard of laws pertaining to women's equality, protection and full citizenship. However women also identified that their own lack of confidence and skills prevents them from running for office. More emphasis should be placed on preparing women to enter politics and to encourage women to become involved politically at the local and national levels.

“When you feel secure in your house - you have a future”



E: Economic Security

Before the conflict, in 2005, the South was the second poorest region in the country with 42% of the population living below the poverty line of \$4/day and 11.64% living in extreme. Although the post-2006 reconstruction in South Lebanon had an overall positive impact on the economic security of the region, there is still a need to strengthen women's economic participation. The economic activity rate of working women has increased from 21% in 2007 to 23% in 2009; the statistics are still low in comparison to men. There are also rife discriminatory practices against women including social security laws that exclude women from income tax reductions as they are not seen as head of households and are therefore treated as dependants.

Most of the poor in the country work in the informal sector, i.e. as agricultural workers, fisherman, street vendors, or construction, and have unstable incomes; moreover they are often left with no income during the winter or during periods of violence.

Women-headed households specifically are among the most vulnerable, and constitute 16% of all households in South Lebanon; according to the 2009 National Human Development Report more than 50% of women-heads of households make less than \$400 per month.

The participants highlighted the link between safety and access to employment, Given the cultural context, men's employment and ability to provide for their families is critical . It was reiterated that women are not able to assume the responsibilities of men in the community; therefore the ability for men to work was paramount, and gives security to the family as a whole [it was reported that it would be culturally unacceptable for a woman to work and not the husband].

Additionally, while women have skills and are generally highly educated, they are limited as to what they can do – due to cultural restrictions and lack of opportunities. However the women did suggest that for absolute safety and stability women have to be financially independent from their husbands, despite the obstacles. This cultural paradox was apparent in a number of areas related to women's empowerment.

"...Women are strong and we can help each other and help ourselves..."

A number of participants identified that displacement during conflict and relocation post-conflict causes increased economic insecurity for women. The lack of access to employment and financial instability increases the risk of physical violence towards women, which was in-part attributed to limited financial resources and opportunities.

F: Empowerment Issues

Motherhood is a very important role in Lebanon; the role of the mother cuts across sectarian lines - the protection of the family is one of the strongest identifiers of Lebanese women.

Women's status as the heart of the family was highlighted as critical in Lebanon. Women in South Lebanon

described that responsibility for the family fell firmly within the roles designated for women, and one which women readily accepted. The issue of migration of young people and the break up of the family, was thus, of great concern for women. The migration of young people from the South to other regions because of lack of education and economic opportunities was a great indicator of insecurity.

However women from the South understand that they also need to be recognised as equal partners in the community outside of the realm of motherhood. The participants suggested this was important because security was also viewed as freedom from displacement. The women highlighted that during conflict men move freely but women are more attached to their families, and are not financially independent, so their ability to leave is limited. The limitations to their physical movement, either through choice or physical constraint, were a major obstacle to their personal security.

“If I believe in myself ... the community will trust in me, but I need to be empowered.”

However, the limits placed on women were also identified as self-imposed restrictions, ‘Our religion [Muslim] does not forbid us from having a social or economic life – we have the same rights [as men] but we lack unity.’

In general, the participants recounted how women in Southern Lebanon have capacity to contribute to the well-being of their societies, but need empowering and support to harness their power.

The participants in this project highlighted that although women in the Middle East are highly educated, Lebanese society does not allow women to be fully empowered. However, criticism was levelled by women to women, in that they argued obstacles were often put in place by the women themselves who did not want to alter the status-quo. It was posited that women do not fight the traditions that restrict them – and while respect should be afforded to the differences between men and women and their different roles and responsibilities – this does not mean that women can not achieve more for themselves.

“We can do what men can do, before the war my husband was a mechanic, now he is disabled. I took on the role, I am now the mechanic”



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