Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces

FACILITATORS GUIDE

osce
ODIHR

Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces

FACILITATORS GUIDE

Acknowledgements

Human Rights and Gender Assessment in the Armed Forces — Facilitators Guide

Designed by Homework

Contents

PART 2 PRE-ASSESSMENT PLANNING PHASE 45

PART 3 REPORTING AND PRESENTATION 93

ANNEXES 97

INTRODUCTION

1. The Guide

The armed forces play a key role in defending a democratic state and society by ensuring a security environment that allows each individual to enjoy the inalienable human rights and fundamental freedoms to which they are entitled. As state service members, armed forces personnel are bound to respect human rights and international humanitarian law in the exercise of their duties. At the same time, states are also responsible for ensuring that the human rights of service personnel are guaranteed within their own organizations. These responsibilities are clearly reflected in the *OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security*[1] and in the majority of countries' domestic legislation pertaining to the armed forces.

In 2021, together with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), ODIHR published the *Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Compendium of Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations.*[2] This provides an overview of legislation, commitments, policies and mechanisms for ensuring the protection and enforcement of the human rights of armed forces personnel. In addition, jointly with UN Women, ODIHR and DCAF published the *Gender and Security Toolkit.*[3] *Tool 3 on Defence and Gender,*[4] which sets out practical measures to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming both within the armed forces and during operations.

This guide aims to support the dissemination, adoption and implementation of the content of these publications, and offers guidance on how to conduct human rights and gender self-assessment in the armed forces to contribute to proper respect for, protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of armed forces personnel. The guide draws extensively on material from the International Labour Office's participatory gender audit methodology, *A Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators.*

1 Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, OSCE, 3 December 1994.
2 Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations, OSCE/ODIHR and Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), 4 March 2021.
3 Gender and Security Toolkit, OSCE/ODIHR, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and UN Women, 2019-2020.
4 Tool 3: Defence and Gender, OSCE/ODIHR, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and UN Women, 25 February 2020.
5 A Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, The ILO Participatory Gender Audit Methodology, 2nd Edition, (ILO Manual), International Labour Office, Geneva, 2012.

1.1 TERMINOLOGY

The terms used in the guide have specific meanings:

- **'Leadership'** — a group of individuals (e.g., Ministry of Defence or senior leadership of the military structure) or individual (e.g., Minister of Defence, Chief of Staff) mandated to decide about conducting a human rights and gender assessment, and its related aspects (e.g., team composition and methodology approval) for the entire armed forces, its individual branches and/or organizational structures. Importantly, it is expected that the Leadership does not interfere with the independence and impartiality of the assessment team. They should support the assessment team and be kept informed of progress without prejudice to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality.

- '**Military structure'** — any branch, academy or training centre of the armed forces that is the subject of a human rights and gender assessment.

- '**Military unit'**/'**unit'** — any group (e.g., squad, platoon, company, battalion), service or department of determined size, function and role (e.g., combat, support, technical, administrative) within a larger military structure that is the subject of the human rights and gender assessment.

- **'Group of military service members'** — two or more armed forces personnel who share certain characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity) that are pertinent from the viewpoint of protection of human rights and gender equality and, consequently, who may warrant joint expression and consideration of needs, vulnerabilities, circumstances or experiences.

- **'Assessment team'** — the group of trained facilitators who conduct the human rights and gender assessment.

- **'Facilitators'** — the people who conduct the human rights and gender assessment and who, therefore, need to know how to deliver the material contained in this guide.

- **'Stakeholders'** — all those involved in the assessment process or interested in the outcome of the process (e.g., Leadership, military structure coordinating the assessment, participating military and civilian personnel, other military personnel from the unit/organization, assessment team etc.).

1.2 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This guide sets out how to conduct an assessment of human rights and gender in the armed forces, using a 'self-assessment' or 'participatory' methodology. It translates the content of *Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Compendium of Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations* and *Tool 3 – Defence and Gender* from the *Gender and Security Toolkit* into a step-by-step guide that enables military organizations to verify to what extent they treat their staff in line with human rights standards, to identify challenges in policy and practices, and to develop solutions.

The guide should help military structures conduct assessments of human rights and gender, and it should improve stakeholders' understanding of human rights and gender equality and help them identify gaps in internal policies and practices. Those trained to conduct assessments (facilitators) should become a valuable resource for those in charge of policy planning, reforms and action plans to promote human rights and gender equality within military organizations. They are expected to assist in spreading the knowledge and mainstreaming human rights and gender throughout the military structures.

The guide is inherently flexible — a 'pick and choose' tool that should be adapted to the realities and specificities of different structures/units. There is no single way to promote respect and enjoyment of human rights in the armed forces, so this guide presents an array of indicative methods and tools for assessment teams to choose what best suits their context and resources. These tools were conceived of as minimum standards. States may/should adapt them to the their specificities, aims and binding international obligations.

1.3 TARGET AUDIENCE

The guide is primarily addressed to armed forces general staff, who are responsible for the development and implementation of military and defence policy and planning, as well as to teaching staff of military academies and other training centres. It is also aimed at serving officers and other ranks with responsibility for these issues in the general staff and/or Ministry of Defence.

The guide may also be of interest to readers who, due to their expertise, may become part of assessment teams. In some instances, they may be civilians.

1.4 USING THE GUIDE

The guide takes facilitators step-by-step through how to conduct a participatory assessment of human rights and gender in the armed forces.

Part 1 focuses on planning, covering the steps for preparing a smooth and effective assessment.

Part 2 covers execution of the assessment. It discusses the tools and exercises that can be used to help collect meaningful and reliable data, both objective and subjective. It also elaborates on how to draft and validate the final report.

Parts I and II complement each other and facilitators should follow the guidance from both parts to achieve best results.

Supporting materials, including a set of assessment tools, are given in the Annexes.

2. The Self-assessment Methodology

Like other quality auditing methods, a self-assessment evaluates the extent to which, in practice, a structure/unit's organizational culture, practices and written documents (e.g., by-laws, policies, manuals, handbooks) are respected, implemented and compliant with international law and good practice. The key to the methodology is how it allows participants to think, assess and evaluate critically the manner in which human rights and gender are being applied in their organization. Throughout the process the assessment team collects objective data and records subjective perceptions and needs, from which they identify good practices, challenges, gaps and avenues for improvement. The self-assessment methodology promotes self-learning and gives the structure/unit ownership of the process and the outcomes. This is critical to achieving real change and progress. The success of a self-assessment relies upon the motivation and interest of the Leadership and assessment participants and their ability to contribute actively to this process. To achieve this, it is essential that facilitators are able to create an environment of trust and adapt the language they use to the target audience. The concepts must be translated into ideas/examples that are both important to the audience and to which they can relate.

2.1 PRINCIPLES

The main principles of a self-assessment are as follows:

- **Training** personnel at all levels to understand their armed forces' obligation to respect and promote the human rights and gender equality of their personnel, how this affects them individualy, and to identify strengths and shortcomings within their structure;

- **Critical reflection** on gender and human rights, through team-building, good practices and sharing information. Activities/exercises that support individuals and groups in identifying problems and solutions should complement the analysis and encourage robust outcomes;

- **Ownership** of human rights and gender-equality initiatives, engagement and progress. It is important that participants feel included, that they are active partners in the process and take responsibility for the assessment as this will help to spread the knowledge wider and mainstream human rights and gender; and

- **Commitment to solid and sustainable progress** on gender equality and the human rights of armed forces structures and personnel.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of a self-assessment is to **initiate transformation** by helping to identify key areas for action **that will enhance the human rights of armed forces personnel and gender equality among them** (at the individual, structure and unit levels).[6]

To this effect, a self-assessment aims to:

- Assess human rights and gender mainstreaming in the organization's policies, procedures, operations and environment;

- Analyse the resources allocated to activities related to the mainstreaming of human rights and gender equality and assess how well they are applied;

- Evaluate the policies of structure/unit sections (e.g., Human Resources, intelligence, operations, logistics, policy and planning, finances and budget, civil-military cooperation, media communications and relations) from the perspective of human rights and gender equality standards;

- Determine the organization's current performance on promoting human rights and gender equality within their own ranks and use it as a baseline against which to benchmark future progress;

- Assess progress on implementing existing action plans on human rights and gender equality-related commitments; and

- Identify good practices, major gaps and challenges in respecting and promoting gender equality and the human rights of armed forces personnel, and recommend strategies for improvement where necessary.

In addition, the assessment should:

- Improve the understanding of individual staff members (and the organization as a whole) of the importance and impact of respect for

---

6 Objectives informed by ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 12.

human rights and gender equality and the extent to which they are mainstreamed in their organization; and

- Disseminate information on policies, practices, tools, mechanisms and strategies that can enhance human rights and gender mainstreaming in the organization.

The main output of any self-assessment is the final report; this should make recommendations on how to further promote and apply good practices and address obstacles to respecting human rights and gender equality in the armed forces.

2.3 ADVANTAGES OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

The benefits of using a self-assessment methodology (rather than an external audit) include the following:

- The ability to maintain confidentiality and trust between the assessment team and all interested parties. This is especially valuable when it comes to reviewing sensitive data such as personnel and force strength, reviews of disciplinary procedures undertaken that relate to breaches of human rights and gender equality provisions, etc.;

- By engaging with the assessment and recognizing it as a way to improve working conditions, participants are motivated to reflect critically and look for solutions;

- Learning is based on critical self-analysis;

- Good practices are identified and become deeply embedded in the organization;

- Ownership of the process means that recommendations should be accepted and implemented more easily;

- Organizational culture is scrutinized, participants brainstorm on ways to improve, and the process of change is energized;

- Organizational solidarity is reinforced through shared learning experiences and solutions based on joint efforts;

- The information collected can be used as benchmarks for future assessments to track and ensure sustained progress; and

- The language, tools and exercises can be easily adapted and tailored to the unit/organization being assessed.

Using a self-assessment methodology encourages self-awareness, expands knowledge and promotes team and individual identification with problems

and solutions. It values and encourages the pursuit of good practices, enhances ownership and accountability and fosters empowerment.

2.4 PROCESS OVERVIEW

Conducting a gender and human rights assessment in the armed forces is a complex process, comprising several steps (see Box 1 below). Good preparation is critical. All stakeholders should be involved at an early stage and informed about the objectives and steps to take. To ensure a successful assessment, there must be constructive cooperation between the different stakeholders, based on the chain of command as well as trust and shared responsibility.

Box 1: Key steps of a gender and human rights self-assessment in the military[7]

1. The Leadership decides to conduct a gender and human rights assessment for the entire force, or a specific structure/unit. Alternatively, the leadership of a military structure/unit may recognize a need to conduct an assessment and sends a formal request for approval higher up the chain of command.[8]

2. The Leadership assigns an Assessment Focal Point (AFP) to serve as the main point of contact and communication between the Leadership and the assessment team. The Leadership also selects and assigns the members and leadership of the assessment team, based on their rank, function and subject matter expertise.

3. The AFP and the assessment team agree upon the methodology, division of work and timetable for the assessment, taking into account both the size and complexity of the assessment, and the need to avoid a drawn-out process where collected data becomes out of date: the interactive part of the process (see point 5) is recommended to take around 10-15 days. All of this is communicated to the Leadership for approval.

4. Once approved, the assessment team begins its preparatory work in close cooperation with the AFP. The assessment team starts with a detailed review of documents (legislation and by-laws, general, human rights and gender-specific).

---

7 Adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 33.
8 If no entity has been assigned and trained to conduct human rights and gender assessments, a representative of the military organization may send a request to ODIHR to train a pool of facilitators on the methodology contained in this guide.

5. Next, the assessment team conducts a range of activities (approved by the Leadership) to elicit further information, such as individual interviews, focus group discussions and workshops.

6. The assessment team compiles and shares draft report, its findings and recommendations and presents it to the AFP for additional input and guidance in advance of the presentation of the report to the Leadership.

7. The draft report is then presented to the Leadership, highlighting the main findings, good practices, challenges and recommendations for further action and implementation.

8. After feedback and further revision, the final report is submitted to the Leadership for consideration and further dissemination.

9. Once the assessment is finished, the Leadership takes charge of implementing the recommendations. The Leadership appoints a specific team to coordinate implementation, which should ideally include at least some of the the assessment team. The team's Action Plan for implementing the recommendations (including timelines) is approved by the Leadership and the team reports directly to Leadership on their progress on implementation.

Figure 1: Overview of the assessment process

Phase 1: Pre-assessment planning

Organize assessment team meeting to coordinate structure → Identify willing participants → Kick-off meeting with unit commander and/or group focal point → Kick-off/townhall meeting with whole unit /group

Collection and delivery of materials for desk review → Thematic prioritization → Workplans

Phase 2: Assessment and reporting

Desk review → Questionnaires → Individual interviews → Focus groups

Workshops → Report writing → Validation of report recommendations with participants

3. Conducting the Assessment

The more accurate, up-to-date, reliable and complete the information the assessment team receives, the more robust, consistent and meaningful the assessment will be. To that end, it is important that all facilitators are familiar with or already part of existing human rights and gender equality initiatives within their Armed Forces. (Chapter 5.1). This will help the team understand the unit's needs and priorities. In parallel, Leadership should strive to establish a favourable working environment and promote acceptance of and confidence in the assessment. The following approaches are particularly encouraged in this respect:

- Building bridges between individuals and organizational structures to create a sense of ownership and a climate of trust, which will enhance effective collaboration and motivate participants to self-scrutiny, critical reflection and finding solutions;

- Mapping a diversity of views, approaches and organizational bias, acknowledging openly that cognitive diversity and different experiences are extremely valuable in overcoming obstacles in a consensual manner;

- Highlighting the interlinkages between human rights compliance, gender responsiveness and military operational effectiveness by giving specific examples and concrete experiences that individuals can relate to;

- Offering step-by-step solutions. These should emerge naturally from a process that is participatory, inclusive and respects gender balance; and

- Emphasizing the advantages of being an inclusive organization, both for operations and as champions of democracy and rule of law.

3.1 FOUNDATIONS

Facilitators should be well versed in the fundamental principles that underpin the United Nations and OSCE commitments and support human

rights and gender equality in the armed forces. These are explained and discussed in detail in ODIHR and DCAF's 2021 publication, *Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Compendium of Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations.*

Importantly, facilitators are recommended to recognize armed forces personnel as **'citizens in uniform'**; as all other individuals, armed forces personnel should enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, subject only to restrictions allowed by law and under specific conditions. Military status does not deprive armed forces personnel of their human rights, nor does it weaken their protection under rule of law mechanisms. Limitations to human rights may only occur for specific reasons, such as protecting public order, preserving military discipline and political neutrality, and safeguarding military effectiveness.

Military organizations that are human rights-compliant and gender-responsive should have better operational effectiveness than those which are less so. Likewise, a credible commitment to, and respect for human rights and gender equality in the military sector should lead to increased public confidence in the armed forces and strengthen democratic norms.[9] Old tropes, (e.g., that respect for human rights and military effectiveness are conflicting notions, or that trying to make the armed forces more accountable could be damaging to their credibility and relevance), should be firmly debunked.

3.2 ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

Some analytical approaches are particularly suitable for self-assessments. The following are encouraged, and facilitators should keep them in mind throughout the various activities and exercises:

- *Barrier assessment* — This is research to identify the organizational obstacles (e.g., limitations on who can serve in some military branches and/or specific military units), the underlying reasons for such limitations (cultural or physical, has the physical limitation been tested against operational requirements?), any imposed deployment limitations (e.g., criteria for deployment selection) and the psychological and physical challenges post-deployment.[10] Informal barriers related to organizational culture are also looked at. This approach can be applied to all the assessment tools presented in Part 2, which includes a workshop exercise that

---

9 For further analysis on the subject, see e.g., OSCE/ODIHR, Compendium, Chapter 3.
10 PTSD is a major issue. In essence, deployment positively affects career in all armed forces. However, not all armed forces have gender- and culture-appropriate programmes for veterans affected by PTSD.

prompts personnel to perform their own analysis of the barriers to gender equality and human rights in their structure/unit.

- *Organizational climate assessment* — This is about gathering information on the views, attitudes, sentiments and needs of personnel regarding diversity and inclusion. It shows what the organization is doing well, where it can improve, and where additional training is required to inform the personnel of their human rights and limitations pertaining to service in the military.

- *Data disaggregation* — Facilitators should request and obtain data disaggregated by sex and age at a minimum. Categorization by other status is also encouraged, if feasible, (e.g., by 'race',[11] ethnicity, social background). This will allow important information about discriminatory practices and gender inequality to be captured. Disaggregated data is also extremely relevant for measuring progress on action plan implememntation.

When applying different analytical approaches, it is important to keep the objectives of the assessment in mind at all times, while ensuring the analysis is impartial and independent.

3.3 STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING RESISTANCE

The recommendations contained in the final report should form the basis of an action plan, which will address the idenfitifed challenges and detail actions that will improve human rights and gender equality in the assessed military structure/unit. As such, the assessment is intrinsically about change or the prospect of change. There is always resistance to any process of change, especially when sensitive matters such as human rights and gender equality are involved. It is important for facilitators to anticipate resistance and be prepared to deal with it.

Resistance can be passive (an unconscious or deliberate lack of reaction to activities and processes) and active (manifested through ridiculing, open boycott or attacks on individuals representing or supporting change). It may also be hidden (a mismatch between statements and behaviours, such as declaring openness to gender equality but acting against it). In certain cases, the objections may be reasonable and substantiated, but the assessment team needs to recognize that they are informed by the prevailing social constructs and culture rather than state and military objectives, obligations and mission.

---

11 The use of the term 'race' in this Guide shall not imply endorsement by OSCE/ODIHR of any theory based on the existence of different races. It is a term widely used in international human rights standards, as well as in national legislation.

Human rights and gender equality may not be subjects many military personnel think are relevant to them; the term 'gender' may produce negative responses, as it may be associated with 'issues for women', or 'feminist ideology'. These notions can be unappealing to men and women for reasons of personal belief, lack of knowledge or even for the effects that openly supporting them may have. Therefore, facilitators should adapt the language and terminology so that they address these issues in a way that surpasses any prejudice and resistance. Facilitators should always try to use language that military personnel can relate to.

Resistance may also be categorized by source. Table 1 presents possible causes of resistance and strategies to deal with it.

Table 1: Resistance challenges

Type	Possible causes	Response
Individual resistance E.g., service personnel may feel personally targeted when addressing the prohibition of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CIDT) as they fear being made accountable for their actions during hazing[12] practices	• Longlasting cultural practices for admission into the 'manhood' • A perception that the concept or process entails a negative judgement about one's personality or conduct • Fear of being accused of acting in a discriminatory way or against human rights • Feeling excluded from the process • Lack of knowledge about the subject • Lack of acknowledgment or recognition of the process • Lack of incentives to adhere to the process	• Engage with participants to instil the sense that they are an integral part of reaching the assessment conclusions and future improvements, thus avoiding feelings of being 'negatively judged' by others or the target of social reproach. • Ensure confidentiality and remain aware of the possible psychological consequences of sharing such personal and professional experiences. In the case of specific victims of hazing opening up during assessment, interviews ensure proper psychological and physical follow-up and protection. • Create incentives (often requiring Leadership support) to participate in and implement the findings of human rights and gender assessments (e.g., involvement in human rights and gender mainstreaming processes recognized in performance appraisals). • Secure the solid engagement of the Leadership, e.g., by highlighting individual examples of conduct, running some assessment sessions jointly with leaders, leaders sharing personal experiences.[13]

---

12 Hazing in the military refers to any activity or behaviour that is humiliating, intimidating, or abusive in nature, and it is used as a way to initiate or discipline newcomers to a military unit or group by inflicting physical or mental harm.

13 Deciding which leaders should be involved in this type of coping strategy should be discussed carefully with the Leadership and AFP. Facilitators must underline the critical importance of consistency in the selected leaders' declarations and behaviour (in public and in private) to ensure the human rights and gender assessment and its outcomes are not undermined.

Organizational resistance E.g., military operational capability and the nature of military service are incompatible with part-time or flexible work arrangements[14]	• Fear of negative effect on operational capability • No meaningful involvement and support from the Leadership (because e.g., an officer may be focused on obtaining a promotion and consider that engaging in perceived controversial topics, such as gender equality, may jeopardize his or her career prospects) • Fear of the impact of change on organizational status and privileges	• Emphasizing the difference between peacetime and operational formations • Focus on highlighting the added value of the process (notably, to address individuals' apathy about recurring organizational change) • Present available data on the increase of operational capability by employing diverse forces (culture, gender, language)
Society level resistance E.g., Gender mainstreaming is a feminist ideology E.g., Men and women are different and thus cannot perform the same military functions	• May have an issue with social and political advancement of the country/society • May try to manipulate the process for preservation of age relative 'values' • Culture, customs and beliefs inconsistent with current military needs and operational capabilites	• Clarify the concepts to prevent misinterpretations and wrong assumptions, e.g., the difference between 'sameness' (which is not linked to gender equality) and 'gender equality' (which is a fundamental right) • Focus on data collection for the assessment, and do not engage in discussion on values and beliefs of the assessment subjects.

When encountering resistance during the assessment, it is vital to remain impartial and record all comments, suggestions and data offered by interviewees, as they will likely present very valuable insights into the prevailing culture within the structure/unit. Facilitators should treat the participants as equals, regardless of their rank. Communication should be based on trust and confidentiality, and be fluid. The assessment team should feel confident in posing any and all questions approved by the Leadership (methodology), and record both positive and negative reactions and answers for the benefit of the assessment report and subsequent development of the action plan. For the self-assessment to be successful, it is sufficient that the Leadership supports it.

---

14 For military personnel, service is often not compatible with flexible work arrangements and this is understood. In peace time formation, arrangements can be made for one or both parents (being mindful of restrictions imposed on forming intimate relationships within the chain of command) and some armed forces provide child daycare in, or in the vicinity of barracks.

Figure 2: Strategies to deal with resistance
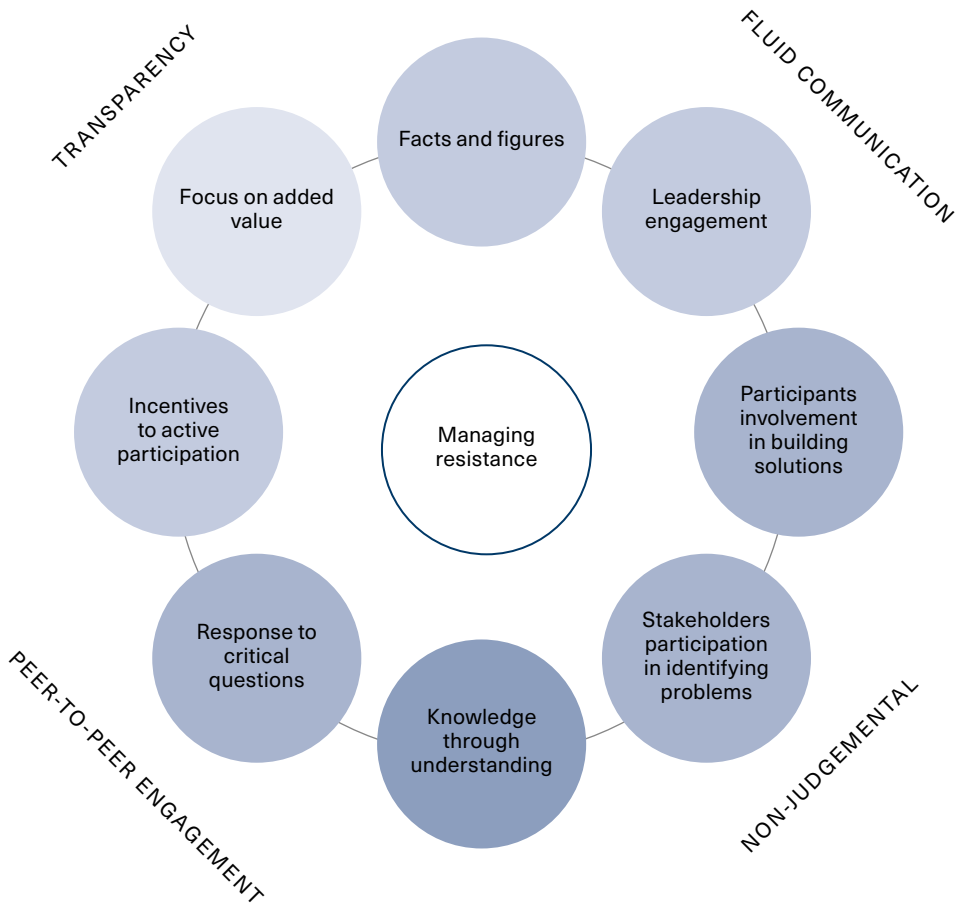
3.4 NO 'ONE SOLUTION FITS ALL'

Facilitators should be aware that that there is no single, 'correct' model for protecting the rights of armed forces personnel. This is particularly true when applying certain civil and political rights in some military contexts. Likewise, they should remind themselves regularly that they have been selected and appointed to conduct the assessement and should be supporting the ensuing action plan to implement the recommendations.

On the one hand, armed forces personnel should have their civil and political rights recognized as 'citizens in uniform'. Each state must ensure that the human rights of the members of its armed forces are respected

and protected in line with international and domestic legal obligations and commitments. On the other hand, the rights of armed forces personnel may be restricted due to the nature of their duties, provided that the restrictions are strictly justified, necessary and proportionate.

Most countries adopt some restrictive policies on political engagement. Highly restrictive policies include those that prohibit their armed forces members from joining political parties and standing for elected political office. Other states, with moderately restrictive policies, limit how armed forces personnel may participate in public life to avoid the perception that the armed forces are aligned with a particular political faction or cause. For example, some countries restrict the right of armed forces personnel to take up public office in political parties but not to be members of political parties. Other countries follow the least restrictive policy of political neutrality, allowing service personnel to exercise their full civil and political rights, provided that these rights do not interfere with military duty, for instance, allowing armed forces personnel under certain circumstances to hold demonstrations in military installations or to participate in public meetings.[15]

Different approaches have proved effective in protecting political neutrality while safeguarding human rights in the armed forces. No particular approach should be imposed, as long as they do not lead to excessive limitations such as denying members of the armed forces their right to vote or to political thought. As a matter of principle, the least restrictive policies – favouring human rights and fundamental freedoms – are preferred.

The assessment team must be highly knowledgeable about the human rights[16] and gender equality provisions and principles that apply to armed forces personnel.[17]

---

15 Compendium on Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Civil and political rights, OSCE/ODIHR, 4 March 2021.
16 The right to life; liberty and personal security; freedom from torture and degrading treatment; the right to seek and gain protection in other countries from persecution; the right to equality before the law; the right to a fair trial; the right to privacy; freedom of belief and religion.
17 For details see, e.g., OSCE/ODIHR, Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel, Chapters 5, 9 and 14.

PART 1

PRE-ASSESSMENT PLANNING PHASE

Part 1 examines the pre-assessment planning phase. It covers the various steps and actions that should precede the assessment to ensure it will be executed smoothly and effectively.

It is important for the assessment team to consider, from the outset of the planning phase, the methodological approach they will use, all the stages of the assessment (approval procedures, state and religious holidays) and assessment timeline. This will be critical for optimizing resources and opportunities, and conducting a successful assessment. The assessment is an intensive, time-consuming and demanding process. Miscalculations that emerge later in the process — about the methodology, time or resources required — may delay the completion, scope, quality and reliability of the assessment. The assessment is split into two phases: **pre-assessment and assessment** (the latter including report writing and presentation).

The duration of the whole process will depend upon the size, scope and depth of the assessment and the available resources (size of the assessed unit/structure, size and composition of the assessment team, dedicated resources). If assessing a country's entire armed forces, for example, the two phases together could take several months.

Figure 3 presents the indicative steps of the pre-assessment phase. These are flexible and should be adapted as required, in particular to reflect a specific country's military decision-making process; some steps may happen simultaneously, in a different order or be omitted altogether.

Figure 3: Elements of the pre-assessment phase
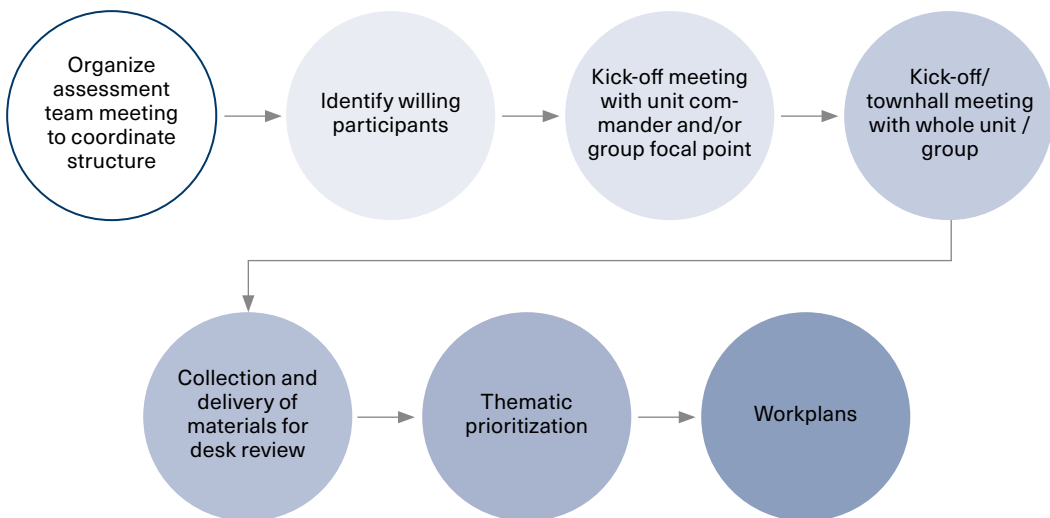
Box 2: Sequencing

The sequence of pre-assessment stages presented here is purely indicative. Some steps might occur simultaneously, or in a different order. Materials for desk review might start to be collected shortly after the assessment team is established or even earlier. The Leadership, who decides on holding the assessment, might take the initiative to start collecting relevant documents, which will then be appraised by the assessment team at a later stage. They may also decide to first appoint focal points for the group(s) to be assessed and only afterwards identify individual participants. In this case, the focal points might play an important role in selecting participants if the whole structure/unit does not take part.

Likewise, some steps might not happen. For instance, the competent authorities might deem it unnecessary to hold a meeting between the assessment team and the Chief of Staff or other similarly high-ranking officers, preferring that the facilitators engage with the command of the structure/unit or the focal point(s).

4. Assessment Team

The role of the assessment team is to lead and conduct the assessment: in particular, deploying the assessment tools, interacting with participants and the Leadership, processing and reviewing the information, and drafting and validating the assessment report.

4.1 COMPOSITION

It is the responsibility of the Leadership coordinating the participatory assessment (e.g., Chief of Staff or delegated authority) to appoint the members of the assessment team — the facilitators. Ideally, the team will be made up of at least four facilitators who have complementary expertise on human rights (or law), gender, human resources and the organization being assessed (military academy or other). Given the scope of the assessment, it is particularly important to ensure gender balance in the composition of the team. One facilitator should be appointed team leader as early as possible. This may be an appointment from above, or a team decision.

4.2 ALLOCATION OF TASKS

Tasks should be allocated among team members as soon as possible. Aspects to cover include designating who will attend meetings, who will coordinate to ensure individual tasks are completed (e.g., thematic prioritization[18]), who will review which documents during the desk review, who will conduct the different exercises, and who will draft and review (sections of) the report.

---

18 Thematic prioritization is a step that should be carried out by the human rights specialist since it is very unlikely that other team members (even if they have some knowledge of the subject) will have the necessary expertise to do robust work. Other team members will likely assist, providing the information necessary for the thematic prioritization.

Report drafting

While all tasks are important for the completion of the assessment, the main output will be the report. The different tasks related to drafting the report should be allocated as soon as possible, with clear deadlines for completing each step and rough agreement on the length. Table 2 provides a planning template. Sections should ideally be drafted by different team members in line with their particular expertise and a second team member should review each section before final clearance. Alternatively, the team could create an e-file into which facilitators put their information and one member of the assessment team drafts the whole report. (See more information about report drafting in Chapter 9).

Table 2: Report drafting matrix

Chapter/ Section	First Draft		Peer-Review		Compre-hensive Review	Final Report			
	Drafter	Deadline	Reviewer	Deadline	Reviewer	Deadline	Validator	Deadline

5. Once the Assessment Team is Established

The pre-assessment phase sets up the assessment and should start a minimum of three weeks before the assessment phase launches. In practice, planning is likely to have started much earlier, and much may already be in place in terms of timing, resources, identification and agreement of participants, and challenges or issues that might need urgent action, (e.g., recurring violations of human rights in specific activities, such as training).

5.1 CONTEXT RESEARCH

The facilitators should start researching the context as soon as possible (even before the team is formally established). Context research aims to identify, at least in outline, the subject and circumstances of the assessment — the Who? What? Why? When? and How? — and will give an overview of the:

- Structure/unit being assessed — its work, mandate, characteristics, activities (Who?)

- Aspects likely to be analysed in relation to the human rights of armed forces personnel and gender mainstreaming, including any specific events (What?)

- Reasons (Why?) that prompted the need for assessment of the Who? and the What?

- Time (When?) of any specific events and their possible impact on the assessment; and

- Possible/most appropriate assessment tools to deploy (How?).

Context research is typically based on open source materials or other easily available information. The assessment team may use a range of sources for context research, such as:

- Press and other media channels (incl. social media)

- Reports from NGOs, international organizations and civil society organizations

- Parliamentary or other state-led oversight publications

- Individual declarations or testimony

- Relevant jurisprudence

- Applicable laws and regulations

Facilitators should not engage in any behaviour that could potentially affect the trust and transparency of the relationship with structure/unit being assessed. Even where sensitive events are at stake (e.g., allegations of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)), team members should not ask for documentation or information that is not readily available to the organization concerned.

5.2 IDENTIFYING AND COORDINATING PARTICIPANTS

Selecting the participants can occur in different ways. One option is to launch a request for volunteers (e.g., through the commander of selected units or appointed focal points). Another option is when the Leadership picks the participants. The assessment should include as many participants as possible, but it may not be able to include everyone (e.g., for military units made up of dozens or even hundreds of individuals). In this case, a representative sample should be chosen. Selecting participants might take place before the assessment team is formed, but the selection should be verified by the assessment team to ensure the sample is representative and relevant to the scope and purpose of the assessment (e.g., gender-balanced composition, presence of individuals with family/care responsibilities, involvement of staff experienced in hardship duty stations, personnel that have recently undergone conscription training). In all scenarios, participants must give their informed consent to taking part. To that end, they must understand the kind of information that will be collected and the tools that will be used. They must also understand that their participation or refusal to take part would not have a negative effect on their careers. The difference between confidentiality and anonymity should also be explained where applicable.

Anonymity applies to the *source* of the information while confidentiality refers to the *content* of the information collected. Table 3 highlights how these concepts apply in the assessment process.

Table 3: Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity	Confidentiality
• Sources will not be identified to superiors, third parties or in the report. • There can be exceptions resulting from internal regulations (e.g., obligatory reporting of crimes).	• Information will be recorded in the final report if such information is necessary to meet the scope and purpose of the assessment. • Information shared 'off the record' should, in principle, be kept confidential. • In case of extremely sensitive data (e.g., on SGBV), facilitators should consider whether and in what terms to bring the matter to the attention of the competent entities for appropriate action (e.g., structure coordinating the assessment, human resources office, ombuds organizations, investigative bodies), provided all actions are taken with the informed consent of the survivor.

A focal point should be nominated for each of the military units or groups taking part in the assessment (e.g., administrative or support staff, operational staff, staff deployed in hardship duty stations) to ensure smooth communication and collaboration with the assessment team.[19] They will have to support the assessment in multiple ways, including by identifying the most important documents for the desk review, organizing logistics and dates for meetings and exercises for their unit/group, and mobilizing participants to prepare for the assessment. The assessment team should also consider appointing a focal point for women. Likewise, if minority groups are taking part in the assessment, or when one of the thematic areas (see Chapter 6) concerns minority rights (e.g., LGBTI, linguistic or religious minorities), it may be beneficial to nominate a specific focal point for said group(s). However, the final decision should be reached in consultation with the group(s). Focal points can be nominated by peer voting, or designation, or by order from above (ideally once the individual has volunteered). Focal points for minority groups should always be chosen by their peers. It is also very important to acknowledge intra-community differences; having focal points for minority groups only makes sense if enough leeway is given to ensure groups are not treated as monoliths. Again, each assigned focal point must agree to taking on the role.

---

19 These people must have sufficient seniority/authority to get things done – e.g., secure access to documents, organize and authorize participation etc., as well as the ability to work in both directions, up and down the hierarchy.

5.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPANTS

The assessment team should arrange a kick-off meeting as soon as possible with the Leadership to outline the process and planned methodology. The team should highlight those aspects where the assistance of the Leadership would be particularly relevant or even indispensable. This is especially important for document disclosure, which is necessary to ensure the quality and reliability of the assessment.

Transparency, information-sharing and fluid communication are key to establishing trust, cooperation and commitment. It is essential that the Leadership is actively supportive of and engaged in the assessment and the subject (i.e., human rights and gender). In parallel, the visible, active support of high-ranking officers will help to instil confidence down the chain of command. Meeting the Leadership is also a valuable opportunity to gather initial information that will assist in the thematic prioritization.

Likewise, the assessment team should meet the structure/unit focal point at the earliest opportunity, not only to establish good relations but also to ensure they fully understand the purpose of the exercise and their role.

The team should also have a 'town hall'/kick-off meeting with all of those from the structure/unit who will be taking part. This is a good opportunity to build trust and (start to) deconstruct any suspicions or bias among the audience. The meeting should not be long and should focus on introductions and explaining the purpose and nature of the assessment.

Communication should be open. The assessment team should emphasize their role as peers, not 'judges', highlighting that the assessment aims to improve working and living conditions in the future. The meeting could also be used to gather perceptions on existing challenges; these might help with thematic prioritization (adding to information already gathered from context research and the Leadership and focal point meetings). The assessment team should decide on the most effective approach for the meeting (e.g., direct questions, using ice breakers to collect views for organizational improvement). The team's earlier research on the dynamics, role, mandate and work of the structure/unit will be valuable for this task. It may be useful to prepare a factsheet/handout covering the key information.

5.4 DISCLOSURE OF MATERIALS FOR DESK REVIEW

On the basis of their exchanges with Leadership, command structures and participants, as well as their initial research, the assessment team needs to idenfity the types of documents (See Annexe 1) relevant for the desk review and how far back these should go (e.g., last two years). This

should enable the Leadership and delegated authorities to identify other documents that might be pertinent. The formalities of identifiying, disclosing and delivering the documents to the assessment team should be addressed promptly. Delays would probably affect both the substance and timeliness of the assessment. The assessment team should make clear that any document shared with them will be treated confidentially and solely for the purposes of the assessment.

Most documents should be made available to the assessment team at least two weeks before the assessment is due to start so that the team can make an initial assessment. To the extent possible, the team should indicate roughly how many documents they would like to receive to avoid becoming overwhelmed. This will depend upon the scale and complexity of the assessment and the resources available for desk review. The team decides how to share out the documents internally for review, ensuring distribution according to skills and experience.

Chapter 7.1 discusses in detail how to conduct the desk review, which will only take place once the documents have been evaluated and irrelevant documents excluded. Section 5.1 also gives more information on the types of documents that might be required.

5.5 SETTING THE SCOPE

Another important step in the planning phase is the thematic prioritization. The assessment team needs to identify the most important issues to be assessed, bearing in mind the specific context, organization and structure/unit. Prioritization at this stage will necessarily be flexible and might require adaptation as the team gathers more detailed knowledge. Chapter 6 describes the process in detail.

5.6 WORKPLANS

After completing steps 5.1–5.5, the assessment team should be in a position to draw up an overall workplan for the assessment and individual plans for each facilitator.

6. Thematic Prioritization Step-By-Step

The assessment team must choose which priority human rights issues will be covered in the assessment. The human rights universe is extensive. Assessing compliance with all human rights and their various manifestations would be very difficult, time-consuming and resource-heavy. In addition, there may be no data or indicators suggesting that, for the structure/unit in question, all human rights need assessing. Therefore, it is important to identify the key topics to be scrutinized. Thematic prioritization is a three-pronged exercise that looks at: (1) key human rights in the armed forces; (2) cross-cutting and specific areas in the armed forces; and (3) focus areas.

6.1 KEY HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ARMED FORCES

The table below provides guidance on the key human rights of armed forces personnel, highlighting how they might be called into question.[20] Assessment teams and military Leadership should consider which human rights are priorities in the countries/context where they are operating.

This document focuses on civil and political rights. However, economic, social and cultural rights are equally relevant for the armed forces, e.g., the right to health. Assessment teams may include economic, social and cultural rights in the analysis and final report, depending on what approach is deemed more appropriate in light of the specificities of the structure/unit under assessment.

---

20 For further details on the issue, see OSCE/ODIHR, Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel, Box 2.1, p. 28 and Box 3.1, p. 42; See also Annexe 4 for further guidance on examples and related indicators.

Table 4: Key human rights issues in the armed forces

Human Right	Examples of manifestation in the armed forces
Right to life	• Extreme abuse of conscripts • Not independent or ineffective investigations into deaths on military premises or during military service and training • Precautions and practical measures to prevent suicide by personnel battling psychological problems
Right to liberty and security	• Detention under military justice systems
Right to equality	• Discrimination in the treatment of women, religious and ethnic minorities, or on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation (e.g., discharge following pregnancy or on grounds of sexual orientation, limitations on promotion of women or deployment into combat zones) • Recruitment practices (e.g., mandatory/voluntary for men and women) • Temporary special measures[21] • Physical standards and tailored training at post • Equality in employment, occupation, and promotion (e.g., paternity and maternity benefits, pathway for career progression) • Equal remuneration • Measures to prevent gender-based violence and harassment
Right to a fair trial, hearing and remedy	• Court martial and military justice systems • Due process
Right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief	• Right of conscientious objection • Alternatives to military service • Restrictions on manifestation of religion (e.g., religious dress, dietary requirements, opportunities for religious worship, access to fellow members of religious community, proselytizing to fellow service personnel)

When examining the record of adherence to human rights principles in the structure/unit, the assessment team must include various context-specific considerations, including:[22]

---

21 Temporary special measures often refer to women but may also apply to minority or vulnerable groups. They amount to action aimed at improving the situation of beneficiaries towards substantive equality and expediting the necessary cultural, social, organizational and political changes to that effect. Temporary special measures may also specifically target remedy and compensation. See e.g., OSCE/ODIHR, Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel, pp. 175 and 184.

22 For an analysis of these subjects, see OSCE/ODIHR, Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel, p. 45.

- Situation of non-derogable rights;[23]

- Applicability and validity of derogations and reservations;[24] and

- Justifiability of restrictions on the exercise of human rights by service personnel.

> **Box 3: Restrictions**
>
> During thematic prioritization, the analysis of human rights and cross-cutting issues must not be disconnected from the specifics of and needs inherent in military functions. Most importantly, the fundamental requirement of political neutrality must not be underestimated, as it is central to ensuring the rule of law, the impartiality of the armed forces, the democratic process and the principle of separation of powers.
>
> This requires careful assessment of whether the restrictions on the exercise of human rights by military personnel are justified. The restrictions must comply with international standards, i.e., they must be based on military needs (not arbitrary), determined by law and be proportionate, necessary and non-discriminatory. Finally, the burden is on the state (and the military as an institution of the state) to demonstrate the necessity of human rights restrictions.

As noted in the Introduction, it is vital to acknowledge the influence of different realities in the adoption of specific measures, and the existence of different approaches to promoting respect for the human rights of service personnel. There is no 'one-solution-fits-all'. A more restrictive, less popular or convenient arrangement need not automatically mean a violation of human rights in the armed forces.

---

23 Non-derogable rights are those that admit no limitation or restriction, including in situations of national emergency, war or threat of war (such as the right not to be subjected to torture). See e.g., Article 4(2) ICCPR. Derogable rights are rights from which States may derogate in times of emergency that threaten the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed. Derogations must however (i) be strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, (ii) not be inconsistent with their other obligations under international law, and (iii) not involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin. See e.g. Article 4(3) ICCPR.

24 Reservation means "a unilateral statement, however phrased or named, made by a State, when signing, ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to a treaty, whereby it purports to exclude or to modify the legal effect of certain provisions of the treaty in their application to that State", Article 2(d) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

6.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND THOSE SPECIFIC TO THE ARMED FORCES

The facilitators should assess cross-cutting human rights issues as well as matters that are particular to the functioning and characteristics of the armed forces. As shown in the table below, the relationship between these cross-cutting issues and specific human rights may not always be obvious. Annexes 2 and 4 provide more detailed examples of cross-cutting issues and their indicators.

Table 5: Aspects in which cross-cutting human rights issues may be found

Aspect	Examples
Implementation, enforcement, accountability	• The regulatory framework — human rights-compliant and gender-responsive, with responsibilities, rights and limitations established by law and aligned with national and international standards • Those responsible for human rights violations effectively made accountable • Zero tolerance for gender-based violence and sexist behaviours • Reporting mechanisms • Independent and impartial enforcement and accountability systems, with due process guarantees
Gender	• Due consideration of the views, needs, experiences and skills (e.g., right to health covering reproductive dimension) of women, girls, men and boys • Vulnerabilities based on gender identity and sexual orientation • Gender-sensitive responses to existing challenges • Measures to challenge hyper-masculine cultures • Measures to tackle gendered hierarchies of power • Disaggregated data (at least by sex and age)

Non-discrimination	• Unfavourable treatment of specific groups (on grounds of 'race', colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status) with negative repercussions on the exercise of their rights (e.g., linguistic minorities prevented from communicating in their language[25] or disproportionately deployed to 'unfavourable' postings) • Direct and indirect discrimination (e.g., needs of parents who are both in the military[26])
Children in the armed forces	• Minimum age of recruitment • Demand for reliable proof of age prior to recruitment • Informed consent (child and legal guardians) • Standards of call-up campaigns • Limitation in duties and tasks assigned to under-18s. • Existence of procedures grounded in the 'best interest of the child' principle for under-18s, incorporating gendered differences • Tailored assistance to children of service personnel
Superior orders and command responsibility	• Illegal orders • Right and duty to disobey illegal orders • Whistle-blowers and protection against retaliation • Responsibility and accountability of commanders • Superior orders and command responsibility is incorporated into codes of conduct widely respected

25 The approach of armed forces to minority languages varies considerably between countries. Some recognize minority languages as official languages, others prohibit their use while on duty, still others follow intermediate positions. In this context, the text refers to the use of minority language in communication between service personnel, not as a command language. For further analysis of the subject see OSCE/ODIHR, Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel, Chapter 10, in particular Boxes 10.1, 10.9 and 10.10.

26 For example, making career progression dependent on specific activities or requirements that would make it impossible (or disproportionately onerous) for parents who are both in the military to meet, due to their childcare responsibilities. See also footnote 15.

Human rights and gender equality education	• Inclusion of human rights in training programmes of armed forces personnel • Inclusion of *OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* and *Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Compendium of Standards. Good Practices and Recommendations* in armed forces training programmes • Human rights in codes of conduct • Human rights training in military academies • Human rights training in accommodating the needs of minorities and vulnerable groups • Involvement of civilian experts in the design and delivery of human rights training • Unconscious bias training • Training on the right and duty to disobey illegal orders • The existence of an independent organization overseeing the content and quality of armed forces' human rights training • Service personnel's familiarity with and commitment to human rights • Human rights as a requirement for career progression
Leadership	• Role of the Leadership in promoting and respecting human rights and gender mainstreaming in the armed forces • Training the Leadership on human rights[27] • Existence of effective channels for accountability for Leadership personnel in breach of human rights

In the case of human rights and gender assessments, the cross-cutting issues of 'Gender' and 'Non-discrimination' (at the least between men and women) should be mandatory areas for assessment.

6.3 FOCUS AREAS

The third step in the thematic prioritization process is to rework the issues into a format that commanders will find easier to understand. Using the issues identified in 6.1 (key human rights) and 6.2 (cross-cutting issues), the assessment team will create comprehensive overarching classifications through an inductive process. This avoids overlap or duplication in the analysis and reporting, and should make it easier to process and present

---

27 It is not sufficient to train the leadership on what human rights are, what is witten in the books and in the treaties. They need to know how human rights manifest in practice, e.g., at the level of recruitment, budgeting or operations. Some of these áreas are not immediately associated with human rights. Human rights is not only about the right to life, liberty and other civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), which are as important as civil and political rights.

the information. In turn, this should make it easier for the structure/unit to absorb the results of the assessment and take appropriate action.

The table below gives examples of focus areas; these should be adapted and reviewed by the assessment team to reflect the specifics of the organization. The structure of the assessment report can follow the focus areas.

Table 6: Focus areas

Focus Area	Examples of content
Personnel and human resources	• Recruitment, promotion and retention • Deployment conditions • Remuneration • Benefits • Support for staff associations • Policies promoting work/life balance • Safe and impartial complaint mechanisms
Regulatory framework and organizatioronal policy	• International obligations • The national legal framework • Participation in Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans[28] • Stance on SGBV and human rights • Position on discrimination • Valorization of different skills, knowledge and experience • Work/life balance • Role and engagement of the Leadership • Criteria for engagement with communities and civil society organizations • Vocabulary/terminology
Planning and operations	• Gender-sensitive conditions and logistics of deployment (e.g., equipment, accommodation, medical services) • Conditions for optimizing the exercise of human rights by deployed staff (e.g., facilitating voting) • A gender- and human rights-based approach to planning and operations • Demographic and cognitive diversity[29]

---

28   United Nations States Parties hold the primary responsibility for the achievement of gender equality and fulfilment of human rights. In a presidential statement in 2004, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) encouraged national-level implementation of UNSCR 1325, the landmark resolution of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, including through National Action Plans (NAP) to implement the four pillars of the resolution. See 1325 National Action Plans – An initiative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

29   By demographic diversity it is meant diversity in terms of the qualities or characteristics of a group (e.g., age, 'race', gender, education). By cognitive diversity it is meant the inclusion of people

Finance and budgeting	• Resources allocated to human rights and gender activities/initiatives • Expertise on gender-responsive budgeting • Gender-responsive budgeting and procurement techniques • Human rights record of contractors as a condition for the award of contracts
Enforcement, accountability and oversight	• Correspondence between regulatory protection and practice/violations • Characteristics of complaint channels • Independent investigations into violations • Sanctions • Effective remedies • Legal and administrative procedures to protect the human rights of military personnel • Effective responsibility of commanders for illegal orders • Commanders' approach in making subordinates accountable for violations • Due process guarantees in military justice systems • Existence of ombuds institutions • Involvement of civil society organizations (including women's organizations) in oversight • International compliance mechanisms • Regular self-assessment, internal review, and external auditing
Education and training	• Content of training • Military academy training curricula • Mission-specific human rights and gender training • Human rights and gender expertise as a requisite for promotion, role progression, deployment • Training the Leadership in human rights and gender • Training on the right and duty not to follow illegal orders

Given that these assessments are looking specifically at gender and human rights, 'Personnel and human resources' and 'Regulatory framework and organizational policy' should be among the selected focus areas. Likewise, 'Education and training' will likely require scrutiny; it should be mandatory for military academies.

---

who have different problem-solving skills, who offer different perspectives because they have different experiences and backgrounds. Some people will be more focused on achieving results as soon as possible, others will emphasize team strengthening first as a sine qua non for military effectiveness.

As the facilitators move through the assessment, they should keep these focus areas in mind. All the information gathered during the assessment will be used to address these areas directly in the report.

> **Box 4: Sorting focus areas**
>
> Some topics might fit into more than one focus area (e.g., flexible work arrangements might fall under the scope of 'Personnel and human resources' and 'Organizational policy'. 'Valorization of different skills, knowledge and experience' might be part of 'Organizational policy' or 'Planning and operations'). When deciding where to place each topic, the assessment team will have to analyse the information in terms of relevance and pertinence to different focus areas.
>
> Some focus areas could be subsumed into others. For instance, 'Planning and operations' could be integrated into 'Personnel and human resources' and 'Regulatory framework and organizational policy'. However, it is advisable to focus on the relevance of the topic to the work of the structure/unit and/or to the assessment. For example, 'Planning and operations' might be particularly important for recurring deployments and field operations, where issues such as gender equality, gender-sensitive policies in the field, freedom of expression, voting rights or respect for private life might be worth special attention. 'Regulatory framework and organizational policy' should address the role of the Leadership, both 'on paper' and in practice.

At this stage, the thematic prioritization is necessarily flexible as it based only on the initial information available to the assessment team (context research, initial meetings, initial document/desk review). The selection may need to be adjusted if new topics emerge .

6.4 SUMMARY

Facilitators should take the following steps to carry out the thematic prioritization:

- Identify key human rights, cross-cutting and specific issues in the armed forces that are most pressing for the assessment, based on factual information gathered during (i) the preparatory research for the assessment; (ii) the initial desk research; and (iii) meetings with the Leadership, focal points and participants. Facilitators are encouraged to use the guiding questions on human rights and gender in the armed forces (Annexe 4).

- Determine the priority focus areas from the selected issues.

Thematic prioritization in the planning phase is necessarily flexible and focus areas may need to be revised as the assessment progresses.

Figure 4: Determining focus areas

HR and gender indicative questions (Annexe 4)

FLEXIBILITY

Initial desk review

Preparatory research

Meetings with leadership, focal points, participants

KEY HUMAN RIGHTS AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES IN ARMED FORCES → **FOCUS AREAS**
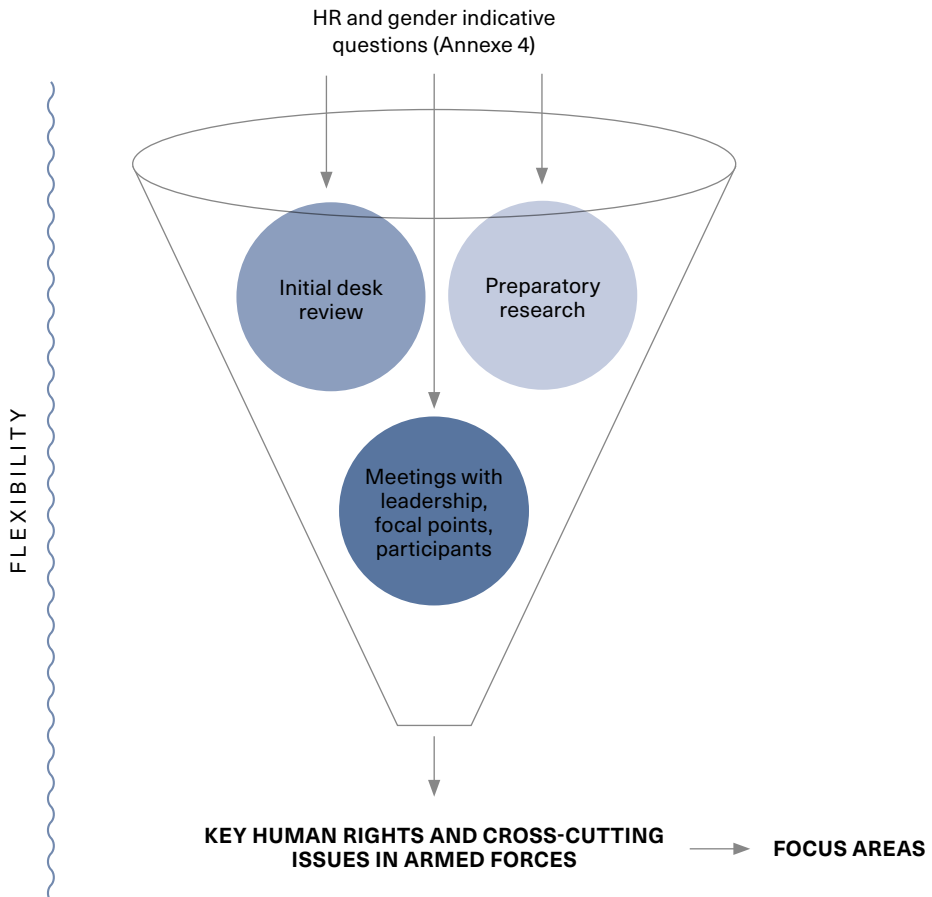
6.5 PREPARING WORK PLANS

Following the various steps addressed above, the assessment team will be in a position to draw up a workplan regarding each of the team members and for the overall assessment. The tasks, timelines and outputs should be clearly defined.

PART 2

ASSESSMENT PHASE

Once pre-assessment is complete, the assessment can be initiated. This will consist of a series of activities and exercises intended to collect both objective and subjective information. While the detailed desk review will be the main source of objective data, the perceptions, opinions, needs and vision of the participants will be collected and evaluated through different tools, such as questionnaires and focus groups. Depending on certain variables (e.g., allocated resources, circumstances specific to the assessment, characteristics of the team of facilitators), workshops may also be organized; they are a particularly good way to link critical learning with effective change, empowerment and ownership. The self-assessment methodology is grounded in team building, information-sharing, reflection, social identification[30] and engagement, and these processes are, in turn, essential for fostering collective ownership, capacity and responsibility that promotes solid change. While holding workshops is recommended, it is not a compulsory part of the assessment methodology.

Figure 5: Assessment phase

---
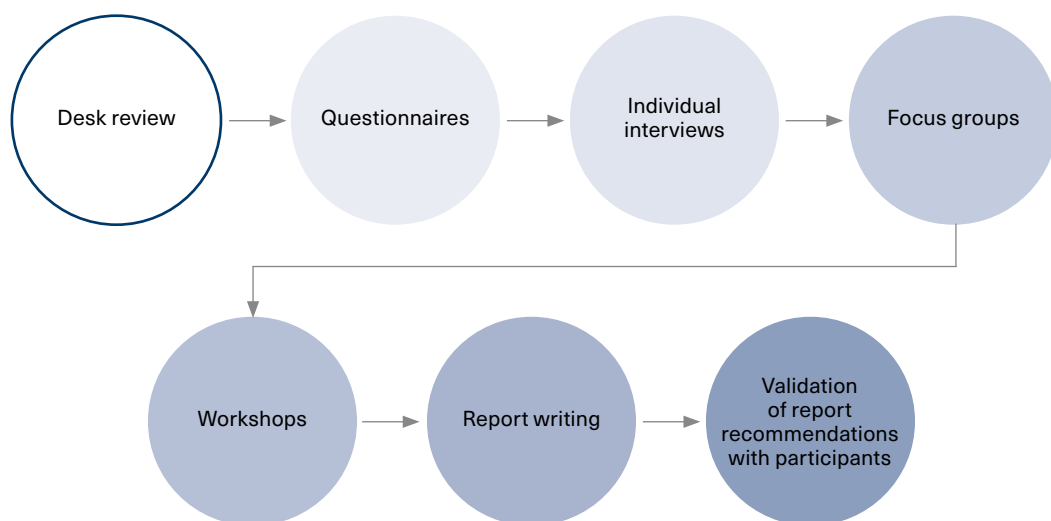
30 The process by which individuals identify themselves with each other and with the group to which they belong, e.g., citizens in uniform, service personnel entitled to specific rights, individuals that have benefits or could benefit from entitlements they were not aware of or did not understand before.

7. Assessment Tools

7.1 DESK REVIEW

The desk review is the first step of any human rights and gender assessment and subsequent steps will largely be based on its results, setting the context for the facilitators. It is essential that it is well planned and that sufficient time is allowed to conduct it properly. Facilitators should understand the legal framework the military operates under and this, together with the size and scope of the assessment, should inform the depth of the desk review.

If looking at a country's entire armed forces, then working groups of specialists may be required to review blocks of documents (e.g., legal, strategy, infrastructure, finance, Human Resources). For assessments of smaller structures/units, facilitators will need to decide which legislative and strategic documents are relevant at this level (e.g. if provisions of the Law on Service in the Armed Forces include provisions on human rights and discrimination).

Document selection should be coordinated with the Assessment Focal Point (AFP). It is recommended to review documents covering the previous three to five years in order to capture recent trends. The quality of documents available will also depend on the context, so the facilitators should decide what timeframe they wish to cover. Facilitators should be aware that they may need to review dozens of documents to get a full picture of the overall situation. Some human rights aspects may require lengthy analysis. If there is insufficient time and resources to fully address certain aspects, these should be highlighted for further analysis in the assessment report for further analysis. The facilitators should aim to get the optimal number of documents; this could range from 40-50 to 100-150 documents, depending upon the size and scope of the assessment.

Document selection

Different sets of documents should be selected[31] for assessment and they should be organized into categories (e.g., administrative, technical/substantive, informative and related to cooperation[32]). Annexes 1 and 2 respectively present a detailed list of suggested documents and a range of criteria and indicators to help in selection. Documents of interest may include information on, for example:

- The ratio of women to men by position, rank, age, and decision-making powers;

- Broader data on diversity in the armed forces, where available, such as ethnicity or religion;[33]

- Information about resources allocated for, and applied to human rights and gender-related work;[34]

- Research documents and substantive reports addressing human rights and gender issues;

- Training materials in use;

- Codes of conduct or internal guidelines that touch upon human rights matters (e.g., ill-treatment, social media use, political affiliation);

- The compliance of public relations materials with human rights standards and use of gender-sensitive language and images (e.g., recruitment videos) and media coverage;

- Data on sexual abuse, harassment, or completed/ongoing disciplinary procedures, if available; and

- Engagement with civil society and human rights and gender champions.

The documents may be programmatic or conceptual in nature or specific to gender equality and human rights. The team does not need to focus only on those documents specifically related to human rights and gender issues. It is equally important to include documents that do not directly address human rights and gender issues, such as budgets, training materials, HR

---

31 Facilitators and Assessment Focal Points/Leadership should discuss where and how to find the necessary documents — internal databases, external sources (e.g., UN Universal Periodic Review), internet searches, HR files, regulations etc.

32 Categories proposed in ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, pp. 37-41.

33 It should be noted that revealing religious affiliation in the context of any data gathering activity should always be voluntary.

34 There are often formal departments/positions responsible for dealing with these subjects and, in some militaries, there are informal organizations, such as groups on social media and other grass-roots support networks.

policies etc. (see Annexes 1 and 2); these can provide valuable information on organizational accomplishments and necessary changes.[35]

Documents that form part of the regulatory framework — such as reports, relevant laws and normative acts, other policies and reports on their implementation — should also be assessed, along with any previous assessments and recommendations. Research, technical cooperation documents and NGO reports should also provide valuable information on the organization's approaches to gender and human rights.

Reports drafted by other organizations should be considered, together alongside reports by international NGOs, handbooks, procedures, the organization's own website and other relevant websites, media articles and reports. The aim is to obtain more information on external perceptions of the organization's performance in the area of human rights and gender balance/equality. For example, reports issued by the ombudsperson, other national human rights institutions and equality bodies and international human rights monitoring bodies (such as concluding observations and recommendations) may also be included in the document list.

There will be specific aspects to a human rights and gender assessment in the defence and military context and, more generally, in the context of security sector reform and governance. Some documents and policies/procedures related to national security issues and defence may fall within the scope of national legislation on secrecy and cannot be easily disclosed to the facilitators. In some cases, they may be given access to redacted versions that exclude the most sensitive parts of the information.

Allocation among team members

The team should sort the documents according to their relevance (see Annexe 3) and they should be in agreement on how to conduct the desk review. One approach could be to group the documents into 'concept' documents (e.g., legislation, internal and external reports on human rights and gender equality) and more specific, human rights- and gender-related documents, with different parts of the team working on each. They could also be grouped by assessment areas, (e.g., legal, budget allocation, training, logistics, personnel) and allocated according to the expertise and experience of the team members.

It is strongly recommended to have at least one legal expert in the assessment team (see Section 4.1) who will be responsible for reviewing the relevant legal and policy documents (including the laws and bylaws). The presence of a gender expert is also highly recommended.

---

35 ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 43.

The aim of the desk review is to assess whether the documents are compatible with human rights laws and accepted international standards and to what extent they take into account gender equality. This will highlight gaps in human rights and gender mainstreaming. While team members should review their assigned documents, the desk review remains a collective effort, and the team should coordinate and discuss their activities. They should organize their reflections and findings in such a way that it is possible to include their summaries and notes as well as the main findings in the relevant sections of the draft assessment report. Annexe 3 contains a template for recording findings.

Assessing the level of inclusion of gender perspectives[36]

One of the main criteria to assess is the *gender sensitivity* of the documents. Reviewers should assess whether relevant issues are covered and acknowledged, including:

- Sexual and gender-based harassment and violence

- Maternity and paternity policies and regulations

- Gender perspectives and equality in staff recruitment, promotion, retention and development

- Gender analysis in deployment and training plans

- Speeches by senior management highlighting issues such as gender equality or condemning discrimination and SGBV

Box 5: Assessing gender sensitivity

Resolution (2016) 2120[37] of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on *Women in the armed forces: promoting equality, putting an end to a gender-based violence* identified three key concerns:

- Recruitment and career management for members of the armed forces;

- Creating a climate conducive to gender equality within the armed forces; and

- Combating gender-based violence in the armed forces.

---

36 Material drawn from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators on gender sensitivity, p. 45.
37 Women in the armed forces: promoting equality, putting an end to gender-based violence, Council of Europe, Resolution 2020 (2016), 21 June 2016.

Reviewers should also consider how and why certain issues affect staff of different genders in different ways and what has been and should be done to address the issue. It is important to look not only at the content, but also the style and language used.

Another important area is the imagery used; do they reflect respect for human rights, diversity and gender equality? The diversity of the society should be reflected, and women should be shown as equal to men in meeting the highest professional standards in their everyday work in the military. Images should deliver a message counter to any form of discrimination or stereotyping. At the same time, the text and images should emphasize the value of equality and equal access to opportunities in the military. It is also important to assess to what extent the documents use *gender-responsive language* in different contexts.

Box 6: Gender-responsive language[38]

Gender-responsive or inclusive language should be used throughout all relevant documents.

- Gender-responsive language refers to both women and men.
- Precise terms should be used when describing groups and situations in which one gender is over-represented (such as women employed in the informal economy or other subgroups of disadvantaged women).
- Using gender-blind terms should be avoided, as should any sexist terms or language.
- In general, non-discriminatory language should be used.
- Gender should be made visible when it is relevant for communication and not be highlighted when it is not relevant for communication.
- Default use of the masculine form should be avoided.

For further information see also the United Nations Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English and accompanying Toolbox on how to use gender-inclusive language in English.

Assessing compatibility with human rights standards

To assess the compatibility of the organizational and legal framework and the organization's practices with human rights standards, reviewers should start by looking at the relevant laws and the policy documents of the military organization.

It is important to be clear about the scope of the assessment from the human rights perspective and the broader areas of the organizational and legal framework on which the assessment will mainly focus. For example, the assessment may be looking at military recruitment and/or draft, in-service implementation of the fundamental rights of service personnel and disciplinary and criminal liability procedures. It may also cover internal service regulations and look at their compatibility with human rights. A broader assessment of organizational practice should also analyse implementation, as measures are usually required that go beyond the formal removal of barriers to women's and minorities' access to military service.

Handling the material

It is crucial to ensure that the documents are *well organized* and *accessible* to all team members. The best way to organize the data is for the assessment team coordinator to create a reference list. An annotated list of all source material should structure the data by respective focus areas and include available links for easy accessibility.

Secondary data should also be collected and analysed. This includes publicly available information and data related to human rights performance and gender-responsiveness of different defence and military organizations.

With this approach, the desk review can collect and analyse *both quantitative and qualitative data*. While what appears in the documents may differ (sometimes significantly) from the day-to-day reality, analysing this data should give the assessment team the first indications of how effectively individual human rights are implemented and to what extent gender balance and an inclusive working environment are embedded within the organization.

7.2 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Individual interviews are an important and integral part of the entire participatory assessment process. During and following the interviews, the assessment team will have the chance to verify the insights and results of the desk review and obtain additional information to fill in the gaps

or clarify certain issues that have arisen in the desk review process and remained open. Moreover, through the interviews the assessment team will collect valuable new information on the organizational practices related to human rights and gender equality.

The schedule should be coordinated with the AFP and focal points in specific structures/units. The assessment team should prepare a list of those whom they would like to interview for approval by the Leadership. The ultimate number and range of interviews will depend on the size of the organization and the available time.

7.2.1 ENSURING INCLUSIVENESS

The assessment team should aim for a complete and balanced picture of the organization's performance in the field of human rights and gender equality, covering not only specific areas for improvement but also the organization's achievements. Interviewees should be selected from different parts of the structure/unit.

It is important to interview senior leadership and commanders who are responsible for different areas of the organization's work. They should be able to provide valuable information and insights and may have several recommendations on what steps need to be taken to improve the situation. Furthermore, technical and support staff should also be interviewed (on the condition of anonymity, if necessary). They may provide information that senior management is not familiar with and contribute a great deal to the collection of information on organizational culture.

It is important that women service personnel from different minorities or vulnerable groups are also interviewed. This can be discussed in advance with the AFP so that they are permitted to participate.

7.2.2 DEVELOPING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions should be prepared in advance. The desk review will help identify specific areas where the assessment team needs more information. The team members can plan and formulate the interview questions accordingly.

Guiding questions (see Annexe 4) related to the focus areas of the assessment can also be used to help to formulate interview questions. Those provided in the annexe are indicative, and the facilitators should choose the most relevant and adapt them or formulate new questions as required.

While not all of the guiding questions will likely need to be addressed, the assessment team should develop a set of core standard questions that address each of the priority areas for the assessment; the core questions should reflect the thematic prioritization. There should also be questions aimed at getting information on how a particular situation affects individuals (women and men) differently. In general, facilitators should formulate the questions in a way that allows the interviewees to talk about the issues and give specific (and focused) answers.

7.2.3 CREATING A CLIMATE OF TRUST

One of the main tasks of the assessment team, and a precondition for successful interviewing, is to create a climate of trust that allows the facilitators to have an open dialogue and obtain the required information. To achieve this, it is crucial to discuss and clarify from the outset the rules on anonymity and confidentiality of information (see Table 3). Guarantees should be given to all interviewees that their anonymity will be preserved by not including their name, rank and the position in the final report, as well as by not discussing or reporting on specific cases.[39]

Not all the information obtained during interviews can be included in the final report. This applies both to sensitive information and information shared on condition of confidentiality (although this has its limitations: there are some cases where specific information cannot lawfully be kept confidential, e.g., in cases of abuse or other serious offences).

Assurances should be given that the data will only be used in an aggregated form (protecting the interviewee's anonymity). This is crucial for having an open conversation and should create a comfortable environment. The interviewer can start with some warm-up questions to further build a comfortable interview environment.[40]

7.2.4 HOW TO RUN INTERVIEWS

Interviews should be carefully prepared both in terms of content and logistics. The AFP should be engaged well in advance to ensure that suit-

---

39 Facilitators will need to take care to provide true anonymity in their reporting where, for example, the experiences of a woman staff member could be identified by the fact that she is the only woman in such a role.

40 Building the climate of trust starts at the launch of the whole assessment process and depends upon the assessment team's availability and skill in engaging with the unit. If participants understand the purpose of the assessment, are invested in the process and like the assessment team, then the quality of the information obtained from the interviews (and other forms of face-to-face engagement) should be good.

able venues are available and that other preparations are in place (e.g., approvals, accessibility, materials, catering).

The facilitators should agree in advance what type of interviews they plan to conduct, including what **types of interview questions** they will use, and **in what sequence.** They should, however, leave some room for flexibility. Circumstances may change and the interviewers may need to adapt their approach during the interview. They may also need to ask some clarifying questions, if the interviewee gives answers that are not clear or require further explanation. Any inconsistences in answers should be recognized, noted and probed further if appropriate. If the interviewee is unable to answer a question, they may be willing to give the names of other colleagues who may have an answer (*snowballing*).

The facilitator starts the interview with a short introduction, outlining the objectives of the assessment (its timeframe, structure and participants) and explaining how the interview will run (its format, structure and duration). The interviewee should be able to withdraw their consent before the interview begins if they do not agree with the essential elements of the interview process.

Facilitators should use a mixture of open and closed questions to obtain a balanced picture. They should use *open, neutral questions* to engage the interviewee, and a mixture of *open guided*, *closed neutral* and *closed guided questions* thereafter. It is important to develop strategies to minimize the risk of *bias* that could come from incorrect information being given than could affect the results of the assessment. The facilitators should be aware that such bias can occur and that it can be introduced both by the facilitators as well as the interviewee.

The most important questions should be asked in the first 20-30 minutes of the interview and no interview should take longer than one hour.

<div style="background-color:#c9cfe0; padding:1em;">

Box 7: Type and sequence of interview questions

Question types:

- *Open neutral questions* give respondents the chance to provide some background information and to elaborate on a wide range of related issues; the answer would not be limited to 'yes' or 'no'.

    E.g., How does your structure/unit ensure career advancement of women and men in the armed forces?

</div>

- *Open guided questions* may help to probe further and get more specific information on different aspects of the main interview topic.

    E.g., Are gender perspectives incorporated in the human resources development policies?

- *Closed neutral questions* are helpful for obtaining more specific information; the answers would be relatively short, and they may also be limited to a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

    E.g., Are there any specific barriers to women's advancement in the air force?

- *Closed guided questions* aim at getting a definitive answer to a question.

    E.g., Do you think it is necessary to update the curriculum at the military academy to bring it in line with human rights standards and gender equality?

Sequencing:

The interview should start with an open question or two about less controversial issues to put the interviewee at ease and get them talking (warm-up questions). The interview should close with a question which leaves the interviewee space for further reflection and elaboration. They should be encouraged to provide additional information or share some recommendations on further steps to be taken.

While developing rapport and creating a relaxed environment is important for building an atmosphere of trust and openness, it is equally important to remain focused and intervene if the interviewee strays from one topic to another (unrelated issues). Appropriate interviewing techniques should be used to achieve this and keep the interviewee engaged; it may become necessary to ask more specific, short questions that require a concise answer, or some informal questions about the interviewee's work and experiences. The facilitators should use their communication skills and be a good listener. Other forms of non-verbal communication, such as body language, should also be observed and noted by the facilitators.

Anonymized quotes can be included in the assessment report, but great care must be taken that they cannot be traced back to the interviewee and they must provide written consent to the use of their quote in the text. Recommendations for further improvements made by interviewees can also be included in the text, but should also be anonymous.

It is recommended that two facilitators conduct the interviews, with one responsible for taking notes. It is essential to take good notes and recording the interview can also be considered if approved by the Leadership and with the interviewee's prior consent. The facilitators should write up and summarize the information immediately after the interview while it is still fresh in their minds. If possible, they should also try to verify the information.

All team members should apply the same approach to conducting the interviews so that the responses can be structured and analysed easily, and the team should plan enough time to *analyse the interview results*. One of the team's central tasks is to map the diversity of views and organize the information according to the agreed focus areas. This will enable the team to analyse the interview transcripts and integrate the findings into the assessment report.

Table 7: Preparing and conducting one-on-one interviews

Preparation	Conducting individual interviews	After the interview
• Coordinate with the focal point and obtain necessary approvals • Decide on the type of interview • Determine the focus, topics to be addressed in questions • Think about the language/terminology you will use to make sure it works for the interviewees. • Determine the types and sequence of questions	• Create a climate of trust with ice-breaking small talk and warm-up questions • Explain your approach towards confidentiality • Give a short introduction on the interview format, agenda, timing, next steps • Start with less sensitive questions before moving to more controversial issues • Always ask the most important questions in the first half of the interview • Ask clarifying questions, if necessary • Listen carefully and maintain eye contact, show your interest in the answers	• Review and complete your notes, and add more information obtained from your interlocutors after the interview • Analyse the data and discuss it with your assessment team colleagues • Structure the answers and accompanying information around the focus/priority areas of the assessment • Include this material in the draft report

- Ensure a set of guiding rules for all structured and semi-structured individual interviews; interview guidance may prove especially useful in case of a standardized open-ended interview
- Prepare an inclusive interview process, decide on the number and type of employees to be interviewed
- Determine in advance how you handle the interviewee's confidentiality

- Stay focused and prevent the interviewee from straying unnecessarily from one topic to another, remain in control of the interview
- Try to get a balanced picture by asking questions about strengths and weaknesses, positives and negatives
- Make sure your questions are as clear as possible while giving the interviewee the chance to reflect and elaborate
- Ask questions in a neutral manner
- Be neutral and non-judgmental to be able to fully appreciate the answers given by the respondent
- Stay focused and engaged while attentively listening to the respondent; use your verbal and non-verbal communication skills positively to keep the respondent engaged and open for communication
- Take notes on key points and add more information later
- Close the interview by explaining the next steps in the human rights and gender assessment
- Ask a closing question to allow the respondent to provide more information
- Ask if they would like to recommend other colleagues who may be able to provide more details on specific issues

7.3 FOCUS GROUPS

7.3.1 WHY USE A FOCUS GROUP?

Focus groups may include 10 or 15 people from one unit, department or structure (e.g Gender Focal Points, Persons of Trust). A facilitator will moderate the focus groups and encourage participants to express their point of view and take an active part in the discussions. These groups can be a useful tool in human rights and gender assessment to obtain additional, in-depth information on organizational practices, perceptions and culture.

Group dynamics in focus groups may provide valuable insights on the work environment and can motivate participants to express points of view that they would not express in individual interviews, stimulating critical thinking among all participants.

As a rule, focus groups are used for qualitative data collection and should be complementary to other data collection methods.

7.3.2 PREPARATION FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups need to be planned and prepared well in advance, in close cooperation with the AFP, who will also be responsible for arranging approvals, venues and other logistics.

The facilitators should be well prepared. They must decide upon the composition and size of any focus groups. In order to do this, they need to know what information they hope to get, who from and for what purpose; e.g., do they want qualitative information to explain the quantitative data already collected? All the information obtained through focus groups should complement the data collected via other means.

When preparing methods and questions, facilitators should remember that different parts of the military may have their own specific experiences and perceptions about human rights and gender.

7.3.3 CONDUCTING A FOCUS GROUP

A facilitator should guide the focus group and will be responsible for coordinating all the activities. If discussed and agreed upon in advance, the meeting can be recorded and comprehensive notes should be taken. The notetaker should prepare a detailed protocol for the focus group discussion, including, for example, explanation of purpose, presentations,

clarification of informed consent and free participation, clarification of purpose, duration, management of expectations and key questions. Focus group discussions should be in person and not online. The facilitator should use appropriate interviewing techniques and be able to give direction and focus to the discussion. Facilitators should be prepared to stop any intimidation that might prevent anyone expressing their views, especially if members of minority groups are present.

Before starting, all participants should be informed about the objectives, structure and duration and other background information. The rules that apply to individual interviews, e.g., on confidentiality and anonymity, the type of questions to be asked, also apply to focus groups. It is important to establish the norms and common perceptions of the group; at the same time, the facilitators should map the diversity of views on different topics and particularly on controversial issues. All this information should be included in the focus group protocol for further consideration by the assessment team.

A typical focus group discussion will last 60 to 90 minutes.

7.3.4 AFTER A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Following a focus group discussion, the notes should be supplemented and structured, and the assessment team should hold a debrief to analyse the data and to exchange information from different focus groups to try to find commonalities and differences. While doing so, keep in mind that groups may have different perceptions and approaches; the key findings within one group may not necessarily reflect those of other groups. For example, the views of support staff and management may diverge, but different units or departments may also have different practices and sub-cultures.

Focus groups give important indications about group norms and practices, less so about individual values and experiences. This does not mean that the facilitators should ignore any strong individual views that differ significantly from the rest of the group. All the different opinions need to be reflected in the notes and analysis.

Box 8: Setting the agenda for focus group discussions — guiding questions

1. **Introduction**

- What are the objectives of the exercise?

- How do we proceed?

- Other organizational issues.

- Introducing participants and their work; how is it related to human rights and gender?

- Providing an overview of the main themes to be addressed and reviewed during the focus group discussion.

2. **Human rights and gender balance as part of organizational culture**

- What are the prevailing gender related practices and norms at your structure/unit?

- Do you directly address those issues?

- Are people of one gender over-represented? How are members of minority groups treated?

- The group will reflect on the current practice and culture of the organization with respect to human rights and gender.

- See Annexe 4 for guiding questions on human rights and gender in the armed forces (some of the questions can be explored at this stage).

3. **Brainstorming and recommendations for future improvements**

- What areas need to be improved with respect to human rights and gender?

- What changes need to be made to improve the overall situation?

- The group should seek consensus and provide a set of recommendations.

4. **Conclusion**

- Final remarks and reflections; summary of key findings.

7.4 QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires are very useful data gathering tools and they can be a good way of supplementing data gathered by other methods and confirming or disproving data or perceptions collected e.g. in interviews.

The assessment team should discuss what type of questionnaire they will choose and how to deliver it to the target group. The Leadership will need to authorize the questionnaire format (written/online), who will take part and the content.

It is important that facilitators are familiar with the context in which they are working. This will help them to design a targeted questionnaire and work more efficiently. The questionnaire should be adapted so that participants of all ranks and profiles can easily understand and respond to questions. Facilitators are encouraged to use the questionnaires in the annexes and adapt them as necessary. Sensitive and/or difficult questions should not be asked at the very beginning and all the data/information should be treated with due care; the rules on confidentiality and anonymity should be clearly set out and communicated to the survey participants. Specific, pre-agreed procedures should be in place for communicating and using the questionnaire to ensure anonymity.

8. Workshops[41]

Objectives and approach

After the desk review and interview phase is completed, workshops are a useful way to obtain additional information, promote team spirit and critical reflection, and promote change in the prevailing organizational culture. If workshops are held, then focus groups may not be necessary. When deciding on the approach, the assessment team should bear in mind that workshops are highly recommended as they usually allow for more in-depth analysis and reflection than focus group discussions.

An **integrated approach** that invites as many personnel as possible is recommended, in order to map the full range of views, to support effective collaboration and enhance the feeling within the structure/unit that the assessment is a shared process.

Looking at the structure, hierarchy and organizational culture, it may be necessary to divide command, administrative, technical and support staff into different groups. In the armed forces, in particular, this may be useful, because junior staff may be reluctant to express their opinions openly in front of their superiors. If the team feels it is best to combine different groups in one workshop, there are strategies they can use to ensure an open exchange of information, e.g., by dividing people into subgroups based on their functions, or assigning one person to ensure that everyone's views are heard and recorded. This can bring additional benefits: the workshop may build bridges and sensitize others to different views, which may, in turn, help the adoption of the final recommendations.[42]

A range of workshop **exercises** are discussed below. The assessment team should decide which exercises are most appropriate and tailor them accordingly to meet the composition and requirements of the group.

---

41 Both the structure and content of this chapter draw extensively on ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators.
42 ODIHR's training for assessment facilitators includes some of the strategies to allow this bridging to take place without undermining any of the people involved.

It is important to note that workshops are not typical capacity-building events on human rights and gender equality. Their primary purpose is to obtain additional, substantive information on the priority areas of the assessment; information to be included in the assessment report and recommendations. That said, the workshops will also be a form of training/awareness-raising, which, while not the primary objective, is a welcome bonus benefit.

Preparation and work allocation

The workshops should be carefully planned. At the planning and preparation stage, the facilitators should acquire a good understanding of the organization and its units that are involved in the assessment process. Tasks should be divided among members of the assessment team by qualifications and experience; the facilitator with the greatest experience in running workshops should lead, with others assisting them. There may be co-facilitators whose main responsibility will be to contribute to the exercises with their expertise and skills. Another team member should be assigned to take notes. These should not only summarise the discussions and key findings, but also capture the group dynamics during the workshop; this can be very informative and helpful in the overall evaluation and assessment process. Tasks can be rotated among the team members. A workshop agenda should be drafted and distributed in advance to help the team prepare.

During the workshop

The lead facilitators are primarily responsible for creating an open and stimulating environment for all participants and motivating them to take an active part in the discussions and share their thoughts, concerns and recommendations. The workshop structure should, therefore, not be too formalized and allow for some creative flexibility. This encourages open interaction and dialogue between the members of the group.

The diversity of the participants should be considered when the facilitator chooses and tailors certain workshop techniques to the needs of the audience. Personality, gender and hierarchy issues may play an important role in the military context. One of the facilitators' roles is to minimize the impact of such issues as much as possible.

The facilitator should encourage the discussion of **different viewpoints**. They should use their communication skills and experience to help group members to find consensus and seek common solutions. An open and respectful workshop environment will allow for the diversity of views and approaches. The facilitator plays a crucial role in creating and maintaining this environment, while keeping in mind the objective to obtain

additional information and insights that would complement the findings of the assessment so far.

To make this process more **inclusive**, the facilitator may invite some group members who are otherwise not actively taking part in the discussion to share their reflections and comments. They must ensure that different perspectives — including those of women, minorities and others — are represented and discussed. In general, the facilitator should encourage each participant to play an active part.

Furthermore, the facilitator should look out for any stereotypical or discriminatory behaviour and ensure that the workshop is based on mutual respect between all participants. At the start of the workshop, they should be explicit that any discriminatory or disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated.

Exercises

The workshop facilitator can use different exercises to obtain information and get all participants to interact in finding common solutions and approaches towards human rights and gender issues. Which exercises are chosen will largely depend on the objectives, the size and profile of the audience, and also on the time available and the facilitators' preferences. A two-day assessment workshop would not allow for many exercises to be conducted, particularly if there is a large number of participants (10+).

This guide focuses on the following core exercises, but facilitators may also include other exercises they have found to be effective in other settings. Each exercise is described in more detail below.

- **Historical timeline**

- **Human rights and gender knowledge and awareness**

- **Hofstede's onion/organizational culture**

- **SWOT analysis**

- **Human rights equation**

- **Analysis of impediments to gender equality**

- **Ideal organization**

- **After Action Review**

The **sequence of the exercises** will in principle be determined by the facilitator. Table 8 suggests a possible flow for the workshop.

In this model,[43] after the introduction and an icebreaker exercise, the facilitator will use a historical timeline exercise to set the context for subsequent discussions. Then they would use Hofstede's onion to stimulate more collective reflection on the organizational culture, or SWOT analysis to identify the organizations' strengths and weaknesses in enhancing a gender-responsive and human rights-compliant work culture. Analysis of the impediments to gender equality is used to identify and discuss the challenges service personnel face in their enjoyment of fundamental rights and in creating a healthy gender balance within the organization. The facilitator then finishes with the Ideal organization exercise and an After Action Review, which is forward-looking and helps group members to bridge the differences between the current situation within their organization and an ideal organization model.

It is not mandatory to use all the exercises. The facilitators must ultimately decide which exercises meet the needs of each organization and how they can or should be adapted.

Table 8: Incorporating exercises into your workshop agenda (example)

Day 1	
09:00 – 09:45	Introduction and Icebreaker
09:45-10:45	Historical timeline
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-13:00	Human rights and gender knowledge and awareness
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:00	Hofstede's onion / organizational culture
15:00-15:15	Break
15:15-16:30	Practical exercises in human rights and gender
16:30-17:00	Questions and answers, conclusion of day 1

---

43   ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 55.

Day 2	
09:00 – 09:30	Recap of day 1 and introduction
09:30-11:00	SWOT exercise and/or Barrier Analysis
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15-12:45	Selection of exercises and working groups
12:45-13:45	Lunch
13:45-15:30	Ideal organization (and/or After Action Review)
15:30-16:00	Break
16:00-17:00	Questions and answers, workshop close

Introductions

The workshop should begin with initial reflections from the participants, whereby they introduce themselves and answer some questions about the main topic of the workshop. They could be asked to describe how their everyday work relates to individual human rights and gender equality issues; they might also address their expectations for the workshop, any concerns they may have and the outcomes they are hoping for. The facilitator should ensure all introductions are kept short.

8.1 ICEBREAKER[44]

Since one of the facilitator's primary roles is to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere that is conducive to an open exchange of ideas and reflections and where all comments and suggestions are valued and appreciated, it is important to include an ice-breaker exercise. This should engage all participants and create a good environment for discussing the substantive issues related to individual human rights and gender equality. Further energizing exercises can be included throughout the workshop.

The main theme of the workshop and its context should be taken into account when planning the ice-breaker. It can deal with several issues, such as individual human rights, cultural stereotypes, prejudice, patterns of discrimination, societal or professional perceptions of the role of certain population groups. The exercise should take no longer than 30-45 minutes. If needed, the participants can be divided into sub-groups.

44 Adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p.61.

Proposed Icebreaker: *Imagining the ideal military organization from a human rights and gender perspective*

Divide participants into small groups and ask them to explain the role of human rights in an ideal military organization in just three sentences. Ask them to describe a situation in which human rights were particularly important and why.

In particular, they should describe situations where equality and human rights were important not only to satisfy their personal needs but also to increase military effectiveness. This will help them think about their work and the role of human rights in the workplace in a military context.

Ask each group to present their findings to the whole group.

Follow this with a short general discussion where participants outline how respect for equality and human rights should be embedded in the organizational culture of an ideal military organization.

8.2 HISTORICAL TIMELINE EXERCISE[45]

The objective of this exercise is to create and critically reflect upon a timeline of **milestones** in addressing gender equality within the armed forces and in advancing the human rights of service personnel. The timeline could include, among others, the adoption of new policies or laws, partnerships with external entities, publications or campaigns. The exercise will improve knowledge, increase critical reflection and enable participants to assess strengths and gaps in their organization's performance from a historical perspective. This should give the facilitators valuable information about the organization's practices and achievements with respect to human rights and gender equality.

Ask participants to identify historical milestones in the organization's engagement with the human rights of service personnel and gender issues within the armed forces. Ask them to write the milestones on a timeline stuck to a wall. Participants should focus on the most important events (from their point of view) with significant implications for human rights of armed forces personnel and gender equality. The facilitator may wish, in advance, to prepare a list of milestones in advance to add to the information generated by the participants.

The historical timeline can be drawn at different levels (international, regional, national, organizational and personal) and time periods.

45 Adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 61.

Table 9: Historical timeline structure[46]

Levels	Time Periods					
	1961–1970	1971–1980	1981–1990	1991–2000	1991–2000	2001-2020
International Key international gender equality and/or human rights days and events						
Regional Important regional events with significant implications for human rights implementation and gender equality						
National Human rights and gender milestones in the historical development of a particular country						
Organizational Human rights achievements and gender milestones in the work of the structure/unit						
Personal Important personal life events related to individual human rights issues and gender balance/ equality						

PART 2

When all participants have added their most important findings at all levels to the timeline and the historical timeline is complete, ask them to share their perceptions of the achievements, probing any differences in views about the placement of any milestones. It is important that participants discuss why the different events should be added to the timeline and what their significance is (positive or negative), rather than just commenting on what happened, recalling or describing the details of the event.

The key findings/milestones and most controversial issues can be discussed further withing the group, and participants can add more information on critical points.

The historical timeline should stay up throughout the workshop, so that additional information can be added if it emerges.

Added value

This exercise helps to set the work of the structure/unit related to gender and human rights in context, and it broadens the perspective of all participants. It is important for building knowledge because it refers to realities that the participants know and can relate to. It encourages critical reflection and group discussion on human rights and gender equality milestones and gives the opportunity to discuss decision-making and the monitoring and planning mechanisms already in place. It should give the assessment team plenty of information about the organizational culture and material for the assessment focus areas.

Tip: This exercise should be run at the beginning of the assessment process.

Time required: 1 hour.

8.3 HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS[47]

This exercise should provide valuable information on the existing human rights and gender expertise within the structure/unit. Participants will discuss individual human rights and gender-related concepts. This will help them to recognize organizational practices, to develop a shared understanding of human rights and gender balance and to identify avenues for improvement.

Working in small groups, participants will discuss individual human rights and their applicability in the military context. They will also address gender-related concepts and how these are interpreted and applied.

---

47 Adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 64.

Prepare cards with one individual human right or one gender-related concept written on each of them and place in a container. Divide the participants into small groups and ask each group to take two cards.

Ask the groups to reflect on the interpretation of the gender-related concepts and write their thoughts on the back of the card. They should also discuss the meaning, relevance, interpretation and applicability of individual human rights and make notes.

Ask a spokesperson from each group to present their key findings, interpretations and reflections. Follow this with a group discussion of the issues and key points, so that everyone can comment, reflect and raise additional points. Encourage participants to pay sufficient attention to the context, environment, culture and dynamics of the structure/unit, and to offer specific recommendations for further improvement. Suggest that participants write down what they have learned during the workshop that they will take away to apply in their daily work.

Box 9: Human rights issues

What issues should be addressed when discussing individual human rights?

- What is the content of the right and how does it relate to your work?

- What is its scope? Which entitlements do you derive from this human right?

- Are there any limitations that can lawfully be imposed on the exercise of this rights? Under what circumstances?

- Are there any limitations that can be imposed and justified in the military context?

- What do you do if this right is violated?

Which individual human rights can be discussed?

- Political rights: the right to vote and stand for office, freedom of association (including military unions and associations), a related structural issue of political neutrality of the armed forces, the right to demonstrate

- Freedom of expression

- The right to a private life

- Freedom of religion or belief (including conscientious objection)

- Equal opportunities and protection of women's and LGBTI rights

- The rights of minorities in the armed forces

- Prohibition of torture and degrading treatment or punishment

- Access to remedies and fair trial rights

- The notion of non-discrimination as another cross-cutting issue

- Social and economic rights in the armed forces (related to working conditions and work/life balance in the military)

These rights will be discussed in different contexts and from different perspectives depending on the participants' professional background and place within the respective structure/unit.

Tip: Detailed information on the above can be found in *Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel: Compendium of Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations.*

Box 10: Gender-related concepts

Gender-related concepts for discussion (indicative list)

- Gender

- Equal opportunity

- Diversity in the workplace

- Gender balance

- Positive action

- Women's empowerment

- Gender mainstreaming

- Direct and indirect discrimination

- Stereotyping and prejudice

- Harassment and bullying

- Gender-sensitive policies

- Gender and organizational change

- Gender budgeting

- Maternity and paternity protection

- Work/life balance

- Gender-based violence

These concepts will be discussed in different contexts and from different perspectives depending on the participants' professional background and place within the respective structure/unit.

Tip: Detailed information on the above can be found in the *OSCE Glossary on Gender-Related Terms* (2006)[48] and the ILO glossary.[49] Printouts of the glossaries may be useful.

Participants should pay sufficient attention to cross-cutting issues such as non-discrimination and access to effective remedy. They may wish to discuss the notion of discrimination in greater detail and address its forms and manifestations in the armed forces. There are different definitions of discrimination. Participants should focus on the definition given by their own legal system as well as international human rights standards and comparative experience.

Box 11: Definition of discrimination[50]

Discrimination shall mean any differential treatment based on a ground such as 'race', colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, belief, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics or status, which has no objective and reasonable justification (see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Memorandum to ECRI General Policy Recommendation 15).

Forms of discrimination:
- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Sexual harassment
  - Bullying as harassment
  - Gender-based violence
- Victimization

---

48 OSCE, Glossary on Gender-Related Terms, May 2016.
49 ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, Glossary, Annex 2, p. 107.
50 While there are various definitions of discrimination from relevant international instruments and norms, this one, from the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism (ECRI) has been included due to its comprehensive nature. The definition can be found in ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 15 on Combating Hate Speech, European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), adopted 8 december 2015, p. 14.

- Multiple discrimination
- Intersectional discrimination

Although gender-related concepts can be discussed separately, an integrated approach can also be chosen to address individual human rights and gender concepts as interrelated elements. Furthermore, gender analysis should be integrated in the analysis of different human rights problems. This approach will help to uncover hidden patterns of discrimination and address the root causes of the problem.

Added value

This exercise should produce useful information on the shared values and understanding within the structure/unit. Moreover, it will help raise awareness about the importance of individual human rights and gender-related concepts.

Time required: 2 hours to address 10 gender-related concepts and 10 individual human rights.

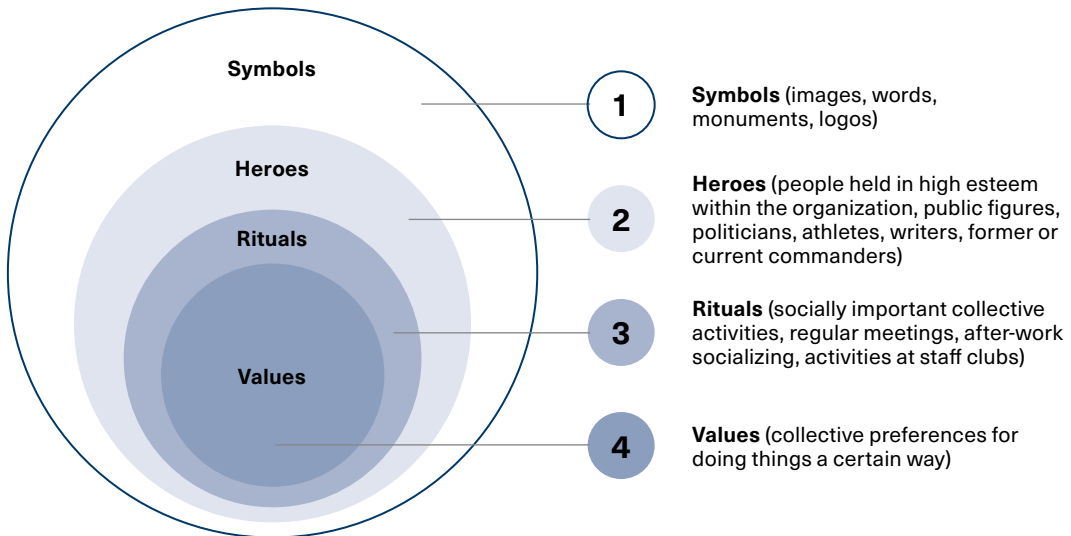## 8.4 HOFSTEDE'S ONION — ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE[51]

In this exercise Hofstede's onion diagram is used to analyse the organizational culture. Hofstede's onion consists of four layers — symbols, heroes, rituals and values that may promote or hinder human rights and gender equality. Through this exercise participants will identify different aspects of the organizational culture.

The **organizational culture** manifests itself in the organizational practices and it may contribute to military effectiveness. Changes in such practices lead to a change of the structure/unit's organizational culture. Thus, it is important to focus on, discuss and analyse what the organization or its units say and do in the fields of human rights and gender equality to get a full picture of the organizational practice and culture, and to find out what changes need to be made to shift or improve that culture. The objective is to address aspects of the organizational culture that either promote or hinder the realization of human rights and gender equality.

---

51 Adapted from Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 71.

Figure 6: Hofstede's onion diagram

The four layers of organizational culture

1   **Symbols** (images, words, monuments, logos)

2   **Heroes** (people held in high esteem within the organization, public figures, politicians, athletes, writers, former or current commanders)

3   **Rituals** (socially important collective activities, regular meetings, after-work socializing, activities at staff clubs)

4   **Values** (collective preferences for doing things a certain way)

The facilitator's primary task is to create a relaxed and trustful environment for the exercise, in order to discuss several sensitive issues related to the organizational culture.

Distribute four different colour sitcky notes — one colour for each of the four layers of organizational culture — and ask participants to write their comments and reflections on each layer in turn. Use the guiding questions in the box below (and in Annexe 5) to help participants think about their answers. At the end, ask participants to discuss the key findings of each layer.

Box 12: Organizational culture exercise questions

Level 1 — Symbols

- What images, words or metaphors do you associate with your unit? Why?

- Are these related to individual human rights, or to staff members of a specific gender?

- What other symbols or words come to mind when you think of your unit and your daily work?

Level 2 – Heroes

- Who are your heroes and heroines/exemplary individuals within or outside your organization?

- Why do are they a role model for you. What messages do they convey and are these messages directly or indirectly related to effective implementation of fundamental rights and gender equality?

- Do these individuals represent some of the organization's values?

- Do they represent your professional values associated with your work in the organization?

- Or do they to some extent represent your desire for a change in the existing organizational practices and culture?

Level 3 – Rituals

- Are there any rituals/typical collective activities within your structure/unit?

- Why are they unique and different from the activities/rituals of other structures/units?

- Does your structure/unit practice certain social activities? Are they inclusive or do they rather exclude certain individuals?

- Are men and women (and those from ethnic, linguistic or other minorities) equally involved?

- Do these activities contribute to an open and respectful working environment?

- Are there any activities/rituals you do not necessarily see in a positive light?

Level 4 – Values

- Does your structure/unit have a set of shared values? What are the most important ones?

- Do you consider human rights and gender equality a part of this value system?

- Is diversity in workforce one of the values?

- Are all staff treated equally or are there any differences? Do you consider those differences in treatment as justified or unjustified?

- Do you make the continuation of your work in the organization dependent on certain values being upheld?

The exercise aims to establish:

- The current situation and organizational culture;

- The most important aspects of the organizational culture that promote or hinder the realization of human rights and gender equality;

- The changes necessary to improve the prevailing organizational practices and culture (and who should make them); and

- The participants' recommendations on how to improve the situation and create an organizational culture that enhances human rights and fosters gender equality.

During the discussion, participants may consider the following questions:

- Does the structure/unit value diversity? Is equal treatment one of its main values? What about equal opportunities?

- Does the current composition of the armed forces reflect the diversity of the society?

- Are there any differences in treatment on grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, language, religion or belief, ethnicity, status and standing within the structure/unit? On any other grounds? How are they justified?

- What would participants change in the current organizational practices and culture to achieve more effective implementation of human rights and gender equality? How would they implement those changes?

- Which fundamental rights should be promoted and more effectively implemented?

- Has the organization adopted quotas, targeted recruitment strategies or other affirmative action measures to enhance representation of women or other less represented groups within the armed forces? How has this impacted the organizational culture or the way the personnel from these groups are treated and valued?

- Does the organization ensure equal access to career advancement opportunities?

- To what extent does the structure/unit respect and promote the work/life balance of both men and women in its activities and operations, and what should be changed to improve the situation?

- What are the main critique points from insiders[52] and outsiders,[53] and are they justified? Should they be addressed to improve the organizational culture?

- What are short-, mid- and long-term changes that need to be implemented at the organization?

- Does the organization enjoy a good reputation as an employer, seeking ways to achieve gender balance and diversity and to address any human rights concerns of its staff?

- What is the role of the Leadership in promoting human rights, non-discrimination and enhancing gender equality?

- Do the complaints mechanisms within the organization function well in case individual human rights are violated? Are they trusted?

Time required: 90 minutes.

8.5 SWOT ANALYSIS

This exercise should reveal the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to its projects and activities. Using an organizational analysis checklist and a SWOT analysis chart and matrix, the strengths and weaknesses of the organization can be assessed from a human rights and gender perspective and opportunities and constraints/threats will be identified. This exercise engages the participants and motivates them to look at either a specific issue or several areas of the organization's work from different perspectives. By the end they should have developed a number of concrete proposals/recommendations.

---

52 E.g., other units or branches within the general staff, defence ministry or other internal oversight bodies.
53 E.g., ombuds institutions, inspector general, parliamentary committee members, civil society.

Divide participants into small groups and ask each group to look at one or more of the issues identified as of central importance to the structure/unit's performance. Participants should focus on human rights and gender equality issues as well as on the areas of the organization's activities that have significant implications for the realization of individual human rights and gender balance/equality. Using the questions in Box 13 to guide them, get groups to complete each section of the SWOT analysis chart (Table 10).

Box 13: Organizational analysis checklist[54]

- What is the status, profile, image and identity of the organization?

- What are the organization's external relations, cooperation with other organizations, networking?

- What is the rationale behind work?

- What are the objectives of the structure/unit?

- What are the strategies used to achieve objectives?

- What activities have been undertaken to implement strategy and achieve the objectives?

- What is the current organizational chart? How are tasks, responsibility and authority divided/allocated?

- What procedures and tools does the structure/unit use for programme analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation?

- What are the decision-making procedures within the structure/unit?

- What are the personnel policies with the structure/unit? Address recruitment, career prospects, career advancement practices, selection and training.

- Is the knowledge and information produced and accessible to all members of the structure/unit?

- Are there resources, funding and material infrastructure in place to enhance individual human rights and gender balance/equality within the structure/unit?

- What are the structure/unit's norms and values, the organizational culture?

Table 10: SWOT analysis

SWOT ANALYSIS CHART	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the structure/unit's strengths? *What is the source of these strengths?* *How can they be improved?*	*What are the organization's weakness?* *What are the sources of these weaknesses?* *How can they be addressed?*
Opportunities	**Threats**
What are the structure/unit's current and long-term opportunities? *How can the organization seize these opportunities?* *What can be improved in terms of human rights and gender equality performance?*	*What constraints/threats with respect to human rights and gender equality does the structure/unit currently face?* *What changes need to be made to overcome/avoid them?*

Each chart should then be discussed by the whole group. They should consider their key findings and develop a strategy/action plan on how to improve their performance with respect to human rights and gender equality. Participants should be looking to find answers to the following questions:

- How can the strengths of the unit/organization be increased?

- How can the weaknesses be reduced?

- How can the existing opportunities be used most effectively?

- How can the unit/organization overcome the existing constraints and mitigate the threats?

These answers can then be transferred into the SWOT matrix, that will form the basis for the strategy/action plan.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	S-O Analysis *How can the unit's strengths be employed to explore the existing opportunities?*	W-O Analysis *How can weaknesses be transformed into opportunities? How can weaknesses be overcome to take advantage of the existing development opportunities?*
Threats	S-T Analysis *Which constraints/threats can be countered with which strengths? How can the unit's strengths prevent certain threats from arising?*	W-T Analysis *How can weakness of the organization be overcome to counteract/prevent threats? Which activities should be avoided to minimize threats and overcome the existing constraints?*

Time required: 2 hours.

8.6 THE HUMAN RIGHTS RISK EQUATION[55]

This exercise enables participants to collect information on the context in which certain human rights issues arise or systemic violations occur. They conduct a comprehensive human rights analysis, addressing all important issues related to a particular human rights topic of importance to the armed forces, analysing the root causes of violations and addressing the associated risks and effects. Additionally, participants map the actors who can influence and change the existing situation. The participants will carry out a context analysis of different human rights concerns and the assessment team will obtain valuable information on several structural issues as well as on participants' perceptions and approaches towards the key problems in their military organization.

Divide participants into groups and assign each group a different human rights topic of importance to the military organization, choosing topics identified in the initial prioritization (see Chapter 6) process of the assessment. Ask the subgroups to discuss specific military socialization practices, including degrading and humiliating initiation rituals, hazing and homophobic behaviour, or particular discrimination patterns with respect to service women and minority groups. It is crucial that they also

---

55 The components of the risk equation and actor mapping are discussed in more detail in Manual on Human Rights Monitoring – Chapter 8, United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, (no date).

acknowledge the broader cultural and societal contexts in which such violations occur and are to some extent tolerated by different stakeholders. Participants may also examine to what extent the prevailing military culture is gendered or racialized, as well as what the root causes and effects of this are.

1. **Analysing a human rights problem in the military from different perspectives**

   - Identify a human rights problem in the armed forces.

   - Find out what the root causes are and discuss them. Consider also its effects in practice. Differentiate between the root causes and effects of the human rights violations.

   - Address the organizational context in which such violations occur. Identify the main organizational and individual stakeholders associated with the problem, as well as which individuals are the most affected.

   - What are the social, political, economic, cultural issues directly related to the problem?

   - Identify and discuss the legal dimension of the issue: what is the legal framework? What are the implications? What rights are at stake?

2. **Run the human rights risk equation**

   Ask each group to use the four components of the human rights risk equation to identify and discuss (1) threats, (2) vulnerabilities, (3) commitments and (4) capacities of the human rights issue they have analysed.

   - What are the threats?

   - What are the vulnerabilities of rights holders?

   - What is the commitment of a duty bearer to address the identified human rights problem?

   - What are the capacities of rights holders and duty bearers?

   - How to devise a strategy to effectively reduce the risk?

Box 14: What is the human rights risk equation?

The equation deals with human rights risks and differentiates between four elements — threats, vulnerabilities, commitments and capacities.

Threats stem directly from organizations and actors who are primarily responsible for human rights violations. Their organizational and structural deficiencies as well as their policies and activities create such threats.

Vulnerabilities focus on those individuals and groups who are exposed to such threats, e.g., on victims of human rights violations, their identities and actions.

Commitment denotes the willingness and readiness of state institutions and influential societal actors to address and solve the human rights issue.

Capacities focus on both sides — duty bearers, e.g., the respective state institutions and their resources to address a human rights problem as well as rights holders and their coping strategies and capacities.

Figure 7: Risk equation

$$\text{Risk} = \frac{\text{Threat} \times \text{Vulnerability}}{\text{Commitment} \times \text{Capacity}}$$

If certain measures are taken and changes made that reduce the threat and vulnerabilities and increase the commitment and capacity, this should diminish the existing risk of a given human rights violation.

Figure 8: Mitigating risk

$$\downarrow \text{Risk} = \frac{\downarrow \text{Threat} \times \text{Vulnerability} \downarrow}{\uparrow \text{Commitment} \times \text{Capacity} \uparrow}$$
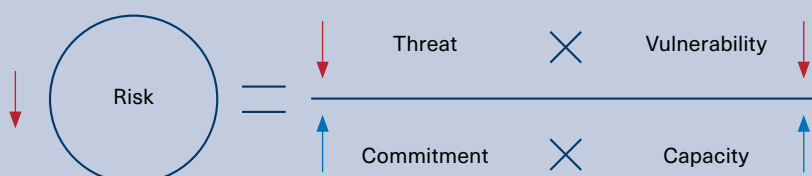
Discuss the conclusions and insights of each group with all the participants. The results of this analysis and exchange of ideas should enable the participants to propose key elements that can feed directly into the assessment report and its recommendations. Annexe 10 contains a template for recording outcomes.

Table 12: Strategic planning to reduce the overall risk of human rights violations

Threats	Vulnerability	Commitment	Capacity
What steps should be taken to reduce the threats?	How should the vulnerability of victims be reduced?	What needs to be done to influence and increase the commitment of the agencies and other actors?	What measures should be implemented to increase the capacity of both duty bearers and rights holders?

3. Map the relevant actors

The objective of this part of the exercise is to discuss and analyse relevant actors' contribution to the human rights situation and gender equality in the military and to produce a comprehensive actors (tactical) map. Participants will use tools that aim to visualize the most relevant actors, their relationships, conflicts, existing and potential partnerships and how they relate to human rights and gender equality in the military.

Key actors include key rights holders and duty bearers, perpetrators, those who are directly or indirectly responsible for human rights violations, other actors such as civil society organizations, media, businesses, international agencies and others who are able to influence the situation in the armed forces and/or have corresponding legal obligations.[56]

---

56 Other organizations may include parliamentary commissioners and ombudspersons for the armed forces, defence committees of national parliaments, ministries of defence, parliamentary oversight bodies, independent review mechanisms that already exist in the domestic legal system or need to be launched to investigate alleged human rights abuses and make recommendations, certain army corps or command structures, civilian and public oversight institutions, civil society organizations and international agencies.

Box 15: A simplified actors map – Torture in the army: main actors

This map shows the relationships that sustain the practice of torture and ill-treatment in the armed forces. It focuses on officals, institutions and relevant state and non-state actors.

PART 2

Ask the participants, in their groups, to map the actors for their human rights issues. They should name all the actors (including indirect actors) who are able to influence the human rights issue they are working on. Participants should also agree on the importance of each actor, writing their names on a chart.

Next, ask the participants to dicusss and decide on the relationships between the actors, using the following questions:

- What is the character of their relationships?

- What are the current issues of controversy and how do they influence the human rights and gender equality in the army?

- What alliances and partnerships exist and what are the power dynamics within this system?

- Do such power dynamics facilitate effective realization of human rights and gender equality within the defence sector?

- What kind of interventions and where exactly are needed to improve the situation and solve the problems?

The assessment team must adapt the mapping exercise to the participants in the exercise. For instance, while higher-rank officers may have a clear picture of the various entities and bodies portrayed in the figure above, non-commissioned officers are unlikely to have the same perspective. They are likely to identify the relevant actors within the organization itself or closely related thereto (e.g., counselling staff, civil society networks, military superiors).

Ask participants to present their main findings. They should explain the benefits of collaborating with some of the actors identified, and discuss how they could explore their potential and ability to make a positive change to solve the identified human rights problem. Participants will also identify any harmful relations and discuss ways to address them.

Value added

Insights gained from the human rights equation exercise will help the participants to develop strategies and recommendations to address the identified human rights issues. All the information can be incorporated into the assessment report. To maximize the added value of the exercise, the assessment team should explain how the conceptual framework could be translated into categories specific to the armed forces such as 'risk to life – risk to mission – risk to reputation'.

Time required: 90 minutes.

8.7 ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO GENDER EQUALITY[57]

Participants identify formal and informal impediments to the implementation of equality between different groups of men and women in the armed forces. They also try to understand the causes of the existing barriers and brainstorm to find ways to overcome these impediments and constraints. This exercise uses the round-robin brainstorming technique, which, guided by the facilitator, helps to get input from all the participants and generate new ideas and approaches through a collective effort. This approach should engage all the participants and achieve consensus on key issues and their root causes.

Divide all participants into small groups and encourage them to identify 2-3 barriers to attaining gender equality in their organizational structure. Each group should be assigned a different focus area. For example, one group may look at barriers to recruitment and retention, another logistical details, such as equipment or infrastructure and other defence material, while a third group may consider barriers to career advancement, and the fourth group may discuss military deployments. Ask them to focus both on policy and legal frameworks, as well as on how effectively they are implemented.

Once they have identified the barriers and how they manifest, encourage the participants to reflect on what causes them, both their immediate and root causes. For example, in the case of women's under-representation in particular roles in the military, encourage participants to consider whether the root causes lie in the organizational culture, the legal framework or, for example, in organizational policies. In addition, prompt the participants to explore further linkages to human resources, training, operations, budget issues and/or complaints. After discussing the causes of each barrier, ask the participants to discuss and write down potential solutions.

Using the robin-round technique, group members contribute to the work done by others, with only one person, the 'reporter', from each group staying in their seat throughout the session. After the discussion phase, the team leader of each group presents the group's impediments and proposed solutions to the whole group.

It is important to try to organize immediate barriers and root causes in a logical manner so that the patterns of discrimination within the unit/organization can be uncovered and addressed. Participants may also identify certain power imbalances that form part of the prevailing organizational culture.

---

57 Adapted from the ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators barriers analysis exercise, p. 84.

PART 2

Participants should use this exercise as a tool for consensus-building, seeking agreement and common solutions to the problems identified.

Box 16: The round-robin facilitation format

This is a technique for unpacking and discuss complex problems between groups. Group rotation should lead to a truly collective effort and more creative solutions to the problems.

Participants are divided into groups and assigned one aspect of the topic under discussion. Each group writes their reflections on flip-chart. After the initial analysis, each group moves to the next flipchart to give their input, until all the groups have visited all the flipcharts. One person from each group, the 'reporter', remains at their original station to add input throughout the exercise.

Questions can be asked to help keep participants focused on solutions[58]. These should include questions on:

- Measures to be taken in the thematic area;

- Selected target groups; and

- Areas of action, main actors, timeline and support mechanisms.

Box 17: Women in the military – asking the right questions[59]

- Are all positions in all parts of the military open to women?

- What are the recruitment and career management policies on identifying the skills needed to fulfil missions?

- Have recruitment campaigns been adapted to eliminate stereotypes and attract more women into the armed forces, including in operational roles?

- Have proactive policies been introduced for recruiting women and including them in roles from which they have previously been excluded?

- Have the physical criteria applied in recruitment to military professions been reviewed and adapted?

---

58 See also MOWIP Methodology – Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations, DCAF, Geneva, October 2020; DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, UN Women (2019), Tool 3: Defence and Gender, in Gender and Security Toolkit.

59 For further information and guidance see also Recommendation (2016) 2120, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), 21 June 2016, and OSCE/ODIHR, Compendium.

- What is the feasibility of implementing pilot projects to promote the recruitment of women in these professions?

- Have more flexible career opportunities been developed in order to increase the number of pathways into the most senior ranks?

- What comprehensive measures have been adopted to help balance work and private life for all members of the armed forces?

- Has any research been done into the reasons behind: difficulties in recruiting more women into military service; why military careers of women are often shorter than those of their male counterparts; and why women and men leave the armed forces before retirement or the end of their contracts?

- Has any further information on the experiences of women in the armed forces been collected, systemized and analysed?

- Are direct or indirect discrimination, harassment (sexual harassment or bullying) among the factors that diminish the attractiveness of the armed forces for women?

- Have specific training and support programmes been introduced to deal with these issues?

Value added

Exchanging and sharing ideas in this way makes the whole process more engaging and creative for all participants. The facilitators should gather valuable information for the assessment report and recommendations — information on collective understanding and perceptions of the existing barriers to the attainment of individual human rights and gender equality.

8.8 DEAL ORGANIZATION[60]

This exercise gets participants to focus on developing their own vision of an ideal organization that is compliant with human rights and enhances gender equality. They will discuss ways to improve compliance with human rights and gender equality. This is a forward-looking exercise that seeks to help participants develop their own an action plan for incorporating human rights and gender into the organization's structures, policies and activities. It can be one of the concluding exercises of the workshop.

60Adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, pp. 81-83.

Using a list of guiding questions (see Box 18), ask participants to work in small groups and then discuss the results with the whole group. These questions can be used, or they can be adapted to match the needs of the unit/organization. All participants should receive the list of questions.

Box 18: Guiding questions for the ideal organization

- What values would an ideal organization incorporate and promote?

- How would people interact and incorporate human rights and gender equality in their daily activities? How would they cooperate?

- How would human rights and gender equality be reflected in the organization's mission?

- How would decision-making be organized?

- What would be your personal vision and contribution to make it the ideal organization?

- How could you contribute to that vision?

- Does the unit/organization currently have any of the characteristics of your vision?

- Which characteristics are missing? Of these, which are the most important to acquire?

- How would you facilitate this process?

- What could lead to/help the incorporation of these characteristics into the unit/organization?

- What concrete steps need to be taken to achieve this objective?

Advise the participants to organize their comments into two parts: the current reality and the ideal organization as per the table below.

Table 13: Ideal Organization

Current reality	Ideal organization/unit
E.g: • *No counselling staff* • *No prayer facilities* • *No work flexibility for service personnel with young children*	• *Counselling staff (male and female)* • *Prayer facilities available that accommodate religious diversity* • *Flexible work arrangements in place for service personnel with youngchildren*

One person from each group presents the key findings to the whole group. Ask particpants to focus on the most important differences between the current situation and the ideal organization and the steps necessary to get them closer to an ideal organization model.

Value added

Participants will describe an ideal unit/organization that promotes human rights and gender equality through its daily work and activities. The results of the discussion should form the basis of an action plan that outlines the desired changes and necessary steps to get there.

Time required for the exercise is 90 minutes.

8.9 AFTER ACTION REVIEW

This exercise gets participants to review the exercises — their tasks, objectives and results — and to learn from their experience and performance. This fosters organizational learning and continuous improvement of the organizational culture. The participants will identify and discuss strengths, weaknesses and areas for further improvement. This will also help to build consensus around the assessment's final recommendations. In parallel, this exercise should be of great value to the facilitators, giving them feedback that they can apply during workshops in future assessments in different parts of the military.

The after action review should be an inclusive exercise, planned well in advance and involving as many members of the unit/organization as possible. It could also be done shortly after the workshop is completed. The review should be well organized and structured; either around the key

themes of the workshop, or by addressing the events and activities during the workshop chronologically. One member of the assessment team should make notes on a flip chart.

The facilitator should carefully guide the exercise and help the participants to focus on the facts. It is important to ensure that the subsequent recommendations for further improvements are based on those facts. The discussion should be as objective as possible, with each participant able to share their honest observations and conclusions in an atmosphere of openness and trust. Quotes should not be attributed to participants without their explicit agreement.

Start by writing down the main objectives, tasks and steps taken during the workshop on a flip chart or whiteboard. Then, ask the participants to briefly review them and add any topic they deem important. The ensuing group discussion should focus on the following five questions:

1. What was initially planned and what were the tasks and objectives of the workshop?

2. What was actually achieved during the activity?

3. What went well and why?

4. What did not go so well and why?

5. What can and should be improved for next time, and how could this be achieved?

(For more questions, see Annexe 11)

In the final part of the exercise, summarize the key points and discuss necessary improvements and recommendations. Tell the participants to imagine they will be preparing a short report on lessons learned, for sharing with the group for feedback. What would they put into such a report, including actionable recommendations and the main issues that require further attention from the Leadership.

Time required: 60-90 minutes

PART 3

REPORTING AND PRESENTATION

Before drafting begins, the assessment team should discuss and agree on the main points to be included in the report. It is important that the report highlights positive behaviours and developments — what the unit does well already — as well as making recommendations for improvement. It should identify gaps and avenues for improvement and should include lessons learned alongside existing good practices. It should draw together the views, expectations and visions of the military unit.

The recommendations should be validated by the participants and submitted to the Leadership for endorsement. The endorsed recommendations should then form the basis of the action plan which the Leadership is expected to implement to enhance the military unit's compliance with human rights and gender equality.

The report is, therefore, critical to the success of the whole assessment and to the acceptance and mainstreaming of gender equality and human rights of armed forces personnel in the unit. It should clearly show the reader a logical connection between the facts, conclusions and recommendations.

A recommended report structure is given in Annexe 12.

9.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary should contain all the major points that are included in the report. The summary will be used both for the debriefing with the Leadership who commissioned the assessment and during any feedback session with the structure/unit staff. It should be kept as short as possible (1-5 pages maximum) and be presented in bulleted, short paragraphs. Feedback on the executive summary (and the full report) should be included, as appropriate, in a revised executive summary and final report.

9.2 KEY FEATURES OF THE FULL REPORT

The report should begin with the executive summary, followed by any acknowledgements and a list of acronyms.

After a short introduction (explaining the genesis of the assessment), the report should discuss the assessment methodology. This should refer to all the tools used (desk research, interviews, workshops, debriefing and feedback sessions) and explain the assessment process and how the assessment team reached its conclusions.

The main findings should be structured around the focus areas of the report established during the thematic prioritization, e.g., staff and human

resources, legal framework and organizational policy, planning and operations, budgeting, implementation, grievance and oversight mechanisms, and education and training.

The report should include a section on good practices, positive experiences and examples of change. This section should be near the beginning of the report and executive summary, not as an 'afterthought' towards the end.

The final section of the report should highlight the lessons learned and conclude with a set of recommendations on how the existing framework can be improved to bring it in line with relevant human rights standards. Both general and specific human rights standards need to be addressed. The recommendations should cover all focus areas of the participatory assessment and also highlight key findings. The recommendations should be implementable as far as possible by the assessed structure/unit. This section should also identify the timeframe and the person/team responsible for implementing the recommendations.

Supporting information should be put into the annexes, which could include the list of documents reviewed (grouped by focus areas), the interview schedule (respecting the anonymity of participants), workshops agendas and participants, and some or all of the workshop exercises.

If sections are drafted by individual team members (see Chapter 4.2), each should then be peer-reviewed before the whole document is reviewed again to ensure the accuracy of the content and consistency in style, format and terminology.

9.3 DEBRIEFING AND VALIDATION

For the Leadership and the staff of the structure/unit to accept the final report and the recommendations it makes, it is crucial that they fully understand the objectives and findings of the assessment, how the team reached its conclusions and, therefore, where the recommendations come from. Before it is finalized, the draft report and executive summary should be discussed with the Leadership in order to avoid any misunderstandings and to clarify any questions. It is important that the discussions highlight not only areas for improvement, but also good practices and positive achievements in the area of human rights and gender equality.

The meeting with the Leadership should, to the extent possible, take place in a relaxed and informal setting. Some of the findings and recommendations may come as a surprise — positive or negative — and the Leadership may have a different view of the organization than that presented in the report. The assessment team should present the main findings and

recommendations, allowing the Leadership to give their point of view and ask questions, so that any misunderstandings or concerns can be addressed directly, and resolved. The final report will likely be treated as an internal document which forms the basis of the action plan to implement the recommendations. The facilitators should underline that it is the responsibility of the Leadership to create the action plan and deliver on the recommendations. The Leadership has to decide how to inform all staff about the results of the assessment and what the next steps will be. Once ready, the action plan should be distributed to assessment participants for comments and suggestions.

ANNEXES

Annexe 1
Indicative documents for desk review[61]

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER-RELATED	
Administrative	**Technical/Substantive**
• Lists of staff and consultants, with description of roles, qualifications and training • TOR/TOE • Budget documents • Procurement plans • Minutes of relevant meetings • Rules and regulations on recruitment, promotion, assignment and deployment • Selection criteria for training • Rules and regulations on the functioning of the unit/organization (e.g., compliant procedures, oversight) • Rules on flexible working arrangements	• Research documents and substantive reports on relevant subjects • Work and training plans • Reports of major relevant meetings and training with lists of participants • Training materials in use • Codes of conduct • Policies on whistleblowers protection • Mission-related documents • Standing orders on SEA
Infomative/Promotional	**Cooperation**
• Public relations materials, brochures, posters, leaflets, videos, CDs, graphics • Covers of publications, with photographs • Newsletters • Intranet and Internet links	• Cooperation agreements and arrangements • Bi-/multilateral meeting reports/minutes • Project descriptions and other documents • Evaluation reports

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER-SPECIFIC	
• Documents specifically referring to or addressing human rights and gender equality, such as existing gender or human-rights action plans, maternity and paternity regulations, documents regulating membership to military associations, policies outlining access to religious or belief representatives, and SOPs regarding reporting of human rights abuses, ToRs of Gender / Human rights advisors or focal points	• In case of military training institutions, existing training curricula regarding gender equality and human rights.

61   List adapted from ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 37.

Annexe 2
Indicative assessment criteria/indicators[62]

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER-RELATED	
Administrative*	**Technical/Substantive***
• Ratio of women to men per position, rank, age, and with decision making powers • Requirement on human rights and gender expertise • Indication of resources allocated and applied to human rights and gender-related work • Indication that equipment purchased satisfies the needs of all staff • Human rights and gender matters addressed in meetings • Rules and regulations on recruitment, remuneration, promotion, assignment, and deployment are consistent with human rights and gender-responsive • Maternity and paternity policies exist and are non-discriminatory • Staff selection for human rights and gender training is holistic • Flexible working arrangements are considered	• Relevant laws/military legislation and army regulations are in line with international human rights standards • Research documents and substantive reports address human rights and gender issues in a timely way • Work and training plans promote human rights and gender expertise • Training materials in use are consistent with international standards • Codes of conduct reflect human rights obligations and are gender-responsive • Mission reports denote human rights and gender issues being proactively and reactively addressed
Infomative/Promotional*	**Cooperation***
• Public relations materials are compliant with human rights standards and use gender-sensitive language and images • Materials are widely available and use accessible language • In audio-visuals materials balanced participation is given to minorities, men and women and LGBTI people, as appropriate • Recruitment and call-up materials are consistent with child rights standards and rights	• Cooperation-related documents denote engagement with human rights and gender champions, address human rights and gender substantively rather than superficially, reveal active engagement of the armed forces and appropriate allocation of resources

*   These broader categories would be appropriate at the initial stage of selection of documents. In the analysis phase, it would be recommended to organize the relevant documents into sub-categories.

62   List adapted from the ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p. 37.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER-SPECIFIC
• Existence of human rights and gender-specific documents in the unit/organization • Topics and rights covered (more or less challenging, more or less controversial, more or less relevant to the operation of the unit/organization) • Process of adoption of documents • Individuals involved in the adoption of documents • Level of dissemination of documents among personnel	• Level of awareness of documents by service personnel • Role of the Leadership in promoting these documents • Existence of a gap between existing documents and their implementation/existing practice • Relevance and impact of these documents on the operations of the unit/organization • Consistency of documents with international human rights standards and gender equality

Annexe 3
Documents analysis table — sample

Unit/Sector/Department				
Document Title	**Date**	**Format**	**Score***	**Observations**

* The document might be scored by reference to a grading scale. For instance 1-5, where 5 is the highest score (e.g., for documents that comply 95%-100% with defined assessment criteria) and 0 is the lowest score (documents that meet none of the assessment criteria). While this column is not essential it would provide quick insight on the relevance of the document.

ANNEXES

Annexe 4
Guiding questions about human rights and gender in the armed forces

Guiding questions about human rights and gender in the armed forces

Questions*	Indicators*
Right to life and freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment	
• How many instances of injury and or mistreatment (physical or mental) resulting from hazing, training, disciplinary measures) are you aware of in the last year? • Have disciplinary sanctions been misused? • Are you aware of cases of informal punishment having been applied? Please elaborate. • Have there been effective and independent investigations of deaths in the military service, training or premises?	• Number of deaths and injuries of service personnel on duty • Number of investigations concluded in line with laws and regulations in force • Number of cases of disciplinary measures irregularly applied • Number of cases concluded in line with principles of due process
Liberty and security	
• Under what circumstances may service personnel be detained? • Are conditions of detention safe and humane? • How is the duration of deprivation of liberty determined and by whom? • What assistance and support are available to detained service personnel?	• Grounds for detention are provided by law • Detention is legally grounded • Detention is consistent with human rights standards (e.g., access to health care, legal counsel as appropriate, family visits)

* It would also be an option to prepare questions and indicators in relation to the different focus areas (Chapter 6.3). Here, it is preferred to question and interview by direct reference to human rights and issues specific to the armed forces, to which responders may easily and intuitively relate. Some proposed questions are pertinent to more than one focus area. Following the approach proposed, the facilitator will be better placed to carry out a comprehensive analysis and organize the information accordingly. This notwithstanding, were one to prefer to arrange questions by reference to the identified focus areas, the questions and indicators above may be easily adapted to that approach.

Questions*	Indicators*
Equality and non-discrimination	

Questions*	Indicators*
• Are you aware of any negative consequences (e.g., discharge, non-deployment) related to gender, sexual orientation, 'race', colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status? • Are there different treatments based on any of the grounds mentioned? • Are there negative consequences (e.g., discharge, non-deployment to combat areas) associated with pregnancy and or motherhood? • Are women entitled to paid leave for child birth? Keeping earnings and benefits during maternity leave? Right to resume work after maternity leave? • Is there effective protection from gender-based violence and harassment at work, during trips, communications, social events, commute to work? Do these protections favour or neglect any specific group? • Are there measures conceived of to balance work and family life (e.g., conscripts to be placed near family/home, non-deployment of both parents at the same time, possibility of flexible work arrangements for individuals with family caring roles)? • Do men and women both have the right to paternity and maternity leave, respectively, in non-discriminatory terms? • Does the organization provide for child care benefits, nursery schools, adequate child health and educational systems? • Are there support and information networks for women, LGBTI, minorities, in the armed forces? In which format (e.g., buddy system, telephone, group meetings)? • Are there temporary special measures (e.g., quotas) in policy or practice? • What kind of information is disseminated to women, LGBTI, minorities in recruitment/drafting campaigns? • Are there any differentiated recruitment procedures for women, LGBTI people, minorities? If yes, please explain?	• Number of discriminatory incidents reported and identity of victim • Loss of income by specific group • Poor career progression opportunities for specific group • Women allowed in all roles • No discrimination regarding recruitment/conscription • Physical requirements aligned with demand of post • Mixed recruitment and promotion panels • Promotion pathways do not discriminate directly or indirectly against women and members of minorities • Unconscious bias training • Flexible work arrangements are provided • Tailored physical training • Safe work environment (uniforms, equipment, installations, complaint mechanisms, accountability) • Multiple support and information channels (formal and informal)

Questions*	Indicators*
• Are there any differences in physical standards to be met for different roles? On what grounds? Do different thresholds apply to men and women? • Are men and women subject to the same conditions regarding voluntary recruitment and conscription? If not, please elaborate. • What is the percentage of women / men / other in leadership, management and decision-making positions?What is the percentage of women/men/other admitted to training for combat roles? • What is the percentage of women/men/ other deployed to conflict areas? • What are the reasons for the gender gap in respect thereof? • Do you consider that women's knowledge, skills and experiences are important in roles that are traditionally male-dominated (e.g., combat roles)? • What are the criteria for promotion (e.g., age range for certain promotional pathways or experience type)? • What is the percentage of women/men/ other turnover? • Are there any measures aimed at countering the turnover tendency of women? If yes, please elaborate. • Does the organization provide gender-sensitive equipment (e.g., maternity uniforms)? • What are the accommodation and washing facilities arrangements for men and women?	

Questions*	Indicators*

| **Fair trial, hearing and remedy** ||

| • Are service personnel criminally charged tried in military or civil courts?
• Are they entitled to legal counsel of their own choosing? Are they entitled to legal aid?
• If the competent court is military, how are members selected/appointed?
• Considering cases decided by military courts, what due process guarantees typical of civil courts apply?
• What is the average timing for a military court decision to be issued?
• Are hearings public? Who are they accessible to and under what conditions?
• What procedures apply to disciplinary actions? | • Criminally charged service peronnel are tried before independent courts
• The rights to legal counsel, defense and decision in a reasonable time are respected
• Legal aid is available for those that may not afford legal counsel of their choosing
• Disciplinary procedures leading to severe sanctions (e.g., long deprivation of liberty) apply due process rules in line with human rights standards |

| **Thought, conscience, religion and belief** ||

| • Are there restrictions on manifestation of faith and religion (e.g., religious dressing, diet, opportunity for worship, access of co-members of religious community, proselytizing to fellow military personnel)?
• Are there alternatives to compulsory military service? Who can resort to it and under which conditions?
• Is conscientious objection admitted? If yes, does it, directly or indirectly, benefit or neglect any groups of individuals as opposed to others? | • Restrictions on manifestation of faith, religion and thought are based on the law, necessary, proportional and non-discriminatory
• Existence of alternatives to conscription and non-discriminatory possibility of resorting to this option
• Regime on conscientious objection is non-discriminatory |

| **Opinion and expression** ||

| • Are there limitations on public statements by service personnel?
• Are their limitations on the right to vote and be elected? Please elaborate.
• How are personnel deployed in hardship duty stations assisted in exercising their voting rights?
• Are there limitations on expressing political views or declaring support for political parties or candidates? What is the extent of such limitations? | • Limitations on manifestation of freedom of expression are grounded in law, necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory
• Organization adopts proactive approach in pursuing maximum possible enjoyment of freedom of expression
• Organization makes efforts to balance demands of military life/service and restrictions of human rights of armed forces personnel |

ANNEXES

Questions*	Indicators*
Peaceful assembly and freedom of association	
• Are there limitations on participation in public meetings/demonstrations, trade unions or professional associations, civil society groups? Please elaborate. • Are there limitations on the right to take part in political activities (e.g., membership in political parties)? Please explain. • What is the duration of such limitations (e.g., do they cease upon retirement)? • Do service personnel have the right to strike?	• Limitations on manifestations of freedoms of assembly and association are grounded in law, necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory • Organization makes efforts to balance demands of military life/service and restrictions of human rights of armed forces personnel

Guiding questions on cross-cutting and specific issues in the armed forces

Questions	Indicators
Implementation, enforcement and accountability	
• Is there budget allocation specific to the implementation of human rights and gender mainstreaming? • Are restrictions on human rights provided by law? • What are the allowed reasons for restriction? • Do restrictions apply to all human rights? • Are there specific sanctions established for infringement of rights of military personnel? What are those? Are they effectively implemented? • How many complaints /reports have been received in the last year? Three main grounds of complaint? • What are the reporting procedures/ channels available within the military structure? And outside the chain of command? • Do you trust in/ would you feel comfortable in using these mechanisms if needed? • Are there protections for whistleblowers? Please elaborate? How many times have they been used in the last year? Please elaborate. • Do complainants benefit from support services, e.g., legal counsel, psychological assistance, provided by the military? Are these services free of charge? Is their provision subject to any conditions? Please elaborate. • Are there external entities (e.g., ombuds institutions, NHRIs) mandated to oversee respect for human rights within the military and or receive and address complaints of human rights violations?	• Existence of specific human rights and gender mainstreaming budget allocations • Grounds for human rights restrictions are provided by law • Restrictions are necessary, proportional and non-discriminatory • Restrictions are consistent with international human rights obligations • Gap between law/regulations on paper and practice • Number of complaints received in the last year for human rights violations • Number of complaints submitted by men, women, LGBTI people, other minorities? • Major human rights violations occurring in the organization • Existence of effective, confidential, responsive and secure complaint and reporting mechanisms • Existence of measures of protection against retaliation for reporting human rights violations • Existence of support service to those (considering) complaining of human rights violations • Existence of external entities with monitoring and overight mandates over the military regarding respect and ortion of human rights and gender mainstreaming in the armed forces

Questions	Indicators
Gender	
• Does the organization endeavour to take into account – and does it consider – the different needs, experiences and realities of men, women, LGBTI people? • Does the organization acknowledge – and does it try to give effect to – the importance of different sets of skills, knowledge and experiences of men, women, others in military operations, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation? • Does the organization have a 'zero tolerance' policy towards SGBV? Please elaborate. • What are the channels and processes for reporting SGBV? • Would you fear resorting to these mechanisms? • Does the organization collect data disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity? To your knowledge, does the data reveal any trends of likelihood of abuse? If yes, what counter-measures have been adopted? • Are you aware of any manifestations of direct or indirect discrimination based on gender? • Are there public reports on gender equality in the armed forces? • Does the organization engage/cooperate with externals with expertise in gender mainstreaming? • Does the organization promote an inclusive working environment / working culture?	• Systems of collection, management and processing of gender-related information • Data disaggregated by sex, gender, and ethnicity • Actions and policies to benefit from and employ the different set of skills and capacities of men, women, others in the operations of the organization • Processes to identify, acknowledge and respond to the different needs and experiences of men,women, others in the performance of their duties • 'Zero-tolerance' policy towards SGBV • Multiple channels to receive informal advice and support (e.g., hotlines, lecturers) and formal assistance (e.g., legal counsel) • Existence of alternatives for complaint outside of the chain of command (e.g., Focal Point in Armed Forces or Ministry of Defence, externally in Ombuds or HR Commissions) • Regular and publicly available reports on gender equality by central monitoring authority • Productive dialogue with external partners, gender champions • Presence of initiatives to tackle hyper masculine cultures and promote an inclusive working environment

Questions	Indicators
Non-discrimination	
• Are any human rights restrictions based on distinctions of 'race', ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, etc.? If so, what are those grounds? • Do you perceive any distinction in terms of application of laws or policies (in terms of both rights and sanctions) according to rank? If yes, please explain. • Are there any distinctions regarding remuneration, recruitment, employment, deployment to combat zones, access to training based on gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, ethnicity, colour, 'race', political opinion, nationality or other status?	• Different treatment of military service personnel is grounded in the law and not discriminatory • Restrictions are necessary, proportionate and serve a legitimate aim
Children in the armed forces	
• What is the minimum age of recruitment into the armed forces? • If under-18s are allowed to join the military, are there restrictions regarding the role they are allowed to perform and training they are entitled to receive? Please elaborate. • For under-18s, what is the process of recruitment (e.g., regarding informed consent, proof of age, rights and duties such as wish to leave)? • Are there specific procedures to address negligence or abuse of children in the armed forces? Please elaborate (involvement of externals)?	• Minimum age of recruitment • Restrictions on activities recruits may engage in while still minors • Recruitment of under-18s integrates obligation of informed consent of child and the minor and possibility of quitting • Commanders are held responsible for any abuse or neglect of minors

Questions	Indicators

Superior orders and command responsibility	
• Are there specific provisions on the duty and right not to follow illegal orders? If yes, on what grounds? • Is the plea of abiding with superior orders admissible? Please elaborate. • Are there mechanisms to protest against orders deemed illegal? If yes, what is the procedure? • How many reports or complaints of this kind in the last year are you aware of? What was the outcome? • Is acting under duress an admissible defence regarding illegal orders? • Are service personnel trained on the matter? Regularity? Duration? Content? • Are commanders trained on the subject? Regularity? Duration? Content? • Is adherence to codes of conduct mandatory for service personnel? Is the issue addressed in codes of conduct?	• Existence of legal provisions on illegal orders and protection of subordinates • Responsibility of commanders issuing illegal orders • Existence of meaningful training on the duty and right not to follow illegal orders • Complaints of illegal orders promptly and effectively addressed

Human rights and gender equality education	
• Are human rights and gender components of training curricula in the armed forces? • Do you consider training to be helpful? Have they changed your views or added knowledge on the subject? • What is the form of training? • Who delivers the training? Do they have specific expertise on human rights, gender and/or training facilitation? • Is there training on awareness-raising and capacity building for preventing human rights and gender-based violence?	• Human rights and gender issues are main components of training curricula • Curricula are consistent with human rights standards and gender equality • Training is interactive and case-based • Training delivered by individuals with appropriate expertise • Training tailored to the audience (e.g., commanders and otherwise)

Questions	Indicators
Leadership	
• Do you consider your leadership to be knowledgeable in terms of human rights and gender? • Do you consider your leadership to be committed to human rights / gender implementation? • Does your leadership lead by example in this regard? • What are the three main qualities and shortcomings of your leadership in respect of gender and human rights? • Are commanders held accountable in some way for persistent breaches of human rights by their subordinates? Please elaborate.	• Leadership expertise on human rights and gender • Leadership leads by example • Leadership participation in emblematic human rights and gender meeting and events • Commanders required to act to ensure and promote human rights of subordinates • Mandatory reporting systems to hold commanders accountable • Leadership statements, including on resources

Annexe 5
Hofstede's onion/organizational culture guiding questions

Symbols and Artefacts	Champions and Leaders
• Describe the 'perfect' service person in your unit/organization? • Create a slogan/message to reflect the spirit and mentality of your unit/organization? • How would you translate that slogan into a poster? • Is there an activity, practice, saying specifically related to your unit/organization that you consider to mirror its commitment to human rights?	• Who do you consider to be a role model (internal or external to the organization) in reference to your work? • What are/would be the main characteristics of that role model? • Do you associate these role models with any specific human rights issue, flag, message? If yes, please explain. • What characteristics would prevent a person from being a leader or role model in your unit/organization?
Rituals	**Values**
• What activities are typical or regularly take place in your unit/organization? • Are there social rituals? • Who usually participates in such gatherings? • Are there restrictions (veiled or otherwise) to participate in these rituals? • Are there limitations regarding what can be said or done in said meetings (naturally, besides outlawed behaviour)? • Is there someone you would like to participate or that you would prefer not to participate in said meetings? • Are there typical hazing, welcoming or farewell practices in your unit/organization? Please describe some of them. • Are there private jokes in your unit or between a considerable number of staff in your unit/organization? • Is there coded language or slang to refer to some people or subjects? If yes, please explain.	• What are the values that you believe to be the most important in your unit/organization? • Do you share these values? • Do you give such values the same primacy as your unit/organization does? • Do you believe all staff are treated equally, with respect and dignity? • Would you feel comfortable/be willing to submit a complaint if you were victim of a human rights violation by or with the acquiescence of your organization? • Do you know what the complaint procedures are? • Would you fear retaliation in reporting a violation (against you or others)? • Are the opportunities for training, promotion, and skills enhancement the same for all in your unit/organization? • Do you feel there are individuals or groups of individuals that are favoured or disadvantaged directly or indirectly (e.g., because information is not easily accessible)?

Annexe 6
Organizational analysis checklist[63]

- What is the status and profile, image, identity of the organization?

- What are the organization's external relations, cooperation with other organizations, networking?

- What is the rationale behind work?

- What are the objectives of the unit?

- What are the strategies to achieve objectives?

- What activities have been undertaken to implement strategy and achieve the objectives?

- What is the current organizational chart? How are tasks, responsibility and authority divided/allocated?

- What procedures and tools does the organization/unit use for programme analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation?

- What are the decision-making procedures within the organization/unit?

- What are the personnel policies with the unit? Please address recruitment, career prospects, career advancement practices, selection and training.

- Is the knowledge and information produced and accessible within the organization/unit?

- Are there resources, funding and material infrastructure to enhance individual human rights and gender balance/equality within the organization/unit?

- What are the norms and values, the organizational culture?

63 Reproduced with minor changes from the organizational checklist in the ILO, Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators, p.77.

Annexe 7
SWOT analysis chart

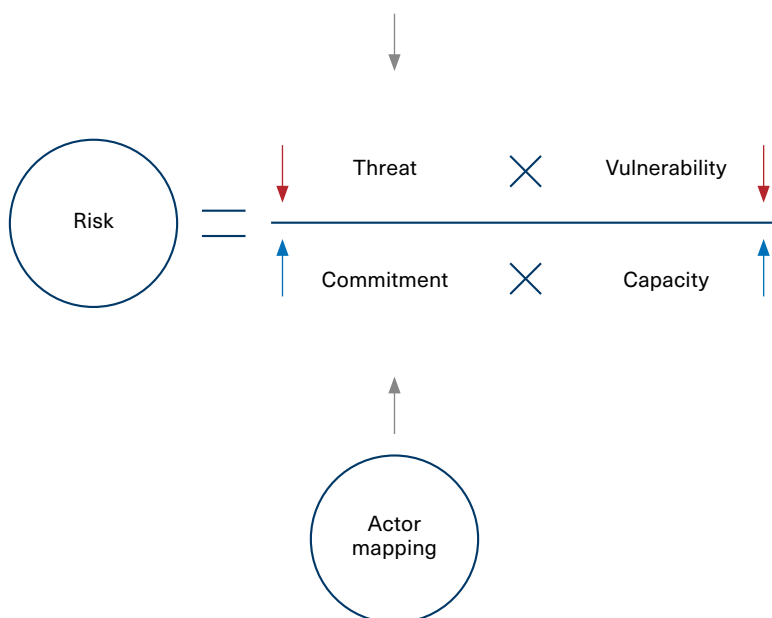| SWOT ANALYSIS	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
The unit's strengths will be identified and described.	**The unit's weaknesses will be identified and described.**
Questions to ask: What are the unit's strengths, what is the source of such strengths and how can they be improved?	*Questions to ask*: What are the organization's weakness, the sources for such weaknesses and how can they be addressed?
Opportunities	**Threats**
Opportunities to explore will be identified and analysed.	**Constraints/threats the unit faces will be identified and analysed.**
Questions to ask: What are the unit's current and long-term opportunities, how can the organization seize these opportunities and what can be improved in terms of human rights and gender equality performance?	*Questions to ask*: What constraints/threats with respect to human rights and gender equality does the unit currently face? What changes need to be made to overcome those constraints?

Annexe 8
SWOT matrix

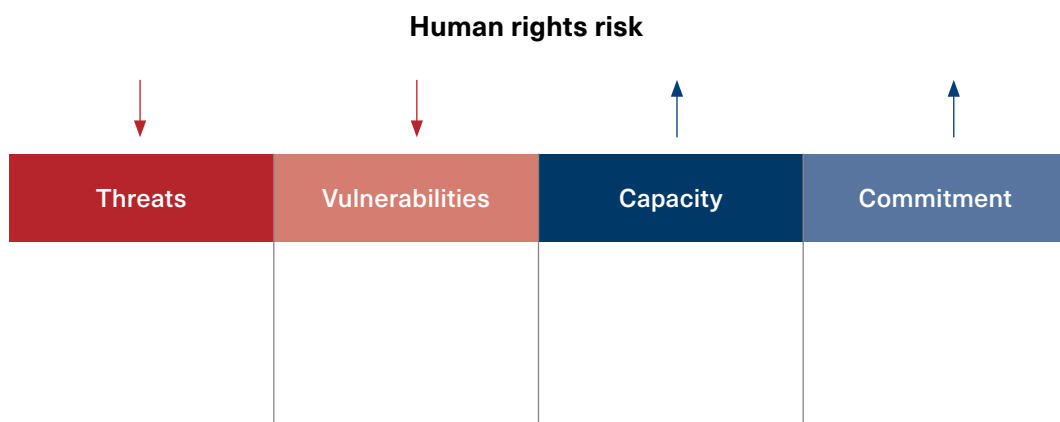|	Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	S-O Analysis *How can the unit's strengths be employed to explore the existing opportunities?*	W-O Analysis *How can weaknesses be transformed into opportunities? How can weaknesses be overcome to take advantage of the existing development opportunities?*
Threats	S-T Analysis *Which constraints/threats can be countered with which strengths? How can the unit's strengths prevent certain threats from arising?*	W-T Analysis *How can weakness of the organization be overcome to counteract/prevent threats? Which activities should be avoided to minimize threats and overcome the existing constraints?*

Annexe 9
Human rights risk equation diagram

$$\text{Risk} = \frac{\text{Threat} \times \text{Vulnerability}}{\text{Commitment} \times \text{Capacity}}$$

Action required to reduce the risk of human rights violation

$$\text{Risk} = \frac{\downarrow \text{Threat} \times \text{Vulnerability} \downarrow}{\uparrow \text{Commitment} \times \text{Capacity} \uparrow}$$

Actor mapping

Annexe 10
Human rights risk equation strategic planning table

Human rights risk

Threats	Vulnerabilities	Capacity	Commitment

Annexe 11
Guiding questions for After Action Review exercise

- Did the session/exercise/workshop provide you with new insights/knowledge about human rights and gender?

- Do you believe it will help you to approach human rights and gender equality in a different manner?

- Did the methodology of the assessment help you to learn?

- Was the methodology useful in making you aware of characteristics/performance of your organization and/or yourself concerning human rights and gender issues?

- Did the methodology help you to see how your own and your organization's working methods could be changed in order to maximize respect and enjoyment of human rights and gender responsiveness?
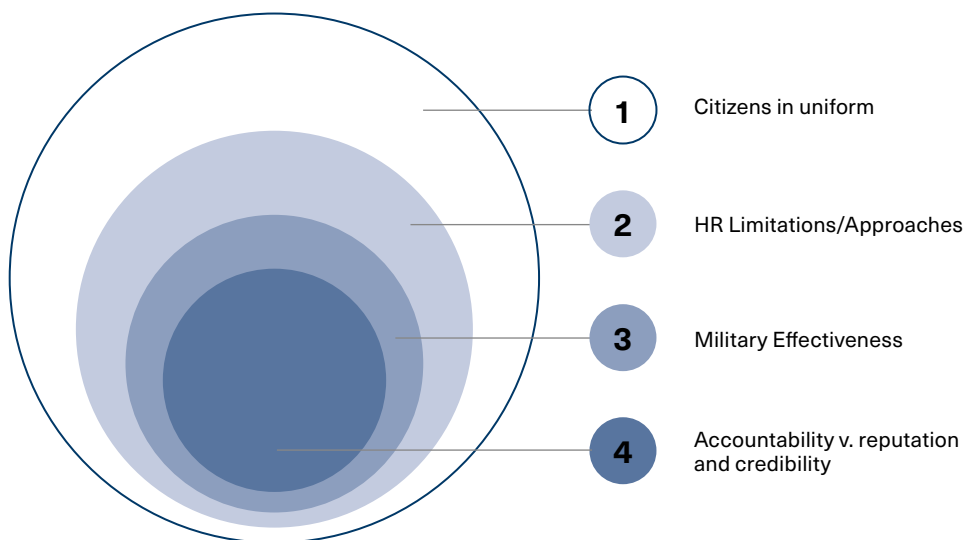
Annexe 12
Assessment report template

- Executive summary

- Acknowledgements

- List of abbreviations and acronyms

- Introduction

- Methodology

- Key findings

- Personnel and human resources

- Legal framework and organizational policy

- Planning and operations

- Budgeting

- Implementation, complaints and oversight mechanisms

- Education and training

- Conclusions

- Good practices and lessons learned

- Recommendations

ANNEXES

Annexe 13
Gender and human rights in the armed forces – supporting materials

1. Citizens in uniform
2. HR Limitations/Approaches
3. Military Effectiveness
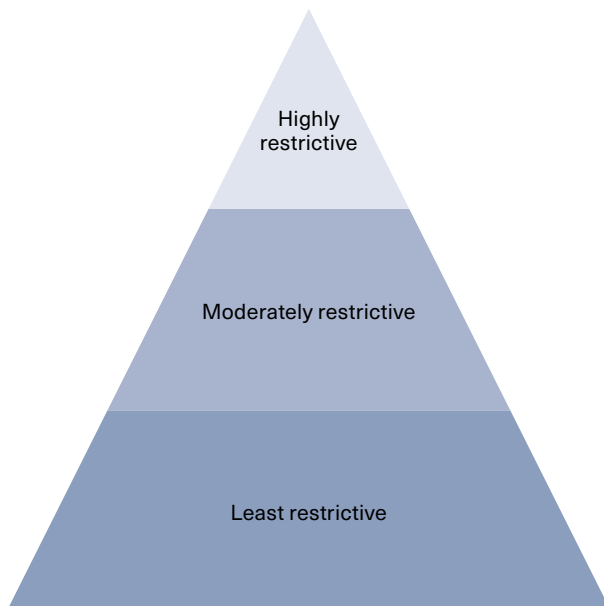4. Accountability v. reputation and credibility

Concepts and principles

- Human rights
- Gender
- In armed forces

Key human rights in the armed forces

- Life
- Liberty and security
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Fair trial and effective remedy
- Freedom of thought, religion, belief
- Prohibition on torture and CIDT
- Equal participation in political and public affairs
- Freedom of opinion and expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Enforcement
- Superior orders and command responsibility

Annexe 13

Human rights and restrictive policies

Highly
restrictive

Moderately restrictive

Least restrictive

Specific groups

Women

Religious,
ethnic,
linguistic
minority

Children

LGBTI