

Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming Work and impact of United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL):

Final Report prepared for DPKO

by

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Cover photo: *The last Nigerian troops board the ferry, from Freetown to Lungi airfield transit camp, awaiting repatriation. UNAMSIL Photo/Eric Kanalstein 6 December 2005*

Acronyms

CCSEA	Coordination Committee for the prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
CCSL	Council of Churches of Sierra Leone
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIVPOL	Civilian Police
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale (an Italian NGO)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Military
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FSU	Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone police
GA	Gender Adviser
GRP	Gender Resource Package
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
IMAT	International Military Assistance Team
IRC	International Rescue Committee
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre.
MARWOPNET	Mano River Women's Peace Network
MONUC	United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MP	Member of Parliament
NCDDR	National Commission for Disarmament and Reintegration
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QIPs	Quick Impact Projects
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMSIL	United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
WFP	World Food Programme

A. Executive Summary

This report responds to a request, by the gender adviser of DPKO Headquarters, for an evaluation of UNAMSIL's gender mainstreaming work and impact. It is based on qualitative and quantitative data and insights, generated (October and November 2005) from face-to-face interviews of a sample of UNAMSIL staff, local stakeholders as well as representatives of other UN bodies, in addition to desk research.

Sierra Leone suffered many years of political and economic malaise after its independence (27 April 1961) and over a decade long civil war (1991-2002) with pervasive sexual abuse, other human and physical destruction and displacement of people. The UN's response, following the Lome Peace Agreement (July 1999) initially consisted of an observer mission (UNOMSIL). In October 1999, under Security Council Resolution 1270, UNAMSIL was set up and remained in the country until December 2005 to, inter alia, assist the Government to implement the Lome Peace Agreement.

A.1 UNAMSIL's gender mainstreaming work

UNAMSIL's **original mandate**, which predates Security Council Resolution 1325, makes **inadequate reference to gender and may have restricted, to some extent, the human and financial resources allocated to the mission's gender mainstreaming work**. Nevertheless, the mission was able to embark upon substantial efforts at gender mainstreaming both inside and outside its structures. **The approach, however, fell short of a holistic strategy** and, therefore, inhibited **the realization of the Mission's full potential in gender work** and impact in the country.

A.1.1 Gender Adviser

Until the last year of the Mission, the GA was located in the Human Rights section. **Her relocation to the SRSG's Office, therefore, occurred late**, when the Mission was actually in the throes of its drawdown. Thus, while she gained direct access to the SRSG and senior management and had the potential to influence the gender sensitivity of the mission's policies and actions, **the duration was too short to ensure full attainment of the potential benefits**. The relocation was also not accompanied by any expansion in the size and resources of the GA's unit.

A number of **features that now characterise gender components of peacekeeping missions were absent in UNAMSIL**, such as having more than one gender adviser plus gender focal points in each functional area. A Mission as large as UNAMSIL (18,000+ at its height) had only one full time gender adviser (from mid 2003 to December 2005). Before that, it had an acting gender focal point who combined this role with another function in the Mission's human rights section. **DPKO seriously under-invested in supporting gender mainstreaming activities in UNAMSIL**.

The GA's main functions covered both **internal and external work**, the capital city and the rural areas, and included **capacity building through training** both within and outside the mission (such as of women's organizations, CSOs and other NGOs, Gender Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and human rights committees), **information dissemination, provision of technical advice and relevant documentation**,

servicing on relevant gender task forces (such as for the TRC and the Special Courts); **partnerships** with women MPs, other UN bodies (e.g the gender theme group) as well as national and international NGOs and UNAMSIL's functional areas to carry out joint programmes.

Most of the respondents (both internal and external to the mission) were appreciative of the GA's contribution, even if she lacked the means to ensure wide implementation of the policies she advised on. The above functions also fitted into the general thrust of the gender adviser's terms of reference that had been developed by the DPKO gender adviser. It has to be recognized, nevertheless, that **the gender adviser had to carve out a role she could handle within the exigencies of the context.**

A.1.2 SRSG

The **SRSG serving at the time of the evaluation was deemed to be gender sensitive** and contributed to the gender mainstreaming work. He referred to gender issues in his addresses and advice to Government such as on appointments.

A.1.3 Functional Areas

All the mission's functional areas attempted to mainstream gender in their activities but some, especially **the civilian ones, were more active than the military.** Public Information and Human Rights were among the most active. For example, many non-UNAMSIL respondents referred to the gender knowledge and awareness raising they had gained from **UNAMSIL Radio.**

A.2 Impact

Some impacts may not have emanated solely from UNAMSIL's operations, simply because of other interventions in the same environment.

A.2.1 Positive:

✓ Legal

A major feat was that for the first time since the country's ratification of **CEDAW** in 1988, Sierra Leone has compiled a report on its application of this treaty.

There is now **greater local awareness of key UN gender-related legal and other instruments, for example CEDAW and Security Council Resolution 1325** in the country than before the establishment of UNAMSIL

Parliament has passed laws pertinent to women, such as laws on trafficking, inheritance and property rights. Other gender-related Bills are also before Parliament.

The Law Reform Commission's agenda also included elimination of discriminatory laws against women such as some customary laws. The **TRC report and recommendations include many on women and other gender matters.**

Human rights awareness of the police, such as on gender violence, has increased as gathered from interviews with the local police. The **increased number of Family Support Units** at police stations has augmented rural women's access to them to seek redress to their concerns.

✓ **Political**

There has been a **gradual increase in the numbers of women involved in the modern political arena, including elections, Parliament and Government.**

✓ **Gender knowledge**

UNAMSIL in conjunction with other UN and local institutions have **created a degree of gender awareness in the country.**

Greater knowledge, gained about their rights, has **boosted the confidence of more women to come forward to report rapes and other taboo subjects to the FSUs.**

There is now institutionalization of nationwide celebration of 8th March, International Women's Day and 16 days of activism (25 November -10 December each year). These events continue to be used as an opportunity to promote gender equality and women's rights.

✓ **Strengthened institutional Capacity**

Many local women's organizations, other civil society groups and governmental structures now have **enhanced capacity.** A number of gender-related initiatives have also been supported, including Women's Help Line for battered women.

✓ **Improved physical and human security for women and men**

A positive economic impact was generated by UNAMSIL's presence through the opportunities it provided directly and indirectly to some poor women and men to earn a living.

UNAMSIL created a physically secure environment in the country that benefited both men and women by enabling them to move around the country to pursue economic and other activities without fear.

A.2.2 Negative:

There was an escalation of **sexual exploitation and abuse of local women, girls (and boys) by the mission's troops and other staff**, which, according to locals interviewed, has resulted in **"large numbers of UN babies"**. There was also a reported increase in **the level of prostitution.**

A.3 Lessons learnt, good practices and recommendations to guide on-going and future peacekeeping missions:

A.3.1 Monitoring and evaluation

Gender audits, coordinated by the DPKO Headquarters' gender adviser, should be regularly conducted on each functional area and the mission as a whole to permit problem areas to be remedied in time to improve the gender mainstreaming effort and impact in the course of the mission.

A.3.2 Training

Gender training should be one of the core training activities of a peacekeeping mission. It should not be voluntary but mandatory and organized frequently for all staff including senior management.

There should be **follow up to the gender training to see how staff utilize the knowledge acquired.**

Skills imparted to women in training programmes should be linked to demands of the labour market. Indeed skills training in post-conflict and other environments should be used as an opportunity for diversifying women's skills beyond traditional ones to also include men's occupational skills.

A.3.3 Aggressive resource mobilization for gender mainstreaming

The GA should **develop strong contacts with local offices of donors** and embark on aggressive external resource mobilization to fund some of the mission's gender work.

A.3.4 SEA

With respect to SEA, the **implementation of the UN policy and the code of conduct on the issue should be done with adequate consideration of the local conditions contributing to sexual abuse.** In Sierra Leone, this was the abject poverty of a large number of people due to lack of local opportunities for employment. Thus, **the training and sensitization on SEA should not just be with the peacekeepers, as was done by UNAMSIL, but also with the local community, civil society groups and government.**

A.3.5 Missed opportunities and constraints

There were a number of **missed opportunities and constraints.** For example, there was **no visible gender plan** at the inception of the mission with time lines and goals to underpin the mission's internal and external gender mainstreaming work.

Even though gender covers both women and men, there **were no programmes targeting men and boys.**

The **patriarchal context with discriminatory gender relations and cultural practices posed a major challenge** to gender mainstreaming and the pace of change that can be achieved.

The module on gender in the new inter-agency manual (IDDRS) should be used to plan and implement **gender-sensitive DDR programmes** which take full account of women.

The lower representation of women in the mission did not facilitate gender mainstreaming nor make the mission a role model in terms of gender mainstreaming in the country. **Bold and innovative measures are also required by DPKO to promote gender balance of peacekeeping missions.**

A.3.6 Exit strategy

A specific gender exit strategy is required as an integral part of an overall exit strategy or disengagement of a mission from a country. This should be formulated with the GAs in the country and at DPKO as well as local stakeholders. Unless gender considerations are seriously taken into account in the mission's exit strategy, follow-up to strides made in gender mainstreaming and potential ones can be compromised.

On the whole, the **Sierra Leonean respondents expressed satisfaction with the gender mainstreaming work carried out by UNAMSIL and the impact** attained.

B. Introduction

B.1 Why peacekeeping and gender mainstreaming ?

“If peacekeeping operations are to succeed in ensuring sustainable peace and long term reconciliation based on democratic principles and internationally recognized human rights standards, it is crucial that their activities and policies uphold the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination.”¹

UNAMSIL was one of DPKO's largest multidimensional peacekeeping operations with the potential to affect a number of critical areas, including gender relations and equity in the host country. The mission's work has been described as “successful” and commended by a 2003 external assessment and subsequent Security Council reviews². It is, however, uncertain whether this description is equally applicable to the mission's gender mainstreaming work and impact. To-date no evaluation, premised on the assumption **that an effective approach to gender mainstreaming requires a more holistic approach** including the catalytic role of a gender adviser, has been undertaken on the mission. As UNAMSIL was ending in December 2005, DPKO mandated a gender consultant, to undertake such an evaluation in October 2005. Similarly, an evaluation of the Timor-Leste mission, that had also ended, was undertaken by another consultant. The evaluation's timing (October –November 2005) was opportune since its findings at the end of UNAMSIL's mandate, could: a) provide essential baseline information and insights to underpin effective planning of gender-sensitive work by the UN bodies and others that would be assisting Sierra Leone in the post-UNAMSIL period; and b.) be invaluable for planning new, and strengthening on-going, peacekeeping missions for better gender coverage and impact.

¹ The Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security doc. S/2002/1154

² See, for example, Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit, DPKO : Lessons learnt from United Nations Peacekeeping experiences in Sierra Leone, September 2003; Security Council Resolution 1620, 5254th meeting of the Security Council , 31 Aug 2005. And subsequent ones up to the end of the mission, December 2005.

In addition to recent analyses³ of wars that have highlighted gender differences in experiences and, therefore, the urgent need for post-conflict responses to integrate gender concerns, the landmark Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (October 2000), raised this to a higher level by underscoring gender mainstreaming in all UN peacekeeping, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and other interventions. Since then, DPKO has invested in broadening the Department's policy and operational framework to ensure effective integration of gender perspectives in all peacekeeping activities⁴ as well as in establishing gender units in multidimensional peacekeeping operations and at DPKO Headquarters. Training tools and resources have also been developed to build staff awareness and sensitivity to gender issues. Furthermore, in March 2005, DPKO's Under Secretary-General issued a gender policy statement, which provides an operational framework for implementing the Department's work. As this is a new policy statement, dating only from March 2005, its implementation, while in progress both at headquarters and in the field missions, may probably not have attained "cruising level", so to speak, at the time of the field evaluation at the end of October 2005.

B.2 Objectives of the evaluation

a.) The evaluation's key objectives were:

assessment of the overall impact – internal and external - of gender mainstreaming interventions in UNAMSIL and the extent to which these efforts had succeeded in situating the goal of gender equality as a core objective in all aspects of the post-conflict reconstruction process including in the areas of security sector reform, rule of law and human rights;

b.) examination of the extent to which UNAMSIL's gender mainstreaming efforts have contributed to building the capacity of national counterpart institutions, including women's organizations, in a sustainable way; and

c.) review of the effectiveness of the Mission's exit strategy to facilitate transition of this work to national, governmental and non-governmental partners.

In more specific terms, the evaluation was, inter alia, aimed at:

- assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming approaches employed by the mission in accordance with mandates provided by the Security Council and the General Assembly⁵;
- reviewing and highlighting successes and best practices in relation to implementation of the gender mainstreaming objectives pursued by the mission;
- assessing gaps, missed opportunities and challenges encountered in relation to implementing the mandate for gender mainstreaming;

³ See for example, UN: Platform for Action (Fourth *World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995*); Rehn, E. and Johnson-Sirleaf, E: *Women, War and Peace: Progress of the world's women*, Vol. 1 (2002), (UNIFEM, New York, 2002); ICRC. *Women facing war* (Geneva 2001); Date-Bah, E.: Women and other gender concerns in post-conflict reconstruction and job promotion efforts in Date-Bah, E.(ed.) *Jobs After War* (ILO, 2003); Date-Bah, E: Sustainable peace after war: Arguing the need for major integration of gender perspectives in post-conflict programming (ILO Action programme on skills and entrepreneurship development for countries emerging from armed conflict, Geneva, 1996)

⁴ Mainstreaming gender in peacekeeping activities is the full incorporation of gender perspectives into all peacekeeping activities, from the initial stages of ceasefire negotiations and the establishment of mandates for peacekeeping operations, to post-conflict situations (Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly on Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Activities, February 2003)

⁵ Including in particular, Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (October 2000) and Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly on Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Activities (February 2003)

- evaluating the impact of the mission's policy making and operational procedures on gender relations within the host community;
- assessing the relevance of the mission's exit strategy and sustainability of the mission's investments in gender mainstreaming on the political, economic and social structures and institutions in post-conflict Sierra Leone;
- supporting organizational learning on effective approaches to mainstreaming gender perspectives in post-conflict transition processes; and
- contributing to inform the design of future policy approaches for integrating gender perspectives in the management and coordination of the phasing-out of peacekeeping missions.

B.3 Analytical Framework: Elements assessed

The evaluation was also guided by a number of variables, identified from the literature⁶, as able to support (or impede) the peacekeeping mission's gender mainstreaming work and impact. Among the variables are the following:

- the mission's mandate⁷, including its degree of coverage of gender issues;
- the existence, location and resources of gender unit/adviser in the mission,⁸;
- the degree of gender sensitivity and commitment of the mission's senior management, especially the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to gender mainstreaming in the mission's work;⁹
- the degree of gender knowledge among peacekeeping personnel and the strategies adopted by them to integrate the concerns of men and women into the activities of their functional areas¹⁰;

⁶ Examples are O'Neill A. and Ward, A. *Mainstreaming and Maneuvering? Gender and peacekeeping in west Africa* (KAIPTC Monograph No. 1 April 2005); Olsson, L.: *Gender and UNTAG operation of the peacekeeping mission in Namibia 1989-90*;

Clingaendale Institute and the Kofi Annan international Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC)

⁷ Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, October 2002, identified clear gender references in mandates of peacekeeping missions and allocation of adequate budgetary resources to gender work to be decisive in gender mainstreaming and to demonstrate commitment to gender equality.

⁸ The above report also stressed the need for gender expertise at both the DPKO Headquarters and in the peacekeeping missions to "support top management in carrying out their responsibility for gender mainstreaming" (page 7). Furthermore, the gender advisers in the mission should receive backstopping from a gender adviser at Headquarters.

⁹ In an analysis (Olsson, *Gender and UNTAG Operation of the peacekeeping mission in Namibia (UNTAG – UN Transitional Assistance Group) 1989 -1990*, which has been described as very successful in terms of women's participation in it, attributed this success to two key factors:

a) The gender sensitivity of the head of the mission, Messrs Marti Ahtissari (the former SRSO of the mission) and Cedric Thornberry (former head of the mission's Office of Administration) as well as the efforts of the UN "Women's group on equal rights", stimulated the recruitment in a non-discriminatory manner, of many women (40 per cent) into the mission civilian positions and into demanding and responsible rather than light positions outside general service roles. Some of the women staff were allowed to bring their children to the mission. But no woman was in top positions within the mission.

b) The mandate of the mission was not explicitly gender sensitive but the inclusion of gender-sensitive women in the mission permitted the mission to focus on gender issues including "special education for (local) women regarding democracy and voting procedures" and the behaviour of such women and the mission as a whole, contributed to enhance the gender awareness of the mission.

¹⁰ Ibid stresses that the responsibility for a mission's implementation of gender mainstreaming should be the responsibility of all staff of the mission, especially the senior managers.

- the collaboration between the peacekeeping activities and the local women's groups¹¹ and relevant civil society bodies;
- the degree of gender balance among the mission's staff;¹²
- the traditional practices and culture of the host country¹³, especially in connection with relations between women and men and attitudes towards gender equality, such as in access to economic power, political participation and decision –making, inheritance and other social practices;
- the possible direct and indirect impact of the mission's policies and activities on women and men in the local culture and society as well as how the mission takes into account the local societal structures and cultural norms.¹⁴
- the commitment or apathy of the government and the legislature to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, including through adoption of relevant laws;
- relevant policies and tools on the subject as a framework for this work as well as the degree of support of DPKO headquarters for establishing the vision on how to accomplish the gender mainstreaming goals and to drive the process; and
- extent of gender sensitivity of the troop contributing countries.

B.4 Methodology and challenges encountered

The evaluation was undertaken (from 31 October to 10 November 2005) when UNAMSIL was in the throes of its draw-down and actually had less than two months before its closure in December 2005. Furthermore most of the mission's initial staff complement of over 18,000+ (made up of 17,500 military, and over 500 civilian staff) had already left. There were only about 1970 military, 217 international non-military staff and 410 national staff, totaling 2597, left in the mission during the fieldwork.

The evaluation methodology adopted combined desk review of existing data with qualitative enquiry and interviews both in New York and Sierra Leone. The interviews sought the views of a purposive sample (see annex 1) consisting of: representatives from relevant units at DPKO New York, other UN organizations and donor bodies in New York and Freetown; the different functional areas of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone; the incumbent gender adviser; some of the old staff who were no longer working with UNAMSIL; and external local stakeholders including women's organizations and other civil society groups, the churches, the Sierra Leone Government (represented by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Gender and Children's Affairs), an MP, a gender focal point from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Sierra Leone Police and local offices of other UN and international NGOs. The respondents included an equal number of men and women (20 of each). All the interviews were conducted by the evaluating consultant herself in a flexible manner, but with the main

¹¹ Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, October 2002 draws attention to the fact that peacekeeping missions could gain from having "contacts with access to the knowledge and expertise of local women's organizations". Furthermore, in developing gender perspectives, peacekeeping operations can benefit from collaboration with local women's organizations" (DPKO: Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, 2004, page 120).

¹² Olsson /2005) is of the view that "successful gender balanced mission (like UNTAG) indicates that gender mainstreaming might be easier reached if more women are included in the UN field staff".

¹³ DPKO: Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, 2004, for example urges peacekeeping missions to take into account the local societal structures and cultural norms. (Page 116).

¹⁴ DPKO, Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, page 115 -116.

focus on the variables highlighted in the evaluation framework, and their indicators. Among them were: the respondents' gender knowledge and utilization of Security Council Resolution 1325, DPKO gender policy statement; degree of human and financial resources allocated to the mission's gender work; location and role of the gender adviser; other internal and external gender mainstreaming work, such as of functional areas and strategies employed; mission leadership's commitment to gender mainstreaming; other facilitators; gender balance; partnerships with local stakeholders; the code of conduct; constraints and missed opportunities and impact.

Most of the respondents were interviewed individually. Some were also interviewed in groups, such as the headquarters of the Sierra Leone Police Family Support Unit in Freetown and another unit in Waterloo as well as some UN gender focal points and members of the **UN Gender Theme Group**. In UNAMSIL, at least one person was interviewed in each functional area. Among the exceptions was the SRSG's office, where 5 staff (including the SRSG himself, the gender adviser, the legal adviser, the DDR adviser, the HIV/adviser and child protection adviser) were all respondents. They all had to be interviewed since they handled different schedules within the SRSG's office.

While most of the respondents were in Freetown, an attempt was also made to include a few rural areas near Freetown – Waterloo (where one family support unit was interviewed) and Hastings (where a police college was located and training inputs were provided by CIVPOL) see map 1. The short duration, fixed by DPKO for the fieldwork (namely 11 days) as well as the infrequency of flights from Sierra Leone to Accra, prevented the consultant from doing interviews throughout the country, especially in most of the provinces and districts where UNAMSIL had operations. However, some of the stakeholders interviewed in Freetown also operated in those local areas and were, therefore, able to draw attention to their collaborative gender work with UNAMSIL in those areas and impact.

Apart from facts supported by figures, **most of the responses were opinions and qualitative data, which did not always lend themselves to quantitative analysis.**

Biases

Biases could have been introduced through a few features of the data collection methodology. UNAMSIL respondents had not all been in the mission for the same length of time and this, meant that the newer employees might not have gained the same level of knowledge about the mission's gender mainstreaming work to be able to provide accurate responses to all the questions on its different facet, including the activities of the gender adviser. The sample size was relatively small (40) even though they were randomly selected from both inside and outside the mission. Their responses were, however, supplemented by documentary materials collected during, before and after the fieldwork. Despite the above, there was consistency between the responses from the different people which could confirm their reliability and validity.

B.5 Sierra Leone: brief overview

B.5.1 Political and socio-economic situation

Sierra Leone, with a population size of about 5 million, covers a geographical area of about 72,000 sq. kilometres in West Africa.(see Map in annex 3). The bulk (Ninety per cent) of the

country's population is made up of about 20 ethnic groups. Two-thirds of the population is Muslim, 10 percent Christian and 30 percent indigenous religions. The main economic activities are agriculture and mining with a few industries. Its capital city, Freetown, has a population of approximately 800,000.

The country has been independent since April 27 1961. It has, however, had a tumultuous political history including several coups d'état. The country now has a democratically elected leader, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, and multipartism. From 1991, the country went through ten years of brutal war between rebel forces (principally the RUF) and the government, characterised by **mass rape, other abuses of women and girls**, horrendous physical maiming of people, **extensive destruction of infrastructure and other assets**. More than **50, 000 people were killed and over 2 million people were displaced**, both internally and externally, **and 100,000 were disabled ("the amputees")** and more than a quarter of a million of the female population (both women and girls) were raped.¹⁵ On 7 July 1999, the rebels and the government signed an agreement in Lomé to form a government of national unity and to end hostilities. There were only two women at the negotiations and **the agreement made only limited reference to gender issues**.¹⁶ This was to the effect that "Given that women have been particularly victimized during the war, special attention shall be accorded to their needs and potentials in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes, to enable them to play a central role in the moral, physical and social reconstruction of Sierra Leone" (July 1999).¹⁷

The war, however, did not end with the Lomé accord but continued until early 2002.

The country was initially assisted by peacekeeping forces of ECOMOG, representing the Economic Community of West African States. Later, Security Council Resolution 1181, 13 July 1998, established a United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNMOSIL) to monitor the country's military and security situation, DDR and the role of ECOMOG. UNMOSIL was expanded under Security Council Resolution 1260, adopted on 20 August 1999, which made no reference to gender. Furthermore, on 22 October 1999, the Security Council under resolution 1280, authorized the establishment of a larger peacekeeping mission, UNAMSIL.

Post-war Sierra Leone currently has **poor socio-economic indicators**. For example, the **unemployment rate is very high, over 70 percent**, and **the illiteracy rate is of a similar order of magnitude**. In 2002, **89 per cent of the population was reported to be living in extreme poverty compared to 57 per cent in 1990**.¹⁸ The country's GDP was estimated at US\$ 121 in 2002 and life expectancy at 34.3 years in the same year. The country **was at the bottom of the UNDP Human Development Index in 2004**, but however, moved up to the last but one position (176) in the Index of 2005.

B.5.2 Gender relations

The various ethnic groups in Sierra Leone have been described as patriarchal in which **women are discriminated against in access to resources, education, political**

¹⁵ See Asante, A 2005.

¹⁶ This did not fully reflect the fact that women had played a significant role in challenging the rebel movement and its leaders.

¹⁷ Article XXVIII paragraph 2 of the Lomé Peace Accord.

¹⁸ Government of Sierra Leone: PRSP, 2005.

participation and rights. Gender inequality is “entrenched in all spheres of social, political and economic life by discriminatory laws, customs, traditions and practices”.¹⁹ Among the **root causes of this inequality in the country are traditional norms and practices, cultural orientation, legislative gaps, ignorance and religious beliefs.**²⁰ Women suffer a number of human rights abuses including sexual and other forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and early marriage. The **war exacerbated these abuses and also the burden on women**, including caring for many disabled family members and non-income households. **Few ever hold traditional political office**, like paramount chiefs.²¹ There has however been some progress, although slow and inadequate, in the modern political arena with a woman even standing for President (although unsuccessfully) during the last elections in 2002. A small number of women (8) are now in Parliament. Women hold 3 ministerial and 3 deputy ministerial positions.

C. UNAMSIL’s gender mainstreaming work: Key Features

A multidimensional peacekeeping mission, like UNAMSIL, provides an appropriate framework for the adoption of a holistic approach to gender mainstreaming. The assessment of the holistic approach has to start from the mission’s inception including its mandate.

C.1 Gender in UNAMSIL’s mandate

The Security Council Resolution 1270, which established UNAMSIL, made only cursory reference to gender issues as it predated Security Council Resolution 1325, compared to the mandates of on-going peacekeeping missions in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo which were established after this resolution. The mandate provided under resolution 1270²², specifically underlined protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence and the inclusion among UNAMSIL personnel of staff with training in international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law including child **and gender-related provisions**, negotiations and communication skills, cultural awareness and civilian-military coordination. **The mandate was subsequently extended several times** by the Security Council such as through Resolution 1370 of 2001, 1400 of 2002 and 1478 of 2003, **which drew attention to more substantial gender concerns, such as sexual violence and other violations of women and children’s human rights. Civil society initiatives, including those of the Mano River**

¹⁹ TRC report Vol.2, 2004: page168.

²⁰ Gender inequality in the laws of Sierra Leone, Dec. 2001, page 15.

²¹ According to Ward (2002, p.23), there were only 3 women among the country’s 149 paramount chiefs, none in the Northern Province.

²² The Mandate specifies the following::

- to cooperate with the Government and other parties to the Lomé Peace Agreement to implement the Agreement;
- to assist the Government in implementing the DDR plan;
- to set up a presence in key locations throughout the country;
- to ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel;
- to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance;
- to support the operations of the UN civilian officials, including the SRSG and his staff, human rights officers and civil affairs officers;
- to support the country’s elections.

Union Women’s Peace Network, were called upon to continue their contribution to regional peace.

These subsequent Resolutions, as well as 1325, could have reinforced UNAMSIL’s gender mainstreaming work. However, the follow up reports by the Secretary-General continued to note that there were gender gaps in UNAMSIL’s work; gender mainstreaming had still not been systematically incorporated into every aspect of the peacekeeping mission; and the desired impact had yet to be attained. **The inadequate reference to gender in UNAMSIL’s original mandate may have constrained, to some extent, the human and financial resources allocated to gender mainstreaming**, the initial location of the Mission’s gender adviser and the accountability of the mission’s hierarchy as a whole to gender mainstreaming.

Furthermore, the mandate differed from that of Timor-Leste where the UN administration was actually the government and, therefore, had more power to introduce non-discriminatory laws and other changes in the country. Sierra Leone, on the other hand, had a substantive government and UNAMSIL’s mandate was to assist it. Thus UNAMSIL needed to carry the Government along in terms of possible changes it deemed necessary such as on the unequal gender relations in the country. The nature of the mission’s mandate, therefore, might have had an impact on the relatively slow pace of change, especially in the gender arena.

C.2 The gender adviser: location, role and strategies during different periods.

The few analyses²³ so far undertaken of UNAMSIL’s gender adviser’s role have portrayed the role as synonymous to gender mainstreaming and have thus tended to be unduly critical. They have tended not to take full account of the roles of other features of a holistic approach to gender mainstreaming in a peacekeeping mission.

From the mission’s inception to the end, the gender unit was very small, consisting of only one staff member. Initially there was a gender focal point/specialist who combined this role with another full time role as a human rights officer. Later (only in 2003) a full time gender adviser was appointed. This size needed to be compared to the magnitude of the mission (17,500+) and the enormity of the gender challenges in the host country.

There were three changes in the incumbent of the persons in the gender post at different periods in the course of the mission’s 5-year duration but did not unduly affect the smooth functioning of the role. There were two predecessors before the last GA but only one could be interviewed (by email) as efforts to trace the very first incumbent (from October 1999 to early 2000) of the post were not successful because no one appeared to have her present contact details. Thus essential information on how gender was handled at the inception of the mission could not be reflected in this report to be able to measure the major changes, if any that occurred subsequently.

➤ **March 2005-December 2005**

The Gender Adviser was **relocated** from the human rights section to the SRSG’s office **only in March 2005, the mission’s last year**. However, **it generated benefits for the mission’s gender mainstreaming work. She could participate in senior management meetings,**

²³ Such as by Clingaendale/KAIPTC 2004 and O’Neill and Ward 2005.

provide relevant gender advice to the SRSG and other senior staff in addition to having regular direct access to them. She was also able to undertake some strategic activities at the senior management level. For example, she made a presentation on the concept of gender mainstreaming at a meeting of senior management to deepen their comprehension of this concept. She was able to develop closer working collaboration with many of the mission's units, especially child protection (which was also located in the SRSG's office), public information, the mission's focal points on sexual exploitation and abuse, and the civilian police. At the same time, she continued her strong working relationship with the Mission's human rights section (where she was earlier located) in such areas as training in international human rights law.

The GA's relocation raised considerable expectations as it was believed that being close to the SRSG would provide her with access to financial and human resources. Unfortunately, the relocation was not accompanied by additional DPKO resources with the exception of US\$9000 obtained through the DPKO headquarters-managed funding facility as part of extra-budgetary donor contributions to support gender mainstreaming in the department. On the whole, the gender adviser's move to the SRSG's office towards the end of UNAMSIL's mandate limited the full realization of its potential benefits. The GA was, however, able to consolidate the gender mainstreaming work she had already undertaken before the move, including continuation of the capacity building of several institutions within the government structure, NGOs and civil society bodies. She produced articles on gender in the UNAMISIL Review (the mission's newsletter) and joined hands with UNAMSIL Radio to organize public debates on key gender topics in the post-war Sierra Leonean context, such as domestic violence, gender equality and CEDAW. She organized training workshops, such as on Security Council Resolution 1325, DPKO's Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations (GRP) and also made inputs to training activities by other UNAMSIL units, UN bodies, local and international NGOs. She regularly participated in the UN Country Team Gender Theme Group meetings and other gender task forces in the country. Additionally, she contributed to the implementation of the UNAMSIL rollout plan on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) including staff members' training, radio programmes; posters, hotline broadcasts, notice boards and town hall meetings on the issue. The adviser incorporated SEA and other gender issues into all her training activities.

➤ 2003-February 2005

Located in the mission's human rights section, the GA (then called gender specialist) promoted protection of the rights of women and children such as in the areas of female genital mutilation and domestic violence; and capacity building. In conjunction with other local institutions, she served on the gender task force to promote the coverage of gender by the TRC and the Special Court²⁴. The GA was able to pinpoint both advantages and disadvantages in her initial location. Among the advantages was the fact that she could tap the budget and outreach structures in the activities of the human rights section (such as human rights training of police and human rights programmes and committees at the district and national levels) for gender activities both inside and outside the mission. Furthermore, she faced less resistance both within the mission and in the country, as pursuing gender

²⁴ More detail on this role is provided in section C 6.8 of the report.

mainstreaming from a human rights perspective was, in her view, “more acceptable” to people.

There were, however, **several disadvantages**. The **adviser did not have direct access to the SRSG to be able to influence the mission’s strategic policies and activities** and to provide guidance on gender mainstreaming. She **could not attend senior management meetings nor interact with senior management to be able to raise gender issues for consideration** and to obtain their commitment. She had to rely on the gender sensitivity of her human rights chief in order to convey gender concerns to the SRSG and other senior managers.

Other strategies employed by the GA included **networking with local partners** – non- UN and UN bodies - for concerted action and also to reach more people with relevant gender messages. This appeared to conform to earlier observations regarding operational priorities²⁵ of the GA’s role and the fact that the effectiveness of the gender adviser is closely linked to her/his “individual personality”. The local partnerships however did not include local offices of donors, which could have enabled her to mobilize external funding to strengthen her unit and work.

➤ 2000-mid 2003.

The **acting gender focal point** focused on gender only as part of his function within the Human rights section. The specific gender-related activities undertaken overlapped with a number of those by the current substantive GA. Most of them were **promotional** – raising gender awareness among UNAMSIL troops and civilian staff, observance of international gender events and collaboration with other functional areas, such as public information, to obtain air time for gender issues and information dissemination on international instruments; capacity building of local women’s associations; supporting DPKO-led gender training of UNAMSIL staff and UN review of sexual violence against Sierra Leonean women during the war.

Because of the incumbent’s dual role and perception of gender as a human rights issue primarily, he employed human rights as an entry point for gender work. He observed that his dual role made it impossible for him to cover all the mission’s functional areas equally in terms of supporting them to mainstream gender. He was able to employ a number of strategies to advance knowledge on gender issues among the mission staff and other relevant local groups. He incorporated gender and women’s rights in the induction of newly deployed military and other staff, in training on SEA. He was able to involve troops in gender activities organized in the districts where they were based. He provided gender materials in information packs to new staff and troops and organized joint activities with other organizations such as preparation of a report on gender violence.

The appointment of a fulltime gender specialist in 2003 to replace him might have reinforced the gender activities.²⁶

²⁵ Among the operational priorities were the following :

- “engage in outreach and networking with partners, women’s groups and other civil society organizations;
- hold regular meetings with these bodies to be able to access the process of gender mainstreaming; and
- link up with the national human rights commission;
- Use the capacity and resources of the public information section to draw attention to gender issues.

²⁶ In addition to the substantive gender technical work, the mission also had a Women’s wing formed by the mission’s women with a spokesperson that existed before the appointment of the gender focal point. The

C.3 Senior management support for gender mainstreaming

Almost all respondents (inside UNAMSIL) underscored the fact that **the degree of success of gender mainstreaming in a mission was facilitated by the degree of commitment of the mission's hierarchy and DPKO headquarters**. At the mission's outset, the SRSG was described as "supportive of gender mainstreaming" and often participated in person in the Mission's gender activities. However, the location of the part-time gender focal point in the human rights section of the mission, rather than in the SRSG's office, and the continuation of this trend until January 2005, even after the appointment of a substantive (full time) gender specialist, did not reflect full commitment of the mission's hierarchy nor DPKO to gender mainstreaming. It was, however, observed by the acting gender focal point (from 2000 to 2003) that DPKO's support "grew as a substantive gender specialist was hired" and culminated in the relocation of the post to the SRSG's office.

The **SRSG** at the time of the evaluation, Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago, was described by the evaluation respondents as "**more committed to gender mainstreaming than his predecessor**". He informally **advised the government to appoint women to key positions**, such as the head of the electoral commission. **He gave considerable backing to the Women's Help Line**. He **made references to gender equity in most of his speeches**. For example, in commissioning schools that had been rebuilt by UNAMSIL, he often **appealed to parents to give equal education chances to girls and boys and to increase girls' school attendance by not forcing them into early marriages**. He lent support to, and also raised the profile, of gender issues by attending gender-related events. He was of the view that **the end of a mission was not the best time to mainstream gender because of the draw down of staff and the emphasis on other priorities that may divert attention from gender**. He stressed the fact that peacekeeping missions tended to be "predominantly military and male" which made it difficult to achieve gender equality.

C.4 Other facilitators of gender mainstreaming

C.4.1 Opportunities for gender mainstreaming

The mission had many opportunities to mainstream gender. Apart from induction of the military, civilian police and other staff, it maintained regular dialogue with the government, other local bodies, community leaders, traditional chiefs and civil society associations. Other opportunities included information dissemination through the radio and other public information channels; training of mission staff; training of locals; inputs to local technical meetings, seminars and other events; DDR and other projects around the country; planning, policy-making, human rights activities, and recruitment. It was, however, recognized **that not all of them had been fully exploited by the mission and its diverse functional areas in terms of incorporating gender concerns**.

C.4.2 Tools available for gender mainstreaming

women's wing's functions were more representational although crucial for gender mainstreaming in terms of promoting gender balance in staff composition

In addition to Security Council Resolution 1325, other more practical tools were also utilized by UNAMSIL. Of significance is the **DPKO Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations (GRP)**. While both the Resolution and the package were known to many of the respondents, (mainly through staff training) and were actively employed by the gender adviser who complemented them with tools from other institutions, not much reference to the use of the Resolution and GRP was heard during the fieldwork. **Staff training on the GPR appeared to occur infrequently**. This trend needs to be remedied to enhance the gender knowledge of peacekeeping staff and to give them the confidence to use that knowledge.

The evaluator's attention was also drawn to the **three modular manual, prepared by the procedural working group of the Coordination Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CCSEA)**, made up of UNAMSIL and 14 other organizations in the country, including other UN organizations, Governmental and NGO bodies. The purpose was to inform on the "various steps of the Human Resource procedure from a sexual exploitation and abuse prevention and response position".²⁷ It is a context-specific tool and, therefore, relevant for work in the country. It also ensures uniformity of action on the issue by all the numerous organizations that participated in its elaboration. Moreover, there was a **UNAMSIL-specific tool on SEA, which** was used for the mission's regular staff training on the subject

C.4.3 Gender balance.

At the peak of the mission, UNAMSIL's staff included 30 percent women, most of them within the mission's civilian staff. This was actually described "as one of the best examples among DPKO's peacekeeping missions around the world" as many had lower proportion of women staff. **Many UNAMSIL respondents repeatedly called upon DPKO to "show more commitment to gender mainstreaming by ensuring gender balance in recruitment of staff. A distinction has to be made between the mission's international and local staff** since responsibility for the former was with DPKO while responsibility for the latter was with the mission. In November 2005, the staffing situation with regard to the 2 groups was as follows: **the bulk of them consisted of men; the international staff comprised 152 men and 65 women; the local staff were 410 men and only 65 women. Only 13 out of the 2085 military** at post were women, most of them from Nigeria. (spearheaded see Annex 3). Since the onus of responsibility for the recruitment of women in uniformed peacekeeping functions lies with the troop contributing countries, the fact of their not having a gender balance in their local troops obviously implied inability to contribute gender balanced troops to any peacekeeping mission. The gender imbalance in the different functional areas is further highlighted in the table below.

²⁷ Procedural working group of the coordination committee for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (CCSEA: Modules I, II and III. (Freetown , not dated)

**Gender Balance within UNAMSIL's functional areas²⁸, as reported by respondents,
November 2005²⁹**

Functional area	Women's Percentage
Planning and political Affairs	50 per cent
Human rights	40 per cent
Military	Less than 3 per cent
DSRSG's office	44.4 per cent
CIV/POL	14.7 per cent
Personnel	57.4 per cent
Public information	33.3 per cent
SRSG's office	.

DDR	100 per cent female (only one woman)
Child protection	100 per cent male (only one man)
HIV/AIDS	100 per cent (Only one staff-a woman).
Legal adviser's unit	Female 100 percent (3 women)
Civil Affairs	28percent. Percent.

Senior positions were predominantly male. During the fieldwork, **there was no woman in the top three positions (D1 and above).** Only a quarter of the 8 people at P.5 were women. The majority of women employees in the mission were not in professional positions (see Annex 2, obtained from the Personnel section of UNAMSIL).

.Another factor, repeatedly mentioned by respondents, as constituting **a bottleneck to women's proportion in the mission was the non-family duty status** of the country.

C.5 Gender mainstreaming in the different functional areas

²⁸ A few functional areas are omitted from the table because they could not be interviewed due to the draw down and the limited duration of the evaluation mission.

²⁹ The reported percentages can only be indicative, as with the draw-down, most functional areas did not have their full staff complement.

It was observed, in the field work, that **some functional areas (such as Human Rights because of the GA's long location there, Public Information, the Office of the SRSG) undertook gender mainstreaming more seriously than others** (for instance the military).³⁰ A peacekeeping mission “is not a cohesive institution” for an institutional position, like gender mainstreaming, to be accorded the same level of importance and resources by all the functional areas³¹. **There was definitely a difference between the military and civilian sections** in relation to the degree of gender sensitivity. **Some respondents from the different civilian functional areas described themselves as “very familiar” with gender issues, the gender mandate of a peacekeeping mission and Security Council Resolution 1325** because of what they had learnt in UNAMSIL. A few had prior gender knowledge before UNAMSIL, from their previous peacekeeping experiences, such as in Kosovo and Timor-Leste. For example, one respondent had earlier served as a gender focal point in the Kosovo mission, while a few had also served as gender training resource persons who supported the gender adviser in her work. It would appear that **quite a number of the functional areas fell short of what the DPKO Gender Resource Package had spelt out.**

C.5.1 Public information

Right from the mission's outset, Public Information **hired a woman community outreach staff to cover grassroots women** and other organizations. Furthermore, as a clearinghouse for all information about UNAMSIL, the section played a key role in **disseminating information about UNAMSIL's gender concerns** in the country in a simple language and in the local dialects that could be easily understood. For example, it had been **at the forefront of the campaign targeting the larger population on the UN's Zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse and also the campaign against domestic violence.** The gender adviser regularly contributed to discussions on Radio UNAMSIL on Security Council Resolution 1325 and other gender themes. In many interviews outside UNAMSIL, **respondents referred to what they had learnt from Radio UNAMSIL.** Public information **also covered gender matters in the Mission spokesperson's briefings as well as in the UNAMSIL Review** (the mission's newsletter) and images. Other UN organizations in the country also used UNAMSIL radio to air their gender and other programmes and collaborated with UNAMSIL's public information in celebrating International Day of Peace as well as the International Women's day (8 March). Additionally, they collectively convened the Women's March for Peace in March 2001. Such collaboration, especially on gender matters, enabled all the organizations to show a common stance in relation to gender issues.

Public Information, from the beginning of the mission, remained one of the few functional areas with a woman as head.

C.5.2 Planning and Political Affairs

This functional area was responsible for policy planning, preparation of the Mission's diverse progress reports and also for political matters. Women were reported to constitute 50 per cent of the section's staff. **Among its gender mainstreaming strategies were: the incorporation of gender in all policy planning reports; gender scrutiny of all proposals and plans received from the Government as well as of the section's liaison with the various**

³⁰ This was also confirmed by the response of one woman MP. In her view, UNAMSIL's human rights and political affairs functional areas were the most gender-sensitive, apart from the gender adviser.

³¹ This was an observation shared by a DPKO official who briefed the evaluator in New York, before her field work in Sierra Leone.

functional areas; and ensuring that gender is covered in the section's role within the All Sources Group and the Working Group on Policy Planning. The evaluator could not verify the actual impact of these strategies.

C.5.3 Human Rights Section

The Human Rights section was, for most of the mission's duration, at the forefront of the mission's gender mainstreaming work, because (as earlier noted) of hosting the acting gender focal point and later gender specialist function. The section's chief described the relocation of the gender post to the SRSG's office as having "created a vacuum" as it had left gender in the human rights activities to be covered by the section's non-gender specialists. The section **attempted to mainstream gender in all the human rights sensitization and training activities.** Furthermore, **both women and men were represented in the diverse human rights committees** in the different districts and towns as well as at the national level. Additionally, the **section insisted on gender balance among the participants in all its human rights training activities.**

C.5.4 D/SRSG's office

The Office of UNAMSIL's Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (D/SRSG) coordinated the mission's exit strategy and also the mission's interactions with the UN country team. It claimed to have taken gender into account in the transition plan and the successor arrangement (UNIOSIL). However, other UNAMSIL respondents were critical of the "inadequate coverage" of gender in these plans. For example, in the capacity building of institutions, such as training of magistrates, no attempt was made to provide a breakdown of the trainees and the graduates by sex. However, the training specialist, within the governance work of the D/SRSG's office, reported having integrated women systematically in all training activities he had organized and in the needs assessments conducted to plan them. The unit often invited a woman attaché of the US embassy and a woman ambassador of the Irish embassy to its events as resource persons to stimulate local participants as they were considered good female role models.

It was also reported that the (D/SRSG) always raised the issue of women and other gender concerns in his discussions with the Government. Additionally, a staff member of the D/SRSG's office, who represented the section in the UN youth theme group in the country, had persuaded the group to include gender issues in the coverage of youth and in the district youth committees.

C.5.5 Civilian police (CIV/POL)

During the fieldwork, women formed only 14 per cent of the 49 UN police then at post. Efforts by CIVPOL to encourage the local police to recruit more women has contributed to women forming 30 per cent of the national total, with one woman (Mrs. Kadi Facondo) as Assistant Inspector General.. Considering that the global average of women in police forces is under 10 per cent, the attainment of 30% by Sierra Leone could be perceived as a major achievement. Only 4 out of 46 Superintendents in Sierra Leone were however women. Furthermore, it was reported that some women were found to have been given tasks like cooking for their male colleagues and other traditional women's jobs, instead of the same police duties being handled by these male colleagues. Among CIVPOL's major gender-related activities was support to the Family Support Units (FSU) of the Sierra Leonean Police.

(See section C.6.5 for more information on FSUs and their role). CIVPOL appointed a family support coordinator who worked with the police FSUs. While the FSUs had some male employees, they were staffed predominantly by female police staff “because of the nature of the complaints they received, which were mainly sexual and other domestic abuses”. CIVPOL tried to include gender concerns in the training of the Sierra Leone Police, often conducted at the police college³² in Hastings, just outside Freetown. However, the gender training inputs had not been formally integrated into the CIVPOL training manuals to ensure continuity. CIVPOL collaborated with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs. It was also significant that CIVPOL worked on the national taskforce for elaborating the trafficking Bill, which was passed by Parliament and became effective in June 2005.

C.5.6 Personnel

Because of its functions in relation to recruitment of local staff and monitoring of staffing conditions in the whole mission, Personnel was important for the mission’s gender mainstreaming work. The section **has tried to include women in the local staff recruited** by the Mission, but they remained few. A similar feature has earlier been noted in connection with the international staff recruited by DPKO, New York. It was this section that organized the induction courses and tried to include gender in them.

There was a **Personnel Conduct Office** that **received, and tried to deal with, complaints about SEA**. Most complaints received were against men in the mission. According to some respondents’, the complaints were not always handled in a way that reflected the underlying inequality in gender-relations.

C.5.7 Civil affairs

The section covered social services, quick impact projects (QIPs), support of the district recovery committees’ work, rehabilitation of infrastructure and training in different parts of the country. It, therefore, had representatives and projects in all the districts. **Many QIPS targeted both women and men or women alone, such as those covering tailoring and hairdressing which were considered traditional female jobs**. Thus, these post-conflict interventions were not used as a window of opportunity for diversifying women’s income-earning skills to promote gender equality in jobs. The Civil Affairs Section had **established district recovery committees on which both women and men served**. Similarly, **both men and women were represented on the National Recovery Committee**. Such coordination mechanisms promoted information sharing and collaboration between local men and women in support of the section’s interventions. Women formed 28 per cent of the staff of the Civil Affairs section

C.5.8 Units within the SRSB’s office, excluding the Gender Adviser

✓ **DDR**

³² Most of the funding for strengthening the police, such as putting up new structures for the Sierra Leone Police, had been provided by UNDP.

UNAMSIL's DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) unit supported the government in implementing its DDR programme, which was handled by the NCDDR. The programme's implementation **was described as "notoriously gender blind" in the sense that it did not make adequate provision for women ex-combatants**, including the significant number of women and girls among the fighters, sexual slaves and "bush wives". Few females benefited from the national DDR programme, unlike the male combatants³³. There was no access to reliable statistics on the issue.

Several gender discriminatory criteria were adopted for assessing eligibility, such as carrying a gun and being able to assemble and disassemble an AK47; and the fact that a woman had to appear with a man to be able to claim benefits. In addition, **girls and women tended to lack adequate information about the DDR programme and what they were supposed to do to access it, as their male military commanders did not share such information with them.** Generally, implementation of the DDR programme "did not have adequate mechanisms to address the needs of women in the forces"³⁴. **A number of male ex-combatants were able to acquire sustainable skills such as motor bicycle repairing.**

After a lot of criticism on the gender insensitivity of the DDR programme, the UNAMSIL DDR unit encouraged female NGOs to partner with the programme and its activities, such as skills training but in female traditional skill areas. UNAMSIL and the other agencies involved **could have advised the women to opt for skills with more demand in the labour market.** Some **training was of very short duration (6 months) and did not leave long-term skills to enhance, in all cases, the employability of the ex-combatants** although 60 percent of those trained were able to use the acquired skills to earn a living. There was also **no follow-up monitoring** to support the ex-combatants and to address any challenges they encountered in their attempts to implement the reintegration ideas. Furthermore **post-DDR sensitization programmes were necessary to tackle issues of discrimination, reconciliation and community acceptance of the ex-combatants, especially the women and girls** among them.

Another drawback of the DDR programme was that **the emphasis was more on the DD than on the R.** Thus many of the demobilized combatants were kept for several months in the encampment sites with their "wives" and children in the peripheries of the camps. Although there were regular weekly meetings between all the actors engaged in the DDR programme, no ex-combatants – male or female – were ever represented at these meetings. Cross-border concerns including ease of movement of the combatants (both male and female) between the borders of Sierra Leone and Liberia also constituted a major challenge of the DDR programme.

✓ **Legal Adviser's unit**

The senior legal adviser was a woman and all the staff (3) in the unit were also women. The unit was familiar with the mission's gender mandate because the SRSG and the gender adviser often discussed it and shared information about it and other gender concerns in the country at the SRSG's regular senior management meetings. She collaborated with the GA and identified substantial weaknesses in the mission's attitude to gender. The senior legal

³³ See, for example, D. Mazurana and K. Carlson: From Combat to community: women and girls of Sierra Leone. (Women waging peace, Hunt alternatives fund, 2004).

³⁴ Ibid p.21.

adviser reviewed most reports sent to the SRSG to provide him with appropriate recommendations which also included some relating to gender issues.

✓ **Child protection**

The unit **worked closely with the gender adviser**, such as in building the gender mainstreaming capacity of human rights NGOs and other local bodies, as well as with the Human Rights section, UNICEF and other UN bodies and NGOs that **focused on the human rights of girls and boys** in the country. Furthermore, the unit covered **the concerns of girls and boys in the district human rights committees as well as in the National Human Rights Commission**. The male child protection adviser also **participated in work of the National Commission on war-affected children including their centres for girls** and contributed to national activities to promote the protection of girls and boys. He invited women NGOs and other CSOs to all activities of the unit.

Among the unit's other gender mainstreaming strategies were: **training on the human rights of girls and boys; and insisting on women's concerns in human rights monitoring**.

✓ **HIV/AIDS**

The female HIV/AIDS adviser worked previously as a gender adviser in another organization and also **covered gender as a regular component of her HIV/AIDS activities**. Examples are training workshops for civilian police, community outreach and radio programmes. She described herself as "very familiar" with the mission's gender mandate. Furthermore, she used the Security Council Resolution 1325, other gender materials and insights as valuable additions to Security Council Resolution 1308 relating to HIV/AIDS in her work.

C.5.9 Military

Although troop-contributing countries were encouraged, by DPKO, to deploy women to peacekeeping missions, the UNAMSIL Force Commander reported that few complied with this request because of the gender imbalance within the ranks of their home military. The peacekeeping troops thus included very few women. (See the charts in annex 2). **Thus more intensified gender sensitization of the troop-contributing countries was required by DPKO**. There were some notable differences between the different troop-contributing countries (which included Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh and Pakistan) in terms of their level of gender sensitivity.

The military reported employing several gender mainstreaming strategies in their work. In addition to induction courses already referred to, they were trained by UNAMSIL to be able to abide by the personnel conduct on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. **In their "humanitarian" work, such as building of schools, roads, bridges and health centres in the communities, they collaborated with women's associations and other civil society groups. Moreover, the humanitarian work benefited women, girls, men and boys**. The military had been able to improve the security situation around the country for both women and men who could now move about without fear to undertake economic activities. Also the **military's restoration of schools, destroyed in villages during the war, had made it possible for more girls to attend school** as they did not have to travel long and unsafe distances. UNAMSIL's military troops have not been involved in capacity building of the

local Sierra Leonean military as this is handled primarily by the United Kingdom under IMAT (International Military Assistance Training) programme. Thus the mission lost the opportunity to integrate gender concerns in the local military's work and capacity building.

Although the troops were rotated regularly (in some cases every 6 months or every 12 months, according to the troop commander) to avoid long absences from families, they were still associated with a high incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse of locals.

C.6 Gender mainstreaming in the mission's external work

UNAMSIL's gender-related activities outside the mission covered both the capital city and the rural areas. They involved UNAMSIL's gender adviser and the functional areas working closely with a number of local stakeholders - Parliament, Government institutions including the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary, the Law reform Commission, the Sierra Leone Police as well as a number of national and international non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and human rights bodies in different parts of the country in addition to UN organizations in the gender theme group. The NGOs included the Women's Forum, the Sierra Leonean Council of Churches, MARWOPNET, Women in Crisis Group, The 50/50 Group, OXFAM, CARE International, COOPI, and the International Rescue Committee.

A number of the stakeholders collaborated with UNAMSIL in the committee for sexual exploitation and abuse, covering humanitarian workers and chaired by OXFAM. Together with staff from other functional areas (like human rights, civil affairs, civilian police, child protection and HIV/AIDs). UNAMSIL (GA) contributed to gender training of the staff of COOPI and **the training of local women and other groups in voting and elections process in 2002**. Other examples included capacity building; technical inputs into major developments in the country, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Law Reform Commission; promotion of knowledge and observance of international instruments, particularly reporting to the CEDAW Committee. Others can be summed up as joint gender activities with other UN bodies, advocacy, provision of advisory services, funding for projects and the mobilization of vital equipment for the functioning of some local institutions.

C.6.1 Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs

The gender division of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs recounted, with considerable satisfaction, the help it had received from UNAMSIL, especially its Gender Adviser, Human Rights and HIV/AIDS Policy Advisers, including their inputs to their training and sensitization activities and radio discussions on women's concerns in the country. Other UNAMSIL functional areas also contributed to the capacity building of the Gender Ministry and educational programmes for the girl child. Their logistical needs, like transport and office accommodation, however, could not always be met.

C.6.2 Women in Parliament

Collaboration with women in Parliament was a key strategic approach adopted by UNAMSIL, mainly the GA and the Human Rights Section, and included joint activities with some women MPs. Others included: information campaigns such as on the need to translate CEDAW's principles into the national context and **technical inputs into national**

Bills (on trafficking and on inheritance) which were subsequently passed by Parliament. Other draft Bills currently before Parliament covered, inter alia, gender-based violence and customary marriages to reduce the disadvantaged position of women. The women MPs also worked with UNAMSIL's GA (within the framework of the Law Reform Commission) to identify critical issues pertaining to the unequal gender situation in the country; **the PRSP gender sector theme taskforce**; and the network of women Parliamentarians and Ministers. As earlier stated in section B.5.2, **there were 8 women in parliament** during the evaluation period (November 2005).

C.6.3 Council of Churches of Sierra Leone (CCSL)

According to the human rights officer of the CCSL, her organization benefited from UNAMSIL's support in addressing the gender challenges encountered in CCSL's human rights work. For instance, **UNAMSIL's child protection adviser gave technical advice in monitoring child rights abuses including sexual abuse and exploitation of girls. He often accompanied CCSL's staff to the police to report complaints.**

C.6.4 The Women's Forum

The Women's Forum was one of Sierra Leone's vibrant women's groups before UNAMSIL's establishment. The Forum is a network of women's organizations – NGOs and community-based organizations. It has been in existence for 12 years. It reported a **close working relationship with UNAMSIL** throughout the mission's duration. **With funding and technical support of the gender adviser, the Women's Forum undertook sensitization events** on international women's rights instruments and local women's concerns like domestic violence. UNAMSIL could also have helped the Forum to improve its "poor" premises, other facilities and to acquire vehicles and other logistical support for its efficient functioning, but did not do so.

C.6.5 FSUs

The Family Support Units (FSU) of the local police is part of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Sierra Leone Police. They were established, initially in 2001 as domestic violence units, to receive and deal with domestic violence complaints. They are under the charge of the only woman Assistant Inspector General of Police in the country. The staff were grateful for **the training support received from UNAMSIL's CIV/POL, the gender adviser and the human rights section.** In 2005, **the FSU had as many as 22 units with 150 staff who were all trained police women and men, though women formed the majority.** The FSU respondents thought UNAMSIL had attained substantial impact in raising public awareness about gender equality instruments and human rights concerns. Aside from the FSU, **the Sierra Leonean Police have also restructured recently and established an equality unit and a Human rights unit which all reflect growing gender sensitivity** in the institution. UNAMSIL has trained some of the police as mentors and coaches.

A case study of an FSU at the police station in Waterloo, about 35 miles from Freetown

This FSU was established in 2001 and had 10 staff including 7 women and 3 men. The complaints it regularly received were mainly on domestic violence and sexually-related offences. A minimum of 8 were received each week and were mostly from women. So far UNAMSIL had provided advice and training to the Waterloo unit's staff but they also

expressed the need for more training and vehicles to permit staff mobility in the course of examining cases. The staff noted that the FSU has given women and girls the confidence to bring forward cases. The “old taboo on domestic violence has been broken forever”. The evaluator observed substantial community satisfaction with the FSU.

C.6.6 Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET)

MARWOPNET is an association of women from the three countries³⁵ of the Mano River Union in pursuance of peace. The MARWOPNET office in Freetown described UNAMSIL’s external gender mainstreaming work as “a success”. It always consulted MANORWOPNET. MARWOPNET was supplied with computers to improve the functioning of its office and work. The organization was provided with periodic transport to facilitate organization of events around the country. It also organized joint activities with UNAMSIL and obtained resources to translate materials into French for the benefit of its members in Guinea Conakry. It participated in most of UNAMSIL’s external training, information dissemination and advocacy events.

C.6.7 International NGOS

The International NGOs, like OXFAM, CARE International and International Rescue Committee (IRC), collaborated with UNAMSIL’s gender adviser on subjects such as domestic violence and female genital mutilation. They were, however, “not familiar” with the totality of UNAMSIL’s gender mainstreaming work inside or outside the missions as they had their own mandates to comply with. The IRC, for example, operates Rainbo Centres that provide medical, psycho-social and legal support to victims of gender-based violence throughout the country. Apart from the gender adviser, it also worked closely with the child protection adviser and some of the focal points on SEA. **These international NGOS perceived UNAMSIL as a large organization, nationwide and with extensive outreach which they should have fully exploited to press for gender equality in an integrated manner and in partnership with other agencies.**

C.6.8 Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In accordance with the Lomé Peace Agreement between the Sierra Leone Government and the rebel Revolutionary United Front in July 1999, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 2002 by an Act of Parliament. **Of the seven human rights experts on the commission, almost half – 3 – were women.** Its mandate was to establish an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law during the country’s armed conflict, specifically from 1991 to the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement in July 1999. The TRC was to restore the human dignity of victims and to promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims to give account of the violations, sexual and other abuses inflicted on them and for the perpetrators to respond so that there is constructive interchange between them.

Although Article XXVIII paragraph 2 of the **Lomé Peace Agreement had made special provisions for the TRC to tackle women and girls’ needs, the various women’s groups and human rights bodies wanted the issue kept alive on the TRC and the Special Court’s**

³⁵ The Mano River Union comprised Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

agenda and to guarantee that these issues were thoroughly examined. A women's taskforce was, therefore, established in 2001. UNAMSIL (the GA) was a member of the taskforce and actively participated in its discussions and preparation of recommendations for consideration by these transitional mechanisms of justice. Most of the recommendations were implemented by the TRC including the proposal that the **TRC should operate in a gender sensitive manner**, have guidelines for dealing with sexual violence cases, document and **fully investigate gender-based abuses**. Furthermore, they should provide training and sensitization of the media to encourage their reporting of gender-based crimes in a sensitive manner, adopting measures to encourage women to come forward to testify to the TRC. The TRC also had a policy of psychosocial support for the victims of gender-based violence.

The TRC's final report and recommendations, especially in Chapter Three of Volume Two, included many on women, such as: reparations for the female survivors of gender-based violence and requesting the father of the nation, the President, to apologize to women for the suffering they endured during the armed conflict. The State was urged to adopt the necessary measures to "eradicate structural inequality against women" through law reform, access to justice, abolishing discriminatory customary laws such as on early marriages, divorce, land rights and inheritance; and addressing the specific needs of the very vulnerable groups of women. Also covered were women affected by armed conflict; domestic and sexual violence; women's political participation and access to power; women's need for skills training and economic empowerment; education; HIV/AIDS education; and establishment of a gender commission. UNAMSIL's experiences, in relation to the TRC's gender work, has been shared (by the GA) with others, for example in Liberia which is also in the throes of a similar exercise.

C.6.9 CEDAW

As earlier noted, although the country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1988, it has yet to reflect its principles in national laws. During the field work in November 2005, it was evidenced that with the support of UNAMSIL, the country was in the process of preparing its first country report on the application of CEDAW, for submission to the UN.

C.6.10 Gender work in partnership with other UN bodies

Several UN agencies in the local UN gender theme group, such as UNIFEM, UNDP, UNICEF and WFP, collaborated with UNAMSIL (GA and other functional areas). They also participated in initiatives undertaken by UNAMSIL's GA for local sensitization on Security Council Resolution 1325. UNAMSIL worked closely with these international organizations (and NGOs) such as on the taskforce on violence against women

A few of the UN organizations, operating in the country, had innovative gender plans and programmes that UNAMSIL's gender work could have learnt from. For example, WFP supported female training institutions in the country such as a female driving school and tried to hire more female than male drivers in its operations. It was a mandatory requirement for its prospective and actual local collaborators and partners to mainstream gender. Part of WFP's "enhanced commitment to gender" was that women should form 60 per cent of its programmes' beneficiaries. **Such bold measures were lacking in UNAMSIL's gender work.**

D. Gender mainstreaming in the mission's exit strategy and successor arrangement

Apart from the phased withdrawal of the mission, UNAMSIL's exit strategy, implemented throughout 2005, focused on a number of key areas, namely security, consolidation of peace and political stability, consolidation of civil authority and governance, reintegration of ex-combatants, human rights, public information and national recovery. **Some UNAMSIL respondents had expected that one of the hallmarks of this transitional strategy and its implementation would have been to highlight gender as a cross-cutting theme and for the gender adviser to have been closely involved in the whole exercise.** Thus, even though women and gender issues were mentioned in a few of the expected outcomes, a major criticism often heard during the field work was the exit strategy's inadequate focus on gender. There was no sex breakdown of most of the expected outcomes and progress indicators in the transition plan³⁶.

Some respondents were of the view that **there should have been a well formulated gender exit strategy in the transition plan. It should have spelt out how gender mainstreaming in the mission would be phased out and how the gender interventions would be sustained.** The absence of such a gender exit strategy was criticised by many UNAMSIL respondents. Others thought that having a national gender plan of action could have strengthened the follow-up action in terms of guidance.

Concerning the successor arrangement, Security Council Resolution 1620 of 31 August 2005, authorized the UN Secretary-General to set up UNIOSIL (United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone), from 1 January 2006 for 12 months initially. It specified UNIOSIL's functions as being: to assist the Government of the country to consolidate peace by enhancing political and economic governance, building national capacity for conflict prevention and preparing for the country's 2007 elections. **The resolution mentions women only once,** namely that "assistance to the Government is to include also "developing initiatives for the protection and well-being of youth, women and children". This was interpreted by respondents as indicative of the relatively low priority given to women and other gender concerns. UNIOSIL's planned staff complement (300) was also criticized for not including a gender adviser. The gender adviser function was retained until December 2005.

There seemed to be **an assumption that, after UNAMSIL, other UN bodies, like UNIFEM in the UN gender theme group, could adequately assume the gender responsibilities** (in addition to their own) country-wide and thus no major interruption was anticipated. **The local office of UNIFEM in Sierra Leone at the time of the evaluation was very small, with only one national professional officer in place.** Furthermore, according to some respondents, **several representatives of the UN bodies on the gender theme group were not gender experts and thus would require capacity building to be able to contribute substantially to this endeavour.** The theme group also reported urgent need of donor funding for

³⁶ The reports on the implementation of the exit strategy mentioned, for example, the number of magistrates, prison officers, youth and others trained but did not provide any sex breakdown to show how many of them were women. There were, however, a few exceptions. For example, legislation on the right of detainees and access to justice was adopted with a particular focus on women; 20 micro-finance institutions trained with special focus on women's needs 222 community schools established (and) 20,352 children enrolled including 9,002 girls and 11,350 boys; assessment of the country's gender situation (a World Bank assessment study to be reviewed nationwide)³⁶.

programme implementation. Other respondents were of the view that as “UNAMSIL has invested in the capacity building of local NGOs and other bodies, they were empowered to be able to operate on their own after the mission”, although some still needed training materials and logistical support. As UNAMSIL radio would continue to operate in the country, there was also hope that information on gender issues would continue to be covered. One local women’s organization, however, thought that a gender adviser’s role would still be needed in the successor mission “since the local women were still behind in accessing their rights. and seizing opportunities created by UNAMSIL”. Indeed when Parliament was briefed about the successor arrangement to the mission, among the questions posed was “what would happen to the gender work of the mission” as there was no gender adviser in the proposed new structure.

In the view of a few respondents “the stakeholders conference to be held in December 2005 will help to identify successes, failures and gaps to help UNIOSIL in its work. It would permit specific areas to be assigned to individual organizations to avoid duplication.” Others observed that **the transition strategy and the successor arrangement, were “elaborated in New York and, therefore, was a top down approach rather than reflecting local realities, including gender needs.”** As some non-UNAMSIL respondents were not adequately informed about UNIOSIL’s structure and planned work, such information needed to be quickly and widely disseminated.

E. Impact on gender relations in Sierra Leone and on the mission itself

UNAMSIL’s work in the country produced a number of legacies, including positive and negative ones. Some of these were intended and direct, while others were unintended and indirect. **Among the impacts were changes in the legal, social, political and economic fields** which could contribute to empower local women and men. **UNAMSIL, however, did not realize its full potential in gender mainstreaming** because of missed opportunities and constraints encountered, some of which are highlighted in the conclusions. Furthermore, **Sierra Leone had a substantive government and UNAMSIL was there to assist it. Thus, it needed to carry the government along in terms of possible changes such as in the delicate gender relations in the country. This is likely to have had an impact on the pace and scope of change.**

Since in addition to UNAMSIL, other UN bodies as well as bilateral organizations, international and local NGO’s also provided assistance to the country in the field of gender, the legacies examined below may not have emanated mainly from UNAMSIL’s work.

E.1 Positive impact:

E.1.1 Legal

A major feat attained was the government’s resumption of reporting on its application of CEDAW.

Parliament has passed laws critical for women, such as laws on trafficking, inheritance and property rights. Other gender pertinent Bills are also before Parliament. The **Law Reform Commission’s agenda also included elimination of discriminatory laws against**

women such as some customary laws. The **TRC report and recommendations included many on women and other gender matters.**

There is now **greater local awareness of key UN gender-related legal and other instruments, for example CEDAW and Security Council Resolution 1325** across the country than before the establishment of UNAMSIL.

The awareness of women's human rights by the police, such as on female genital mutilation and gender-based violence, has increased as gathered from interviews with the local police. **The increased number of Family Support Units** at police stations has increased rural women's access to them to seek redress to their concerns.

The government has been influenced (to some extent) to stop FGM but has been slow to come up with a national policy to ban it because of the sensitivities of traditional leaders of the various ethnic groups.

E.1.2 Gender knowledge

UNAMSIL has to some extent created a level of gender awareness in the country, especially in Freetown and the district capitals, It is however debateable if this is also evident in the remote villages as well. Indeed some awareness of gender issues was noted in the interviews both inside and outside the mission, but it is not clear the degree of institutionalization of the knowledge acquired. Only a longitudinal study after UNAMSIL can reveal this.

Some local "taboo" subjects like domestic and sexual violence were now being openly debated by local men and women, such as on UNAMSIL Radio. For example, **a man who phoned in at a gender violence discussion programme by UNAMSIL Radio revealed that "through the points raised repeatedly by the Radio, he now understood why he should not be beating his wife. Till then, he did not realize that there was anything wrong with domestic violence."**

Some attitudinal change, such as respect for human rights including rights of women, was reported. **Some women in the communities are now emboldened to stand up at local fora to raise their concerns and even complain about how they are treated by men as well as to report them to the police FSU. UNAMSIL radio and other activities have given confidence to more women to come forward to report rapes.**

There is now institutionalization of the nationwide celebration of 8th March, International Women's Day and of the 16 days of activism to end violence against women (25 November - 10 December each year) which continue to be used as an opportunities to promote gender equality and women's rights and also to advocate for an end to violence against women.

E.1.3 Strengthened institutional Capacity

Many local women's organizations, other civil society groups and governmental structures now have enhanced capacity through UNAMSIL's assistance. A number of gender-related initiatives have also been supported, including a Women's Help Line for battered women. The impact has even reached Sierra Leone's neighbouring countries. For example, Liberia is in

the process of modelling the FSUs and the Sierra Leonean Deputy Police Commissioner was in Liberia as an UNMIL consultant on FSU during the period of the evaluation field work.

The strengthening of women's groups has contributed to **greater hearing of women's voices** in many spheres, such as in the preparation of the PRSP.

Community infrastructure (like clinics, schools, bridges etc used by both women and men) have been rebuilt and restored. There has been a **reported increase in school enrolment, especially of girls**. The government has also introduced a policy that exempted girls in the North and East of the country where girls' education rate has been low, from paying school fees. (This could also be due to UNICEF's efforts.)

E.1.4 Physical and human security for women and men

UNAMSIL's creation of a physically secure environment in the country has benefited both men and women by enabling them to move around the country without fear to pursue economic and other activities.

A positive economic impact was generated by UNAMSIL's presence through the opportunities it provided to some poor women and men to earn a living, and indirectly through the service activities that sprung up, such as restaurants and domestic help to the mission's staff. UNAMSIL staff, as major consumers, injected cash into the economy. The long-term nature of the latter impact can be questioned since there were already complaints about decline in these economic opportunities with UNAMSIL's draw down.^{37 38} (A full report on this has to await the study on the economic impact of peacekeeping by the Canadian NGO, Peace Dividend Trust, with funding from the U.K.)

UNAMSIL's presence provided both women and men with time to recover from the psychological and other scars of the war.

E.2 Negative impact:

E.2.1 SEA, UN babies and prostitution

Most local respondents outside UNAMSIL referred to the "**high incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse of local women by the mission's troops and other staff** which has resulted in a **substantial number of UN babies**". Although similar incidents have been noted in host countries of other peacekeeping missions, their extent in Sierra Leone was depicted by some respondents, who had served in other peacekeeping missions, to be relatively high and also more open, although others perceived it to be low in comparison to the size of the mission. Actual figures on the incidence were, however, not readily available locally to confirm the above. There was also a reported **general escalation in the level of prostitution**. The **high level of poverty and deprivation of the local population and the lack of decent**

³⁷ It was reported by some of the respondents that the locals, including women and men, did not take as much economic advantage of UNAMSIL's presence in the country as the Lebanese community.

³⁸ Some UNAMSIL staff in the process of the draw-down have personally given capital and other assets to their local domestic staff. One female respondent had built a small house for her domestic help so that she had a place to live after her departure

alternative sources of income were identified to be among the contributory factors. People in such economic circumstances are forced to resort to drastic measures to gain livelihoods. The fact that most staff – military and civilian – of the mission were in their sexually active age and yet the duty station was a non-family one could have also played a role. The above trend also reportedly **caused broken family and marital relationships.**

E.2.2 HIV/AIDS

UNAMSIL was perceived by some local respondents to have increased the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country. For example, according to the Gender Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs, **the HIV/AIDS rate was 2 per cent before UNAMSIL’s arrival but 9 percent in November 2005,** towards the end of the mission. Some local respondents proposed that the troops should be tested for HIV/AIDS before being dispatched outside their countries of origin to avoid transmitting the infection to local girls and women in countries hosting peace keeping missions.

E.2.3 Drug Use

The local respondents reported increased drug availability and use in the country which they attributed to UNAMSIL troops. The specific gender dimension of this trend was, however, not too apparent apart from the fact that more men and boys than women and girls were reported to use the drugs.

E.2.4 Distortions in income and prices

The high incomes paid to locals in the employment of the mission and the mission’s international staff created distortions in local salary structure and escalated the cost of food and other goods.

E.3 Impact within UNAMSIL

Most UNAMSIL respondents observed that the mission had generated a positive trend in gender mainstreaming, judging from what the situation had been at the outset and the level attained almost at the mission’s end, even if this trend had occurred rather slowly.

Examples of respondents’ reports of positive gender mainstreaming trends in UNAMSIL

- *“now more gender awareness among senior management than befor”*
- *“There is a full scale gender adviser located in the SRSG’s office which puts her in an influential position”*
- *“Most committees in the mission now include both women and men”*
- *“mission-wide commitment to gender mainstreaming now”*
- *“more targeting of women in the mission’s external activities than before”*
- *“More mission plans reflect gender concerns”*
- *“Now more women (4,) even if an inadequate number, occupy senior positions in UNAMSIL. At the mission’s inception there was only one”*
- *“There is now a gynaecologist in the mission’s clinic in recognition of the women in the mission and their special health needs (A civilian international staff member who became pregnant while serving in the mission reported having been cared for*

- throughout her pregnancy by the mission's gynaecologist)"
- *"Special needs of local women are now recognized by most functional areas of the mission"*

Most UNAMSIL respondents were not very definite about whether the gender mainstreaming efforts actually changed the practice of peacekeeping in the mission.

Did the practice of peacekeeping change with gender mainstreaming?

- *"Not sure"*
- *"Not much change"*
- *"Gender inequality is still institutionalized in the mission"*
- *"Some staff still laugh at gender, do not appear to take gender seriously and refer to the gender adviser as Madame gender"*
- *"With only few women in leadership positions, they are not able to influence the UNAMSIL gender adviser's initiatives on local sensitization on Security Council Resolution 1325 and change approaches to programmes to enhance their gender sensitivity"*
- *"The integration of gender concerns in the peacekeeping mission has changed the practice of peacekeeping to the extent that the peacekeeping mission is now strongly covering such issues as violence against women, family support units in the local police and sexual exploitation"*

F. Conclusions, Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Policy Recommendations to Guide On-going and Future Missions

F.1 Conclusions

F.1.1 Overall effort

Despite the **inadequate emphasis on gender in UNAMSIL's initial mandate and the absence of a full time Gender Adviser from the mission's inception until 2003**, on the whole, UNAMSIL's **gender mainstreaming efforts were significant and the achievement credible**. Together with the contributions of other institutions - local and international - **gender issues gained visibility** in the country, **but they never reached centre stage** in the country's post-conflict reconstruction policies and programmes nor in the mission's exit strategy.

In the mission's gender mainstreaming work, **the focus tended to be only on women, while issues affecting both men and women needed to be addressed**. For example, there was **hardly any programme focusing on men and boys**. Men were depicted as the "bad guys" which could make them more resistant to change. Men should have been targeted to be able to influence the traditional discriminatory behaviour against women, often learnt in secret societies, like the poro and other traditional socialization processes. In addition **more men should have been involved in UNAMSIL's gender mainstreaming work**. This would have enhanced the gender-mainstreaming impact in and out of the mission.

Not all UNAMSIL respondents were fully familiar with the mission's gender mainstreaming work. Thus in-mission frequent information exchanges on gender mainstreaming work are called for.

Radio UNAMSIL enabled women's voices to be heard across the country. Furthermore, its advocacy on, and other support to the country's elections in 2002, enabled more women to come forward to vote and to stand for political office.

F.1.2 Gender adviser

Most respondents both inside and outside UNAMSIL were positive about the GA's contributions and some actually commended them in the light of her limited resources. However, the GA unit was not perceived as "a real priority" in terms of resource allocation despite relocation to the SRSG's Office, albeit in the last year of the mission.

If considered as a priority, the GA's relocation would have been instituted immediately after the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 and not several years later. Furthermore, the move would have been accompanied by increased support, not only because of the size of the mission but also by the intricate range of gender inequalities in the country.

Because of the nature of her functions, the GA collaborated with many gender-related stakeholders and UN bodies. The other functional areas also worked closely with such institutions. This collaboration contributed greatly to the level of impact attained.

There was more rhetoric than real support for the GA. "UNAMSIL and DPKO should have gone beyond this rhetoric to show, in practical terms, its commitment to the GA unit". "DPKO is not serious in pursuing gender mainstreaming otherwise, they would have appointed more than one gender adviser for such a huge peace keeping mission and in a country where there is such unequal relations between men and women in traditional customs and practices."

F.1.3 Gender Parity

There was gender imbalance throughout the mission's 5-year life span, with women under-represented both among the international and local staff. Women constituted a minority in managerial positions. The fact of not being a family duty station was often cited as the reason for few international women joining the mission. There was however **not much difference in the gender balance of the international civilian staff recruited by DPKO and that of the local staff who were recruited by UNAMSIL.**³⁹ Women's proportion was lowest among the uniformed personnel.

DPKO should identify innovative ways of encouraging more women to apply for peacekeeping jobs to reduce the male dominance. More effective ways also need to be found to encourage the troop contributing countries to increase the number of women among the troops they send to such missions. This will make the peacekeepers approachable to local women and also enhance their sensitivity to women's needs.

³⁹ In the latter, women formed between 25 and 28 percent, which was almost similar to that of the former, namely the international women staff.

Furthermore, it will ensure that women soldiers are available to work with local women and will reduce contacts between male soldiers and local women and, thus, opportunities for the latter to come into harm's way in terms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

F.1.4 Capacity building of local partners

The mission contributed to strengthening the capacities of relevant civil society groups and sponsored some of their activities. The SRSG and other staff participated in their activities and contributed to raising their profile and also that of gender concerns in the country.

F.2. Lessons Learned, Good Practices and Recommendations to guide on-going and future peacekeeping missions

F.2.1 Equal male and female involvement

The success of UNAMSIL's gender work required **equal involvement of men and women**. Thus having a man initially as a part-time gender focal point of UNAMSIL was a welcome move, even though he reported being ridiculed because of the erroneous popular perception of gender as "women's exclusive domain".

DPKO and the Missions at large should **promote the active involvement of male staff in gender work, not only as beneficiaries of gender training but also as active agents and core facilitators**.

F.2.2 The host country

The Mission's serious pursuit of gender mainstreaming in the country at large **depended also on the existence or otherwise, of a national policy on gender mainstreaming and equality**. A peacekeeping mission's gender mainstreaming work can only be supportive but not a substitute for the host country's work in this field.

The **involvement of local women's groups and other civil society organizations in the mission's gender mainstreaming activities is critical** for the success and local sustainability of the activities. Furthermore, these groups **could constitute a local watchdog on the mission's gender mainstreaming work and impact and also put pressure on the peacekeeping mission to focus more on specific gender concerns**.

F.2.3 Impact

It is often difficult to assess impact precisely because one **cannot always distinguish between the impact of a peacekeeping operation and that of other interventions** within the same environment, even when one could compare the current situation to what it was before the mission. The fact that the evaluation was done more than five years after the mission's inception could allow some but not all the long-term gender impacts to be captured. For the latter, one may require a longer time and, therefore, a longitudinal study beyond the duration of the mission. This was, however, outside the scope of the current evaluation.

F.2.4 DDR

Peacekeeping missions **should make more conscious and concerted efforts to identify and integrate ex-combatant women and girls in DDR.** This should include overcoming the stigmas and other factors that prevent women and girls from coming forward to be registered and covered by the programme. **The gender module (spearheaded by UNIFEM) in the new multi-agency manual (IDDRS), whose preparation has been led by DPKO, can be employed to make a difference to women and girls in future DDR programmes.** The module can also be invaluable as reference material for such programmes. An effort is also necessary to include women in NCDDR structures to be able to better accommodate and understand women and other gender concerns of the DDR process.

F.2.5 Gender mainstreaming strategies

UNAMSIL treated gender issues in a piecemeal fashion rather than holistically as demanded by an effective approach. The coverage of women in some QIPS projects could have been used as an opportunity to introduce them to diversified skills, including non-traditional trades such as auto mechanics.

Essential strategies for promoting gender mainstreaming in a peacekeeping context include training, public information, including radio programmes, discussion and information sharing, advocacy, capacity building and joint activities with relevant local bodies and provision of advisory services linked to the needs of local people and their institutions.

Although gender mainstreaming has to be pursued **both internally and externally**, it has to commence with the internal, to equip all the mission's different functional areas and staff with requisite gender mainstreaming skills and sensitivities to facilitate the incorporation of gender perspectives into their activities with the local population. If resources allocated to the gender component are limited, priority has to be given to promoting gender mainstreaming internally, as this can have a ripple effect outside the mission. If the resources are relatively adequate, both internal and external gender mainstreaming can be equally emphasised.

The number of gender advisers in a mission should be proportional to the size of the mission and the complexity of the country's gender challenges. Even if local headquarters-based GA/s regularly travel to the provinces and districts, there is still need for the mission to appoint **gender focal points at these local levels** who can promote, monitor and advice on incorporation of gender in all the peacekeeping operations and the activities of local bodies at the community level.

One could observe **the need for prioritization of the gender adviser's functions, especially in a context of limited resources.** Some guidance from DPKO GA in this connection was needed in addition to the provision of some extra-budgetary funding provided through the Headquarters-based Gender Funding Facility, which enabled her to undertake more aggressive capacity building, during the mission's draw down, as an essential feature of the gender exit strategy. This was highly appreciated by the local women's groups.

The SRSG should be given discretionary resources to be able to help specific programmes to reduce gender constraints including women's vulnerability.

F.2.6 Inadequate understanding of gender mainstreaming

One did not observe, among the peacekeepers, the same level of understanding of gender mainstreaming.

The mission should have had a gender taskforce to advise, plan and monitor implementation of the gender goals and to support the gender adviser.

F.2.7 Gender Training

Adequate gender training involves more than just making small inputs on gender in induction courses. Furthermore, one or two gender training activities for staff for the whole duration of a peacekeeping mission cannot be described as sufficient to provide peacekeepers and the host country institutions with strong gender skills to be able to mainstream gender systematically in their activities. **Gender awareness should rather be one of the core training activities of a peacekeeping mission.** The existing comprehensive Gender Resource Package should facilitate this process. Owing to the high turnover of staff of a peacekeeping mission, especially the military, gender training should be frequently conducted to equip new staff with relevant skills.

Indeed, **gender training should not be voluntary but mandatory** in the mission.

Additionally, there should be **follow up to the gender training provided to see how staff utilize the knowledge acquired.**

Every peacekeeping mission should **train trainers in gender** to be able to have a critical mass of gender trainers who can make gender inputs into all the mission's training activities within and outside the mission.

It is necessary **to provide gender training to the staff of the peacekeeping mission all the way up to senior management to ensure that senior management policies mainstream gender properly and that senior managers are also held accountable for gender mainstreaming in the mission.** Such training should preferably be conducted soon after their assumption of duty if it cannot be done before hand.

In addition to the existing induction programme for the military in which there was a gender component, there was no similar programme for the civilian staff in UNAMSIL. Furthermore, the gender session in the induction programme could have been allocated a longer time-frame rather than the very short duration of 10 to 20 minutes, as reported by some of the respondents.

In addition to existing gender training materials for peacekeepers, **more training materials have to be produced**, by the mission's functional areas and the Gender adviser in conjunction with other UN members of the gender theme group and relevant local institutions in the country, which reflect the local gender peculiarities. Such materials can also be used by the local civil society and other bodies to continue their gender mainstreaming capacity building upon the departure of the peacekeeping mission.

While existing **gender tools** were deemed helpful, their use by all the mission members **needed more promotion, as without it their valuable contents would remain inadequately known and harnessed.**

There should be **training of local journalists on gender equality issues** and the use of gender mainstreaming as a route to achieve it. It could bear fruit in terms of their coverage and dissemination of such issues nationally in support of the mission's gender work.

F.2.8 Missed opportunities and gaps

UNAMSIL could have achieved more if it had been able to utilize all the opportunities at its disposal and also to address the constraints it encountered.

No visible Mission gender action plan

At the outset, the mission could have elaborated a visible gender action plan with measurable goals in the field of gender mainstreaming to permit it to work towards their achievement. This would have given a strong policy direction on gender mainstreaming to the mission. In a patriarchal society like Sierra Leone, this would have enabled it to exert more influence on the government to outlaw such discriminatory gender practices as female genital mutilation and to adopt other gender-sensitive policies. Such a plan could have been developed with the relevant local women's groups and government and within the framework of Security Council Res. 1325.

F.2.9 Constraints

✓ Local traditional culture

The importance of cultural realities such as harmful traditional practices against women, has to be appreciated and seriously taken into account. As earlier noted, the cultural practices of the country's diverse ethnic groups were discriminatory against women and girls, and could have reduced the potential impact of UNAMSIL's efforts that could have generated changes in gender roles. The unequal treatment of women, especially in the more traditional rural areas, meant that a longer time was required, more than UNAMSIL's 5-year duration, for major changes in gender relations in the country to be achieved by the mission.

The mission appeared to pursue primarily DPKO headquarters' expectations on gender, **without taking full cognizance of the realities on the ground** in terms of gender relations. Moreover not all the cultures of the troop contributing countries upheld gender equality. In some cases, they were in antithesis and sometimes clashed with the culture of the host country.

Moreover, as part of the peacekeepers' preparation for the mission, the information provided to international staff and the troops' should include the gender traditions, roles and relations to enable them to understand the context and appreciate the possible gender repercussions of their activities.

✓ Pervasive local poverty

In addition to culture, **poverty** was identified as a critical mediating factor in external compliance with gender equality messages imparted in training and public information and should be borne in mind. For example, when UNAMSIL was intensifying its efforts to ensure staff's compliance with the code of conduct on sexual exploitation and abuse, some parents in the local community, on the other hand continued to encourage their daughters to court

commercial sex from the peacekeepers. According to some respondents, this was because, without it, these families would be deprived of a source of livelihood.

F.2.10 Other Institutional recommendations

Gender mainstreaming should not be an institutional choice of the peacekeeping mission but an obligatory and systemic policy. It should include gender expertise in the initial assessment of the peacekeeping planning mission to ensure that the essentials of the conflict and post-conflict gender situation are taken into account in the conception of a specific mission. This will also facilitate the unequivocal reflection of gender equality concerns in the mission's mandate and the serious consideration of gender mainstreaming in the mission's policies, plans, programmes and budgets, right from the mission's inception.

As often the largest international assistance in the post-conflict country, **the peacekeeping mission has to set a good example to the country in terms of gender mainstreaming** and tackling issues of gender inequality.

✓ SEA

It should not be the UN alone that should have a code of conduct and policies on sexual exploitation and abuse but also the government of the host country. The latter should have its own policy to be able to protect women and children against peacekeepers' sexual abuse.

The link between gender relations and SEA should be more strongly stressed by the mission and DPKO which continued to treat SEA as separate from gender.

While the troops are rotated every six or 12 months, most of the local groups were of the view that the troops should be allowed to bring their spouses as soon as the local security situation improves. It was thought that this would reduce the extent of the troop's sexual abuse of local girls and boys.

The local respondents called for DPKO to test troops for HIV/AIDS before they are sent to a country as peacekeepers. This is to prevent them from infecting the local girls, women and boys.

✓ Aggressive resource mobilization

In the absence of funding for gender activities through the peacekeeping assessed budget, **not much effort seemed to have been made by the GA nor the mission's leadership to mobilize external funding from local offices of international and other donors for the mission's gender work.** Such external resource mobilization should be aggressively pursued by GAs and mission management in current and future operations as lack of it gravely limits the scope of the gender mainstreaming work a mission could undertake. For example, local donor roundtables can be organized periodically to mobilize resources for the mission's gender initiatives.

✓ Monitoring and evaluation

There should be periodic (e.g. annual) monitoring of the peacekeeping mission's gender mainstreaming work through **gender audits** being carried out in each functional area and the mission as a whole to produce **a kind of Gender Mainstreaming Achievement Report**. This will permit timely identification and resolution of constraints and unforeseen challenges. It also enables tracking of the efforts made in pursuance of gender mainstreaming. **Such gender audits have to be spearheaded by the DPKO gender adviser** with the involvement of gender consultants skilled in gender audits. These audits should supplement end of mission gender evaluation reports.

✓ **Inter-mission exchanges**

Apart from the DPKO gender adviser's periodic meetings with all the gender advisers, inter-mission cooperation and information exchanges in the gender sphere should also be promoted, to learn from each mission's experiences.

✓ **Exit strategy and successor arrangement**

The question of how **to safeguard gender equality should be an integral part of a peacekeeping mission's disengagement** from a country and the goal of promoting the country's sustainable or positive peace. **A specific gender exit strategy is called for.**

Despite capacity building, **some of the local women's groups and other civil society organizations, in Sierra Leone are still weak and thus will require further assistance** from the other U N bodies in the country (such as UNIFEM, UNDP and others in **the gender theme group**). The follow up will therefore be critical.

Furthermore, **the successor arrangement (UNIOSIL) has to ensure that gender mainstreaming is given priority in its work since this was not apparent to many respondents.** Because there is no gender adviser in UNIOSIL's planned staff complement, this will have to be done by reinforcing the gender-sensitivity of its staff.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 Sample Interviewed

Names are not included because the evaluator promised anonymity

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Respondent/Post	Sex
SRSG's Office:	
The SRSG	Male
The gender adviser	Female
Senior legal adviser	Female
DDR adviser	Female
Child protection officer	Male
The HIV/AIDS adviser	Female
D/SRSG's office:	
Economic Affairs officer	Male
Governance/training adviser	Male
Planning and political affairs –chief	Male
Human rights –chief	Male
Civil Affairs –chief	Male
Civil Affairs - the training officer.	Female
Public information – The acting chief	Female
CIVPOL – The commissioner	Male
Training officer	Female
Training officer	Male
Military	Male
The commander	Male
Personnel	Female
<u>Outside UNAMSIL :</u>	
Government:	
Director of gender department, Ministry of social welfare, gender and children's Affairs	Female
2 regional representatives of the gender department	Male & Female
Gender focal point Ministry of Finance.	Male
A Member of. Parliament	Female
Law reform commission	Male
Mano river women's peace network	Female
Women's forum	Female
Council of churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL)	Female
Sierra Leone police: Family support unit (FSU) headquarters in Freetown.	2 Female & 1 male
FSU office in Waterloo.	Males
IRC –International rescue committee	Female
CARE	Male
OXFAM	Female
UN bodies::	
UNDP & UNIFEM (together)	2 Females
WFP (on the flight to Accra)	Male

<u>Former UNAMSIL staff outside Sierra Leone:</u>	
Former acting gender focal point (2000-early 2003) in UNAMSIL's human rights section before Theresa Kambobe's appointment)	Male
Former chief of UNAMSIL Public Information	Female
Former officer in the military	Male
Former CIVPOL officer	Male
