

The EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia

EUMM Gender Mainstreaming Assessment Lessons Learned



November 2016 – October 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the European Union has adopted a number of policies and directives that set out the importance of integrating the WPS framework into Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Missions. It is in this framework that the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia strives to integrate a gender perspective in all areas of its work. Key achievements to date include institutionalising WPS into guiding Mission documents (Operational Plan, Mission Implementation Plan, Mission Information Collection Plan, Standard Operating Procedures etc.) and the creation and implementation of a concrete Action Plan. By the last day of the reporting period, on average, women made up 27 percent of international staff at Field Offices; on average, 25 percent of patrols are led by women; 38 percent of Mission patrols were mixed and 50 percent of all top Field Office Management have attended external training on 'Mainstreaming Gender in Missions'. 'Unconscious bias' training, coupled with more gender balanced recruitment panels and more 'gender neutral' language in job descriptions are all contributing to a more balanced workforce, particularly at the senior level (50 percent of senior management at Field Office level and 40 percent at HQ level are women). This has been achieved despite a limited gender balance in the pool of applicants for positions. Despite significant progress, challenges remain: Gender is still often perceived as being secondary, instead of integral to implementing the mandate. To combat this, the Mission, through its Gender Advisor, gender focal points (GFPs), senior staff and the broader team, will continue to promote gender as a catalyst for operational efficiency.

1. Mission Response

1.1 Mandate Interpretation, Implementation and Guiding / Planning Documents

The Mission Implementation Plan (MIP) makes clear reference to gender and WPS, in the context of crisis management, and additionally sets out gender specific measures in its annexes. The document, which guides the daily implementation of the Mission mandate over its two-year period, continues to provide for a full time Gender Advisor and a gender focal point network providing guidance, advice and focus on operationalising policies into daily tasks. It is envisaged that this will continue throughout the period covered by the MIP covering December 2018 to December 2020.

In an improvement from its previous incarnation covering 2016-2018, the MIP covering 2018-2020 integrates a gender perspective at the activity level (strategic level is covered in the Mission Operation Plan (OPLAN)), for example through the integration of an internally generated action plan to address gender balance in the Mission planning process. Furthermore, over the last year, the Mission Information Collection Plan (MICP), which converts actions from the MIP into short-term focused information-gathering assignments, has also seen increased integration of a gender perspective into operational tasking, and an increase in direct WPS focused tasks. Limitations still exist at the practical/operational level, however, mainly due to low numbers of female monitors, and lack of individual interest paired with, on occasion, low levels of knowledge, and differing contexts in each Field Office. But overall, the Mission has seen increased awareness and understanding of gender mainstreaming as essential to achieving full situational awareness of its area of operation.

Gender mainstreaming efforts have successfully, in many cases, been institutionalised in guiding documents and processes, including in the Mission's contributions to the Strategic Review. As a part of this process, the Mission's Gender Advisor worked closely with the EUMM Planning Section to include a gender perspective and the WPS principles in the review in a meaningful way.

At the Mission's inception in 2008, there were no designated staff focusing solely on mainstreaming gender and ensuring the Mission's work was in accordance with the UNSCRs on WPS. A full time Gender Advisor was appointed in 2010. The EUMM pioneered the system of a cross-Mission Gender Focal Point (GFP) network that has expanded over the years. There is now staff in each office providing advice and guidance on gender mainstreaming and driving forward gender mainstreaming initiatives. The GFP network is comprised of twelve staff members, three men and nine women, and is coordinated by the Mission Gender Advisor. These personnel not only provide advice and guidance in their offices on gender mainstreaming, they are also key drivers for special campaigns addressing violence against women and gender equality. Over the years the Mission has collected best practices in the area. It has learned that it is essential to maintain consistent contact with GFPs in order to keep the network mobilised and motivated. This happens through physical meetings, telephone calls, video telephone conferences and an email distribution list. The GFP Network meets three to four times per year together as a group but also in a one-to-one format with the Gender Advisor.

In 2018 it was decided to expand the Gender Focal Point network to include national staff. Additionally, a new GFP was nominated, located in the Human Resources department. The Mission is looking at strengthening the GFP network further – not least by ensuring that sufficient resources are available. GFPs work on gender-related issues only part-time and are very dependent on their management allocating adequate space and time. The Mission regularly assesses challenges to further progress. The main challenges for GFPs at this stage, inter alia, include lack of understanding, disinterest at individual level, non-inclusion in planning processes and a reliance on the willingness of individual monitors to be pro-active when interviewing interlocutors. Past challenges related to unsupportive management. However, that has evolved for the better with capacity building and in some cases, changes in management. Recruiting monitors with existing specific gender expertise is one way to build the capacity of the network.

1.2 Statistics and Organisational Information

Checklists, guidelines and sex-disaggregated data: Gender analysis must begin with the collection of sex-disaggregated data. The Mission doubled its efforts in terms of collecting sex-disaggregated statistics over the reporting period and this was systematised into the main patrolling database. This is an improvement on 2016, when it was reported that similar information on the composition of patrols and sex of interlocutors was collected inconsistently. This is another positive example of institutionalising gender mainstreaming in Mission processes. Data collection was further bolstered in February 2018 by an Instruction from the Civilian Operations Commander¹, which required all CSDP Missions to maintain statistics disaggregated by sex for all aspects of Mission work. The Mission uses these statistics to better understand the environment in which the Mission operates. For example, that between January and October 2018, the Mission met with 6,926 persons when on patrol. Of these, 3,098 (45 percent) were women. The Mission conducted 4,202 patrols, and of these 55 percent had at least one female monitor, and 25 percent of them had a female patrol leader. Internally, too the Mission has strived to increase gender balance in recruitment. Thus for example, of 32 interview panels for international staff, 40 percent of the panel members were women. For national staff, of 14 panels, 39 percent of the panel members were women.

¹ The CivOpsCdr Operational Guidelines for Mission Management and Staff on Gender Mainstreaming has proved to be a useful tool to further strengthen efforts in this area, in that it translates a complex framework into practical guidance and ideas enabling CSDP Mission staff to mainstream gender throughout Mission work.

EUMM continued to work towards systematically mainstreaming gender in Mission monitoring through the use of various tools such as targeted gender mainstreaming checklists and capacity-building, and through the guidance from the CivOpsCdr Operational Guidelines for Mission Management and Staff on Gender Mainstreaming, 29 July 2018. Additionally, the GFP network created a new initiative in the spring of 2017 to integrate a gender perspective in all patrol tasking. This was rolled out across all Field Offices over 2017 and leads monitors to follow specific tasks and ask targeted questions, which facilitate obtaining a gender perspective.

Female interlocutors and staff: As stated above, women made up around 45 percent of interlocutors at Field Office level in 2018. Over the 2016-2018 reporting period, 31 percent of interlocutors – local community members living along the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) - met by the Field Offices were women. Moreover, women made up 27 percent of international staff at Field Offices and on average, 25 percent of patrols are led by women.

Mixed Patrols: Female interlocutors in Georgia often inhabit the domestic space, sometimes behind closed doors, and many have different experiences and information related to the conflict than their male counterparts. The Mission prioritises the use of mixed patrols (patrols made up of both women and men) as it provides a greater sense of security for women and children along the ABL, and is viewed as less intimidating, e.g. in some cases it has led to women disclosing a gender-based violence related issue. Over the reporting period, an average of 38 percent of Mission patrols were mixed: more female monitors would lead to more mixed patrols. Monitors are well versed in understanding the importance of using female monitors and interpreters strategically, for example a female monitor and interpreter would interview a female ex-detainee. This strategy is also applied when discussing sensitive topics under the normalisation pillar of the mandate related to access to healthcare, such as reproductive health issues, or access to justice, such as gender-based violence related issues.

Reporting: There is room for further improvement when it comes to analysis, which could better uncover inequalities and systematically include a gender perspective. Although gender is not systematically integrated into monthly Mission reporting products and sex-disaggregated data is not regularly used to present information the Mission regularly reports on Women, Peace and Security related matters. In 2017, the Mission began producing a

quarterly assessment of the participation of women in conflict resolution. Some trends are encouraging, even though there is a persistent challenge with underrepresentation of women in dealing with the conflict. The reporting acknowledges that, while representation remains low on all sides, Georgian efforts are notable. According to UN Women, women make up approximately 30 percent of Georgian representation in Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings. Since 2018 the Chair of the Gali IPRM has been a woman, although at the Ergneti IPRM no women from any of the parties have a speaking role at the table. At the Geneva International Discussions, one of the three co-chairs is a woman. Presence is not enough - women must also be in positions, which enable them to make meaningful contributions. Furthermore, reporting shows that the Mission makes a concerted and effective effort to consult regularly with women-focused organisations and local and international actors, which promote gender equality, women's empowerment and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Positively, women also hold senior positions within the Georgian government, many of whom are key interlocutors for the Mission on conflict issues.

With an aim to further improve its reporting, the Mission will seek to include more gender-sensitive language to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes. While reporting officers receive induction training on mainstreaming gender, the Mission plans to prioritize training focused purely on integrating a gender perspective in reporting. A reporting officer gender mainstreaming checklist was circulated to assist them in their work.

1.3 Capacity Building Activities

Induction training: Gender analysis and the integration of a gender perspective is a competence for both men and women to learn and conduct. Therefore, capacity building is critical to effective integration of a gender perspective. All staff members who enter the Mission receive participatory induction training on gender and Women, Peace and Security. Additionally, Field Offices offer gender induction sessions at the Field Office level, although over the reporting period, due to turnover of staff and Gender Focal Points, this did not happen consistently.

The basis for the Mission's training work is the EU Policy on Training for CSDP adopted on 15 March 2017, establishing mandatory and standardised pre-deployment training for both seconded and contracted staff. The Mission makes an effort to integrate a gender perspective

in all training, for example when monitors undergo patrol training. Refresher sessions are given by Gender Focal Points and the Gender Advisor throughout the year during team days and special campaigns.

External gender training: Over the reporting period, nine members of staff attended external gender training. This included two Heads of Field Office and one Deputy Head of Field Office. It is clear that when Field Office management attend gender/WPS training, they become both more supportive and engaged with implementing a gender perspective operationally, and better utilise the GFP network. At the time of writing, 50 percent of all top Field Office Management have attended external training on Mainstreaming Gender in Missions. With new management in place in some Field Offices, the Mission will focus on further and more systematic training.

Gender Focal Points are “double-hatted”, meaning they work as either monitors, team leaders, reporting officers, human resources officers, etc. and take on additional duties as a GFP. They often come to the role with limited specific experience and it is therefore crucial that they receive training. An in-house GFP training curriculum was developed by the Mission Gender Advisor and over the reporting period, 28 GFPs (15 women and 13 men), were trained on gender/WPS, and 17 of those attended a subsequently developed Gender Analysis module. Additionally, the Mission identified a need for GFPs working with teams monitoring the Administrative Boundary Lines to receive extra training and therefore, two GFPs attended additional training in 2017 to increase their skills in this area. Many monitors are deployed to the Mission for a maximum of one or two years, which means that there is a constant turnover of GFPs. This remains a challenge as it takes time for each new GFP to receive training and to build their skills and confidence to work effectively.

1.4 Interaction with Women, Women’s Organisations, Civil Society & Outreach Activities

The Mission regularly interacts with civil society organisations dealing with gender-related issues. EUMM organises regular Information Sharing Meetings (ISM), and participates in similar meetings organised by the Georgian government and UN Women. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss issues that impact women and girls, which can then be raised by Head of Mission and others who participate in the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism and/or the Geneva International Discussions.

While the Mission's Human Security Teams have the most interaction with women-focused NGOs, all teams strive to maintain a gender perspective in their respective areas. For example, Compliance Teams, which visit police and military installations, make it a point to discuss gender and WPS related issues on most visits. The Mission is a part of the UN Gender Theme Group in Tbilisi and sits with observer status on the Early Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation Task Force headed by UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Task Force headed by UN Women.

The Mission also continues to be one of the driving forces behind the international community's involvement in the White Ribbon Campaigns for the '16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence' in Georgia. In 2016, the Head of Mission, together with six male Ambassadors performed a documentary theatre piece – organised by the Mission, addressing violence against women. During the campaign, Mission Field Offices engaged with the local community through various activities such as an art competition, presentations and discussions at schools and other related events.

1.5 Mission Action Plan to Address Gender Balance Update - Gender Balance in Recruitment & Equal Opportunities

Recognising the importance of increasing female participation in field-based operations and Missions is a pillar of UNSCR 1325. In line with these commitments, the Mission has taken several concrete steps to recruit more women, especially at the senior management level².

The Action Plan to address Gender Balance was approved in November 2017 and presented to the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) the same month. The Action Plan employs a holistic approach to attract more diverse candidates to the Mission and it has played a key role in increasing the number of women in senior management positions. Five job descriptions (including monitor) were adapted to include more gender-neutral language to attract a wider pool of applicants. Another development, as a direct result of this work on the Action Plan, is that all recruitment panels across the Mission must now include both men and women. Awareness has been raised across the Mission on the principle of non-discrimination, and the EUMM Gender Advisor delivered training to all recruitment panel members in 2018 on the concept of 'unconscious bias' and how to prevent it in recruitment and management practices.

² HOM, DHOM, H/MSD, H/AROD, H/OPS,SMSO, H/FOs & Deputy Heads of all these positions.

One major challenge identified in the last EUMM Gender mainstreaming report was the lack of women at the senior management level. The Mission has taken a more proactive approach in identifying strong female candidates for key positions within the organisation. The success of the approach ultimately depends on Member States presenting a sufficient number of qualified women. Encouraging national contingent leaders to emphasise to their own Member State authorities the importance of nominating women for the Mission is also highlighted in the Action Plan, as is continued awareness raising of and importance placed on the Code of Conduct and Discipline for EU Civilian CSDP Missions (6 September 2016), and Upgraded Generic Standards of Behaviour for CSDP Missions and Operations (7 March 2018).

Positive Changes: The gender balance on the senior management level at the Mission's HQ has improved significantly. Furthermore, the gender balance in management on Field Office level as also improved. On 15 May 2016, all Heads of Field Offices/Deputy Head of Field Offices were men. By 30 June 2018, women comprised a third of the Field Office management with one female Head of Field Office and one Deputy. At the time of writing, 50 percent of Field Office management positions are filled by women and 40 percent at Mission HQ. This is in part due to steps taken by the Mission to encourage qualified internal candidates to apply for leadership roles. The overall percentage of female international staff in the Mission has steadily increased and currently stands at 27 percent while 62 percent of local staff are female. Among international staff, men are still overrepresented among those with a military or police background and women among civilians. Amongst local staff, the majority of positions are administrative.

The Mission understands that it is not enough to only recruit diverse candidates (especially women), steps must be taken to ensure the Mission retains them as well. In this regard it is crucial to provide and promote an inclusive and gender-sensitive working environment. A clear 'zero tolerance' policy towards sexual harassment – for example - is consistently communicated by senior management in order to create a preconditions for a proper working environment for both women and men. Therefore, the Mission continues to raise awareness around the updated Code of Conduct and the Upgraded Generic Standards of Behaviour for CSDP Missions and Operations (7 March 2018), and to particularly stress the zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment. This was carried out through an information campaign

using the intranet, printed posters and presentations, and through regular Code of Conduct Trainings in 2018.

All information pertaining to improving the gender balance within the Mission is systematically included in Six-Monthly Reports. Furthermore, the Mission management continue to urge Member States to nominate even more female candidates to further improve the gender balance.

2. Mission Findings: Staff Survey, Individual Interviews & Focus Group Discussions

From 1 July to 30 June 2018 the Mission conducted an intranet staff survey, individual interviews and focus group discussions on gender mainstreaming. The Mission findings based on the survey, interviews and discussions are mixed. Both staff and managers felt that ignorance of gender mainstreaming remains a challenge, and that differences in understanding to some extent reflected differing backgrounds. In their feedback, managers underlined that it was important to lead by example on the subject of gender. For staff, their perception was that gender mainstreaming was often over-simplified to be about counting exercises, gender balance or Code of Conduct issues. Concerns raised by male staff centred on positive discrimination and whether staff were being appointed on merit.

3. Assessment and Recommendations

As evidenced by this gender mainstreaming report, EUMM is still facing important challenges when it comes to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, but has made progress and continues to move in the right direction. Important progress has been achieved in translating EU policy into practical action, in some cases providing a positive example about how even small changes can have a substantial impact. The increase in the number of women represented in the senior management of the Mission since the last biannual assessment is remarkable and welcome. It is a result of long-term efforts by the Mission to improve the gender balance, including through the Gender Action Plan of 2017. Ultimately, the possibility to build on results achieved so far depends on willingness by Member States to put forward qualified female candidates. In other words, the Mission needs to rely on further efforts by EU Member States to nominate an even greater number of qualified female staff to further reduce the gender gap among staff.

If further progress is to be achieved in WPS area generally it requires the active involvement of staff specifically mandated and empowered to work on gender issues by senior management. Such concerted efforts need to be combined with a policy where the gender dimension is clearly integrated into guiding documents. 'Counting the numbers', in the form of gender-disaggregated data, will always be necessary, to ensure there is no backsliding and progress can be quantifiably tracked. This biannual gender mainstreaming assessment continues to be an excellent tool for evaluating progress, raising awareness and inspiring gender related discussions within the Mission and beyond.

Methodology

This report is the result of an assessment that explored progress made by the Mission; efforts taken; and areas identified for improvement, in all areas of Mission activity. For the purposes of this report, Gender Mainstreaming is interpreted as the integration of a gender perspective into every stage of all activities, such as planning, design, implementation, monitoring and reporting, at all levels. The immediate purpose of gender mainstreaming itself is to ensure that boys/men, girls/women are not discriminated against and will benefit equally from policies and actions. It is important to ensure that those policies and actions do not exacerbate or perpetuate gender inequalities. The long-term objective of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

The Mission reports about gender mainstreaming on a regular basis. In this update, information was collected during the reporting period 1 July 2016 to 31 October 2018 through: a) a review of the Mission's main operational documents; b) analysis of organisational and statistical information; c) interviews and focus group discussions; and d) a staff survey on gender. Seven individual interviews were held with Management at both the Mission Headquarters and the Field Offices, while twelve focus group discussions were held across the Mission; three in the Mission Headquarters and three per Field Office. In all locations, there was one discussion group for male staff and one for female staff, including both national and international personnel. In addition, there was a separate focus group discussion for Senior Management in each of the three Field Offices. In total, 96 members of staff were consulted through focus groups and interviews and 250 answered questions through an online survey.