

Building Skills to Integrate, Protect, and Empower Women During Peacekeeping

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For twenty years, the United Nations has strongly supported the deployment of women in peacekeeping units and has urged peacekeepers to protect women and girls during peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, integration of women lags and violence against women and girls persists. Official training for peacekeepers often addresses integration of women and protection of civilians, but peacekeepers receive little instruction about how to foster the necessary social and organizational changes. This article identifies key issues and relevant skill-building approaches to equip peacekeepers to support integration of women in peacekeeping and improve the security and safety of local women.

Keywords: gender integration, peacekeeping, protection of civilians

INTRODUCTION

“At a time when armed extremist groups place the subordination of women at the top of their agenda, we must place women’s leadership and the protection of women’s rights at the top of ours.” - *United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, October 13, 2015*

A recent United Nations report identified several barriers to the participation and protection of women in peacekeeping, including “institutionalized gender bias and discrimination, continued and high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, lack of economic, social and cultural rights for women, low levels of political participation of women prior to conflict, and the continuing levels of poverty, food insecurity, disparity and deprivation experienced by women and girls.” The report emphasized the importance of “addressing the full scope of the human rights of women and girls and gender equality, specifically as it is linked to prevention” (United Nations Security Council, 2018, paragraph 32). Despite twenty years of resolutions and quotas, participation and protection of women during peacekeeping remain largely unfulfilled objectives.

What is the connection between female peacekeepers and the safety and comfort of local women in unstable regions? How does this matter in societies where public interaction between men and women is socially unacceptable? During peacekeeping operations, women often build positive relationships with community members, especially other women and children, more easily than could men. Local women who are not comfortable around male soldiers, or forbidden from interacting with them, often find it

easier to trust a woman. This affects intelligence-gathering, advocacy, and the ability to develop community-based security plans. In addition, female peacekeepers can often meet with local women in situations that male peacekeepers could not enter. For example, women in some societies, such as rural Afghanistan, may be forbidden to interact with men outside their families. The United States Army responded with teams of female soldiers who established relationships with Afghan women, reducing their fears and giving them the opportunity to express concerns and obtain assistance (Tracy, 2016). Likewise, female peacekeepers can work effectively with populations where the presence of a foreign man is perceived as threatening or socially unacceptable. International women at checkpoints, on medical missions, and in humanitarian operations open the door for increased services and safety for local women and their children. At the same time, teams that include both men and women provide social models for local people, and successfully integrated teams can influence local attitudes about women in professional and leadership positions.

Integration of women into military organizations, including those that provide peacekeepers for UN missions, has not always gone well. The UN and other organizations, including national governments, have repeatedly identified (and sometimes politicized) many obstacles to gender integration, but very little attention has been given to individual and group-level actions that could improve attitudes, norms, and behaviors among people who actually do the work of peacekeeping on the ground. It is well-known that organizational culture does not change easily, and such change requires intervention at all levels, not just edicts from high-ranking managers (Ogbonna & Harris, 1998). Top-down messages and regulations can have some effect, but socio-cultural change depends on participation by members of the social system. To participate in organizational change, people need to understand why change is necessary and how they can help the change effort (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Research, therefore, is needed to understand how members of peacekeeping organizations can be motivated and equipped to improve integration and protection of women within their spheres of influence. Toward this goal, the current study identified instructional approaches that empower members to create collegial, integrated peacekeeping units and to build partnerships with local people to protect women from violence during peacekeeping operations. We identified gaps in standard UN peacekeeper training, and we developed a set of learning modules delivered in the form of a one-week workshop to provide the social and organizational skills that peacekeepers at all levels can use. We then collected anonymous feedback from participants about the usefulness of different activities and types of knowledge that they obtained in workshops on “Women, Peace, and Security” (WPS).

In the sections that follow, we will overview the history of women and peacekeeping, then describe a hands-on course tailored to peacekeepers and peacekeeping instructors. We will summarize what we learned through several years of listening to peacekeepers’ concerns and their expressed needs to learn skills that pertain to particular kinds of challenges. Then we will report the results of exit surveys evaluating the usefulness of specific types of training for peacekeepers. We will conclude with recommendations about preparing peacekeepers to foster inclusion and protection of women, discuss ways in which our research can inform other military/security situations, and suggest areas of further inquiry.

BACKGROUND: WOMEN AND PEACEKEEPING

Social trends toward de-gendering jobs and professions in the latter part of the 20th century led many military organizations to expand opportunities for women in the armed forces. During the same time period, the United Nations failed to avert several human rights disasters, and the organization began to include protection of civilians in peacekeeping mandates. The international community recognized unique challenges that women face during armed conflict, and many people argued that women should be protected and included during peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. As a result, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 to support increased participation and protection of women during peacekeeping (United Nations Security Council, 2000). The resolution “[*reaffirms*] the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and [*stresses*] the importance

of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution” (United Nations Security Council, 2000, emphasis in original). Countries that deployed UN peacekeepers soon began recruiting women for their peacekeeping missions. Inclusion of women as peacekeepers equalized job opportunities regardless of sex, and the presence of women expanded the capacity of a unit to provide needed security.

In 2009, UNSCR 1889 further emphasized involvement of women during post-conflict and reconstruction periods and among peacebuilding and peacekeeping personnel (United Nations Security Council, 2009). Throughout the UN, women began to play somewhat larger peacekeeping roles. Women brought distinct strengths to peacekeeping units and peacebuilding teams, and greater female participation improved the overall capacity for protection of civilians. Nevertheless, the most notable increase in women’s participation happened at the headquarters and top management level, not among the peacekeepers who actually did most of the work on the ground. Major General Kristin Lund of Norway became the first female commander of a United Nations peacekeeping force in August, 2014, in Cyprus (United Nations, 2014), but women remained a small minority of the peacekeeping forces, and many female peacekeepers continued to find their organizational environment to be challenging. Despite the highly acclaimed promotions of women in the upper echelons of the organization, UN goals for gender integration have not translated into widespread employment of women throughout the organization.

Following years of UN Security Council Resolutions and persistent inability to reach quotas for women’s participation in most (but not all) areas, the UN rolled out a “Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy” for a.d. 2018-2028 (Department of Peace Operations, UN, 2019). The stated goal was to reach specific targets for women’s representation in UN military, police, justice, and corrections personnel each year through 2028. A key divergence from prior strategies was emphasis on the importance of improving the environment for gender parity. In a letter outlining the strategy, Secretary-General António Guterres (2019) stated that, “A range of actions are identified, including improved networks and access to senior leadership for women; provision of advice through women officers’ focal points; development of programmes to prevent sexual harassment and the provision of information on mechanisms to address it; and an improvement in the standard of camp accommodation to meet the needs of women.” This hopeful plan of action could lead to improved structures to support deployment of women as peacekeepers. As well, the presence of women’s focal points could help with social interventions when needed.

Two distinct benefits of gender integration in peacekeeping undergird discussions about how and why women should be included in combat positions. First, there is the human rights argument that all people should be allowed to pursue any type of career, without restrictions based on demographics such as race or sex. Many aspects of peacekeeping rest on principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that same vein, excluding women from peacekeeping and peacebuilding neglects the needs of half of the population. Second, there is a performance argument that women bring unique capabilities that all-male units lack. Mixed-gender teams perform better, on average, than teams including only men (Woolley, Chabris, Pentland, Hashmi & Malone, 2010), and inclusion of women’s groups in peace negotiations increases the chance of reaching and implementing an agreement (Paffenholz, Ross, Dixon, Schluchter, & True, 2016). Empowerment of women to work toward peace, both as members of peacekeeping teams and within host countries, could lead to greater success by improving decision-making and fostering harmony. The UN has repeatedly emphasized that conflict affects women and girls differently than it does men and boys, and that peacebuilding benefits from the unique perspective that women bring to peace negotiations.

As of October, 2019, women composed about 4.2% of military personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions (UN Security Council, 2019). At the present time, all-male units remain common, and women are unlikely to have many female colleagues. Violence against women continues in conflict zones despite UN efforts, and long-term solutions will depend on building security partnerships within local communities. While quotas for inclusion of women as peacekeepers have increased the number of women deploying, we find a striking need to address values, attitudes, and social relations within the newly integrated peacekeeping units. Organizational cultures that developed with male-only members are

sometimes resistant to inclusion of women as peers, and potential change agents within these organizations need to learn new skills to foster change. Some of the skills that support social integration of women also pertain to building security partnerships with local people during peacekeeping operations.

Required Training, Gap Analysis, and Necessary Development of Teaching Capacity

Analysis of standard UN peacekeeper training revealed heavy emphasis on rules, expectations, and guidelines for responsible behavior on the part of the peacekeepers. The prepackaged UN modules were designed to be taught by military personnel who had experience in the field, but they lacked attention to interpersonal skills that could be crucial for effective integration and protection of women. Further, most military instructors assigned to teach these modules lacked the educational background that would enable them to assess social/organizational challenges affecting women's integration, develop intervention strategies, or coach students who wanted to help. We saw an immediate need to provide the social and organizational skills that peacekeepers at all levels could use to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the UN modules. To gain the greatest effect for our efforts, we undertook a train-the-trainers model to equip peacekeeping instructors who would then educate members of their own military forces.

For seven years, we have taught knowledge and skills that we believe are necessary for effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions regarding inclusion and protection of women during peacekeeping operations, largely based on organizational behavior principles and theories. These intertwined goals of integrating and protecting women have become high priorities for peacekeeping organizations because of the persistent UN emphasis, and several countries have partnered with us.

Research Venues and Questions

The current research assessed ways to transfer interpersonal and organizational skills that could be particularly useful for peacekeepers to streamline integration of women and to build partnerships for protection of women during peacekeeping missions. The effort included work with peacekeeper training institutions in Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Participants came from several Latin American countries, including military members of all ranks, civilians from women's advocacy groups, police and other security personnel, and staff from national governments. The primary purpose of the workshops was to teach future instructors to incorporate skill-building into courses on women and security. The secondary purpose was to equip peacekeepers with social and organizational skills that would help them effectively integrate and protect women during upcoming deployments. Many participants had been, or would soon be, deployed on a UN peacekeeping mission.

The initial WPS course development rested on theory-based selection of social and organizational topics, and subsequent adjustments followed feedback from stakeholders and assessment of the discussions and activities in each workshop. Many improvements came from participants in the courses as they shared their problems and concerns, and we discussed typical situations that they chose to analyze in small-group sessions. Our goal was to convey relevant social and organizational principles alongside standard UN modules on peacekeepers' responsibilities with regard to women and security.

Design of the final WPS curriculum resulted from extensive investigation, over a period of six years, to address the following questions and revise our plans accordingly.

1. What issues regarding women and peacekeeping are most important to peacekeepers and others who work with peacekeepers?
2. What approaches can best prepare members of a military organization to support the integration of women in their peacekeeping teams?
3. What kinds of knowledge and skills could help members of military organizations overcome resistance to the integration of women?
4. What approaches can best prepare members of a military organization to be more effective in addressing threats to women's safety during peacekeeping operations?

Our WPS workshops have been funded by the U.S. State Department Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), managed and executed by U.S. Southern Command in partnership with peacekeeper training institutions in Latin America. Each workshop is delivered by a multinational mobile training

team that includes instructors with backgrounds in the social sciences and others with UN peacekeeping mission experience. Over the years, the team has included members from Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and the United States. WPS programs in Latin America support engagement and participation of previously untapped resources—women and all that their networks bring to the table—for addressing the root causes of instability (Telley, n.d.). The WPS agenda calls for a holistic approach to issues surrounding women and security, not only gender equality. It includes engaging women in military and government, and attempting to empower local women during peacekeeping operations. The WPS agenda also encourages a gender perspective across all levels of government, with an intent to consider how any situation affects men, women, boys, and girls differently, and how those differences may drive or prevent conflict. While we do address the breadth of gender issues in the workshops, our primary focus is on integration and protection of women, and we will maintain that focus throughout this article.

Each peacekeeper training institution is responsible for preparing people from their nation for deployment, and their instructors sometimes support international workshops. Each of the WPS workshop leadership teams included instructors from two to four different nations’ training institutions, in addition to the American professor(s). Many of these instructors had been deployed on peacekeeping missions, most were members of their country’s military forces, and almost none had any background in the social sciences. Like the participants, instructors often connected the principles we taught with events that they had observed within their organizations or during deployments. Their feedback helped us find a useful balance between teaching general principles and practicing specific skills.

A HANDS-ON “WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY” COURSE FOR PEACEKEEPERS

The WPS curriculum that we developed conveys the United Nations expectations regarding inclusion of women and protection of civilians during peacekeeping, and it builds participants’ ability to take positive action. Table 1 shows the subjects that are taught in the workshop. Our focus has been on the development of social skills to lead change, improve collaboration, communicate better, and develop successful partnerships in support of the inclusion and protection of women during peacekeeping. The course design emphasizes group work where participants identify, discuss, and develop strategies to address prototypical scenarios that relate to WPS, as well as situations that they have observed in their jobs. Step by step, they apply principles to a diversity topic, and they develop a feasible action plan. Their analyses and recommendations are presented to everyone in the workshop.

**TABLE 1
WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY COURSE TOPICS**

United Nations Information and Expectations	Social Science Principles	Applied Diversity Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction to United Nations Principles · Legal Aspects of Peacekeeping Operations · Protection of Civilians · Protection of Children · Conduct and Discipline · Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Motivation and Persuasion · Organizational Change · Negotiation and Conflict Management · Cultural Competencies · Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Gender Integration in Peacekeeping Operations · Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Operations · Sexual- and Gender-Based Violence · Respect for Diversity · Intercultural Communication to Support Women’s Security

Over time, we adjusted the curriculum to meet the needs of three types of participants with varying degrees of knowledge on the subject matter, giving special attention to the diversity issues that would be

encountered when working in foreign countries as a peacekeeper could expect to do. Most workshop participants arrive with knowledge of women's challenges or successes in military environments, but they usually lack the social science background that might help them analyze what happened and identify solutions. Some participants have better understanding of social principles, and they tend to express a desire for additional knowledge and skills to address particular kinds of issues. A few participants know almost nothing about the roles of women in peacekeeping or the unique dangers that women face in areas that require the presence of peacekeepers. For these participants, we found it necessary to include videos or live speakers who could attest to the suffering of women during recent conflicts. Instructors share stories about challenges and breakthroughs for female peacekeepers, as well as reasons that women are necessary in peacekeeping units from a functional perspective. Regardless of their starting point, participants increase their skills for grass-roots intervention in social processes that impact beliefs, attitudes, speech, and behavior regarding women and security. Because many participants in these workshops are preparing to teach WPS courses in their home country, we try to equip them with underlying principles that can generalize to many situations rather than focusing on specific tactics.

To make the scenarios more appreciable to everyone in the room, we invite participants to tell their own stories, both in small groups and in the large venue. Sometimes the stories are general or from an observer's perspective, while others are personal and emotional. They include a variety of different experiences, good, bad, and mixed. One Uruguayan officer, for example, told us of her experience while deployed on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). She was then a Second Lieutenant and it was her job to lead the troops, 56 men, in marching drills through the town of Kinshasa two mornings per week. She noticed the townspeople staring, mystified. It was later explained to her that the Congolese people of Kinshasa had never seen a woman leading men in this way. As time went on, the women and children began to cheer for them during their morning drills, chanting "Uruguay," singing their cadences, and even running along beside them. Her presence was changing the perception of the armed troops and the role that a woman can have in those troops. Another time, while on a security mission, she set up a base camp in the jungle of Busurungi. She needed to establish communications with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). The Commander of the FARDC told his troops that she, being a woman, would not last even three days in the jungle. At the completion of the mission, he approached her and said that he was really surprised that she had been given command of the troop and how well she had performed. He told her that he had made a bet that in less than a week, a man would come to replace her, but that did not happen. Again, her presence and her performance were not only fulfilling the objectives of the peacekeeping mission, but also changing the local perceptions that women are incapable of leading troops or managing a negotiation mission in the jungle.

While some people share success stories, particularly about gaining acceptance for women and men working together, we hear about many challenges and failures. For example, some military women have reported that they were assigned by high-ranking officers to deliver paperwork or coffee during meetings with important dignitaries. A few women had been made officers without completing the necessary training to become an officer, and without meeting the standards that were applied to men and to other women. These women were reportedly chosen because they were young and attractive; they were expected to wear form-fitting clothes, makeup, and high heels to attend high profile meetings and events. While many countries officially announced increasing participation by women in the military, this type of participation was not publicly acknowledged by the government or military organizations.

The peacekeeping scenarios are intended to help participants apply social science principles to peacekeeping situations. For example, one exercise places participants in the roles of unit supervisor or gender adviser, and they meet to discuss hiring practices and develop a mutually acceptable plan to open opportunities for women. Another scenario depicts a typically dangerous village scenario in which peacekeepers must plan interventions to improve security for local women as they go about their daily activities. A third scenario pairs members of a humanitarian organization with peacekeepers, requiring them to find a mutually acceptable solution to achieve the objectives of the peacekeepers and the humanitarian organization while meeting the needs of the civilian population. When feasible, we ask

civilian participants to play the military role and the military personnel to play the role of the civilian humanitarians. We have received a great deal of feedback that these role-playing exercises help the participants understand the perspectives of other stakeholders in ways that they had not considered before attending the workshop.

Beyond the testimonials and group work on realistic scenarios, we discovered that people become most energized and inspired when working on topics that they choose themselves. The topics are generally drawn from the experiences of one or more team members, and the group agrees that this or similar situations are worth their time to analyze and plan strategic responses. On rare occasions, an instructor needs to suggest problems that they might work on. Participants are free to tackle either an organizational issue related to integration of women or a cross-cultural issue related to protection of local women during peacekeeping operations. We have found that participants do best with a written guide that walks them through the analysis and strategy-development steps, giving them a framework for thinking about issues that they need to address. Key questions help them explore potential topics, and a workbook format leads them through best practices for analyzing and planning action. Crucial steps in this analysis include establishing objectives and interim goals, analyzing stakeholders' interests and inclinations, identifying points of resistance and strategies for change, and crafting messages for key audiences. Participants who learn this process are better equipped to thoughtfully and strategically plan interventions to support integration and protection of women in future situations.

Participants' Assessments of the Course Components

We obtained 113 exit surveys from the four most recent workshops: two in Peru in 2018 and 2020; one in El Salvador in 2019; and one in Paraguay in 2019. These exit surveys were anonymous and they generally lacked demographic information. We used them solely to identify which aspects of the workshop were particularly useful to participants. The intent was to assess our present delivery of the workshop and inform future design of WPS workshops. We hoped to identify what kinds of challenges participants have experienced or anticipate facing, which workshop activities they thought were useful, and why the useful knowledge/skills seemed relevant. The exit surveys provided insight on what the participants found valuable to help them support the integration of women in security-related roles and protect women during peacekeeping operations.

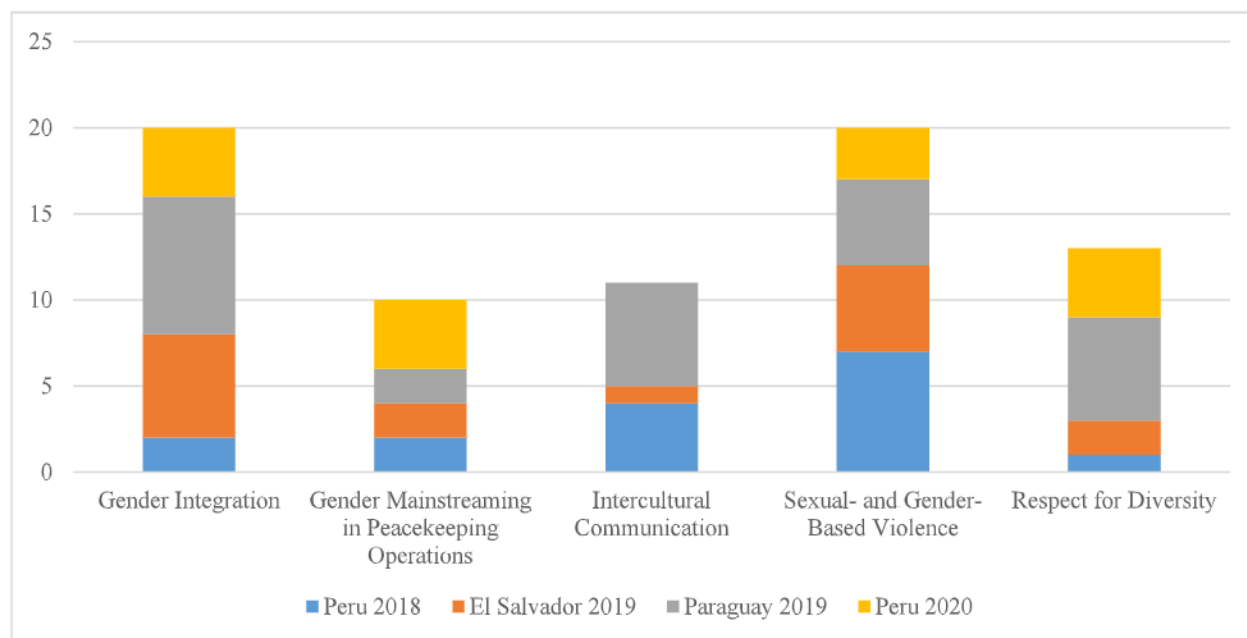
We collected data from a question in the exit survey that asked, "What parts of the workshop were the most valuable for you? Please provide examples." [Author's translation from Spanish] The open responses to the questions were coded into categories mapping onto the course activities using qualitative textual analysis. This is a grounded theory method, applying systematic but flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing data in order to build theories from the data themselves (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory seeks to create theoretical statements based on empirical evidence (Glaser, Strauss, & Strutzel, 1968). It is commonly used to analyze interview or survey data, and it is the method that we have used throughout the years of program development. To assess the value of the topics that we now include, we started with a list of the modules offered in the course, shown in Table 1 above, and counted any mention of those modules in the exit survey. The results of this count are depicted in Figure 1 below. As we went through the surveys we found other responses that were composites of the modules, and we inductively created new categories to capture those responses. These categories of workshop components that were cited as particularly useful by participants are: group work, everything, instructors' experience/stories, and videos (see Figure 2). The exit surveys were reviewed several times for accuracy. See Appendix A for a sample workshop agenda.

Results of Participant Feedback

Participants largely valued sessions that embedded learning in discussions of real-world situations where they could hear about a challenge and consider possible ways to solve it. They most frequently cited modules on Gender Integration and Sexual- and Gender-Based Violence as particularly valuable, with twenty votes for each. Respect for Diversity and Intercultural Communication received thirteen and eleven votes, respectively. The need to understand intercultural communication was reinforced by verbal

participant feedback and questions requesting stories of experiences with people from Caribbean, African and Middle Eastern cultures. Many people recognized the need to understand how the cultures in these places differed from the Latin American cultures with which they were more familiar. Anticipating peacekeeping missions in the Congo, Mali, and Middle East, the participants wanted to know what they could expect and how they could appropriately interact with members of those local populations. The modules dealing with diversity and intercultural communication principles gave participants new ways of seeing and adapting to cultural differences. Given the lack of prior knowledge about cultural differences and the likelihood that they will need to communicate with people from other countries, we believe that this kind of preparation is essential for anyone going abroad in a security role. On occasion, discussions about cultural competencies for deployment also prompted discussions about cultural differences within Latin America, providing opportunities for perspective-taking among members of participants' own countries. Figure 1 shows how many participants named each module as being particularly valuable. As we interpret these results, it may be helpful to know that intercultural communication skills are incorporated into group work on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. If we view these as two aspects of the same activities (recalling that these are free responses to the open question, without reference to a list of topics), we may conclude that skill-building to protect people from sexual and gender-based violence was seen as the most important take-away for many participants. Similarly, respect for diversity, gender mainstreaming, and integration of women are often intertwined in the group work on fostering change in organizations.

FIGURE 1
VOTES OF VALUABILITY OF APPLIED DIVERSITY WORKSHOP MODULES, AS REPORTED BY PARTICIPANTS, PER WORKSHOP

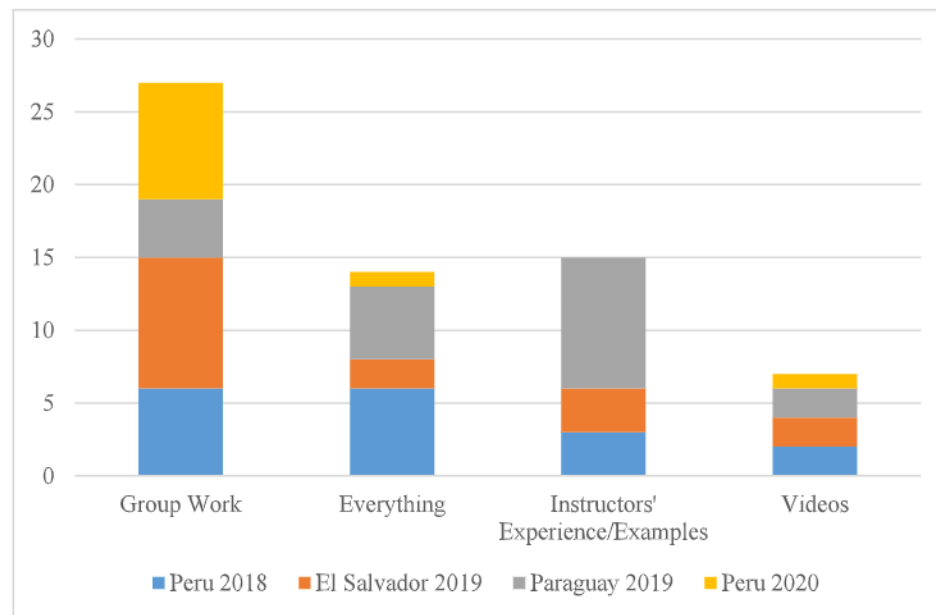


In addition to reporting about course content that was valuable for them, many participants cited delivery aspects of the workshop that they felt were beneficial. This included group work (twenty-seven votes) and listening to the examples and stories of experienced peacekeepers (fifteen votes). See Figure 2 below for a breakdown of those workshop components as named by students, by country of workshop delivery. According to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), the process of learning through experience, as well as reflecting on that experience, solidifies learning more effectively than a more passive learning style (1984). Kolb's Experiential Learning Model calls for active learning as well as

reflection on what was learned. Extensive use of group work related to peacekeeping operations provides an opportunity for participants to immediately apply the theoretical knowledge gained in the preceding lecture to current and important diversity issues. After the groups complete their work, they present their results to the whole group, and a facilitator leads a discussion reflecting on the findings, following Kolb's model.

We were surprised to find relatively few people naming videos as particularly valuable elements of the course. We have often shown films about women struggling to lead peace efforts under extremely difficult circumstances, and participants (as well as instructors) have wept through videos about violence against women and children. These films often get an immediate emotional response, but it appears that they are not as highly valued as practical, hands-on work sessions where people discuss the issues and develop strategies for intervention.

FIGURE 2
VOTES FOR OTHER WORKSHOP COMPONENTS VALUED AS IMPORTANT BY PARTICIPANTS



Additional Feedback

Many participants have provided helpful feedback that allowed us to tailor subsequent workshops to better suit the needs of our audience. This has been, and continues to be, an ongoing process. Here are typical comments from recent participants about what they thought was valuable in the workshop:

- “The exercises where each group goes around to present their opinion and share their knowledge was one of the most valuable things for me.” –Participant from El Salvador course, June 2019. [Author’s translation]
- “The themes are interrelated: motivation, human rights, equality, in order to negotiate and motivate these themes” –Participant from Paraguay, December 2019. [Author’s translation]
- “I really appreciated the exchange of experiences between the instructors and the students.” –Participant from Peru, June 2018. [Author’s translation]
- “The group work, since each person has a different perspective. The videos because they show us an unknown reality.” –Participant from Peru, March 2020. [Author’s translation]

- “Actually the whole workshop in terms of the teaching principles used but mainly I would highlight the shared experiences.” –Participant from Paraguay, December 2019 [Author’s translation]

Take-away lessons cited by participants tended to focus on increased capability to intervene effectively for integration and protection of women. Recent examples of memorable lessons include, “the importance of body language [for intercultural communication],” “exercises and examples,” “more lived experiences,” “gender mainstreaming to integrate it in any other project in the future,” and “how to use motivation to incorporate women in peacekeeping operations, which is very important.” [Author’s translations].

The verbal feedback, as well as results aggregated from the exit surveys, supports Kolb’s ELT: learning is more effective when it has both application and reflection points. Further, the nearer the applications to the people in the group, the more engagement and deep learning seem to occur. As stated above, videos seem less impactful than stories from instructors and peers, even though both have been followed by group discussions. Participants comment that examples like that of the Uruguayan captain mentioned above help them know what to expect in unknown environments. They show equal appreciation and engagement with stories that are shared in their small group discussions, and it becomes important to give each group dedicated time to report their issues, analyses and recommendations to everyone in the course. This opens opportunities for participants to further discuss strengths and weaknesses of the initial plan, and for listeners to learn from the work that each team has invested. As each graduate of the course returns to his or her organization, we hope that increased awareness of diversity issues, alongside new skills and strategies for addressing them, helps each participant become a force for positive change at home and during peacekeeping operations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite myriad resolutions by the UN Security Council and twenty years of accompanying national action plans, integration and protection of women during peacekeeping operations remain more talk than substance. While governmental efforts may be helpful, many of the social and organizational challenges must be solved at the local level by people who are willing and able to act effectively. When members of military and governmental organizations understand the issues and take effective action to streamline integration of women in their own spheres of influence, this can change cultural attitudes, support positive relationships, and encourage inclusive professional behaviors. We have argued that one crucial foundation for such grass-roots intervention is understanding about social processes that impact beliefs, speech, and behavior regarding women and security. Relevant process skills include the ability to communicate effectively, motivate cooperation, solve interpersonal conflicts, and persuade people to support change. These skills must be practiced in scenarios that approximate the real world, preferably scenarios that are meaningful to potential champions for integration and protection of women in peacekeeping, as part of the learning process.

How, then, can we prepare change agents within military and government organizations to facilitate integration and protection of women during peacekeeping? We found the answer in activities, analyses, and discussions where know-how and practice come together. Participants in our “Women, Peace, and Security” courses reported the most benefit from discussing real events and working in groups on strategies for intervention. While United Nations doctrines were (and remain) important for the course, it is in the group work that participants practice new skills and internalize strategy-development processes that they can use to support women in peacekeeping. This sequence is crucial: teach clear principles about social processes in small digestible units and immediately help the participants apply those principles to genuine situations that people in the room have seen or heard about. In these discussion and analysis sessions, people are sometimes surprised to learn about different situations that women face in the organizations that are represented around the table. This raises awareness of challenges, inequities, or threats in a way that inspires empathy, not defensiveness. The stories are often personal, and the problems that the teams work on are meaningful because participants raise the issues themselves. These team

projects, whether focused on solving integration challenges or protecting women during peacekeeping, should incorporate necessary social and organizational principles, enabling group members to practice applying the principles in familiar settings. As they analyze their scenarios and design intervention strategies, many participants express confidence that they will be better prepared for the next time they encounter a challenging situation.

Informing Training Efforts for Integration of Women in Other Security Organizations

While the Women, Peace, and Security initiative, as initially outlined by UNSCR 1325, emphasizes integration of women in peacekeeping operations and government and military sectors, the findings of this study can be applied to other organizations. Most of our workshops have included non-peacekeeping participants, among them members of the local and national police forces, who report that the principles they learn can be usefully applied to their circumstances. Many of the challenges that women face in military organizations mirror challenges for women in other security organizations. Not surprisingly, some of the UN topics that are specific to peacekeeping are largely irrelevant to domestic security personnel, but the social processes that relate to integration challenges are similar. Whether in a military unit, a police department, or a civilian governmental office, champions for full inclusion of women need skills for motivating, communicating, and influencing change. People from all of these environments can build their expertise as change agents through team-based projects that apply social principles to real-world situations. This approach takes more time than watching a talking PowerPoint or a video about diversity and inclusion, but it can produce a vastly better outcome. Even live presentations about diversity in organizations, however well delivered, are unlikely to equip change agents to lead improvements. Instead, potential champions for integration of women need to meet in groups, identify real-world challenges within their own organizations, and learn step-by-step to apply social principles to solving genuine diversity issues.

Limitations and Future Research

Future research could further refine our understanding of knowledge and skills that are necessary for integration and protection of women during peacekeeping. As the integration process continues, curriculum planners will need to understand new kinds of challenges that arise. Women, peace, and security curricula will need to incorporate newly relevant scenarios and potentially adapt the topics of study. It would be useful to measure the importance of various types of know-how using Likert scales, both for evaluation of existing curricula and to inform a theoretical model about factors that influence the integration and protection processes. Finally, we need better understanding about teaching these topics online to dispersed participants. People often flew from neighboring countries to attend our workshops, and this limited the number of people who could participate. Can equivalent discussions, trusting disclosure of challenges and painful experiences, and strategic planning be coordinated in online groups? What venues can be established to enable genuine group involvement, analysis, and problem-solving through online media? Solutions to these questions could enable a dramatic increase in preparation of potential champions for integration of women in security sector jobs.

Contributions

These findings contribute practical insights to the sparse literature on building skills to support integration and protection of women during peacekeeping. Results of this work can inform education and training decisions for future peacekeepers and may be applied to broader populations working in security sector institutions. By extension of the concepts, our work potentially contributes to the management field dealing with gender integration and education of change agents for more inclusive organizations.

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APPENDIX

SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA

Women, Peace, and Security Workshop					
<u>Time</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
0830-0910	1A - Welcome	2A - Integrating Gender in PKO	3A - Intercultural Communication Group Exercise	4A - Respect for Diversity	5A - Negotiation/Conflict Management, Equal Employment Opportunity Exercise
0910-0950	1B - Introduction & UN Principles	2B - Gender Mainstreaming in PKO		4B - Protection of Children	
0950-1030	1B - Introduction and UN Principles	2C - Protection of Civilians	3B - Intercultural Communication Groups Report	4C - Conduct & Discipline	
1030-1040	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1040-1120	1C - Legal Aspects of PKO with Applications	2D - Organizational Change Groups Identify an Issue, Begin Analysis	3C - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict	3E - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Group Exercise	5B - Negotiation/Conflict Management, Civil-Military Cooperation Exercise
1120-1200					
1200-1300	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1300-1340	1D - Human Rights	2D - Organizational Change Groups Develop a Strategy	3C - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Conflict	3E - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Exercise	5C - Negotiation/Conflict Management, Teams Report their Solutions
1340-1350	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1350-1430	1E - Motivation Group Exercise: Motivating Support for Women and Security Initiatives	2E - Organizational Change Groups Wrap Up	3D - Sexual Exploitation & Abuse	Country Presentations about Women and Peacekeeping	5D - Workshop Wrap Up/Evaluations
1430-1510		2E - Organizational Change Groups Report Solutions			Closing Ceremony
1510-1600	Admin/Q&A	Admin/Q&A	Admin/Q&A	Admin/Q&A	