Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)

2022 Report on Results of the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP) Assessment

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors from Cornell GSS Lab and the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia, based on the best available information they have. The report does not necessarily reflect the views of the Armed Forces, Liberia, UN Women, the EIF, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organisations.

The Armed Forces of Liberia have provided corrections or clarifications during the validation workshop. The present report has been validated by the Liberia and the Armed Forces of Liberia and integrates the feedback and insights of a representative group of the Liberia and the Armed Forces of Liberia.
# Contents

Acknowledgements .......................................................... 1
Disclaimer ..................................................................... 1

1) Executive summary ......................................................... 5
   a) Top good practices that can be shared and replicated elsewhere .................................... 5
   b) Top barriers to women’s meaningful participation in UN deployments .......................... 5
   c) Top recommendations to overcome the barriers ............................................................... 6
   d) Recommendation for Regional Partnerships across MOWIP Reports ......................... 6

2) Introduction ................................................................ 7
   a) Rationale ................................................................ 7
   b) Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL): Profile and national characteristics ........................... 8
   c) Liberia’s contribution to peace operations .................................................................... 10

3) Methodology ................................................................. 11
   a) Overview of the MOWIP assessment methodology ....................................................... 11
   b) Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation (KAICT) .......................................... 14
   c) Implementing the MOWIP in the Armed Forces of Liberia ........................................... 15

4) The ten issue areas shaping women’s participation in peace operations in the Armed Forces of Liberia ........................................................................... 16
   Issue area 1: Eligible Pool .................................................. 17
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 17
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 19
      iii. Main recommendations ........................................ 21
   Issue area 2: Deployment Criteria ..................................... 22
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 22
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 24
      iii. Main recommendations ........................................ 27
   Issue area 3: Deployment Selection .................................... 27
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 27
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 28
      iii. Main recommendations ........................................ 30
   Issue area 4: Household Constraints .................................... 31
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 31
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 32
      iii. Main recommendations ........................................ 37
   Issue area 5: Peace Operations Infrastructure ......................... 38
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 38
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 39
      iii. Main recommendations ........................................ 41
   Issue area 6: Peace Operations Experiences .......................... 41
      i. Good practices ....................................................... 41
      ii. Main barriers ....................................................... 42
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue area 7: Career Value</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Good practices</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Main barriers</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Main recommendations</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue area 8: Top Down Leadership</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Good practices</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Main barriers</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Main recommendations</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue area 9: Gender Roles</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Good practices</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Main barriers</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Main recommendations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue area 10: Social Exclusion</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Good practices</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Main barriers</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Main recommendations</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) Gaps between perceptions of barriers and overall assessment 54

6) Conclusions: recommendations to leverage opportunities and overcome barriers 56

   a) Summary 56
      
      Top recommendations to overcome the barriers 56
      Other recommendations to overcome the barriers 57
      Future Research 58
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFL</td>
<td>Armed Forces of Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>Armored Personnel Carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCAF</td>
<td>DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance</td>
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<td>DPO</td>
<td>UN Department for Peace Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFF</td>
<td>Fact-Finding Form (See section 3 on methodology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAICT</td>
<td>Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAIPTC</td>
<td>Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILOBS</td>
<td>Military Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOD</td>
<td>Ministry of Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOWIP</td>
<td>Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Barrier Assessment Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSO</td>
<td>Military Staff Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Sexual Exploitation and Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGBV</td>
<td>Sexual and Gender-Based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPCCs</td>
<td>Troop- and Police- Contributing Countries</td>
</tr>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPS</td>
<td>Women, Peace and Security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) Executive summary

The Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP) assessment for the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) examines the AFL’s ability to deploy women to, and ensure their meaningful participation in, United Nations (UN) peace operations through ten issue areas. It uses three data collection tools, a fact-finding form (FFF), key decision-maker interviews and a survey. The KAICT team undertook the data collection for this project from October 14, 2021 through April 25, 2022. This study shows that the three main barriers to women’s meaningful participation in peace operations are Issue Area 3 deployment selection, Issue Area 5 peace operation infrastructure and Issue Area 10 social exclusion. In the summary, we highlight the best practices, top barriers and top recommendations to overcome the barriers.

a) Top good practices that can be shared and replicated elsewhere

- The AFL has developed pre-recruitment training that is specifically tailored to build the physical fitness of women desirous of enlisting in the AFL. Prior to the recruitment drive that began in January 2022, women interested in applying to be in the Armed Forces of Liberia were given the opportunity to engage in pre-recruitment training. Throughout previous recruitment processes, the AFL noticed that women from urban areas of Liberia tend to do poorly on the physical fitness test during recruitment, but tend to pass the written exam. Conversely, they noticed that women in rural areas tend to do well on the physical test, but poorly on the written exam. Consequently, as of January 2022 round of recruitment, the AFL began holding pre-recruitment “training” in which women from urban areas were able to train for the physical fitness test and women from rural areas were able to take a practice exam for the written test prior to actual recruitment.
- The AFL, along with the MOD, have just passed a Gender Policy. Representatives from the MOD and the UN has begun to travel to different barracks throughout the country to present the Gender Policy to members of the AFL. This type of collaboration is unique to Liberia and is something that can be relied on as a best practice for presenting gender policies to security forces in other contexts.
- The AFL are aware that upon return from deployment, many personnel encounter financial troubles. Consequently, they have begun to employ financial literacy training courses that they offer to personnel when they return from deployment. However, the AFL do not currently have enough monetary resources to be able to implement these courses at a larger scale within the AFL.
- There are prototypes in development for AFL uniforms, called the Military Maternity Uniform, specifically tailored to pregnant women’s bodies. These uniforms could serve as a model for other countries that lack such uniforms.
- AFL senior leadership are enthusiastic about making the AFL gender-inclusive. They have stated on several occasions the importance of having women in the AFL and deployed to peacekeeping operations.

b) Top barriers to women’s meaningful participation in UN deployments

- There are very few women in the AFL. It is estimated that of the 2000 or so soldiers in the AFL, only 80 are women. Resources need to be allocated to recruiting and retaining more women in the AFL. If there are not enough women in the AFL, there are not enough women to be able to deploy to peace operations because most deployments occur through rotating contingents.
- Access to equipment, services, infrastructure, and childcare is lacking. A high number of survey respondents highlighted the inadequacy of services and infrastructure both in Liberia and while on peacekeeping missions. In particular, mental health care is needed at all stages rather than only at specific periods of time: prior to, during and after peacekeeping deployment.
- Many personnel that have been deployed do not feel that they have the adequate testing, computer, language or driving skills that are necessary for deployment.
- There are worries about backlash against women who are perceived to be chosen unfairly to participate in peacekeeping operations. There are practices that exacerbate these perceptions such as women sitting for exams and not men. Furthermore, general harassment of women, including single mothers and their children, continues to be a problem as does men’s fear of being accused of harassment. These perceptions and the continued harassment prevent a cohesive armed forces from developing and create barriers to successful peacekeeping.
• Communication concerning AFL policies and processes (for example, how deployment occurs or that leave is paid) seems to be an especially large challenge. This creates confusion among both male and female personnel and contributes to perceptions of unfair practices—meanwhile personnel are simply not aware of certain practices or policies in the AFL.

c) Top recommendations to overcome the barriers

• The conditions that soldiers face in-country are not always conducive to retention, both of female and male soldiers alike. Improvements to the conditions at the barracks, childcare, increased and consistent pay in addition to more healthcare benefits and childcare subsidies are strongly recommended. Special attention should also be paid to the needs and concerns of single mothers.

• The infrastructure and services for deployment must be improved, in particular access to mental and reproductive care. The mental healthcare of soldiers is imperative to the retention, health and ability of soldiers or carry out their duties to the best of their ability while in the AFL. It is strongly recommended that soldiers have increased access to mental healthcare services not only when they return from deployment, but also pre-deployment and during deployment as well. These services should be made available and be widely advertised to members of the AFL regardless of deployment status. Moreover, women do not have access to free birth control, reproductive healthcare or sanitary products (pads, tampons, etc.) while deployed. Meanwhile, men in the AFL do receive free condoms while on mission. Women should be receiving these resources. It is recommended that there is some oversight to ensure that deployed women receive access to these goods and resources.

• Many personnel who have been deployed stated that they did not feel adequately prepared for the tasks that were required of them in mission. In particular, personnel did not feel that they had the adequate computer, language (ability to speak French) or driving skills that are necessary for the missions that they were deployed to. It is recommended that prior to pre-deployment training there is additional training or in-service training that is offered on written exams, computer skills, language skills (speaking French) and driving skills.

• To prevent backlash against women who were chosen to deploy, especially in the form of harassment, the senior leadership of the AFL should raise awareness about the skills that the selected men and women have so that they are not perceived to be favoring women. They should make sure that all opportunities for deployment are made available to both men and women. Additionally, there should be more awareness and transparency about how deployment selection is conducted. Finally, the AFL should promote more positive bonding activities that showcase women’s skills and abilities.

• The AFL are aware that upon return from deployment, many personnel, including women, encounter financial troubles. There is currently a financial training course offered post deployment. This course is not sufficient for addressing these financial issues, largely because they do not include dependents (who often manage money while the member of the AFL is away on deployment). Consequently, they are interested in offering financial literacy courses to personnel’s dependents (family, etc.) as well. Financial literacy courses should be offered to members of the military as well as their dependents (primarily spouses), so that financial planning within the household can occur prior to peacekeeping deployment in an effort to help soldiers and their families better manage their money.

d) Recommendation for Regional Partnerships across MOWIP Reports

• In order to address the issue of recruitment, additional action needs to be taken to help supplement current efforts. One recommendation is for a south to south knowledge exchange to occur across different African countries that have had an increase in women’s recruitment into the Armed Forces. This knowledge exchange should especially focus on how to advertise recruitment opportunities to women, especially in rural areas. Additionally, a south to south knowledge exchange should include information about how to retain women in the Armed Forces once they are in the military.
2) Introduction

a) Rationale

Liberia’s civil war formally ended in 2003 with the signing of the Accra Peace Agreement. The civil war resulted in the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) which lasted from 2003 through 2018. The presence of UNMIL ushered in not only a period of governmental reform and rebuilding, but also a period of security sector reform as a function of UNMIL’s mandate. The New Armed Forces of Liberia was established in 2006 under the supervision of the United States government and ECOWAS.

As is made evident throughout the report, there are very few women in the AFL, which makes the case of Liberia fairly unique in that there are so few women in the AFL. Of the estimated 2000 troops currently in the AFL, it is estimated that 80 members are women. This is of concern given the extent to which security sector reform in Liberia, particularly under the guise of UNMIL, was focused on gender in some capacity. This is also surprising given the strides that were made in Liberia for women’s rights and women’s empowerment shortly after the war ended. For instance, in response to Liberia adopting a National Action Plan (NAP) to localize plans for implementing the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 a number of changes have occurred. Since the first and second NAP, the government has created the Gender and Security Sector National Taskforce and established a partnership between the AFL and UNMIL to establish gender-sensitive training on HIV/AIDS for peacekeepers. The AFL has adopted a number of reforms such as sexual harassment training, adoption of a maternity leave policy and the appointment of gender focal points. Of particular note are the increase in gendered reforms and the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as Liberia’s first female president in 2006. During this period, there was also a robust civil society movement of women largely responsible for pushing such reforms and mobilizing women to become involved in politics throughout the country.

However, the AFL is now making an effort to recruit more women and prioritize the experiences of women in the AFL in order to ensure fairer recruitment and retention processes in the AFL for female personnel in particular. Some of these efforts include pre-recruitment training that is offered to women before applying to the AFL and a recruitment drive, with the goal of half of the recruits being men and the other half of recruits being women. Additionally, the fact that the AFL applied to the ELSIE Initiative despite such low numbers of women in the forces currently, is an indication of their interest in prioritizing the voices and perspectives of women in the force to better inform their policies and practices going forward.

Lastly, Liberia is also a unique case because of its more recent experience with peacekeeping within the country. The UN Mission in Liberia ended fairly recently, in 2018. The AFL has only recently begun to contribute to UN peacekeeping operations abroad: following a brief contribution to the UN United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria in 2012, the AFL joined the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali in 2013. This makes for a unique situation, one in which the AFL has not only recently undergone security sector reform as a function of UNMIL presence, but also a situation in which individual soldiers in the AFL have lived in a country where they were once “peacekept” and now they have the opportunity to “peacekeep” abroad. One important point to keep in mind regarding the context of Liberia is relatively how recent UNMIL’s departure actually was and whether exposure to peacekeeping influences individuals in the AFL in some way.

Conflict affects men and women differently. However, this realization has remained confined to the academic context until more recently. Similarly, the advancement of women’s rights and their engagement at the political, economic and social level has largely been undertaken at the country level. As such, the advancement of gender equality is specific to the country and its socio-cultural and political context and thus exists on a continuum where some countries and contexts have made greater progress than others. In the 1970’s the international sphere, under the auspices of the UN, started to address the need to advance women’s rights and their participation in all levels of society. The UN is a member organization representing and reflecting the varied interests of its member states collectively. This includes its primary goal of supporting, enabling and fostering international peace and security, a task outlined by its Charter. In line with this mandate, the UN became the foremost intergovernmental international organization responsible for advancing women’s rights and participation in the context of peace and security. UN member states recognized that the role of women should not be limited to being caregivers. Rather, their presence in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and social, economic and political development is critical to long-term and sustainable peace. Indeed, peace is not merely the absence of violence.
and conflict, but also the presence of equal security, safety and access to livelihood. This requires the collaborative participation and engagement of all members of society - including women who often represent a slight majority of the population. When women experience barriers to meaningful participation in decision-making across all levels of society and governance, policies will fail to be holistic and as such will be ineffective in dealing with the complex reality of advancing equal safety, security and access to livelihood - or long-term and sustainable peace. As such, advancing women’s rights and gender mainstreaming has gradually been recognized as a necessity at both the international and national level.

Even while women’s social, political and economic participation is increasingly understood as central to a country’s overall progress their participation in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and social, political and economic development has remained limited. Women’s access and entry to wider parts of a society, where men’s entrance is often viewed with suspicion or even barred, is not fully appreciated. In societies where strict gender roles and segregation exist, it is often women who are positioned to gain access and build trust, enabling them to advance understanding of the dynamics of conflicts, requirements of sustainable peace, and the socio-cultural cleavages and fragility that may exist. Women’s participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding must therefore include meaningful participation in the context of decision-making as well as operational work - including peacekeeping operations. In order to build trust with local communities, a prerequisite to meet their specific security and safety needs, both women and men are needed within peacekeeping forces.

UNSC Resolution 1325 identifies the need for women as uniformed peacekeepers across role, unit and rank. Uniformed women peacekeepers, like their male counterparts, must perform all of the official duties of peacekeeping, thereby contributing at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Equally important is a demonstration of women role-models - at both the global level and the host-country context. This importantly serves to challenge the existence of gender roles. Indeed, in many societies women may be responsible for (and limited to) the challenging task of reproductive and care work or responding to the basic day-to-day needs of their family and community (food, water, care, etc.) - all within a context of violence and conflict. Yet, the presence of uniformed women peacekeepers, working alongside uniformed men peacekeepers, importantly illustrates a social contract wherein men and women are working together to establish and maintain peace.

b) Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL): Profile and national characteristics

Liberia has been governed by democratically elected presidents since January 2006. Overall, the political situation has stabilized and is broadly peaceful. After the signing of the Comprehensive peace Agreement (CPA) on August 18, 2003 in Accra Ghana, the old Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) was dissolved. Liberia’s security sector was reformed after the end of the civil war in 2003, led by the United Nations Military Intervention Liberia (UNMIL) and the United States.

Today, there is a 2000 troops strong army, that is relatively well respected in the country, that comprises two Battalions including specialized units. Additionally there are support services composed of Medical, Band, Engineering, Catering, Supplies, and Transport, among others. Liberia also has a police force of about 6000 personnel, including border and other internal intelligence and security institutions.

The Security Sector Reform process was guided by the imperative to create professional Armed Forces stabilizing Liberia’s democratic dispensation and exercising its duties within the confines of international humanitarian law. It also focused on increasing the gender balance in the Armed Forces, leading to the employment of 350 female troops who were integrated into different battalions. In the current recruitment process for the armed forces, targeting 350 new recruits, the aim is to attract at least 50 percent women.

The Armed Forces fall under the administrative authority of the Ministry of Defense, with the President of the republic as Commander-in-Chief. The new armed forces were modeled after the American Armed Forces. The Armed Forces is composed of the Army, Coast Guard unit and an Air Wing unit. These units are still under development, and will be further divided into various commands once fully established.
In 2005, the AFL celebrated the integration of women in the military. Prior to the AFL dissolving in 1990, women were segregated into the Women Auxiliary Corps. Since 2005, a number of policy frameworks have been adopted at the national level to promote the role and inclusion of women. This has enabled the AFL to keep up with global commitments pertaining to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. The New National Defence Act (2008), the Liberia National Gender Policy (2009), the Liberia National Action Plan on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2009) and the Armed Forces’ Gender Policy (2022) are some of the national policy documents that serve as foundations for the AFL to promote the inclusion of women. For instance, the AFL has a recruitment quota that reserves 15% of positions for women. All efforts are being made to attain this. In March 2018, the AFL promoted for the first time a woman to the rank of Brigadier General and appointed her as Deputy Chief of Staff—the only such exclusive promotion of a woman in the West African Region. The current recruitment process targets 350 new recruits, including at least 50 percent women.

In Liberia, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) is responsible for overseeing many of the activities in the AFL. The MOD in particular has a Division of Gender and Social Inclusion that is meant to help oversee and monitor changes, reforms and the current status of gender and broader social inclusion within the Armed Forces of Liberia. In other words, the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion is a monitoring branch in many ways that will help to oversee the implementation of the Gender Policy for the AFL (see description below) and can help to oversee the implementation of many of the reforms and recommendations suggested in this report. However, the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion does not presently have a designated budget. The Government of Liberia allocates a certain portion of budget funds toward gender-mainstreaming throughout Liberia in a variety of different government sectors. However, the MOD Division of Gender and Social Inclusion does not have a designated budget under this government funding. In order for the AFL’s Gender Policy to be realized and for strides to be made to address many of the issues raised in this report, funding needs to be allocated to the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion.

In 2022, the AFL released a gender policy, with support from the Ministry of Defense’s Division of Gender and Social Inclusion, UN Women and partners. The Ministry of Gender is leading the national action plan of the country, which was modeled after UNSCR 1325, yet very few people know of it. This gender policy is a “tool to guide the MoD and AFL on implementing a gender perspective and increasing gender equality in institutions,” (Gender Policy, pg. 22). The policy covers nine strategic priority areas: capacity and training, leadership and accountability, gender experts, recruitment and retention, gender-related crime, institutional culture, institutional frameworks for coordination, institutional policy frameworks and monitoring and evaluation. It is complete with a list of priorities and actions that fall under these nine priority issue areas and a timeline and action plan for specific actors in the AFL.

The Ministry of Gender and Social Inclusion also just completed its own gender policy, independent of that of the Armed Forces. In June 2022, The Ministry of Defense, representatives from the UN and members of the AFL went to several barracks in Liberia to describe and outline the gender policy to members of the AFL. However, MOD has not been able to travel to each barrack to disseminate this information concerning the gender policy due to a lack of funding and support. In particular, funding and support is needed for MOD to reach barracks in more remote locations such as Lofa county, where the road conditions do not often permit ease of travel. The barracks that they have been able to visit, however, received this information generally well. According to MOD representatives, most members of the AFL whom they spoke with and gave their presentation of the gender policy to were appreciative of the policy, as it outlines specific issue areas and action items that benefit both men and women.

This form of collaboration across institutions (MOD, the AFL and UN Women) and information dissemination of the gender policy is unique to Liberia and not common in many other TPCC countries that have been included in ELSIE Initiative MOWIP assessment. This unique arrangement is largely made possible because there is a civilian-run Division of Gender and Social Inclusion under the Ministry of Defense whose job it is to oversee and monitor the implementation of gender-mainstreaming and social equity within the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defense. However, the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion is currently ill-equipped to engage in monitoring and oversight efforts as they currently lack data collection, data monitoring and oversight training. Additionally,
the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion is not currently given funds under the gender responsive budgeting that the government of Liberia designates.

c) Liberia’s contribution to peace operations

The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) was established by the National Defense Act of 1956. It deployed its first troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1960. The peace support operation in DRC was approved by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 143 on July 14, 1960. During this period, women were not part of peacekeeping operations in the DRC. The peace support mission in DRC ended in 1962.

The New Armed Forces of Liberia was established in 2006 under the supervision of the US Government and ECOWAS. After six years, the new AFL was inducted into International Peace Support Operations (PSO) June 2012 under the short-lived United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria. A year later, it joined the African-Led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), which later transitioned to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in July 2013. The AFL also has Military Staff Officers and Observers in the missions in South Sudan and Sudan. Table 1 presents an overview of the timing and set of UN peacekeeping operations to which Liberia has contributed personnel, through 2020.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type of Contribution</th>
<th>Total Number of Annual Average Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS)</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Experts/Observers</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINUSMA</td>
<td>2013-2020</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Troops, Experts/Observers</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>South Sudan, Sudan</td>
<td>Experts/Observers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Experts/Observers</td>
<td>2</td>
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Table 1. Liberia’s Personnel Contributions to UN Missions, 2012 - 2020.

In January 2018, the former opposition leader George Weah took over as president and a wide range of officials were replaced, signifying the first peaceful transition of power in Liberia since before the civil war.

In March 2018, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) left the country, turning over responsibility for security, law and order to national institutions. The military is perceived to be a force for stability in the country by many. For example, according to Afrobarometer data from Liberia, in 2015, 26% respondents stated that they trust the army a lot. The percentage of respondents from Afrobarometer that stated that they trust the AFL has increased over time. In 2020, 43.5% of respondents in the Afrobarometer stated that they trust the army a lot.²

¹ These data are gathered from Perry and Smith’s data on UN peacekeeping personnel contributions, available online at the International Peace Institute’s website: https://www.ipinst.org/providing-for-peacekeeping-database?sp=28185#sub.
² Afrobarometer is a survey of African countries that occurs periodically in countries throughout the continent. Afrobarometer data from Liberia is meant to capture the general public opinion of Liberians on a variety of issues.
Currently, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) has about 150 personnel deployed in Timbuktu, twelve Military Staff Officers (MSO's) in Mali and four Military Observers (MILOB) in Sudan and South Sudan with ten percent female representation. Female participation in peacekeeping is a mandate from the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO). However, the AFL tries to ensure female full participation in peace support operations by training its females in peacekeeping operations for mission readiness. Selected females, depending on the requirements, are also given opportunities to attend the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana and Entebbe, Uganda.

The females nominated to serve in UN Missions are given the opportunity to serve with the Liberian Contingent in Mali and Military Staff Officers (MSO’s). Some females are also deployed as Military Observers (MILOBs) in South Sudan and Sudan respectively. Some roles AFL Women occupy during their support to peacekeeping are, Personnel Managers, logistic personnel, UN Observers, Battle watch Captains (Operations), Drivers for Armored Personnel Carriers (APC), caterer and medical personnel.

The AFL is committed to sustaining and possibly increasing its 10% female participation in peacekeeping operations. Notwithstanding, the AFL is working toward improving women’s participation in peacekeeping by allocating additional pre-recruitment training opportunities to enhance female capacity in the recruitment process.

Increasing insecurity within the country needs to be understood in relation to the country’s economic crisis. This economic crisis was exacerbated through the Ebola (2014-15) and Covid-19 pandemics (2019-ongoing). The war in Ukraine put a further strain on the economy by prompting an increase in fuel and food prices.

3) Methodology

a) Overview of the MOWIP assessment methodology

The MOWIP methodology is a unique tool to assess and improve women’s meaningful participation in peace operations. It provides a systematic and comprehensive framework for identifying both a security institution’s existing good practices and possible improvements in each of ten issue areas identified as central to women’s meaningful participation. Many relevant factors are not limited, however, to the specific context of women’s participation in UN deployments. Rather, they reflect how women and men are treated in the security institution more broadly. While the MOWIP methodology has a specific focus on UN peace operations, the good practices and possible improvements it identifies can benefit the security institution in a much wider sense.

The ten issue areas discussed below include all the factors that shape the numbers and nature of women’s participation in peace operations from initial recruitment into the Armed Forces of Liberia to deployment on mission. These factors can be either positive (good practices at the institutional level that contribute to women’s meaningful participation) or negative (barriers to women’s meaningful participation at the institutional level). For each issue area, the MOWIP methodology uncovers whether and to what extent it constitutes a barrier or an opportunity. Its main objectives are to:

- Provide a comprehensive set of issue areas within a given security institution that could be improved to increase women’s meaningful participation in UN peace operations;
- Identify the good practices within the security institution that can be leveraged, scaled up, and/or disseminated more broadly;
- Apply a set of tools and a comprehensive list of indicators to measure the importance of each issue area for increasing women’s meaningful participation in the security institution;

and topics. The Afrobarometer survey has been conducted in Liberia four times in total, in 2008 (Afrobarometer round 4), in 2015 (Afrobarometer round 5), in 2018 (Afrobarometer round 6) and in 2020 (Afrobarometer round 8). 2015 was the first year that the question concerning trust in the Armed Forces was included in the survey. This question has been included in every Afrobarometer survey in Liberia since 2015 (Center for Democratic Governance 2021).
• Determine the differential impact of each issue area in the security institution.

The MOWIP methodology comprises three components. The fact-finding form (FFF) contains approximately 200 questions designed to collect qualitative and quantitative data from official sources about deployment to UN peace operations from the country and institution being assessed.

Once the first draft of the fact-finding form was completed, remaining data gaps were filled through correspondence with 28 key decision makers from within the institution as well as relevant ministries. Some of the key decision makers were interviewed and others filled out relevant sections of the fact finding form on their own time and returned them to the local research team which was used to finish filling out the FFF. Several of the forms were not used by the local research team, particularly those that were not thoroughly filled out or for those respondents who took a long time to return the form. This process is slightly different from what the MOWIP methodology requires. The key decision interviews are used to better understand how decision making is made about peacekeeping in the country in addition to using the interviews for the FFF. According to the MOWIP methodology, respondents should be interviewed, their interviews should be audio recorded, transcripts should be written, the transcripts are then coded and used to help fill out the remaining gaps in the FFF and for data in the report. Quotations from these interview transcripts help supplement the findings from the FFF and the survey in the final report. In most MOWIP assessments, these quotes are used to further explain key points, provide more context to a general finding and to further support themes that were highlighted from the other data sources. Interview transcripts were not made available to the GSS Lab team for the report writing process.

The Fact Finding Form and related questions concerning specific policies that the AFL does or does not have written as a policy (rather than simply a norm), was especially difficult to obtain confirmation for. Any results that discuss an official policy need to be read with caution.

The third component of the methodology is an hour-long survey. The Liberia sample included 587 total personnel, of which 8% were women. Here we note that the Liberia team went above and beyond the required 380 surveys, which is the minimum number of surveys required for the MOWIP methodology. Moreover, 23% of the sample have deployed to a UN peacekeeping mission. Of the total women in the sample, 51% have deployed. The sample includes representation from all batches in the AFL, and there is representation across rank and birth county.

The AFL personnel in the survey sample according to batch are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Batch</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. AFL Personnel in the Survey Sample by Batch and Gender.

3 600 total AFL personnel were surveyed, but due to technical difficulties in retrieving the final 13 surveys, only 587 personnel are included in the analyses presented in this report.
The rank of the AFL personnel in the sample are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (commissioned officers)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (enlisted non-officers)</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (enlisted non-officers)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. AFL Personnel in the Survey Sample by Rank.

The county of birth for members of the AFL in the sample are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bomi</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margibi</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montserrado</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Gee</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivercess</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinoe</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bong</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gbarpolu</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Bassa</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Cape Mount</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Gedeh</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Kru</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lofa</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. AFL Personnel in the Survey Sample by County of Birth

During the survey implementation, the KAICT team enumerated surveys to members of the AFL in various locations throughout the country. Some surveys were implemented during the rainy season in Liberia. This
created very strenuous conditions for the enumerators to travel in, ranging from difficulty in traveling due to the road conditions to enumerators falling in the mud themselves. The conditions while traveling throughout the country proved to be a large difficulty of the survey enumeration process in particular.

Each issue area is ranked based on color coding. Red indicates the issue areas that constitute the most significant barriers and green indicates areas of opportunity. The survey data is compared to the data from the FFF to look for inconsistencies between institutional reforms and policies and armed forces personnel’s actual experiences and perceptions. The results of the analysis will be presented and vetted during the validation process with the security institution.

A three day validation workshop for the report took place at the University of Liberia, Fendell Campus from July 13 through July 15, 2022. Approximately 50 members of the AFL, both men and women of different ranks, attended the validation workshop. Additionally, members of the KAICT research team, including Professor Sayndee, attended in addition to Kofi Ireland of UN Women, representatives from the Ministry of Defense, including representatives from the Division of Gender and Social Inclusion, and Priscilla Torres, a representative from the Gender and Security Sector Lab, attended the validation workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to present a nearly completed draft of the MOWIP report to members of the AFL and have them validate the findings and various points that were made in the report. Chatham rules were enacted in an effort to ensure AFL members that their comments would not be directly tied to them and would not leave the room, but rather help inform the report.

For the first two days of the validation workshop, the draft of the report at that point was presented to the AFL members in the room. The AFL members who were present in the room were able to give their impressions of the individual points that were presented and confirm whether or not the points presented were true to the experiences of members of the AFL and truly reflected the institutions and policies that the AFL has in place. If there were inconsistencies that were highlighted by members of the AFL, or inaccuracies highlighted, notes were taken and edits were made accordingly in subsequent versions of the report. Additionally, some anecdotes from the validation workshop were included in later versions of the report as well. Where appropriate this is noted, however, these anecdotes are not tied to any specific individual who was present at the workshop. On the third day of the workshop, members of the AFL discussed the broader trends that were found in the report and discussed policy recommendations that they suggested to be included in the final report. Notes were also made at this point in the process and recommendations from the AFL members were included in later versions of the report.

After the validation workshop it was determined by the report writers that the Liberia MOWIP report could benefit from an all-female focus group to help supplement some of the quantitative findings and trends in the report. The idea for this supplemental focus group came from the Sierra Leone MOWIP report process. On August 5, 2022, female members of the KAICT research team led focus groups with 20 low ranked, female members of the AFL. These focus groups were meant to supplement some of the quantitative and overarching trends of the report. The notes that were taken from the focus groups were used to help provide more context and information for the MOWIP report. Again, none of what was said during the focus group discussion is tied to individual participants in the report.

The MOWIP methodology therefore produces robust and evidence-based findings drawing on perspectives from within the institution, the knowledge acquired by the assessment team as well as from national and international experts who have an academic background in gender and peace operations. It can be used to provide transformative, evidence-based recommendations that effectively target the root causes that prevent uniformed personnel, particularly women, from deploying to peace operations. Using a common methodology across many TPCCs also allows for the identification of universal barriers that need to be addressed at the UN level; and highlights good practices that can be shared and adapted to other contexts.

b) Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation (KAICT)

The Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia is a center of excellence for research, teaching, dialogue and community engagement on peace, conflict, security, gender, and development
that aims to contribute to Liberia’s national recovery and development. It conducts research, offers a Master’s Degree and Certificate program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, facilitates dialogue among key stakeholders and implements outreach programs in communities to develop human resource capacity to transform conflicts, advance peace building, enhance security, gender sensitivity and inclusivity in Liberia. It thereby bridges the gap between research and action. KAICT has its own library, containing a vast selection of literature on above-mentioned topics. Furthermore, it hosts the Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman Think Tank, which champions the participation of girls and women in all aspects of public life, especially in leadership and governance in Liberia, as well as the Security Sector Reform Think Tank. KAICT was selected to work on the MOWIP assessment for Liberia particularly because of its prior work with the Liberian security sector.

The assessment team is headed by Professor Debey T. Sayndee, Professor and Director of the Kofi Annan Institute. He is supported by graduate research assistants from KAICT, most of whom have a wide range of experiences in administering similar surveys. They have prior experience in collecting data on security sector/community relations, gender-based violence and community leadership development. The Kofi Annan Institute has maintained a long-standing relationship with the security sector in Liberia, especially with the Liberian military. Several members of the AFL have graduated from KAICT and the institute helped to host dialogues for security institutions during the security sector reform period.

c) Implementing the MOWIP in the Armed Forces of Liberia

Two of the primary data collection tools in the MOWIP assessment are the survey and interviews to help supplement the FFF. In the Liberia MOWIP the survey did not vary substantially from most other MOWIP countries. The survey was localized with the AFL at a localization workshop prior to piloting the survey. Very few edits needed to be made to the content of the survey instrument. However, during the workshop it was determined that specifically members of the armed forces should not be asked their ethnicity, as this is a sensitive question given the history of Liberia. After the pilot of the survey, the notes of the enumerators and the pilot data were taken into account to make any further localization/wording changes that were necessary. All of the women sampled were interviewed with the standard instruments, without the need to adapt language, culturally sensitive questions, or wordings. The most substantial deviation for the survey was the sampling frame.

In the general MOWIP methodology, it is recommended that at least 380 personnel are surveyed, with half of these personnel being men and half being women. The sample is also usually selected according to rank and deployment status. The goal is to have a sample where the personnel are 15% high rank, 43% middle rank and 43% low rank. It is recommended that half of the sample have deployment experience and the other half of the sample to have never been deployed. Lastly, according to the MOWIP methodology, the survey sample should also be representative according to geographic location within the country. That means that the number of personnel from each base/station within the country should be proportionate to the number of personnel stationed at that location, with the goal of achieving representativeness according to location as well.

The implementation of the MOWIP in Liberia followed the general MOWIP methodology with a few improvements and adaptations. First, rather than complete a survey of 380 personnel, the AFL completed a survey of 600 personnel. Second, due to the low number of women, targeted recruitment of women was used to try to capture all the women in the AFL. Whilst this proved difficult for many reasons, including the unavailability of the women, over 50% (61% to be exact), of the estimated 80 women in the AFL were surveyed. Second, the AFL has only recently, since 2012, begun to deploy Liberian personnel to United Nations Peacekeeping. Therefore, the total number of AFL members with peacekeeping experience is fairly low (See Table 1). Consequently, half of the sample does not have deployment experience (23% of the sample has deployment experience). Third, the AFL would not allow for the team to ask in the survey about which location respondents are located within the country. Consequently, monitoring the survey sample characteristics according to the location of respondents is difficult.

Please note, however, that the analyses only include data from 587 of those personnel. This is due to technical difficulties in obtaining the remaining 13 surveys from the survey platform.
region of the country where personnel are located was very difficult. It could not be assessed whether and to what extent the survey is representative geographically.

During the implementation of the FFF, most of the persons interviewed did not always cooperate to the extent to which was desired. Hence, the FFF was adapted to suit the availability of and time offered by the interviewees. Some even offered to take the form and return it with their answers, and this had to be accepted. As this FFF interview information was deemed sensitive by the AFL, the AFL requested that the information-gathering be limited within the AFL and the MOD. This was also respected. Hence, no officials outside of the AFL or MOD were surveyed. Additionally, very little information was available online due to the sensitivity of the topic and the relatively poor web presence of the armed forces. All interviews for the FFF were conducted in military barracks around the country. Key decision makers were primarily interviewed in Monrovia. As noted above, the key decision interviews were used for the FFF and transcripts were not available. As such, the report is missing one part of the MOWIP methodology.

4) The ten issue areas shaping women’s participation in peace operations in the Armed Forces of Liberia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-deployment stage: including factors that affect force generation</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Cross-cutting issue areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Eligible pool</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>9 Gender roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there enough women in national institutions?</td>
<td></td>
<td>High Social exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Deployment criteria</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Cross-cutting issue areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do criteria match the skills needed in operation?</td>
<td></td>
<td>High Do preconceived attitudes about women preclude their ability to deploy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Deployment selection</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Cross-cutting issue areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does everyone have a fair chance to deploy?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Do preconceived attitudes about women preclude their ability to deploy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Household constraints</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High Are women treated as equal members of the team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there arrangements for families of deployed women?</td>
<td></td>
<td>High Are women treated as equal members of the team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Peace operations infrastructure</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Cross-cutting issue areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment stage: including difficulties for women during operations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-cutting issue areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The eligible pool issue area explores whether there are enough women in the AFL to meet the UN Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy targets for 2028: 15% of troops and 20% of military observers and staff to be women.

It must also be noted that AFL-member deployment is based on the batch system and order of seniority for members in batches that were admitted earlier into the AFL. Women and individuals with special skills needed for the peace operation will sometimes be specifically recruited for deployment.

Additionally, there was some information missing, particularly concerning the exact numbers of members in the AFL, disaggregated by gender. Consequently, the overall ranking of this issue area may be higher or lower. The information presented here is based on the information that the research team had access to.

i. **Good practices**

**Clear steps taken to recruit more women into the AFL**

The AFL held a recruitment drive that began in January 2022. The recruitment drive was a nation-wide drive that targeted both men and women throughout the country. Women in rural areas were given access to pre-recruitment written tests in preparation for the written test. Women in urban areas were given pre-recruitment physical training in preparation for the physical fitness test in the recruitment process. These specific steps were taken in order to better prepare women for the recruitment tests, as women in rural areas tend to pass the physical test but often do poorly on the written exam and women from urban areas tend to do well on the written
assessment but often do not pass the physical exam. The AFL aims for the incoming recruit class to be 50% men and 50% women.

There are distinct, but insignificant gender difference in the timing of joining the AFL

Men and women have joined the AFL at different periods of time. While the plurality of men (20%) had joined the AFL in its fifth batch, another 48% had joined within the first four batches. The plurality of women (41%) had joined the AFL in either the seventh or eighth batch. While this distinction is not statistically significant, it does demonstrate a recent uptick in women’s enlistment in the AFL and a leveling of men’s enlistment in the AFL.

There are opportunities for different kinds of deployment

The AFL deploys both units and individuals. 41% of deployed personnel in the sample stated that their superiors selected them individually for deployment and 56% of deployed personnel stated that they were deployed as part of a battalion.

Information is open to the public about recruitment opportunities

The majority of personnel (69%) found out about joining the AFL from the radio. Radio is frequently used or listened to by Liberians. When asked about why they joined the AFL, female personnel gave a variety of reasons. Several joined for their love of country, admiration for the work of UN peacekeeping missions, and better opportunities to support themselves and their families.

There are women are in medium and high-rank positions

31% of the women in the sample are above the median rank of the entire sample. This suggests that women are in high and medium rank positions. As such, they can deploy as military observers and experts.

There is interest among members of the AFL in deploying

76% of personnel who have not been deployed would like to be deployed at some point. All of the non-deployed women want to be deployed at some point as well. 98% of personnel in the sample who have deployed would like to deploy again. All of the women in the sample who have previously deployed would like to deploy again. Furthermore, 91% of respondents (84% of men and 94% of women) said that they want to deploy in the future and that they think they will be deployed in the future. Much of the interest in deploying to peacekeeping operations is believed to be due to the increased salary that soldiers obtain while deployed compared to their usual salary in Liberia.

Deployed personnel are able to take extensions

Personnel can obtain extensions to their deployment. 38% of men and 22% of women who have been deployed were able to take an extension. Women extend their mission at relatively the same rate as men.

There is generally high morale in the AFL

Under 50% of personnel in the AFL have ever considered leaving the armed forces (35% of all surveyed personnel, 35% of men and 33% of women in the sample). Of those surveyed, personnel from earlier batches are less likely to consider leaving the armed forces: Batch 1 (11%), Batch 2 (30%), Batch 3 (21%), Batch 4 (29%), Batch 5 (44%), Batch 6 (22%), Batch 7 (23%), and Batch 8 (25%).

Female personnel in a focus group were asked about why they chose to remain in the AFL provided a number of reasons including self-motivation, being able to set an example for women in other national institutions and learning discipline. One woman described her motivation to stay in the AFL as one to protect her children and family after being threatened by the father of her children years prior to joining in the AFL.

When asked about why women and men leave the AFL, female focus group participants often cited reasons related to the living conditions and salary concerns. Several suggested that unmet expectations are a key motivation for why people leave the AFL.

High percentage of personnel have received international military training

International training increases personnel’s skills. A high percentage of personnel have received international training. About 67% of personnel in the AFL sample have never received international military training; 57% of
women said they have not received international military training compared and 68% of men said they have not received international military training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Military Trainings</th>
<th>Batch 1</th>
<th>Batch 2</th>
<th>Batch 3</th>
<th>Batch 4</th>
<th>Batch 5</th>
<th>Batch 6</th>
<th>Batch 7</th>
<th>Batch 8</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1. AFL Personnel That Received International Military Trainings by Batch

ii. Main barriers

There are very few women in the AFL

There are not enough women in the AFL. Of the 587 individuals surveyed in the AFL, only 49 are women. There are an estimated 80 women in the institution, according to AFL leadership. Men in the sample consistently listed a low number of women in the AFL as a large barrier to women’s deployment to UN peacekeeping operations.

The lack of women in the AFL poses difficulties for the institution, especially when it comes to UN peacekeeping deployment. The UN often requires that a certain number of peacekeeping slots are allotted to women in the AFL. However, because there are so few women in the AFL, this creates a situation in which many women redeploy before many men have the opportunity to even deploy for the first time. The AFL is placed in a difficult situation, in which it does not want to lose out on the peacekeeping slots allotted to Liberia, but it does not have enough women to fulfill the quota. Consequently, this results in a perception that many women redeploy and presumably, contributes to the general perception within the AFL that women are preferred in peacekeeping operations over men.

This difference in the deployment of women versus men can be seen in the difference between men and women in their length of deployment. The mean length of deployment among men and women in the sample is sixteen months. 71% of the deployed women in the sample were deployed for more than sixteen months. Conversely, only 57% of deployed men in the sample were deployed for more than 16 months.\(^5\)

UN quotas place a strain on the AFL and contribute to disproportionate redeployment of women and members with specific skills

\(^5\) Please note that this question refers to the total number of months that personnel have been deployed. Consequently, it can encompass multiple deployments.
The United Nations sends a certain number of peacekeeping slots that need to be filled by the AFL to the AFL’s headquarters, often with specific characteristics that some of the troops must possess (i.e. a certain number must be women or they must have a particular skill that the UN is interested in). AFL headquarters then divides the slots by unit. This allotment of a particular number of slots for peacekeepers creates a dilemma for the AFL: the AFL wants to maintain the slots that were allotted to it and it wants to give their soldiers the opportunity to deploy, however the AFL has very few women in the military. This creates a situation in which women redeploy more often than men and it also creates a situation where women and men with specific skills needed in the mission, are able to jump ahead with respect to their designated place in line in the batch system.

44% of personnel stated that they know of a formal redeployment program, however there is not a formal redeployment process in the AFL. This suggests that there is a perception that there is a formal redeployment process, even though there is not a formal redeployment process. During the validation workshop it was noted that Officers, Sergeant Generals and women tend to redeploy frequently due to the specific UN peacekeeping slot that the AFL needs to fill, which might further contribute to this perception. While specific individuals with certain characteristics frequently redeploy, other members of the AFL do not have the opportunity to deploy even though they would like the opportunity to do so.

Personnel generally do not know of professional networks

Most of the personnel do not know of professional organizations (networks) within the AFL, with 45% of men and 47% of women now aware of any professional networks within the organization. Such networks can be central both for improving the retention of women in the Armed Forces as well as for promoting the deployment of women in international operations.

AFL personnel generally do not find facilities in Liberia to be adequate

Over 50% of personnel in the AFL found bathrooms, sleeping quarters, office space, dining space, recreational space, uniforms and equipment to be inadequate. With inadequate facilities, it is difficult to recruit and retain personnel.

One woman in a focus group of AFL personnel reiterated this concern, saying that living conditions were bad and could potentially be a reason that personnel leave the AFL.

Specific concern for how AFL uniforms fit women’s bodies

31% of women in the sample noted that AFL uniforms do not fit their body. There is a need for a uniform that fits pregnant women’s bodies. At the validation workshop some members stated that there are prototypes in development for AFL uniforms, called the Military Maternity Uniform, specifically tailored to pregnant women’s bodies.

Personnel generally do not have consistent access to necessary equipment

40% of personnel in the sample noted that they do not have equitable access to the equipment necessary for them to do their job in the AFL. 40% of men and 37% of women in the sample stated that they do not have the equipment necessary to complete their job in the AFL.

It is difficult for members of the AFL to change specialties

86% of surveyed personnel claim that it is either difficult or very difficult to change specialties within the AFL. 87% of men said it was difficult or very difficult to change specialties compared to 90% of women. This means that if a particular specialty is in high demand for peacekeeping operations, it is difficult for people to obtain those skills.

The difficulty in changing specialties poses negative implications for deployment prospects for many members of the AFL. Due to the UN quotas that target specific skill sets, many members of the AFL do not have the opportunity to deploy, despite their interest in doing so. The limited ability to change specialties in the AFL also means that redeployment is more likely for members that have specific skills that the UN asks for a specific quota for. Meanwhile, members that do not have those specific skills are not as likely to deploy.
iii. Main recommendations

Policies

- Clearly state the policies for deployment selection to all personnel, particularly the skills needed for deployment

Training and Professional Development

- Provide information about professional networks to all AFL soldiers at the Academy
- Provide later batches with opportunities to do international training

Practices

- Identify best practices from current recruitment drive and replicate
- Institutionalize the pre-recruitment training as a part of the recruitment process
- Expedite the Military Maternity Uniform
- Provide more opportunities for in-service training so that personnel can change specialty easier
The deployment criteria issue area examines whether women can meet the requirements for deployment to the same extent as men.

Formal requirements for deployment of Military Staff Officers (MSO) and Observers (MILOBS) derive from the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPO). However, in order for MSOs to be deployed, they need to hold the rank of at least Captain or above, depending on the post vacancy. It is also required that a Staff College qualified personnel are eligible for deployment as MSO or MILOBS. A physical fitness test, medical test, and small arms tests are required for deployment. Additionally, a passport and clean disciplinary record is also required for deployment. Further, it is mandatory that 10% of female officers serve in UN Missions for gender balance.

Overall, AFL personnel are aware of many of the requirements that are necessary for deployment. Additionally, most AFL personnel, men and women both, believe that they are equipped with the skills to successfully deploy.

i. Good practices

Prior to deployment, members of the AFL can take French courses

Recently, the AFL began offering training in French for up to three months so that members can be better prepared to speak and understand French while they are deployed. This practice needs to be funded in order for it to be able to scale up and reach more members of the AFL.

Physical fitness tests are required for deployment and personnel are aware of this requirement

A physical fitness test is needed for deployment and most personnel are aware that there is such a requirement (81% are aware that this is a requirement for military observer deployment and 86% are aware that this is a requirement for formed unit deployment).

If a member of the AFL fails the physical fitness test, but they otherwise fulfill the criteria to deploy, they have the opportunity to retrain and take the physical fitness test again. It is rare that failing the physical fitness test results in someone not deploying who otherwise was supposed to deploy.

Men and women believe that they can pass the physical fitness test for deployment

The majority of personnel (76%) believe that they can pass the physical fitness test. Men and women believe that they can pass the physical fitness test at similar rates (men 76% and women 76%).

The AFL noted that one of the biggest barriers to recruiting more women in the AFL is the testing required during recruitment. Many women specifically from urban areas do not pass the physical fitness test required for recruitment. Consequently, the AFL now offers pre-recruitment physical training to women in urban areas interested in applying to the AFL. This pre-recruitment physical training involves three weeks of physical training to help prepare women for the physical fitness test prior to the recruitment physical fitness test. This physical training includes push-ups and a one-mile run (the time threshold is based on the individual’s age).

One female member of the AFL stated during the oral report that when she initially went to boot camp, she was unable to pass the physical fitness test. She was dropped from AFL recruitment. Then out of her own volition, she trained herself for about three weeks at the gym. Over that time she improved her ability to do push-ups and to complete the one-mile run in the time expected of her. Once in the AFL, the female member of the AFL discussed her personal training and experience with other members of the AFL. She emphasized to them that one of the key takeaways from her experience, and the experiences of many other women, is that the physical fitness training is often too difficult for women to complete without any additional preparation. This helped to spark a larger conversation about how to better prepare women for recruitment, which eventually culminated in the pre-recruitment physical training program described above.
Men and women believe they have the combat/tactical skills necessary for deployment

According to the AFL Annual Training Directive mandates small arms/weapon proficiency training of its personnel for mission readiness, and therefore a small arms/tactical test is required for deployment to a UN peace operation to ensure weapon proficiency prior to assignment. The majority of surveyed personnel (53%) believe that this is a requirement for military observer deployment and 64% believe this is a requirement for formed unit deployment) believe that there is a small arms/tactical test requirement to deploy. The majority of personnel believe that they have the combat/tactical skills necessary for deployment (82%). Women (82%) and men (81%) believe that they have the correct combat/tactical skills to deploy as well.

Communication skills are necessary for deployment, but not all personnel are aware of this requirement

AFL members perceive that communication skills are necessary for deployment, however, there is not a formal requirement that deployed personnel must have strong communication skills. Communications skills are necessary for successful deployment and should be an area used for evaluation for deployment. 60% of all personnel surveyed stated that communication skills are necessary for formed unit deployment, but only 53% of personnel stated that these skills are necessary for military observer deployment. 76% of all personnel surveyed said that they believe they have the necessary communication skills to be able to deploy. 76% of the women surveyed and 76% of the men surveyed believe that they have the communication skills necessary to deploy. Yet, fewer numbers of personnel believe they have conflict resolution skills sufficient for deployment despite it also being important for the success of the mission. 49% of all personnel surveyed believe that they have the conflict resolution/negotiation skills necessary to deploy. 49% of men and 43% of women surveyed said that they have these skills.

Disciplinary records are taken into account for deployment and personnel are aware of this

Disciplinary records are taken into account as a requirement for deployment. 71% of all personnel surveyed confirmed that disciplinary records are considered for deployment in a formed unit and 69% of personnel surveyed confirmed that this is a requirement for military observer deployment. Generally, a first offense results in counseling, a second offense results in the member being disqualified from deployment opportunities. However, there are no compromises or “second chances” for two violations: if a soldier is found guilty of rape or possession/consumption of drugs.

Men and women believe that they have the necessary disciplinary record for deployment

The majority of personnel surveyed believe that they have a clean disciplinary record (61%). 61% of men surveyed and 59% of women surveyed believe that they have a clean disciplinary record for deployment.

Personnel feel well prepared for deployment due to their pre-deployment training

Pre-deployment training equips personnel with the necessary skills for deployment. 96% of all personnel surveyed that have been deployed believed that pre-deployment training prepared them for deployment. 96% of deployed men and 92% of deployed women felt that pre-deployment training prepared them for their deployment.

There are few in-country requirements for deployment

The AFL has few in-house requirements for deployment. For example, there is not a written exam required for deployment and most personnel are not aware of such a requirement (27% are aware of one for military observers and 19% are aware of one for formed units). Furthermore, there is not a certain rank required to be deployed, nor age or year of experience requirement (deployment occurs by batch with regard to level of seniority unless individuals are deployed based on a particular criteria that the UN requests).

While it was noted both by men and women at the validation workshop that the current system of deployment (with respect to batch deployment) helps to promote transparency, there are concerns with the batch system and targeted deployment. Most notably, in instances when the batch system is not used there is confusion among personnel as to how and why people, particularly women and individuals from later batches, are deployed prior to those from earlier batches. This contributes to confusion and resentment of those who get to “skip the line.”
Main barriers

Personnel are generally not aware of the requirements for deployment

Generally, most personnel are not aware of the specific criteria for deployment. Many personnel believe that the primary criteria for deployment is the batch that they came in with as well as their disciplinary record. While these are criteria for many deployments, batch ordering and individual disciplinary records, there are exceptions to the batch system for deployment. Many personnel are targeted for deployment because they fulfill a specific criteria that the UN has requested for deployment (either personnel that have a particular skill or personnel that are women to fulfill the UN female deployment quota). This deviation from the batch rule for deployment creates confusion among rank and file members of the AFL. Many feel that they are continuously waiting their first turn to deploy, despite the fact that members of their own batch or batches that came after them have already deployed. This can lead to resentment and frustration toward members who deploy, especially those who have already deployed multiple times. This can contribute especially toward the resentment of women, as they often comprise many of the personnel who are targeted for recruitment due to the UN’s quota for women to deploy. Collectively, this sentiment, or the perception that women are preferred for deployment over men, can lead to hostile attitudes toward women and create a difficult working environment for women especially.

It is recommended that AFL leadership inform all members of the AFL of the two means of deployment: the batch system and individual selection based on skills or specific personnel characteristics. If personnel are made aware of the specific means by which personnel can be selected for deployment, this will help to reduce negative sentiment toward individuals who are chosen for deployment outside of their batch ordering.

In a focus group among women, several ideas were suggested to improve gender equality efforts in the AFL such as education opportunities, childcare and women in decision-making positions. Among things the AFL is doing right in their eyes, women felt that women were only included in peacekeeping missions because they had to and women were not considered for positions despite no gender restrictions.

On average, personnel, especially male members of the AFL, do not have valid passports

In order for personnel to be ready for missions, it helps to already have a passport rather than having to wait for one to be issued. Only 48% of non-deployed surveyed personnel have passports. Men in the AFL are significantly less likely to have a passport compared to their female counterparts. Members of the AFL are given service passports while they are deployed, however they are required to return the passports once their deployment is over.

Few people have driving skills and drivers licenses

While only certain positions require the ability to drive and it is not common in Liberia for individuals to have their driver’s license, it is important for members of the AFL to know how to drive in case of emergencies in mission. There is not a formal driving requirement for deployment as implemented by the AFL. Additionally, members of the AFL do not generally believe that driving skills are a requirement for deployment (56% of personnel did not state that a driving test is a requirement for UN military observer deployment and 57% of surveyed personnel did not state that a driving test is a requirement for formed unit deployment). 87% of the AFL personnel surveyed did not have a valid driver’s license. Furthermore, Only 10% of nondeployed surveyed personnel have their driver’s licence (10% of non deployed men and 8% of non deployed women surveyed). Moreover, it is UN policy that all peacekeepers who drive a UN vehicle on mission have a UN driver’s license. This is not only a barrier for women, but for men as well in the AFL to deployment.

At the validation workshop it was recommended that more resources are dedicated to the development of adequate driving skills for members of the AFL. Members also recommended that a driving test, prior to deployment, is conducted, where members have three attempts to pass the test prior to deployment.

UN Lesson Outline 3.11 on Road Safety [Link](https://resourcehub01.blob.core.windows.net/training-files/Training%20Materials/003%20CPTM-EN/003-178%20Lesson%20Outline%203.11%20SA100517.pdf)
Personnel are aware that a medical test is required for deployment and most personnel believe that they can pass the medical exam; however, many personnel need to pay for the medical test out of their own pockets in order to be able to deploy.

There is a medical test required for deployment and personnel who were surveyed are aware that there are medical requirements (76% were aware of this requirement for military observers and 77% were aware of this for formed units). Personnel generally believe that they can pass the medical fitness requirement to deploy (72% of personnel surveyed said that they believe that they can pass). Men and women believe that they can pass a medical fitness test at similar rates, 71% of men stated that they believe they can pass such a test and 73% of women stated that they believe they can pass such a test.

Despite the confidence of members of the AFL in their ability to pass the medical fitness test required for deployment, one barrier to many members of the AFL is access to the medical fitness test. The AFL does not pay for the medical test of many members of the AFL. Consequently, there are many situations where members need to pay for the medical test themselves because the tests are not paid for by the AFL on their behalf.

Few personnel have computer skills

A computer test is not required for deployment. However, only 25% of surveyed personnel believe that they have the computer skills necessary for deployment. 24% of men and 35% of women said that they have the computer skills necessary to deploy. This is more of a barrier for men than women, although more women should be trained in computer skills.

During the validation workshop, it was noted that, in addition to driving, computer skills are essential in the context of a UN peacekeeping deployment.

There is not a gender sensitivity module/questions necessary for deployment; the majority of personnel do not believe they have the gender sensitivity skills necessary for deployment

There is not a gender sensitivity module/interview questions that are necessary for deployment. 47% of all personnel surveyed said that they believe they have the necessary gender sensitivity skills for deployment. 47% of men and 51% of women said that they have these skills.

It is recommended that a gender sensitivity module or gender sensitivity questions are incorporated into pre-deployment testing.

There are few personnel with language skills

There is not a certain level of English or French required to be deployed to a UN peacekeeping operation. Personnel generally do not believe that they have the French skills necessary for deployment. 8% of personnel surveyed said that they have the correct French skills necessary to deploy. 8% of men surveyed and 10% of women surveyed said that they have the French skills necessary for deployment.

Very few personnel believe that interacting with the local population is important for the peace operation

Only 4% of surveyed personnel stated that the ability to speak the host population’s language is one of the most important skills for deployment to a peace operation. Only 30% of personnel in the sample stated that the ability to work with locals is one of the most important skills for deployment. This is despite communications skills being an important skill for the success of the mission.

Few members believe that working with personnel from other countries is important for the peace operation

Only 32% of all personnel surveyed believe that working with personnel from other countries in mission is one of the most important skills for peacekeeping. 32% of men and 28.6% of women in the sample stated that the ability to work with personnel from other countries is one of the most important skills for peacekeeping.

Contact skills such as communication skills and the ability to work with personnel are often thought to be critical to mission success; few personnel believe that these skills are of most importance to a peace operation.
When asked to consider the skills or abilities needed for peace operations, less than 90% of personnel listed communication and interpersonal skills\(^7\) as top attributes for a successful mission. 55% of personnel, 55% of men in the sample and 49% of women in the sample, listed communication/listening/interpersonal skills as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. 19% of personnel (20% of men and 12% of women in the sample) listed conflict resolution/negotiation skills as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. 32% of personnel (32% of men and 29% of women) in the sample, listed the ability to work with personnel from other countries as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. Only 1% of personnel, 1% of men in the sample and no of women in the sample, listed personality/character as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation.

**Kinetic skills were not thought of as the most important skills for deployment by the majority of AFL personnel**

When asked to consider the skills or abilities needed for peace operations, less than 90% of personnel listed kinetic and technical skills as top attributes for a successful mission. 61% of personnel, 61% of men in the sample and 61% of women in the sample, listed combat/tactical skills as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. 44% of personnel, 44% of men in the sample and 43% of women in the sample, listed physical fitness as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation.

However, only 5% of personnel (4% of men and 16% of women in the sample) listed computer skills as one of the three most important skills, and 3% of personnel, 3% of men in the sample and 4% of women in the sample, listed the ability to drive a manual car as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation.

Of deployed personnel in the sample, 64% of men and 72% of women that deployed listed combat skills important for deployment. 5% of men and 12% of women listed computer skills and 41% of men and 36% of women listed physical fitness as one of the most important skills. Of those that listed the ability to drive a manual car as an important skill, only 3% of men and 8% of women said yes.

Among non-deployed personnel in the sample, most personnel listed combat skills (60% of men and 50% of women) and physical fitness (45% of men and 50% of women) as the most important skills for success of a UN peace operation. 4% of men and 20% of women not deployed to a mission listed computer skills as important and 2% of men and no women listed the ability to drive a manual car as an important skill for the success of a UN peace operation.

**Other skills such as language, medical fitness and a clean disciplinary record were not listed as the top skills needed for peace operation deployment**

Language, medical fitness and a clean disciplinary record were listed as the least important skills necessary for successful peacekeeping deployment. 2% of personnel (2% of men and 2% of women in the sample) listed the ability to speak English as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. 1% of personnel (1% of men and no women in the sample) listed the ability to speak French as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. 23% of personnel, 23% of men in the sample and 22% of women in the sample, listed medical fitness as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation. And only, 3% of personnel, 7% of men in the sample and 4% of women in the sample, listed a clean disciplinary record as one of the three most important skills for the success of a UN peace operation.

However, during the validation workshop, many personnel with deployment experience noted that a clean disciplinary record is one of the most essential criteria to deployment, as a lack of clean deployment criteria can automatically disqualify a soldier from deployment. Additionally many personnel during the validation workshop stated that the ability to speak French is a large barrier for both men and women when they are deployed. It was recommended that the AFL continues to scale-up language training pre-deployment for members that are scheduled to deploy. Additionally, it was noted that medical illness is a large barrier to both men and women for the sake of their deployment.

\(^7\) **Contact skills** are defined as “a set of non-combat skills associated with effective engagement with civilian populations. These include communication skills, multicultural awareness and knowledge, de-escalation, mediation, dialogue, diplomacy, and problem-solving among others,” (Global MOWIP Report, 7).
Deployment criteria is a main barrier for women, according to women in the AFL

Women (24%) in the sample listed issue area 2, deployment criteria, as a top barrier to women’s meaningful deployment in peacekeeping operations. During the validation workshop, it was noted by many women in the room that while women in the AFL feel as if they are prepared to deploy, many women do not have the skills needed when they are on mission. Particularly, women noted that a lack of computer skills, a lack of driving skills and a lack of language skills (the ability to speak French) are large barriers to women when they are deployed in peacekeeping operations. It was also noted that pregnancy and medical illness are large barriers to deployment as well. Many women actively try and avoid getting pregnant around the time that they are supposed to deploy because they do not want to have their deployment opportunity compromised.

iii. Main recommendations

Policies
- Provide clear and transparent guidelines about the skills and requirements necessary for deployment to all personnel
- Institutionalize the importance of gender sensitivity as a part of the skills needed for peacekeeping deployment
- Institutionalize contact and kinetic skills as requirements for peacekeeping deployment

Training and Professional Development
- Provide more in-service training on languages, written tests, driving, and computer skills
- Provide training on kinetic, contact, and gender training

Practices
- Ensure that no one with disciplinary record is able to deploy

The deployment selection issue area explores whether women are prevented or not from deploying through a lack of information, a lack of connections to influential decision makers and/or because their superiors decide that it is too dangerous for them to deploy.

It must be noted that there are two means of deployment in the AFL. First, members of the AFL enter in batches. Members of earlier batches are supposed to deploy according to their batch number (i.e. the order that they came into the military). If there are multiple people from the same batch who are eligible to deploy, then order of merit, or the individual’s rank and number of total years in the military coupled with the specific skills that they might have. It must be noted that there is not consistent criteria for what constitutes order of merit- rather it is up to the discretion of the commander to determine which criteria fall under order of merit. The second means of deployment, however, is the quota system. In this type of deployment, the United Nations sends a request to AFL Headquarters requesting a certain number of individuals to be deployed who have a particular skill or characteristic. In this situation members who have the particular skill or characteristic, for example, if a certain number of engineers are needed by the UN or the UN requests a certain number of women to deploy, then those personnel are able to be deployed even if they entered in a later batch. It was also claimed by some members that under certain circumstances individuals are given a specific rank in order to allow them to deploy, however, it was suggested that when such a rank is given for deployment specifically, it is a temporary rank that is often taken away post-deployment.

i. Good practices

Personnel are individually selected for deployment
Personnel are individually selected for deployments (45% of all personnel with deployment experience have been individually selected). 45% of deployed men in the sample and 48% of all women in the sample were individually selected for deployment.

**There are special efforts made to deploy female peacekeepers**

There are special efforts to select women into peacekeeping, particularly the AFL strictly follows the UN quotas for female personnel to be deployed to peacekeeping operations. For example, while seniority is used to determine deployments, if there are calls for specific types of skills, there is a preference for women first. Moreover, in order to meet the UN quota for women, women who are in later batches, that is they joined the AFL at a later date, are selected to deploy.

While it does benefit women in the AFL that the AFL strictly follows the UN quotas and recommendations for the number of female personnel deployed, there are some negative implications to this. Largely due to the low number of women in the AFL, this creates a situation in which women from later batches (i.e. women who were admitted into the AFL more recently) are able to deploy before men from earlier batches. Due to many personnel believing that the primary means of deployment is through the batch system, this contributes to the perception that women are preferred over men for deployment. This can lead to resentment both by men and some women who believe that it is not fair that someone who joined the AFL later would be able to deploy prior to individuals whose batch has already been called for deployment. Deployment is of particular interest to members of the AFL for many reasons, especially due to the salary that soldiers receive while deployed, relative to their salary in the AFL when not deployed. The high interest in deployment, confusion with the batch versus quota system for deployment and the low number of women in the AFL all contribute to a situation in which there is much resentment for women and personnel generally who are able to deploy before members of earlier batches have been able to deploy.

**Men and women are willing to speak to leadership about deployment opportunities**

80% of surveyed personnel stated that they are willing to speak to leadership about deployment opportunities. 80% of men and 71% of women surveyed stated that they are willing to speak to leadership about deployment opportunities.

It is likely that this stated willingness to speak to leadership is due to the open door policy of the AFL, in which members of the AFL are able to speak to their immediate supervisors about a multitude of issues. However, members of the AFL need to inform their immediate supervisors if they want to speak to leadership that is higher up in the chain of command. While members are willing to discuss deployment opportunities with leadership, this is not necessarily likely to influence their chances of deployment, as the batch system and the specific criteria selection for UN peacekeeping deployment are the primary means that are relied on for deployment.

**Liberia received Mobile Training Support Teams (MTST’s) and Mobile Training Teams (MTTs)**

Liberia has received Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) and Mobile Training Support Teams (MTSTs) multiple times a year over the past three years. However, they have not received Selection Assistance Teams (SATs).

**ii. Main barriers**

**During training at the academy, formal information/modules are not provided about UN peacekeeping deployments; However, informal information is given to members of the AFL from their platoon leaders**

At the training academy, formal information/modules are not provided about UN peacekeeping deployments. However, members are provided with informal information about deployment opportunities by word of mouth from their platoon leaders. Members of the AFL are also made aware by their platoon leader who has been selected for deployment. This is not a policy however, it is rather a norm in the institution.

It is recommended that the AFL informs its members of the means of deployment. Additionally, it is recommended that the method of the platoon leader providing members of the AFL with updates on deployment opportunities, who has been deployed, etc. become a formal process that is written into policy. This can help to curb the issue of a lack of awareness and/or confusion concerning deployment criteria among rank and file members of the AFL.
There are few opportunities to volunteer for deployment

Because the military is a hierarchical institution, deployments are orders. As such, there are few opportunities for deploying voluntarily. Neither men nor women are nominated by government officials as independent contractors (secondment). Given that there are no opportunities for deploying voluntarily, UN positions are not distributed over the radio/TV/social media/email/job boards/word of mouth/professional associations/immediate supervisors.

Personnel had concerns with taking the test(s) necessary for deployment

51% of all surveyed deployed personnel had concerns about taking the deployment test(s). 52% of deployed men and 48% of deployed women in the sample said that they had concerns with taking the test.

From the survey, the majority of respondents (31) stated that they had a concern that members of the AFL of all ranks were able to take the test. Other reasons that were listed in the survey were stress prior to the exam, people having to take the test when it was very unlikely that they were going to deploy, individuals not understanding why they were not deployed after taking the test, their results were shared publicly, the test(s) were too difficult, not enough time to complete the test(s), other people taking the test/the proctor disrespected them and there were too many distractions when taking the test(s).

One particular concern that was raised during the validation workshop about test taking involves the medical exam that personnel are required to take prior to deployment. It is required for personnel to take a medical fitness exam in order to deploy. However, the fee to take the medical exam is only covered for contingent level personnel. In order to take the medical exam to be able to deploy, non-contingent personnel are often required to pay for the medical examination themselves.

One particular point of concern was a case where women who were eligible to deploy as Military Support Officers (MSO’s), were told to take a written exam. In this instance, none of the women who were told to sit for the exam had any prior knowledge that they would be sitting for a written exam and none of the women had college degrees. Their written exam scores were used to create a list to determine the order in which women were asked to deploy as MSO’s. This exam was only administered to women, not to men. It must be noted here that the AFL has committed to not allowing an instance like this to happen again, however, it is also important to record and note instances such as these so that these instances do not happen in the future—particularly under new military leadership in the future.

Personnel are concerned that if they act as a whistleblower, they will lose their deployment opportunity

Many personnel expressed concern that if they ever behaved as a whistleblower they would be reprimanded. More specifically, if they are close to their date of deployment, they are concerned that their opportunity to deploy will be taken away. This undermines personnel’s ability to help identify instances of abuse and mismanagement within the AFL which has negative implications especially for individuals who undergo harassment and abuse within the institution.

A large percentage of personnel know someone who has failed the pre-deployment test at least once; Men know people who have failed more than women know people who have failed

44% of survey deployed respondents know someone who has failed the pre-deployment test at least once. 50% of deployed men and 16% of deployed women know someone who has failed the pre-deployment test at least once. While this is low for women, it is fairly high for men.

Personnel spend their own money on items necessary to take the pre-deployment test

27% of deployed personnel in the sample spent their personal money on items necessary to be able to take the test/participate in the interview/participate in deployment training in preparation for deployment. Personnel spent money in particular on travel to and from the testing, interview, and/or training center, food and drinks, clothing/uniforms, and supplies needed for the application, interview, testing or training process. Specifically, non-contingent personnel noted that they had to spend their own money on the medical test in order to deploy.

There is a perception that women in the AFL are prioritized for deployment opportunities over men
There is a perception among both men and women in the sample that women are prioritized over men in peacekeeping operation deployment. Roughly, 50% of all personnel and half of all women and men in the sample said that women are favored in who is selected for peacekeeping deployment. While this is a positive for the prospects of women being deployed to peacekeeping operations, this might lead to resentment and negative sentiment by male soldiers of female soldiers within the AFL, especially because peacekeeping deployment is such a sought after activity among members of the AFL.

There is generally a zero-sum view of deployment, that is if a woman gets the opportunity to deploy, then a man loses out on that opportunity to deploy. 54% of all personnel in the sample believe that favoring women for some opportunities disadvantages men. 55% of men in the sample and 39% of women in the sample feel that favoring women for some opportunities disadvantages men.

Women in a focus group felt that time in service and the lack of women in the AFL dictate who will be deployed to a UN peacekeeping mission. Some women argue that it is not just the batch system and merit that drives deployment decisions, but the lack of women in AFL to meet the quota for women drives the decision about deployment. Most women in the focus group felt that there should be a quota for women’s inclusion in the AFL. Women suggested a number of reasons for why a quota is needed such as women have different abilities than men, protects the policy of women working in the AFL, allows women to serve in peacekeeping missions and protects women more broadly. Among those that felt there should not be a quota they provided a number of explanations: fear that recruitment of women would stop once the quota had been reached, women are allowed to participate in all jobs in the AFL, and certain jobs should be open to all genders since there are jobs women will not want or cannot do.

When asked about potential backlash, or negative attitudes in a focus group about women who are selected to deploy by their male counterparts, many felt that they did experience backlash or negative attitudes. Women were told that they manipulated their way into the mission, and were only deployed due to their gender and the preferences of the UN. Women also felt that they were placed into less desirable positions once deployed.

Women, especially, have heard of members of the AFL trying to exchange favors to increase their chances of deployment

27% of personnel in the sample have heard of someone exchanging a favor to try to deploy to a UN peace operation. 33% of women and 26% of men in the sample have heard of someone exchanging a favor in order to deploy. There is a statistically significant difference between men and women in the sample, meaning that based on how respondents answered this question, the perception of corruption among women is greater than that of men’s perceptions of corruption. 34% of personnel surveyed, 35% of men and 22% of women think that the deployment process is unfair or very unfair.

### iii. Main recommendations

**Policies**

- Institutionalize a testing cycle for deployment
- Provide an anonymous way for personnel to identify instances of abuse and mismanagement within the AFL
- Provide stipends for those taking written tests so that they do not have to spend their own money to take the exam
- Clearly state the policies for deployment selection to all personnel, particularly the skills needed for deployment

**Training and Professional Development**

- Provide training for written tests for men and women

**Practices**

- Address testing issues brought up by personnel
● Ensure that both men and women are able to take tests
● Ensure that whistleblowers are not punished by taking away their deployment opportunity
● Highlight that women

The household constraints issue area explores the impact of having young children, elderly parents or other family obligations on women’s ability to deploy to peace operations, as compared to men. It also assesses whether there is social pressure towards women who might deploy.

### i. Good practices

**Personnel are allowed to and do take vacations and holidays**

Personnel are allowed to take vacation/holidays. 93% of surveyed personnel said that personnel deployed to UN peace operations are allowed to take vacations/holiday. 92% of surveyed men and 98% of surveyed women said that personnel deployed to UN peace operations are allowed to take vacations/holidays.

**It is generally normal to take a leave at some point in the AFL, this means that personnel are able to and do take leave which is especially true for sick leave**

It is a norm to take leave in the AFL. 84% of personnel said that they have taken leave of some kind previously. 84% of women surveyed and 84% of men surveyed said that they have taken a leave of some kind previously.

There is sick/disability leave in the country and members are paid their regular salary when they take it. 83% of all personnel surveyed said that they have taken sick leave (83% of men surveyed and 80% women surveyed). 39% of all personnel surveyed said that they have taken disability leave (39% of men in the sample and 39% of women in the sample). The sick/disability leave is paid as well, however a large portion, albeit not the majority, do not know that sick leave is paid. 63% of personnel surveyed said that sick leave is paid (53% of women and 64% of men said that sick/disability leave is paid). While a large portion of survey respondents are aware that leave is paid, not all personnel, or even the number who have previously taken leave, are aware of this.

While the survey asked about specific types of leave, in the AFL different types of leave are not separated out with the exception of maternal leave. In practice in the AFL different types of leave, i.e. family leave, sick leave, etc. are solely called leave. The general category of leave includes the different kinds of leave that a soldier can take (with the exception of maternal leave which is considered as a separate category for the AFL).

**Personnel generally felt that they did not miss out on opportunities in the AFL while on leave**

55% of all personnel surveyed said that they did not miss out on opportunities within the AFL while on leave. 57% of women and 54% of men said that while on leave they did not miss out on opportunities in the AFL.

**Personnel can engage in in-service training while they are on leave**

There is the opportunity to engage in in-service training while on leave, however, 34% of surveyed personnel said they had the opportunity to engage in in-service training while on leave. 27% of men surveyed said they had this opportunity and 47% of women said they had this opportunity as well.

**Family members tend to take care of children within Liberia**

It is a norm for family members to take care of children in-country. 86% of surveyed personnel said that they have family members who take care of children. 85% of surveyed men and 92% of surveyed women said that they have family members who take care of children.
Women with children deploy and deploy often
Women with children can deploy. All of the women surveyed (25 women) who have been deployed have children.

Pregnant women are allowed to remain in the Armed Forces
Pregnant women are allowed to stay in the Armed Forces. However, there was a “pregnancy policy” previously that has since been overturned. The pregnancy policy stated that if a soldier was going to have a child, that they would be required by the AFL to get married to the person they were supposed to have the child with. In practice, however, this policy was only implemented with women when they got pregnant. The pregnancy policy has since been overturned, as was recommended in the gender policy that was released in January 2022.

Family of deceased peacekeepers are able to obtain benefits and compensation
The family of on-duty, deceased peacekeepers are entitled to compensation from the national government. Additionally, the family is entitled to benefits such as healthcare and a pension.

There is very little stigma against women who deploy to peacekeeping operations
Approximately 80% of all women surveyed said that there is no or very little stigma against women who deploy to UN peacekeeping operations.

There is the same/a similar amount of social stigma for male and female peacekeepers. For women, 8% of personnel surveyed said that there is social stigma against female peacekeepers and 4% of all surveyed personnel said that there is social stigma against male peacekeepers.

Men and women believe that peacekeeping does not compromise their ability to be a good parent
Both women and men in the AFL believe that peacekeeping does not compromise their ability to be a good parent. Approximately 96% of men in the sample said that men can still be good fathers and deploy. 98% of women surveyed said that women can still be good mothers and deploy.

Women are generally deployed for the amount of time that they want to be deployed
Women’s deployment time tends to match their preferred time to be deployed. The average deployment length is 16 months and women reported that their ideal deployment length is 13 months. Women in a focus group provided similar answers with most respondents saying an ideal deployment should be between 12 and 18 months.

Generally, women and men in the AFL said that they do not believe women need to ask for permission to deploy from their fathers or husbands
62% of women in the sample said that they do not believe that women need to ask for permission from their husbands in order to deploy to UN peace operations. It is worth noting as well that 72% of men in the sample also said that women do not need to ask for permission from their husbands in order to deploy.

Most personnel are willing to approach their supervisors about family issues
85% of all personnel surveyed said that they are willing or very willing to approach their supervisor about family issues. 86% of men and 78% of women in the sample said that they are willing or very willing to approach their supervisors about family issues.

ii. Main barriers

Families cannot deploy to missions
Family deployment is not an option for any UN peace operation. This creates difficulties both for married couples and families with children in them especially. It also is likely to increase the sense of homesickness that soldiers feel while they are deployed.

There are not childcare subsidies in the AFL
There are no childcare subsidies in the AFL. The AFL does not have childcare facilities. Neither the AFL, nor the
government provide childcare subsidies or childcare facilities for members of the AFL specifically.

Many employers offer access to childcare facilities at the facility where the employee conducts work. Childcare
facilities of these kinds are sometimes subsidized or members can utilize them for a fee. If the AFL is able to
provide childcare for members of the AFL, this will help to alleviate some of the stress and difficulties of raising
children while in the AFL, especially for women as they tend to be primary caretakers of children in Liberia. This
is likely to be especially helpful for single mothers who are likely to have less family support to be able to watch
after her children while they work.

Female AFL personnel in a focus group all agreed that the government and/or the AFL should provide childcare.
They offered different suggestions for what childcare could look like such as cash payments for a trusted nurse,
payments for each child, or a school in the AFL barracks.

**Vacation while on deployment is paid, however, there are very low perceptions of pay for vacation while deployed**

According to the AFL, deployed personnel are paid their usual salary if they take a vacation. However, there are
very low perceptions of being paid for time off by members of the AFL. Only 9% of all surveyed personnel stated
that vacation which deployed as a UN peacekeeper

According to AFL personnel, UN peacekeeping operation vacations/holidays are not subsidized (only 9% of all
surveyed personnel said that vacation while deployed to UN peacekeeping operations are subsidized). However,
AFL policy says that vacations/holidays are subsidized. This suggests that either personnel are not receiving paid
time off while this is the official policy of the AFL or that personnel are not aware that they are eligible for paid
time off while they are deployed.

**While it is common for members to take leave at some point, there is no distinction between different types of leave (with the exception of maternal leave and there is also no distinction between leave and vacation in mission)**

While it might appear as if a lack of distinction for different types of leave, or leave as distinct from vacation in
mission, helps members of the AFL, as they do not have to disclose the reason for leave, this system has negative
implications for members of the AFL. If there is not a distinction between different types of leave, then members
are less able to take leave for different reasons, as they will be seen as taking leave “again” for example if they
need to take personal leave for personal health reasons and then need to take family leave to care for a sick
family member.

There needs to be a distinction concerning different types of leave, so that members are able to take multiple
kinds of leave if necessary. Along with a distinction between different kinds of leaves, there also need to be clear
guidelines established for how many times a member can take specific kinds of leave within a year and the
specific requirements needed for members to take that particular kind of leave (for example, a doctor’s note for
health leave, etc.). Additionally, leave needs to be distinguished from vacation time. Members should have access
to a certain number of vacation days each year. This vacation time should be written down in official policy so
that such a policy cannot be easily overturned if a different leadership is in charge of the AFL.

**It is not culturally acceptable for men to stay at home and be fathers**

It is not culturally acceptable for men to stay at home and be fathers, this places a strain on women to be the
primary caretaker and likely discourages female deployment due to household responsibilities with children at
home. Only 15% all personnel surveyed stated that the father is the primary childcare provider in their
household. 10% of women in the sample and 15% of surveyed men said that the father is the primary childcare
provider in their household.

**The AFL maintains that it has flexible work hours, however, personnel do not perceive that they have flexible work hours**

According to the AFL, there are flexible work hours. However, there is a perception among personnel that work
hours are not flexible. 55% of respondents did not indicate that they have flexible work hours in-country (the
ability to work from home, work hours that accommodate personal/family needs or the ability to leave the office
if there is a family emergency). 54% of men and 61% of women did not say that they have flexible work hours. This is in contrast to the key decision-maker’s response that there are flexible working hours when not deployed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Batch</th>
<th>Work from Home</th>
<th>Accommodations for Personal/Family Leave</th>
<th>Leave Office for a Family Emergency</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1. Accommodations for AFL Personnel by Batch

The rank of the AFL personnel in the sample are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Work from Home</th>
<th>Accommodations for Personal/Family Leave</th>
<th>Leave Office for a Family Emergency</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (commissioned officers)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (enlisted non-officers)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (enlisted non-officers)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2. Rank of AFL Personnel in the Sample

There is a maternal leave policy, however, not all women and very few men are aware that this policy exists
The AFL has a maternal leave policy. According to the policy, once a woman gives birth to their child, they are given three months of maternity leave. 65% of all women surveyed are aware that maternal leave is an option. However, only 26% of men surveyed (29% of all total personnel surveyed) are aware that there is a maternal leave policy. More women should be aware that this policy exists, as it poses implications for their decisions with respect to having a family. Additionally, it allows women with a safety net to ensure that if they were to get pregnant, they would be able to take some time off after they give birth. Additionally, it is important that more men are aware of this policy as well, particularly so that they know the options that are available to their female colleagues and so that they can further spread such information if they meet someone who could benefit from the policy. This disconnect between the existence of a formal maternity leave policy and a lack of knowledge about the policy is also concerning because the AFL are taking steps to increase female inclusion in the AFL through the maternal leave policy, however, personnel are not aware of this particular effort and the culture of inclusion that it aims to promote.

However, according to a focus group of female AFL personnel, most women said that the current structure around maternity leave is not sufficient. Poor structure for maternity leave can result in a number of issues around family planning and deployment opportunities for women, as well as their partners and infants. Most focus group participants also suggested that paternal leave should be AFL policy. When asked about sufficient lengths of maternity leave, several said 6 months (3 months before and after delivery) with one person suggesting a full year, which is far longer than the three months mandated by AFL policy.

**Personnel do not generally know about paid disability leave**

40% of all personnel surveyed said that disability leave is paid (40% of men and 43% of women surveyed said that disability leave is paid).

**It is not acceptable for women to breastfeed at work**

It is not acceptable for women to breastfeed at work. 50% of all personnel surveyed said that there are no breastfeeding/pumping stations provided by the AFL. 69% of women and 49% of men surveyed said that the AFL does not provide stations such as these. Additionally, 76% of women surveyed said that they do not believe women feel comfortable breastfeeding at work. 46% of men also said that they do not believe that women feel comfortable breastfeeding at work (50% of men in the sample said that they do not know if women are comfortable breastfeeding at work).

Women do not usually carry their babies to work in the AFL. However, there is one example of a female member who was granted permission to bring her baby to work and feed the baby if necessary (particularly on days where she had little to no option to make other arrangements). This was a special accommodation though at the individual discretion of her immediate supervisor.

**Single Mothers Face Additional Challenges**

Validation workshop and focus group participants also noted the particular difficulties that single mothers face in the AFL. AFL personnel that participated in a focus group noted several concerns that single mothers face. Women are afraid to leave their children in the barracks as male soldiers follow children around and are worried about potential sexual relations between male soldiers and underage girls. Additionally, women fear that their children will be coaxed into taking substances, such as drugs, while they are away.

**Some women in the AFL are afraid of their family’s judgment if they were to deploy**

About 20% of women in the sample said that they are afraid or very afraid of their family’s judgment if they were to deploy to a peacekeeping operation.

**Men and women in the sample did not deploy at the same ages**

Men and women do not deploy at the same ages over the same distribution. Among personnel in the sample, men tend to be deployed at earlier ages, compared to women. Men tend to be deployed between the ages of 27-63. On average, members of the AFL are deployed at approximately 41 years old. Conversely, women tend to be deployed in their 30’s. Moreover, women are not deployed at the ages that they would like to be deployed. The age(s) that women deploy do not match the ideal age women want to be deployed. Among women who

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8 The exact average is 40.59 years of age. If we round up, 41 years old is the average age of deployment.
answered the deployment age question, most women were deployed in their 30’s, when the majority of them said that the ideal age for women to be deployed is between 18 and 30 years old.

**Personnel often have financial difficulties when they return from peacekeeping deployment**

During the oral report, it was noted that many members of the AFL tend to struggle with financial difficulties when they return from deployment. It is possible that some of these financial difficulties come from having a much higher salary during deployment than personnel otherwise would in the AFL. It was also noted by the AFL during the oral report that financial mismanagement has likely contributed to this perception of insufficient deployment pay. Consequently, the AFL has tried to implement financial literacy courses for deployed members of the AFL upon their return. While this is a good practice that will likely help to alleviate some of these financial concerns and help give skills to formerly deployed personnel that is sure to help them well into the future, the AFL is lacking monetary resources to be able to implement financial literacy courses at a much larger scale.

34% of all personnel surveyed said that the pay from UN peacekeeping operations is not sufficient to maintain a household. 33% of men and 47% of women in the sample said that pay from UN peace operations is not sufficient to maintain a household.

In order to further explore these dynamics, Table 4.3 below shows the items that personnel spent their money on when they returned from deployment. Among those personnel who were deployed and surveyed, they reported spending their money when they returned from mission on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Deployed Men (110 total)</th>
<th>Deployed Women (25 total)</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Deployed Personnel (135 total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saved the money</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other household items</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start a new business</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My children</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay debt</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave money to family members</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave money to friends</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My own education</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generally, houses and land were the items that were most purchased, with 68% of personnel stating that they purchased a house and 60% of personnel stating that they purchased land. 47% of personnel said that they purchased a car and 47% of personnel said that they gave money to family members. The physical items that were purchased most frequently, land, houses and cars, tend to be large purchases that often involve additional payments either on loans or further upkeep, taxes, etc. for the item for long periods of time. The purchase of these large items based on money that comes from deployment payment, i.e. payment that will only last upwards of one year, might pose negative implications for personnel who purchase such large items without savings or money to continue the additional payments that are necessary.

The results from Table 4.3 are also broken down by sex. On average, women tend to save their money more than men do, with 32% of female personnel stating that they have used some of their money toward their savings, compared to 27% of men in the sample who stated that they used some of their money for savings. There are fairly large gender differences for some items, particularly for the purchasing of cars (54% of men stated that they purchased a car whereas 20% of women stated that they purchased a car with some of the money that they earned from deployment). Similarly, 65% of men stated that they purchased land whereas 40% of women stated that they purchased land with their payment. Women also tended to spend the money on their children more than men (44% of women stated that they spent money on their children and 37% of men stated that they spent money on their children). Lastly, 9% of men used the money to pay a debt that they owed, meanwhile none of the women in the sample used the money to pay a debt. This might suggest that men in the AFL tend to be in debt more than women in the AFL.

### iii. Main recommendations

**Policies**
- There should be childcare facilities and subsidies provided, particularly for single mothers with children
- Consider revising the leave policies so that:
  - Leave policies are clearly stated and accessible
  - Differentiated based on different types of leave
  - Parental leave should be provided for both men and women

**Training and Professional Development**
- Provide training on the leave policies, especially maternal leave
- Provide financial literacy program to personnel and their families before deployment

**Practices**
- Allow men to have flexible working hours so that they can engage in parenting activities just as much as women
- Provide accommodations and time for women to breastfeed
- Conduct a needs assessment and address concerns of single mothers in the AFL

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9 It is entirely likely that there is a norm against women purchasing land as a legacy of prior restrictions/norms against women purchasing land which might contribute to this gendered gap. Additionally, it is entirely possible that a woman’s husband purchased land with the money she earned on deployment, etc.
The peace operations infrastructure issue area assesses whether the lack of adequate equipment, infrastructure and services prevent women from deploying to peace operations.

i. Good practices

The country has the ability to engage in pre-deployment training

There is not a national peacekeeping training center, however personnel do engage in pre-deployment training. 60% of all deployed personnel (62% of deployed men and 52% of deployed women) engaged in training for deployment.

Personnel have access to sleeping quarters

During peace operations, deployed personnel in the sample had access to sleeping quarters/barracks. 97% of all deployed, surveyed personnel said that they had access to sleeping quarters or barracks. 100% of deployed women and 96% of men surveyed in the sample stated that they had access to barracks.

Men and women are generally given the same equipment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Men (total = 583)</th>
<th>Women (total = 49)</th>
<th>Total (total = 587)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ammunition</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armband</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beret</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullet proof vest</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headscarf</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helmet</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN handbook</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN scarf</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapon</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunization/Vaccines</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria Pills</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1. Equipment Provided to AFL Personnel in Sample by Gender
**Peacekeepers have access to healthcare while on mission**

Peacekeepers have general healthcare during missions. 98% of deployed personnel in the sample said that they were given healthcare during the mission. 97% of deployed men in the sample and 100% of deployed women in the sample said that they were given healthcare during the mission.

**ii. Main barriers**

**There are not many options for alternative peacekeeping training**

Deployed personnel do not engage in peacekeeping training in other countries that often. 13% of deployed personnel in the sample said that they have engaged in training in other countries. 13% of deployed men and 12% of deployed women said that they have engaged in peacekeeping training in another country. Furthermore, there are no online peacekeeping training opportunities.

**Women are less likely to engage in in-service training related to peacekeeping**

71% of deployed personnel in the survey engaged in in-service peacekeeping training. 76% of deployed men and 48% of deployed women have engaged in in-service peacekeeping training.

**Access to bathrooms was limited for deployed peacekeepers**

29% of all deployed personnel in the sample did not have access to their preferred bathroom near their workspace. 34% of deployed men and 8% of deployed women did not have access to their preferred bathroom near their workspace. During the validation workshop it was noted that in some settings, women and men need to use the same bathrooms while deployed. Additionally, the doors to restrooms do not often lock. Additionally, bathrooms, for both men and women, tend to be very far away from the work spaces of peacekeepers. In some cases there were not or were very few bathrooms so personnel needed to simply go to the bathroom outside.

**Door locking is a problem on mission**

While peacekeepers stated that it is important to keep doors unlocked for safety reasons, the option to be able to lock doors is lacking. About 20% of deployed personnel in the sample stated that they cannot lock doors in their sleeping quarters. 40% of deployed women and 16% of deployed men in the sample said that they could not lock doors in their sleeping quarters.

This is a particular concern because it poses negative implications for harassment and even possible assault. If members are unable to lock their doors, it is much easier for a potential perpetrator to access them in vulnerable situations, such as while they are asleep.

**Uniforms do not fit properly**

Only 56% of deployed personnel said that their UN-specific uniform fit their body properly. 59% of deployed men and 40% of deployed women in the sample said that the UN-specific uniforms fit their bodies properly. At the validation workshop, however, it was noted by personnel that the AFL does not receive UN-specific uniforms.

**Women’s specific needs for the mission are not met**

Despite there being a gender needs assessment, women do not receive deployment gear/equipment/uniforms specifically made for them. Moreover, feminine hygiene products are supposed to be part of the standard deployment kit, according to the AFL. However, only 13% of deployed personnel in the sample stated that sanitary products were given during deployment (20% of deployed women and 11% of deployed men in the sample stated this).

A minority of deployed personnel in the sample said that services were inadequate; However, women are not frequently given sanitary products, reproductive healthcare or birth control when they deploy. During the validation workshop it was noted by many women that sanitary products, reproductive healthcare and birth control are not given to women when they deploy.
The following services were inadequate when they were deployed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (inadequate)</th>
<th>Men (total = 110)</th>
<th>Women (total = 25)</th>
<th>Total (135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General healthcare</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental healthcare</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary products</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive healthcare</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth control</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2. Survey Responses of AFL Personnel in Sample on Inadequate Services by Gender

Women do not always have access to female physicians

Female physicians sometimes, but not always, deploy with personnel. 41% of deployed personnel in the sample stated that they have received care from a female physician while deployed. 44% of deployed women and 41% of deployed men in the sample said that they have received care from a female physician while deployed.

Facilities were perceived to be inadequate

Deployed personnel in the sample did not generally find barracks, bathrooms, equipment and uniforms adequate (equipment is the only item that was generally seen as acceptable by surveyed personnel that have been deployed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Men (total = 110)</th>
<th>Women (total = 25)</th>
<th>Total (135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping quarters</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office space</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational space</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3. Survey Responses of AFL Personnel in Sample on Inadequate Facilities by Gender

Vehicles are not fitted for shorter people

UN 4x4 vehicles are not outfitted for shorter people. They are outfitted for people 5ft tall and up, but the average woman in Liberia is 5ft tall, which does not accommodate shorter women.

Access to adequate services is lacking on mission
According to the AFL, deployed personnel have access to mental healthcare services, however 36% of all surveyed deployed personnel did not state that they had access to mental healthcare services while deployed. 40% of deployed women and 35% of deployed men did not state that they had access to mental healthcare services while deployed. Access to mental healthcare while deployed appears to vary substantially from mission to mission. If members do have access to mental healthcare services while deployed, then there is a gap in knowledge concerning access to this resource.

While peacekeepers are supposed to have access to free reproductive healthcare while on missions, only 21% of deployed personnel in the sample stated that they were given access to free reproductive healthcare. 36% of deployed women and 17% of deployed men stated that they had access to free reproductive healthcare. During the validation workshop it was noted that access to reproductive healthcare while on mission is severely lacking.

Peacekeepers are supposed to have access to free birth control while on mission. However, only 39% deployed personnel had access to free birth control while on mission. 39% of deployed men and 32% of deployed women in the sample stated that they were given free birth control while on mission. During the validation workshop it was also noted that access to birth control is severely lacking while deployed. While male members are given condoms, female members often do not have access to free birth control.

Additionally, one specific case was raised where an AFL member got hurt while on mission. They were not dressed at the time in their uniform and consequently, the UN did not cover the medical costs of their injury.

**Information about a gendered needs assessment is unclear**

AFL policy stipulates a gender needs assessment. The gender needs assessment is designed to encourage female participation in peacekeeping missions, familiarize women on their roles during missions, and ensure capacity building for female peacekeepers.

iii. Main recommendations

**Policies**
- Conduct a gendered needs assessment on a regular basis to determine the specific needs of deployed men and women

**Practices**
- Provide adequate peacekeeping facilities
- Provide mental healthcare to all personnel before, during and after deployment
- Provide reproductive care (including sanitary products) to women

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**Issue area 6 Peace operations experiences**

The peace operations experiences issue area assesses the impact of (positive and negative) experiences during deployment, including experiences of meaningful participation, on women's decision to redeploy or not, and to encourage or discourage others from deploying.

i. Good practices

**Men and women feel prepared for the mission and felt a sense of fulfillment from deployment**

The survey found that 95%, agree or strongly agree that they felt a sense of fulfillment while on the mission. Moreover, 92% of respondents felt prepared for the mission. When asked about questions related to their role,
the survey found that nearly 45% engaged in mentorship and networking while on mission and 89% agreed that their skills matched their role in the mission.

A majority of peacekeepers engage with locals
90% of deployed AFL personnel said they engage with the population in their host country. In general, women interact with locals (84%) slightly less often than men (92%). However, men are more likely to interact with locals during patrols and/or monitoring local activities (35%) than women (20%), but otherwise engage with locals at similar rates for other activities including training with local security forces, engaging in community-based work, providing services to the community, engaging in civilian protection activities (e.g. refugee camps etc.), participating in local events, volunteering on their own time, or spending time with locals socially (e.g. bars nightclubs etc.)

Men and women felt respected while on mission
63% of AFL personnel in the sample believe that everyone in mission is treated with respect. 63% of the sample said they felt that everyone was treated with respect, with 65% of men saying everyone was treated with respect, and 56% of women stating that everyone is treated with respect. Only 14% of respondents said they felt uncomfortable while on the job. 3% of AFL personnel said they faced problems observing their own religions, traditions, and culture while on mission.

Personnel felt free from discrimination while on mission
Of the AFL personnel in the survey, 46% reported that they felt free from unnecessary criticism, with 45% of men and 56% of women saying that they were free from unnecessary criticism. Similarly, 44% of male and 40% of female personnel said said for free from experiencing discrimination while on mission.

ii. Main barriers

A high percentage of personnel hear complaints about peacekeeping missions
65% of respondents heard of women complaining about their experience while on mission, with 64% of men and 71% of women reporting that they heard of women complaining about their experience. However, only 8% of men and 11% of women said stories about women’s complaints affected their decision about deployment. 78% of respondents heard of men complaining about their experience while on mission, with 79% of men and 78% of women reported that they heard men complaining about the experience. Only 10% of men and 16% of AFL personnel deployed experienced no problems on mission. 11% of men and 10% of women said that stories from men’s complaints influenced their decision about deployment.

Women AFL focus group participants reported mixed sentiments about hearing positive stories about the deployment experiences of women. Some reported that male personnel do not say positive things about women which discourages women and makes them feel inferior. Others note positive stories about the work that women do on missions, such as building their homes, and their ability to now go on patrols. Focus group participants felt that these stories change their views on the importance of women deploying to varying degrees. Some reported that these stories did not change their views of women in the AFL, but women that deployed, while others said that it did not change their view of women due to a lack of recognition by leaders. Further, when asked about how these stories changed their views on the importance of women in the AFL, they said that mutual support and celebration of women were important in the AFL. However, women felt demotivated by the lack of recognition of women compared to women.

What are the major problems during deployment?
The major problems in the mission reported by both men and women included homesickness (50%), a lack of safety in the country (42%), and problems with locals (36%). Of the women sampled in the survey, 52% reported issues with homesickness, 44% reported a lack of safety in the country, and 28% said problems with locals. Similarly, men 50% reported issues with homesickness, 41% reported a lack of safety in the country, and 38% said problems with locals. Additionally, roughly 13% of respondents heard members being criticized for not fulfilling obligations back home while deployed. Table 6.1 presents the breakdown by gender for all problems that reached a 5% response threshold.
Men and women have experienced different forms of harassment during mission

Table 6.2 below presents over 8% of the sample reported, heard of or received unwanted texts while deployed. Just over 20% of respondents reported hearing or experienced name-calling while on mission. Jokes were a problem on mission, as 32% of personnel heard jokes made about women, 17% of personnel heard jokes about physical appearance, and 3% of personnel heard jokes about sexual orientation. Table 6.2 below shows the percentages with experiences with different forms of harassment while on mission.
Table 6.2. Survey Responses of AFL Personnel on Types of Harassment Experienced During Deployment to a UN Mission by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jokes about Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>7%</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jokes about Age/Rank</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokes about Phys. Appearance</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokes about Soc. Econ. Class</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokes about Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men and women could not leave their base when they wanted

46% of men and women stated in the survey that they were able to travel freely and have access to vehicles when they want. Only 6% of deployed personnel in the sample were able to leave the base whenever they wanted while deployed. 5% of respondents reported driving accidents.

However, during the oral report and the validation workshop, it was stated multiple times that this is not true. Members noted that women especially are required to have a male escort them to wherever they need to go. It was stated that this is done in order to protect the women from getting pregnant specifically. It was suggested that there are instances of harassment that happen toward women in mission when they are not accompanied by a man. While women are given restrictions on movement, men seem to rarely be told not to harass or rape women in mission. However this justification demonstrates that the gender protection norm (Issue Area 9) could prohibit women from leaving the base.

Men and women experienced different challenges when they returned

Men in the sample had a harder time transitioning back from deployment (73%) when compared to women (49%). More men faced family problems after returning home to Liberia (55%) compared to women (12%).

Men reported higher rates of physical and mental health problems than women. Upon returning home about 40% of the sample said they faced mental health problems (46% of men and 4% of women), 42% said they faced physical health issues (49% of men and 12% of women), and 71% experiencing financial problems (80% of men and 32% of women).10 Table 6.3 presents the breakdown by gender for all problems that reached a 5% response threshold.

When asked at the validation workshop why members believe that there is such a stark difference between men and women with respect to mental and physical health challenges upon return. Both male and female members stated gender stereotypes, particularly that men have a more difficult time addressing complex emotions than women, as the primary explanation for this difference. However, it might be the case that men are engaging in activities, such as active combat situations, that are more likely to induce mental health challenges upon return from mission.

There is little help with the transition back from deployment

Little support for transition came from leadership in the AFL with 6% receiving support from their supervisors, 6% from a colleague, and 4% from a mentor. While a bulk of support came from the UN (50%), a formal program in the armed forces (35%), or the Liberian government (27%)

Men and women report difficulties in their relationships

The biggest issues for both men and women in the AFL were related to their relationships when returning home, with 78% of all deployed personnel in the sample experiencing a divorce or separation, with 89% of men and 28% of women experiencing divorce/separation when they returned home. While only 0.07% of respondents

10 Veterans that are honorably discharged should be able to seek a pension under the New National Defense Act of 2008
said they faced issues with relationships in their host country, 7% said they faced relationships with someone back home.

When returning back to Liberia, 29% of deployed personnel in the survey indicated problems with friends. Men were more likely to report issues with friends (33%) than women (12%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men and Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3. Survey Responses of AFL Personnel on Problems Faced Transitioning Returning Home from Deployment by Gender

iii. Main recommendations

Policies
- Provide anonymous means to report misconduct on missions
- Provide a non-bias policy for leaving the base that is not based on the protecting women

Training and Professional Development
- Ensure that men and women are trained in combat and operational skills
- Provide training bystander training so that men and women can prevent abuse by other contingents
- Conduct more training on the peacekeeping context so that personnel are trained on the local culture
- Provide counseling, especially financial, to families of those deploying before, during, and after deployment

Practices
- Conduct focus groups to better understand how to address homesickness while on mission
- Conduct a exit interviews with deployed personnel returning to determine the problems men and women face
The career value issue area measures whether peace operations help the careers of military personnel. This, in turn, affects whether or not men and women are likely to deploy and redeploy. Women who have deployed may choose not to redeploy if it is not advantageous to their career prospects.

i. **Good practices**

**Personnel think there are career advantages to deploying**

Men and women found that there were professional development benefits due to deployment with more than 81% of men and women agreeing that peacekeeping deployment advances someone’s career. 77% of sample respondents said peacekeeping deployment improves a CV/resume. More than 81% of the sample said that deployment provided extra salary, and a majority of men (71.2%) and women (75.5%) said that they learned new skills on a peacekeeping mission.

73% of AFL personnel reported learning new skills from deployment, with 71% of men and 75% of women saying they gained new skills while being deployed on mission.

**Personnel are able to find job opportunities after returning home**

Almost 90% of AFL personnel returned to their old job when they came back to Liberia. At the same time, only 14% of respondents said that peacekeeping missions delayed promotions or disrupted career opportunities, with 16% of men and 4% of women reporting delayed promotions or disrupted career opportunities upon returning from deployment.

ii. **Main barriers**

**Peacekeeping deployment is not a factor in promotions**

Peacekeeping deployment is not considered for promotions and personnel tended to understand this. Only 14% of men and 8% of women said that peacekeeping mission experience is considered in decisions for promotions.

**Gendered differences in recognition for their service**

While only 3% of deployed AFL personnel said they did not receive some form of recognition for their deployment, survey results found that 20% of respondents were recognized for their deployment by the media and 30% were recognized by their community. However, women felt more recognized than men for their service. Women were more likely to be recognized for their deployment (10%) and the military (43%), than men at 5% and 17%, respectively.

Women in a focus group felt that there is a lack of recognition for women’s achievements when they return from deployment relative to men. One participant noted that a woman saved an entire camp, but was never rewarded for that.

iii. **Main recommendations**

**Policies**

- Consider peacekeeping missions as a part of promotion structure or the skills learned on peacekeeping missions as a part of promotion tests

**Practices**

- Highlight women’s success stories while on mission on the radio, social media, and internal newsletters and magazines
The top-down leadership issue area explores the impact of political will among those in influential positions (or lack thereof) on women’s deployment and meaningful participation in peace operations.

i. Good practices

The majority of personnel are willing to approach leadership

At roughly equal rates between men and women, AFL personnel feel comfortable to approach leadership about problems. 79% of men and 71% of women (88% of the total sample) felt comfortable approaching leadership about job-related matters, 88% of men and 84% of women felt comfortable about reporting misconduct (89% of the total sample), and 87% of men and 78% of women felt comfortable about reporting personal-matters (87% of the total sample). Of those surveyed, 70% of the sample strongly agreed or agreed that senior leadership listens to lower ranks, with men being slightly more likely to say leadership listens to lower ranks (69%), than women (61%).

Knowledge of gender training being offered is high

45% of those surveyed reported that leaders promote gender training to personnel. Regarding knowledge of gender trainings, 85% said that sexual abuse and exploitation training was required, while 65% of sample said general gender training was required at the basic academy. However, personnel were not aware of all forms of gender training. 37% said gender training was offered as in-service training, 21% said it was offered at pre-deployment training, and 24% said that trainings was offered during deployment.

High level of commissioned officers’ satisfaction with their work relationship with subordinates

Commissioned officers in the AFL have demonstrated a general satisfaction with the work relationship they hold with their subordinates: about 63% of all commissioned personnel indicated that they are either very satisfied or satisfied. These results are indistinguishable across gender, with men and women’s responses virtually the same.

ii. Main barriers

The majority of personnel do not know about gender divisions

Few people have knowledge about gendered institutions in the AFL. 25% of survey respondents knew of a gender division in the AFL. Only 33% of women and 25% of men knew about these divisions. At roughly equal rates between male and female AFL personnel, 24% were aware of a gender coach and 12% were aware of a gender toolkit. 27% reported knowledge about a gender focal point, with women being more likely to know about a gender focal point (40%), than men (26%).

Most personnel do not know about gender mainstreaming policies

Only 39% of AFL personnel said they knew of a gender mainstreaming policy, of which women were more likely to know about the policy (49%), than men (38%). 46% of respondents have heard of UNSCR 1325, while among members who answered that they do know what UNSCR 1325 is, 97% of men and 96% of those surveyed had the correct interpretation of UNSCR 1325. When asked about this point at the validation workshop, many members believed these numbers to accurately reflect the true knowledge, or lack thereof, of 1325 among most members of the AFL.
Few senior and mid-career Leadership know about UNSCR 1325

Knowledge of gender mainstreaming policies is low for senior and mid-career AFL personnel surveyed. 47% of mid-career leadership have taken a gender course and 61% have taken a specialized gender course. While only 3% of senior leaders knew about 1325, 3% have taken a gender course, and 4% have taken a specialized gender course.

In a focus group, female AFL personnel found that gender courses are necessary as they help with women’s meaningful participation. AFL policy stipulates a periodic training. The Department of Gender and Social Welfare within the AFL conducts these trainings and has a focus person at every AFL base to encourage female participation in this training.

Mentorship

While 53% of women have a mentor in the armed forces, only 26% of all AFL personnel sampled said that there are male allies who have advanced women’s rights in the institution.

27% of AFL personnel reported that have served under a female supervisor, with women reported slightly more frequency to work under a female supervisor (32%), than men (26%).

Main recommendations

Policies

● Institutionalize policies related to gender

Training and Professional Development

● Provide training and information to all personnel about the gender policies, practices, trainings, toolkits, resources available

Practices

● Institutionalize a formal mentorship program for women in the AFL

Issue area 9 Gender roles

The gender roles issue area explores whether the prevalence of gender stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes influences the number of women deploying and their ability to meaningfully participate in peace operations. We assess this by looking at the degree to which women and men hold traditional roles and views about the roles that men and women play in society. We also assess the degree to which a gender protection norm exists in the institution. This means we assess whether men and women continue to feel that women must be protected from danger.

Good practices

There are largely equal views about gender roles while on mission

AFL personnel hold relatively egalitarian views about the different roles men and women should fill during peacekeeping missions. AFL personnel felt similarly about engaging with refugees in a camp, with 66% of
respondents saying men and women should equally engage with refugees in a camp while on mission. 69% of male respondents said either a female or male peacekeeper should engage with refugees in a camp, 13% of men said a male peacekeeper should engage with refugees, relative to 4% saying a female peacekeeper should engage with refugees.

In the survey, we presented different scenarios that could take place in peace operations, and asked respondents to tell us whether a man, a woman, or both, would be better able to handle the situation or perform certain tasks. The responses received show that gender stereotypes impact on conceptions of what tasks men and women should take part in during deployment.

Similarly, 58% of AFL respondents said that women and men should equally engage in helping women and children in a mission. Male AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (59%), male peacekeepers (6%) and female peacekeepers (35%) should engage in helping women and children. Female AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (57%), male peacekeepers (9%) and female peacekeepers (34%) should engage in helping women and children.

Male AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (48%), male peacekeepers (50%) and female peacekeepers (2%) should respond to a potential terrorist situation after intelligence about a possible bomb situation. Female AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (57%), male peacekeepers (39%) and female peacekeepers (4%) should respond to a potential terrorist situation.

Regarding typing situation reports, 66% said that either male or female peacekeepers should be responsible for that role, with 23% saying female peacekeepers should be responsible for that task compared to 11% saying male peacekeepers should be responsible for it. Male AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (65%), male peacekeepers (11%) and female peacekeepers (24%) should be responsible for typing situation reports. Female AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (71%), male peacekeepers (10%) and female peacekeepers (18%) should type situation reports.

68% of the sample said that men and women should train with local gendarmerie/police/military, while only a minority said male peacekeepers should train (27%). Male AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (69%), male peacekeepers (28%) and female peacekeepers (4%) should train with local police/armed forces. Female AFL personnel said either male or female peacekeepers (67%), male peacekeepers (24%) and female peacekeepers (8%) should train with local police/armed forces.

**Men and women serve in combat roles at roughly the same rate**

Of those deployed in peace operations, 32% of women and 39% of men said that women and men equally serve in combat roles. A majority of men and women agree that women are capable of serving in combat roles.

**ii. Main barriers**

**Women take on more gendered work outside of their official roles**

Women generally take on more roles than men in terms of cooking (88%), cleaning (72%), community outreach (36%), and healthcare provision (28%). Men reported taking on additional tasks in terms of cooking (45%), cleaning (75%), community outreach (19%), and healthcare provision (5%).

In mission, the commander has the authority to order individuals to engage in the types of activities listed above. The overall goal is to support those soldiers who will be leaving base to go on patrol. Additionally, the commander has the authority to decide who specifically will go on patrol. During the oral report, it was noted that women often serve as support for those soldiers who will go on patrol. More recently, however, women are being sent on patrol more than they did previously.

**Mobility is restricted for deployed personnel**

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11 Please note that this specific question asks about tasks in addition to the primary tasks that an individual has been sent to complete in mission. For example, if someone is deployed specifically as a cook, this question asks them about any tasks in addition to their regular tasks that they would take on.
66% of personnel said they needed an escort to leave the base/compound, with 63% of men and 41% of women reporting the need for an escort. Similarly 47% of personnel said they had access to a vehicle when they wanted on mission (46% of men and 48% of women). Only 6% of AFL personnel said they felt free to leave the base/compound while deployed (5% of men and 8% of women). When pressed, senior leadership suggested that restrictions on women’s movement was for their own safety. There were reports of female peacekeepers being harassed and abused by other contingents. As a precaution, the AFL places restrictions on women’s movement. Although these restrictions are meant to protect women, they place the responsibility of appropriate conduct on women and not on the men who are engaging in the abuse.

**Men and women do not serve equally as leaders**

The survey shows that personnel do not serve equally as leaders, with 27% of women and 33% of men reporting that men and women equally serve as leaders. Women are more likely to serve as gender focal points (32%) than men (10%) while on mission.

**Women do not serve in the infantry**

Through discussion with members of the AFL, it became clear that women want the same opportunities as men, including the opportunity to serve in the infantry. Currently, it seems as if women are not allowed to, or are not sent, to serve in infantry units.

iii. **Main recommendations**

**Policies**

- Provide a non-bias policy for leaving the base that is not based on the protecting women
- Provide clear policies on vehicle access on mission
- Provide clear policies on appropriate conduct while on mission

**Training and Professional Development**

- Train women in infantry jobs

**Practices**

- Ensure that the same standards for rules regarding leaving the compound apply to men and women equally
- Ensure that both men and women engage in the same types of work outside of their regular job on mission

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The social exclusion issue area explores whether in-group / out-group mentalities cause women to be marginalized, ostracized, denigrated, harassed or attacked thus preventing them from deploying or participating meaningfully in peace operations. It also explores the ways in which male group cohesion forms. We assess this by looking at the levels of harassment and violence in the institutions and sanctions against them, as well as healthy and unhealthy ways of creating cohesion.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) of the Armed Forces of Liberia generally governs the behavior of members of the AFL. This document outlines the judicial system under the military and outlines what constitutes
violations that are worthy of trial in the justice system of the military. Several items under the punitive articles, violations that are punishable by court-martial according to the UCMJ, are relevant to this section. In particular, “drunken or reckless operation of a vehicle, aircraft or vessel” (Article 111), being “drunk on duty” (Article 112), “wrongful use, possession, etc. of controlled substances” (Article 112a), “rape and sexual assault generally” (Article 120), “rape and sexual assault of a child” (Article 120b), “other sexual misconduct” (Article 120c), “sodomy” (Article 125) and “conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman” (Article 133).

i. Good practices

Personnel are aware of improper conduct policies

84% of AFL respondents said they were aware of who to speak to about reporting harassment (84% of men and 80% of women) and 75% of respondents were aware of an internal complaint system (75% of men and 78% of women). Most personnel in the AFL are well aware of the AFL Code of Conduct.

However, many personnel are concerned that they will be reprimanded for acting as a whistleblower. This concern becomes especially stark as members of the AFL near their expected time of deployment.

In the AFL there is a general open door policy, where members are able to report.

However, women in a focus group said that there are a number of policies that they said should be written down. While most policies are written down, such as needing to wear a uniform when leaving the barracks, others report that other policies should be written down such as whistleblower, paternity leave and childcare policies.

AFL personnel engage in co-ed social cohesion activities

A large majority (96%) of surveyed AFL personnel reported that they socialize with other AFL members outside of work with both men and women reporting equal rates of socialization outside of work (96%).

82% believe that the AFL is like a family (82% of men and women), with nearly 90% of AFL personnel (88% of men and 84% of women) reporting that they have participated in one or more positive bonding experiences, such as sports, non-athletic co-ed formal activities, extra physical activity, training exercises or orientation programs.

Over 96% of respondents think that joint training sessions between men and women are appropriate. With 96% of men and women personnel agreeing that mixed training sessions are appropriate.

ii. Main barriers

Non-commissioned officers are not included in their superiors’ decision-making process

Non-commissioned officers in the AFL have noted minimal consultation in the decision-making process of their superiors: over two-thirds (69%) of respondents indicated that they are rarely or never consulted. Though women indicated a slightly higher rate of consultation, the difference is not statistically significant.

There is not an official whistleblower policy in the AFL

While there is an integrity policy and an open door policy in the AFL, there is not an official whistleblower policy. By whistleblower policy, we mean a policy in which members are able to report instances such as misconduct for example, and they are protected from being reprimanded against for “blowing the whistle” or “sounding the alarm”. Only 36% of AFL personnel in the sample were aware of a whistleblower policy. Only 36% of men and 35% of women were aware of the whistleblower policy. However, it is likely that the members of the AFL who stated that they are aware of a whistleblower policy confused whistleblower for the integrity policy. As it stands, many members are afraid that they will be reprimanded if they report misconduct, especially misconduct perpetrated by their superiors or personnel with higher rank.

AFL personnel do not support the provision of resources to try AFL members in civilian courts

AFL members indicated consistent, low support for the (hypothetical) provision of more resources to judges and prosecutors to try cases involving AFL members in civilian courts. While 18% of respondents indicated strong support for such measures, about 50% of respondents indicated that they did not support these measures at all,
with another 13% of respondents—63% overall—indicated that they are more unsupportive than supportive of such measures. Men and women’s responses were indistinguishable.

**AFL personnel support making it easier for the Inspector General to investigate soldiers**

In contrast, AFL members demonstrated a strong support for a (hypothetical) proposal to make it easier for the Inspector General to investigate soldiers: a high plurality of respondents—46%—indicated that they very much support a proposal for an inclusion of an Inspector General’s office in every installation of the AFL. Another 23 percent of respondents—69% overall—indicated that they are more supportive than unsupportive of such a policy. There was no significant difference across gender.

**Domestic violence is not seen as grounds for removal from deployment by AFL personnel**

Per the New National Defense Act of 2008, military personnel can be discharged for a number of reasons including conviction of a civil or criminal offense under Liberian law and/or conduct not keeping with AFL standards which could include domestic violence.12 51% of personnel said that domestic violence not a reason for removal from deployment. Generally, members will be given a second chance if they are found to have engaged in domestic violence.

**Sexual harassment is a concern among personnel**

The AFL has an official sexual harassment policy. Male AFL personnel are worried about being accused of sexual harassment. Nearly 50% of male respondents are worried or very worried about accusations.

Women in a focus group said that policies for sexual harassment are used in practice. However, there were mixed feelings about how effective these policies are. Women felt that cases brought forth are compromised, unless someone is caught in the act where serious consequences can be addressed, and need to be conducted under people that are trained to investigate such cases.

**There is evidence of different types of harassment**

10% of respondents (9% of surveyed men and 8% of surveyed women) have experienced receiving unwanted text messages, 27% of respondents (28% of surveyed men and 16% of surveyed women) said they have received criticism for not fulfilling duties of the institution. 23% of respondents (22% of surveyed men and 29% of surveyed women) said they have heard someone be called something other than their name. 20% said that talking about sex between colleagues is not the norm, of those surveyed 19% of men and 27% of women said they had heard of this behavior.

Moreover, 34% of male and 31% of female AFL personnel have heard jokes made about women. 36% of male and 16% of female respondents have heard jokes about physical appearance, and 9% (9% of men and 16% of women) have heard jokes about sexual orientation. 52% (53% of men and 49% of women) said that members engage in adult entertainment (e.g. going to brothels).

**Drunk driving and corruption are more seriously taken than SEA**

We asked AFL members a number of questions about different scenarios about their behavior and attitudes towards misconduct. Given an incident of a team member drunk driving and hitting someone, 96% of personnel felt that that was serious or very serious behavior, 86% said they would report the incident, and 94% felt that a drunk driving incident would be a violation of the AFL’s official policy. A majority of respondents thought an incident of drunk driving deserved some sort of disciplinary action (e.g. a written reprimand, court trial, suspension without pay etc.).

In a scenario where a male from your team has a sexual relationship with a local girl 60% of personnel felt that was a serious or very serious behavior, 60% said they would report the incident, 63% felt that a sexual relationship with a local girl was a violation of AFL policy. However, most respondents felt this behavior merited a written reprimand (26%) or no disciplinary action (25%). During longer discussions, some personnel noted that they would report such behavior. Meanwhile others stated that individuals are usually given one or two chances if they are caught engaging in this kind of behavior before it is officially reported.

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In a scenario where a member of your team received cash for not reporting a crime in a situation report, 93% of personnel felt that was a serious or very serious behavior, 92% said they would report the incident, 96% felt that accepting a cash bribe for not reporting the crime was a violation of AFL policy. Most AFL personnel surveyed felt this behavior merited a court trial (35%) or a written reprimand (20%).

In a scenario where someone from your team hit someone with a baton and permanently injured the person during a protest, 73% of personnel felt that was a serious or very serious behavior, 71% said they would report the incident, 72% felt that accepting a cash bribe for not reporting the crime was a violation of AFL policy. Most AFL personnel surveyed felt this behavior merited a written reprimand (34%), a verbal reprimand (16%) or a court trial (14%).

Certain views of masculinity may lead to difficulties for women engaging in the AFL, though these views are not always dominant across surveyed respondents

The survey reveals that the personnel within the AFL hold beliefs in certain masculine norms, which are not necessarily compatible with equal opportunities for men and women. However, these views are complex, and varied. It is important to note that everyone is entitled to their own opinions and beliefs. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of security institutions to ensure that the work environment is inclusive and respectful, and that standards of conduct and behavior overshadow individual views on gender roles within the family and society. This is a matter of operational effectiveness; for institutions to function well, it is important for all personnel to be able to work together and trust each other. So, for example, it is necessary to ensure that respect for hierarchy or competence prevails over beliefs about obedience, or that the obligation to respond to GBV prevails over views about rape culture or the acceptability of intra-family violence.

First, there is some acceptance of rape culture and norms around sexual domination, though these views are not held by a strong majority of personnel.

For example, the majority of men believe that women sometimes lie about being raped. 59% of surveyed personnel stated that women often lie about being raped.

A strong majority of personnel (72%) do not believe that it is ok for a husband to have sex with his wife even if she did not want to.

Additionally, there is not acceptance of sexual relationships with children. 85% of male and female respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that it is better for women to get married while they are young (12-18yo).

65% of male and female respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that a man who is unsatisfied with his wife can be intimate with other women.

Second, personnel feel strongly that honor and duty are important, and that men should protect women’s dignity and purity.

95% of personnel agreed or strongly agreed that it is important for a man to be respected by other men.

For example, 94% of male and 96% of female respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they would defend their reputation with violence if someone insulted them.

87% of male and female respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is a man’s duty to protect his family’s dignity by watching over the purity of the women in his family.

46% of respondents stated that a woman should remain a virgin before her marriage. 45% of women agreed or strongly agreed and 46% of men agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Third, personnel accept that women and men may disagree within the household, and do not hold firm views about women’s obedience.

92% of surveyed personnel believed a good wife should listen to her husband despite disagreeing with him. This view is consistent across both men and women.
A majority of respondents, 81% disagreed or strongly disagreed that a woman should tolerate humiliation to keep her family together.

Fourth, personnel do not broadly accept that the worth of men and women is not dependent on their ability to have children.

84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that women do not want to marry men who cannot have an erection.

iii. Main recommendations

Policies
- Institutionalize a formal whistleblower policy in the AFL
- Institutionalize a formal sexual harassment policy in the AFL
- Provide a clear zero-tolerance policy for SEA

Training and Professional Development
- Train all personnel on the whistleblower and sexual harassment policy
- Provide more training on misconduct, especially SEA

Practices
- Encourage positive bonding activities that highlight women’s skills

As mentioned earlier, the research team was given the opportunity to ask several additional questions in the MOWIP survey assessment. These questions are some of the same questions that were asked in a survey previously conducted by Renanah Miles Joyce with the AFL that covered the topics of civilian-military relations, civilian protection and general cohesion.13

The survey asked questions about the future of the AFL. Personnel overwhelmingly view the United States as the best model for the future of the AFL. 93% of respondents viewed the United States as the best international model for the future development of the AFL. Only five percent of respondents believe China, ECOWAS, or the United Nations is the best model for the AFL’s future.

Moreover, respondents prefer the preservation of (at least some of) the wartime military. 89% of surveyed personnel believed that it is better for militaries to keep (at least) some members of the wartime military, rather than to start over after a civil war. Men and women responded roughly equal to one another: 92% of women agreed that it is better to keep some members of the “old military,” while 89% of men felt the same way.

5) Gaps between perceptions of barriers and overall assessment

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According to the analysis as a whole, the top barriers to women’s meaningful deployment in peace operations are Issue Area 3 (deployment selection), Issue Area 5 (peace operation infrastructure) and Issue Area 10 (social exclusion). When asked directly what the top barriers to women’s meaningful participation in peace operations are, the survey respondents stated that Issue Area 1 (eligible pool), Issue Area 3 (deployment selection) and Issue Area 5 (peace operation infrastructure) are the top barriers. The overall analysis, which takes into account a multitude of relevant survey questions per issue area and the fact finding form, and the survey question which asks what the three top barriers are both highlight the issue Area 3, deployment selection, and Issue Area 5, peace operation infrastructure, are two of the largest barriers to women’s deployment in the AFL.

When asked directly about the top barriers, 83% of all respondents in the sample, 84% of the men surveyed and 76% of the women surveyed, stated that the eligible pool of women (Issue Area 1) is a top barrier to women’s meaningful participation in peace operations. However, the overarching analysis did not capture issue area one as a top barrier, but a medium priority barrier. This discrepancy might be a function of how the score for the indicator is calculated in the overall analysis, in which other factors such as the relative percentage of women deployed compared to that of men are also taken into account, rather than solely whether there are enough eligible women in the AFL, which the survey question explicitly asks. The perception among members of the AFL, and AFL members at the validation workshop, that a low number of women is the largest barrier to women’s deployment is indicative of the actual number of women in the AFL. Additionally, personnel perceptions such as these are all the more understandable given how few members of the AFL have interacted with female personnel or had female leaders in charge of them.

The overarching analysis highlighted issue area ten, social exclusion, as a large barrier to women’s meaningful participation in peace operations. Conversely, the survey question did not indicate that this is an issue, as it asks much more directly whether women not being treated as equals in the AFL is a significant barrier to women’s deployment. The overarching analysis takes into account a multitude of different questions in the analysis, some of which are a bit more difficult to capture outside of an aggregated analysis, such as views of masculinity and concerns regarding sexual harassment. However, when asked to describe the main barriers to women’s deployment, many personnel, especially men noted that issues such as sexual harassment are a large barrier to women’s deployment. For example, one respondent stated “I can say that the challenge is being vulnerable to harassment from male counterpart(s)”. During the oral report, it was also noted that women are often escorted while they are on mission and their movement is limited compared to that of men for fear that they will become pregnant if left to travel on their own or if given more freedom. There is a general sentiment, both expressed by men and women in the AFL, that if women are left to their own devices during missions then they will not “behave” themselves, with respect to abstaining from having relations with other peacekeepers. This was expressed during the oral report as well as in the open-ended responses when survey respondents were asked to describe the main barriers to women’s deployment. Several responses noted that significant barriers to women’s deployment is their disciplinary record. Similarly, several male and female participants at the validation workshop expressed their belief that women often do not want to be put in harm’s way, so they self-select out of particularly dangerous experiences. It must be noted, however, that this overall sentiment sparked much debate in the room, as many women and some men strongly disagreed with this sentiment. Additionally, one female member of the AFL during the oral report noted that she experienced sexual harassment while deployed and at present, her complaint on the matter to the United Nations, has not been addressed. Consequently, issue area ten, social exclusion is a large barrier to women’s deployment, but this issue area also seems to significantly overlap with issue area six, peace operation experiences.
6) Conclusions: recommendations to leverage opportunities and overcome barriers

a) Summary

Effective participation is not just about the number or proportion of women deployed, but also about ensuring first, that women’s needs are met when participating in the institution and on operations; second, that women have access to the same opportunities, roles, and resources as men; and third, that women’s skills and competencies match their responsibilities and the expectations they face. As such, addressing the barriers identified will require an integrated and holistic approach, incorporating four complementary types of intervention: policies, training and professional development, practices, and organizational culture.

The recommendations developed by the research team, the working group, and the validation workshop participants are presented by issue area throughout the report. This study shows that the three main barriers to women’s meaningful participation in peace operations are Issue Area 3 deployment selection, issue area peace operation infrastructure; and issue area 10 social exclusion.

Below, we provide a comprehensive list of recommendations to overcome the barriers mentioned in each Issue Area. These are broken down by Policies, Training and Professional Development, Practices, and Organizational Culture. We conclude with a list of topics for further investigation.

Top recommendations to overcome the barriers

- The conditions that soldiers face in-country are not conducive to retainment, of both female and male soldiers alike. Improvements to the conditions at the barracks, childcare, increased and consistent pay in addition to more healthcare benefits and childcare subsidies are strongly recommended. Special attention should also be paid to the needs and concerns of single mothers.
- The infrastructure and services for deployment must be improved, in particular access to mental and reproductive care. The mental healthcare of soldiers is imperative to the retainment, health and ability of soldiers or carry out their duties to the best of their ability while in the AFL. It is strongly recommended that soldiers have increased access to mental healthcare services not only when they return from deployment, but also pre-deployment and during deployment as well. These services should be made available and be widely advertised to members of the AFL regardless of deployment status. Moreover, women do not have access to free birth control, reproductive healthcare or sanitary products (pads, tampons, etc.) while deployed. Meanwhile, men in the AFL receive free condoms while on mission. Women should be receiving these resources. It is recommended that there is some oversight to ensure that deployed women receive access to these goods and resources.
- Many personnel who have been deployed stated that they did not feel adequately prepared for the tasks that were required of them in mission. In particular, personnel did not feel that they had the adequate computer, language (ability to speak French) or driving skills that are necessary for the missions that they were deployed to. It is recommended that prior to pre-deployment training there is additional training or in-service training that is offered on written exams, computer skills, language skills (speaking French) and driving skills.
- To prevent backlash against women who were chosen to deploy, especially in the form of harassment, the senior leadership of the AFL should raise awareness about the skills that the selected men and women have so that they are not perceived to be favoring women. They should make sure that all opportunities for deployment are made available to both men and women. Additionally, there should be more awareness and transparency about how deployment selection is conducted. Finally, the AFL should promote more positive bonding activities that showcase women’s skills and abilities.
- The AFL are aware that upon return from deployment, many personnel, including women, encounter financial troubles. There is currently a financial training course offered post deployment. This course is not sufficient for addressing these financial issues, largely because they do not include dependents (who often manage money while the member of the AFL is away on deployment). Consequently, they are interested in offering financial literacy courses to personnel’s dependents (family, etc.) as well. Financial
literacy courses should be offered to members of the military as well as their dependents (primarily spouses), so that financial planning within the household can occur prior to peacekeeping deployment in an effort to help soldiers and their families better manage their money.

- In order to address the issue of recruitment, additional action needs to be taken to help supplement current efforts. One recommendation is for a south to south knowledge exchange to occur across different African countries that have had an increase in women’s recruitment into the Armed Forces. This knowledge exchange should especially focus on how to advertise recruitment opportunities to women, especially in rural areas. Additionally, a south to south knowledge exchange should include information about how to retain women in the Armed Forces once they are in the military.

Other recommendations to overcome the barriers

Other recommendations are therefore presented below based on whether they pertain to policy, training and professional development, practices, and organizational culture:

**Policies**

- Clearly state the policies for deployment selection to all personnel, particularly the skills needed for deployment
- Provide clear and transparent guidelines about the skills and requirements necessary for deployment to all personnel
- Institutionalize the importance of gender sensitivity as a part of the skills needed for peacekeeping deployment
- Institutionalize contact and kinetic skills as requirements for peacekeeping deployment
- Institutionalize a testing cycles for deployment
- Provide an anonymous way for personnel to identify instances of abuse and mismanagement within the AFL
- Provide stipends for those taking written tests so that they do not have to spend their own money to take the exam
- Clearly state the policies for deployment selection to all personnel, particularly the skills needed for deployment
- There should be childcare facilities and subsidies provided, particularly for single mothers with children
- Consider revising the leave policies so that:
  - Leave policies are clearly stated and accessible
  - Differentiated based on different types of leave
  - Parental leave should be provided for both men and women
- Provide anonymous means to report misconduct on missions
- Provide a non-bias policy for leaving the base that is not based on the protecting women
- Consider peacekeeping missions as a part of promotion structure or the skills learned on peacekeeping missions as a part of promotion tests
- Provide a non-bias policy for leaving the base that is not based on the protecting women
- Provide clear policies on vehicle access on mission
- Provide clear policies on appropriate conduct while on mission
- Institutionalize a formal whistleblower policy in the AFL
- Institutionalize a formal sexual harassment policy in the AFL
- Provide a clear zero-tolerance policy for SEA
- Train all personnel on the whistleblower and sexual harassment policy
- Provide more training on misconduct, especially SEA

**Training and Professional Development**

- Provide information about professional networks to all AFL soldiers at the Academy
• Provide later batches with opportunities to do international training
• Provide more in-service training on languages, written tests, driving, and computer skills
• Provide training on kinetic, contact, and gender training
• Provide training for written tests for men and women
• Provide training on the leave policies, especially maternal leave
• Provide financial literacy program to personnel and their families before deployment
• Ensure that men and women are trained in combat and operational skills
• Provide training bystander training so that men and women can prevent abuse by other contingents
• Conduct more training on the peacekeeping context so that personnel are trained on the local culture
• Provide counseling, especially financial, to families of those deploying before, during, and after deployment
• Provide training and information to all personnel about the gender policies, practices, trainings, toolkits, resources available
• Train women in infantry jobs

Practices
• Identify best practices from current recruitment drive and replicate
• Institutionalize the pre-recruitment training as a part of the recruitment process
• Expedite the Military Maternity Uniform
• Provide more opportunities for in-service training so that personnel can change specialty easier
• Ensure that no one with disciplinary record is able to deploy
• Address testing issues brought up by personnel
• Ensure that both men and women are able to take tests
• Ensure that whistleblowers are not punished by taking away their deployment opportunity
• Highlight that women are deployed based on their skills to counter discrimination
• Allow men to have flexible working hours so that they can engage in parenting activities just as much as women
• Provide accommodations and time for women to breastfeed
• Conduct a needs assessment and address concerns of single mothers in the AFL
• Conduct a gendered needs assessment on a regular basis to determine the specific needs of deployed men and women
• Provide adequate peacekeeping facilities
• Provide mental healthcare to all personnel before, during and after deployment
• Provide reproductive care (including sanitary products) to women
• Conduct focus groups to better understand how to address homesickness while on mission
• Conduct a exit interview with deployed personnel returning to determine the problems men and women face
• Highlight women’s success stories while on mission on the radio, social media, and internal newsletters and magazines
• Institutionalize a formal mentorship program for women in the AFL
• Ensure that the same standards for rules regarding leaving the compound apply to men and women equally
• Ensure that both men and women engage in the same types of work outside of their regular job on mission
• Encourage positive bonding activities that highlight women’s skills

Future Research

Finally, there are many areas for further investigation. In particular, the norms versus written policy of the AFL needs to be further assessed, the experience of military families and dependents, the living conditions of
members of the AFL, payment for members of the AFL and decision-making processes within the context of the AFL should be investigated further. As stated in the methodology section of this report, it was difficult for the research team to obtain consistent answers from officials concerning which practices within the AFL are a matter of policy versus informal norms. Further investigation should take stock of what are norms versus written policy in an effort to better understand the institutional structure of the AFL and in order to offer more specific recommendations as to which practices should be written as formal policy.

The specific difficulties that military families and dependents, as well as single mothers in the AFL face need to be further explored. During the validation workshop and the focus group discussions with female members of the AFL, it was noted that there are specific difficulties that military families, single mothers in the AFL, and dependents of AFL members face. While the survey asked some questions that can pertain to the experiences of dependents and military families, this was not the focus of the report. In particular, it became clear from the validation workshop that more analysis is needed of the experiences of military families, particularly when the AFL member in their family is deployed. The experiences of single mothers in the AFL and their children, in particular, need to be further explored as well. During the focus group discussions it was noted that many single mothers in the AFL have explicit concerns about their children when they are on base by themselves, as there are many instances of male soldiers engaging in relationships with them while the mother is away. This concern in particular needs to be explored further.

The living conditions for members of the AFL on base in Liberia need to be further investigated. During the validation workshop, a large concern that many participants had was living conditions on base in Liberia. Many participants noted that the living conditions are especially poor for many members of the AFL and that this is a large concern when thinking about female member retention in the AFL. The living conditions of members of the AFL were also noted as a particular concern by the enumerators who traveled to the different barracks throughout the country to collect the survey data for this project.

Lastly, the specific decision-making processes in the AFL need further investigation as well. Throughout the data collection process it was particularly difficult to obtain information on how decisions are made in the AFL: what is the exact chain of command, who has a say in making different types of decisions, what the process to make decisions is like, etc. This is important to understand, as any changes made that are meant to help improve the experiences of members in the AFL, particularly female members, will need to go through such a process. The recommendations in this report are dependent changes being implemented through the institutional and decision-making structure that already exists in the AFL. However, it was difficult to understand what exactly the structure is, for the purposes of this report.
Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)

2022 Report on Results of the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP) Assessment

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