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Participation of Female Military Personnel in PSO: A Case of AMISOM

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in Peacekeeping: A Case of Central African Republic

Creating an Enabling Environment for Peace and Security in Eastern Africa

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Foreword

The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) is a research and training institution that focuses on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). IPSTC has developed to be the regional Centre of Excellence (CoE) for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. The institution addresses the complexities of contemporary UN/AU integrated Peace Support Operations (PSOs) by describing the actors and the multidimensional nature of these operations. The research conducted covers a broad spectrum of issues ranging from conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction. The Centre has made considerable contribution in training and research on peace support issues in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (HoA) regions through design of training curricula, field research and publication of Occasional Papers and Issue Briefs. Occasional Papers are produced annually, while Issue Briefs are produced quarterly. The Issue Briefs are an important contribution to the Vision and Mission of IPSTC.

The Third Quarter Issue Briefs No. 6 (2016) has two titles on peace and security architecture in Eastern Africa. These are: ***Participation of Female Military Personnel in PSO: Case of AMISOM,*** and ***Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in Peacekeeping: Case of Central African Republic***

The Issue Briefs provide insights into pertinent peace and security issues in the region that are useful to policy makers and aim at contributing to the security debate and praxis in the region. The articles in the Issue Briefs are also expected to inform the design of training modules at IPSTC. The research and publication of this Issue Brief was made possible by support from UN Women.

Brigadier Patrick M. Nderitu

Director, IPSTC

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	Africa Union
BINUCA	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic
CAAC	Children and Armed Coflict
CAR	Central African Republic
CDT	Conduct and Discipline Team
CDU	Conduct and Disciplinary Unit
CHR	Commission for Human Rights
CMW	Combat Masculine War-fighting
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ILO	International Labour Organization
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MISCA	African Union Mission in the Central African Republic
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
PCC	Police-Contributing Countries

PoC	Protection of Civilians
PSC	Peace and Securty Council
PSO	Peace Support Operation
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
SSR	Security Sector Reforms
TCC	Troop-Contributing Countries
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNTAG	United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defence Force
UTM	Urgent Temporary Measures

Introduction to the Issue Briefs

The first paper, ***Participation of Female Military Personnel in PSO: Case of AMISOM***, analyzes how female personnel participate in Peace Support Operations (PSOs) using the case of the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The deployment of female peacekeepers in any mission provides meaningful contribution to solidifying peace and security gains in any mission. The literature has identified several benefits of having women in peacekeeing operations including operational effectiveness, acceptability of the mission by host communities, reduction of incidences of sexual exploitation and abuse, and improved tactical level of work among others. Despite the lack of data, it has been proven that women's participation in peace operations has been low since the UN's inception. Women peacekeepers, especially in miltary components, have remainned low despite persistent demand for military female peace keepers. Using the case of AMISOM, this study informs strategies for enhancing participation of female military personnel in peace support missions.

The second paper, ***Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in Peacekeeping: Case of Central African Republic***, identifies and analyzes the mechanisms and strategies in place that can help address SEA in peacekeeping. Civilians caught up in armed conflicts have always been subjected to SEA, especially of women, girls and boys. Peacekeeping troops in the Central African Republic have been in the limelight as a result of allegations and actual reports of SEA against women and children. Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) and Police Contributing Countries (PCC) have been slow to act on these allegations as has been the United Nations. UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is a vital tool that can be used to sensitize and neutralize the perpetration of SEA through its guiding principles.

Participation of Female Military Personnel in PSO: Case of AMISOM

By Col. NDUWIMANA Donatien

Introduction

Following the changing nature of warfare to the extent that civilians, especially women, are increasingly targeted, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 came to change the way the international community thinks about peace and security. The "Women and War" Conference held in 2010 by the United States Institute of Peace and its partners specifically highlighted the importance of this Resolution due to its impact on international law, women's empowerment, the military, and global security. In the area of international law, the Resolution highlights the importance of women at the peace table hence the need to involve them in international decision-making. Increasing women's participation in PSOs has been an important component of UN peace operations since Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security was passed in 2000. The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has also issued a number of policies emphasizing the important role that women play in achieving the mandates of multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations, including their potential advantage in accessing and working with vulnerable populations, particularly female victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Many women continue to suffer from physical and mental harm caused by armed violence, particularly high levels of SGBV and, sometimes, by the peacekeepers themeslves. Even when armed conflict is officially over, women and girls continue to face various forms of violence and exploitation, including gang rape, sexual slavery, forced sex in exchange for food or survival, and forced or early marriage (Bastick, Grimm and Kunz, 2007). In these 'new' conflicts, women and men experience armed conflict differently and face different challenges in the post-conflict peace-building processes. Women and girls tend to be viewed as helpless victims of conflict. They are often seen as care-givers with high risk of sexual vulnerability. However, in many conflicts, some women and girls have taken active roles as combatants, spies and cooks, while others have engaged in peace-building activities. Anderlini (2001) asserts that in spite of their active roles during conflict and peace development, women and girls continue to be marginalized in peace-keeping, negotiation, rehabilitation and decision-making processes.

For national and regional-level UN peacekeeping missions, engendering security forces has become a strategy to mainstream all security activities. Therefore, deploying more women in PSOs is seen as necessary to achieve a more successful mission. According to UNSCR 1325, appointing or recruiting more women leaders as decision-makers, military, police officers, and foot soldiers is a means of better protecting the safety and rights of women and girls. Ensuring women's participation at all levels is linked to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. The growing consensus on gender mainstreaming in PSOs is explained by the current context of conflicts. Current conflicts are not wars fought only in military battlefields but also include wars against poverty, disease and different forms of violation of human rights and human security at large.

Decades after the two world wars, the world continues to be ravaged by numerous conflicts and human insecurity. Threats to human security include inter and intra-state wars, widening economic gaps within and between countries, sexual and gender-based violence, feminisation of poverty and different natural disasters. In these conflicts, women, children and the elderly are the most affected groups. The major issue for these groups is SGBV which occurs both in times of conflict and peace. SGBV has become widespread and occurs with different objectives and within varying contexts. Systematic rape as a weapon of war is the most dramatic as it destroys the foundations that hold society together such as family and identity. According to Lahai (2010), rape is meant to humiliate women and destroy communities and it constitutes part of the threat to stability and peace. While the UN encourages and advocates for the deployment of women to uniform functions, the responsibility for deployment of women in the police and military lies with member states. In 1993, women made up 1% of deployed uniformed personnel. In 2014, out of approximately 125,000 personnel, women constituted only 3% of military and 10% of police personnel in UN peacekeeping missions. Again, the scandal of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in peacekeeping increases the suffering of an already vulnerable sector of the population and undermines the peacekeeping mission's ability to achieve its mandate. The inclusion of female personnel in PSOs helps to deter SEA by having a 'civilising effect' on their male colleagues.

In this context, Somalia has persistently experienced war following the fall of President Siad Barre's regime. The nature of the Somali crisis has been continuously mutating. It transformed from a civil war in the 1980s, clanism and warlordism in the 1990s; to a globalized ideological conflict in the new millennium. On the peacekeeping front, Somalia remains one of the most challenging endeavours faced by the African Union and United Nations. AMISOM, the African peace mission in Somalia since 2007, is

mandated to support the central government of Somalia, implement a national security plan, train the Somali security forces, and assist in creating a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid. It also props the Federal Government of Somalia's forces in their battle against Al-Shabaab militants (Hull and Svensson, 2008). This mission has made an important and substantial contribution towards improving the security situation in Somalia. However, AMISOM and the Government of Somalia have not been able to provide effective security to the Somali people. The focus on gender in AMISOM is fairly recent, with the first gender officer deployed in Mogadishu in 2012. She was the first gender officer to be deployed in any AU PSO, potentially paving the way not only for gender mainstreaming in AMISOM but also in future AU operations (Kasumba and Lotze, 2013: 29). AMISOM's Gender Unit aims at building a gender-sensitive organization and facilitating and increasing the focus on gender mainstreaming in line with Resolution 1325.

The Concept of Participation in PSOs

Participation is a rich concept that varies with definition and application. The way participation is defined also depends on the context in which it occurs. For some, it is a matter of principle and for others, practice (World Bank, 1995). In PSOs, gender mainstreaming needs to start at the very beginning of a mission to ensure that structures and programmes are designed to address the different needs of women and men for protection, assistance, justice and reconstruction. Towards this end, it is important to include women in all phases and activities of any peace misssion: at decision-making level, assessment missions prior to the design of the mission, tactical and operational activities, and monitoring and reporting, in order to hold the misssion accountable.

Background to Female Participation in PSOs

In the past couple of decades, the tasks of peacekeeping have changed drastically from relatively straightforward ones such as building sustainable peace and restoring a safe environment to more complex intra-state and inter-ethnic conflicts that require multidimensionnal PSOs. Consequently, peacekeeping mission mandates have moved beyond exclusive military operations to multidimensional operations. In the increasingly globalised world, the new security challenges are products, not of conventional inter-state rivalries, but of economic, demographic and societal tensions that are mainly trans-national in nature. Incidents of conflict are on the rise due to a multiplicity of factors ranging from weak and illegitimate state institutions, through marginalisation of people in border areas (generating sanctuaries for various insurgent groups) and large-scale

population displacements to ineffective regional security arrangements. This implies the inclusion of new personnel with more comprehensive skills (Fapohunda, 2011). Within this multidimensional approach to peace, the gender approach is essential to adequately respond to the needs of women, men, boys and girls. A key aspect of the gender dimension of multi-dimensional peace operations is effective integration of more women in peace-support operations.

In 1999, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action called for the United Nations Department of Peace Keeping Operations (UNDPKO) to undertake a series of measures to advance gender balance and gender equality at all levels of peacekeeping missions. The Plan of Action emphasized the importance of the participation of women in all stages of a peace process. It spelled out the steps the UN and member states should take to mainstream gender, including providing gender training to all peacekeeping personnel and recruiting a higher number of women in high-level, decision-making positions. Pursuant to this, an ambitious target of achieving 50/50 representation by 2015 was set. The United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia (UNTAG) was the first mission to implement these policy guidelines amidst an environment that combined traditional peace keeping activities with peacebuilding functions.

In 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This was the first time the Security Council recognized that women and girls were affected by conflict in different ways relative to men and boys and therefore had an essential role in participatory peace processes. The Resolution built on previous international legal mechanisms such as the Windhoek Declaration/Namibia Plan of Action in its provision for a stronger gender mainstreaming component within peacekeeping missions. Since its passage, Resolution 1325 has served as a milestone towards better integration of women in peace processes. The Resolution emphasizes the importance of women's participation in all stages of a peace process, from negotiation to signature of a peace agreement, while emphasizing the necessity for pre-deployment as well as gender and sexual abuse and exploitation training for all military, police and civilian personnel deployed to missions.

Pursuant to the Resolution, many peacekeeping missions began putting in place Gender Units, Gender Advisors, and Gender Focal Points to ensure that gender mainstreaming programmes and mechanisms were regularly implemented and coordinated with mission activities. Resolution 1325 and the Namibia Plan of Action have been integrated by guidelines prepared by the UN DPKO aimed at helping Mission Gender Advisors in their implementation efforts. Despite these efforts, women represent a small part of the

UN peacekeeping forces, constituting 3% of the military personnel and 9% of police personnel. At the UN Headquarters in 2012, 48% of staff were women and 52% men, with the most disparity showing at middle and senior levels. In peacekeeping operations and special political missions, the figures are more challenging, with women making up only 29% of international and 17% of national staff. However, these data have been on the rise since 1993 when women represented only 1% of the forces. Since 2010, women have constituted about 30% of the civilian staff working on peacekeeping missions (DPKO, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

As peacekeeping evolves to encompass a broader humanitarian approach, women are increasingly seen as a vital part in peacekeeping operations. However, female peacekeepers tend to be deployed to the safest missions, not to places where the security situation is most fragile. Following a kind of gendered protection norm, countries willing to deploy female troops and police send them to more economically developed places and on missions with fewer peacekeeper deaths. Although there are some indications that greater female participation in peacekeeping missions is associated with fewer allegations of sexual violation, peacekeepers continue to be responsible for rape and sexual assaults on women and children in host nations (Manuza and Beardsly, 2015). Crimes associated with prostitution and sexual slavery of women and children far exceed what is normally tolerated in society. In African conflicts, significant proportions of the population are routinely subjected to torture, starvation, terrorism, humiliation, mutilation, and even murder simply because they are female (Carrillo,1991). When peacekeepers come, they sometimes take advantage of the people they were sent to protect.

A more balanced force of males and females on peacekeeping missions could reduce these crimes against women and children, coming closer to providing the environment necessary to meet positive and successful peacekeeping objectives without compromising the success or efficiency of operations (Conaway, Pampell, 2006) . However, this seemingly positive contribution of women to peacekeeping is largely unexploited. Various protocols and frameworks adapted by the AU and regional organisations related to the implementation of Resolution 1325 have promoted women's participation in peace keeping. Again the DPKO has shown that the presence of women in peacekeeping operations can make a positive difference in improving access to the local population, enhancing local communities' acceptance of the peace mission and improving the behaviour of male members of the mission. However, as of March 2013, there were less than 4% female UN peacekeepers in the world. Women peacekeepers especially

in military components have remained low despite the persistent demand for military female peacekeepers. Women's participation in peace operations has been recognized not only as an issue of gender equality and women's rights, but also as one of the preconditions for full operational impact of peacekeeping operations (Gorana, 2010).

Despite the lack of comprehensive data, it is clear that women's participation in peacekeeping operations has been low since the UN's inception. From 1957 to 1989, only 20 women served in peacekeeping missions, mainly as nurses in medical units. From 1957 to 1993, there were no female military officers at UN headquarters. However, by 1993, 11out of 19 UN Peacekeeping missions had significant civilian components, and almost 33% of civilian staff was women. The problem can be partially found in the fact that the right implementation of these plans depends on the will and ability of the TCCs for those peace missions (IRIN, 2010).

In AMISOM, only 1.49% military personnel are women. Uganda, which contributes the highest number of military personnel, has 3.1% women in its deployed forces in Somalia, while the other TCCs have less than 1%. Even though AMISOM aims at increasing the number of female staff, it is the TCCs that will decide whom to send to Somalia (Cedric de Coning, Meressa & Gjelsvik, 2013). Within the mission, women often serve at subordinate levels in supportive roles such as nurses, secretaries and translators, and are rarely found in high-ranking/decision-making positions. This is relevant not only for the military and police components but also for the civilian component which, similarly, has a low number of female staff. Gender mainstreaming requires the integration of gender analysis in all decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation functions, and as such, major efforts have been undertaken especially by the DPKO in UN missions, to increase the number of women leading and/or serving in peace operations through provision of gender awareness training to peacekeeping personnel. This paper, therefore, examines the participation of female military personnel in AMISOM which was established under chapter seven of the UN charter. The military is the biggest of the three components of AMISOM which seeks to stabilise the situation in the country, create the necessary conditions for the conduct of humanitarian activities and an eventual hand-over of the Mission to a United Nations Peacekeeping Operation. The study will inform strategies for enhancing participation of female military personnel in future peace missions.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper are to:

- Investigate the ranks/command levels and roles of female military personnel deployed in AMISOM;
- Establish the contribution of women to operational effectiveness of the mission; and
- Examine the challenges and strategies for effective participation of female military personnel in AMISOM.

Research Questions

- What are the roles and levels of female military personnel deployed in AMISOM?
- How have women contributed to the operational effectiveness of the mission?
- What are the challenges and strategies of improving women participation in PSO?

Literature Review

This literature discuss the issue of gender in the context of UN peacekeeping and different theories that explain the necessity of gender balance in PSO. Within the literature on peacekeeping, there has been very little attention paid to the role of female military peacekeepers. With the passing of UNSC 1325, the numbers of women in peacekeeping have increased(Karim, Beardsley,2013).

Gender mainstreaming in PSO is essential for the success of any peace operation because it helps to respond to different security needs within society, improve operational effectiveness, create a representative mission, strengthen civil components of the mission and strengthen democratic oversight (Fapohunda, 2011).

Etchart (2005) asserts that gender main-streaming is not solely about advocating for women's rights but about critically analyzing all the challenges and opportunities for reform and reconstruction with respect to existing gender roles and inequalities. Gender mainstreaming, as defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.

INSTRAW (2008) observes that gender-blind peace agreements have only partially secured peace in war-torn societies and programming based on these agreements cannot be considered inclusive. The risk in not having a gender perspective is that the mission will overlook important issues of inclusive security that will jeopardize agreements and threaten the fragile peace. Gender mainstreaming is one tool for understanding complex situations, reaching a broader consensus, inspiring new solutions and solving conflicts by incorporating new approaches and viewpoints.

Theoretical Framework

Feminist Theories of Gender and International Conflict

Feminist approaches to security argue that war and violence have always been gendered, and may now be increasingly so (Väyrynen, 1999: 48). In looking at issues using a gendered perspective, one can investigate the different relationships between men and women based on the existing social and power structures of tradition, cultural preferences, and timeless norms (Enloe, 2014:11). The expansion of women's movements and feminist scholarship has been one of the principal driving forces behind the increased awareness of gender issues at decision -making levels, particularly within international institutions concerned with peace and security (Reeves, 2012). Feminist gender theories, particularly in international relations, tend to focus on equality and inclusion, paying attention to the way relationships between men and women impact on the understanding of power, institutional influences and norms (Youngs, 2008: 693). These theories tend to counter-balance the traditional collective security and peacekeeping thinking where peace missions had little relevance to women apart from providing a means for their protection. This gendered mode of this thinking, which casts male military and diplomats as the primary actors, and women (often together with children) as the passive recipients or victims, continues to pervade laws, policies and practices relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Women's peace movements, human rights advocates and feminist activists and academics have struggled for at least the last century to challenge the gendered assumptions of militarism and the precarious security that military thinking offers.

Gender, Gender Mainstreaming, and Peacekeeping

Gender mainstreaming recognises the existence of gendered relations in societal norms. As such, gender mainstreaming policies are context-specific and dependent on multiple stakeholders both at regional and international levels. Stakeholders involved in gender mainstreaming may include international and local non-governmental organisations, national governments, and intergovernmental bodies such as the European Union and the United Nations (Youngs, 2008). Female peacekeeping personnel assist in normalising peacekeeping troops' presence, facilitating peace processes, reducing fears, and engendering trust in host countries (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009). The deployment of female peacekeepers and mission successes in gender mainstreaming are dependent on UN member states and their ability to send suitably qualified personnel to serve in peacekeeping missions. While UN peacekeeping may involve a number of different

organisations, it is predominantly a military activity and in general, female peacekeepers are well regarded by host countries, as they are often perceived by civilians to be more approachable than their male colleagues. Women peacekeeping personnel can also conduct body searches on civilian women, which can in turn reduce incidences of weapons smuggling (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009). While examining gender representation in peacekeeping forces Olsson (2000) found out that the number of women in military and police components in peacekeeping missions was quite small, whereas the number of women employed as civilian staff was substantially higher. The main reason military numbers were lower than civilian staff numbers is the fact that the UN relies on TCCs to send them personnel, thus the deployment of women becomes dependent on their status in their respective countries' armed forces (Olsson, 2000). Resistance to female participation may also occur as a result of assumptions of expected problems which could occur if women were to be included (Olsson, 2000: 9).

Female Personnel in PSO and Decrease in Crimes Against Women

Through observations in different peacekeeping missions, male soldiers are prone to sexual violence against civilians with whom they come into contact. No army is immune to this problem, as British experience in Cyprus demonstrates. The incidence of rape involving US military personnel stationed in Japan is three times higher than would be expected among a similarly sized community at home. This sort of sexual violence has marred UN peacekeeping operations. Evidence also suggests that women peacekeepers are more willing than their male counterparts to seek understanding and reconciliation during disagreements, thus proving themselves to be the more effective negotiators. In Somalia, a marked difference in behaviour was apparent between combat and support units of the US Army that had women. While support groups exhibited a strong inclination to understanding the problems facing the host society, combat groups quickly developed a hostile attitude, particularly when the political situation deteriorated (Wilson, 1996).

It is therefore believed that an increase in female personnel can decrease crime against women and children committed by peacekeepers in host countries (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009). Peacekeeping missions have been spoiled when some personnel in military contingents commit crimes against civilians (Carey and Kirshenbaum, 1994). Peacekeepers have been responsible for rape and sexual assaults on women and children in host nations (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009: 122). In addition, peacekeepers who have engaged in sexual assault in host countries have also been found to have contracted HIV and AIDS and passed on the disease to others (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009). Some peacekeepers have also been found to be involved in facilitating human trafficking, and

also engaging in illegal prostitution (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009). Between January 2004 and November 2006, the UN "investigated and sent home 144 peacekeepers who were accused of exploitation and/or abuse" (Bridges and Horsfall, 2009: 124). Kent (2005) states that, despite the fact that peacekeepers have codes of conduct and zero-tolerance policies to abide by, allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation "continue to be heard with increasing frequency and, as a result of limited remedial action, the abusers continue with impunity. Some of the countries where there have been allegations of sexual assault by peacekeepers include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Bosnia, Mozambique, Kosovo, Liberia, Haiti, and Cambodia (Kent, 2005). Impunity prevails due to the fact that many missions lack the capacity to monitor their personnel, leading to incomplete reporting and follow-up on cases of peacekeepers and aid workers abusing their positions of power (Kent, 2005).

The literature has therefore identified several benefits of having women in peacekeeping operations. Among these include operational effectiveness, acceptability of the mission by the host community, reduction of incidences of sexual exploitation and abuse, and improved daily tactical level work of the mission. However, the challenge posed by the current low participation of female personnel is continued marginalization of women from making decisions at all levels of PSOs. According to Yaw Affram (2011), the few women in PSOs have generally been relegated to support roles, the ground combat-arms occupations having been the most resistant to the inclusion of women. He observes that in some countries, women's participation in combat specialties has been cyclical at best, and progress stalled once the wartime crises passed. Countries such as the UK and US have developed personnel policies establishing partial inclusion, protecting the ideal traditional military image of the physically strong, emotionally tough, masculine war hero. Such policies are internally sustained by the cultural influence of a Combat Masculine War-fighting (CMW) model, shaped largely by men and which constitutes a serious obstacle for women. This also contrasts with the diversity model, which starts from the fundamental premise that the organization, structure, and management of the military reflect the norms and values of civilian society.

Adzo Arhin (2014) support the full implementation of the gender-diversity model explicitly challenge arguments opposing women in combat roles. Their stated position is that the real barrier to women participating fully in the military today has little to do with their physical and mental abilities but rather revolves around social and cultural issues characterizing the warrior framework. They suggest the use a credible strategic approach to women's roles based on research and information rather than on myths, biases, and outdated arguments.

The United Nations (2006) Background Paper on "Enhancing the Operational Impact of Peacekeeping Operations: Gender Balance in Military and Police Services Deployed to UN Peacekeeping Missions" highlights how inaction by governments to remove barriers and address cultural and marital attitudes hampers increased involvement and deployment of women from military units and police services to peace support operations. This has adversely impacted gender mainstreaming policies in PSOs and the capacity of most member states to change their administrative policies, ensure greater enrolment, and enhance pre-deployment training for female military and police personnel. The success of women integration in peace missions is largely dependent on the political will of each country, the initiatives taken by high level leadership of the country, and the organization of mission staffing (Fapohunda, 2011). Research suggests that to improve the integration of women into PKOs, policymakers should:

- Improve data collection on women's and men's access to decision-making opportunities within PKOs;

- Foster commitment at all levels – local, national and international – by increasing the number of female peacekeepers in senior positions;

- Ensure opportunities for women peacekeepers to participate in PKO decisions and policies;

- Examine ways in which women peacekeepers contribute to the operational effectiveness of PKOs and investigate how these contributions may or may not differ from those of male peacekeepers;

- Push TCCs to enforce the law and remove impunity of their peacekeepers in terms of sexual crimes they commit while serving in PKOs;

- Deploy all-female units and integrate them in mixed-gender peacekeeping environments;

- Reinforce accountability at all levels of PKOs; and

- increase the number of women (and men) peacekeepers who are gender sensitive and willing to bring about change in local women's lives (Simic, 2013).

Roles and Levels of Female Military in AMISOM

Resolution 1325 urges an increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. AMISOM, as a regional institution, is therefore obliged to enforce the resolution by increasing the numbers, roles and levels of female personnel and ensuring that the mission is gender mainstreamed. However, there are currently no female officers at senior decision -making levels in AMISOM. It should be noted that even though AMISOM aims at increasing the number of senior female officers, it is the TCCs that decide whom to send to the mission. Furthermore, AMISOM TCCs do not have enough female personnel to send for peace-keeping missions. Integrating and mainstreaming a gender perspective in all parts and at all levels of the mission are essential to encourage local women to deposit complaints and report incidents of SEA. The role of women in peacekeeping is based on the assumption that they contribute to reducing the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence, build the capacity of local women and break down traditional views that discriminate against and marginalize women.

In 2013, AMISOM started the process of developing its first gender mainstreaming strategy, which will be important not only for AMISOM's work on gender but also for future AU missions in their approaches to gender mainstreaming. It is therefore important to provide a clear, strategic, systematic, realistic and operational strategy for gender mainstreaming in all components and activities of the mission. However, to be able to support the implementation and reporting on developments and outputs of the strategy and implementation plan sufficiently, the gender unit needs to be strengthened with more human and financial resources. Here, it should be stressed that gender advisors are intended to play a supportive role and ensure a shared understanding that all male and female mission staff are responsible for the implementation of the gender strategy in their everyday work. In order to operationalize this, detailed guidelines and documents must be available to all. Further, checklists and yearly implementation plans including budget allocations must be provided. In addition, effective tools must be in place for monitoring and evaluation, including gender-sensitive indicators, sex-segregated data, tracking systems, etc. The gender unit would also benefit from closer support and backing from AU HQ in Addis Ababa. Measures to bridge the significant gap between Mogadishu and Addis Ababa, such as increased communication and frequent field visits, are important activities in relation to the making and implementation of a gender strategy.

Evidence from around the world and across cultures shows that integrating women and gender considerations into peace keeping helps promote democratic governance and long-term stability. In order to achieve these goals, women need to be able to play a role in building and participating in the full range of decision-making institutions in their countries(United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, January 21, 2015).

A major challenge in implementing gender strategies in Africa is that the AU requires troop-contributing countries to provide most of the equipment and personnel needed by their troops. As such, AMISOM has little influence in determining the gender composition of its police and military personnel. However, despite this challenge, it (AMISOM) has made positive strides towards the involvement of women through the establishment of a Gender Unit. The unit works to empower and involve Somali women through training, outreach programmes and capacity-building processes.

Level of Participation of Female Personnel in AMISOM

As mentioned above, it is now recognised that the level of participation of female personnel in AMISOM is quite low. The few women in the mission serve at subordinate levels, mainly playing supportive roles, and are rarely found in high-ranking/decision-making positions. Various reasons explain the low level of responsibility in the mission. Among these is low percentage of female personnel in the armed forces of the TCCs concerned. Information on the number or proportion of females in national forces is often not publicly available. However, a report on Resolution 1325 in Uganda showed that in 2011, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) had a total of 1,566 female soldiers, barely 10% of the total forces (Gjelsvik, 2013). Again, female personnel in most African countries are fairly young with recruitment of female officers being recent in most of the countries concerned.

Table 1.1: Representation of AMISOM Female Personnel by Country

Troop-Contributing Country	Number of Troops	Number of Female Troops	Percentage (%)
Uganda	6,223	193	3.10
Burundi	5,432	40	0.73
Kenya	4,652	29	0.62
Djibouti	960	8	0.83
Sierra Leone	850	-	0.0
Total	**18, 117**	**270**	**1.49**

Source: Accord, 2013.

Table 1.1 indicates the low number of female personnel deployed to AMISOM by TCCs. Uganda and Burundi are leading by sending a larger number of female troops to AMISOM's peace support operations. Each country experiences specific challenges that explain why their contribution of female personnel is low. However, these challenges need to be addressed to implement UNSC Resolution 1325. In many countries, neither the military nor the police make active efforts to recruit women. Sometimes, they cannot provide sufficient incentives to attract women like possibilities of promotion, good career opportunities, etc. MONUSCO in DR Congo and MINUSTAH in Haiti are examples of UN missions where women mainly held supportive roles, working as nurses, secretaries, translators, etc. The low level of women's participation and inclusion in armed forces may be attributed to societal norms and biases that prohibit women from active combat.

Role of women in AMISOM Operational Effectiveness

After more than two decades of violent (and still ongoing) conflict, the challenges related to gender equality and sexually-based violence are many. Given the mission's mandate, capacity and resources, the inclusion of female personnel in AMISOM constitutes a good practice for the Somali Government to emulate on gender mainstreaming in its institutions. AMISOM gender representatives have already embarked on a positive process of supporting and encouraging the Somali government to ensure gender mainstreaming and women's participation in politics. In connection with the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in 2012, there was a 30% quota for female representatives as Members of Parliament, which AMISOM actively supported. With respect to AMISOM's previous and current engagement with the government on the inclusion of women in politics, the mission is in a position to provide useful support to these processes through its gender units. Other activities that AMISOM female personnel have been engaged in are essential functions related to the mission mandate. These essential functions include information gathering for early warning and human rights investigations; screening and assisting female ex-combatants during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes and assisting survivors of gender-based violence.

The AMISOM medical care to Somali women has also contributed immensely in winning the hearts and minds of Somalis. AMISOM hospitals that were initially set up to take care of injured troops opened their doors to civilians who flock to them in large numbers. The Mission's Outpatient Department (OPD) Level 2, for example, is located inside the AMISOM Base Camp in Mogadishu and opens to civilians three times a

week. During those three days, hundreds of civilians travel from far and wide and line up for hours for much needed medical attention.

Since its inception, the AMISOM Gender office has engaged heavily with the local community, arranging events and providing training sessions in the hope of empowering the local community, especially those marginalised by their society. Reflecting the African Union's strong commitment to the advancement of gender equality and supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia, the office strategically mainstreams gender equality in all areas of operation. Supporting the Federal Government of Somalia, AMISOM Gender office's aim is to achieve sustainable peace by ensuring that the government's post-conflict reconstruction process promotes gender equality and women's and girls' rights. Recently, the unit organized a one-day event that focused on empowering Somali women and engaging with local elders and politicians in Mogadishu. The event brought together local elders, academicians, female activists and religious leaders who took part in discussions concerning the role of women in politics, lack of education in the community as well as the benefits of women empowerment and its support towards the progression of Somalia. Last year, alongside the Political Unit, the Gender Unit organized a successful needs assessment workshop for Somali female MPs in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop provided the female parliamentarians in the Somali Government a networking opportunity with their counterparts from Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya and Uganda. It also gave them an opportunity to exchange experiences and lessons learnt.

Challenges for Female Participation in AMISOM

Although there are legitimate arguments in favour of greater deployment of women in peacekeeping operations, there is a deep-rooted belief that the security sector is a domain reserved for men if the proportion of male representation and systemic preconditions for entry into this sector are taken into account.

Social Norms and Biases that Perpetuate Gender Inequality

In many african countries, wherever gender integration has taken place, whether in government or military institutions, it has encountered obstacles, derision, and ridicule. A common thread observed is the prevalence of social norms and behaviors that perpetuate inequality between men and women and act as a barrier to women's full participation in the security sector. While virtually all countries appear to falter on the number of women they contribute to UN peacekeeping operations, a few lead because of established national frameworks for gender integration in their armed forces. In order to establish strong national frameworks for gender integration, countries have to directly address the prevalence of social norms and biases that perpetuate gender inequality in the past and present.

Lack of Political will

While there are many provisions for gender mainstreaming in Africa's peace operations, these have mostly remained as strategies on paper, lacking the requisite political will and financial support to be translated into action for impact. Specifically, thirty five countries have developed and launched national action plans and nine of them are African. The national plans developed and launched faced a lot of challenges on funding and coordination which have negatively affected their implementation. Further, there are over 2,500 indicators on women, peace and security collated by UN Women into 400 groupings and categorised according to the four pillars[9] of UNSCR 1325 (Kuonqui and Cueva-Beteta, 2012). With the many indicators, it is challenging to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the resolutions and frameworks, more so in Africa where there are many competing interventions and actors on women, peace and security.

Complexity of Gender Mainstreaming in African PSOs

Peacekeepers work in difficult circumstances where challenges such as gender-based violence, culture-specific gender roles and unequal power relations between peacekeeping personnel and the civilian population have to be addressed adequately. For peacekeepers to fulfil their mandates and respond to these challenges, the integration of a gender perspective in all spheres of peacekeeping missions is essential. However, different regional organisations and member states apply different laws and processes for integrating gender in their peacekeeping processes that are unique to their contexts. Thus, the application of international frameworks such as UNSC resolutions, international humanitarian law, and protocols and conventions on women, peace and security further add to the coordination challenges among actors and processes. Furthermore, member states have the primary responsibility for implementing UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions. The provision of competent troops and personnel, experts on gender, women in the armed forces and female candidates for leading positions in operations depends entirely on national decisions. These national decisions are based on national laws and frameworks, which are often largely masculine in priority and character.

Lack of Expertise

Given the dynamic nature of peacekeeping and the challenges that the peacekeepers face on a daily basis, there is a need to ensure that they are adequately equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform their duties (Limo, 2015). Training is therefore important to develop expertise and ensure that peacekeepers are adequately prepared with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively perform their tasks in missions. Training, education and scenario-based exercises form part of the many factors that determine the success or failure of peace operations (Aubyn, Fiifi Edu-Afful, Serwaa and Susan Nelson, 2015). Despite the predominance of women in crisis spots, peacekeepers are rarely trained in gender issues. More often, the integration of gender training in national and regional curricula in support of peace support operations is still ad hoc. Both male and female peacekeepers need to acquire basic knowledge and conceptual understanding of gender and security issues specific to the host nation so that they can support the implementation of the mission mandate effectively. Gender training thus addresses the gap between the goal of gender equality and the standard practices of peacekeeping. Gender training has further sought to draw the attention of peacekeepers to the complex impact of conflict on the lives of women and girls, and of the need to engage them as agents of change in post-conflict peacebuilding processes.

Lack of Specific Training and Exposure to Harmful Threats

Women can make a difference in enhancing human security especially for local women. However, this ability is limited by their training which is gender-neutral and therefore requires them to act and perform functions just like men. The rationale for this is that when deployed on peace missions, they have to carry the same equipment, work in the same environment and face the same adversaries in the course of duty. Psychologically and emotionally, the operational environment is seen to be more taxing for women, not to mention the extreme forms of sexual violence sometimes meted out to women. Women are also perceived to pose a gendered security risk, especially in hyper-masculine contexts where women are seen as sexual objects or are used as weapons of war which may threaten the existing gender power relations that threaten male dominance.

Thus, female peacekeepers face different forms of gender and sexual harassment which are used to denigrate them. Some of the female peacekeepers who served in positions of authority explained how they were often ignored, undermined, not respected and faced frequent sexual advances. Such forms of gender harassment occurred often, but were not considered serious enough to evoke punitive action. This was simply explained away in terms of existing patriarchal relations that could not be changed. However, in some cases this evoked open hostility towards them. For instance, "…in Sudan it is considered disrespectful to their culture for women to be soldiers, carry rifles and wear trousers. Besides this, the threat of being raped served to further erode women peacekeepers' agency, especially where they were excluded from certain operations considered too dangerous by their commanders. In this way, not only were old gender stereotypes replicated but also used to undermine the prospect of an equal partnership between men and women.

What this shows is that even where national armed forces implement gender equality, the peacekeeping environment remains hostile to women. Multiple masculinities, patriarchy and sexism undermine the ability of women peacekeepers to imbue alternative ways of dealing with and resolving conflict. One of the effective ways of gendering the military is to stop privileging masculinity over femininity (Kümmel, 2000). This is unlikely to happen where peacekeeping remains steeped in the warrior ethos and where the feminine is not valued, is suppressed, seen as a threat, or is considered a liability. What is needed is for women to become less complicit and more assertive in making their voices heard. However, military females themselves typically do not embrace feminine values given the nature of their work. They typically conform to and assimilate masculine values, norms and practices in order to be judged as capable soldiers. They have to demonstrate

an absence of emotion and a willingness to use violence by excising all that is perceived to be feminine (Kovach, 2015).

This makes it difficult to achieve the ideals advocated by UNSC Resolution 1325. The aim of this resolution is not only to increase the number of women serving in the military but also to mainstream gender by bringing about greater sensitivity to the different effects that war has on men and women. In this regard, there has been little progress as the number of military women serving on peacekeeping missions has remained around 3%. Even in the South African armed forces where women now represent 26% of uniformed personnel and up to 15% of those deployed on peacekeeping missions, there seems to be little qualitative change in changing military culture. This necessitates a closer introspection in terms of how women are trained, deployed and supported on peacekeeping operations. It then raises the question as to whether a gender-neutral approach to gender integration in the military does not in fact perpetuate gender inequality. Clearly, one cannot bring about a different perspective to war and peace if women are expected to embrace masculine norms and values and where gender difference is not recognised and valued (Norville, 2011).

A number of other arguments have been raised about military policies that ban women from combat roles. Below is an overview of some of the challenges that have been raised against the enlisting of women soldiers into combat units:

Physical Ability: While the majority of jobs in the armed forces are open equally to men and women, there are some to which women are just not physically suited. The standards of physical fitness have been set to suit men, and women attempting to reach them will over-stretch themselves. In addition, combat units engage in activities designed to suit men's capabilities. Women serving in integrated units will suffer higher injury rates as a result of this.

Military Readiness: Conditions such as pregnancy can affect the deployment ability of a unit when the unit has a disproportionate number of women or is understaffed.

Abuse by Enemy: Both male and female prisoners are at risk of torture and rape

Tradition: Men, especially those likely to enlist, maintain traditional gender roles. In some situations, men may act foolishly to protect women in their combat units. Harassment and resentment of the presence of women in a hyper-masculine military sub-culture is likely to become a problem.

Career Advancement of Women: As combat duty is usually regarded as necessary for promotion to senior officer positions, denying female personnel this experience ensures that few reach the highest ranks of the military thus further entrenching sexism. Women have to be given the same opportunities and exposed to the same risks as men in the army in order to access the same opportunities.

Modern Warfare and Public Support: In the modern world of combat (such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Mali and Nigeria), women serving in the military are exposed to front-line risks. Women serving in support positions on and off the frontlines where war is waged on street corners or in markets are often at equal risk with men. In Afganistan and Iraq, about 118 women were killed. Support for women serving in the armed forces has not wavered as warfare changes which is a clear sign that the necessity of women serving in combat is recognized. However, according to Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness in America, "...women can't be assigned, but they can be "attached" to direct ground combat units".

Strategies for Effective Participation of Female Military in AMISOM

Despite progress in implementing the 'women peace and security agenda' through the work of peacekeeping operations, significant efforts need to be made. Peace and security can only be achieved and sustained if all members of society are equal in terms of opportunities, protection, access to resources and services, participation in decision making, and other basic rights. The following strategies can be used to enhance the participation of women in AMISOM.

Change of Military Culture to Embrace Diversity and Flexibility

The military as a male-dominated domain recognises the need to develop an integrated strategy to increase the representation and retention of women in non-traditional roles. A unique mechanism to attract, recruit, retain and develop women at all levels of the military is a key strategy to enhance the participation of female personnel. The real security need for Africans is not only military security. It is also social security; security against poverty, ignorance, anxiety, fear, disease, famine, arbitrary power and exploitation. It is security against those things that render democracy improbable in Africa (Ake, 2000). Militarism in Africa is conceptualised as an extreme variant of patriarchy and practices that subordinate and oppress women (Lutz, 2002). Scholars have also observed that insecurity characterises the lives of women in Africa in many ways, key among which are women's exclusion from political and military arenas which emphasises their exploitation and invisibility. The strategy of addressing the root causes will bring a transformative effect of the military institution and extend its work into the deeper issue of human security. This transformation will encourage countries to secure the participation of women as equal to men in the field of military work.

Measures against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in AMISOM

Creating strategies for implementation of SGBV responses and safe environments can only be achieved by addressing gender inequality and discrimination. The inclusion of effective gender perspectives in the work of AMISOM peacekeepers can contribute to the continued credibility of peacekeeping operations and the overall achievement of sustainable peace and security. Female peacekeepers also stand as role-models in the Somalia local environment, inspiring women and girls to join the army and the police. However, this can be achieved only if the presence of female peacekeepers also decreases

the prevalence of sexual abuse and misconduct by other peacekeepers. Therefore, AMISOM needs to create a clear and feasible vision for the mission's work on gender and Resolution 1325 in relation to the mission's capacities, resources and mandate.

Rapid Implementation of UNSCR 1325

It has been observed that UN member-states are aware of Resolution 1325 but most do not understand its full implications for UN peacekeeping beyond increasing women's presence in missions. However, awareness does not guarantee understanding or appropriate action. This has also made member states lack motivation to implement adequate policies and guidelines on gender mainstreaming in peace operations. Insufficient funding, lack of data analysis on gender issues and also lack of technical expertise on gender, attitudinal obstacles, and insufficient mapping of needs in planning and budgeting have harmed the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Countries should create national action plans on implementing 1325 as well as putting in place systematic monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the resolution to enhance commitment and accountability.

Engagement with Member-states to Increase Female Personnel

If the AU and other regional organisations developed proactive efforts designed to increase the number of female personnel serving in the strategic, operational and tactical planning processes of the missions, the level of female participation would increase. In this regard, strategies should be developed aimed both at increasing the number of civilian female personnel recruited and deployed in missions, and increasing the number of uniformed female personnel. In addition, efforts should be undertaken to review employment conditions and facilities in the field to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to attract and retain female personnel in field operations. Institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming in all African peace missions can help TCCs to implement the Resolution 1325 in order to contribute military contingents with enough gender representation. Although gender issues remain on the international peace and security agenda, there is still a lack of political will and limited efforts at implementation among TCCs. Increasing women's participation in PSOs, therefore, has practical advantages. These include enhanced effectivenenss of the mission in terms of protection of civilians, assistance to victims of sexual violence and abuse, and deterrence of sexual violence.

Protection: Peacekeeping operations with more female personnel are better able to protect citizens, especially women and children because they bring greater awareness

of and sensitivity to their particular needs and challenges, and are less intimidating or provocative than men peacekeepers.

Assistance to victims of sexual violence: women peacekeepers ensure a more compassionate or empathetic response to victimised women and children, especially those that have been sexually assaulted. It is often claimed that it is "easier" for a raped woman to talk to another woman about her problem.

Deterrence of sexual violence: by having a civilising effect on their male colleagues, women peacekeepers ensure a better-behaved, less-corrupt and less-abusive PKO. With regard to the problem of sexual exploitation or abuse committed by UN personnel, women are less likely to be perpetrators, thus lowering the overall level of sexual exploitation or abuse committed.

Practical advantages: women peacekeepers are able to search local women at checkpoints; can establish better relations with local women groups; and can improve intelligence gathering about the local community via better access to local women and/or broader understanding of what constitutes a security threat.

Inspiration: women peacekeepers help contribute to more equitable gender relations within the local society by serving as role-models or mentors for local women and girls (Jennings, 2012)

Encouraging Integrated Training on Gender Mainstreaming in PSOs

"A typical soldier or police officer is not naturally a good peacekeeper, unless s/he acquires critical knowledge and skills that only specific peacekeeping training can provide. For this reason, peacekeeping training needs to be understood as a crucial part of effective peace keeping operations"- (*Dag Hammarskjöld, Former UN Secretary General*)

Integrated trainings for gender equality is a transformative process for providing knowledge, techniques and tools to women and men that aim at changing attitudes and behaviours. It is a continuous process that requires commitment and political will from TCCs and mission leaders in order to create inclusive military and police that recognize the need to promote gender equality. Training is a tool, strategy and also means to effect individual and collective transformation towards gender equality by raising awareness and encouraging learning, knowledge-building and skill development. It helps women

and men to understand the role gender plays and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for advancing gender equality in their daily lives and work (Mackay, 2003). There are two main types of training given to peacekeeping troops: pre-deployment training and induction training. Pre-deployment gender training aims at educating troops on the basic values of the United Nations when dealing with men and women of the host population. Mackay (2003) suggests that pre-deployment gender training be broad and generic, incorporating a wealth of different examples, but should also cover specific information about culture and gender in the country where the mission will be deployed. Training should inform peacekeepers about the social context where they will operate in order to help reduce unintended effects of their behaviours on the local population. Pre-deployment training is the responsibility of troop-contributing countries.

Induction Training refers to training that is delivered to mission headquarters of troops in the host country. This may include generic as well as specialized training, training for military police and civilian personnel and gender mainstreaming. Integrated training for all male and female personnel from entry into the service throughout one's career can help peacekeeping missions enhance mandate implementation with adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes towards gender equality (Minna, 2008).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This paper focussed on participation of female military personnel in African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). It was manly guided by three objectives. The first objective was to Investigate the ranks/command levels and roles of female military personnel deployed in AMISOM, the second objective was to establish the contribution of women to operational effectiveness of the mission; and lastly to examine the challenges and strategies for effective participation of female military personnel in AMISOM. Based on the findings, the following conclusion have been drawn. While improvements have been made in Africa, women continue to be largely under-represented in African uniformed components of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In AMISOM only 1.49% military personnel are women. Uganda, which contributes the highest number of military personnel, has a percentage of 3.1 women in its deployed forces in Somalia, while the other contributing countries have less than 1%. Even though AMISOM aims to increase the number of female staff, it is the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) who decide whom to send to Somalia.

However women have largely contributed to mission effectiveness even if they usually serve at subordinate levels and rarely found in high ranking/decision-making positions. They are working as nurses, secretaries and translators and have been effective in building peace with Somali women organisations. This is relevant not only for the military and police components but also for the civilian component which, equally, have a low number of female staff.

 Barriers including culture, lack of political will, lack of experience and training within troop contributing countries make difficult for African peace missions to achieve the ideals advocated by UNSC Resolution 1325. The rapid implementation of UNSCR 1325 as well as the introduction of strategies to monitor and evaluate the level of implementation can help to achieve quickly expected results.

Recommendations

- Africa Union should increase women's representation in peace operations through the recruitment of police, military and civilian personnel.Africa Union should support the troop contributing countries, to develop comprehenisive short-term plans for meeting the global recruitment goal of increasing the number of women military and police personnel serving in peacekeeping operations in Africa

- The UN and AU should encourage member states to review their recruitment policies and criteria for deployment to identify any inequalities or barriers to entry for women.

- AMISOM should include women in all activities prior to deployment. Strategic planning, force generation planning, operational planning and in monitoring and reporting activities to evaluate the progress of military efforts to implement mandates on women, peace and security.

- AMISOM should also Request that TCCs contextualize pre-deployment training in order to address specific operational realities in countries of deployment, including the impact of the conflict on gender relations and the role and participation of women.

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Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in Peacekeeping: Case of the Central African Republic

By WATSON Karuma Karomba

Introduction

The conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) has been in a catastrophic spiral of renewed civil armed conflict since late 2012. The CAR continues to be plagued by acts of ethno-sectarian violence characterized by a disintegration of state structures, deep-rooted inter-ethnic rivalry and a hand-to-mouth economy (International Crisis Group, 2015). Consequently, the violence has torn the country apart to the extent that international intervention has warranted a peacekeeping mission. As much as this mission is meant to bring some semblance of peace to this country, allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) have surfaced. This is a serious dent to the goal of the mission known as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and the United Nations peacekeeping initiative as a whole. There is need to look into the causes and magnitude of SEA by peacekeepers in CAR as well as the strategies and mechanisms in place to address it. This paper delves into these three aspects. In this regard, it seeks to identify gaps in the actions undertaken by the United Nations (UN) and Troop-Contributing Countries (TCC) to address the problem of SEA in CAR.

The UN has over 100,000 peacekeeping personnel comprising military, police and civilian components. All the personnel are tied to a code of conduct that is based on high levels of accountability and professionalism under the Departments of Field Support (DFS) and Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). These key departments are tasked with the enforcement of UN policies on conduct in peacekeeping operations (United Nations Conduct and Discipline Unit, 2016). There are standards to which the Peacekeeping personnel should adhere as entailed in the UN Standards of Conduct (UN Standards of Conduct, 2016).

UN peacekeeping operations have for decades brought peace and stability to countries emerging from war (UN, A/59/710). The women and men who serve under the blue flag do so under demanding and often dangerous conditions. The history of peacekeeping has been one of distinguished collective accomplishment and personal sacrifice. However, this exemplary record has been clouded by the unbecoming conduct of a

few individuals. In particular, the revelations in 2004 of sexual exploitation and abuse by a significant number of United Nations peacekeeping personnel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have done great harm to the name of peacekeeping. With the reported cases of SEA by peacekeepers in CAR in mind, the paper seeks to explore and analyze the causes and magnitude of SEA violations. In addition, the paper focuses on the strategies and mechanisms meant to help avert situations leading to SEA. Lastly, the paper examines why these strategies and mechanisms do not seem to have worked in the case of the CAR.

Definition of Key Terms

Peacekeeping - Defined by the United Nations (UN) as a unique and dynamic instrument that it has developed to help countries torn by conflict to create the conditions necessary for lasting peace (Allais, 2011).

Sexual Exploitation - Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual use of another... In addtion, sexual abuse is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. (United Nations Conduct and Discipline Unit, 2016).

Organization of the Study

The paper consists of seven (7) sections with section one being the introduction. Section two will look at the framework guiding SEA. Section three reviews the literature while section four is on a brief background on the CAR conflict. Section five looks into causes and magnitude of SEA in CAR, and the mechanisms and strategies in place to address SEA are covered in section six. Finally, section seven offers the conclusions and recommendations, followed by highlights of key messages in the paper.

Statement of the Problem

The rising cases of SEA in CAR continue to jeopardize PSO in this Central African state. Civilians have been greatly impacted by the violations emanating from SEA, with children, both boys and girls making up the rising cases of victims. Young women have also been subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation due to the desperate conditions the conflict has left them in. On the part of the mission, the perpetrators who have been

serving in the peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) continue to hurt its mandate and objectives. Civilians no longer feel safe being around UN peacekeepers thus watering down the safety-net standards their presence ought to have brought to a conflict-ravaged state like the CAR. This lack of confidence in peacekeeping troops paints a gloomy picture for the work of MINUSCA in managing the CAR conflict. The mechanisms and strategies in place do not seem effective in dealing with this problem. Furthermore, lack of a justice body or system to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators leaves the victims shortchanged on justice because not only are they not given reparations but are also denied a chance to testify before their perpetrators.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

a) What are the main causes of and magnitude of SEA by peacekeepers in CAR?

b) What are the mechanisms in place related to the protection of protection of civilians against SEA in PSO?

c) Which are the strategies that provide for effective protection of civilians against SEA by peacekeepers?

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

a) Investigate the causes and magnitude of SEA by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic;

b) Assess the mechanisms that have been put in place to address the issue of SEA in CAR; and

c) Find out strategies that could address the issue of SEA in peacekeeping missions.

Theoretical Framework

This section examines some of the key theories that may help explain SEA in conflict situations. The theories are based on social aspects in which individuals are socialized, as well as character traits perceived to be inherent in their biological make-up especially as regards men in their gendered perceptions.

Biology – Impunity Theory

The biological impunity theory is based on the classical notion that boys will always be boys and that the aggression men show towards women is due to their high testosterone levels. Sexual aggression is then in-born for the men and is heightened in times of war due to breakdown of legal restrictions and social structures and norms. This theory hoovers around the connection between conflict, impunity and rape and runs in the period between when there is a breakdown of social systems and their restoration (Linsdey, 2013). According to Ward and Beech (2005), genes may play a factor in influencing an individual to act on certain urges or wants, e.g. sexual urges. In addition, certain cultural aspects that may have socialized a person to be in a position to achieve these urges could play a huge role in sexual abuse and exploitation. This may predispose an individual to attaining certain goals through unacceptable means. Here, culture and genes play a pivotal role in escalating these tendencies especially when an individual has low self-control.

Low Self-Control Theory

Criminals act for the benefit of getting immediate gratification from their actions. In addition, they lack the capacity to defer the want for gratification hence act on impulse leading to acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, including rape (Lowell, 2010). Viewed from a peacekeeper's point of view, women and young girls are easy targets for abuse given their vulnerable state in conflict. The low self-control theory states that crime is easy to execute and may require little skill to achieve results. This is how targeting minors (boys or girls) seemed easy for the MINUSCA troops accused of SEA. Furthermore, having a handicapp in interpersonal skills as well as poor social skills can lead to sexual agression (Lowell, 2010). Troops who have difficulties interacting with other persons at the social level may have far -reaching repercurssions and this may explain why SEA has widely been reported in this vital UN Mission. The tendency of male dominance forms an ideal avenue for using low self-control to illegally attain sexual wants through SEA. This is in total disregard of the laid down procedures governing peacekeeping

missions. In addition, it goes against socially accepted norms on abuse and exploitation of children in a sexual manner.

Framework Guiding SEA

UNSC Resolution 2272 of 2016

The United Nations Resolution 2272 on SEA by UN peacekeepers was adopted by the UNSC on 11 March, 2016. It represents a strong measure by the UN to ensure that any TCC whose troops were found to be perpetrating SEA would be repatriated from the mission. In addition, any TCC that does not seriously deal with allegations and credible cases of SEA shall be replaced by another TCC with immediate effect. Furthermore, the repartriated TCC must show cause as to why it should not be barred from taking part in any future peacekeeping operations. The resolution also urges troops that are not under the UN force but are sanctioned by the UNSC to ensure that cases of SEA in the CAR are investigated and addressed to ensure that impunity is uprooted from peacekeeping. Perpetrators must be held accountable for their crimes against the human rights of vulnerable civilians caught up in conflict. Of importance is the that a robust peace-keeping operation, TCC and PCC need to subject their troops to pre-deployment training to instill discipline in field missions [(UNSCR, S/RES/2272 (UN, 2016)].

The Resolution advocates for the protection of civilians against SEA for all Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and refugee camps. Of critical importance is the protection of women and children who are often vulnerable and fall prey to peacekeepers who may be perpetrators of SEA (S/RES/2272) (UN, 2016)). This refers to any form of abuse that constitutes sexual acts with minors and/or coercive sex in exchange for money or food by peacekeepers.

Literature Review

The issues being highlighted in this paper fall under the scope of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of boys, girls and women caught up in the CAR armed conflict by peacekeepers. The literature reviewed is relevant to the fact that available mechanisms and frameworks in place have failed to protect these vulnerable groups.

According to Carvalho and Sending (2013), civilian suffering has been on the increase with the rising cases of armed conflict. As a result, United Nations peacekeeping missions have entrentched Protection of Civilians (PoC) within their mandate. In lieu of this, about 90% of the missions within UN peacekeeping operate within PoC mandates. However, 15 years or so after the constitution of the first PoC mandated mission, gaps still exist on the implementation methods and guidelines that ensure these mandates are effective Carvalho and Sending (2013: 89). Other scholars point out that the term PoC does mean that civilians are accorded protection from abuse and harm, physically or psychologically once a mission has been deployed.

> *"When peacekeepers exploit the vulnerability of the people they have been sent to protect, it is a fundamental betrayal of trust. When the international community fails to care for the victims or to hold the perpetrators to account, that betrayal is compounded"* (Sooker et al, 2015: i).

The perpetration of SEA by UN peacekeepers is a fundamental dent on the very essence of peacekeeping thereby undermining its ethics and ultimate goal (Chun, 2009). As a result, not only is the future of peacekeeping jeopardized, the confidence and credibility of the United Nations ability to enhance PoC is also tarnished. UN ethics are governed by ten rules in the Code of Conduct with the first five addressing factors that may lead to SEA. While the first rule addresses the character and demeanor of the peacekeeper, the other four touch on respect for the law of the host country including culture, tradition and customs; showing courtesy, respect and consideration to the host communities; respecting and regarding all Human Rights, and the fifth being avoiding immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse of the local population (UN Standards of Conduct, 2016).

Chun (2009) adds that SEA can have a detrimental effect on the success of a peacekeeping mission which in turn can adversely affect a host country heavily dependent on the success of the same mission. This is to show that when civilians are left vulnerable and exposed to abuse by the very actors who are mandated to instil security, trust and confidence in the

rule of law, the mission is compromised. Not only is the United Nations compromised but the TCCs are also affected in the missions in which they serve.

Peace Support Operations (PSO) have been present in the CAR since 2007 under the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). BINUCA was a Field Office under the UN Department of Political Affairs and operated under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) mandate through Resolution 1178 of 2007. Its mandate was to foster national cohesion, DDR and SSR in CAR (Cinq-Mars, 2015: 14). The African Union (AU) had its own PSO intervention known as the African Union Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA). This was an international support mission set up through the AU's Peace and Securty Council (PSC). Established in 2013, through the UNSCR 2127, its main aim was to ensure stabilization of CAR following the outbreak of the violent armed conflict following the 2013 coup. A European Union (EU) intervention force made of French troops through an operation known as *Sangaris* was brought in to renforce the MISCA force in CAR (Council of European Union, 2014). The French troops had a UNSC mandate under Resolution 2127 of 2013, but were not under the direct UNDPKO command while under serving MISCA (Sooker et al, 2015). In order to enhance PoC as a result of the escalating violence, MINUSCA was established through UNSCR 2149 of 2014. It took over MISCA's role in addressing the conflict in CAR and has the sole mandate of UN peacekeeping.

According to the UN Factsheet on SEA (September, 2015), training of peacekeeping personnel on SEA is mandatory upon arrival at the mission. In additon, pre-deployment training by TCC is conducted using UN training materials. However, the pre-deployment trainings seem to be weak in attaining their objective of capacity building given the rise in SEA cases. Consequently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on TCC has been put in place with the primary aim of investigating alleged misconduct by military personnel. Enforcement measures focus on ensuring that the standards of conduct for all categories of peacekeeping personnel are applied in receiving and assessing complaints, conducting investigations and taking disciplinary measures for substantiated allegations (Sooker et al, 2015). An estimated 535,000 people are internally displaced in the CAR as a result of ongoing violence, with 110,000 displaced in the capital, Bangui alone. In the period between May and June 2014, allegations that international troops serving in the peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (CAR) had sexually abused a number of young children in exchange for food or money were reported for the first time (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2015). To ensure that allegations like these do not recur, the aforementioned MoU between TCC was drawn.

According to Chun (2009), the victims of SEA tend to be young girls and children (boys and girls) aged between 13 and 18 years and mostly children who had been separated from their parents or guardians. The social impacts of SEA are grave on the civilian population, especially on the victim, family members and immediate community as a whole. The victims are subjected to both psychological and physical consequences which have short and long-term effects. The short-term effects are mainly the physical pain and anguish of initial actual abuse. The body is subjected to untold injuries which affect the reproductive and rectal systems of the victims. The psychological short term effects revolve around the thought of contracting sexually-transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS. Pregnancy is also a devastating effect given the circumstances of the conception. Looking at the long-term consequences, healthcare provision will be a necessity for the victims given the trauma they undergo in the hands of the perpetrators. Counselling is needed to heal the psychological wounds. In cases of pregnancy, the victims may be a minor or a young woman lacking economic empowerment and any pillars of support like family. As a result, the victim may not be able to take care of the child since they had not planned for it, or are too young for one.

UNSCR 1325 (2000) - Women, Peace and Security

As women continue to be exposed to the damning effects of conflict, the UNSCR 1325 (2000) came to bring out their plight in protecting and highlighting the issues they face. Prior to the signing of 1325, only 11% of peace agreements dwelt on incorporating the agenda of women in peace processess. However, after UNSCR 1325 was adopted, many of the UN-initiated peace agreements have addressed this hence the agenda of women inclusion in the peace process rose to 30% by 2014. This agenda raises the need for more women peacekeepers in missions to ensure that gender balance is attained in troop composition. TCC have been urged to increase women troops in their deployments (Coomaraswamy, 2015). This recognizes that the invisible, informal and/or neglected component that is women and girls, can now be party to peacebuilding efforts. As a result, they can be able to solidify and give credible support to calls for tougher measures in investigating and prosecuting SEA crimes. Furthermore, having more female personel in peacekeeping can help reduce the number of cases of SEA on young girls and vulnerable women by peacekeepers. This is attainable through sensitization on the harmful effects of abuse, both psychological and physical.

Background of the 2013 CAR Conflict

The map of Central African Republic with a projection of its geographical position on the African continent. Source: Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Program.

Source: http://www.tdrp.net/centralafricanrepublic.php

The CAR has been in a state of armed intra-state conflict since 2013 following the unconstitutional overthrow of President François Bozizé's government by a largely muslim coalition of rebel groups known as *Seleka*[1] (International Crisis Group, 2015). This followed a post-independence period of coups, inter-communal conflict and fragile economy. The CAR is a resource-endowed country with oil and diamond deposits. In addition, it boasts a modest size population of 4.6 million people, many of whom have been displaced or killed by the civil war (Shaw and Gabsis, 2014). Armed non-state groups and government forces have been party to this conflict which has significantly compounded its management. Geographically, CAR's landscape is split into two halves with the North being inhabited by largely merchant communities who are predominantly muslim. The south has communities who are agro-pastoralist and are largely christian with a few pockets of animists (International Crisis Group, 2015).

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[1]   *Seleka – Means alliance in the local in the local Sango language. http://binuca.unmissions.org/Default. aspx?tabid=5525&language=en-US*

Armed groups emanating from the country's social divide have always been at loggerheads. The *Seleka*, an armed group comprising a coalition of muslim youths has always been in rebellion against the mainly christian-led government. This has been as a result of years of marginalization and exclusion which have led to poverty and underdevelopment. Despite being merchants, the Northern region has always been marginalized by the government which is predominantly southern led. The other armed group is the *anti-Balaka* which has been afiliated with the government since 2003. Mainly made up of christians, this group was President Bozize's militia. Due to deep-rooted ethnic and religious differences, tensions have simmered in the CAR leading to the outbreak of the civil war following the Seleka-led coup in 2012 (Spittaels et al, 2014: 44). The armed conflict in CAR has as a result left the country in a state of ethno-religious split between the north and south. Sectarian violence is a huge consequence of this split as the anti-Balaka group continues to perpetrate revenge attacks on the Muslim Seleka group. The country continues to experience these attacks despite regional and international enhancement of Peace Support Operations. As a result of the retaliatory attacks eventually brought the conflict to a full-blown civil war (Council on Foreign Relations, 2016).

According to Arieff and Husted (2015), a donor-funded transitional government took over the reigns of power from the Seleka-led regime. This was achieved following international and regional intervention through diplomatic avenues. A forum for drawing up reforms on governance was conducted through a gathering of the civil society, political figures and militia commanders. The forum, known as the Bangui Forum, aimed at addressing issues of governance, reconciliation and disamarment. A U.N. commission of inquiry reported in December 2014 that all parties to the conflict were responsible for "war crimes and crimes against humanity" and that abuses by the anti-Balaka groups amounted to "ethnic cleansing" of CAR's Muslim community (Arieff and Husted, 2015: 4).

International Intervention in the Conflict

a) Africa Union Mission in the Central African Republic – MISCA

MISCA is an international support mission set up by the African Union (AU) through the Peace and Securty Council (PSC). Established in 2013, through UNSCR 2127, its main aim was to ensure stabilization of CAR following the outbreak of the violent armed conflict after the 2013 coup. "Its mandate focused on the protection of civilians, the restoration of security, public order and stabilisation, the restoration of state authority,

the creation of conditions conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance, the continuation of BINUCA's disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process and security sector reform" (Barbelet, 2015: 15). The mission had an European Union (EU)-led contigent in addition to some 2,000 French troops deployed earlier as per UNSCR 2127 (Barbelet, 2015).

The peacekeeping force comprising French Troops was accused of allegedly perpetrating SEA on women, girls and boys. This exploitation was meted out to these vulnerable groups of civilians in exchange for food and other basic needs (Sooka et al, 2015: 57).

b) **United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic - BINUCA**

BINUCA was a field office under the UN Department of Political Affairs and it operated under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) mandate through Resolution 1178 of 2007. Its mandate was to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights, help consolidate peace, foster national reconciliation, and strenthen democratic institutions (S/RES/1778). Up until the moment MINUSCA took over the peacekeeping mandate in the CAR, BINUCA had been in operation for a decade (UN Missions, 2016). Unfortunately, BINUCA faltered in its mandate as CAR disintegrated into a state of armed conflict. Under BINUCA's mandate, a European Union (EU) force was authorized to intervene in the CAR conflict in 2014 under UNSCR 2134. This was due to the escalation of armed retaliatory attacks by the parties to the conflict which impacted heavily on civilians (S/RES/2134 of 2014).

c) **United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic - MINUSCA**

MINUSCA was established through UNSCR 2149 of 10 April 2014 with the aim of subsuming BINUCA's role in addressing the conflict in CAR. In accordance with the UN Charter (chapter VII), MINUSCA was given the greenlight to use all actions necessary to execute its mandate within its capabilities and areas of deployment (United Nations, 2016).

With the establishment of a peacekeeping mission, the UN's role was increased substantially with approval for a force of 11,820 uniformed personnel, with responsibilities including the protection of civilians, support to implement the transition process, facilitation of humanitarian assistance, protection and promotion of human rights, support for

national and international justice, and DDR (Amnesty International, 2016). Urgent temporary measures (UTMs) granted to MINUSCA under UNSCR 2149 gave the mission power to help in maintaining law and order. MINUSCA aided in arresting, detaining and handing over individuals or groups inciting, planning, committing or having committed criminal acts related to the conflict. In addition, MINUSCA was to advise on investigations and judicial procedures relating to the above power.

Causes and Magnitude of SEA by Peacekeepers in CAR

Causes

Lack of a stronger UN role in addressing human rights violations like SEA affects the enforcement of observance. Mansson and Murphy (2008: 7) view the human rights dimensions of peacekeeping as being minor with its role confined to reporting and checking on compliance. Hence, it is difficult to keep a lid on perpetration of human rights violations like SEA given that the investigative and enforcement mechanisms are weak. This did hamper passing on of investigative evidence to the French Government after allegations of *Sangari* involvement emerged. This weakness in enforcement also made it possible to keep the allegations and subsequent inquiry outcomes from the limelight.

The abuses are also abetted by the flawed manner in which UN Agencies respond to the allegations of SEA by peacekeepers. In addition, the Head of Mission failed to institute measures against the Sangaris (French troops) that would have led to an end to the abuses. As a result, the peacekeepers continued to take advantage of the complacency of inaction (Sooker et al, 2015). It is also argued that another cause is the fact that UN SEA policies do not apply to troops not under UN Command as was the case of the Sangaris. Hence cases of this nature are handed over to TCCs who have the descretion on whether or not to move forward. Consequently, troops operating under these auspices have little to deter them from sexually exploiting and abusing civilians including children.

Vulnerable groups like children, the elderly and women living in IDP camps are most at risk of SEA. As a portion of the IDP population remains trapped in several enclaves throughout the country, the risk of exposure to dire humanitarian situations may drive them into becoming victims. Getting stranded in these camps prevents them from leaving which attracts the alluring idea of falling victim to acts of SEA. Therefore, going by such a scenario, the protection of civilians remains hampered by the limited presence of state institutions particularly outside of Bangui, and the slow progress in the reconstitution of legitimate security forces. The administration of justice is still largely dysfunctional despite increased support and capacity-building by MINUSCA and other actors in reopening courts and detention facilities (MINUSCA, 2015).

Insecurity in CAR continues to expose children to harmful conditions that may affect their future wellbeing. SEA is fuelled by lack access to education for the children which has left them wandering in the dangerous streets and neighborhoods of CAR thereby exposing them to exploitation and abuse. Consequently, the children are almost always unaccompanied thus making them easy targets. Therefore, ensuring access to education for school-age children and providing opportunities for vocational training and income-generating opportunities for older children is key to ensuring that they are not always exposed (MINUSCA, 2015). Unequal power relations between the peacekeepers and civilians are also a cause of SEA. This is evident, according to Stern (2015) where children in CAR were allegedly sexually abused in exchange for money and food. In addition, peacekeepers also mete out this perpetration in exchange for medicine to desperate victims. As a result, it is hard for victims to come forward since they perceive this as a mode of cutting the supply of basic essentials of life which they would otherwise not come across easily.

Magnitude

Hall (2016) estimates the number of UN peacekeeping force at 11, 000 aided by 5,600 AU peacekeepers and 2,000 French troops. Given that sexual abuse is commonly related to armed conflict and war, peacekeepers who abuse their powers and perpetrate these heinous acts compound the mission mandates of DPKO. The allegations of SEA in CAR coming out in 2013 watered down UNDPKO's effectiveness in PoC (Hall, 2016). As such,

> *"...there is need for all forces operating in the Central African Republic, while carrying out their mandate, to act with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the Central African Republic and in full compliance with applicable international law...." (United Nations, 2015).*

According to Arieff and Husted (2015), the cases of SEA involving peacekeepers have been reported in CAR implicated UN, AU and French troops. The accusations have brought to light blatant sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and girls as young as seven years of age (p.8). This form of unbecoming conduct is a breach of the laid down policy that guides peacekeeping operations. Deschamps et al (2015) point out that the policies in place to address misconduct by peacekeepers do not cover forces that are not serving under the UN command. This is a big gap in conflict management in DPKO troop deployment in PSOs. A case in point is the action of some of the French soldiers (Sangaris) serving under the peacekeeping operations. They were alleged to have abused

young boys and girls in 2014 through exchange of coerced sexual favors for money or basic necessities. As the French troops were not under the UN peacekeeping command but rather under the authority of the UNSCR, the UN policies and guidelines on prohibition of SEA did not apply to them. This loophole may be perceived to project an aura of impunity from the victims' perspective. However, TCC have an obligation to take action against the perpetrators in line with their national laws.

Abuse of these minors is a clear violation of Human rights and also contravenes the UN obligation of ensuring that these rights are protected. According to Mertus (2005: 1), the UN human rights practice is guided by the work of UN treaties, charter and procedures. These models guide the reporting and monitoring of violations perpetrated on civilians. In addition, Mertus (2005: 44) points out that the UN aims at achieving international co-operation through the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights. Furthermore, the Commission for Human Rights (CHR) sets the standards for Human rights hence encompassing the rights of the child (CHR, 48). In August 2015, more allegations of rape surfaced this time relating to the rape of a young girl aged 12 years by MINUSCA peacekeepers. The allegations led to the resignation of the the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) (Amnesty International, 2016).

According to Human Rights Watch (2016), eight women and girls were either sexually exploited and/or raped by peacekeepers in the period between october and december 2015. The victims were waylaid near a MINUSCA base by alleged DR Congo troops. The month of January 2016 saw further reports of allegations of SEA in the Bambari region of CAR according to Human Rights Watch (HRW). In addition, some of the survivors did not receive any medical treatment for the psychological and physical injuries as a result of the abuse. Many of the allegations coming from the Bambari region have fingers pointing at the DR Congo troops who control this area. HRW has documented detailed cases it has come across which include rape and exchange of food for sex.

According to the IPP Journal (2016), SEA allegations have risen by a third since 2015 with sixty-nine claims being reported. According to a Report of the Secretary General on Special Measures For Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (A/70/729), the 69 cases represented a sharp increase from the 52 reported in 2014 despite concerted efforts to address SEA in peacekeeping. The dire situation in CAR has made it extremely volatile in terms of sexual abuse with the wanton displacement of civilians making it easy for peacekeepers to prey on desperate victims.

Mechanisms and Strategies

Mechanisms

a) **United Nations Policy on Mainstreaming the Protection, Rights, and Wellbeing of Children Affected by Armed Conflict within Peacekeeping Missions**

According to Nilsson (2013: 71) there exists a Child Protection Focal Point that incorporates the entire UN DPKO. Thus, children are protected under the UNDPKO's policy on maistreaming the protection, rights and wellbeing of the children affected by armed conflict. The scope of this policy falls within the responsibility to protect of the DPKO and its partners at headquarters and field office levels. The partners include UN child protection actors like UNICEF, UNHCR, ILO and UNFPA. The policy's key objective is to promote the rights and concerns in cases of children and armed conflict (CAAC) by ensuring that all relevant human rights instruments and UNSC Resolutions are adhered to.

b) **Conduct and Disciplinary Unit (CDU)**

According to Chun (2009), the Conduct and Disciplinary Unit (CDU) of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) defines SEA-related misconduct as being anything from sex with minors, through sex with prostitutes to exploitive sexual relatioships. It also includes recording sexual acts on any electronic device, sexual favours in exchange for monetary or extra assistance gains. For this reason, a zero-tolerance policy on SEA was officially launched in 2005 (Chuk, 2009). This is because SEA goes against the very fabric of the core business of the multi-dimensional UN peacekeeping operations. The main aim of these operations is to provide an environment that is secure, enables the practice of the rule of law and ensures that human rights are upheld. Furthermore, the core functions also include the facilitation of a political process that should eventually lead to the re-installation and strengthening of state institutions. It should also offer a steady and stable environment for the UN and other international actors to conduct their activities in a coordinated manner (United Nations, 2008)

The Conduct and Disciplinary Unit promotes quality assurance and offers guidance in the field with its Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT). The CDT is the first recipient of allegations of SEA on the ground and upon receipt, they pass them on to the head of mission. The CDT also analyzes the allegations and gives recommendations as to whether investigations are necessary. Then the allegations are sent to the UN Office of

Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (Stern, 2015).

c) Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM)

The monitoring and reporting mechanism looks into grave violations against children caught up in armed conflict. It is one of the various child protection strategies that UNICEF has in their quest for heightened protection and wellbeing of children. MRM furnishes the Humanitarian Policy Section and Advocacy Unit with field data on issues affecting children who in turn report to the UNSC through a document report known as the *horizontal note* (Nilsson, 2013). Furthermore, according to UNICEF Unite for Children (2015), the MRM is also involved in bringing into the limelight the magnitude of violations on children, in this case violation number IV: Rape or other sexual violence against children. The MRM also provides a basis for identifying patterns of violation against children through monitoring and reporting. This mechanism could have had a greater impact on CAR SEA prevention had reporting mechanisms been liaising with one another.

d) The Geneva Convention: Additional Protocol II

The Additional Protocal (II) to the Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in non-international armed conflicts prohibits any form of indecent assault or forced prostitution. These are fundamental guarantees that ensure that a civilian's dignity is respected in the midst of despair during conflict (ICRC, The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949). The consequences arising from sexual abuse may amount to a form of psychological torture given the mental state in which a victim is left in the event of a rape ordeal. This is compounded by the fact that some of the CAR victims were minors as young as seven year old boys and girls. The failure of TCC troops that go against these fundamentals of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) highly compromised the principals of Protection of Civilians (PoC).. These are principals that are enshrined on humanitarian affairs underwhich peacekeeping plays an integral part. Once civilians lose faith and trust in the operations of peacekeepers, the mandate is called into question by both the international community and the local communities who should be benefiting from the process.

Strategies in Place to Address SEA

i.   Special Measures for Protection From Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The UN has drawn up special measures to ensure that cases of SEA are discouraged, limited and addressed so as to enhance the protection of the vulnerable, mostly boys and girls in the CAR. The Office of Human Resources Management oversees the reporting and response to allegations of this nature. These special measures are meant to follow up on the growing view that SEA cases are under-reported which could be due to the low outcomes in terms of economic gain after victims have reported. The victim, or victim family may feel that the embarrassment and shame that come with abuse may not be adequately compensated. To increase the effectiveness of reporting and response, a focal point for receiving SEA-related complaints was set up. The focal point is meant to promptly inform the Department of Management at Headquarters of investigations into cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the actions an office has taken as a result. Consequently, this is meant to ensure that these complaints and allegations are attended to with utmost urgency (UNGA A/59/782, 2005). Despite these measures, the abuses in the CAR were misreported and treated in disregard of the gravity that SEA perpetration deserved. To ensure that there is transparency in dealing with these allegations, reports will be made available on the CDU website which will be updated as new allegations crop up. This has been in line with consultations with TCCs and PCCs.

ii.   Harmonizing UN Policies Applicable to Sexual Violence

There is a great need to harmonize reporting mechanisms that are meant to address sexual violations by peacekeeepers (Deschamps et al, 2015). Two policy frameworks independently apply, with the first being various policies on SEA adopted by the Secretary General. These policies have loopholes as they do not apply to troops not under UN Command. As a result, comprehensive investigation and information-sharing is hard given that a TCC that has deployed outside of the UN Command can only do an internal investigation outside of the UN process. SEA policies only focus on misconduct from a disciplinary perspective thus TCC handling of cases takes away the jurisdiction of the UN.

The second framework is based on the UN Human Rights mandate which is enshrined in the UN Charter and effected through the UNSCR and UN policies. In this regard, the Human Rights aspects of UN policies are centered on the victims hence any violations are open to UN investigations. This is irrespective of where the perpetrator is based,

outside of UN command or otherwise. Consequently, any violation of SEA under UN policies governing human rights is not seen from a misconduct lens but rather from a serious violations of Human Rights perspective.

The disparity between these two framework avenues is ambiguous to the UN as both have parallel procedural paths that tend to legitimize impunity in terms of how violations by peacekeepers are addressed. Therefore, it is prudent to merge these policies to ensure that the UN has the sole mandate to investigate and recommend punitive measures on perptratoors of SEA. This way, misconduct of this magnitude can be addressed from two points of view: personal misconduct and human rights violations (Sooker et al, 2015).

In order to enhance accountability on the elimination of SEA, extensive training on the purpose and mandate of the mission is recommended. This is to help ensure that the rules of engagement are followed or adhered to. An effective outreach program for the local communities is also an avenue for addressing SEA. This would make the peacekeeping mission accessible to the communities and the reporting of cases easier. To complement this, the commanders and managers of the missions should have a performance appraisal on the level of implementation and use of these strategies within a mission (UNGA, A/59/710, 2005).

iii. United Nations Security Council: Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2005/21)

The statement by the president of the UNSC was a strategy towards the goal of dealing with SEA by peacekeepers. It was delivered to the UNSC during its 5191st meeting on 31st May 2005. It outlined the rising cases of SEA and condemned them in the strongest terms possible recognizing its detrimental effects on mission mandates. In addition, the statement was also used to reiterate to the TCCs their responsibility to ensure that their personnel were held liable for their conduct. It further mentioned the urgent need for measures to ensure that SEA allegations were properly investigated and punitive measures adequately taken. To ensure that a thorough addressing mechanism was put in place in relation to SEA, new resolutions were to have relevant provisions for prevention, monitoring and investigation as well as reporting of misconduct cases. A renewal of existing mandates, as well as establishment of new ones, was also found key to ensuring that peacekeepers towed the line while on mission. This statement has made great strides in ensuring that SEA is tackled although reports of abuse and exploitation continue to rise. The rising cases of SEA pervaded CAR's MINUSCA where despite the UNSC President's statement in 2005, reporting of cases has been flawed leaving

civilians, especially children, both boys and girls, vulnerable to abuse. (Security Council Report-What's in Blue, 2016). It is as a result of this that such violations continue with impunity.

To help in cementing UNSC S/PRST/2005/21, the United Nations General Assembly president was furnished with a letter from the Secretary-General (Kofi Annan) that came up with a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/59/710). This letter outlined a strategy where the investigation of sexual exploitation and abuse was to be assigned a special mechanism in the form of a professional. This professional was recommended to be an expert in military law and must be a member of a TCC within that particular mission. In additon, a MoU was proposed where TCCs were to share information pertaining to an ongoing investigation. An on-site court-martial should be encouraged to ensure that access to witnesses is guaranteed so that justice is done for closure and healing purposes on the side of the witness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This paper sought to assess the causes and magnitude of SEA by peacekeepers in Central African Republic, the mechanisms that have been put in place to address the issue of SEA in CAR and to determine the effectiveness of strategies that can address the issue of SEA in peacekeeping missions. Based on these findings, one may therefore conclude as follows;

The conflict in CAR has been characterized by ethno-sectarian armed conflict which has led to deterioration of the functions of the state thereby undermining development, peace and security. As a result, a widespread displacement of persons has left the vulnerable in society exposed to the ills of armed conflict including SEA. Cases of SEA that have been reported in many peacekeeping missions continue to undermine the gains and purpose of the United Nations peacekeeping and support operations. The Central African Republic has been hit by SEA allegations with reports of young children being abused and exploited sexually. With reports of these violations, existing mechanisms and strategies have almost failed in ensuring that SEA does not occur especially when it is being perpetrated by peacekeepers under UN command, or sanctioned by the UNSC. The ten rules in the code of conduct that governs peacekeepers continue to be ignored by the perpetrators who continue to keep vulnerable civilian populations at risk in the CAR. TCC bear the brunt of blame as it is their forces that sometimes engage in SEA. To ensure that adherence to peacekeeping conduct is enforced, UNSCR 2272 of 2016 proposes the expulsion of an entire unit of a TCC if found to be in serious and systematic perpetration of SEA.

Interventions that have accompanied PSO in the CAR have seen the African Union and UN forces engage in SEA where young boys and girls were sexually abused. These interventions lacked a concrete reporting strategy that could enhance the investigation of allegations. MINUSCA, being the latest mission in CAR, has seen an increase in reported cases of SEA which is a clear violation of the human rights that govern the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The UN does foster the need to ensure that fundamental freedoms are enjoyed by civilians with their rights being observed. The Commission for Human Rights (CHR) sets the standards for Human rights which encompass the rights of the child. SEA allegations have been on a sharp increase with 69 cases reported in 2015 compared to the 52 reported in 2014. With the huge number of displaced civilians in CAR, the rise in these cases continues to pose a threat not only to the peacekeeping mission but also to the confidence of the population at large.

Lack of a support mechanism to ensure that displaced children are given access to basic education within IDP camps exposes them to SEA. Such a strategy can ensure that children are well monitored in their movements and kept occupied within protected areas. The lack of this mechanism leaves the children wandering around idle and hungry. This also brings out an unequal balance of power where forced or coerced sexual favors are exchanged for money, food or medicine. UN Policy on mainstreaming the protection, rights, and wellbeing of children affected by armed conflict within peacekeeping missions can go a long way in empowering this mechanism. They can use partner organizations like UNICEF to help build structures and infrastructure that can empower children not only to be safe but also for the benefit of their future.

Recommendations

- Governments of TCC need to collaborate with investigating organs of the UN where their troops are alleged to have committed acts of SEA. Such governments should share their findings from internal investigations that they may have conducted. Reporting mechanisms through governments must be open and in line with those under the UN policies so as to enhance information gathering, and hasten as well as ease prosecution of cases.

- Communities should ensure that they have their own reporting mechanisms that can help identify perpetrators. In addition, these mechanisms can aid in identifying victims who otherwise would not report cases of abuse. It would also be a support mechanism for those directly or indirectly affected given that the community is a great pillar of support. Mechanisms such as this can also be important in educating and sensitizing children, the youth (especially young women) and women at large on SEA and how they can create conditions that minimize the risks they face.

- The UNSCR 1325, which brought out the need to include women in leadership on peace and security, is a vital tool for addressing SEA. The UN has made it possible to formally recognize women's voices relating to peacebuilding and peacekeeping in peace support operations. This has involved the inclusion of more women peacekeepers and leaders in peace and security processes and agendas.

- Harmonization of all mechanisms that apply to both UNSC TCC-sanctioned and UNDPKO missions is needed to address SEA. This will help seal loopholes that exist when these two forms of missions are on the ground.

- The National law of CAR should be recognized when investigating and prosecuting allegation cases. Through this, victims are able to get a feeling of justice given that the perpetrators may be tried within CAR's laws and the victims can also be witness to the proceedings hence face the perpetrators in court.

- A pre-deployment training curriculum should be enforced to ensure that there is a special focus on addressing SEA where preventive strategies and punitive measures are instilled.

- Where CAR's national law does not have laid down structures for practice, the International Criminal Court (ICC) should be given a mandate to institute local tribunals that investigate and prosecute cases within the jurisdiction of the mission.

- An avenue for reparation to victims of SEA by the UN or TCC should be put in place as compensatory measures to those affected by the abuse and exploitation.

- Liability measures should be imposed on TCC commanders whose troops perpetrate

SEA on a mass scale. This may ensure that troops are kept in check by their commanders and SEA perpetrators dealt with accordingly.

- Ensure that all peacekeeping troops are incorporated in the UNSCR 2272 (2016) to ensure that troops operating outside of the UN Command adhere to laid down SEA rules and are also bound by the resolutions.

- Incorporate UNSCR 1325 in the peacekeeping process given its emphasis on inclusion of more women UN peacekeepers and peace-builders for enhancement of peace and security in conflict areas including the CAR.

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Highlights of Key Messages in the Issue Briefs

Participation of Female Military Personnel in PSOs: Case of AMISOM

- The African Union should create a gender-sensitive force generation strategy to ensure that peacekeeping missions are gender-balanced. AU should develop and publish a long-term strategic plan that identifies priorities for action on female recruitment, retention, and advancement. The strategy should be in line with DPKO Guidelines on Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military Peacekeeping Operations, and set out the actions that will be undertaken to deliver improvements in these areas, including, training and outreach to member states.

- As the Council renews the mandate of AMISOM following their recent mission to Somalia, the Council should call on the mission to consider gender as a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of its mandate. In addition, the Council must call on Somali authorities, AMISOM and UNSOM to ensure women and girls are protected from sexual violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, as specified in SCR 2102 (2013).

- AMISOM and TCCs should have realistic and focused gender strategies by creating a clear and feasible vision for the mission's work on gender and Resolution 1325 in relation to the mission's capacities, resources and mandate. At the same time providing tools for monitoring and evaluation, including gender-sensitive indicators, sex-segregated data and tracking systems.

- Harmonisation of gender training and capacities within African peace forces needs to be undertaken since different regional organisations and member states apply different laws and processes in integrating gender in their peacekeeping processes that are unique to their contexts. This will make possible the provision of competent troops and personnel, experts on gender and women in the armed forces as well as female candidates for leading positions.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in Peacekeeping: Case of the Central African Republic

- Lack of a stronger UN role in addressing Human rights violations like SEA affects the enforcement of observance.

- The conflict in the CAR has been characterized by ethno-sectarian armed conflict

which has led to deterioration of the functions of the state that guarantee development and security leaving civilians displaced and vulnerable to SEA.

- A devastating stream of victims of SEA has also been left in the wake of several cases of abuse, with children (both boys and girls) making the statistics. Insecurity in CAR continues to expose children to harmful conditions that may affect their future wellbeing. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are fueled by lack access to education for the children.

- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse continue to undermine the gains and purpose of the United Nations peacekeeping and peace support operations.

- Existing mechanisms and strategies have failed in ensuring that SEA does not occur especially when it is being perpetrated by peacekeepers under the UN command, or sanctioned by the UNSC.

- Intervention mechanisms lack a concrete reporting strategy that can enhance the investigation of allegations of SEA by peacekeepers. This has unearthed a clear violation of the human rights that govern the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

- SEA allegations have been on the rise with 69 cases reported in 2015 compared to the 52 reported in 2014. These cases continue to pose a threat to displaced persons as well as a diminished confidence level in MINUSCA and peacekeeping as a whole.

- Governments of TCCs do not fully co-operate with investigating organs of the UN where their troops are alleged to have committed acts of SEA. They fail to share their findings from internal investigations that they may have conducted.

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