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LEADERS AND CHANGEMAKERS:  
WOMEN DRIVING SUSTAINABLE PEACE  
AND SECURITY OUTCOMES

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Women, Peace and Security Highlights of UN Peacekeeping in 2021



This report showcases strategies and progress made by UN Peacekeeping on the Secretary General's Action for Peacekeeping priorities on women, peace, and security to:

- a) ensure full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all stages of the peace and political processes.
- b) systematically integrate a gender perspective into all stages of analysis, planning, implementation and reporting.

Updates on women in peacekeeping missions are found on <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/women-peacekeeping>

**Front Page:**

Mouna Awata is the president of the Women's Peace Hut (Case de la Paix) in Gao, supported by UN Women and the UN peace operation there, MINUSMA. The Hut brings together 76 women's groups from diverse backgrounds and communities. Together, they promote peace and social cohesion to prevent and resolve conflicts in this volatile region of Mali.

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**ACTION**  
FOR PEACEKEEPING



## FOREWORD

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to dominate the past year with devastating impacts on gender equality and women's rights. It brought to light existing stories of inequalities and further limited women's participation in peace processes. At the same time, women were once again the first to respond in times of crisis. Women have shown resilience and leadership in responding to the pandemic while they continued to fight for more just and peaceful societies. We must leverage the transformative power of the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda to merge from the pandemic more equal, resilient and on a road to lasting and inclusive peace.

Accelerating gender equality and the WPS agenda remain key political priorities for the Department of Peace Operations. Placing women and gender equality at the heart of peace and security are our guiding principles. This is exactly what we are doing through Action for Peacekeeping + (A4P+) where we have integrated WPS across all seven A4P+ priority areas. We have also signed up to [transformative actions](#) under [the Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action Compact](#).

We cannot lose hard-fought gains or hesitate in our efforts to advance the WPS agenda. We owe it to all the women risking their lives on the frontline in conflict prevention and resolution efforts. It is also critical to our efforts to

***“There are countless stories of how women have prevented conflict and built peace. We have redoubled our efforts to support them. I have made it my personal mission to champion this important cause and ensure gender and Women, Peace and Security is integrated and reinforced in all of our work.”***



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**Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Guang Cong, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan engage in dialogue with women leaders in South Sudan. (September 2021)**

achieve sustainable peace and security. As the report outlines, progress has been made. We have taken action to strengthen partnerships with local women leaders, their organizations, and networks to enhance their participation.

Ensuring our work is gender-responsive and enhances women's rights, including their participation in peace and political processes, is essential to enabling us to navigate the evolving nature of conflicts in peacekeeping contexts. Looking back at our work in 2021, our field missions supported women so they could safely and meaningfully engage in elections, political transitions, conflict prevention, trust building efforts and in the implementation of peace agreements. We will prioritize and build on this as we continue to support host countries and communities on their road to lasting peace.

**Jean-Pierre Lacroix ,  
Under-Secretary-General  
Department of Peace Operations**

# TURNING WPS COMMITMENTS INTO A REALITY

With the prioritization of the WPS agenda in the Secretary-General's [Action for Peacekeeping Initiative](#) (2018), and the evolvement of more nuanced and prioritized WPS mandates for peacekeeping missions, DPO has redoubled its efforts to accelerate implementation and made WPS central to peacekeeping effectiveness. As this report shows, the Department has taken action to implement the Secretary-General's five forward-looking goals outlined in his [2020 report on WPS](#) (S/2020/946), and the 10 directives in his [2019 report](#) (S/2019/800), and progress has been illustrated in his [2021 report](#) (S/2021827). In 2020, the Secretary-General also issued a [Call to Action](#) on WPS with tangible actions to advance women's participation in peace and political processes. These actions have been integrated in the [Action for Peacekeeping Plus plan \(A4P+\)](#). In addition, in 2021 DPO signed up to [transformative actions under the Women, Peace and Security Humanitarian Action Compact](#) (WPSHA Compact), a global movement to advance the implementation of WPS. As a Board Member of the Compact, DPO participates in the technical working groups to implement, monitor, and report on the progress.

## DPO WPS implementation via the A4P+ initiative include:

- Implementing and monitoring gender responsive mission plans and political strategies.
- Ensuring gender experts and gender analysis are integrated in planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting.
- Systematic reporting on WPS indicators, and integration of gender data in planning, monitoring, reporting (CPAS, SG reports, etc.).
- Strengthening dynamic partnerships and systematizing consultations with local women and women's organizations.
- Establishing gender responsive early warning systems.
- Using Strategic Communications to enhance the WPS agenda.

## DPO WPS implementation via the WPSHA-Compact include (in brief)\*:

- Supporting women's participation in UN-led processes.
- Advocating with conflict parties to ensure delegations include women and prioritize their rights.
- Using good offices to advance women's participation in peace and political processes.
- Deepening support for women-led, community-based peacebuilding infrastructures, supporting and protecting women's roles as mediators, community leaders, and peacebuilding advocates.
- Scaling up advocacy and financial support, and providing technical assistance where requested, to enhance the participation of women in appointed and elected public positions.
- Using quantitative and qualitative standards to measure and track the participation of women in UN-led or co-led peace processes.
- Conducting gender responsive conflict analysis at all stages and all levels of peace processes.
- Taking steps for women civil society organizations to influence peace processes from the outset.
- Promoting coherence and coordination among UN entities on gender responsive security sector reform.
- Seeking and advocating for approval for funding of senior gender advisers and senior women protection advisers in UN missions.
- Strengthen UN system actions and strategies to achieve gender parity targets.

\*Full details of the commitments are found here, [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/wpsaha\\_compact\\_dpo\\_commitments.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/wpsaha_compact_dpo_commitments.pdf)

# WOMEN'S VOICES AT THE CENTER OF PEACEKEEPING

In 2021, DPO ensured that women's voices, experiences, expertise, and knowledge informed peacekeeping. Strategic political spaces for women to influence the work of the Department were created and their messages were amplified by Senior Leadership through political advocacy and strategic communications.

## POLITICAL SPACES CREATED TO INFORM PEACEKEEPING

With the Permanent Missions to the UN of the United Kingdom, France, Norway and Mali, DPO co-hosted a [high-level event on WPS and Mali](#) on 24 May. During the event, women leaders from Mali civil society and parties to the conflict noted that the strong mandate on WPS in Mali by the Council has translated into progress, with MINUSMA's role being critical to achieving this. But much more remains to be done. Some of the recommendations put forward by the women were considered in the mandate renewal of MINUSMA (June 2021).

On 29 October, DPO organized with the Permanent Missions of Canada, Finland, Kenya and the Republic of Korea a high-level event to accelerate WPS implementation. Women leaders from the Central African Republic and Lebanon discussed the progress made and key gaps in the implementation of the WPS agenda with the Mission Leadership from MONUSCO and UNMISS and Member States. The importance of political, financial, and technical support was underscored. The discussions resulted in an [Issue Brief](#) published to inform the [UN Seoul Peacekeeping Ministerial](#) held in December 2021 and other decision-making fora on peacekeeping.



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***“We have made a small gain with women in the CSA [Agreement Monitoring Committee]. We thank all our partners who have supported this, in particular MINUSMA, for advocating for it at highest level... It was a very significant progress, and the process must continue to be supported.”***

**- Bintou Founé Samake,  
Former Minister of Women, Children  
and Family Affairs**



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***“Women’s responsibilities and hardship have increased due to the economic and social circumstances and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women were in the front rows and raising the banner of endless work and giving. We commend and appreciate the support we have received from UNIFIL.”***

**- Randa Abu Saleh, member of Tyre Municipal Council in Southern Lebanon and UNIFIL focal point.**

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP PRIORITIZING PARTNERSHIPS WITH WOMEN

The Senior Leadership has continued to build strategic partnerships with diverse groups of women leaders. Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, regularly met with women leaders to elevate and amplify their messages at the highest-level. In September in South Sudan, he discussed with women leaders the need for urgent actions to enhance their roles in the peace process. In October in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the USG had a fruitful exchange with women leaders on their political participation in all spheres of decision-making on peace and security matters. He reiterated UN's support to women's meaningful participation in the upcoming electoral process. On mission level, the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) and Head of MONUSCO, Bintou Keita created a collaborative platform for regular and systematic exchange with the African Women Leaders Network. In Mali, SRSG and Head of MINUSMA, El-Ghassim Wane met with women leaders to discuss mission priorities when he took office.

**ACTION**  
FOR PEACEKEEPING

*"My experience of over 30 years has taught me that integrating women in all aspects of our work is essential to have a protective environment, find sustainable political solutions, and move towards more effective peacekeeping."*

**Bintou Keita**  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
MONUSCO, Democratic Republic of the Congo



#womenpeacesecurity

UNMISS/DSRSG Guang Cong and MONUCO/SRSG Bintou Keita outlined key strategies for advancing women's participation at the high-level event in October to inform the peacekeeping ministerial.

**ACTION**  
FOR PEACEKEEPING

*"UNMISS continues to support women-led civil society organizations and associations through key engagement, technical support, partnerships, capacity building, advocacy and inclusive approach."*

**Guang Cong**  
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
UNMISS, South Sudan



#womenpeacesecurity

**2021 SEOUL**  
UN PEACEKEEPING MINISTERIAL

7-8 December, Seoul, Republic of Korea

# ELEVATING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic communications on WPS continued to use creative tools and ways to elevate voices of women activists and their networks, inform on UN and partners' efforts to advance the WPS mandate and advocate for support. Among these, a “[UN in Action](#)” video series launched on March 8<sup>th</sup> featured stories of women peace activists in [the Central African Republic](#), [Mali](#), Cyprus and [Kosovo](#), and a photographic exhibition developed in partnership with the Department of [Political and Peacebuilding Affairs](#) (DPPA), [UN Women](#) and New York City's iconic [Photoville](#) festival featured 14 women peacemakers and peacebuilders seen through the eyes of women photographers.



The [in Their Hands: Women Taking Ownership of Peace](#) exhibition premiering at the New York Photoville festival, Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1, 18 September 2021.



The “[In Their Hands: Women Taking Ownership of Peace](#)” exhibition was seen by over half a million people in Brooklyn, New York, from 13 September to 2 December 2021 and served as a backdrop to the annual Security Council Open Debate on WPS at UN headquarters. In his opening remarks, Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the tremendous role played by the women depicted in the exhibition in advancing peace and political processes. “I think their struggle, their commitment, their courage, is an inspiration for us all and I would say that nothing could start better our debate than the testimony of this group of women heroes,” he said. The [exhibition gained significant interest](#) among Member States and UN leadership with many, including the Secretary-General, promoting it on social media and media platforms such as Radio France Internationale, France 24 and the BBC; all of whom featured UN organizers, women activists and photographers in their dedicated coverage. “In Their Hands” was also featured virtually at the [2021 Seoul Peacekeeping Ministerial](#), before travelling to peacekeeping missions in Africa in 2022 and returning to Brooklyn to mark International Women’s Day on 8 March.

Social media communications on WPS continued to share positive stories, mandate implementation challenges, critical data while elevating women’s voices throughout the year with a specific campaign connected to the #InTheirHands exhibition reaching 92,300 users on Instagram, 43,000 users on Facebook and appearing up to 200,000 times in users’ newsfeeds on Twitter.

In several missions, communications initiatives helped strengthening women's participation. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA published a special magazine highlighting progress made on the WPS agenda by the mission and national partners. The missions also used its radio to mobilize women during the legislative elections. In Cyprus, UNFICYP carried out a month-long WPS social media campaign which highlighted the work of women activists from Cyprus. This work included building trust and confidence through dialogue among women from Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to promote a joint approach to fostering sustainable peace.



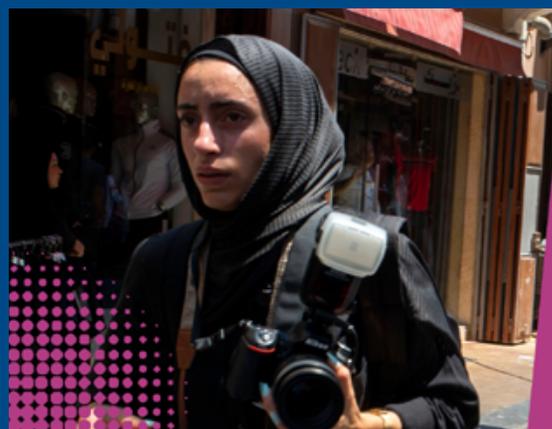
Video screening at the Security Council Open Debate on Women Peace and Security hosted by Kenya on 21 October 2021.



“ Seen through the lenses of talented women photographers, the exhibit brings to vivid life the inspiring stories of women around the world dedicating their lives to the most important and consequential cause of all: peace.

**António Guterres**  
United Nations Secretary-General

**IN THEIR HANDS** WOMEN TAKING OWNERSHIP OF PEACE  
through the lens of women photographers



“ It is urgent for people in my region to help women access decision-making positions and empower them to positively impact our societies.

**Rawan Mazeh**  
Photographer  
Lebanon

**IN THEIR HANDS** WOMEN TAKING OWNERSHIP OF PEACE  
through the lens of women photographers



“ Only when we leverage on women's leadership and mobilization power, we will achieve peace in my country. It is our right to sit at the decision-making tables, not just around them. Last elections showed we still have a long way to go.

**Béatrice Epaye**  
Parliamentarian  
Central African Republic

**IN THEIR HANDS** WOMEN TAKING OWNERSHIP OF PEACE  
through the lens of women photographers

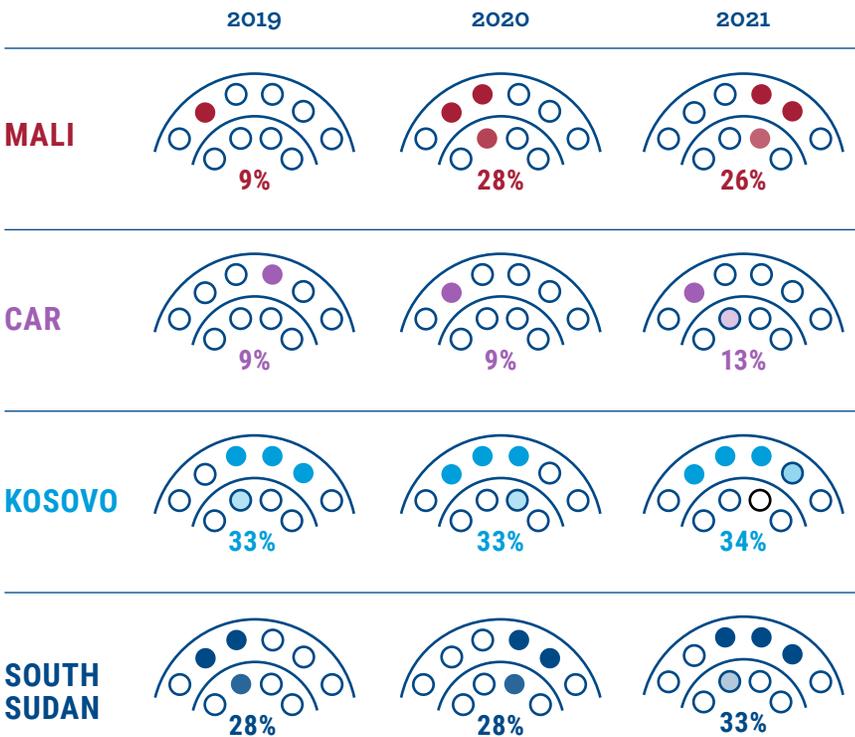


# KEY FACTS: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

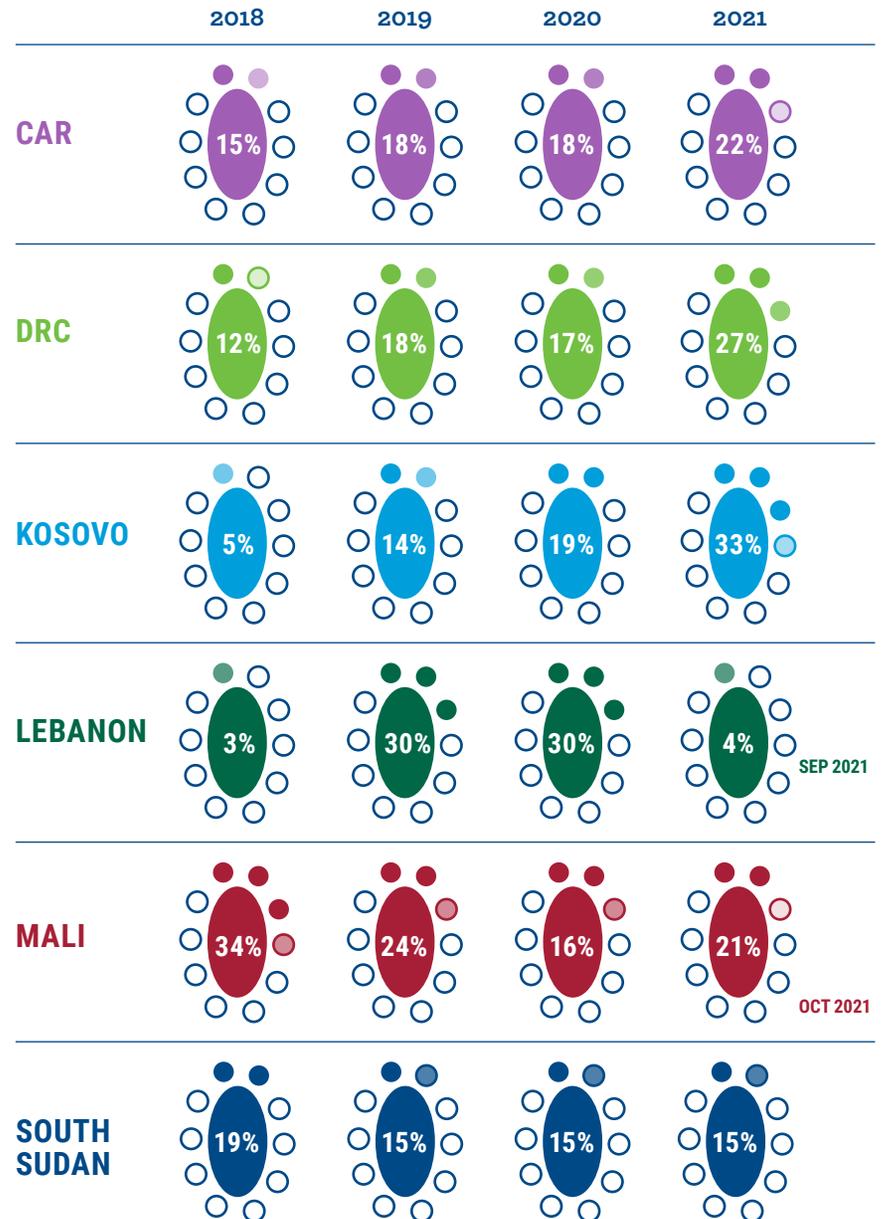
The number of women in key political positions and in formal implementation mechanisms put in place to monitor peace agreements continues to gradually increase in several peacekeeping contexts. However, in most cases, women's representation remains below legal gender quotas. Data collected through the DPO WPS indicators shows trends, progress and gaps in WPS implementation.

## WOMEN LEAD POLITICAL SOLUTIONS

### Women in parliaments, including transitional assemblies (South Sudan and Mali)

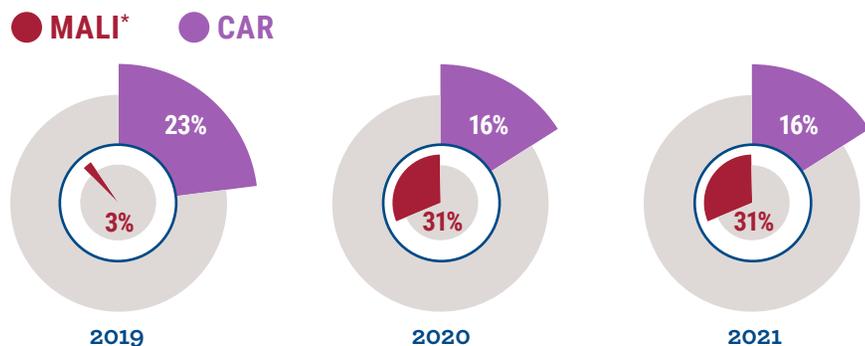


### Women in ministerial positions including transitional governments (South Sudan and Mali)

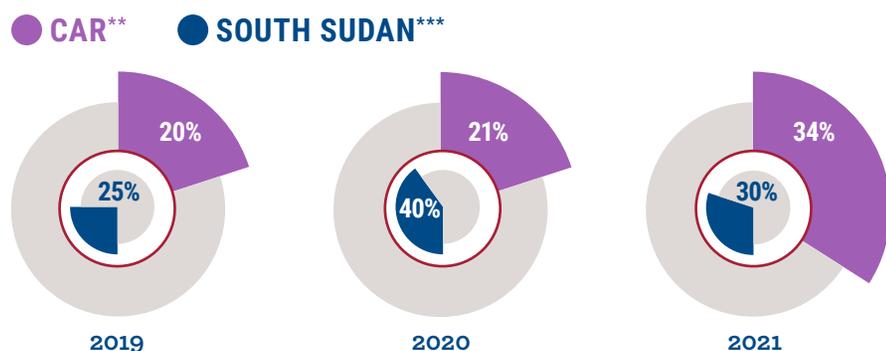


## WOMEN IN FORMAL PEACE COMMITTEES AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

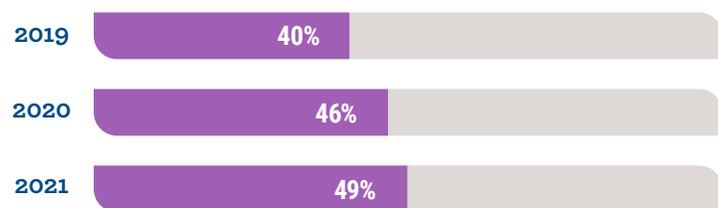
### Women in peace agreement implementation processes at the national level



### Women in peace agreement implementation processes at the local level



### Early warning mechanisms in Central African Republic supported by MINUSCA involving at least 30% women



\* Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee | \*\* Local Peace and Reconciliation Committees  
 \*\*\* Local peace initiatives supported by UNMISS | Data source: DPO WPS indicators as of December 2021.

## MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION: BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Peace Operations support women's diverse roles and responsibilities in peace and political processes to go beyond sheer numbers to ensure women's participation is meaningful. Peace Operations support women's engagement as peacebuilders, human right defenders, ex-combatants, and political and grassroots leaders in formal and informal processes of dialogue, negotiation, and political transitions and as members of formal peace agreement implementation and monitoring mechanisms. However, women still face multiple forms of discrimination and protection risks that hamper their participation, challenge their rights, and hinder progress on the WPS agenda.

### WOMEN INFLUENCING POLITICAL TRANSITIONS

Peace Operations played an important role in strengthening women's participation in finding political solutions during transitions in 2021. In Mali, women have engaged actively in the transition process since the two Coups, one in August 2020 and one in May 2021. In preparing for the National Dialogue "Assises Nationales" held in December 2021, women made up 38.8 and 30 percent in the Panel and the Commission, respectively, set up to organize the dialogue. Consequently, gender issues such as the gender parity law were largely promoted during the dialogue. Furthermore, MINUSMA supported women from diverse backgrounds across the country to draft gender-responsive electoral, political, and institutional reform proposals. These were considered in the draft electoral law adopted by the Council of Ministers (November 2021) which includes gender provisions in line with the gender parity law. In South Sudan, UNMISS continued to advocate for the enforcement of the 35 percent quota on women's representation in the political transition as per the Revitalized Peace Agreement. The mission held workshops, strengthened collaborations, and partnerships with diverse actors, including UNDP and UN Women and engaged in joint advocacy with women leaders and their networks,

also young women, on the transition and constitution making processes. These initiatives have helped build local ownership and enhanced strategic political engagement on women's meaningful participation and respect of their rights.



*“Women play an incredibly important role in society, therefore I advocate for the participation of women in the ongoing transitional process in Mali.”*

- Loda Coulibaly, woman rights activists involved in the transition process in Mali, partnering with MINUSMA.



Alokiir Malual, is central in the political transition in South Sudan as one of the seven women signatories to the Revitalized Peace Agreement and a Member of the Revitalized Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. She chairs the South Sudan Civil Society Alliance and is a member of the South Sudan Women, Peace Monitoring & Advocacy Group.

## STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S POLITICAL ROLES THROUGH ELECTIONS

Where mandated to do so, peace operations have supported women's participation in electoral processes. This has helped increase the number of women engaged in politics. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA used strategic communications, provided support to strengthening the security system, and partnered with UN Women, UNDP and women's organizations to support women's engagement as voters and candidates in the legislative elections in 2020-2021. A gender analysis of the first round of the elections in late 2020 was carried out with women's organizations to inform the mission's approach. The representation of women in the parliament increased from 8 percent to 12.8 percent, reaching the highest rate since the independence of the country. However, financial and social-cultural barriers to women's participation presented serious challenges to women's meaningful participation according to the President of the Constitutional Court, Professor Daniele Darlan. She played a vital role in ensuring transparent, free and fair elections in the Central African Republic.



A woman voting in the legislative elections in Central African Republic.

Moving forward, a community mobilization project to strengthen women's participation in the up-coming local elections was initiated. In Kosovo, both parliament and local elections were held. 41 women were elected to the parliament, only 25 percent of the women elected relied on the quota to secure their seat, and five women were among the top ten most voted candidates. The percentage of women mayors increased from zero to five. UNMIK advocated for women's participation through the multi-stakeholder Security and Gender Group. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Mali, the missions engaged in preparations of up-coming elections. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO intensified its engagement with political parties and actors to advocate for a revision of the electoral law to make women's representation on candidate lists mandatory. The mission worked with key political leaders, parties, and organizations to help them identify and train more women, including young women to eventually present them as candidates. Several parties committed to advancing this agenda. In Mali, MINUSMA supported the Government and women leaders to set up a Women's Situation Rooms project in 7 regions to advocate for women's protection and participation in the elections. UN Women and UNDP provided technical support. The Situation Room in Bamako played a vital role in convening women to prepare for and follow up on the National Dialogue in December 2021.



M. El-Ghassim Wane, SRSG and Head of MINUSMA visiting the Women's Situation Room in Bamako as part of its launch in November 2021.

## WOMEN ENGAGED IN IMPLEMENTING PEACE AGREEMENTS

*“The advocacy begins to bear fruit with 15 additional women to be included, 3 in the CSA and 12 in its sub-committees, but this number is far from satisfactory as out of the 1000 people involved in the implementation of the Agreement, only 31 are women, 2.96 percent.”*

**- Ms. Maïga Sina Damba, Member of the Agreement Monitoring Committee, Mali, May 2021**

Women continue to be marginalized in the implementation process of peace agreements. However, some developments were noted in Mali and the Central African Republic. In Mali, training offered by UN Women, Folke Bernadotte Academy and MINUSMA to the women members of the Agreement Monitoring Committee (CSA) has helped ensuring their participation is meaningful. MINUSMA also continued to engage with the Government, parties to the conflict and women members of the CSA to push for the pending commitment to include 15 additional women in the CSA and its subcommittees. This commitment is yet to be realized, but MINUSMA allocated funding for this through the Peace Trust Fund. In the Central African Republic, support from MINUSCA helped increase women's representation in the Local Peace and Reconciliation Committees to 34 percent by the end of 2021 compared to 21 percent in 2020. However, women's representation in the monitoring mechanisms of the Political Agreement on National level remained at 16 percent, and the few women members were sidelined in the work of the mechanisms. “We are only two women in the Executive Monitoring Committee of the Political Agreement ...during mediation efforts with armed groups, we were not involved” Jaqueline Massengue, Member of the Committee said in October. To counter this, MINUSCA has partnered with various women networks and organizations to ensure their priorities are considered, for example, in the preparations of the Republican Dialogue.

## WOMEN ENGAGED IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION, RECONCILIATION AND PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS

From Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Abyei, South Sudan and Cyprus, local level conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, and peace building efforts have taken innovative and creative forms in 2021. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO supported women's participation in intercommunity dialogues and conflict resolution initiatives and enhanced women's roles in community alert networks and local protection committees. In Irumu territory (Ituri), such efforts resulted in a landmark local peace agreement. In Cyprus, women continued their trust-building efforts with the support from UNFICYP. Women's participation was strengthened via 47 virtual intercommunal initiatives, meetings, and events with women's civil society organizations and informal women's groups, as well as the diplomatic community. In addition, a women's walk was organized in cooperation with civil society to mark the United Nation's Day on October 24, 2021, which enabled dialogues between women activists across Cyprus and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Among local and traditional leadership in multiple communities in Abyei, UNISFA played a key role in facilitating strengthening of women's participation in community level decision-making including garnering local leadership commitment to promote women's participation in the local population committee responsible for settling disputes between members of the community. In the Misseriya community, traditional leaders, committed to promote women's participation and a coordination mechanism with women and the traditional leaders was established. In South Sudan, UNMISS ensured women's roles in conflict resolution. 60 percent of the participants in capacity building initiatives aimed at CSOs involved in community-based conflict resolution were women and 48 percent of the participants in community level peace negotiation activities were women. The impact of these interventions led to more economically productive communities, a key aspect to building lasting peace in the multifaceted nature of peacekeeping.



*“When I make someone feel at peace, when I help people live together peacefully, it enriches not only me but the country as a whole.”*

- Marthe Mbita, peace activist,  
the Central African Republic



Youth Peace Activist [Evgenia Chamilou](#) supported by UNFICYP as a UN Youth Champion for Environment and Peace.

## AMPLIFYING WOMEN LEADERS' ADVOCACY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout 2021, there were noteworthy gains on political advocacy and partnerships with local women leaders across peace operations. In South Sudan, UNMISS supported the Office of the Vice President, H.E Rebecca Nyandeng De Mabior in launching the South Sudan Women Leadership Forum (SSWLF) that brings together a diverse group of women with the aim to enhance their strategic participation in ongoing political processes relating to the constitutional formation and up-coming elections. In addition, the persistent pandemic context prompted UNMISS to facilitate digitally mediated meetings with the South Sudan Women, Peace and Security – Monitoring and Advocacy Group, where local women leaders from across the country advocated and reported on WPS progress in order to keep the agenda at the fore of the political and peace processes. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, MONUSCO convened local leaders, women and men from CSOs, local officials and traditional leaders to a workshop on the implementation of WPS agenda in the territory of Masisi (North Kivu). Barriers and limitations were identified and recommendations made including targeted training for traditional leaders to stop engaging in practices that hinder or prevent progress on WPS. Finally, in Lebanon, UNIFIL continued engaging virtually with the Local Gender Working Groups that the mission established with local women leaders, including through mediation and conflict management trainings. This served as a vital platform to ensure their participation in the implementation of the National Action Plan on WPS and provided a safe space to discuss challenges related to COVID-19 and WPS progress.



Fifi Baka leads a group of 300 civil society organizations in their advocacy efforts for women's equal participation in decision-making bodies in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

## PROTECTING WOMEN, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THEIR PARTICIPATION

Protecting women engaged in peace processes, including peacebuilders, politicians, and women human rights defenders, and reducing risks that compromise women's protection was critical to the progress on WPS in 2021. Local and subnational efforts across missions have contributed to recentering the WPS agenda as the pandemic continues to shape peacekeeping contexts. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA, UNDP and UN Women supported the establishment of 16 women's situation rooms in each prefecture and a 24-hour hotline to address attacks against women who took part in the 2021 legislative elections. In some cases, the mission de-escalated situations where women were under threat. Peacekeepers "arrived luckily to root out the attackers around me," [Beatrice Epaye](#), Member of Parliament, recalled after being targeted and assaulted for her political engagement. In Kosovo, UNMIK saw a need to address domestic

violence as there were over 1,100 reported survivors in the first six months of 2021. The Security and Gender Group, of which UNMIK is a member, issued a statement on March 18 which detailed substantive actions to ensure women's protection. Efforts to quell the harm and support survivors of domestic and gender-based violence led to the development of a helpline and support provided to a Regional Safe House in Northern municipalities in Kosovo. In Abyei, UNISFA facilitated the release of girls unlawfully detained for running away from forced marriage. Local efforts to protect women's participation continued in South Sudan. In the Jonglei and Pibor Administrative Area, UNMISS and partners facilitated the release, family tracing and reunification of 36 women, 39 girls and 45 boys who were abducted because of intercommunal violence. Additionally, the security of women leaders, peacebuilders and human rights defenders in several states was enhanced via the deployment of gender-responsive patrols and female engagement teams by the UNMISS Force and UN Police (UNPOL). In Mali, the logistical support provided by MINUSMA to the women members of the Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee was crucial in ensuring their safe participation.



©MINUSCA/ Serge Kossouate Belalengbi

On 10 December more than 300 women and men marched the streets of Bangui in the Central African Republic to call for justice for victims of violence against women and fight against impunity.

## WOMEN SHAPING THE TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY

While women generally remain underrepresented in the judiciary, some positive developments were noted in the Central African Republic where MINUSCA provides technical and financial assistance for the transitional justice process. In 2021, the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission was established with 45 percent of its member being women with a woman lawyer as the chair. The mission supported women's mobilization efforts to ensure the specific needs for women victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) were considered. In partnership with women's civil society organizations, MINUSCA also promoted women's meaningful participation in such decision-making mechanisms. In addition, the President of the Central African Republic appointed a Focal Point on sexual violence, indicating a political will to fight against sexual violence. In Mali, MINUSMA continued to support the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, ensuring women victims and their cases are considered. As of June 2021, 50 percent of the depositions registered by the commission were made by women. In relation to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV),



©Lella Thiam

Bernadette Pampali is one of the 18 women elected to the national assembly in the Central African Republic despite the security threats directed towards women during the elections.

MINUSMA assessed the national judiciary's response as no CRSV cases and charges have been brought to trial. As a result, four CRSV cases were identified as priority cases by national counterparts and civil society. In South Sudan and the Central African Republic, UNPOL's support to national police institutions helped ramp up the institutions' advisory services and response capacity to SGBV. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNPOL's support resulted in more effective processing of SGBV cases in police stations in Kalemie, Bunia, Kananga, Goma and Bukavu.

## WOMEN ENGAGED IN DDR PROCESSES

Ensuring women combatants are meaningfully engaged in demobilization disarmament reintegration (DDR) processes remains a challenge. However, DPO made progress to ensure women's participation across all stages of the implementation of integrated DDR processes, notably the design, planning and implementation of DDR programs and Community Violence Reduction (CVR) projects. Several peace operations established a minimum gender quota for beneficiaries of CVR projects and promoted gender-sensitive parameters for determining eligibility criteria for DDR processes. Moreover, missions have encouraged women to fill leadership roles both in the design and implementation of projects. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, women represented 23 percent of the direct beneficiaries targeted in CVR projects, which mainly comprised of income generating activities, high intensity of labor activities and vocational training initiatives. In Mali, 51 percent of the direct beneficiaries of MINUSMA's DDR/CVR projects were women. More women held leadership roles in various Project Management Committees to lead the implementation of projects. To facilitate women's participation in the DDR process, the transit camps operated by MONUSCO in Bunia, Beni, Goma, Bukavu and Uvira were equipped with gender-sensitive infrastructure while radio was used to urge women and children involved in armed conflicts to dissociate themselves from armed groups.

## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

Most security sectors are still largely male-dominated and systematically exclude women, particularly from leadership positions. To counter this, peace operations have helped host-countries to increase women's participation in national security sectors including through barriers assessments, establishment of gender parity quotas, review of human resources policies and gender-sensitive recruitments. In the Central African Republic, MINUSCA supported the national security institutions towards achieving the 35 percent gender quota established in the national Gender Parity Law. Gender-sensitive recruitment enabled the national police and gendarmerie to reach 25.46 and 15.89 percent, respectively, of women in 2021. MINUSCA and UNDP have also supported the local forces to develop a Ministerial Plan for gender integration in the reform of the Internal Security Forces yet to be approved. In South Sudan, UNMISS together with UN Women and UNDP facilitated the creation of a women network in the security sector, which will be headed by the Ministry of Gender. At Headquarters, steps were taken to prepare a first-ever global report on gender equality and the status of women in the defense sector; an area that remains underreported and hampers countries efforts to enhance women's representation in armed forces.



**UNMISS engaging women officers from the South Sudan Police Services on their role in preventing and managing conflict.**

# GENDER-RESPONSIVE PEACEKEEPING IN PRACTICE

## GENDER-RESPONSIVE TRANSITIONS: CASE OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo a [transition plan](#) for the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO was endorsed by the Security Council in December 2021. The plan is highly gender responsive. Out of the total 18 benchmarks, one is dedicated to WPS while gender has been integrated into other benchmarks, such as SSR (Security Sector Reform). Additionally, 33 out of the 83 progress indicators in the plan touch on at least one of the four WPS pillars. Mireille Laurier Affa'A Mindzie, the Senior Gender Adviser at MONUSCO, attributed these gains to the “synergy... and mutual support” among local and international UN offices, including UN Women, the DPO Gender Unit, MONUSCO and the UN Transition Project.

Strategic collaboration and leadership engagement at political and technical levels were integral to successful integration from the outset of the process. From the Independent Strategic Review commissioned by the Security Council in 2019 to the drafting of the transition plan, gender experts and gender focal points have been involved. This allowed for a gendered data-driven conversation to take place as part of conflict analysis, planning and in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the mission's senior leadership filled a major role to imprint gender and WPS as key considerations in the joint working groups with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Regular engagements by the mission leadership with the African Women Leaders Network ensured women voices were centered in the discussions.

It is often a concern that WPS gains might be quelled during transitions. However, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, this plan has garnered renewed commitment to the WPS agenda. The implementation of the WPS agenda via the National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 has become widely accepted as a “cross-cutting” issue throughout various sections of the mission. To ensure the WPS aspects of the transition plan are upheld in the implementation phase, MONUSCO and UN Women are developing a joint project to track the implementation. It is pertinent to support the Government in the implementation of the NAP, strengthening the mission's collaboration with UN women and UNCT, and advancing gender parity with a strong focus on national staff in the mission to ensure that progress on the WPS agenda continues to be made into the future.

## GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP

In missions, WPS continued to be elevated by the Senior Leadership. In Lebanon, UNIFIL's High-Level Integrated Gender Task Force headed by the Head of Mission and the Force Commander helped ensure gender was integrated in all on-going processes in the mission. For example, a Military Gender Task Forces (MGTF) at the Sector and Headquarters levels was established to implement WPS. Similar Gender Task Forces chaired by Senior Leadership are operational in UNMIK, UNMISS and at DPO Headquarters. At DPO-DPPA Headquarters, a Gender-responsive leadership course was offered to senior managers in partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy. This helped strengthen senior managers' gender-responsive leadership skills with concrete priorities and visions to advance gender equality.

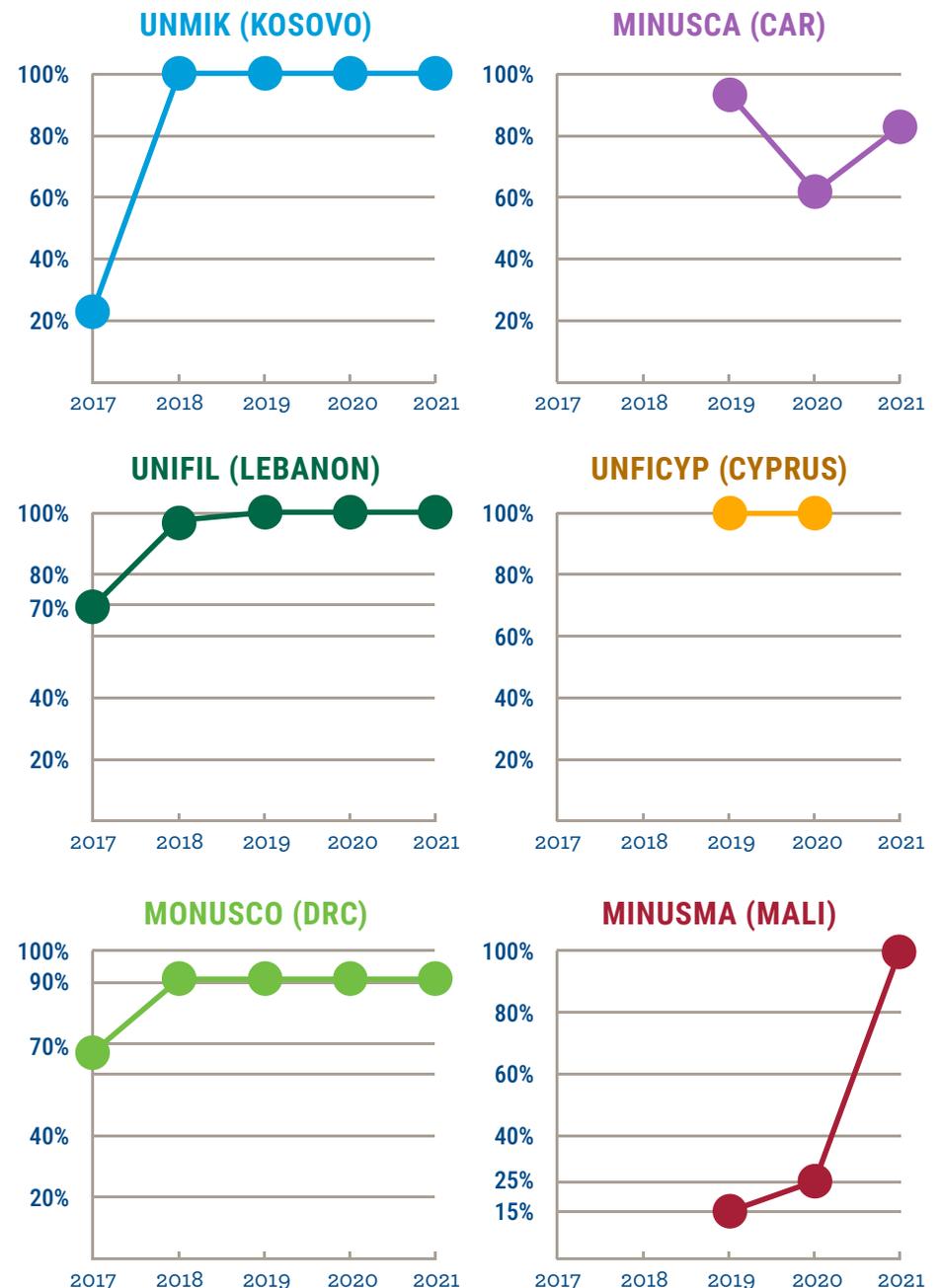
## DATA-DRIVEN APPROACHES IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY, PLANNING AND COORDINATION

To enhance performance, accountability, and ensure planning processes consider gender and WPS, eight missions are systematically monitoring progress, trends, and challenges in the implementation of WPS mandated tasks through WPS indicators. In 2021, the indicators were integrated into the Comprehensive Planning and Assessment System (CPAS) through the establishment of a WPS-CPAS platform. In line with the UN data strategy, this human centered platform has allowed for greater access to WPS data, enhanced the quality of data and increased accountability of and collaboration between data collectors. Through an integrated approach, the platform has engaged colleagues across gender units, planning and evaluation teams and other sections at Headquarters and in missions resulting in improved coordination on WPS implementation. The data and analysis have informed reports, leadership briefs and influenced decision-making, including through Secretary-General's reports and analysis provided to the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on WPS and C34. [Factsheets](#) have been produced, and the data has been incorporated in key messages used for political advocacy and strategic communications efforts on WPS.

## PLANNING PROCESSES BECAME MORE GENDER-RESPONSIVE

The number of workplans integrating gender continued to grow in 2021. In many missions gender is integrated in all workplans. This indicates a strengthened coordination between substantive sections and the gender experts in the missions, as well as confirms the importance of ensuring gender and WPS data informs planning processes. For example, the Gender Advisor in UNIFIL is a member of the CPAS committee which ensures the integration and reporting on WPS within CPAS. In Mali, gender experts are members of the Peace Trust Fund project review committee and the budget performance working group which improved the integration of gender in 18 projects in 2021 and in the mission plan.

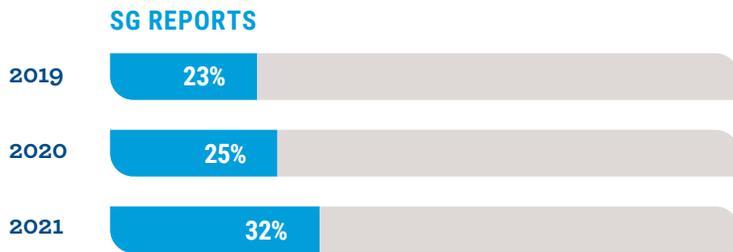
### Mission units' working plans addressing gender-specific needs



## IMPROVED GENDER-RESPONSIVE REPORTING

In 2021, 29 of 30 Secretary-General reports to the Security Council on country-specific situations prepared by DPO contained gender information and/or gender-disaggregated data. The gender analysis continued to improve as the number of paragraphs containing gender specific information and data grew to 31.83 percent from 25.35 percent in 2020. This also translated into an increase in the number of reports that include sections specifically targeting WPS and gender specific recommendations.

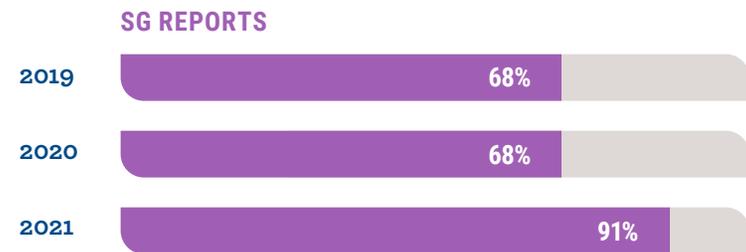
**Number of paragraphs with gender specific, related, and/or disaggregated mentions in reports on country specific situations by the Secretary-General prepared by DPO, out of the total number of paragraphs.**



**DPO prepared reports by the Secretary-General on country specific situations with a stand-alone WPS section.**



**DPO prepared reports by the Secretary-General on country specific situations with gender specific recommendations.**





*“The partnerships between MINUSCA, regional organizations, Member States and women’s organizations are important. The actions carried out by the international partners in favor of women facilitated the election of 18 women in the National Assembly.”*

- Jacqueline Massengue, President of the Women Leaders Caucus for Gender Parity in the Central African Republic, Member of the Executive Monitoring Committee of the Political Agreement

## DYNAMIC PARTNERSHIPS ENHANCED

DPO helped strengthening partnerships on WPS. DPO engaged in UN entity partnerships, such as the UN WPS Standing Committee, and similar mechanisms on field level, and the UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP) Steering Committee. Regional Organizations remained core partners on WPS implementation. Within the UN-EU partnership on crisis management and peace operations, WPS remained a core priority. In 2021, a joint webinar with gender advisors from UN and EU missions at Headquarters and mission level was convened to pave the way for stronger collaboration within the EU-UN partnership. On mission level, for example, in Kosovo, partnerships were forged among

gender advisors of international organizations which reinforced joint messaging and advocacy at the local level. In Cyprus, several resident Embassies initiated a [Group of Friends on WPS](#), with the support of UNFICYP. In Mali, MINUSMA engaged in the Steering Committee of the National Action Plan of UNSCR 1325 (2000) together with Member States and the government, and in Lebanon UNIFIL provides technical support to the NAP implementation as a member of all implementation committees.

## CAPACITIES STRENGTHENED

To enhance cross-mission learning and coherence on capacity strengthening efforts on WPS across the Department, and adapt capacity-building tools to virtual platforms, DPO launched an interactive online version of its Gender Equality and Women Peace and Security Resource Package (available in [English](#) and [French](#)). The resource package has been listed as a reference document by peacekeeping training institutes. DPO also developed a training video on “Translating women, peace and security mandates into political realities in UN peacekeeping” with [English](#), [French](#), and [Arabic](#) subtitles, and a [Practice Note](#) on missions’ support to women’s participation in peace processes to enhance cross-mission learning and close knowledge gaps. A Leadership Development Program was held for senior gender advisors in collaboration with Folke Bernadotte Academy. To support gendered community engagement by the Military component, DPO developed an Engagement Platoon Handbook and a Reinforcement Training Package on the matter for field missions and troop-contributing countries. An UN Engagement Platoon Pilot Course was conducted in September.

## GLOSSARY

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>MINUSCA</b> | <b>United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic</b> |
| <b>MINUSMA</b> | <b>United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali</b>                         |
| <b>MONUSCO</b> | <b>United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>        |
| <b>UNFICYP</b> | <b>United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus</b>  |
| <b>UNIFIL</b>  | <b>United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon</b>  |
| <b>UNISFA</b>  | <b>United Nations Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei</b>                                     |
| <b>UNMIK</b>   | <b>United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo</b>  |
| <b>UNMISS</b>  | <b>United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan</b>  |

## CONTACT

United Nations Secretariat 405 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

[dpo-ousg-gu@un.org](mailto:dpo-ousg-gu@un.org)

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/promoting-women-peace-and-security>

@UNPeacekeeping

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