Protection of Civilians Week 2022 Side Event
Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping: Advancing Gender Integration

Date: Monday, 23 May 2022
Time: 2:00-3:30 pm
Location: UK Mission to the UN,
One Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, 885 2nd Avenue

On 23 May 2022, the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Permanent Missions of Ghana and the United Kingdom to the United Nations will convene an in-person side event on Protection of Civilians (POC) in Peacekeeping: Advancing Gender Integration. The event will begin with a panel discussion followed by an interactive dialogue at expert-level. At the event there will be a short presentation of the preliminary findings from UN DPO’s recent research initiative examining the connection between gender, Women Peace and Security (WPS), and POC in the six peacekeeping missions with a POC mandate. The event will also aim to stimulate discussion and to seek Member State views on how they can help advance collaboration across these agendas.

Background
The UN Secretary-General’s Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative outlines the strategy of the UN and Member States for strengthening peacekeeping in response to the ever-changing nature of conflict. At the heart of this approach is POC and WPS: two of the eight commitment areas. The implementation framework of A4P+ calls for mainstreaming of the WPS agenda across all A4P commitments.

There are currently six peacekeeping operations with a mandate to protect civilians (MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNIFIL, UNISFA, UNMISS). These missions operate in diverse and dynamic environments and must continually adapt and innovate to effectively implement the mandate.

The Policy on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping (2019), the Handbook on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping (2020), and mission-specific integrated training materials on POC were developed to support POC mandate implementation. The POC Policy is clear that a gender lens must be applied to POC, and the POC Handbook includes a dedicated chapter on “Integrating Gender Equality and WPS in POC”. Armed conflicts affect women, men, boys and girls in different ways. Peacekeeping’s approach to POC must be grounded in a gender analysis in order to ensure that the diverse protection needs of the local populations are effectively met. This will require enhanced support from UNHQ, Member States and missions to ensure a gender-responsive approach to POC at all levels.

In response to this issue, the POC Team in the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division (DPET) of the UN DPO, supported by the DPO Gender Unit and with funding from the United Kingdom, launched a research project exploring the integration between gender, WPS, and POC in UN
peacekeeping missions with a POC mandate. Between December 2021 and March 2022, interviews and group discussions were held with DPO personnel in a variety of civilian, police and military roles. Thus far, this research has helped to identify existing gaps, good practice and the development of recommendations for future areas of work to improve integration of gender in POC. The preliminary findings will be presented at this event, and the final results will be captured in a practice note, a summary of which will be disseminated among interested stakeholders.

Speakers
- Regina Fitzpatrick, POC Team Leader, DPO/DPET
- Cathy Andela, Chief, Gender Unit, DPO
- Brig Gen Samuel Asare, Military Advisor, Permanent Mission of Ghana to the UN
- Lt Col Sophie Gregory, Force Gender Advisor and Child Protection Officer, MONUSCO (virtual)

Moderated by Lisa Sharland, Senior Fellow and Director of the Protecting Civilians in Conflict Program at the Stimson Center

Guiding Questions
To be circulated with background note.

Logistical Information and RSVPs
This expert-level roundtable will be held in-person at the UK Mission on 23 May from 2:00-3:30 pm.

Member State experts on POC, WPS and peacekeeping are especially invited to attend.

Please RSVP to nnagbe.camara@fcdo.gov.uk by end of day Friday, 20 May. Prior registration is required to attend.