

Gender Mainstreaming in the Military: Institutional Dissemination in the Military
Component of the United Nations Peace Missions

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The domain of knowledge where this proposal is inserted is in International Relations, specifically in International Security Studies, in the articulation between Feminism, Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution. The research theme focuses on the tensions between norms and practices on gender mainstreaming regarding female and male soldiers that compose the military contingent of the United Nations (UN) peace missions.

Recognizing the potential arising from the broad Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 (UNSC, 2000) which was later disseminated at the same level with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPO), allowed the military to be redefined in terms of gender norms and practices. This event opened space for a generalization of gender mainstreaming policies that sought to improve gender equality within the troops in the peace missions' military contingents and thus, according to the UN mandate, seek to promote sustainable peace in the field.

This work addresses issues of gender (in)equality in a military context, specifically the tension between norm and practice in the socialization of female and male soldiers in the specific context of gender mainstreaming towards gender equality in United Nations peace missions. This study is important because it seeks to explore how the norm of gender mainstreaming in the UN system is perceived in the practice of peace missions' military, that is, female and male soldiers who are or have been deployed in the field of these missions.

Current gender mainstreaming is problematic, as policies and documents are limited. However, the core of gender mainstreaming, in terms of putting it into practice, seems more problematic than the limitations of policies and documents (mechanisms and content) since the practice does not seem to reflect the norms of gender mainstreaming when considering that the military is linked to the ideal of masculinization (institutional

legacies), in a scenario in which the UN peace missions are often associated with sexual exploitation and abuse, and which generates tension with the core values of gender equality and, subsequently, with the gender mainstreaming agenda proposed by the UN system itself. Therefore, the representations of dominant militarism and the proposals of the gender mainstreaming agenda express vectors in opposite directions challenged by negotiation processes.

Therefore, the results of the research now proposed contribute to fill the gap in the analysis of the UN institutional dissemination policies and social change, in addition to contributing to empirical analysis regarding gender mainstreaming. In addition, the results also contribute to policy reform proposals that aim to improve sensitivity regarding gender perspectives in the military contingents of the UN peace missions to achieve a way to diminish gender inequalities in conflict and post-conflict scenarios.