

# **SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN AS PEACEKEEPERS: EXPERIENCES IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

by

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## **Abstract**

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) currently deploys peacekeeping forces as part of the United Nations' (UN) peacekeeping operations in Africa. Until recently, few women in the military had been employed in peacekeeping positions. Little is known about what these women experience on a daily basis, how they interact with local populations and, finally, how they are supported by the UN and the SANDF in terms of gender mainstreaming and gender equality. This study sets out to explore the experiences of South African peacekeepers, particularly women, during their deployment to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The findings from a survey of 63 women and men SANDF peacekeepers who had recently returned from deployment to the DRC revealed that women peacekeepers are predominantly restricted to performing administrative tasks and patrol duties within the safety of UN bases. Male participants were generally apprehensive with regard to women's participation in the mission which highlights the hyper-masculine culture in the peacekeeping context. The women surveyed reported that, although they had not been actively involved in the field, they had developed close social bonds with local populations. Some women reported that they had engaged in discussions with local women about gender equality and women's rights, and that they had attempted to inspire local women to educate and uplift themselves. These findings have important implications for peacekeeping and the role that female peacekeepers can play in the lives of local women. This study has shown that women peacekeepers are not supported or empowered and that an expanded role for women peacekeepers needs to be considered.

### **Key terms:**

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, South African National Defence Force, peacekeepers, gender, gender mainstreaming, gender equality, gender equity

## **Opsomming**

Die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag (SANW) plaas tans vredesmagte in Afrika. Hierdie vredesmagte vorm deel van die Verenigde Nasies (VN) se vredesoperasies. Tot onlangs het slegs 'n klein hoeveelheid SANW vroue in VN vredesmag posisies opgetree. Min inligting is beskikbaar oor die elke-dag ervaringe van vroue in vredesmag posisies en hulle interaksies met die plaaslike populasie. Dit is ook onduidelik hoe vroue deur die VN en die SANW ondersteun word in terme van geslags-gelykheid en geslags-hoofstroming in vredesmagte. Hierdie studie beoog om die ervaringe van Suid-Afrikaanse vredesmagte te ondersoek, in spesifiek die ervaringe van vroue, gedurende hul plasing in die Demokratiese Republiek van die Kongo (DRK). Die bevindinge van 'n opname wat 63 mans en vroue vredesmag werkers insluit, het onthul dat vroue werkers hoofsaaklik tot administratiewe posisies toegelaat word en dat hulle slegs binne die VN basis mag patroleer. Manlike deelnemers in die studie was onseker oor vroue se bekwaamheid in vredesmag werk wat die hipermanlike gesindheid in die vredesmag konteks beklemtoon. Die vroue in die studie het aangedui dat hulle sosiale bande met plaaslike populasies vorm ten spyte dat hulle nie aktief in vredesmag aktiwiteite kon deelneem nie. Sommige vroue het aangedui dat hulle in gesprekke met plaaslike vroue betrokke was oor geslags-gelykheid en vroue regte. Hulle het ook aktief plaaslike vroue probeer inspireer om hulself op te voed sodat hulle sosiaal opgehef kan word. Die bevindinge het belangrike implikasies vir vredesmag werk en die rol wat vroue werkers kan speel in die lewens van plaaslike vroue. Hierdie studie wys dat vroue vredesmag werkers nie ten volle ondersteun of bemaagtig word nie, en dat 'n uitgebreide rol vir vroue werkers in ag geneem moet word.

### **Sleutel terme**

Verenigde Nasies vredesmag operasies, Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag, vredesmag werkers, geslags-hoofstoming, geslags-gelykheid, geslags-billikheid

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## CHAPTER 1

### War, gender and the military

*“Slowly but steadily women in Africa are claiming their place in the last frontier of their exclusion: the security sector” (Juma, 2007).*

#### 1.1 OVERVIEW

Changes in the South African Constitution have given women the opportunity to enter the military as soldiers. With the demise of South Africa’s previous political regime in 1994, women gained equal status to men and institutions such as the South African Defence Force (SADF) underwent radical change. By 2006, the restructured and renamed South African National Defence Force (SANDF) had an 11.8% representation of women in top management (Department of Defence, 2006). Although this is a small percentage, the Department of Defence (DOD) is currently working towards a national target of 30% representation of women at all decision-making levels and a 40% representation of females at entry level (Department of Defence, 2008). According to an audit released by the DOD in 2006, women at that time made up approximately 21% of the total military population in South Africa (Department of Defence, 2006).

It is important to look at women’s inclusion and their roles in the military, as these ultimately determine their representation and roles in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations. It should be noted, however, that the UN has very little influence over the recruitment of peacekeepers by countries contributing troops to conflict areas and cannot force compliance on these countries (Hudson, 2000). The recruitment of women lies in the hands of their national governments’ defence forces. Policy, strategy and the level of danger that the mission may encounter are factors which weigh heavily when making these recruitment decisions (Mazurana, Raven-Roberts & Parpart, 2005). It is clear from historical practice, however, that it is not only the latter factors that determine women’s inclusion into the military and peacekeeping operations. In general, the inclusion – or rather, exclusion – of women in the military is rooted in patriarchal ideas of femininity and the place of women in society.

The domain of war and the military has historically and almost exclusively belonged to men. The inclusion of women in the military environment has led to widespread hostility and discrimination against women (Francke, 1997). Johnston-Conover and Sapiro (1993) describe the historical images of gender in war as limited and moderately stable. Two ideas of women in the context of war have prevailed over time.

The first idea is the portrayal of women who enter the military as soldiers. These women often fall prey to stereotypes, such as being “camp followers” or “mannish” (Meyer, 1992:581). These stereotypical constructions of women were particularly evident during the Second World War when women attempted to have military careers as soldiers. With the entrance of women into the military, new constructions of being female within the military were created in order for women soldiers to be seen as “sexually respectable and feminine”, that is, not to pose any threats to conventional sexual norms (Meyer, 1992:581).

The second idea of women in the context of war is explained by Sasson-Levy (2003), who maintains that women’s inclusion in military service is often viewed as a hindrance to the “military gender system”, thus causing harm to the military as a war machine (Sasson-Levy, 2003:440). The military institution plays an important role in the construction of patriarchy, as combat roles set the stage for the creation of masculine identities and for affirming male dominance (Sasson-Levy, 2002:358). Toktas (2002) explains that masculine institutions such as the military are considered the guardian of national identity and are key to defining national interests and protecting society. Thus, the military can be viewed as a patriarchal institution which serves as a buttress for myths of masculinity and femininity (Johnston-Conover & Sapiro, 1993). These myths place men in the line of duty as protectors, warriors and heroes, while reinforcing ideas of femininity as passive, weak and emotional.

The two above-mentioned ideas have remained relatively stable over time and are reinforced by the dominant male groups in the military (Johnston-Conover & Sapiro, 1993). An example of this recently surfaced during presidential candidate John McCain’s election campaign in the United States of America (USA). McCain himself served in the military and was a prisoner of war during the conflict in Vietnam. It has to be mentioned however that McCain’s experiences as a prisoner of war might have shaped his views on women’s unsuitability for combat roles and their inability to cope in captive situations. Women pilots in the American armed forces have recently pressed the US Congress for equal opportunities as pilots in

combat situations. McCain's view, however, was that the American nation had existed for 215 years and had never seen women in combat roles (Vartabedian, 2008). It is clear from this traditionalist and discouraging stance that the generally held view is that only men belong in battle. In other words, McCain would not have accepted women in combat roles had he become the next American president.

In contrast to the dominant views of women's unsuitability for taking part in war, some contexts offer alternative "normalised" notions of women's involvement in the military. It is interesting to note personal letters with regard to the historical inclusion of women in the Israeli army. Nusair, a woman from Israel, undertook a project under the supervision of Cynthia Enloe to analyse the militarisation process of an Israeli woman's life (Waller & Rycenga, 2000). She chose to look at the life of an Israeli army officer called Hilla. In the letters they exchanged, they write of militarisation in Israel as a process that already begins in early childhood. This is evident in education, television and radio propaganda, which is aimed at boys and girls, men and women. The militarisation of women is described in the letters as being an integral part of a woman's identity. Hilla writes that by not joining the army, women often fear being stigmatised as having a "mental illness", that is, should they refuse to lay down their lives to serve their country (Waller & Rycenga, 2000:117).

Although women in Israel are militarised from an early age, this situation is not common elsewhere. It is the views of such people as John McCain that are more often reflected in military discussion. In analysing such views, the notion of hegemonic masculinity becomes important for understanding the power aspect of masculinity (Morrell, 1998:607). The term "hegemony" in the realm of gender studies is described by Donaldson (1993) as power that is obtained and maintained by a dominant social group. The performance of hegemonic masculinity is typically characterised by aggression, domination and competition (Cheng, 1999). These characteristics are also often associated with the military.

Outward displays of emotions such as grief or affection make the male less worthy and inferior to his male counterparts (Goffman, 1963). Women entering into military roles often have to learn how to perform and mimic male behaviour in order to fall within the masculine norm (Amram-Katz & Sasson-Levy, 2004). Amram-Katz and Sasson-Levy (2004) describe the way women in the Israeli army, especially those serving in infantry units, have a tendency to imitate male behaviour such as lowering their voices or using sexist language. The

adoption of such masculine roles by women has served to reject military notions of femininity and masculinity as dichotomous identities (Sasson-Levy, 2003). One can then conclude that the performance of masculinity and the embeddedness of distinctly different feminine role enactments keep the order of patriarchal rule in its “rightful” place within the military.

## 1.2 WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY

According to Cilliers, Schutte, Heineken, Liebenberg and Sass (1997), different countries vary in the extent to which women serve in the military. This does not include guerrilla forces, where women are incorporated in larger numbers, although often not in combat roles (Cock, 1992; Cilliers et al., 1997). This variation in the numbers of women included in the military of different countries can be seen particularly in Israel and South Africa. The Israeli army has fully incorporated women in combat roles and Cilliers et al. (1997) attributes this incorporation to the possible threat to national survival.

In South Africa, white women were only incorporated into military support roles (non-combat) during the 1970s, when government was gathering resources for war on political, ideological and economic levels (Cilliers et al., 1997). The main reason for their inclusion in the military was a shortage of qualified white males (Cilliers et al., 1997). During the 1980s, the South African Defence Force (SADF) was the most powerful force in Africa (Cock, 1992). The apartheid regime was formidable at the time and the SADF was specifically used as a tool of oppression, often in very violent forms. Within this context, white women contributed to the SADF particularly in terms of *ideological support* (Cock, 1992). This meant that women socialised young men to reinforce societal ideas of masculinity and militarism, often supporting the brutality carried out in the country. Besides ideological support, women in the SADF contributed to the force by providing food parcels and organising recreational activities for soldiers on the border (Cock, 1992).

In 1994, a post-apartheid, democratic South Africa was born and women were granted the same rights as men to participate as full members of the military. The Constitution of South Africa was promulgated, *inter alia*, to eradicate all forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender and race in all sectors of South African society. Military careers for women are now the same as those for men and women have to undergo the same selection processes and training as their male counterparts (Cilliers et al., 1997). The SANDF focuses strongly on

gender mainstreaming and also applies it to men's and women's equal participation in peacekeeping operations.

### 1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Currently, the SANDF contributes troops to the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Until recently, few women were employed in peacekeeping positions. As a result, very little is known about South African women's perceptions of gender mainstreaming and gender equality in UN peacekeeping operations. Preliminary literature searches indicated that, overall, gender and peacekeeping are important sociological concerns and great efforts are being made to implement gender mainstreaming policies in UN peacekeeping missions. Also, very little is known about how female peacekeepers perform their duties and interact with local populations and fellow peacekeepers in the field. If women peacekeepers do interact with other women in the field, it suggests that they have a "public role" to play notwithstanding the various obstacles that might be present.

This study will specifically focus on the South African troops that serve in the DRC under the UN peacekeeping mandate. For this reason, the researcher will refer to *SANDF peacekeeping forces* or *SANDF peacekeepers*.

### 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research study considers two broad themes under which subquestions are raised. The broad themes and the subquestions are as follows:

#### 1.4.1 Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in peace operations:

- What differences are evident between the roles and responsibilities of deployed male and female peacekeepers?
- What are the perceptions of peacekeepers with regard to women's inclusion in peace missions?
- Do the UN and the SANDF make efforts to mainstream gender, raise gender awareness and support peacekeepers on women's issues?

#### 1.4.2 Women peacekeepers' public involvement:

- Do women peacekeepers build relationships with local women on the ground?
- Do peacekeepers think that local women are more trusting of female peacekeepers than of male peacekeepers? Related to this question, what role can women peacekeepers play in conflict-affected communities?

### 1.5 RESEARCH AIMS

In an attempt to answer the research questions, the following aims have been formulated:

- To provide an analysis of the experiences of South African women serving in peacekeeping forces within the DRC.
- To probe whether any restrictions are placed on the duties that women are trained to perform. In other words, the study will explore whether gender mainstreaming and gender equality are being actively practised in peacekeeping operations against the background of UN policy encouraging gender mainstreaming.
- To provide some insight into women's "public" involvement and the relationships they build on the ground with local populations, especially local women. How women "do peacekeeping" and whether they take opportunities to go beyond their duties in the field will be considered.

### 1.6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following section discusses brief definitions of the main concepts used in the study.

#### *United Nations peacekeeping operations*

The report of the Panel on UN Peacekeeping Operations, signed by Lakhdar Brahimi in 2000, defines peacekeeping operations as comprising three major activities. These activities include conflict prevention and peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace building (United Nations, 2000a). For the purpose of this study, only the activity of peacekeeping will be discussed. Peacekeeping can be described as an endeavour that has developed from a traditional military

model of observing ceasefires, forced separations, and attempts to establish peace after civil wars (United Nations, 2000a; Britt & Adler, 2003). Peacekeeping as a practice today incorporates a complex model of military and civilian elements (United Nations, 2000a).

This complex model of peacekeeping falls beyond the scope of this study and will therefore not be discussed. The principles behind peacekeeping include the consent of local parties, the impartiality of the peacekeeping force and the use of force only in self-defence. Military operations that abide by such principles are referred to as “peacekeeping operations” (United Nations, 2000a). For the purpose of this study, only peace operations involving military forces and soldiers will be referred to. Soldiers serving in peacekeeping operations are referred to as “peacekeepers”. According to UN requirements, peacekeepers have to be competent to accomplish the mission mandate, able to defend themselves and able to defend other components of the mission if they are required to do so (United Nations, 2000a).

### *Gender mainstreaming*

Gender mainstreaming is defined by the UN (2000b) as “... 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 political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated”.

Gender mainstreaming, as a concept, needs further exploration and will not be discussed in this chapter. Further reference to gender mainstreaming will be made in the literature review chapter of this study (chapter 2).

### *Gender equality and gender equity*

Gender equality is deemed a human rights issue and promotes the equal treatment of men, women, girls and boys in terms of rights, responsibilities and opportunities (United Nations, 2000b; World Health Organization, 2001). This definition also includes the equal treatment of both genders in law, policy and access to resources within families, communities and the wider society (World Health Organization, 2001). Gender equality is further explained by the

United Nations (2000b) as being a precondition for and indicator of sustainable people-oriented development.

Gender equity adds to the realm of gender and equality. As mentioned before, gender equality refers to *equal treatment and access*, which are advocated for both men and women of all ages. Gender equity, on the other hand, refers to fair and *equal distribution of benefits and responsibilities* between men and women of all ages (World Health Organization, 2001).

## **1.7 CHAPTER SYNOPSIS**

This study is set out in five chapters including the introductory chapter, chapter 1, which has been presented above. Chapter 2 integrates the conceptual framework of gender mainstreaming and the broader peacekeeping literature review. Chapter 2 situates women in the present peacekeeping context and explores the debates that are current with regard to UN peacekeeping. This chapter will also give insight into the history of and current conditions in the DRC and analyse the role of the UN Organized Mission to the DRC (MONUC) and its current efforts in terms of gender mainstreaming.

The research methodology used in this study is discussed in chapter 3. This chapter begins with a reflection on the research process and the difficulties experienced in gaining permission for the study. Thereafter, the chapter describes the processes that were followed in the course of the empirical study, including the procedures followed for obtaining a sample, the study design, the questionnaire construction and its relevance to the study, and the data collection. Finally, the statistical analysis will be discussed.

The results of the empirical study are presented in chapter 4 with the aid of tables, charts and figures.

Chapter 5 will discuss and interpret the results, drawing comparisons between male and female peacekeepers and will then bring the study to a close.

## CHAPTER 2

### Conceptual framework and literature review

*“If Peacekeeping Operations are to succeed in ensuring a sustainable peace and long term reconstruction based on democratic principles and UN human rights standards, it is essential that the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination be upheld”* (Whittington, 2002).

#### 2.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Athanasίου (2007) asserts that with the end of the Cold War, the field of security thinking underwent major changes. The concept of security progressed from *classical security* to *cooperative security* to *comprehensive security*, and most recently, evolved into what was proposed by the United Nations’ Development Programme Report (1994) as *human security*. The concept of human security has become a fundamental part of UN Peacekeeping Operations, and it has been depicted as being “people-oriented” rather than being “state- or territory-oriented”, which was evident in traditional views of security (United Nations, 1994; Hudson, 2006). Lewis (2006:3) describes human security as an approach confronting people’s everyday experiences of fear and oppression, thus providing insight into power relations at the micro-level. Security has in essence, then, widened to include non-military threats as a result of the complex nature and interdependence of human affairs (Hudson, 2006).

Human security consists of two major components. These components are explained by the UN as “freedom from fear”, “freedom from want” and “freedom to take action on one’s own behalf” (United Nations, 1994: 24; Hudson, 2006). Violations of these components are especially evident in war-torn countries such as the DRC, where systematic rape and mutilation are regular occurrences (Pratt, Werchick, Bewa, Eagleton, Lumumba, Nichols & Piripiri, 2004). Hudson (2006:2) argues that the human security approach is giving increasing attention to gender balance and gender mainstreaming issues. Within this approach, the UN specifically seeks to address the protection and empowerment of the vulnerable; strengthen institutional policies linking individual to state; forge global alliances and involve a range of actors as both victims and agents for change (Hudson, 2006:2). Despite the initiative taken to

address gender balance and mainstreaming within the human security approach, Hudson (2006) argues that there is a clear lack of policies and practice connecting gender balance and gender mainstreaming to the broad concept of human security. In order to address the latter, and encourage new opportunities for policy and dialogue, more emphasis needs to be placed on the active mainstreaming of women especially in processes such as peacekeeping and peace building (Hudson, 2006).

Gender mainstreaming as a concept can be described as not only a transformative strategy, but also a form of gendered political and policy practice, ultimately aiming to achieve gender equality (Squires, 2005; Walby, 2005). Gender mainstreaming as a concept was created by feminist development practitioners and was introduced to the UN for the first time in 1985 (Charlesworth, 2005; Walby, 2005). During the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the term "gender mainstreaming" appeared throughout the Platform for Action as a strategy for promoting gender equality in the twelve key areas identified by the UN (Charlesworth, 2005). These twelve key areas include, *inter alia*, the concerns of women in poverty, health and education, as victims of violence and armed conflict, in the economy, decision making, the environment and human rights and issues around the girl child (Charlesworth, 2005).

According to Charlesworth (2005), the term "gender mainstreaming" gained popularity with policymakers as it offered a clear and relatively measurable direction in which to use it as a strategy for achieving gender equality. Despite what policymakers believed, Charlesworth (2005) argues that gender mainstreaming as a concept fails to recognise the social and power relations that shape and sustain gender in society. According to this author, gender mainstreaming has simply become a "head-count" of women in particular positions (Charlesworth, 2005:13). In other words, merely increasing the number of women in institutions does not mean that institutional agendas will change, and will therefore not necessarily bring about gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming has been offered as a solution to women's underrepresentation in peacekeeping operations. History, however, has shown how weak the support is for institutional agendas to change in order to attain gender equality in peace missions. Olsson (2001) refers to the failure of gender units that were set up by the UN in East Timor and Kosovo in order to implement gender mainstreaming. These units encountered endless

difficulties such as a lack of financial support and operational difficulties. Olsson (2001) maintains that although the UN developed policies for gender mainstreaming, these policies are still a long way from achieving their goals. In support of this argument, Hudson (2000) states that despite an increase in the number of women in UN peacekeeping operations, they are still grossly underrepresented in the top decision-making structures of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). In the light of these arguments, it is important to look at current gender mainstreaming efforts in peacekeeping operations.

Women's contribution to peacekeeping is zealously debated in the current literature. In order to look at current debates and the policies that surround women's inclusion in peacekeeping operations, it is also important to outline the way women's contribution is perceived in this field. Johnston (2004) asserts that women in decision-making roles in peacekeeping operations can play an important part in the planning and determining of mandates and scope of operations. An example would be post-apartheid South Africa, where women parliamentarians took part in discussions about South Africa's role in peacekeeping. These discussions contributed to the expanded definition of peacekeeping, which is described as a more "holistic human security approach" (Johnston, 2004:43).

Despite some efforts to mainstream gender in peacekeeping operations, Daly (2005) is of the opinion that gender mainstreaming is better developed as a theory than a practice. Many institutions and organisations claim to apply gender mainstreaming, but Daly warns about taking these claims at "face value" (Daly, 2005:434). Daly's eight-country study – which included France, United Kingdom, Sweden, Belgium, Ireland, Lithuania, Greece and Spain – investigated the implementation of gender mainstreaming in *policy* organisations and found that each country had a different gender mainstreaming approach.

Three main approaches to gender mainstreaming were identified (Daly, 2005): the *first* is called the integrated approach, where gender equality is the responsibility of all those involved in public policy. The *second* approach to gender mainstreaming was identified as mainstreaming in the form of limited transversality. This approach means that it is mainly government departments and ministries that implement programmes for gender equality. The *third* approach is a fragmented approach which implies that mainstreaming is removed from government departments and is rather to be found in smaller policy domains, or programmes within these domains.

From the three approaches given by Daly (2005), it is clear that no one model of gender mainstreaming exists in organisations working on public policy. Although many policies exist on the mainstreaming of gender in peacekeeping operations, its implementation will inevitably vary from member state to member state that contributes troops to UN peace missions. For this reason, the number of women in SANDF peacekeeping operations may look very different to the number of women serving in the Indian peacekeeping forces. A recent example is that of an all-female Indian police peacekeeping unit serving in Monrovia, Liberia (Ross, 2007).

Overall, gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping operations applies principles of women's rights and humanitarian needs within the operations. These principles include sexual violence norms, the right of women to be represented by higher level women within UN peacekeeping operations and addressing certain needs of women and girls affected by war (Carey, 2001). It is clear then that the UN takes its policy on gender mainstreaming seriously.

Despite the UN's commitment to gender mainstreaming, implementation of this policy is a serious concern. According to Hicks-Stiehm (2001), the final outcome of the policy, namely institutionalisation, is difficult to achieve. In order to achieve this, it is important to strategise around education, campaigns, policy work and volunteering to address the resistance to women's inclusion in peacekeeping (Hicks-Stiehm, 2001). Areas that should be targeted in order to implement the strategies include senior leadership, creation of mandates, budgeting and recruitment. The following section will give an idea of the international policies that are currently debated in the field of gender mainstreaming and will then address the challenges.

### 2.1.1 Gender mainstreaming policies to include women in peacekeeping operations

#### *The Windhoek Declaration (2000)*

The Windhoek Declaration (2000) was issued on the tenth anniversary of the UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) where the seminar "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations" was presented. The seminar set out to look at gender equality in peace missions as this was seen not to have been appropriately addressed (UN, 2000). Women have been denied the right to full participation in peace missions and the UN planned to include the principles of gender equality at all levels of peacekeeping in order

for missions to succeed. The seminar recommended the “Namibia Plan of Action” for finding measures to implement gender equality in peace missions in consultation with member states of UN peacekeeping operations.

In terms of the Windhoek Declaration (2000), the most relevant recommendations for this study have to do with recruitment and training. With regard to recruitment, member states known to have suitable female staff would be requested to increase military and civilian police forces qualified to serve in peace missions. Their inclusion should be at all levels of the mission. Member states with *potential* troops to contribute to peace missions should be encouraged to look at policies to increase female staff in their forces. In terms of training recommendations, the UN urged that training should involve a higher number of women in the military, police and civilian forces. Furthermore, gender issues should be mainstreamed in all curricula and courses for peacekeeping operations.

The recommendations also specify that member states should be provided with gender awareness guidelines and materials so as to incorporate these into their training curricula and courses. Some reference is also made to appropriate training of trainers. One of the most important recommendations in this document is the obligatory introduction of training on gender issues which should be carried out on arrival in the specific mission area. The training should include information on the code of conduct; culture, history and social norms of the host country; Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

For the purpose of this study, these recommendations play a very important role, as they are critical for both women’s and men’s understanding of gender issues to increase their knowledge and understanding. Although this study focuses only on whether the recommendations are being implemented, more investigation is needed on the content of courses and materials given to peacekeepers. It is important to know whether the materials look at the local population only in terms of discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault, or whether they also include specific issues concerning women serving in UN peacekeeping missions.

### *UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)*

On 31 October 2000, the UN adopted one of its most celebrated Security Council Resolutions to date (UN Resolution 1325). The UN recognises the importance of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations and it was from this recognition that the policy was drawn up. The resolution has three broad themes that underlie the policy document and which are relevant to this study. These themes can be identified as 1) the incorporation of a gender mainstreaming perspective into peacekeeping operations; 2) training of peacekeepers in gender mainstreaming and 3) creating an understanding of the effects of war on women and girls (Olsson & Tryggestad, 2001). The themes will now be discussed briefly.

The *first* theme, incorporating a gender mainstreaming perspective into peacekeeping missions, has as its foundation the Windhoek Declaration (2000). The United Nations (2000) urges for the recommendations established in Windhoek to be implemented in order for women to have increased representation at all decision-making levels in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Incorporating a gender perspective also means that women need to be consulted in order to identify the needs of women and girls. This is especially true when dealing with the internally displaced and refugees (Mazurana et al., 2005).

The *second* theme looks at the training of peacekeepers in gender mainstreaming. The resolution requests that progress reports and feedback be given on peacekeeping operations in terms of gender mainstreaming (Mazurana et al., 2005). Individual governments are fully responsible for training their peacekeeping troops although the UN includes induction courses on gender in some of its mandates (United Nations, 2000). MONUC, the UN Organised Mission to the DRC, is one of the mandates which train peacekeepers on gender. As most training should take place before deployment, member states are urged to increase financial, technical and logistic support for gender-sensitive training efforts (Mazurana et al., 2005).

Gender mainstreaming and training efforts seem to be centred on the *third* theme, creating an understanding of the effects of war on women and children. Mazurana et al. (2005) state that the resolution requests training guidelines and materials – for member states – on the protection, rights and needs of local women and girls. The resolution's request to involve women in peace building focuses on the role that local women can play in peace efforts after war and the gendered dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution.

In analysing the resolution it becomes clear that the document is mainly focused on the local population of host countries. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) reiterates the importance of the impact of war on women and children. Although the resolution calls for gender mainstreaming and equal representation of women and men, it focuses mainly on the effects of war and the ways in which local women can be involved in peace-building efforts. Very little reference is made to female peacekeepers, their needs and their potential roles in peacekeeping and peace building. Although female peacekeepers are primarily the responsibility of their country's armed forces, it is important that they be recognised as actors in the field of peace and development.

### 2.1.2 Challenges to gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping operations

Despite efforts made by UN Security Resolution 1325 and other policies developed by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the integration of a gender perspective remains a challenge (Puechguirbal, 2008). This is partly due to the strong patriarchal culture of the UN. Puechguirbal (2008) raises some important issues to consider when looking at this patriarchal culture within the UN.

The *first* issue relevant to this study is that of language used in UN policies. When local women affected by war are described, they are often stereotypically depicted as victims. Women are often categorised as part of the vulnerable population together with children, the handicapped and the elderly. According to Puechguirbal (2008), sex, as a sociological variable, is used in the same manner as age and race. This view of vulnerable women in need of protection has far-reaching consequences for female peacekeepers, as it becomes difficult to imagine that they can be actors in their own protection.

The *second* issue is that peacekeepers' perceptions of security often differ from those of host populations. The example used in this case is that of Haiti. Haiti is considered to be a moderately stable country and peacekeepers have many projects to help the local Haitian population repair the social fabric of the country (Puechguirbal, 2008). Peacekeepers involved in these projects, however, have a different perception of security to that of local women. Peacekeepers tend to look at security in terms of the large-scale fighting of rebel groups while

local women may view security as simply being able to go about their daily activities without fear (Puechguirbal, 2008).

The *third* issue raised by Puichguirbal (2008) is that peacekeepers do not consult with local women about problems that may arise in their communities after conflict. Peacekeepers generally consult with male local leaders, which tends to reinforce the rule of men (Enloe, 2007; Puechguirbal, 2008). By reinforcing the rule of men, women are inevitably silenced. Peacekeepers often do not understand the functioning of local communities after war and women are often excluded from talk about political situations. Excluding women from these processes strengthens the existing subordination of women, regardless of how gender roles might have shifted during the war (Puechguirbal, 2008). It is worth noting that the UN has a number of reports that examine the impact of armed conflict on women and girls. According to Mazurana et al. (2005), these reports are good for identifying particular forms and effects of conflict, but the reports purposefully exclude the causes and functions of the violence creating this impact on women and girls.

The concerns raised by Puechguirbal have important implications for peacekeeping operations. From the arguments it is clear that peacekeepers do not always understand the functioning of post-conflict communities, local women's needs and the way roles and relationships within communities may change during the course of the peacekeeping process. These concerns can be addressed by training, such as training peacekeepers in the history and context of host countries. It is clear that more research in this area is required.

## **2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA**

The idea of peacekeeping operations can be traced back to the 1920s, when delimitation commissions were established to redraw European frontiers after the First World War (Goulding, 1993). The first official UN Peacekeeping mission took place in 1948, which saw UN peacekeepers supervise truce negotiations in Palestine. During 1960, UN peacekeepers headed out to the DRC (then called the Belgian Congo) in order to restore peace and security within a politically divided country. This operation was the first of its kind to use a large-scale force. Over 200 peacekeepers, the Prime Minister of the Congo and the UN Secretary-General of the time lost their lives (Hicks-Stiehm, 2001). Since this operation, the UN has examined many issues surrounding peacekeeping and has sought to analyse why this operation ended in

tragedy. The “traditional” model of military operation serves as the foundation of many peacekeeping missions and these operations typically involve assignments such as patrolling areas between conflicting groups and monitoring negotiation periods (Goulding, 1993). Peacekeepers involved in such operations are not necessarily armed, and they are typically referred to as “blue helmets” and “blue berets” (Goulding, 1993).

No complete definition of peacekeeping currently exists, but in common with the Brahimi Report’s (United Nations, 2000) definition of peacekeeping operations discussed earlier, Goulding (1993) describes UN peacekeeping as having been established by a legislative organ of the UN to carry out field operations with the consent of the local parties concerned. Consent, in this regard, refers to the consent that governments of conflict states give to UN peacekeepers for intervening in civil conflicts (Goulding, 1993). These field operations aim to help control and resolve conflicts in countries under UN command and control. The major principles of these operations are impartiality with regard to all the parties, and using minimum force in order to control conflict and violence (Goulding, 1993).

Peacekeeping operations can be categorised into “observer missions” and “peacekeeping forces” (O’Dwyer, 2004). Both of these categories follow a certain code of conduct and adhere to standards set by the UN Secretary-General. Observer missions form the largest part of UN peacekeeping operations and consist of no more than a few hundred unarmed military personnel (O’Dwyer, 2004). Observer mission peacekeepers are usually withdrawn from dangerous uprisings and often consist of small groups. Peacekeeping forces, on the other hand, are larger in number and are often armed as there is the possibility of becoming involved in contact shootings and ambushes (O’Dwyer, 2004). Peacekeeping forces will be the focus of this study, as it involves military personnel.

Current peacekeeping tasks differ from those undertaken in the past. Current peacekeeping forces, like military observer missions, incorporate responsibility for child protection, civil administration, disarmament, demobilisation, humanitarian assistance, humanitarian relief and many more (O’Dwyer, 2004). Peacekeeping as a whole has become multidimensional and peacekeepers are required to perform a broad range of responsibilities depending on their specific mandates (Goulding, 1993).

It is clear that peacekeeping operations are not solely restricted to military activities. Peacekeeping has a significant impact on civilians not actively involved in conflict. Ninety percent of war-affected persons are women and children and they are often used as means to fight a war, as can be seen by the high numbers of child soldiers (Thompson & Eade, 2004). Women and children in host countries are often at risk of sexual exploitation, systematic torture and injuries caused by landmines and weapons (Hynes, 2004).

In considering the detrimental impact of war on women and children, the role of the woman peacekeeper becomes a critical factor in peacekeeping. With regard to the political positions and seniority of women in peacekeeping, it is known that not many women reach the decision-making level in peace operations (United Nations, 2002).

Throughout history gender stereotypes have consistently portrayed women as peacemakers (Caprioli & Boyer, 2001). In the military environment, however, women are seen as incapable of making effective military decisions, and often find themselves excluded from the higher ranks of the military organisation (Cock, 1994; Karamè, 2001). According to Cock (1994:154) this exclusion is mainly grounded in sexism, which represents women as physically inferior and unsuited to engaging in combat.

## 2.2.1 UN Organised Mission in the DRC (MONUC) and the Office of Gender Affairs (OGA)

The UN established one of its first Offices of Gender Affairs in the DRC. This Office is currently operating within the UN Organized Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). MONUC was established during November 1999 and has deployed approximately 500 military observers in the DRC (Kadima & Kabemba, 2000). MONUC emerged as a result of a ceasefire agreement between Zambia, the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe in August 1999 (Kadima & Kabemba, 2000). Higate (2004) maintains that a current analysis of the DRC's political situation would be difficult and that at best, one can set forth the operational conditions of MONUC in order to understand more about the political context.

Higate (2004:11) maintains that the operational conditions of MONUC constitute the following: the exploitation of natural resources by armed DRC and foreign forces; the fact

that the creation of a National Unity Government is progressing at a slow pace; the ethnic and group fractures that have occurred in the conflict; the regional “fiefdoms” that exist in the country and a lack of international commitment to the DRC. MONUC has gained extensive capacity over the past few years and the Gender Affairs Office is a recent addition to the mission.

The Office of Gender Affairs in the DRC has been in operation since 2002 and its primary objective is to integrate a gender perspective into peacekeeping missions. Puechguirbal (2003:23) explains the purpose of the Office of Gender Affairs by stating that it works to “ensure that gender is mainstreamed within design, implementation, promotion and monitoring of the mission’s policies and programs”. The Office also strives to facilitate the involvement of local women in peace building to ultimately achieve sustainable peace. For this reason, women peacekeepers may contribute greatly. Although it seems that the Office of Gender Affairs in the DRC is established and successful, very little information is currently available on it.

### 2.2.2 Peacekeeping and its associated risks

Peacekeeping involves many complex and unique experiences for the peacekeepers involved. Asmundson, Stapleton and Taylor (2004:5) are of the opinion that peacekeeping has received very little attention from health practitioners and researchers alike. The types of stress that peacekeepers are exposed to differ somewhat from those of soldiers in combat. Peacekeepers are often exposed to strong provocation, seeing the casualties of war and facing massacres in which they feel helpless to intervene (Asmundson et al., 2004:6). Having to deal with the disposal of human remains, being in constant fear of assassination and dealing with social issues such as poverty and starvation often have a major impact on the psychological health of peacekeepers (Langholtz, 1998:140). Furthermore, peacekeepers are often caught in the centre of violent outbreaks and might find themselves unarmed and unable to protect themselves.

Women peacekeepers may experience harassment from local troops and may not be allowed to react to such behaviour (Asmundson et al., 2004). Instances of women peacekeepers being harassed by their own male compatriots have also been recorded (Thoresen, Mehlum & Moller, 2003). Women peacekeepers who experience harassment may suffer from intense stress and even depression as result of their powerlessness (Thoresen et al., 2003). Even

though suicide may seem a likely outcome – considering the stressful experiences peacekeepers endure – no evidence has yet been found pointing towards peacekeeping operations as a cause (Thoresen et al., 2003).

Although it may seem as though peacekeepers are profoundly affected by trauma and stress, many counter arguments have been noted. Asmundson et al. (2004:5), for example, argue that peacekeepers' experiences vary from the "benign to the extremely stressful". Peacekeepers may experience boredom as they are not actively performing skills that they have been trained for. Furthermore, peacekeepers are removed from family, friends and their familiar environments and often experience a lack of privacy (Harris & Segal, 1985).

Experiencing monotony is not always the case, and most peacekeepers experience some form of violence during the peacekeeping operation (Asmundson et al., 2004). Dealing with violent situations often proves difficult as there may be vague rules of engagement, and peacekeepers are not always able to intervene in violent acts of rape and murder which may lead to the experience of intense distress (Langholtz, 1998).

There are very clear risks in peacekeeping which may impact negatively on the psychological well-being of peacekeepers. This is especially true for countries that are politically unstable. Although peacekeepers are not always able to intervene directly in traumatic situations, they can play a role in prevention and awareness. The next section will explore just how women peacekeepers can be involved as actors in local communities affected by war.

### 2.2.3 Female peacekeepers as actors in conflict settings

Karamè (2001) explored the experiences of women peacekeepers serving in the Norwegian battalion in South Lebanon from 1978 to 1998. Up to 6% of the battalion were women serving in various positions. Female peacekeepers serving in this battalion developed close relationships with the local population. Part of this relationship developed from reconstruction efforts in the local infrastructure. This is a typical characteristic of peacekeeping operations and will be referred to as non-military activities for the purpose of this study. Women peacekeepers, in Karamè's study, often socialised with local women while they were off-duty. Karamè (2001) explains the interaction as women talking about their issues while sipping

coffee. Conversations typically revolved around problems that women faced including the hopes and fears that both the peacekeepers and the local women experienced.

As a direct consequence of the interaction between the women, the peacekeepers generated detailed knowledge of what was happening within the community (Karamè, 2001). Puechguirbal (2003) served as a UN gender affairs officer in the DRC and describes how she accumulated intelligence by building relationships with local women. Her aim was to collect information on the traumatic experiences and living conditions of women in order to work towards a successful peace operation (Puechguirbal, 2003).

Through the efforts of women peacekeepers it becomes possible to understand how war affects women and children, what coping strategies are used and what initiatives local populations construct to deal with the consequences of war. An inspiring event in which women peacekeepers interacted with war-affected women and children emerged in the DRC in August 2005 (Bakody, 2005). While Women's Day was being celebrated by many South Africans in their home country on 9 August 2005, South African female peacekeepers were planning their own celebration in the DRC. A group of women gathered in the early morning hours on a ferry-boat on Kindu's banks of the River Congo. Together with a group of Bolivian peacekeepers, the women promoted gender equality amongst the local Congolese women using song to actively protesting against gender-based violence. This celebration of women's rights followed the appalling violations that women peacekeepers had witnessed in the DRC, such as landmine injuries and different kinds of violent outbreaks affecting women and children (Bakody, 2005).

Host nations are typically female-dominated (Karamè, 2001; United Nations, 2002). Young men are often deployed as soldiers in times of war, which leaves many communities with mainly women, children and the elderly. Most women, as a result of men entering into combat, become heads of households and are exposed to life-threatening risks. In the face of rape, torture and other threats, would the local woman prefer to interact with female rather than male peacekeepers?

The answer to this question is undoubtedly in the affirmative, and a touching example is given by DeGroot (2001). This example draws from a British Army recruitment advertisement that states: "She has just been raped by soldiers. The same soldiers murdered her husband. The last

thing she wants to see is another soldier. Unless that soldier is a *woman*” (DeGroot, 2001:37, own emphasis). In keeping with the advertisement, it is worth noting the types of violence women are exposed to during times of conflict.

Women experience two main types of violence during times of war (Holt in Afshar & Eade, 2004). In discussing these, it is important to bear in mind that this violence usually involves the local population, and not the women peacekeepers themselves. The first type of violence is similar to the violence that men experience in times of war. This is often called “dignified” violence and includes human rights abuses that are globally criticised and condemned. The second type of violence includes violence done to women *because* of their gender. This type of violence serves to humiliate local women and their families and generally includes sexual violence (Afshar & Eade, 2004).

### *Sexual violence*

Sexual violence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “... any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work ...” (Jewkes, Sen & Garcia-Moreno, 2002). This definition includes acts of sexual violence committed against women and girls in conflict settings. Historically, sexual violence in times of war did not receive the same attention as torture or killings. For this reason, sexual violence was not perceived to serve a strategic purpose in conflict settings (Skjelsbaek, 2001). With the tragedies that unfolded during the wars in Bosnia and Rwanda it became clear that sexual violence served a political goal for the warring parties involved (Skjelsbaek, 2001).

Sexual violence is often used differently in different conflict settings. Globally, systematic rape is often used as a tactic of war and the most tragic can be seen when genocide takes place. One example of this could be seen during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 (Skjelsbaek, 2001). However, it is often not only rebels or warring parties that perpetrate sexual violence against women and girls. Male peacekeepers have often been accused of raping or murdering women in the countries they are mandated to protect.

Sexual violence perpetrated by peacekeepers should have serious consequences for the individual peacekeeper and his country. The UN recently implemented a zero-tolerance policy for peacekeeper misconduct but disciplinary measures are rarely taken against perpetrators (Kent, 2005). Misconduct seems to continue with impunity. According to Kent (2005), failing to hold peacekeepers who perpetrate sexual violence responsible may encourage even greater discrimination and violence against vulnerable women and children. Sexual misconduct of this nature has been attributed to many complex socioeconomic factors in the peacekeeping context (Patel & Tripodi, 2007).

Such factors could include gender inequality and commercial/survival sex which may lead to the vulnerability of local women in host countries (Patel & Tripodi, 2007). With regards to the role of women in peacekeeping missions, female peacekeepers may play a significant role in monitoring and preventing unlawful acts committed against the local population (Olsson & Tryggstad, 2001). Female peacekeepers can also potentially facilitate disclosure from local women in instances of unlawful acts committed against them.

## **2.3 CONCLUSION**

The concept of human security has become an important part of UN Peacekeeping Operations and increasingly focusing its attention on gender balance and gender mainstreaming issues. Overall, gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping operations applies principles of women's rights and humanitarian needs within the operations. These principles include sexual violence norms, the right of women to be represented by higher level women within UN peacekeeping operations and addressing certain needs of women and girls affected by war (Carey, 2001).

Peacekeeping operations are not solely restricted to military activities and it is known that peacekeeping has a significant impact on civilians not actively involved in conflict. A large percentage of war-affected persons are women and children and they are often used as means to fight wars (Thompson & Eade, 2004). It is then, in the UN's best interest to advocate for gender equality within peacekeeping missions in order to expand the roles of female peacekeepers to become more actively involved in post-conflict communities.

To date, very little information and research are available on the experiences and integration of women in peacekeeping forces. Women serving in peacekeeping missions are a refreshingly progressive move by the UN and military forces. It is hoped that women peacekeepers serve the cause of peace and security – of other women and children – and are not appointed simply for the sake of filling quotas of gender equality in the military.

The review of the literature has shown that the military, and subsequently peacekeeping missions, are still male dominated. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, male-dominated institutions may reinforce gender stereotypes such as women being weak and in need of protection. Although it is uncertain whether women might bring “something different to the peacekeeping table”, it ought to have some implications for the peacekeeping process.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 OVERVIEW**

The aims of this research study are to provide an analysis of the experiences of South African women serving in peacekeeping forces in the DRC, to explore whether gender mainstreaming and gender equality are being actively practised in peacekeeping operations and to provide some insight into the experiences of women peacekeepers and the relationships they build on the ground with local populations. In order to meet these aims a questionnaire was developed for completion by male and female peacekeepers. All respondents who volunteered for the study served in the DRC in the period between 2004 and 2007. This chapter will set out to discuss the methodology used to gather and analyse the data.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Gaining access and, hence, being able to administer the questionnaires to respondents was perhaps the most challenging aspect of this study. Various ranks within the SANDF had to be approached for permission to carry out the study. Over and above issues of permission, only a limited number of female peacekeepers were available for the study. For this reason, a cross-sectional survey design was chosen. This type of design is a useful tool for investigating the prevalence of a problem, attitude or phenomenon and entails selecting a cross-section of the target population (Neumann, 2002). This method was thought to be appropriate as the study consists of a once-off self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaires should therefore provide a “picture” of women’s and men’s perceptions of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the mission on which they served. The aim of the study was to provide some basic insights into life as a peacekeeper by analysing the quantitative data and carrying out a qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions asked in the questionnaire.

As the SANDF had informed me that only a limited number of women were available for the survey, it was decided to include men as well in the survey in order to increase the pool of respondents and ensure more substantive and comparative data. It was hoped that the inclusion of men in the research would provide some insight into perceptions of women’s

participation in peacekeeping operations. Although in-depth interviews would have been preferable as a data collection technique, the SANDF recommended the use of a structured questionnaire. Taking all of this into account, a census sample was decided upon. From the census, a total of 63 peacekeepers (i.e. male and female peacekeepers who served in the DRC), 47 men and 16 women, volunteered to participate in the research. I gave the peacekeepers a detailed background on the study and then requested them to participate. SANDF social workers and the head of the SANDF Infantry Battalion helped me to bring the peacekeepers to a central location in order to disseminate information and request their participation in the study.

### **3.3 OBTAINING PERMISSION AND FINALISING THE METHODOLOGY**

The process of obtaining permission took place over a period of six months. Initial entry into the SANDF was through a male peacekeeper who had served as a captain in the DRC and who gave me the contact numbers of staff working in the Human Resources division of the SANDF. From this point, I was referred to the SANDF Defence Intelligence Department (DI), a department that – among other things – manages research approval, research classification and research processes taking place in the SANDF. My first request to Defence Intelligence for permission to conduct this study was denied. At the time, Defence Intelligence gave me various reasons, two of which will be mentioned here as they are of relevance to the study.

Firstly, the SANDF has a longstanding reputation as a “villain” in the media. Many reports over the past few years have told stories of incompetence, brutality in peacekeeping and many other outrages committed by SANDF staff members both locally and abroad. Defence Intelligence was mainly concerned that this study might “sell the stories” told by peacekeepers to the media. Although I assured Defence Intelligence that this study would be carried out for purely academic purposes, I was not initially successful in gaining entry to the SANDF.

The second reason has to do with situations that might occur within units deployed in peacekeeping missions. Defence Intelligence’s main concern had to do with sexual harassment in the peacekeeping units. As this has been reported in the past, Defence Intelligence preferred this type of information to stay outside the public domain. Once again, it was explained that the nature of this study was strictly academic and that the questions

would not be directed at issues pertaining to sexual misconduct in peacekeeping units. This explanation was not accepted and as result of this telephonic rejection of the study, no formal proposal was sent to Defence Intelligence.

In considering these reasons given by Defence Intelligence, I decided to contact one of South Africa's foremost female military sociologists, Prof Lindy Heinecken. Prof Heinecken writes extensively on issues of feminism, women and the military. It was thought that she would have valuable advice for gaining entry into such a hermetically sealed environment. Her response made it clear that in working with women in the defence force, time should not be spent on endless arguments with the lower ranks. I was given the contact details of the SANDF Chief Directorate for Transformation Services, and this Directorate, together with the Heads of Departments of Political Science, Prof Maxi Schoeman, and Sociology, Prof Janis Grobbelaar, started a lobbying process with Defence Intelligence to have the study approved.

After a series of meetings between these parties, Defence Intelligence accepted the study. This acceptance was not unconditional, however. Whilst I had been initially keen to pursue a substantive qualitative study, it was clear that the Defence Intelligence Department would not approve a study that required the in-depth probing of peacekeepers. Instead, Defence Intelligence proposed a structured, quantitative survey of face-to-face interviews. In this way, Defence Intelligence would have the reassurance that questions would not result in damaging information surfacing that would prejudice the SANDF. Although this method was not initially deemed to be ideal, I agreed to it after consultation with my supervisors. I do, however, believe that a thorough objective analysis would still be valuable.

It is also worthwhile mentioning that after receiving approval from Defence Intelligence, we developed a positive and trusting relationship, as we spent some time together developing the questionnaires and talking through certain issues that concerned the SANDF.

After a process of consultation and negotiation on a suitable method of enquiry, a cross-sectional survey design was decided on to provide a gendered analysis of women serving in the peacekeeping forces in the DRC. It has to be mentioned that the study is exploratory in nature and little research has been done in this field in South Africa.

As explained in the first chapter, two broad questions are addressed in the study. Within each broad question, specific subquestions are asked for the purpose of answering the broader questions.

*Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in peace operations:*

- What differences are evident between the roles and responsibilities of deployed male and female peacekeepers?
- What are the perceptions of peacekeepers with regard to women's inclusion in peace missions?
- Do the UN and the SANDF make efforts to mainstream gender, raise gender awareness and support peacekeepers on women's issues?

*Women peacekeepers' public involvement:*

- Do women peacekeepers build relationships with local women on the ground?
- Do peacekeepers think that local women are more trusting of female peacekeepers than of male peacekeepers? Related to this question, what role can women peacekeepers play in conflict-affected communities?

After careful consideration, it was apparent that the research questions for this study could be addressed effectively using either a qualitative or quantitative design. For this reason, my confidence in the research design grew and I started to move forward with the study. Neumann (2002:228) describes survey research in positive terms as an effective way to gain quantitative information about people's beliefs and behaviours. It is particularly appropriate in exploratory research, as it is possible to ask a range of questions in a single survey. The survey data lends itself to general claims that can be further investigated in qualitative projects or replicated in future quantitative research efforts into peacekeeping in other countries.

### **3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION AND DATA COLLECTION**

Two questionnaires were constructed, one for male peacekeepers and one for female peacekeepers. Questions asked were similar in nature although males' questionnaire placed more emphasis on men's attitudes towards women serving on peacekeeping missions.

Both the male and female questionnaires were divided into five sections. The first section focused on demographic variables such as age, race, rank and deployment details. The second section looked at the process of becoming a peacekeeper. Variables include reasons for becoming a peacekeeper, roles and responsibilities as a peacekeeper, terms served on the mission and initial feelings on arrival in the DRC. Section three, entitled "Community involvement", specifically looked at the peacekeepers' interactions with the local population in the DRC. Variables included the way peacekeepers were received by the local population, the nature of their interactions and the level of trust that peacekeepers experienced from the local population.

Section four investigated specific questions on gender and the UN. The aim of this section was to find out whether peacekeepers are currently being provided with any training on gender before being deployed to African countries. This is an important question in terms of the research project, as the UN has specified training on gender in its Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). More specifically, the variables in section four explored male and female peacekeepers' perceptions of women in peacekeeping operations, that is, with regard to their capabilities and feelings of belonging within the peacekeeping mission. The final section dealt with working under pressure. The variables in this section investigated the feelings of fear and uncertainty peacekeepers might have experienced and, if so, with whom they had discussed their feelings. These variables attempt to gain a sense of the daily pressures peacekeepers deal with.

### **3.5 STUDY SITE**

The study was set at an SANDF military base close to the rural town of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, the region formerly known as the Transkei. The military base is located approximately 10 kilometres outside town and set against a backdrop of lush hills, farmland and rural settlements. The military base was easily accessible and an SANDF social worker

was available for support and for monitoring the research process. The researcher spent three days at the research site although it only took a day to fill out and hand back the questionnaires. The respondents can be described as being very respectful and accommodating.

### **3.6 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Structured questionnaires were developed for this study. Before administering the questionnaires to the respondents, they were sent to Defence Intelligence for ratification. No changes were suggested and the next step was the sampling process. It was decided that a survey would be taken on site at the base and here I was assisted by the Head of the SANDF's Infantry Battalion and a social worker based in Mthatha. The Mthatha military base was purposely selected as it was the only base that had women available who had recently returned from the DRC. Another reason for this choice was convenience, as this specific population is hard to reach because they are often deployed either nationally or internationally. As previously stated, it was decided that men should be included in the sample in order to gain insight into their perceptions of women serving as peacekeepers. Participation in the study was voluntary and respondents had the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

Some relevant background information on the study, as well as brief instructions for completing the questionnaire, were attached to the questionnaires and discussed verbally before administering it. All units that had been deployed in the DRC were invited to participate in the research, although a number of the peacekeepers were away on training when the research was carried out. The respondents were encouraged to complete the questionnaire within a period of 25 - 45 minutes and hand it back to the researcher. The male and female respondents were given two similar but separate questionnaires consisting of four open questions and 38 closed questions. The respondents were not asked for any information that could identify them and it was agreed that by completing the questionnaire the respondents had given consent to their participation in the study.

### 3.6.1 Intended sample

The sample included male and female peacekeepers who had recently returned from the DRC mission. The study site was based at Mthatha and respondents were invited to complete the questionnaires in a designated room. I was present in the room to answer any queries that the respondents may have had. The SANDF social worker initially estimated, on the basis of her knowledge of the number of peacekeepers on base, that approximately 100 respondents would be available to complete the questionnaires.

### 3.6.2 Actual sample

On arrival at the Mthatha military base, the researcher was informed that some soldiers had gone to another province for training. This reduced the sample number from the initial expectations of 100 respondents to 63. These respondents (consisting of 16 women and 47 men) completed the questionnaires voluntarily. Taking the percentage of women serving in the military into consideration, this seems to be representative of the total number of women serving in the SANDF (21% of the total military population [Department of Defence, 2006:13]).

## 3.7 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was conducted in order to test the questionnaires. The primary aim of the pilot study was to explore various aspects of the questionnaire, including the validity of the research design; language issues such as grammar; the willingness of respondents to complete questionnaires and their responses to the questions asked. It was also important for me to familiarise myself with the support structures within the SANDF, such as the social workers, and the pilot study provided me with just such an opportunity.

At the SANDF Women's Day Conference in Pretoria in 2007, I had been introduced by the SANDF Directorate for Transformation Services to an SANDF social worker based in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape Province. This social worker had informed me that only specific military units in South Africa deploy, and that the pilot could be carried out at the Grahamstown military base Sai Bin 6, Eastern Cape. On this military base there was a group

of men available who had recently returned from deployment and respondents were asked to participate on a voluntary basis.

After the completion of the pilot, data was entered into the database and the contact person in SANDF Defence Intelligence was consulted on the findings of the questionnaires. A limitation to the pilot was that no women were available to complete the questionnaires. The pilot included soldiers who had been deployed in various African countries, mostly the Sudan. The researcher learned from a discussion with military officials that women are not allowed to serve as peacekeepers in the Sudan. The reasons given for this included the cultural and religious prohibitions placed on women in this traditionally male-dominated field of leadership and war.

This, however, seems to apply only to women serving in the SANDF Infantry Battalion, as there are currently a considerable number of women serving in the Military Police in the Sudan (Sarah Martin, *Medicines Sans Frontiers*, personal communication).

### **3.8 DOMAINS OF INFORMATION**

#### **3.8.1 Defence Intelligence**

Defence Intelligence served as a valuable domain for insight into the views of older men in the force in particular. Although data was not collected formally, the ideas expressed in this domain were kept in mind throughout the study. Views of women's inability to react appropriately in a combat situation and stereotypical views of women not being "mentally strong" enough to cope with violent situations were recurrent. If women are not allowed into combat areas, it becomes a concern that this view might be shared by many other more senior males in authority positions.

#### **3.8.2 Military social workers**

The researcher was assisted in her research by two social workers who are responsible for the debriefing and counselling of peacekeepers on their return from deployment. The social workers also provided some insight into the life of peacekeepers and the difficulties some might experience on their return. Although it does not fall within the scope of this study, it

should be mentioned that over and above the difficulties that peacekeepers may experience during deployment, many experience family problems on their return. The researcher was given three main reasons for these problems.

The first relates to family members spending large sums of money from the peacekeeper's bank account while they are away, as they get paid monthly. Peacekeepers earn high salaries for deploying to African countries and, within the UN, peacekeeping is suitably described as one of the most "prized employment opportunities" (Mazurana et al., 2005:55). On their return, peacekeepers often find that substantial amounts of money have been used by spouses without their knowledge. In cases where peacekeepers deploy in order to strengthen finances at home this creates problems within the family on their return. A second reason for family tensions is the extramarital affairs that develop between male and female peacekeepers while on deployment. As they are away for long periods of time, relationships develop and divorce is usually the consequence on their return. The third reason given was the trauma that some peacekeepers experience during deployment. As most are very young, some peacekeepers do not always possess the psychological resources to deal with such trauma as ambushes and other traumatic experiences. They often experience post-traumatic stress, which is accompanied by a series of consequences and problems that the peacekeeper and his or her family have to deal with.

The insights given by the social workers proved valuable in terms of the researcher's approach to the peacekeepers participating in the study. They gave some background on the diversity of experiences that occur during deployment and also alerted her to show sensitivity for the range of different experiences when the researcher explained the study and the respondents completed the questionnaires.

### 3.8.3 SANDF National Women's Day Conference 2007

From 14 to 17 August 2007, the SANDF held its 3rd National Conference on Women in Defence in Pretoria entitled "Empowering Women for Gender Equity". The purpose of the conference was to facilitate dialogue and build accord on the acceleration of women in peacekeeping. It aimed to set realistic targets for women not only as peacekeepers, but also as women in a military environment (Van Vuuren, 2007). The conference served as a valuable source of information as SANDF women who have served as peacekeepers in various African

countries could relate experiences and build on these. The following section will look at some of the contributions made by women peacekeepers.

During breakaway sessions, women were asked about external factors that support or assist in their ability to deploy. Three factors were given by the women: a requirement to deploy, a political imperative to deploy and international support for women to participate in peacekeeping missions. Women peacekeepers were of the opinion that Department of Defence employees, family members, government and donors to peacekeeping were the main stakeholders involved in their ability and motivation to deploy in peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, the women required their various divisions (e.g. infantry, air force etc) to provide support for their deployment in peacekeeping missions.

In the short term, women peacekeepers wanted the following changes to be made with regard to the acceleration of their inclusion into peacekeeping missions:

- revision of peacekeeping policies in the SANDF
- revision of personnel policies in the SANDF to focus on gender equality in the ranks
- revision of medical policies
- giving women contacts and an opportunity to network in the field of peacekeeping
- revision of training programmes so as to be more gender inclusive
- revision of policy on the recruitment and selection of peacekeepers
- establishment of a pool of deployable officers and warrant officers
- establishment of an acceptable quota of women to deploy in peacekeeping missions
- encouraging senior role models (women) to take active roles that other women can aspire to
- encouraging women to support and appreciate one another
- encouraging patriotism

During the conference, women were asked to lay out their action plans and the following points are relevant to this study:

- Women felt that education should follow from the selection of peacekeepers. It is important that peacekeepers are informed about current trends in peacekeeping and what could happen during missions. This refers to the technology used in the field and the possible dangers for women serving on missions.

- Support systems should be established, which should include civilians.
- A database should be created of deployed and deployable women.

Women also believed it was important for ongoing communication to take place between the peacekeeper and the SANDF. This means that the lessons learnt and other relevant information should be shared in workshops and in other ways, such as discussion groups and seminars. There should also be awareness programmes (e.g. who is deployed where) and support with their career planning.

Furthermore, it was argued that women should be assigned specific posts in peacekeeping musterings and that anti-retention strategies should not be allowed. Anti-retention strategies refer to women being expressly discouraged from deployment by their senior ranks. This discouragement could be addressed by placing women in more senior positions in peace missions.

Women were also in favour of creating a learning organisation in which women could be encouraged to study and encourage others to study. This is an important point, as women felt that more female representation was needed on top management and in the planning structures of the SANDF. Two very relevant points were also made with regard to women's action plans, that is, a demand for constant feedback from equity committees and the dissemination of this information to all levels of the SANDF.

### **3.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

EpiInfo Version 3.5 was used to analyse the data in this study. This is a microcomputer program for word processing, data management and data analysis. It is used mainly for public health purposes; however, because of my familiarity with the programme I thought it appropriate to use it for this study. Data was captured and double entered into the EpiInfo database by a data capturer and by me to ensure reliability. Data cleaning was done before analysis started. This was done by checking the consistency of the responses against items linked to these responses. Errors identified were corrected by returning to the original data sheets. Where inconsistencies were not compatible with other verifiable data, and could not be resolved, the response was captured as "not indicated".

Although the study is quantitative in nature, the open-ended questions in the questionnaire provided an opportunity for qualitative analysis. All open-ended questions were carefully interrogated to identify themes. Themes were coded into broad coding categories and subcoded into narrow coding categories. The content of the codes and the subcodes were then drawn together for detailed description and analysis.

### **3.10 RESPONSE RATE**

The study was not specifically designed to enable findings to be generalised to the wider population of peacekeepers in South Africa. The primary reason for this is the varying political situations in other African countries. The study is thus context-specific, because the circumstances experienced in the DRC might differ significantly from other war-torn countries such as the Sudan and Liberia, and areas such as Northern Uganda. In these countries women might be perceived differently and their roles might differ significantly from the peacekeeping roles played in the DRC. The political tensions in these countries are also different and peacekeepers might be exposed to more or less danger depending on the country in which they are deployed.

### **3.11 RESEARCH ETHICS**

Peacekeeping missions are at times controversial and the possibility of peacekeepers experiencing or witnessing adverse events such as sexual harassment or violence during deployment is a real concern. In building a relationship with Defence Intelligence the researcher realised the importance of complete participant anonymity, as the peacekeepers could reveal sensitive information even if not asked to do so. Were this to happen and such information were to be published, Defence Intelligence might take legal action to obtain the identity of the participant who revealed the information. It was decided that the best method for avoiding such complications would be to have the questionnaires completed anonymously. In this way confidentiality was completely assured.

Every questionnaire was assigned a questionnaire number and no informed consent forms were signed in order to keep the study anonymous. Instead of signing consent forms the covering letter for the questionnaire indicated that consent would be given automatically by filling out the questionnaire. This was also mentioned to the research participants by the

researcher prior to the pilot study in Grahamstown and the research study at the Mthatha military base. Respondents were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Ethics approval was given for the study by the University of Pretoria and the data will be stored for 10 years according to University of Pretoria regulations.

### **3.12 CONCLUSION**

In summary, a questionnaire was developed for completion by male and female peacekeepers respectively. All respondents who volunteered for the study served in the DRC in the period between 2004 and 2007. Some respondents served one term only which is an equivalent to six months, while others have served multiple terms on the mission. The study was set at an SANDF military base close to the rural town of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. Peacekeepers who have recently returned from their mission to the DRC were included in the study. The military base was easily accessible and an SANDF social worker was available for support and for monitoring the research process. Although information was primarily obtained from the questionnaires, other sources of information were also drawn upon to enrich the study. These included Defence Intelligence, SANDF National Women's Day Conference 2007 and two SANDF social workers. The quantitative data for this study was captured in Epi-Info 3.5 and all open-ended questions were carefully interrogated to identify themes. Every questionnaire was assigned a questionnaire number and no informed consent forms were signed in order to keep the study anonymous. This study was successful in its planned methodology and confidentiality was ensured. The questionnaire was generally well understood by the participants and replication of this study at a larger scale would be encouraged.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **South African Women in Peacekeeping: Presentation of Results**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the study. A discussion of the sample will be given followed by an explanation of the central “themes” that emerged from the questionnaires. The central themes constructed are the demographic findings, gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations, the peacekeepers’ involvement with local populations and working under pressure. Each theme contains subthemes which will be discussed in detail.

#### **4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE**

Two SANDF social workers were drawn into the study to provide the researcher with information on the availability of soldiers at the 14 SAI (South African Infantry) army base in Mthatha. These soldiers had all been deployed as UN peacekeepers to the DRC. The respondents, approximately 70 in all, were asked to complete the questionnaires on 16 October 2007. Regrettably, six respondents could not participate in the study, given that they never deployed as peacekeepers, and one male respondent declined to complete the questionnaire for unknown reasons. Sixty-three respondents agreed to complete the questionnaires.

### 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

**Table 4.1: Distribution of race of respondents by age groups**

| Race:        | 20–29 years<br>n = 38 | 30–39 years<br>n = 17 | 40+ years<br>n = 2 | Age unknown<br>n = 6 |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| African      | 74%                   | 82%                   | 100%               | 100%                 |
| Coloured     | 16%                   | 6%                    | 0%                 | 0%                   |
| White        | 2%                    | 12%                   | 0%                 | 0%                   |
| Race unknown | 8%                    | 0%                    | 0%                 | 0%                   |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)<sup>1</sup>

Table 4.1 shows the total sample of respondents by age group. There were differences between racial groups in the proportion of respondents in each group, with proportionally more African respondents in all age groups. Notably, most respondents were young, that is, between 20 and 29 years old (n = 38), with fewer in the 30–39 age group (n = 17) and only two respondents in the 40+ age group. Looking at the total sample in terms of race, 79% of all respondents were African, 11% of the respondents were coloured and 5% of the respondents were white. A small group of respondents (5%) did not indicate their race.

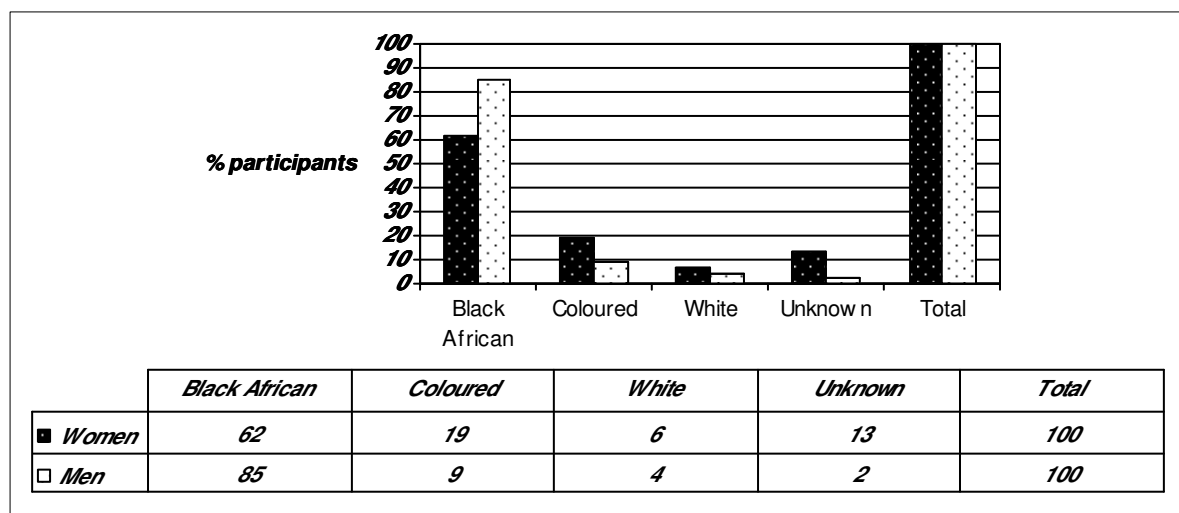


**Figure 4.1: Comparison of the gender distribution in the sample population by race**

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Figure 4.1 shows a comparison of gender stratified by race. A total number of 10 women were African, three were coloured and one was white. Of the 16 women, two did not indicate their

<sup>1</sup> Note that the dataset was labelled by the researcher as the South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008.

race. In comparison to the women, a total number of 40 men were African, four were coloured and two were white. Only one of the 47 male respondents did not indicate his race.

In analysing the data in table 4.2 below, it is clear that a significant number of male and female respondents serve as privates (riflemen) compared to other ranks displayed in the table. Nineteen percent (19%) of the women in the sample are ranked as captains, which was the second highest rank included in the study. None of the women were employed in the decision-making rank of major.

Three of the women serving as captains were professionally qualified. Two of the three women were nurses and one of the women was a social worker. One female respondent indicated that she was a lieutenant (rank preceding captain) and was also a qualified nurse. None of the women in the lower ranks indicated that they held professional qualifications. The professionally qualified women held permanent positions in the SANDF and deployed for personal reasons which will be discussed in section 4.4 of the results.

**Table 4.2: Rank of respondents**

| Rank       | Male      | Female    | Total     |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Private    | 72% (34)  | 56% (9)   | 68% (43)  |
| Corporal   | 11% (5)   | 0% (0)    | 8% (5)    |
| Sergeant   | 2% (1)    | 0% (0)    | 2% (1)    |
| Lieutenant | 0% (0)    | 6% (1)    | 2% (1)    |
| Captain    | 0% (0)    | 19% (3)   | 4% (3)    |
| Major      | 2% (1)    | 0% (0)    | 2% (1)    |
| Unknown    | 13% (6)   | 19% (3)   | 14% (9)   |
| Total      | 100% (47) | 100% (16) | 100% (63) |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

There were no men ranked as captain in the sample, although the highest rank, that of major, was filled by a white male – a qualified psychologist who had deployed with 14 SAI to do debriefing and consulting with peacekeepers and other commanding officers in the DRC. During the pilot study in Grahamstown, a larger proportion of men in more senior ranks participated in the study. As the sample was carried out in the form of a census, it is unclear whether higher ranking women simply excluded themselves from the study. It was noted,

however, that when the military units arrived to participate in the study, they were all led by high ranking male officers.

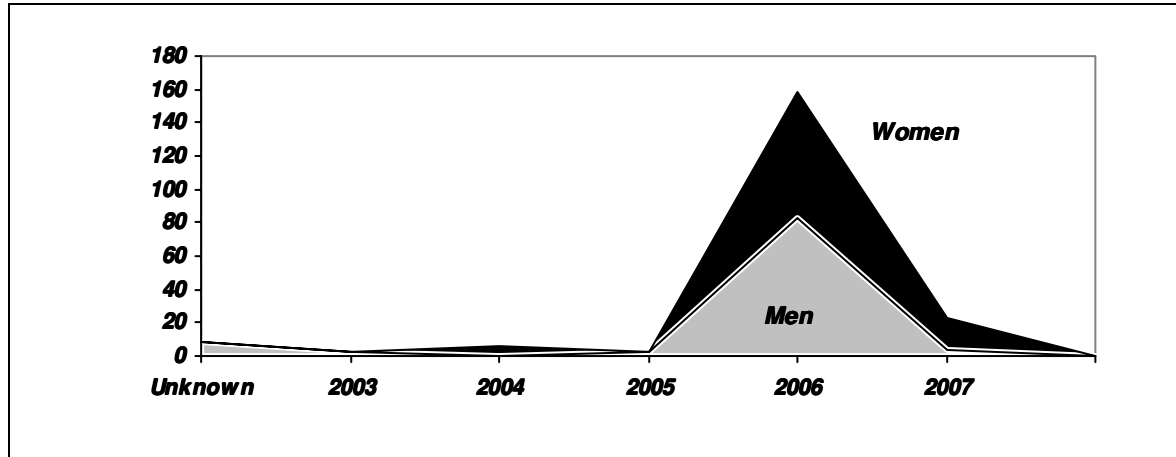


**Figure 4.2: Year of deployment**  
 (Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Figure 4.2 displays the year of deployment of respondents in the study. The peak in the figure shows that deployment to the DRC occurred mainly during 2006 for both women and men. Most respondents returned home to South Africa during 2007. A number of respondents who had been deployed in 2003 and 2004 indicated that they had served three terms (i.e. six months) in the DRC. This group fell into the older age groups, and seven respondents were aged between 33 and 46 years. Of the seven respondents, only one was female. None of the respondents in the younger age groups had served multiple terms on the mission. Respondents who had served two terms had a mean age of 28, while respondents who had served one term had a mean age of 25.

#### 4.4 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The following section will focus on the first research question of the study, namely that concerning gender equality and gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping operations. This section will explore male and female roles and responsibilities on peacekeeping missions. More specifically, it will investigate respondents' perceptions of gender equality and mainstreaming. To explore this question the results will address a variety of variables.

Firstly, reasons for respondents' deployment will be discussed. Secondly, roles and responsibilities will be discussed in order to draw together perceptions of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Thirdly, awareness of gender mainstreaming initiatives within the UN will be analysed in order to find out whether any support, information or training were offered to respondents with regard to gender-related issues.

#### 4.4.1 Reasons for deployment

**Table 4.3: Reasons for deployment and participation in non-military activities**

| Participation in non-military activities: |          |          |           |
|-------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
|                                           | Yes      | No       | Total     |
| <b>Reason for deployment:</b>             |          |          |           |
| Humanitarian                              | 21% (13) | 6% (4)   | 27% (17)  |
| Financial/economic                        | 8% (5)   | 8% (5)   | 16% (10)  |
| Career aspirations                        | 6% (4)   | 13% (8)  | 19% (12)  |
| SANDF instruction                         | 19% (12) | 13% (8)  | 32% (20)  |
| Unknown                                   | 6% (4)   | 0% (0)   | 6% (4)    |
| Total                                     | 60% (38) | 40% (25) | 100% (63) |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Table 4.3 offers some insight into why women and men choose to serve on peacekeeping missions. In order to determine whether peacekeepers are interested in the well-being of local populations, the question relating to "reasons for deployment" was cross-tabulated with the question on "participating in non-military activities". Table 4.3 shows that respondents who engaged with local populations through non-military activities – such as handing out books for schools or teaching local populations certain skills – were mainly deployed for humanitarian reasons (13 respondents) and on SANDF instruction (12 respondents). Most respondents who indicated that they had deployed with the intention of advancing their careers or improving their financial circumstances were less involved in non-military activities.

Keeping table 4.3 in mind, it is also important to look at the male and female respondents' respective reasons for deploying. Only three of the 16 female respondents deployed for humanitarian reasons. In comparison to the female respondents, a much larger number of

male soldiers, 14 of the 47 respondents, deployed for humanitarian reasons. Overall, the women respondents seemed more interested in job security and survival compared with their male counterparts. Of the 16 women, five (31%) indicated that the fundamental reason for deployment was financial/economic, and five of the 47 men (11%) indicated that they deployed to the DRC for the same reasons. Only 11 men believed that deploying on a UN mission would help them advance their careers.

Ultimately, most of the respondents noted that their reason for deployment was mainly on instruction by the SANDF. Of the 16 women, six indicated SANDF instructions as their reason for deployment. In the male sample, 14 indicated instructions as their reason for deployment. It is worth noting that of the three women in senior positions (captains), two indicated that they had deployed for humanitarian reasons and one indicated that she had deployed in order to advance her career.

The unanticipated difference between male and female respondents on the question of human solidarity raises important questions on the traditional notions of and roles of women (caring and nurturing) and men (aggressive and warrior-like) in society. This is because many women respondents in the study seemed more interested in financial security than alleviating human suffering. More specifically, of the 13 female respondents under the age of 26, five indicated that they had deployed for financial reasons. None in this group indicated that they had deployed for career aspirations, and six indicated that they had deployed when instructed to by the SANDF. Interestingly, one woman indicated that she deployed simply for the experience of the mission. Comparing this result to the three women above 26 years of age, the data showed that two of these women had deployed for humanitarian reasons and one for career aspirations.

#### 4.4.2 Roles and responsibilities: a qualitative analysis

In order to establish the capacity in which South African men and women soldiers serve respectively in peace missions, the questionnaire asked participants to outline their roles and responsibilities in a typical mission. The question was open-ended in nature and was later analysed qualitatively.

With regards to gender and roles and responsibilities, it is worth pointing out that two themes emerged from the questionnaires completed by the female respondents. This issue will be discussed in more detail below.

### *Guard duties and patrol*

Most of the female respondents who served as privates (riflemen) on missions described that, in most cases, they were ordered to be on guard duty and driver patrol, as well as to escort ballot papers (the DRC had held presidential elections in 2006).

Some women mentioned that they drove caspirs (personnel carriers), but that this activity was only allowed *inside* the military base – unlike their male counterparts. Indeed, one of the male peacekeepers commented in the questionnaire that women were not able to drive caspirs because the DRC had “bad roads”. In response to this kind of thinking, one of the women respondents stated that “[South African women soldiers] were not allowed to go outside to make peace”.

Some female peacekeepers listed their primary role as platoon clerks – a job comparable to a personal assistant in the civilian world. Platoon clerks in the DRC, for instance, had to ensure that members of the platoon signed the Malaria Tablet Register, and also registered injuries and those on sick leave. One woman summarised her role in the peacekeeping environment succinctly as “... in short, I’ll say I was helping the platoon commander with administration”.

Some women served as company signallers on the peace mission. This primarily means that they were responsible for communication at the military base and ensuring that all radio equipment operated effectively at all times

### *Primary health care and education*

Primary health care nurses on full duty accounted for three of the 16 women respondents. Military nurses and social workers, like their private (riflemen) counterparts, were stationed within the base. One respondent explained the basic roles and responsibilities of a military social worker: (a) offering any kind of “emotional support” to peacekeepers; (b) assisting

soldiers with family problems; (c) contacting, if necessary, the families of peacekeepers back home in South Africa; and (d) serving as special advisers to commanding officers.

Meanwhile, the nurses in the study listed some of their duties as: (a) inspecting the feet of soldiers – usually “on Saturday mornings” – for athlete’s foot and other similar infections; (b) issuing prescribed and non-prescribed medicines; and (c) managing sick reports. Nurses were in most cases also on call after hours and were involved in managing health-related administrative work and statistical data.

Both nurses and social workers indicated that they were involved in health education programmes for peacekeepers. These include programmes on HIV/AIDS education, sexual harassment awareness and management.

### *Differences in roles and responsibilities*

One of the assumptions of this study (and of gender mainstreaming in general) is that there should be no major differences in the roles and responsibilities of male and female peacekeepers. From the qualitative themes mentioned previously it is clear that there are certain differences which impact negatively on how some female peacekeepers experienced the mission. From the men’s responses, there are also indications of differences in roles and duties that male and female peacekeepers perform. Table 4.4 displays the perceptions of difference in the roles and responsibilities of male and female peacekeepers.

**Table 4.4: Difference in roles and responsibilities of male and female peacekeepers**

| Gender (%)                   |           |           |              |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|                              | Male      | Female    | Total (n=63) |
| <b>Differences in roles:</b> |           |           |              |
| Yes                          | 34% (16)  | 25% (4)   | 32% (20)     |
| No                           | 62% (29)  | 75% (12)  | 65% (41)     |
| Unknown                      | 4% (2)    | 0% (0)    | 3% (2)       |
| Total                        | 100% (47) | 100% (16) | 100% (63)    |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

From the table above, 25% of female peacekeepers were of the opinion that their roles and responsibilities differed from those of male peacekeepers on the mission. When asked to explain why this might be, one female respondent stated, “I was excluded from gaining the experience of driving on difficult and long roads as they said I am female. That held me back to gaining a lot of experience and making me believe more in me and my abilities” and “... ladies were not allowed to go outside to make peace. We were always in the base and do base duties e.g. maintenance and guard duty”. This was further supported by yet another female peacekeeper who explained that “the ladies in my company did not go out to patrol, e.g. when the guys went to do duties at the MONUC Headquarters”.

In general, the male respondents seemed to have different views on this issue. While 34% of men believed that women soldiers were treated differently in the DRC, 62% of them suggested that women were treated equally and fairly. Even so, one of the men made the following important statements: “there were definitely differences because most of the ladies were not going out for operations” and “female peacekeepers were not available/supplied for patrols and escort duties”. He also stated that “females were not doing guard duties at night”. This thinking was corroborated elsewhere, with one male respondent reporting that “female peacekeepers were ordered to stay in the base”.

Some men also confided that most foot patrols conducted outside the base were carried out without women peacekeepers and that women were often relegated to staying in headquarters or doing guard duties inside the base. It was also mentioned by a few male peacekeepers that, even if women were allowed to venture outside the base, they almost never had access to heavy weaponry, such as the light machine gun (LMG), during routine deployments.

An interesting response given by one man on the mission was “... in the Red Area<sup>2</sup> females were afraid to go there. Our roles were supposed to be the same but once we arrived there we found that it was different”. This presents a different angle on the question of differences, as this particular respondent hints at the fact that female peacekeepers might have preferred to stay safely inside the base. It has to be kept in mind, however, that women might also have been confined or ordered to stay inside the base.

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<sup>2</sup> “Red Areas” is the term used by peacekeepers to refer to danger or combat zones. Rebel fighting may occur in these areas and the likelihood of ambushes is also high.

To better understand this situation, the researcher had a short conversation with a contact in the SANDF's Defence Intelligence (DI) division. In this conversation, it was emphasised that some individuals in DI were not very confident that women would be able to cope in extremely challenging situations. This discussion came to mind when the following description was given by one of the men: "there were times where we used to go to the rebels to fight. No food or water to drink. We stayed for a week without food." These stories inevitably affected the confidence of most women who then chose to play a less visible role.

Here, the issue of "special needs" should be mentioned. During the SANDF Women's Day Conference, female peacekeepers spoke about their restrictions during deployment and the factors that influenced these. Female peacekeepers are generally perceived as having special needs, specifically when they relate to hygiene and menstruation. Females are seen as unsuited for deployment situations, as it is felt they would not be able to cope with certain conditions and that pregnancy, menstruation and other hygienic needs prevent them from being able to deploy successfully. This argument will be re-addressed in the discussion chapter of the study.

#### 4.4.3 Attitudes towards women's inclusion in peacekeeping operations

*"They [women peacekeepers] don't want to work. And when they are in love with the superior, they think they are also superiors. They don't want to do duties." – Male respondent*

In order to understand gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations, it is important to look at the perceptions of women's inclusion in peace missions. As mentioned in chapters 1 and 2, the military is generally perceived as a male-dominated institution; women, therefore, are often perceived as weak and unsuitable for work in a military environment.

In this study, male peacekeepers were asked to state whether they accepted the inclusion of women on UN peacekeeping missions. Table 4.5 below outlines the male peacekeeper's attitudes towards women's inclusion in missions.

**Table 4.5: Men's attitudes towards women's inclusion in the mission**

| Attitude          | Frequency | Percent | Cum percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| Highly accepted   | 9         | 19%     | 19%         |
| Accepted          | 19        | 40%     | 59%         |
| Somewhat accepted | 14        | 30%     | 89%         |
| Not accepted      | 5         | 11%     | 100%        |
| Total             | 47        | 100.0%  | 100%        |

*(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)*

From table 4.5 it is clear that women are adequately accepted by their male counterparts. A large minority (about 40%) were rather non-accepting of women's involvement in peacekeeping. This is a worrying result and suggests that much work needs to be done at this basic level of gender attitudes. In order to gain deeper insights into this thinking, responses to whether men think that women belong in peace missions were compared in each category of table 4.5's responses. From this analysis, it was determined that approximately 59% of male respondents accepted women's inclusion in peacekeeping operations. Only two female respondents felt that, at some point during their deployment, they did not belong on the mission.

The data shown in table 4.5 was also compared with women's perceptions of how they think men in peacekeeping missions accept them. Compared to the 19% of men who "highly accepted" women's inclusion, 44% of women thought that they were "highly accepted" by men in the mission. Another 44% stated that they felt "accepted" by men on the mission (40% of men confirmed this sentiment). Only 13% of women thought they were only "somewhat accepted" by men, while 30% of men indicated that they "somewhat accepted" women. None of the women thought that they were "not accepted" on the mission. It is clear from these results that women have a very different perception of their acceptance by their male counterparts and that women generally thought that men accepted their inclusion. Forty percent of men did not accept women's inclusion into peace missions and this may have important implications for peacekeeping, specifically regarding the roles that women are allowed to play within the peace mission.

#### 4.4.4 Gender mainstreaming initiatives in the UN

Both the Windhoek Declaration's Namibia Plan of Action (2000) and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) aim to ensure equal participation of men, women, boys and girls in peacekeeping activities. Even before these mandates were finalised, the UN Department of Developmental Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had set out clear objectives in order to facilitate gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions. One of the objectives was to establish a gender advisory team to support peacekeepers with any gender-related issues. Another objective was to develop gender awareness training materials for personnel prior to deployment (United Nations, 2005).

In exploring how far the UN and the SANDF have come in their efforts to raise gender awareness before deployment, peacekeepers were asked if they were familiar with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

The results of table 4.6 describe peacekeepers' experiences as they concern gender awareness, support, awareness training and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). The table gives each category by gender. Fifty-four percent of all peacekeepers (male and female) indicated that they were familiar with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

**Table 4.6: UN and SANDF gender awareness training**

| Gender awareness (%)                                    |      |        |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|--------------|
|                                                         | Male | Female | Total (n=63) |
| <b>Familiar with UNSCR 1325:</b>                        |      |        |              |
| Yes                                                     | 62%  | 31%    | 54%          |
| No                                                      | 36%  | 69%    | 44%          |
| Unknown                                                 | 2%   | 0%     | 2%           |
|                                                         |      |        | 100%         |
| <b>Information distributed on women and UNSCR 1325:</b> |      |        |              |
| Yes                                                     | 38%  | 25%    | 35%          |
| No                                                      | 57%  | 75%    | 62%          |
| Unknown                                                 | 4%   | 0%     | 3%           |
|                                                         |      |        | 100%         |
| <b>Support offered to women in unit:</b>                |      |        |              |
| Yes                                                     | 57%  | 69%    | 60%          |
| No                                                      | 38%  | 25%    | 35%          |
| Unknown                                                 | 6%   | 4%     | 5%           |
|                                                         |      |        | 100%         |
| <b>Pre-deployment training received:</b>                |      |        |              |
| Yes                                                     | 72%  | 56%    | 68%          |
| No                                                      | 21%  | 44%    | 27%          |
| Unknown                                                 | 6%   | 0%     | 5%           |
|                                                         |      |        | 100%         |

*(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)*

There is a 30% difference between men's and women's knowledge of the resolution, with more men knowing about the resolution than women (62% of the men were familiar with the resolution as opposed to 31% of the women). In this regard, it can be mentioned that a large number of military women who attended the SANDF Women's Conference in 2007 showed a similar gap in knowledge about the UN and SANDF departments, initiatives and operations, and the reports disseminated by these institutions.

Thirty-five percent of all peacekeepers recalled being given some form of information on women's issues or the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). Sixty percent of all

peacekeepers indicated that they were supported on gender issues and it is interesting to note that more women (about 12% more) than men supported this claim. There was a slight difference between the responses given by men and women on pre-deployment training. Seventy-two percent of male peacekeepers indicated that they had received pre-deployment training while 56% of female peacekeepers had received pre-deployment training. The possibility that the question was too vague will be explored in the discussion chapter in order to attempt to explain this difference. It is possible that different interpretations of pre-deployment training could exist.

#### **4.5 FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS' INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

*“... women are the flowers of the country so they should be treated with respect, honour and dignity” – Female respondent*

##### **4.5.1 Community involvement**

The above quote was taken from one of the female respondent's responses to their involvement in the local people's lives. This particular respondent believed that she had taught local women to believe in themselves and to “fight for their rights” as women.

The aim of asking about community involvement was to determine whether relationships, if any, were built between soldiers and civilians, and to understand the nature of such relationships. In this regard, most of the respondents indicated that they had made contact with the local population; interestingly, 58% of all respondents had engaged in non-military activities, such as handing out books to willing readers and celebrating public holidays with local communities.

A fairly significant percentage of women respondents who engaged in non-military activities indicated that their involvement with local women was mainly social in nature (60%). In contrast to this, 50% of women who did not engage in non-military activities indicated that their involvement with local women was mainly to engage in commercial activities such as buying goods.

From the data it would seem that some female peacekeepers had developed special social relationships with local women. A few male and female respondents noted, for example, instances where local women had plaited the hair of female peacekeepers.

None of the women who engaged directly with the local population felt visibly unaccepted by the communities they were serving in. Five of the female respondents (31%) indicated in the questionnaire that they felt “highly accepted”; a slightly smaller group of four women (25%) felt “accepted”. The remaining seven female respondents (44%) felt “somewhat accepted” by the local population.

Although the men had come into contact with the local population less frequently than the female peacekeepers, 20 of the male peacekeepers (43%) indicated that they felt “highly accepted” by the local population. Of the 47 male respondents, over half (26 respondents, 55%) felt that they were accepted by the local population. Only 1 male respondent indicated that he felt “somewhat accepted” by the local population.

Much like women peacekeepers, none of the men who had served in the DRC felt that the local community rejected their presence at any stage of operations. From the results it would seem that, compared to the women’s feelings of acceptance, the men seemed to have felt more welcomed by and comfortable with local communities. This is not unusual since communities throughout the world generally associate military and peacekeeping activities with men; in this sense, women have to win greater respect and become more familiar with the local population before they are “welcomed”.

#### 4.5.2 Female peacekeepers’ friendships with local women

Taking community involvement a step further, all the peacekeepers were asked about female peacekeepers’ friendships with the local women in the area. Figure 4.3 below shows the percentage of women who made friends with local women. Men were asked whether they thought that women had made friends with local women. This is also displayed in the figure below.

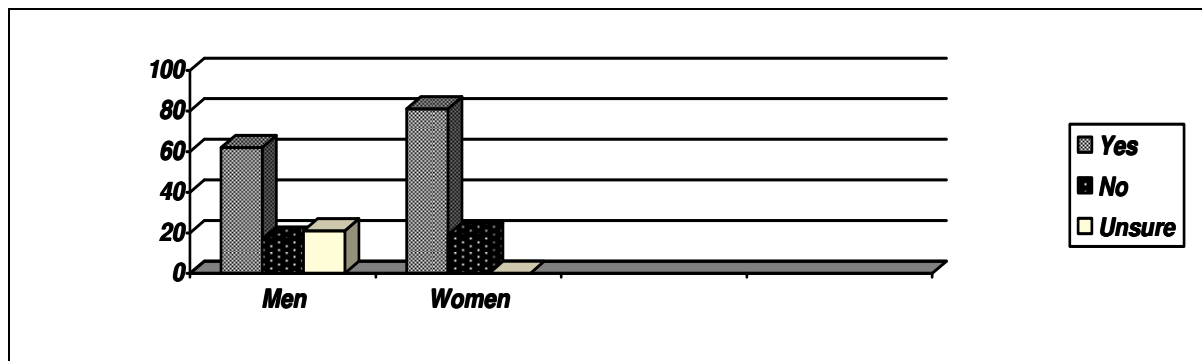


**Figure 4.3: Did women peacekeepers form friendships with local women**  
 (Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Thirteen women serving on the mission (81%) made friends with local women during their deployment to the DRC. A large proportion of the men (62%) were also of the opinion that most women interacted with and befriended local women. Incidentally, many male peacekeepers thought that female peacekeepers' interaction with local women was social.

Figure 4.4 displays the different kinds of interaction that women peacekeepers had with local women in the community. Male respondents were asked to comment on the nature of relationships they thought women had with local women.

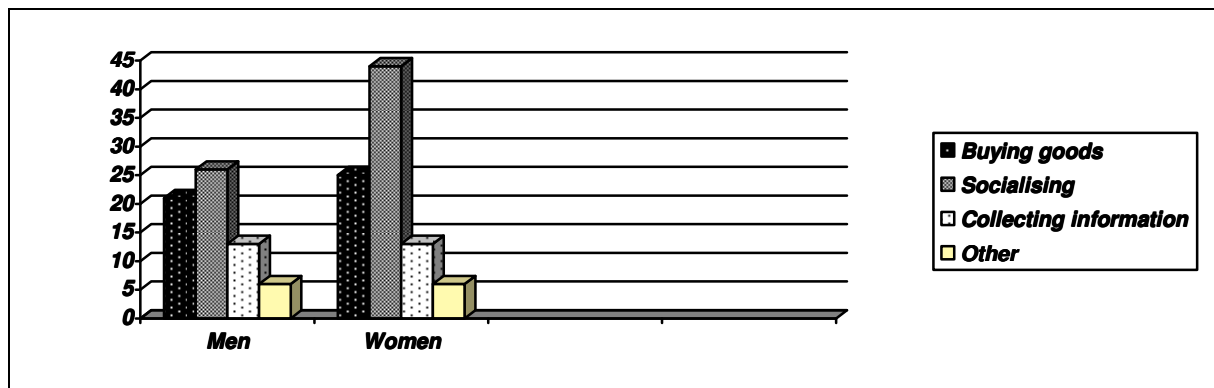


**Figure 4.4: Nature of women's relationships with local women**  
 (Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

It is clear from the figure that the relationships between the women peacekeepers and local women were mainly social in nature, as seven of the 13 respondents who answered "yes" to making friends with local women confirmed this kind of interaction. Of the 13 respondents, three women described the nature of their relationship with local women as commercial in

nature, that is, they bought goods from them. Only two female respondents used their interactions with local women to collect information.

One of the women in the study opted for the category of “other”. She described her relationship with local women as a blend of social interaction, buying goods and collecting information. Some female peacekeepers mentioned giving food and clothing to local women and braiding or plaiting each other’s hair as part of their social interactions. The various indications given by female respondents of their social interactions have strong implications for women in peacekeeping. As mentioned in previous chapters, women are stereotypically seen as peacemakers although this conflicts with some of the literature which indicates that women are marginalised as actors in times of war. It is clear from the questions asked in this study that women peacekeepers have a role to play in terms of building and harnessing “sisterly bonds”, befriending local populations and helping them to rebuild their lives. Much has been written on women and peacebuilding, but the literature rarely includes female peacekeepers and the role they can play in peace processes, as well as in post-conflict reconstruction.

Following on the type of interactions that female peacekeepers had with local women, questions were asked on whether peacekeepers thought that local women were more responsive to and more trusting of female peacekeepers. Of the 16 women, nine (56%) thought that local women were in fact more trusting of and responsive to them. In contrast to this, 28 (60%) of the male respondents did not think that local women were more trusting of female peacekeepers than they would be of males. This suggests a misfit between the men’s reading and the women’s reading of the local context, but it also hints at competition in the field between some male and female peacekeepers.

The question was further explored by asking female peacekeepers to give reasons for why they thought local women were more trusting of them than their male counterparts. Table 4.7 outlines the female peacekeepers’ responses.

**Table 4.7: Female peacekeepers' perceptions of trust from local women**

| <b>Female peacekeepers' perceptions of trust from local women</b> |                  |                |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
|                                                                   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Cum Percent</b> |
| <b>Make local women feel safer</b>                                |                  |                |                    |
| Yes                                                               | 6                | 38%            | 38%                |
| No                                                                | 5                | 31%            | 69%                |
| Unknown                                                           | 5                | 31%            | 100%               |
|                                                                   |                  |                |                    |
| <b>Communicate easier with local women</b>                        |                  |                |                    |
| Yes                                                               | 9                | 56%            | 56%                |
| No                                                                | 3                | 19%            | 75%                |
| Unknown                                                           | 4                | 25%            | 100%               |
|                                                                   |                  |                |                    |
| <b>More sensitive to local women's needs</b>                      |                  |                |                    |
| Yes                                                               | 6                | 38%            | 38%                |
| No                                                                | 5                | 31%            | 69%                |
| Unknown                                                           | 5                | 31%            | 100%               |
|                                                                   |                  |                |                    |
| <b>Control violent tendencies more efficiently</b>                |                  |                |                    |
| Yes                                                               | 4                | 25%            | 25%                |
| No                                                                | 8                | 50%            | 75%                |
| Unknown                                                           | 4                | 25%            | 100%               |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

In analysing the data from table 4.7, one can appreciate that a high percentage of women believed that they communicated more easily with the local women than their male counterparts. Indeed, being restricted to base might have inadvertently led the women to engage on a more social level with local women. The table also shows that women were not confident of their ability to control violent tendencies or to contribute to local women's feelings of safety and security.

Peacekeepers were then asked whether they thought that women's involvement with local women (especially for social reasons) could affect women's neutrality and objectivity in the

peace mission. In total, 71% of peacekeepers believed that female peacekeepers' neutrality is not affected by their social relationships with local women. If this percentage is stratified by gender, 75% of female peacekeepers and 70% of male peacekeepers indicated that neutrality is not affected by friendship or social relationships. Twenty-two percent of peacekeepers in total were of the opinion that women's neutrality was affected by their social relationships with local women. Seven percent of the respondents did not respond to the question.

Following this response, it was asked whether female peacekeepers thought that they had had an impact on the lives of local women. Figure 4.5 displays the data given by female peacekeepers by rank. It is known that soldiers serving as privates/riflemen are usually on the frontlines and more involved in local communities than higher ranking officers.

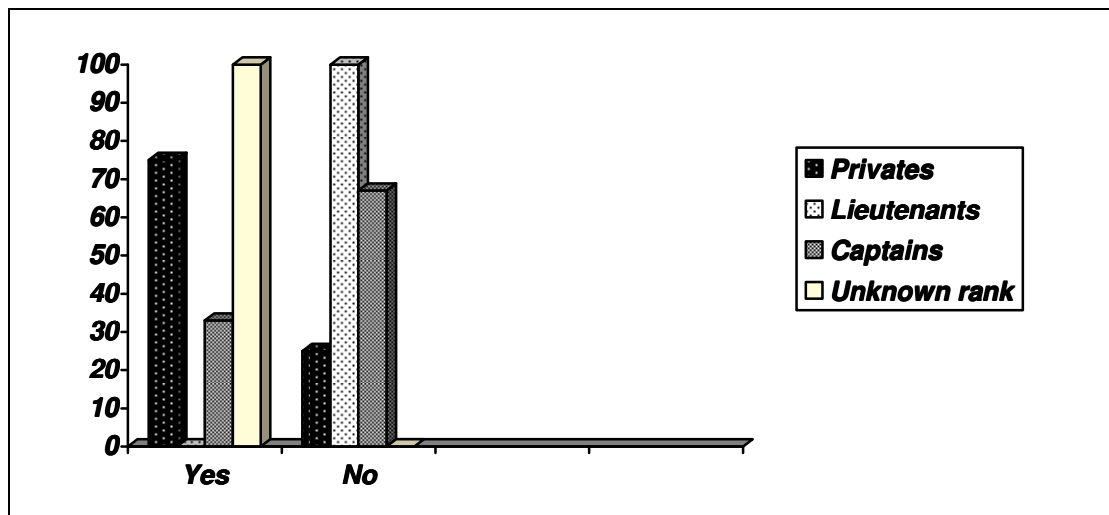


**Figure 4.5: Perceptions of difference made in local population's lives**  
 (Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Figure 4.5 shows that of the nine female privates, six thought that their actions in the DRC made a difference in the lives of local women. The female lieutenant in the sample indicated that she did not think that much difference had been made in the local women's lives. Two of the three captains also thought that they had not made a difference to the local women's lives. Three female respondents did not indicate their rank but all thought that they had made some difference during their deployment. This question was further explored by asking respondents who thought they had made a difference how they thought they had made a difference in the local women's lives. Some inspirational stories were told and two major themes emerged from the responses.

The first theme was about setting an example and teaching local women to be more confident in their own abilities to succeed in life. One female respondent remarked that she taught local women “to believe in themselves and being able to fight for their rights and know that women are the flowers of the country so they should be treated with respect, honour and dignity”; another respondent referred to her presence among the local women as “when they saw me, they saw a strong woman as soldier and hero”.

Apart from socialising and making a difference in the broad sense, many female peacekeepers emerged as role models influencing local women’s thinking on gender equality and empowerment. In this regard, one of the women stated that “they [the local women] look up to us now and know that they can also do what their men do”. The same peacekeeper continued by stating that female peacekeepers empowered the local children by teaching them that education “is what will make them succeed in life to help them build themselves and strive to better”. A few women indicated that they had taught the local women to trust others and that they had developed local women’s sport skills.

The second theme that emerged from the responses was that of empowering local women to become more financially independent. Most of the female peacekeepers indicated that they had given local women old clothing to sell, that they had bought food and other goods from local women, and had offered advice on problems local women might experience. This theme has very important implications for peacekeeping and the way women peacekeepers can be encouraged to teach local women certain skills in trade, as they may lose income once the peacekeepers leave the host country.

In general, it seems that female peacekeepers had formed relationships with local women that were meaningful and inspiring. This is an important consideration for peacekeeping operations: women can contribute to the rebuilding of the host country’s social fabric and to the well-being of local women and children.

#### 4.6 WORKING UNDER PRESSURE

It can be argued that the persistent awareness of systemic violence, murder and rape in countries such as the DRC can cause women peacekeepers to feel (physically and psychologically) powerless to assist local populations. Having said this, it seems as if South African women soldiers, like their male counterparts, are equal to the task of keeping peace. Indeed, only 6% of the female respondents who participated in the study indicated that they felt physically less able than men to participate in the peacekeeping mission in the DRC. Thus, women in the study were enthusiastic and up for the challenge that peacekeeping offered them despite the acknowledgement of ongoing violence and conflict.

**Table 4.8: Experiences of fear or threat during deployment**

| Gender (%)                                          |      |        |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|--------|--------------|
|                                                     | Male | Female | Total (n=63) |
| <b>Experience of fear/threat to personal safety</b> |      |        |              |
| Yes                                                 | 51%  | 38%    | 48%          |
| No                                                  | 45%  | 62%    | 49%          |
| Unknown                                             | 4%   | 0%     | 3%           |
| Total                                               | 100% | 100%   | 100%         |

*(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)*

From the results in table 4.8 it is clear that male peacekeepers experienced more fear than female peacekeepers during the mission. Reasons for this may include women's non-exposure to the threatening environment by being confined to duties on the base. This will be discussed in more depth in the discussion in the next chapter.

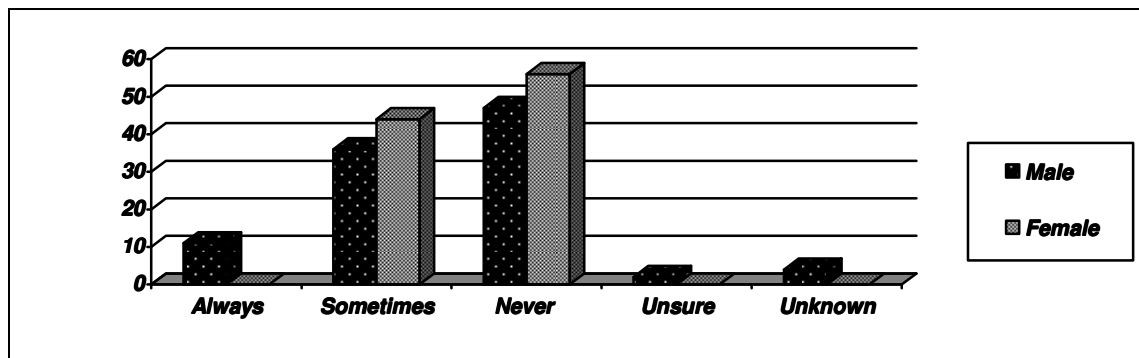


**Figure 4.6: Exposure to emotionally stressful events**  
 (Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Figure 4.6 shows that the men had experienced emotionally stressful events more often than the women in the unit. Again, this may be because male peacekeepers were exposed to more dangerous situations outside the base. Women did indicate that they were, on occasion, exposed to emotionally stressful events. In looking at the relationships that women formed with local women, the explanation might lie in discussions women had with local communities about their own trauma and stressful events.

Men were asked whether they thought that women were more likely to experience stress during deployment. In this regard, 32% of the men stated that they thought women were more likely than they to experience stress and pressure during deployment, and 19% stated that they did not think women were more likely to experience stress during deployment. However, the majority of men (45%) were noncommittal to the question. The remaining respondents did not respond to the question (4%).

In contrast to this finding, the women respondents were asked if they thought that males dealt better with the stresses and pressures associated with peacekeeping. In this regard, 81% of women indicated that they did not believe that men were in any way more capable of coping with stress and pressure than women. It is clear from the findings on coping abilities that a large proportion of men saw women as succumbing to stress more readily, whilst the vast majority of women did not see men as coping any better than them. This result shows how perceptions of women's and men's abilities to carry out peacekeeping tasks under stressful conditions differ.

It is also worth noting that 85% of the male respondents felt that they were physically stronger and more able to serve on the mission than women. This contrasts significantly with the female peacekeepers' attitude to physical ability, given that 63% of the women respondents never felt less able than men to serve on the mission. In fact, in support of the last finding, 88% of female peacekeepers indicated that they would gladly redeploy. These findings shows evidence of "slight" tension, as women are asserting themselves whilst the men are hinting that women are not physically fully capable of peacekeeping tasks.

The study also explored the way peacekeepers spent their time when not on active duty. The intention was to gain some insight into the way peacekeepers experienced the environment in which they lived, and also to explore the other ways they have of interacting with and relating to local populations. About 59% of all the respondents indicated that they often experienced the peacekeeping environment as monotonous and often became bored and frustrated with the environment. Table 4.9 displays the different activities peacekeepers engage in to keep themselves busy while not on active duty.

**Table 4.9: Peacekeeper's extra-mural activities**

| Gender (%)                        |      |        |       |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
|                                   | Male | Female | Total |
| <b>Sport with locals</b>          |      |        |       |
| Yes                               | 58%  | 50%    | 55%   |
| No                                | 38%  | 50%    | 41%   |
| Unknown                           | 4%   | 0%     | 4%    |
|                                   |      |        | 100%  |
| <b>Sport with personnel</b>       |      |        |       |
| Yes                               | 36%  | 62%    | 43%   |
| No                                | 60%  | 38%    | 53%   |
| Unknown                           | 4%   | 0%     | 4%    |
|                                   |      |        | 100%  |
| <b>Socialising with locals</b>    |      |        |       |
| Yes                               | 17%  | 25%    | 19%   |
| No                                | 79%  | 75%    | 77%   |
| Unknown                           | 4%   | 0%     | 4%    |
|                                   |      |        | 100%  |
| <b>Socialising with personnel</b> |      |        |       |
| Yes                               | 32%  | 56%    | 38%   |
| No                                | 64%  | 44%    | 58%   |
| Unknown                           | 4    | 0%     | 4%    |
|                                   |      |        | 100%  |

(Source: South African Peacekeeper Database, 2008)

Half of the women and 27 of the 47 men (58%) engaged in sports activities with the locals. Less than half of the men socialised with mission staff or the local population as a way to pass time. In contrast to this, 63% (n = 10) of the women engaged in social activities with mission staff. In addition to these findings, it is interesting to note that 94% of all peacekeepers stated that they had learned about the local culture, language and lifestyle.

In conclusion, the majority of male and female respondents agreed that the mission fulfilled its mandate. All female peacekeepers indicated that the mission fulfilled their original motivation for joining – whether this was for financial, humanitarian or financial reasons. About 89% of the male peacekeepers also agreed that the mission had fulfilled their original motivation to join as peacekeepers. Fourteen (88%) of the female respondents indicated that they would redeploy and, interestingly, 47% of the male respondents indicated that they thought women were ready to redeploy. It is clear from the findings that there are some definite tensions in the acceptance and inclusion of female peacekeepers in peace missions. There is a slight suggestion in the last-mentioned finding that men were trying, at best, to depart from the study with positive perceptions of women's inclusion.

#### **4.7. CONCLUSION**

Overall, the findings indicate that women were not participating in their full capacity as peacekeepers, but were rather restricted to administrative work within the safety of the UN military base. Furthermore, female peacekeepers seemed to feel disempowered in terms of knowledge of the international policies that aim to promote gender equality on peacekeeping missions. Johnston (2004) asserts that women in decision-making roles in peacekeeping operations can play an important part in the planning and determining of mandates and scope of operations. It is important then, that female peacekeepers be actively empowered by the SANDF, especially by women in decision-making positions in order to have equal opportunities in peacekeeping missions.

It was also found that female peacekeepers, unlike their male counterparts, interacted regularly on a social and spiritual level with the local population; this kind of interaction, it can be argued, is important for successful post-war reconstruction and development. Women can play an important part in rebuilding social norms and values destroyed by the consequences of war.

Female respondents indicated that they had attempted to inspire local women to educate and uplift themselves, and had taught local women to respect themselves and to be aware of their rights. Women peacekeepers saw themselves as role models for local women and this has very important implications for issues such as building peace, and preventing and disclosing incidents of violence, especially sexual violence.

Much work needs to be done to enhance men's acceptance of women's legitimate involvement in peacekeeping. Many of the men in the study were not fully persuaded that women had a right to be on the mission; in stark contrast to the vast majority of women peacekeepers who saw themselves as belonging on the peacekeeping operation.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Discussion and conclusion: reflecting on the data analysis**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the results that have been presented in the study on gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping operations and the experiences of South African soldiers (especially women) as peacekeepers in the DRC. The chapter is divided into several sections – each will attempt to address the different research themes and questions that have been raised in the study. The chapter will conclude by providing a summary of the research limitations and proposing a set of policy recommendations.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE TEXT**

This study set out to explore the experiences of South African women peacekeepers and their perceptions of gender mainstreaming and gender equality in UN peacekeeping operations. Women soldiers have historically been excluded from military roles, especially combat roles and positions of decision making (Hudson, 2000; Boldry, Wood & Kashy, 2001). Military women serving in UN peacekeeping operations today still experience exclusion on the basis of their gender (Hicks-Stiehm, 2001). Although many efforts have been made by the UN to include women equally in peace missions, the final decision lies with the governments of troop-contributing countries. In South Africa's case, few women have been deployed in peacekeeping operations (particularly in combat roles) – even worse, the South African public is generally ignorant about the country's women soldiers serving as African peacekeepers.

Based on the conceptual understanding of gender mainstreaming and gender equality outlined in chapter 2, this study has outlined the manifestation of patriarchy in the military environment, illustrating the complexity of women's inclusion in peace operations. Furthermore, the study aimed to explore women's public involvement and the way women interact with local people on the ground. The study also attempted to identify key concerns regarding gender mainstreaming and recommendations will be made on how women can be better supported and empowered to play more effective, equitable and equal roles in peace missions. These questions are explored in more detail in the following sections.

### **5.3 GENDER-MAINSTREAMING AND GENDER EQUALITY IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

#### **5.3.1 Differences between male and female roles and responsibilities**

The results of this study indicate that one in four female respondents did not perceive their roles and responsibilities as being equal to male respondents in the study. The female respondents reported that they were mainly restricted to the UN base in the area of operations and were ordered to perform guard duties and other administrative duties while men moved outside the base to perform more dangerous tasks. It is important to note, however, that staff filling positions such as military social workers and military nurses are usually situated on the base, and are not required to move into more dangerous areas. The particular focus of this finding is centred on female respondents trained as soldiers and deployed to perform peacekeeping duties in the SANDF.

As this study is exploratory in nature, very little information is available on which SANDF units deploy women in their full capacity. A recent study on sexual violence reported that South African female police officers (military police) were deployed in their full capacity at a camp for the internally displaced in Southern Darfur in Sudan (Martin, 2007). The police officers were stationed at the camps to investigate cases of rape and sexual assault and also to serve as interpreters for survivors of these attacks. Martin's report also showed how women in peace missions can be involved more actively to serve the needs of the local populations. This is especially true when one considers that domestic violence is usually more prevalent after war and that gender inequality can increase during phases of peacebuilding (Pankhurst, 2003).

Despite women's sincerity and their loyalty to the SANDF, the findings of this study have indicated that female infantry unit members were not allowed the opportunity to participate equally in the mission. The claims that women are not equal to men on the mission were mostly supported by the male participants. Women were keen to be part of peacekeeping initiatives and wanted to present themselves as being equal to men; for this reason they may have exaggerated the extent to which their roles and responsibilities were equal to those of male peacekeepers. Another possible reason for some women's responses that they were in fact equal to men in the mission could be the inherent loyalty and the culture of secrecy that

that has historically been associated with the armed forces (Mertz, 1992). A significant minority of men (34%) supported the fact that women were prevented from actively performing peacekeeping duties and a number of women expressed feelings of frustration and anger about this fact. From the study results, it would seem that the women respondents had not been aware of the restrictions to be placed on them once they arrived in the DRC. Interestingly, one of the male respondents noted that women's and men's roles were believed to be equal, but on arrival they found that this was not the case.

This finding has implications in terms of gender mainstreaming, as the mission to the DRC (specifically with regard to the SANDF) would appear to be only filling a gender balance quota rather than implementing gender mainstreaming and gender balance practices. The sexist assumption that women are ideally suited to serve in administrative posts has largely been contested. Within the military context, Yuval-Davis (1985:650) refers to this division of labour as the "front" and the "rear" positions. At the "front", one finds face-to-face military confrontation while the "rear" serves the needs of the fighters at the front. These structures are fluid and may change to include new front fighters, in so doing changing the role of former front fighters to become part of the rear.

The military "front" and "rear" positions seem to apply within the South African forces serving in UN peacekeeping operations as well. Women serving in the military have generally been excluded from front positions that could result in fatality or serious risk of injury and women's positions in the military are mainly dependent on the extent to which men are needed at the front (Yuval-Davis, 1985). The latter statement is made clear by the women's indication of being restricted to the military base, and not being allowed to carry weapons such as the Light Machine Gun (LMG).

### 5.3.2 Women's inclusion in peacekeeping operations

The SANDF National Women's Day Conference in 2007 documented women soldiers' opinions on factors both hindering and promoting gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the SANDF. On examining the internal, structural restrictions on peacekeeping, it became clear that there is a lack of support for women who want to deploy to African countries. Women in the military are expected to serve as support for men who deploy and not to take on combat roles themselves (DeGroot, 2001; Juma, 2007). This type of

military culture in which women are expected to perform support roles has been around for centuries and the findings of this study hint at the fact that it still prevails today. This culture seems to shape men's beliefs about women's unsuitability for military and "frontline" positions.

In this regard, it is interesting to note the reasons why women deployed. Close to 40% of the women under the age of 26 deployed purely for the purposes of securing work, that is, to earn a good living. The main reason for deployment appeared to be SANDF instructions. Young women under the age of 26 years were nearly four times as likely to deploy for financial reasons compared to the men in the study. The majority of the men were deployed as a result of SANDF instructions and also to advance their careers as military practitioners. This finding arouses some concerns with regards to interest in peacekeeping for young women. Older women would be expected to be more concerned with issues of career advancement, and the research findings have clearly supported this expectation.

An examination of attitudes to women's inclusion in peace missions reveals that a significant minority of the male respondents in the study did not accept women's inclusion. The majority of the men indicated that they thought they were physically better able to serve in peacekeeping missions than women. Women's physical ability and strength for serving on peace missions, and the specific physical concerns that women may have during missions (such as pregnancy and other "uniquely female" concerns such as menstruation), proved to be a major obstacle in women's perceptions about their suitability for peacekeeping operations (Heinecken, 2002). Conditions of service, such as ablution facilities designed to meet the needs of women, are known to be inadequate and women are often ridiculed for their "unique" concerns in the peacekeeping environment (SANDF Women's Day Conference, 2007).

Furthermore, arguments pertaining to pregnancy, family responsibility and sexual harassment are often used as strategies to discourage female participation (Heinecken, 2002). A report by Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf (2002) found that senior women serving in UN missions are often frustrated by the limited opportunities for career advancement, the lack of support by UN headquarters, sexual harassment and disrespect from peacekeepers in the lower ranks.

### 5.3.3 Gender awareness, support and mainstreaming in peace operations

As mentioned in the preceding chapters, there are two international mandates calling for gender training in peacekeeping operations. These are the Windhoek Declaration's Namibia Plan of Action (2000) and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). Both these mandates urge the training of peacekeeping personnel in gender mainstreaming in order to involve women in all peacekeeping and peace-building "measures" (Lyytikäinen, 2007: 6). To this end, the UN has developed various training curricula to prepare peacekeepers for their mission. One example is the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN INSTRAW) "Gender Training for Peacekeepers" (Lyytikäinen, 2007). Gender training has become a strong focus of UN training programmes, but the primary focus is on the needs of local women and girls affected by war. The majority of the literature analysing the gender training programmes for peacekeeping operations also focus on local populations rather than on the peacekeeping women themselves.

It is not clear whether any specific training is given in the SANDF to create awareness of women's issues and possible difficulties women may experience in the field. The UN encourages troop-contributing countries to undertake certain training programmes but ultimately has no control over the training that is rolled out to future peacekeeping units (Hudson, 2000). In this regard, the findings of this study yield interesting results. Even though UN Resolution 1325 (2000) is regarded as one of the most valuable documents in peacekeeping, 39 of the 47 respondents had never been given any information on women in this context or on Resolution 1325 (2000). It is very important to note that one in four of the female respondents indicated that no form of support had ever been offered to them in their respective units. Furthermore, 27% of all respondents in the study could not recall receiving any pre-deployment training.

From the results, it would seem that there is inconsistency in the support and training that respondents received. It is not clear as to why some respondents received training and others did not. Many peacekeeping training centres exist across Africa today and it is vital for every government defence force in Africa to support peacekeeping training. According to Hitchcock (2002), governments can play an important role in shaping training and responding to the needs of peacekeeping in the subregions. Peacekeeping training ultimately strives to teach

peacekeepers to protect human rights and to achieve human security; to build capacity and deal with issues such as child soldiers and human trafficking and exploitation and to be gender sensitive (Hitchcock, 2002). More research into the state of South African peacekeeping training is needed to understand the inconsistencies that emerged in the findings of this study. It is important to note that these inconsistencies may play an important role in gender mainstreaming and gender equality in peacekeeping operations.

From the SANDF Women's Conference in 2007 it was evident that the majority of women attending, who had served on peacekeeping operations, were unfamiliar with the very policies aimed at achieving gender equality and mainstreaming. It was a matter of concern to see that a large number of women did not understand certain concepts and definitions relating to gender issues within the armed forces. From the results, close to three quarters (69%) of the female respondents were not familiar with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). This clearly shows that a fairly large percentage of women in the armed forces are disempowered in terms of knowledge and information. It is especially important that women who deploy to African countries understand the policies that protect them from unequal treatment and discrimination.

In terms of gender mainstreaming policy, women do not seem to be informed about their rights to equal participation in peacekeeping. It is important that the SANDF, and in particular women in decision-making positions, take responsibility to teach women these policies. It is important for women who plan to participate in peacekeeping operations to be empowered in order to have their voices heard. The literature shows that the military is essentially a patriarchal institution and to uphold that patriarchal rule would be in its best interests. It is important for women who are already in decision-making positions in the military to ensure that women in the lower-ranks have the tools to empower themselves in order for gender mainstreaming to be achieved. The women in this study were beginning to occupy more senior ranks, and it would be in their interests if the patriarchal culture of the military were to be engaged and transformed. According to Pankhurst (2003), increased representation may not change institutional cultures as such; but it may address inequality in smaller, more specific areas of security institutions.

## **5.4 WOMEN'S PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

### **5.4.1 Women's relationships with local Congolese women**

Prokhovnik (1998) explains that although women's options in the public/private divide have increased in terms of vocational and personal choices, all of these options present a dilemma. The public domain still favours men over women, and this is especially true if one considers the small number of women in decision-making positions in peacekeeping operations. Women in such operations have much to offer, and there is no reason why women should be excluded from active participation. As this study has shown, the social nature of women's relationships with locals seems to have played a significant role in their peacekeeping experience.

From the total sample of women, 13 indicated that they had formed friendships with local women. The nature of their relationships with the local women was mainly social and women often spent their time braiding their hair and talking to each other. The fact that female peacekeepers had built relationships with local women could mean that they had better access to the local community. In this way, women could be seen to play a vital role in the prevention of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers and rebels alike. Women can also be trained (as is the case with police peacekeepers in the Sudan) to facilitate disclosure of traumatic events such as sexual violence committed against local populations. Not only can female peacekeepers play a preventative role but, as previously mentioned by Puechguirbal (2003), female peacekeepers can be used to collect information for gaining insight into what may be happening in local communities. This might prove helpful for finding out about possible ambushes and rebel attacks, which in turn makes the peacekeeping environment safer for peacekeepers as well.

### **5.4.2 Trust from local populations and women peacekeepers' roles in conflict-affected areas**

Most female respondents were of the opinion that local women trusted them as they communicated more easily with them than their male counterparts. This has important implications for women's involvement in peacekeeping, especially with regards to the prevention and disclosure of acts of violence against local women and peace-building initiatives after war. Pankhurst (2003) maintains that women who find themselves in post-

conflict settings are often subjected to domestic violence. Furthermore, rape and sexual assault during and after conflict remain under-reported and unpublished (Amnesty International, 2005). In this regard, an expanded role for women in peacekeeping should be considered, as women may also offer a more gender-sensitive approach to violence against local women. The findings of this study indicate that nearly 40% (6 out of 16) of the female peacekeepers thought that they were more sensitive to the local women's needs and that they made local women feel safer than the male peacekeepers did. According to a policy report by the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF, 2008), peacekeepers are mandated to deter, preempt and prevent attacks on women using proactive measures. With high rates of rape perpetrated by male peacekeeper having been reported to UN agencies over the past few years, the mandate set out by SCIAF (2008) is often impossible to achieve. With the full and equal participation of women in peacekeeping missions, proactive measures could be taken as trust between women peacekeepers and local women has shown to open the doors to communication and subsequently to prevent violent incidents against local women.

In the case of the DRC, 10 of the 16 female peacekeepers thought that they had made a difference in the lives of local women, based purely on social relationships with them. With the appropriate training it is believed that female peacekeepers could actively make a difference in the safety and social aspects of local women's lives. By excluding women from the peacekeeping process, building peace and uplifting societies affected by war becomes much harder and inequality will continue to prevail.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The primary limitation of the study is the sample size, that is, 63 respondents. Even so, it is true that the sample is largely representative of the SANDF population. The sample in the study, undertaken in 2007, had a 25% overall female representation. An audit report released by the SANDF revealed that, by 2006, the total female representation in the SANDF was 21% (Department of Defence, 2006).

A second limitation relates to the different types of experiences that UN troops often encounter in conflict-ridden countries such as the DRC. In such countries, the political and military environment is highly volatile, with periods of peace followed by outbreaks of violence, and so forth. Often the experiences of peacekeepers deployed prior to or after this

sample group to the DRC might be different and inevitably change the way in which peacekeepers experience their mission and perform their tasks.

A final limitation to the study is the inability to gather in-depth qualitative data. Some items in the questionnaire were constrained and should ideally be explored in more depth. One example of this would be the gender-awareness training that peacekeepers undergo before deployment. Furthermore, in an in-depth qualitative study one would have been able to gather richer data by probing certain issues and perceptions with regard to women's inclusion into peace missions.

## 5.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the following summary of the results of the study can be stated in point form:

- In the matter of training, the SANDF is inconsistent in terms of who is being trained and what the nature of the content of the training entails before deploying peacekeepers to African countries.
- Although some women indicated that there were no difference between their roles and those of the men, a number of men and women indicated that women were restricted to base and could not actively and equally participate in the peacekeeping operation. This is a serious issue and one that the SANDF needs to redress in the interests of supporting gender equality.
- Most of the women in the study were uninformed and disempowered regarding gender mainstreaming policies on peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, very little effort had been made in terms of the distribution of this information to soldiers before deployment.
- Most young women in the study seemed to have prioritised “financial reasons” over “humanitarian reasons” and “career aspirations”. This differed from the reasons given by the young men, who desired career advancement from taking part in the peacekeeping mission to the DRC. Young women have to be assured of job security before they begin to pursue more meaningful career paths in peacekeeping and military missions.
- Female peacekeepers formed social relationships with local women in the communities they served. Female respondents strongly indicated that they made a

visible difference in the lives of local women. This is a reality that should be encouraged and explored in future peacekeeping initiatives.

It is clear that the role of female peacekeepers should not be underestimated. Although there are many areas within the peacekeeping field that need attention, the focus on women peacekeepers should be prioritised. Women can play a valuable role in the safety of local women and children and can also be trained to work with survivors of war tragedies. It is understandable that the SANDF would prefer to keep its female soldiers out of harm's way, but in advocating a paternal approach and denying women the right to freely and equally participate in peacekeeping missions, it undermines efforts to achieve gender mainstreaming and gender equality, as well as the UN's efforts to bring about sustainable peace and development.

As this study was exploratory in nature, no list of recommendations for peacekeeping operations will be offered. It is important that future research be undertaken in the form of in-depth qualitative interviews in order to probe inconsistencies and derive more nuanced responses from both male and female respondents. It is also critical that issues of access to doing research in the SANDF be investigated, as research on women in peacekeeping is needed for the success of gender mainstreaming in the military and the peacekeeping contexts.

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## ANNEXURE A: WOMEN'S QUESTIONNAIRE:

Code of Participant    
 Date     /   /    
 Y Y Y Y M M D D  
 Questionnaire Number

Please circle/fill the correct answers/options

|   | SECTION 1:                                                                                    | DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Age:                                                                                          | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2 | Race:                                                                                         | Black.....1<br>Coloured.....2<br>White.....3<br>Asian.....4<br>Other (Specify).....5                                                                                                           |
| 3 | Home language:                                                                                | English.....1<br>Xhosa.....2<br>Sotho.....3<br>Zulu.....4<br>Tswana.....5<br>Pedi.....6<br>Tsonga.....7<br>Venda.....8<br>Afrikaans.....9<br>Other (Specify).....10<br>.....                   |
| 4 | Rank:                                                                                         | .....<br>.....[ ] [ ]                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5 | Country of deployment<br>(eg. Burundi, Sudan, DRC)<br>Please list your most recent deployment | .....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....[ ] [ ]                                                                                                                                                        |
| 6 | Date of deployment                                                                            | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/><br>Y Y Y Y M M D D |
| 7 | Date of return from deployment                                                                | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/><br>Y Y Y Y M M D D |

|   | SECTION 2:            | BECOMING A PEACEKEEPER               |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 8 | What was your initial | Personal/humanitarian interest.....1 |

[illegible]

|    |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15 | How would you rate the level of acceptance you experienced from the local population                        | Highly accepted.....1<br>Accepted.....2<br>Somewhat accepted.....3<br>Not accepted at all.....4                                                                                                                                                           |
| 16 | At any point during deployment, did you participate in non-military activities (eg. helping at schools)?    | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 17 | If yes, did locals welcome your help and support?                                                           | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 18 | Did you make friends with any local women?                                                                  | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 19 | If yes, what was the nature of your friendship with local women?                                            | Buying goods.....1<br>Socialiaing.....2<br>Collecting information.....3<br>Other (specify ).....4<br>.....<br>.....                                                                                                                                       |
| 20 | Do you think that local women are more trusting of women peacekeepers than they are of male peacekeepers?   | Yes.....1<br>No.....2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 21 | If yes to the above, what reasons would you attribute to this trusting attitude towards women peacekeepers? | Women peacekeepers:<br>a)Make local women feel safer.....Yes 1 No 0<br>b)Communicate easier with local women.....Yes 1 No 0<br>c)Are more sensitive to local women's needs.....Yes 1 No 0<br>d)Control violent tendencies more efficiently.....Yes 1 No 0 |

|    |                                                                   |                                      |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|    | <b>SECTION 4:</b>                                                 | <b>GENDER AND THE UNITED NATIONS</b> |
| 22 | Were you at any time deployed to operate in combat areas?         | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                |
| 23 | If no to above, do you feel that this was unfair?                 | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                |
| 24 | Do you think that women peacekeepers are treated differently from | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                |



|    |                                                                                                                               |                       |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
|    | men?                                                                                                                          |                       |
| 25 | Are you familiar with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Gender and Peacekeeping?                              | Yes.....1<br>No.....0 |
| 26 | Did the UN discuss or distribute information that talks about women & the SCR 1325?                                           | Yes.....1<br>No.....0 |
| 27 | Did the UN/SANDF offer any support to the women in your unit, relating to problems women might encounter in the field?        | Yes.....1<br>No.....0 |
| 28 | Did the unit undergo pre-deployment training on the specific needs of women in combat environments/peacekeeping environments? | Yes.....1<br>No.....0 |

|    |                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>SECTION 5:</b>                                                                                                            | <b>WORKING UNDER PRESSURE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 29 | Did you at any point during your deployment experience a high level of fear or threat to personal safety?                    | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 30 | Were you exposed to any emotionally stressful events/situations (eg. seeing wounded civilians/violence against local women)? | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                    |
| 31 | Did you ever feel like you were physically less able than male peacekeepers to handle mission pressures?                     | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 32 | Did you ever feel unable to help local people with any problems they might have experienced?                                 | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                    |
| 33 | Did you ever discuss your feelings of fear/threat/helplessness with anyone?                                                  | a) With military personnel.....Yes 1 No 0<br>b) With friends in military.....Yes 1 No 0<br>c) Upon return with family/friends.....Yes 1 No 0<br>d) With no one.....Yes 1 No 0<br>e) Not applicable.....Yes 1 No 0 |
| 34 | Looking back, do you think                                                                                                   | Yes.....1                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



|    |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | you have made a difference in the lives of local people, especially the women?                                          | No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 35 | If yes to above, please give a short description of the difference you think you have made in the lives of local people | .....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....[ ] [ ]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 36 | Do you think female peacekeepers' involvement with local people affect their objectivity/neutrality of the mission?     | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 37 | Did you ever feel bored or experience your environment as monotonous?                                                   | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 38 | What did you do for entertainment/fun?                                                                                  | a)Sport/physical activity with locals.....a) Yes 1 No 0<br>b)Sport/physical activity with fellow personnel.....b) Yes 1 No 0<br>c)Socialising with locals.....c) Yes 1 No 0<br>d)Socialising with fellow personnel.....d) Yes 1 No 0<br>e)Other (specify).....e) Yes 1 No 0<br>.....<br>.....<br>..... |
| 39 | Did you get to learn about the local culture, language and lifestyle?                                                   | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 40 | Do you think that women peacekeepers experienced the mission differently from male personnel?                           | Strongly agree.....1<br>Agree .....2<br>Disagree .....3<br>Strongly disagree.....4                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 41 | Do you think that male peacekeepers deal better with stress and pressure than female peacekeepers?                      | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 42 | Do you think that the mission you served in fulfilled its mandate?                                                      | Strongly agree.....1<br>Agree .....2<br>Disagree .....3<br>Strongly disagree.....4                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 43 | Did your deployment fulfil your original motivation to serve as peacekeeper (refer to Question 8)?                      | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 44 | Did you at any point, as a woman, feel like you did not belong in the mission?                                          | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|    |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |



|    |                     |             |   |
|----|---------------------|-------------|---|
| 45 | Would you redeploy? | Yes.....    | 1 |
|    |                     | No.....     | 0 |
|    |                     | Unsure..... | 2 |

Thank you for taking part in this project

## ANNEXURE B: MEN'S QUESTIONNAIRE:

Code of Participant

Date

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Y Y Y Y M M D D

Questionnaire Number

Please circle/fill correct answers/options

|   | SECTION 1:                                                                                     | DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION                                                                                                                                             |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Age:                                                                                           | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>                                                                                                                           |
| 2 | Race:                                                                                          | Black.....1<br>Coloured.....2<br>White.....3<br>Asian.....4<br>Other (Specify).....5                                                                                |
| 3 | Home language:                                                                                 | English.....1<br>Xhosa.....2<br>Sotho.....3<br>Zulu.....4<br>Tswana.....5<br>Pedi.....6<br>Tsonga.....7<br>Venda.....8<br>Afrikaans.....9<br>Other (Specify).....10 |
| 4 | Rank:                                                                                          | .....<br>.....[ ][ ]                                                                                                                                                |
| 5 | Country of DEPLOYMENT<br>(eg. Burundi, Sudan, DRC)<br>Please list your most recent deployment. | .....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....[ ][ ]                                                                                                                              |
| 6 | Date of Deployment                                                                             | ____/____/____<br>Y Y Y Y M M D D                                                                                                                                   |
| 7 | Date of Return from Deployment                                                                 | ____/____/____<br>Y Y Y Y M M D D                                                                                                                                   |

|   | SECTION 2:                                                     | BECOMING A PEACEKEEPER                                                                                                                                             |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8 | What was your initial motivation for becoming a UN peacekeeper | Personal/Humanitarian Interest .....1<br>Financial Reasons.....2<br>Career Aspirations.....3<br>SANDF Instruction.....4<br>Other (Specify).....5<br>.....<br>..... |
|   |                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                    |

|    | SECTION 3:                                                                            | COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT                                                                           |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14 | Did you come into contact with the local population?                                  | Frequently.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Never.....3                                              |
| 15 | How would you rate the level of acceptance you experienced from the local population? | Highly accepted.....1<br>Accepted.....2<br>Somewhat accepted.....3<br>Not accepted at all.....4 |
| 16 | At any point during deployment, did you                                               | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                           |



|    |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                    |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | participate in non-military activities (eg. helping at schools)?                                             |                                                                                                                    |
| 17 | If yes, did locals welcome your help and support?                                                            | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                     |
| 18 | Do you think the women in your unit made friends with local women?                                           | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                                              |
| 19 | If yes, what do you think was the nature of the women's friendships with local women?                        | Buying goods.....1<br>Socialising.....2<br>Collecting information.....3<br>Other (specify).....4<br>.....<br>..... |
| 20 | Do you think that local women are more responsive and trusting of women peacekeepers than male peacekeepers? | Strongly agree.....1<br>Agree .....2<br>Disagree .....3<br>Strongly disagree.....4                                 |

|    |                                                                                                                 |                                       |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|    | <b>SECTION 4:</b>                                                                                               | <b>GENDER AND THE UN</b>              |
| 21 | Were you at any time deployed to operate in combat areas?                                                       | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                 |
| 22 | Do you think that women peacekeepers should operate in combat areas?                                            | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2 |
| 23 | Do you think that women peacekeepers are treated differently from men?                                          | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2 |
| 24 | Are you familiar with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Gender and Peacekeeping?                | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                 |
| 25 | Did the UN discuss or distribute information that talks about women & the SCR 1325?                             | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2 |
| 26 | Did the UN/SANDF offer any support to the women in your unit, relating to problems women might encounter in the | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2 |



|    |                                                                                                                               |                       |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
|    | field?                                                                                                                        |                       |
| 27 | Did the unit undergo pre-deployment training on the specific needs of women in combat environments/peacekeeping environments? | Yes.....1<br>No.....0 |

|    | SECTION 5:                                                                                                                      | WORKING UNDER PRESSURE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 28 | Did you at any point during your deployment experience a high level of fear or threat to your personal safety?                  | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 29 | Were you exposed to any emotionally stressful events/situations (eg. seeing wounded civilians or violence against local women)? | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 30 | Did you feel like you were physically more able to serve in the mission than female mission staff?                              | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 31 | Did you ever feel unable to help local people with any problems they might have experienced?                                    | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 32 | Did you ever discuss your feelings of fear/threat/helplessness with anyone?                                                     | a) With military personnel.....Yes 1 No 0<br>b) With friends in military.....Yes 1 No 0<br>c) Upon return with family/friends.....Yes 1 No 0<br>d) With nobody.....Yes 1 No 0<br>e) Not applicable.....Yes 1 No 0                                                                      |
| 33 | Do you think that women peacekeepers are more likely to experience stress and psychological or physical pressure than men?      | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 34 | Do you think female peacekeepers' involvement with local people (if any) affect their role as neutral outsiders?                | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 35 | Did you ever feel bored or experience your environment as monotonous?                                                           | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Never.....0                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 36 | What did you do for entertainment/fun?                                                                                          | a) Sport/physical activity with locals.....a) Yes 1 No 0<br>b) Sport/physical activity with fellow personnel.....b) Yes 1 No 0<br>c) Socialising with locals.....c) Yes 1 No 0<br>d) Socialising with fellow personnel.....d) Yes 1 No 0<br>e) Other.....e) Yes 1 No 0<br>Specify..... |



|    |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                    |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                                                                    | .....<br>.....                                                                                     |
| 37 | Did you get to learn about the local culture, language and lifestyle?                              | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                              |
| 38 | Do you think that women peacekeepers experienced the mission differently from male personnel?      | Strongly agree.....1<br>Agree .....2<br>Disagree .....3<br>Strongly disagree.....4                 |
| 39 | Do you think that male peacekeepers deal better with stress and pressure than female peacekeepers? | Always.....1<br>Sometimes.....2<br>Unsure.....3<br>Never.....0                                     |
| 40 | Do you think that the mission you served in fulfilled its mandate?                                 | Strongly agree.....1<br>Agree somewhat.....2<br>Disagree somewhat.....3<br>Strongly disagree.....4 |
| 41 | Did your deployment fulfil your original motivation to serve as peacekeeper (Refer to Question 8)? | Yes.....1<br>No.....0                                                                              |
| 42 | Do you think that women belong in peacekeeping missions?                                           | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                              |
| 43 | Do you think the women who served during your deployment are ready for redeployment?               | Yes.....1<br>No.....0<br>Unsure.....2                                                              |

Thank you for taking part in this study