

Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Lesson Plan II: Addressing CRSV at the Mission Level

Introduction.

1. On a daily basis, in conflict and post-conflict situations countless women and girls become targets of SV; most of the victims being girls. SV against men and boys is also prevalent and widespread. It is one of the worst global protection challenges due to its scale, prevalence and profound impact. Prevailing inequalities and discrimination at socio-political, economic, legal and cultural spheres contribute to SV. The acts of SV in armed conflict severely impede the critical contributions of women to society; durable peace and security, and sustainable development. The widespread use of sexual violence in conflicts such as in Rwanda, the Former Yugoslavia, and Sierra Leone led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1820 in 2008.
2. Since then, UN peacekeeping Mandates have increasingly and specifically highlighted protection of women and children from all forms of SV and directed PKOs to take comprehensive measures to end impunity. At present, MINUSCA, MINUSMA, UNOCI, MONUSCO, UNMISS and UNAMID are addressing CRSV. CRSV is no longer seen as an inevitable by-product of war, but rather a crime that is preventable and punishable under IHRL and IHL. SV in conflict is a security issue that demands a security response. Combating CRSV is a priority obligation for all peacekeepers.

Aim.

3. To provide an overview UN peacekeeping Mission's approaches to address CRSV.

Scope.

4. The session on 'Addressing CRSV at the Mission level' comprise:
 - a. Part I : Mission Framework to address CRSV.
 - b. Part II : Role and Responsibilities of WPAs.
 - c. Part III : Mission approaches in addressing CRSV.
 - d. Part IV : Country Level Initiatives.

Learning Outcomes.

5. The session intends to bring out the following:
 - a. Comprehend UN peacekeeping Missions framework to address CRSV;
 - b. Be able to interact and support WPAs in the mandate implementation;
 - c. Be able to integrate and coordinate with other Mission Components and partners;
 - d. Understand the Mission's approaches in prevention and response to CRSV; and,
 - e. Be able to execute prevention and response measures to combat CRSV as part of mandate implementation.

Part I: Mission Framework to Address CRSV.

6. **Overview.** Combating CRSV requires a holistic and comprehensive approach involving many actors and multiple instruments. From a strategic perspective, it is addressed by the UNHQ and the international community. The parties to the conflict and the host Nation have a major role to play as well in preventing CRSV and adhering to the commitments. Host Nation must have a comprehensive strategy to ensure protection of civilians, and build its capabilities and capacities to respond effectively to CRSV threats. The UNCT primarily manages the initiatives at the country level, establish humanitarian related protection clusters/platforms/working groups and provide for referral arrangements and survivor assistance.
7. UN Military Component is one of the significant instruments, though part of the wider and multidimensional approach to combat CRSV. CRSV being perpetrated mostly by armed elements and government forces, UN Military Component is best placed to leverage its capacities, including the authorization for use of force to prevent incidents of SV, protect civilians from physical violence and to effectively neutralize CRSV threats.

8. **Mission HQ Responsibilities.** The responsibility to implement the CRSV mandate lies with the Head of Mission (HoM) by ensuring unity of effort and coherence among all mission components. In Missions with protection of civilian's (PoC) mandates, the Mission HQ develops a mission-wide integrated approach, as well as leads and directs the heads of all mission components and ensure unity of effort and coherence among all UN entities. Some of the responsibilities linked to addressing CRSV challenges are:
 - a. Development and implementation of protection strategies for physical protection.
 - b. Setting Mission-wide operational direction for:
 - i. Component level objectives, benchmarks and deliverables;
 - ii. Political engagements, civil affairs efforts and public information campaigns;
 - iii. Integration, coordination and unity of effort.
 - c. Establishment of CRSV prevention and response framework at the country level.
 - d. Constructive engagement (including advocacy) of all parties to the conflict.
 - e. Capacities building of host Government and state institutions to address CRSV.
 - f. Institute response mechanisms to prevent/deter and neutralise threats.
 - g. Promote reconciliation and empower local communities.

9. **Mission Framework.** Addressing CRSV is a mission-wide responsibility demanding integrated planning, preparations and operationalization of the mandate by the military, police and civilian components with other partners.
 - a. **Framework.** In combating CRSV, the HoM is also assisted by the Senior Management Group (SMG) on PoC, Protection Advisory Group (PAG), Mission's PoC and CRSV Working Groups; and protection cluster/sub-clusters (SGBV sub-cluster and child-protection sub-cluster) in addition to the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) and Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC).
 - b. **Guidance and Mainstreaming.** Prevention and response measures to combat CRSV is mainstreamed and reflected in the Mission's documents, such as the Mission Concept, Mission PoC strategy, Military and Police Component Concept of Operations (CONOPS), Operations Orders (OPORD), Directives and SOPs, and other civilian substantive component work plans.
 - c. **Coordination.** Effective coordination between the Mission's Senior Protection Advisor (SPOCA), Senior Child Protection Advisor, Senior Gender Advisor, Director of Human Rights Section and Senior WPA is crucial for an integrated and coordinated approach to prevention and response to CRSV.

Part II: Role and Responsibilities of WPAs.

10. **Overview.** Women's Protection Advisors (WPAs) are mandated by the Security Council for deployment into peacekeeping operations addressing CRSV and are embedded in the human rights and gender components as well as in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (OSRSG) or the Office of the Deputy SRSG. SWPA/WPAs coordinate, mainstream and support the implementation of the CRSV mandate by the peacekeeping operation. Usually Mission's Gender unit is responsible to address Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). The Gender unit is responsible for mainstreaming gender perspectives, capacity building and assisting Mission components to implement the mandate through a gendered analysis.

11. **Functions.** Key functions of WPAs, inter alia include:
 - a. Political engagement and dialogue with parties to the conflict (including eliciting commitments);
 - b. Carry out advocacy with all parties to the conflict to cease CRSV, institute preventive measures and end impunity through judicial process;
 - c. Support development of Comprehensive National Strategy and Missions Action Plan to address CRSV;
 - d. Coordinate and submit reports to the Security Council as required by Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA);

- e. Mainstream CRSV concerns through the work of the military, police, and other substantive components;
- f. Capacity building of the Mission components to address CRSV(Gender WPA);
- g. Integrate CRSV issues throughout security, defence and judicial sector reform and demobilisation and disarmament programmes to effectively address prevention and accountability;
- h. Support prevention activities through gender-specific early-warning;
- i. Coordinate prevention and response measures internally (with all Mission components) and externally (with UNCT, parties to the conflict, host State, regional organisations, civil society, NGOs, etc.);
- j. Ensure that CRSV is not addressed in isolation of other human rights violations.
- k. Monitor, report, analyse and investigate CRSV incidents (Human Rights WPA); and,
- l. Promote gender equality, participation and empowerment of women (Gender WPA).

Part III: Mission Approaches.

12. **Overview.** As guided by the Security Council, UN Peacekeeping Missions are mandated to make targeted interventions to combat CRSV through different arrangements/instruments such as Political Affairs, Civil Affairs, Public Information, SSR, DDR, Justice, Corrections, as well as the Military and Police components. This effort is further augmented and monitored by Mission's substantive entities, such as Human Rights, Gender, Child Protection, etc.
13. **Approaches.** Major initiatives taken at the Mission level to address CRSV include:
 - a. **Political Dialogue.** Integrating CRSV concerns throughout peace and mediation processes; cease-fire agreements; etc.
 - b. **Advocacy.** Advocacy for prevention of CRSV and ending impunity with all parties to the conflict (including non-signatory parties) is crucial to foster accountability and responsiveness.
 - c. **Engaging with parties to the conflict.** Engagement with parties to the conflict to solicit specific commitments to prevent CRSV as well as monitoring the implementation of these commitments is important at strategic and operational levels. Examples include soliciting prevention and accountability commitments which address CRSV as a criminal act; bringing those national security and law enforcement personnel, who have committed SV to speedy and appropriate justice, etc.
 - d. **Community engagement.** Constructive engagement of communities and in particular with women is crucial for addressing their security concerns, improving self-protection measures, and promoting reconciliation.
 - e. **Reporting to the Security Council.** Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) initiated by Missions significantly help collection of timely, objective, accurate, and reliable information on the use of sexual violence by State and non-State actors; analysing trends and patterns of sexual violence; and to name and shame through listing in the Secretary-Generals Annual Report to the Security Council;
 - f. **PoC.** The PoC team in the Mission staffed by PoC Advisers functions under a designated Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) who is usually a PoC lead to overview and guide daily PoC mandate implementation and coordination mechanisms. The PoC team is responsible to support or advise DSRSG/Mission leaders in their efforts to manage Mission's PoC activities and coordinate, early-warning analysis and response, planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation etc.
 - g. **Child Protection.** Most of the victims of CRSV are minors and hence need additional care in providing specific protection to the children. In the case of minor survivors, the Senior Child Protection Adviser (SCPA) must be informed and consulted for further action. The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and MARA must be mutually reinforcing and complementary in addressing CRSV. UNICEF and Child Protection sub-cluster play a vital role in survivor assistance and referral arrangements for child survivors of CRSV.

- h. Gender. Gender inequality and discrimination (socio-politico-economic-cultural and legal) is a root cause for CRSV. Gender component promotes equality, participation and empowerment which contribute to enhanced security for women and girls.
- i. Human Rights. The human rights component monitors, reports and carries out investigations on CRSV.
- j. Rule of Law. Ensuring that CRSV concerns are integrated throughout SSR/DSR and DDR programmes; as well as through justice sector reform;
 - i. SSR. Assistance through promoting oversight and accountability (including of leadership/ commanders) and responsiveness; prosecution of offenders (including through military justice) to end impunity; training and sensitisation on prevention and response to CRSV; improving conduct and discipline to prevent predatory practices and sexual violence; increasing accessibility and participation of women in the National Security Institutions; promoting better command and control systems; timely payment of salaries and provision of welfare and amenities; etc.
 - ii. DDR. Addressing vetting and screening of ex-combatants to prevent recruitment of offenders into the National Security Institutions; reintegration of ex-combatants left over from the newly created NSI; reintegration of offenders after completion of sentencing, reintegration of Women Associated with Armed Groups (WAAG)/bush wives and their children/families; addressing security concerns of women and girls in and around DDR camp sites; addressing weapons proliferation through weapons reduction programmes; etc.
 - iii. JSR. Promoting legislative, policy and judicial reforms; promoting ratification of international instruments; institutional capacity building; support identification, verification and prosecution of offenders; protection of survivors, witnesses and their families; and provision of reparations, etc.
- k. Gendered Early-warning. Strengthening prevention arrangements through the use of early warning, the work of the military and police components etc.
- l. Civil Affairs. The civil affairs component carries out risk analysis (threat and vulnerability assessments), provides early-warning, engages with civil society and local communities; promotes reconciliation and conflict management at the local level; launches gender sensitive and security oriented QIPs; supports protection actors to identify, plan and take concrete steps and make contact with parties; and provides planning and implementation support to joint civil-military PoC initiatives.
- m. Public Information. The public information component undertakes targeted broadcasting of key messages on CRSV/SGBV; such as, on prohibition of all forms of CRSV/SGBV; responsibilities of state and non-state actors, national laws/policies; work of the government, mission and UNCT; survivor assistance, referral arrangements; partnership with national and regional media; and training for national media on how to report on incidents of CRSV/SGBV, promoting anonymity, etc.
- n. Police Component. UNPOL component is responsible for capacity building and mentoring of host State law enforcement agencies (through Individual Police Officers) and protection of civilians, including from all forms of sexual violence (through Formed Police Units)
- o. Military Components. UN Military Component is responsible to proactively prevent incidents, deter perpetrators, protect civilians, especially women and children and neutralise potential, impending and on-going CRSV threats.

Part IV: Country-level Initiatives.

- 14. The UN Country Team (UNCT) primarily manages multi-sectoral and humanitarian initiatives at the country level, establishes humanitarian related protection clusters/platforms/working groups and develops Referral Arrangements for survivor assistance. Collectively, UN entities enable the host State to enhance prevention and protection mechanisms, national ownership and responsiveness through:
 - a. Development of comprehensive national strategies to combat CRSV;
 - b. Capacity development within the health, social welfare, justice and security sectors to respond effectively to CRSV;

- c. Legislative assistance, technical guidance and support legal reforms etc. for prosecution, provision of reparation, etc.;
- d. Strengthening services for survivors including health care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, livelihood support and socio-economic reintegration;
- e. Training/education/sensitisation of the host security forces (military, police and gendarmes) to prevent CRSV, adherence to strict codes of conduct to prevent the use of CRSV and violation of international human rights law, and predatory practices and to promote and protect the human rights of the people; and,
- f. Strengthening coordination through protection/SGBV clusters/sub-clusters and processes.

Takeaways.

15. Following are the key takeaways:
 - a. At the strategic level, CRSV is addressed through the peace process; women's participation; political engagement, eliciting commitments; listing of perpetrators; imposing sanctions and judicial processes.
 - b. Peacekeeping Missions are required to institute proactive measures and credible responses to prevent CRSV, protect vulnerable sections of population and neutralise potential/impending/on-going threats.
 - c. At the heart of any intervention regarding CRSV is the priority protection and assistance to the survivors, witnesses and community.

Conclusion.

16. Addressing SV in armed conflict is one of the most challenging tasks for UN peacekeepers. SV can leave indelible scars on victims, witnesses and their families as well as in the psyche of communities, adversely affecting reconciliation and stabilisation efforts. Incidents of SV involving intense IHL and IHRL violations are tantamount to derailment of peace process and putting at stake even the credibility of peacekeeping operations. It can also adversely affect safety and security of UN peacekeepers and the carefully nurtured trust between the Mission and the people. In most Mission settings, elements of UN Military component are the first responders, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas.
17. Military commanders must develop creative and practical solutions that can advance women's protection, and overall mission success. To succeed, peacekeepers must understand, plan and manage relationships with the multiple stakeholders in the field; as well as make the optimum use of the resources and capabilities at their disposal.
18. Situational awareness, early-warning, operational readiness and committed leadership are crucial for combating SV in conflict successfully. A visible UN presence, with the right posture and profile, can deter potential perpetrators of sexual violence and inspire a sense of security. In exercising the solemn obligation of protection of civilians, especially the women and children; and to combat CRSV, military peacekeepers must be proactive and be prepared to use force, including deadly force. The Blue helmet must remain an emblem of hope, peace and progress for the vulnerable civilians – men and women, boys and girls.