The gender mainstreaming gap: Security Council resolution 1325 and UN peacekeeping mandates

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The gender mainstreaming gap: Security Council resolution 1325 and UN peacekeeping mandates

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ABSTRACT
In response to women’s frequent marginalization in conflict settings, the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2000. It called for including a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and for enhancing women’s participation in all aspects of post-conflict reconstruction. This article contributes to the empirical literature on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, examining the extent of gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping mandates. Situated in a theoretical framework of gradual norm cascades, it hypothesizes that UNSCR 1325 has increased gender content in mandates, but selectively so. Statistical analyses of an original dataset covering all 71 UN peacekeeping operations from 1948 until 2014 reveal that gender-mainstreamed mandates are more likely in conflicts with high levels of sexual violence. In designing gendered peacekeeping mandates, actors thus appear to be responsive to cues about the salience of a very visible, albeit narrow, gender issue emanating from the respective conflict rather than being guided by the universalist norms of women’s participation entrenched in UNSCR 1325.

This article takes stock of the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, with a focus on gender content in peacekeeping mandates. Authorized in 2000, the milestone resolution formally acknowledged the marginalization of women in (post-) conflict settings and called for UN peacekeeping operations to be gender-mainstreamed. According to UN Women, gender mainstreaming encompasses ‘ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities – policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects’. ¹

In line with ‘attention to the goal of gender equality’ in the target state(s), the resolution also called for greater women’s representation and participation at all levels of decision making in conflict prevention, management, resolution

¹UN Women, ‘Gender Mainstreaming’.

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and in peace processes. It is worth noting that the stipulations of UNSCR 1325, and hence the focus of this study, are women-centric. The limitations of such a narrow view of gender mainstreaming are discussed in the concluding section.

Existing research attests to an unsystematic implementation of UNSCR 1325. References to gender in peace agreements have moderately increased, growth in women’s participation in peace operations has been modest and concentrated primarily in civilian positions, while female military personnel tend to deploy to low-risk conflicts. The case of Liberia illustrates that the track record of gender mainstreaming in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives is also mixed.

Contributing to the empirical literature on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, this article tackles the question: how has the landmark resolution affected the gender content of UN peacekeeping operation (UNPKO) mandates? The critical reader may question the significance of studying mandates rather than their implementation on the ground, which may be compromised by budget constraints, personnel shortages or poor leadership. I argue that a closer look at mandate content is important for two reasons. First, in a context of fledgling international norms of women’s participation, formal gender stipulations are arguably a prerequisite for truly gender-mainstreamed missions. Second, studying peacekeeping mandates – the result of negotiations involving major international actors – elucidates the pervasiveness of these norms at the highest level of international politics.

A cursory exploration reveals that not all UNPKO mandates crafted after 2000 reflect the spirit of UNSCR 1325. While the United Nations/African Union Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) considers gender issues throughout most aspects of its mandate, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) does not mention women or gender beyond a reference to UNSCR 1325. Both conflicts take place in the same geo-spatial context. However, while the high levels of sexual violence in the Darfur conflict have attracted substantial attention in UN, NGO and other third party reports, sexual violence in the less-publicized Abyei conflict has not emerged as a prominent issue. Do levels of sexual violence in conflict matter when it comes to gender-mainstreamed peacekeeping mandates?

Situated in a theoretical framework of norm cascades, this article hypothesizes that gender content in UNPKO mandates has increased after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, but that its implementation has been selective.

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2Gender mainstreaming is a concept with many definitions; see, for example, Caglar, ‘Gender Mainstreaming’. The definition employed in this article centralizes the goal of gender equality in the target state rather than adopting a purely organizational approach.
3Bell and O’Rourke, ‘Peace Agreements or Pieces of Paper’.
4Olsson et al., ‘Women’s Participation in International Operations’.
5Karim and Beardsley, ‘Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing’.
6Basini, ‘Gender Mainstreaming Unravelled’.
7Askin, ‘Holding Leaders Accountable’.
Specifically, I posit that actors involved in mandate design are responsive to cues about the salience of gender in a conflict: when sexual violence – a highly visible gender issue – is prevalent, gender-mainstreamed mandates are more likely.

The following sections review the UN response to the marginalization of women in conflict, followed by an elaboration of the theoretical framework, and a presentation of an original dataset recording the gender mainstreaming of all UNPKO mandates from 1948 until 2014. Ordered probit analyses reveal that, despite an overall increase in gender content of UNPKO mandates, sexual violence is the stronger predictor of gender-mainstreamed mandates. The final sections discuss the substantive implications of the findings and suggest avenues for future research.

**Gender, conflict and the UN response**

Violent conflict is usually gendered, exhibiting distinctive patterns of agency and victimization. Men tend to be the primary actors, perpetrating most of the violence. As such, they are perceived to be particularly threatening and are therefore specifically targeted in killings, even as civilians. A second dimension of gendered patterns of violence in conflict is sexual violence, which primarily targets women. While existing research reveals great variation in the prevalence and the drivers of sexual violence in conflict, warring parties may adopt it systematically as part of a war strategy. In addition, women in conflict are disproportionately affected by gender inequalities in poverty, malnutrition and access to education, a precarious economic and employment situation, displacement and human trafficking. Maternal health deteriorates as a consequence of civil war, especially in the poorest states, and women’s post-conflict mortality exceeds that of men. Post-civil war orders often exclude women from the top levels of power, even if they have been active peacemakers at the local level.

In response to the gendered nature and consequences of conflict, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in

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8Jones, *Gendercide and Genocide*; Carpenter, ‘Recognizing Gender-Based Violence’.
9For an insightful discussion of the overlooked dimensions of sexual violence against boys and men as well as women’s involvement in perpetration of sexual violence in conflict, see Carpenter, ‘Recognizing Gender-Based Violence’.
12Bop, ‘Women in Conflicts’; Buvinic et al., ‘Violent Conflict and Gender Inequality’.
13Urdal and Che, ‘War and Gender Inequalities’.
15Mazurana et al., *Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping*; Handrahan, ‘Conflict, Gender, Ethnicity’; Sørensen, *Women and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. 
2000. Its most important commitments, for the purposes of this study, are the expressed ‘willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations,’\(^\text{16}\) a call for greater women’s representation in UN missions and the desire to ensure greater women’s participation at all decision-making levels with respect to conflict prevention, management, resolution as well as in peace processes. The resolution emphasizes the importance of addressing the specific needs of women and girls in (post-)conflict situations, supporting local women’s peace efforts and protecting the human rights of women and girls ‘as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary’.\(^\text{17}\) In sum, UNSCR 1325 is a broad endorsement of a quantitatively and qualitatively improved role of women in post-conflict situations.

The Security Council passed a series of further resolutions under the Women, Peace and Security umbrella in subsequent years. Resolution 1820 (2008) condemned the use of sexual violence as a strategy of war, called on all parties to prevent and combat sexual violence in conflict and identified (implicitly, through frequent references) women and girls as the primary targets of sexual violence.\(^\text{18}\) The commitments of UNSCR 1325, but especially those of 1820 were reiterated and expanded in subsequent resolutions (1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242).

Previous research has identified a reluctant implementation of UNSCR 1325. Five years after its adoption, Hudson found evidence of emerging although uneven procedural changes in six UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, Asia and Europe.\(^\text{19}\) An increasing number of states have developed national action plans based on the resolution, although with varying levels of complexity.\(^\text{20}\) Despite increases in the number of references to women in peace agreements, the overall impact of the resolution on peace processes has been described as modest and unsystematic.\(^\text{21}\) While women’s participation in third-party peace operations has moderately increased overall, this is particularly true for civilian rather than military positions and considerable variation persists across missions.\(^\text{22}\) Female military personnel in peacekeeping operations tends to deploy to low-risk conflicts rather than to those where the need for a gender perspective is greatest; that is, where levels of sexual violence are high or gender inequality is particularly rampant, even if the corresponding mandate includes a gender component.\(^\text{23}\) A careful analysis of the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration


\(^{17}\)Ibid., 3.


\(^{19}\)Hudson, ‘En-Gendering UN Peacekeeping Operations’.


\(^{21}\)Bell and O’Rourke, ‘Peace Agreements or Pieces of Paper’.

\(^{22}\)Olsson et al., ‘Women’s Participation in International Operations’.

\(^{23}\)Karim and Beardsley, ‘Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing’.
process in Liberia reveals considerable shortcomings in addressing the needs of women in the latter two components.²⁴

The unsystematic implementation of UNSCR 1325 has been variously blamed on insufficient commitment, on limitations of the resolution itself, on structural or on ideational factors. The first results in a call for additional capacity-building and norm-altering efforts aimed at overcoming structural impediments to women’s participation.²⁵ Barrow criticizes, second, the very essence of UNSCR 1325 as not radical enough to effect significant change in traditional conceptions of gender in international law, where the view of women as victims worthy of protection remains predominant.²⁶ An analysis of UN Security Council resolutions passed for specific countries reveals an increase primarily in language relating to women’s protection.²⁷ Third, insufficient conceptual coherence between departments, persistent bias against gender equality and a lack of efficient systems management and evaluation²⁸ emerge as major obstacles to gender mainstreaming within the UN system. Finally, the perception that UN Security Council resolutions reflect the liberal interests of the industrialized North has compromised the success of UNSCR 1325.²⁹

**Mandate content**

This article makes a contribution to the empirical literature on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, examining gender language in UNPKO mandates. The existing literature on the determinants of peacekeeping mandates is quite scarce, possibly because the mandate design process is not very transparent and thus difficult to trace. Given the institutional context in which UNPKO mandates are crafted and the highly consensual nature of peacekeeping, a plethora of actors are involved. These are the Security Council members, which ultimately approve the mandate, but also the United Nations Secretariat, other state actors, regional and inter-governmental actors and the parties to the conflict.³⁰

The one factor affecting mandate content that emerges from the literature is the relationship between the actors involved in mandate design. Allen and Yuen have shown that the political affinity between the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council and the target states affects the complexity and specificity of mandates: greater P5 interest in a conflict-affected state yields more flexible mandates requiring less Security Council

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²⁴Basini, ‘Gender Mainstreaming Unravelled’.
²⁵Binder et al., ‘Empty Words or Real Achievement?’
²⁶Barrow, ‘UN Security Council Resolutions’.
²⁷Black, ‘Mainstreaming Resolution 1325?’
²⁹Tryggestad, ‘Trick or Treat?’
oversight. The ties that the P5 enjoy with parties involved in a conflict have also been linked to UNPKO deployment: deeper trade relationships are positively associated with the establishment of a peace operation. Similarly, Junk finds that the interests of the heterogeneous parties involved in mandate design tend to determine the organizational form of the peace operation specified in the mandate.

**Theory: slowly cascading gender norms and norm contention**

This study analyses how UNSCR 1325 has affected gender mainstreaming in UNPKO mandates. The first expectation is straightforward and probably uncontroversial: a Security Council resolution with the backing of UN actors, a group of committed member states and a noteworthy civil society movement that attended the negotiation of UNSCR 1325 has had a notable impact on subsequent UNPKO mandates.

In its essence, UNSCR 1325 is reflective of massive ideational change that continuously advanced norms of gender equality formally entrenched in the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The 1990s were a turning point for the status of women, with international human rights frameworks being scrutinized for their ability to accommodate the unique situations, needs and rights of women. The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action expressed a commitment to ‘removing all the obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making.’ In one sense, UNSCR 1325 may be regarded as a natural step in the evolution of global gender norms. It was also, however, revolutionary in that it linked gender and the ‘hard’ realm of international security.

Two other changes in the international system amplified the impact of emerging gender norms, as UNSCR 1325 was passed at an opportune time of institutional and ideational overhaul. First, intra-state conflict received an upsurge of attention and constructive engagement in the international system after the cold war. With an end to global bipolarity and the vying for ideological superiority, new civil wars broke out while others emerged for the first time on the agenda of the United Nations. Second, with the cold war gridlock in the Security Council removed, more comprehensive

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33 Junk, ‘Function Follows Form’.
34 Shepherd, ‘Power and Authority’; Hill et al., ‘Nongovernmental Organizations’ Role’.
37 Tryggestad, ‘Trick or Treat?’
peacekeeping operations became the norm. The international community, and the ways it reacted to violent conflict in a concerted manner, were undergoing fundamental changes. As periods of transition, when societies reinvent themselves and are more susceptible to different pressures, create favourable conditions for the consolidation of new norms, the international context lends further impetus to the gender mainstreaming agenda. These considerations yield the first hypothesis:

H1: UNSCR 1325 has had a positive impact on the gender mainstreaming of UN peacekeeping operation mandates.

Nevertheless, normative change does not occur instantaneously. Finnemore and Sikkink introduce the model of a three-stage life cycle of international norms. In the first stage, norm entrepreneurs formulate a new norm and persuade a critical mass of states to adopt it. Once a tipping point has been reached, the norm cascades to other states, which initially comply for strategic reasons. In the final stage, the norm is internalized and assumes a ‘taken-for-granted quality’. As Finnemore and Sikkink neither consider eventual norm internalization inevitable nor specify a typical time frame for a norm cascade, the theory allows for a dynamic and non-deterministic understanding of norm diffusion. This makes the model primarily suitable for retrospective analysis rather than for prediction. I propose that the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in response to massive lobbying efforts represents the tipping point completing the first stage in the norm life cycle. The formulation of national action plans (NAPs) based on UNSCR 1325 serves as a useful indicator of the subsequent norm cascade process. With 55 states, representing all regions, having developed an NAP, the gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations norm is currently passing through the second stage.

Naturally, to the extent that UNSCR 1325 applies specifically to peacekeeping contexts, its gender mainstreaming and gender equality provisions apply to more than individual states. As discussed, the actors influencing UNPKO mandates comprise also the Security Council, the United Nations Secretariat, regional and inter-governmental actors and the parties to the conflict. The highly consensual nature of UN peacekeeping thus creates numerous points of possible resistance to nascent gender mainstreaming norms in the mandate design process. The involvement of the bureaucratic United Nations Secretariat housing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is a further complicating factor. International organizations tend to develop their own cultures and dynamics and have a tendency to be ‘unresponsive

38Simmons, Mobilizing for Human Rights; Moravcsik, ‘Origins of Human Rights Regimes’.
39Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics’.
40Shepherd, ‘Power and Authority’; Hill et al., ‘Nongovernmental Organizations’.
to their environments, obsessed with their own rules. Established procedures determining peacekeeping mandate design are therefore slow to change in response to new prescriptions from the Security Council. Finally, feminist scholars have pointed to the various ways in which political institutions create social hierarchies around gender, espousing male-dominated procedures and informal structures. The observed anti-gender equality bias in the UN system can be understood in this light.

In sum, UNSCR 1325 has not yet assumed 'taken for granted' status; that is, it has not yet become part of the informal rules and logics of the United Nations system or been internalized by its member states to the extent that gender-mainstreamed programming would enter into UN peacekeeping mandates by subconscious default. Instead, it is likely that the actors involved in designing these mandates have tackled gender mainstreaming on an ad hoc basis, responsive to cues emanating from the respective context. This raises a critical question: do certain features of a conflict make gender mainstreaming in the corresponding mandate more likely? I expect that the more gender appears on the radar of the international community as salient in a conflict, the more likely that conflict is to receive a UNPKO mandate gender-mainstreamed in line with UNSCR 1325. Sexual violence in conflict is conceivably the most visible gender issue, given the immense attention afforded to it in global activism, overall policy discourse and in several Security Council resolutions passed after 1325 (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242).

Sexual violence is an important but narrow gender issue in conflict, where patterns of male-dominated fighting and women’s marginalization create gender disparities in the social, economic and political spheres. The focus on sexual violence in the post-1325 Security Council resolutions, many of which (1820, 1888, 1960, 2106) do not emphasize the importance of gender mainstreaming and women’s participation, may thus distract from core tenets of UNSCR 1325 pertaining to women’s participation. Barrow warns of ‘diluting the crystallization of important norms on women, peace and security, which are aimed at both empowering and protecting women’. In this sense, the post-1325 resolutions exacerbate tensions between new norms of strengthening women’s agency and traditional conceptions of gender, which attribute victim status to women and prioritize their protection.

Patterns of women peacekeepers’ deployment to low-risk conflicts and North–South clashes over normative values are emblematic of such norm contention. Karim and Beardsley further find that the salience of gender

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43 See, for example, Acker, ‘From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions’; Chappell and Waylen, ‘Gender and the Hidden Life’.
46 Karim and Beardsley, ‘Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing’.
47 Tryggestad, ‘Trick or Treat?’
protection norms in contributing states plays an important role in accounting for low women’s participation in peace operations. 48 Similarly, while an increasingly comprehensive understanding of gender and security has entered into peace agreements, protection from sexual violence is particularly prevalent. 49 In the worst case, a heavy focus on sexual violence and women’s protection risks reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes. At best, countervailing gender norms may further contribute to an unsystematic consideration of gender issues in peacekeeping mandates, resulting in a halting internalization of the comprehensive gender norms articulated in UNSCR 1325. From this discussion emerges the second hypothesis:

H2: Gender mainstreaming of UN peacekeeping operations is more likely when sexual violence in conflict is high.

Naturally, high prevalence of sexual violence in a conflict is not tantamount to this emerging as a major issue for the international community. For the purposes of this study, this is a relatively minor concern for two reasons. First, the data on sexual violence in conflict used50 have been coded based on US State Department reports. It is plausible to assume that awareness of sexual violence held by the USA will diffuse to other international actors via the institutional context of the UN, not least through the expert-staffed Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and other international fora. A potential for bias certainly exists in that the data may partly capture third-party awareness rather than actual levels of sexual violence. Purely for the purposes of this article, however, this is not a major limitation: for the second hypothesis to operate, perceptions of levels of sexual violence are more relevant than actual levels.

Second, human rights organizations publicize widespread sexual violence in conflict and actively pursue the matter within United Nations bodies. For example, both Amnesty International51 and Human Rights Watch52 published reports on the prevalence of sexual violence in the Darfur conflict in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Between 2004 and July 2007, when UNAMID was authorized, international human rights organizations enjoying consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council or the Human Rights Council submitted eight statements condemning the sexual violence in the Darfur conflict and calling the bodies to action.53 In

48Karim and Beardsley, ‘Ladies Last’.
49Ellerby, ‘(En)gendered Security?’
50Cohen, ‘Explaining Rape during Civil War’.
51Amnesty International, ‘Sudan: Darfur’.
52Human Rights Watch, ‘Sexual Violence and its Consequences’.
combination with the increasing ‘newsworthiness’ of sexual violence, this kind of activism and awareness-raising is likely to enhance mobilization around sexual violence in conflict as a core gender concern within the United Nations system.

The critical reader will rightly lament that treating the issue of gender, peace and security exclusively with women in mind defies the underlying notion of gender mainstreaming. Gender is not synonymous with women; it refers equally to men. The massacres of Srebrenica stand as a tragic reminder to the fact that civilian men experience gender-specific violence of the most lethal kind in conflict. These vulnerabilities deserve explicit attention in truly gender-mainstreamed mandates. For the purposes of assessing the implementation of UNSCR 1325, however, this article necessarily has to adopt the women-centric perspective embodied in the resolution.

The Gender Mainstreaming in UNPKO Mandates Dataset

The Gender Mainstreaming in UNPKO Mandates Dataset includes all 71 UN peacekeeping operation mandates from 1948 to 2014, coded on an ordinal scale\textsuperscript{54} for their extent of gender mainstreaming based on information provided on the United Nations’ Peacekeeping online portal (http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping).

The first document used in determining the extent of gender mainstreaming was the resolution authorizing the respective peacekeeping operation. With one exception (the First United Nations Emergency Force, which was authorized by the General Assembly), these are Security Council resolutions. In cases where the authorizing resolution contains references to external documents (usually reports by the UN Secretary General) stipulating the details of the mandate or when the mandate was specified in a separate resolution shortly after the authorizing resolution, the relevant documents were included in the analysis. Only the initial, authorizing resolutions were considered.

In coding the UNPKO mandates according to their gender mainstreaming content, I scanned each document for references to ‘gender’, ‘women’, ‘woman’ and ‘female’ and evaluated the context in which each of these terms is used. When references to gender occur in accordance with gender mainstreaming, that is, when the passage includes references to women’s participation or to a gender perspective, I proceeded in a second step to evaluate how comprehensive such commitments are in relation to the overall scope of the mandate. When gender mainstreaming content relates to almost all the areas comprising the mandate, I assigned a coding of 3. This happened

\textsuperscript{54}Thus offering more nuance than the dichotomous coding by Karim and Beardsley, ‘Female Peacekeepers and Gender Balancing’.
only once (UNAMID in Darfur). While several mandates do include gender mainstreaming content, it is usually limited to one or two out of many areas comprising the mandate (thus receiving a coding of 2). References to women or gender without gender mainstreaming content received a coding of 1. The coding scheme employed to record the extent of gender mainstreaming in each mandate is as follows:

0 – no gender content
1 – mention of women or gender, but not in a manner reflective of gender mainstreaming
2 – partial gender mainstreaming in accordance with UNSCR 1325, restricted to few areas
3 – full gender mainstreaming across (nearly) all areas of the mandate.

Representative excerpts from authorizing resolutions provide a deeper illustration of the coding scheme.

**Coding of 0**

Mandates in this category make no mention of gender or women whatsoever. The vast majority of pre-UNSCR 1325 mandates (49 out of 52) fall in this category. Authorizing resolutions in the post-2000 period were coded 0 when they mention only UNSCR 1325 and follow-up resolutions in the absence of any additional reference to gender or women. This is the case for UNISFA in the Sudan (2011). UNSMIS in Syria (2012) made neither reference to UNSCR 1325 or to women/gender.

**Coding of 1**

Mandates in this category make reference to gender or women, but not in a manner reflective of gender mainstreaming; that is, these references do not refer to women’s participation, women’s agency or a goal of gender equality. Most commonly, mandates falling in this category highlight the need to protect women (and girls) from violence and/or highlight the vulnerability of women. They may also include very general and unspecific references to gender dimensions in mandates. The following formulations are representative of this category:

To facilitate humanitarian assistance and human rights monitoring, with particular attention to vulnerable groups including women, children and demobilized child soldiers. *(MONUC, Democratic Republic of the Congo)*

To contribute to the monitoring and to the promotion and protection of human rights, with particular attention to sexual and gender-based violence,

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and to recommend action to the competent authorities, with a view to fighting impunity. (MINURCAT, Central African Republic)\textsuperscript{56}

Underlines the importance of including in UNAMSIL personnel with appropriate training in international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, including child and gender-related provisions, negotiation and communication skills, cultural awareness and civilian–military coordination. (UNAMSIL, Sierra Leone)\textsuperscript{57}

**Coding of 2**

Mandates falling in this category are characterized by partial gender mainstreaming in accordance with UNSCR 1325, restricted to a few areas of the mandate. Typically, gender mainstreaming content in this category consists of activities ensuring women’s participation in politics or other areas. Calls for treating gender as a cross-cutting issue, without specific stipulations, are also characteristic of mandates in this category. Most commonly, commitments to women’s agency and participation exist alongside pledges to their protection from (sexual) violence, thus reflecting the essence of UNSCR 1325. The following formulations are representative of gender mainstreaming content in individual areas of the mandate:

To devise, facilitate and provide technical assistance to the electoral process and make all necessary preparations, in support of the Transitional Authorities and working on an urgent basis with the National Electoral Authority, for the holding of free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections, including the full and effective participation of women at all levels and at an early stage. (MINUSCA, Central African Republic)\textsuperscript{58}

Supporting the Government of the Republic of South Sudan in developing and implementing a national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy, in cooperation with international partners with particular attention to the special needs of women and child combatants. (UNMISS, South Sudan)\textsuperscript{59}

Requests MINUSMA to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to assist the transitional authorities of Mali in ensuring the participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels and at an early stage of the stabilization phase, including the security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, as well as in the national political dialogue and electoral processes. (MINUSMA, Mali)\textsuperscript{60}

**Coding of 3**

Mandates in this category are characterized by gender mainstreaming (in the spirit of the previous category) extending to nearly all areas of the mandate.
and with a higher degree of specificity. At the time of writing, only UNAMID in South Sudan falls in this category. UNAMID’s mandate is laid out in paragraphs 54 and 55 of the 30-page Report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the Hybrid Operation in Darfur. It calls explicitly on UNAMID to ‘ensure an adequate human rights and gender presence capacity’ and ‘to assist in harnessing the capacity of women to participate in the peace process, including through political representation, economic empowerment and protection from gender-based violence’. What ultimately earned this mandate a score of 3 on the gender mainstreaming scale is the additional inclusion of a gender component, outlined in paragraphs 96 and 97 of the Report. This gender component is tasked with ensuring gender mainstreaming in all aspects of UNAMID’s work, by providing leadership, guidance and training and awareness-raising. Further, the gender component is to cooperate with other actors ‘to ensure the participation of women in all decision-making structures established by the Darfur Peace Agreement’.

Naturally, gender refers to both men and women. Especially in light of the targeting of battle-age males to be killed in conflict, true gender mainstreaming would at a minimum have to pay special attention to the protection of male civilians. As the goal of this article is to assess the implementation of the women-centric stipulations of UNSCR 1325, however, the gender mainstreaming coding captures references to women and gender only. An additional dichotomous variable codes any reference to men in a mandate.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis consists of two sections testing the hypotheses that gender mainstreaming has increased after UNSCR 1325 was passed (hypothesis 1) and that gender mainstreaming is more likely in conflicts with high levels of sexual violence (hypothesis 2). Within each section, I first visually present the data in the form of scatter plots. Ordered probit analyses then provide a more robust insight into how the explanatory variables relate to gender mainstreaming content in UNPKO mandates, controlling for possible confounding factors emanating from the target state(s) and from the dynamics of the international system.

The analysis includes, first, variables controlling for whether the mandate is in response to an intra-state conflict and whether the mandate is multidimensional. In intra-state conflict, state control is often compromised, which requires considerable institutional reforms in the reconstruction phase. This expands the issue areas where gender mainstreaming becomes relevant.

62 Ibid., 24.
With intra-state conflicts rising on the Security Council’s agenda around the same time that UNSCR 1325 was being negotiated (see Theory section), including the dichotomous intra-state conflict variable is important to control for the possibility that the altered conflict patterns are in fact driving changes in gender content. While intra-state conflicts increase the number of issue areas in which gender mainstreaming becomes relevant, inter-state mandates could for example include stipulations regarding the participation of male and female peacekeepers or the engagement with male and female soldiers and civilians. Controlling for multidimensional mandates is of theoretical interest as expanding the thematic scope of the mission and giving it a decidedly more transformative orientation increases the areas in which gender-sensitive programming is commonly integrated into the mandate.

Further, and in line with the theoretical expectation that actors include gender mainstreaming content in UNPKO mandates in response to cues about the salience of gender in the specific case, women’s empowerment in society is another control variable of interest. V-Dem’s women’s civil society organization participation indicator captures this dimension.\textsuperscript{63} The less empowered women are in the target state(s), the more urgent we may expect gender mainstreaming concerns to be. Finally, I include the lowest political affinity score\textsuperscript{64} between any target state and any of the five permanent members as an additional control variable. Table 1 presents the summary statistics.

All models have been tested for multicollinearity. The results are robust to alternative model specifications controlling for V-Dem’s women’s civil society participation and electoral democracy indices and the indicators power distributed by gender, power distributed between social groups, the Freedom House civil liberty score, freedom from torture, fertility and the imputed Polity2 score.\textsuperscript{65}

The impact of UNSCR 1325

A visual exploration of the data (Figure 1) reveals a clear trend towards greater gender-sensitivity in UNPKO mandates after 2000. The four (non-mainstreamed) references to gender in the 1990s may very well reflect the ongoing lobbying and negotiation efforts in international politics, which culminated in the authorization of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000. Even after the

\textsuperscript{63}Coppedge et al., ‘V-Dem Country-Year Dataset V5’. In cases where a UNPKO affects more than one target state, the models presented here include the average value for the women’s CSO participation index across all affected states, but are robust to alternative specifications including the lowest and highest value across target states.

\textsuperscript{64}Voeten et al., ‘United Nations Assembly Voting Data’.

\textsuperscript{65}Coppedge et al., ‘V-Dem Country-Year Dataset V5’.
Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender mainstreaming (n=71)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-UNSCR 1325</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidimensional mandate</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-state conflict</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence in conflict (n=33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s CSO participation (n=67)</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political affinity (n=57)</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 1. All 71 UNPKOs by type of conflict.](image)

resolution was passed, however, all four gender mainstreaming categories have been represented.

Only two mandates made any reference to men: the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) authorized in 2002, and the United Nations Truce Observation Organization (UNTSO), established in the Middle East in 1948. Whereas references in UNAMA’s mandate are limited to the inclusive term ‘men and women’, UNTSO calls on participants in the conflict
to ensure that men of military age not be subjected to military training or mobilization. This early acknowledgement of gendered patterns of agency in conflict remains the only one across all UNPKO mandates.

The descriptive statistics suggest that gender mainstreaming of UNPKO mandates has increased markedly after UNSCR 1325 was passed. Ordered probit analyses give a more robust insight into how UNSCR 1325, as opposed to other factors, has impacted the gender content of UNPKO mandates. Model 1 (Table 2) controls for intra-state conflict, multidimensional mandate and women’s civil society participation in the target state(s); due to missing values on the control variables, four cases are not included in the analysis. Model 2 includes political affinity, with intra-state conflict removed from the analysis to avoid overspecification.66 Due to missing data, the N drops to 57 in this analysis. Models 3 and 4 repeat the two analyses for intra-state conflicts.

In support of hypothesis 1, UNSCR 1325 has a significant positive effect on the gender content in UNPKO mandates across all four models. Post-estimation calculations of the predicted probabilities67 allow for a substantively meaningful interpretation of this impact: a UN peacekeeping operation authorized after UNSCR 1325 decreases the chance of the mandate containing no reference to women or gender (coding of 0) from .82 to .03. The probability of non-gender-mainstreamed references to women or gender (coding of 1) increases from .16 to .24, and the probability of partial gender mainstreaming (coding of 2) from .01 to .65. The probability of full gender mainstreaming (coding of 3) rises from 0 to .08 after the adoption of UNSCR 1325.

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**Table 2.** Ordered probit models to test hypothesis 1 (impact of UNSCR 1325).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3) intra-state</th>
<th>(4) intra-state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNSCR 1325</td>
<td>2.834***</td>
<td>2.488***</td>
<td>2.718***</td>
<td>2.423***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.553)</td>
<td>(0.639)</td>
<td>(0.549)</td>
<td>(0.638)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidimensional mandate</td>
<td>1.082**</td>
<td>1.467**</td>
<td>1.012**</td>
<td>1.559**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.501)</td>
<td>(0.614)</td>
<td>(0.505)</td>
<td>(0.676)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-state conflict</td>
<td>1.269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.955)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s CSO participation</td>
<td>−0.520*</td>
<td>−0.147</td>
<td>−0.525*</td>
<td>−0.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.286)</td>
<td>(0.365)</td>
<td>(0.289)</td>
<td>(0.386)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest affinity with P5</td>
<td>−3.280</td>
<td></td>
<td>−4.849</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.734)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.206)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi²</td>
<td>52.74</td>
<td>49.42</td>
<td>40.39</td>
<td>41.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01.

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66 The results are robust to the inclusion of intra-state conflict instead of the multidimensional mandate.

67 Based on model 1 for intra-state conflicts and multidimensional mandates with women’s CSO participation held at its mean.
In line with expectations, a multidimensional mandate increases the probability that a UNPKO mandate contains gender content. By contrast, neither intra-state conflict nor political affinity has a statistically significant effect on gender mainstreaming content. Women’s civil society participation in the target state(s) has a marginally significant, positive effect in the two models that do not include the affinity score, suggesting that it does not robustly affect the gender content of UNPKO mandates.

**Sexual violence in conflict**

The results of the previous section strongly suggest that UNSCR 1325 has resulted in more gender-mainstreamed UNPKO mandates. But is this effect universal or is, as per the second hypothesis, gender mainstreaming in UNPKOs more likely when sexual violence emerges as a salient issue in a conflict? The following descriptive analyses are based on 33 intra-state conflicts included in Cohen’s dataset on rape in intra-state conflicts in progress any time between 1980 and 2010. Cohen distinguishes four levels of rape in conflict: systematic (coded 3), widespread (coded 2) and isolated cases of rape (coded 1), as well as no mention of rape (coded 0).

A first look at the data (Figure 2) reveals two noteworthy patterns. First, in those four cases where UNPKO mandates made references to gender at all prior to the adoption of UNSCR 1325, sexual violence in the conflict was systematic. Initially, prevalent sexual violence in conflict thus appears to have offered cues for some gender language in the corresponding UNPKO mandate. Second, of the eight intra-state conflicts receiving a UNPKO in the post-UNSCR 1325 period, four each exhibited widespread and systematic sexual violence. Five of the eight UNPKO mandates cluster in the partial gender mainstreaming category whereas one conflict each with widespread and systematic sexual violence received a UNPKO whose mandate made only non-gender-mainstreamed references to gender. Only UNAMID’s mandate in the Darfur conflict earned a coding for full gender mainstreaming.

An ordered probit analysis elucidates the relationship between the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict and gender-mainstreamed mandate, controlling for other factors. Model 5 (Table 3) includes the ordinal variable sexual violence in addition to the variables from model 3. With a sample size of 33, the results in this section should be interpreted with some caution.

In support of hypothesis 2, sexual violence has a statistically significant positive effect on gender content in UNPKO mandates: with increasing levels of sexual violence, the probability of a (partially) gender-mainstreamed UNPKO mandate increases. Even more important, UNSCR 1325 no longer has a statistically significant, independent effect on gender content in

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68Cohen, ‘Explaining Rape during Civil War’. 
mandates. Figures 3 and 4 visually present the predicted probabilities for the four gender mainstreaming categories across different levels of sexual violence in the pre- and post-UNSCR 1325 periods.69

In the pre-UNSCR 1325 period, systematic sexual violence greatly increased the probability that a UNPKO mandate made references to gender, although not in a manner reflective of gender mainstreaming. In the post-UNSCR 1325 period, widespread and systematic sexual violence considerably reduce the likelihood of non-gender-mainstreamed mentions of

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69For multidimensional mandates with women’s CSO participation held at its mean. Ideally, an interaction model would illuminate this relationship, but the small sample size precludes such an analysis at this stage.
gender while markedly increasing the likelihood of partial gender mainstreaming, which reaches almost .73 when sexual violence is systematic. The likelihood of a fully gender-mainstreamed mandate remains low overall; only when sexual violence in conflict is systematic is there a predicted probability of .22 that the corresponding conflict will receive a fully gender-mainstreamed mandate.

Figure 3. Predicted probabilities: Gender mainstreaming at different levels of sexual violence, pre-UNSCR 1325.

Figure 4. Predicted probabilities: gender mainstreaming at different levels of sexual violence, post-UNSCR 1325.
One caveat should be noted: awareness of the phenomenon of sexual violence in conflict – and systematic efforts to collect pertinent data – has grown over time. Among the conflicts that received a UN peacekeeping operation none in the post-UNSCR 1325 period exhibited isolated or no sexual violence, whereas several in the pre-UNSCR 1325 period did. It is therefore likely that the sexual violence variable absorbs part of the UNSCR 1325 effect in the statistical analysis.

Discussion

While prior to 2000 four UNPKO mandates noted the need for women’s protection, gender-mainstreamed content has increased strongly since UNSCR 1325 was passed. The positive effect of UNSCR 1325 disappears once sexual violence is included in the statistical analysis, however: now, only the level of sexual violence in conflict is a significant predictor of gender mainstreaming content in UNPKO mandates. This is not to say that the resolution does not matter for gender content in UNPKO mandates authorized after 2000 – quite the contrary: without it, we would probably have seen much less gender mainstreaming content. Rather, the core tenets and premises of UNSCR 1325 appear to be activated selectively, based on the salience of a prominent gender issue (sexual violence) in conflict.

In defiance of this general pattern, not all conflicts with systematic sexual violence have received gender-mainstreamed mandates in the post-UNSCR 1325 period. While UNAMID, authorized in Darfur in 2007, received a coding of 3 for full gender mainstreaming, MONUSCO authorized in the DRC in 2010 received a coding of 1. This is despite notoriously high levels of sexual violence earning the DRC the dubious title ‘rape capital of the world’.70 Two possible explanations for such discrepancies come to mind. First, the relationship between sexual violence in conflict and gender mainstreaming of UNPKO mandates may be curvilinear, with extreme cases of sexual violence in conflict producing a focus on the protection of women at the expense of women’s participation. This scenario would showcase the problem of norm contention and the danger of reinforcing traditional gender norms. Second, the extent of gender content may hinge on agency and individuals’ values. Through which channels do actors mobilizing around sexual violence and/or gender-equitable peacebuilding and reconstruction shape United Nations debates, and are actors involved in mandate design more susceptible to messages calling for women’s protection than for their participation? As the statistical analysis cannot capture this dimension of agency, future research is needed.

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70 Turner, Congo, 2.
Another unanswered question is whether the very authorization of UNPKOs relates to levels of sexual violence in conflict. UNPKOs after 2000 were authorized only in response to civil conflicts with widespread and systematic sexual violence, whereas four of the nine civil conflicts not receiving a UNPKO in the same period\textsuperscript{71} were marked by isolated occurrences of sexual violence and five by widespread sexual violence. The small number of observations and the consensual nature of peacekeeping preclude the identification of causality in quantitative analysis, thus necessitating future qualitative research.

While this study examines only mandates, the question of their implementation on the ground is ultimately crucial. Yet what does implementation entail when mandates frequently include rather sweeping calls for the inclusion of a gender dimension in the mission? Given the uniqueness of each context, there is hardly a universal blueprint. At a minimum, however, implementation would require gender focal points and female as well as male personnel in each of the mission’s units and an operational plan with quantifiable benchmarks for gender-equitable outcomes in all dimensions of the mandate. In disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts, for example, the specific needs of both men and women would need to be assessed and addressed,\textsuperscript{72} while support for political processes and national elections should involve an initial assessment of the obstacles facing women (in particular) and the formulation of tangible strategies to enhance women’s political participation, for example, technical or budget support.

In the case of UNAMID, the gender component has been implemented in the form of a Gender Advisory Unit, which incorporates a gender mainstreaming component into the mission through research, analysis, review, capacity-building and technical assistance. It also reaches out to and cooperates with government and civil society actors as well as internally displaced persons and ‘facilitated the establishment of many mechanisms on the ground including Women Legislative Caucuses (WLC), GBV States’ Committees, 1325 Committees in the five Darfur States’.\textsuperscript{73} But while the mission had, as of 2010, the highest share of female police officers (more than 10.5 percent) in any UNPKO mission, most sections and units had still not appointed Gender Focal Points three years in.\textsuperscript{74}

Even some UNPKOs without an initial gender-mainstreamed mandate have had gender advisers, gender focal points or gender assistance components in place (see Figure 5). The authorizing mandate clearly does not inflexibly delineate the gender content of any UN peacekeeping operation. Follow-up resolutions, gender training, mission leadership and cooperation

\textsuperscript{71}As per the data in Cohen, ‘Explaining Rape during Civil War’.
\textsuperscript{72}See, for example, Basini, ‘Gender Mainstreaming Unravelled’.
\textsuperscript{73}‘UNAMID Gender Advisory Unit’.
\textsuperscript{74}‘Department of Peacekeeping Operations, ‘Gender Advisory Team’.
with local women’s civil society organizations also affect gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations in the field.\textsuperscript{75} The complex interplay between official resolutions and actors on the ground, and in particular the question of how leadership in the field may affect subsequent Security Council resolutions and adjustments of mandates is worthy of further research.

\textbf{Conclusion}

In scrutinizing the extent of gender mainstreaming content in UNPKO mandates, this study makes a contribution to the empirical literature on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Examining mandates authorized by the UN Security Council gives insight into the pervasiveness in high politics of the gender norms articulated in the landmark resolution. Simultaneously, given the relatively young age of these norms, specific gender stipulations in a mandate appear to be the best prerequisite for ensuring gender-mainstreamed peacekeeping missions on the ground.

Drawing on Finnemore and Sikkink’s theory of norm cascades,\textsuperscript{76} I theorized at the outset that the norm of gender-mainstreamed peacekeeping operations reached a tipping point with the authorization of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 and subsequently began to cascade within the United Nations system and among member states, hindered by the persisting traction of traditional gender conceptions. The empirical results support the theoretical expectations: rather than unconditionally following the prescriptions of UNSCR

\textsuperscript{75}Hudson, ‘En-Gendering UN Peacekeeping Operations’.

\textsuperscript{76}Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics’.
1325, actors appear to turn to the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict for guidance in designing gender-mainstreamed peacekeeping mandates. This pattern runs counter to the spirit of UNSCR 1325, diluting the universality of norms of women’s participation in post-conflict settings and activating them selectively where a rather narrow gender issue is salient.

This is harmful because, as important an issue as it is, sexual violence captures only one dimension of gendered conflict for women. Women’s socio-economic and political marginalization are common features across (post-)conflict settings. Even a ‘greatest need’ argument would not hold up to scrutiny as the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict is not robustly related to the marginalization of women in political, social and economic life. Relying on levels of sexual violence as a guideline for where women’s empowerment may be more or less necessary is therefore misguided.

Several post-1325 Security Council resolutions focusing narrowly on sexual violence in conflict appear to have contributed to a tension between norms of women’s active participation and conceptions of women as (passive) victims. The apparently still ingrained perception of women as the ‘weaker’ gender requiring protection, epitomized by expressions like ‘women and children’ or ‘women and other vulnerable groups’ is counterproductive to gender mainstreaming. It undermines women’s agency, diminishes their value in society and obscures their right to full and equal participation in society. One case where these dynamics are particularly apparent is MONUSCO’s authorizing mandate in the DRC, which in response to rampant sexual violence emphasizes the protection of women only at the expense of their participation.

One way to counter the selective activation of UNSCR 1325 would be to further strengthen norms of women’s agency and participation by emphasizing their universality in all post-conflict contexts and divorcing these norms from the occurrence of sexual violence. Rather than subsuming the protection of women (and men, for that matter) from sexual violence within the framework of Women, Peace and Security, sexual violence should be incorporated under the protection of civilians in conflict theme. This theme in turn, ought to be expanded to account for the fact that battle-age civilian men are specifically targeted in killings. Such an approach will ultimately require rethinking gender mainstreaming practice. Normatively and formally extending the rights to participation and protection to both men and women is a prerequisite for gender mainstreaming in accordance with the true spirit of the concept, including a full implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Cohen, ‘Explaining Rape during Civil War’.
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