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DPKO Practices in Gender Mainstreaming

by Kateland Sliwa | Mine Action Information Center |

Following the adoption in 2000 of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat began mainstreaming gender perspectives into all of its peacekeeping operations. Within DPKO, the United Nations Mine Action Service maintains its own guidelines to help UN personnel mainstream gender considerations into all mine-action programs.

The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations was developed to “help countries torn by conflict create the conditions for lasting peace.”1 DPKO personnel, as United Nations peacekeepers, are deployed to conflict-ridden areas to help stabilize the conflict and establish peaceful conditions. Ever since their first mission in 1948, peacekeepers have carried out a total of 63 field missions, bringing aid and free elections to over 45 countries, resulting in the disarmament of over 400,000 ex-combatants.1 At present, DPKO is working in 18 countries and territories,3 and employs the expertise of military personnel, administrators, economists, police officers, legal experts, doctors, gender affairs officers, human rights monitors, humanitarian workers and others to deliver effective peacekeeping operations.4 Mine action is included in the peacekeeping operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, home to the United Nations Mine Action Service.5 UNMAS seeks to ensure an effective, proactive and coordinated United Nations’ response to the landmine contamination, through collaboration with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, home to the United Nations Mine Action Service.5 UNMAS “seeks to ensure an effective, proactive and coordinated United Nations’ response to the landmine contamination, through collaboration with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations.”5 These guidelines have been field tested and will be revised in 2009 based on feedback received.

Gender Mainstreaming

During the 1990s, war crimes against women during conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia prompted the United Nations to take action and establish policies to mainstream gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations.5 The result was UN Security Council Resolution 1325.6 The resolution calls for the mainstreaming of gender considerations into all peacekeeping operations in order to address the different ways conflict affects men and women, and to recognize the contributions of both genders to peace and security.

Since the adoption of Resolution 1325, DPKO has taken several steps to mainstream gender perspectives, including the appointment of gender advisers in all peacekeeping operations and in UNDPKO headquarters,6 and the development of a body of resource and guidance material, available on the DPKO Best Practices Website.7 To help guide gender practices, UNMAS also developed a publication in 2007, Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action.6 These guidelines have been field tested and will be revised in 2009 based on feedback received.

UNMAS Guidelines

The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action developed guidelines to mainstream gender perspectives into relevant aspects of United Nations mine action programs, including mine clearance, mine-risk education and victim assistance. Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes incorporates real examples of mine-action gender mainstreaming from mine-action programs around the world.

Conclusion

Conflicts and their aftermath affect men, women, boys and girls differently. Taking gender differences into consideration in peacekeeping activities such as mineaction can help ensure that all people enjoy equal access to assistance programs, and can participate in decision-making processes in their communities. Although the guidelines in Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes were created specifically for United Nations mine action programs, these guidelines may provide a helpful model to other mine-action entities, including national authorities looking to include local considerations in mine-action programs.5

News Brief

World’s First Double Arm Transplant Performed on German Man

In July of 2006, 54-year-old German Earl Merk, who lost both of his arms in a farming accident six years earlier, received the world’s first double arm transplant at Munich University. The procedure, which took around 15 hours, required five different teams of medical experts. In total, there was a staff of around 40 surgeons, anaesthesiologists, nurses and others who assisted in the transplant. The surgery was considered to be a success and at this time, the doctors are evaluating Merk’s psycho-social status.

Merk is currently going through strong psychological treatment and has his family for a strong support system.

References

3. Published by JMU Scholarly Commons, 2008