

IMS Office of the Gender Advisor: The High North and the Gender Perspective

What is it?

Gender is an important factor shaping security paradigms in the High North. Using a gender lens is of fundamental importance to evaluate the effectiveness of international operations. The intersection of gender and regional security threats - including hybrid attacks - and the intersection of gender with other marginalised identity makers are fundamental aspects to consider in preparing for, preventing and responding to security threats in the High North.

The Intersection of Gender and Hybrid Threats in the High North

Hybrid threats are a major security concern in the High North, characterised by extensive intelligence gathering and hacking incidents. The proximity of Russia's military installations in the polar peninsula adds a layer of complexity. These threats extend beyond traditional military tactics, exploiting social fault lines, including gender inequalities, to destabilise and polarise democratic societies.

Disinformation campaigns during Finland's elections exploited societal prejudices to cast doubt on women's ability to lead.

THE PRIO MATRIX: GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ACTION

	INTEGRATION	PARTICIPATION
EXTERNAL	<p>Relevance for mission/objectives/ situational awareness</p> <p>(CONTENT and RESULTS)</p>	<p>Relevance for interaction with external actors</p> <p>(KNOWLEDGE and SUPPORT)</p>
INTERNAL	<p>Relevance for organization</p> <p>(SCENARIOS and CAPACITY)</p>	<p>Relevance for equal opportunities professional conduct</p> <p>(MOBILIZATION and BEHAVIOR)</p>

PRIO Matrix: Understanding the Gender Perspective in Military Organisations

The PRIO Matrix systematically addresses the Gender Perspective in military organisations and operations in four key areas:

1. **External Integration:** understanding the societal impacts of conflict, particularly for vulnerable groups. The direct targeting of civilians, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), refugee movements and internal displacement, all pose different risks to men, women, boys and girls. Military targeting of civilian infrastructures have significant and specific consequences for women's health and security.

2. **External Participation:** the division of roles and responsibility in a society is an important entry point as distribution is often gendered. In Sweden, the labour market is divided along gender lines, with men dominating military defence and women dominating civilian institutions for defence and resilience. These considerations can improve decision-making capacity in security and defence.

3. **Internal Integration:** a critical starting point is the ability to collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data. This analysis gives greater detail on gender-based vulnerabilities and potential outcomes.

4. **Internal Participation:** often discussed in terms of female recruitment and retention, another important dimension is to be considered, i.e., mobilisation during a crisis. Government support for child and elderly care promotes high labour participation. Given the gendered labour distributions, women may be unable to mobilise if child and elderly care are not supported during a crisis. This consideration applies to military and civilian defence and resilience.

The PRIO Matrix is relevant for the military because it outlines a roadmap for incorporating the Gender Perspective into military planning, emphasising the importance of identifying civilian vulnerabilities, improving decision-making capacities and using sex-disaggregated data. Integrating the Gender Perspective is a strategic imperative for building resilience and inclusivity in the face of evolving threats in the High North.