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Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence by United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

2021 Annual Summaries of Activities and Good Practices





In Northwestern Central African Republic, female military observers interact with vendors in the local market to inquire about the security situation. © MINUSCA

“ I died and came back to life, I haven’t forgiven, and I don’t want to forgive; now, all I want is justice.”

Anonymous survivor of CRSV

 Read voices of survivors of CRSV in the Digital Book [“In Their Own Words”](#) published by the UN in 2021 (click [here](#))



This report features **17 stories** of activities illustrating the progress made by United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations in preventing and responding to **Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)** in 2021, with the aim of identifying and sharing good practices. These stories are presented according to the **five priority objectives** outlined in the *Policy for UN Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to CRSV* (2019).

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Cover photo credit: © MINUSCA Top Women and girls from Paoua in the Central African Republic attend an awareness-raising session on conflict-related sexual violence and grave violations of children's rights. Bottom left: © MINUSCA Validation workshop for the new Action Plan on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence adopted by Malian authorities in October 2021. Bottom right: © MINUSCA MINUSMA's police patrols the town of Menaka in Mali in June 2021. Left photo: © MINUSCA Awareness-raising session for 100 women, girls, and young mothers at a Police Station in Juba on underage and forced marriages and minor protection.



What is Conflict-Related Sexual Violence ?

Conflict-related sexual violence is sexual violence directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. It takes the form of rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, and other crimes of comparable gravity. While women and girls are disproportionately affected, men and boys are also victims/survivors. CRSV is frequently used as a tactic of war and terror by conflict parties and other perpetrators profiting from the breakdown of law and order.

Overview of CRSV trends in 2021 in peacekeeping contexts

In 2021, four UN peacekeeping operations had specific Security Council mandates to prevent and respond to CRSV: MINUSCA in the Central African Republic (CAR), MINUSMA in Mali, MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and UNMISS in South Sudan.



In Mali, cases of CRSV were recorded alongside human rights violations as the security situation further deteriorated, largely due to an intensification in violence by extremist groups, community-based armed groups, and militias. Sexual violence was reportedly the first perceived concern for girls and the second perceived concern for women in zones affected by the conflict, including both displaced and non-displaced women, according to a Multisector Needs Assessment by the Mali Humanitarian Country Team.



Increasing levels of CRSV were documented in CAR in 2021, in the context of electoral violence and deepened political, security and humanitarian crisis. Clashes triggered further waves of internal displacement during which women and girls were attacked by armed groups, national armed forces and other security personnel.



In South Sudan, CRSV continued to be driven by intercommunal violence, displacement and prevailing insecurity across the country. Perpetrators included organized armed groups, civil defense groups, government security forces and other armed elements, who often committed sexual violence with the intent to terrorize and subjugate rival ethnic communities.



High rates of CRSV were documented in the DRC amid persistent local conflicts, armed group activism, and a "state of siege" declared by the Government in the Eastern provinces in May 2021. Sexual violence was reportedly used as a tactic to control natural resources and territory by non-state actors and as a means of retaliation against civilians by national armed forces in certain conflict zones.

Additional information on country-specific situations can be accessed in the 2021 Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence ([read here](#)).



The following stories are presented according to the five priority objectives for peacekeeping operations outlined in the Policy for UN Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to CRSV (2019) ([read here](#)).



WOMEN'S PROTECTION ADVISERS are deployed at the request of the UN Security Council as experts to support mission leadership and components in preventing and responding to CRSV affecting women, girls, men, and boys. In 2021, there were only 15 professional-level Women's Protection Advisers deployed to assist the nearly 70,000 personnel in peacekeeping missions with mandates on CRSV.

"As Senior Women's Protection Adviser, I provided strategic advice to mission leadership and assisted civil, military and police components of MINUSCA in strengthening our collective response to CRSV. I have also strengthened ties with civil society and networks of survivors to ensure our actions are guided by a survivor-centered approach—one where we put ourselves on the same level as the survivor. Despite the uncountable challenges in preventing and responding to CRSV in CAR, what has continued to motivate me is the pursuit of justice and redress for survivors as a key condition for restoring peace."

Ms. Beatrix Attinger Colijn, Senior Women's Protection Adviser in MINUSCA from 2015 to 2022



Objective 1 – Prevention and protection

Peacekeeping operations must provide prevention and protection for those facing the risk of CRSV, including through the identification of risks, early warning, advocacy, dialogue with parties to the conflict, and preventive and reactive measures, including use of force.

STORY 1 UNMISS Adoption of a new Action Plan for the Armed Forces on CRSV

In January 2021, the Joint Defence Board and the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs adopted the "Action Plan for the Armed Forces on addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in South Sudan: January 2021-December 2023" following continued engagement and technical assistance by UNMISS in collaboration with the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. This Plan consolidates previous commitments by the South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA-IO) to prevent CRSV and ensure accountability for such crimes by a unified and professional national army as well as to provide protection of victims, witnesses and judicial actors. The Senior Women's Protection Adviser provides ongoing technical support to the Technical Committee established pursuant to the Action Plan which is mandated to lead its implementation strategy. Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan is among the five benchmarks set by the UN Security Council for the review of the arms embargo measures imposed against South Sudan.



Launch of the Action Plan in Juba June 2021. © UNMISS

STORY 2 MINUSCA Dialogue and sensitization with local leaders to prevent CRSV related to transhumance



Community sensitization on CRSV organized in Batangafo, CAR, in March 2021. © MINUSCA

In CAR, sexual violence is endemic to the annual transhumance period activity, a seasonal movement of livestock, which is characterized by local conflict between nomads and farmers and fueled by armed groups. MINUSCA has mainstreamed CRSV prevention as part of conflict-prevention efforts in Batangafo, Ouham prefecture, thanks to collaboration between the Civil Affairs Section, Human Rights Division and the Force together with UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, local authorities and transhumance and farmer leaders. After documenting specific CRSV trends and patterns related to transhumance, MINUSCA increased patrols in hotspots and engaged local transhumance community leaders.

In a workshop held in March 2021, transhumance community leaders from the region were gathered and agreed to help identify cases of sexual violence and to address sexual violence issues in local protection solutions that were established, including sensitization efforts and a local protection working group.

STORY 3 MONUSCO Joint protection deployments in response to CRSV incidents

Throughout 2021, the UN Military deployed and secured temporary bases in South Kivu, North Kivu, Tanganyika, and Ituri provinces which enabled field missions by civilian components to assess the protection and security situation and document cases of human rights violations, including CRSV. Joint Assessment Missions and Joint Protection Teams, bringing together civilian, police, and military components, were also deployed in several hotspots following allegations of CRSV to raise awareness on CRSV and strengthen community protection mechanisms. In South Kivu, two of these missions were deployed in partnership with the Panzi Foundation to enable the delivery of assistance for sexual violence survivors in remote rural locations.



UN Police Patrol Menaka Region in North-East Mali. © MINUSMA

STORY 4 UNMISS and MINUSMA Engaging with conflict parties to mitigate risks of CRSV



International Women's Day in Aweil, South Sudan, was all about showcasing local talents. © UNMISS

In South Sudan, UNMISS engagement with the National Salvation Front/Army (NAS) led to the group adopting a Unilateral Communique on addressing CRSV in late 2020. Subsequently, through mentoring sessions held in early 2021, UNMISS trained the senior leadership of the NAS, including the group's high-level focal point on CRSV, on knowledge on CRSV prevention and response. Information was subsequently disseminated by those trained to the group's leadership and field commanders. The departure of the high-level focal point in late 2021 has made sustained engagement with the group on CRSV more challenging.

In 2021, MINUSMA held several technical meetings with CRSV focal points of the armed groups

Plateforme des Mouvements du 14 Juin d'Alger and *Coalition des mouvements de l'Azawad* to monitor the progress of implementation plans to prevent and respond to CRSV previously developed by these groups as well as to plan future activities. The focal points agreed to conduct activities in Kidal and Timbuktu to monitor the mid-term progress of the different plans.

STORY 5 MINUSMA The Government of Mali and MINUSMA sign a Joint Action Plan on CRSV

In October 2021, a workshop organized by MINUSMA and the Malian Government saw the finalization and validation of a three-year Action Plan to implement the Joint Communique signed by the Government and the UN on the Prevention and Response to CRSV in 2019. The workshop gathered representatives from Ministries, UN agencies, and the civil society organizations. The Action Plan covers targeted interventions on prevention and social mobilization, protection, fighting impunity, and access to multisectoral care for sexual violence survivors, such as medical assistance, psychosocial support, security and protection, and access to justice. Each strategic pillar of the Plan is led by a Line Ministry and co-led by a UN entity, with overall coordination ensured by the Senior Women's Protection Adviser. This important landmark is the result of sustained advocacy by MINUSMA with the Government and the Mission's convening of several multi-stakeholder consultations since the signature of the Joint Communique in 2019, despite political instability in the country.



Officials from five Ministries of the Malian Government participated in the CRSV Action Plan validation workshop in October 2021. © MINUSMA



STORY 6 MINUSCA Integrating CRSV concerns and survivors' voices into ceasefire monitoring and peace processes

In the framework of the local committees created under the peace agreement signed in CAR in 2019, MINUSCA's field offices engaged in dialogue with local authorities, parties involved in the conflict, civil society groups, and relevant stakeholders to raise awareness on CRSV and integrate prevention and response to CRSV into the work of these working groups, including ceasefire monitoring. In Vakaga Prefecture, sensitization on CRSV by MINUSCA during local committee meetings resulted in increased reports of sexual violence to the local gendarmerie. MINUSCA also promoted a survivor-centered approach in these efforts, recognizing that participation of sexual violence survivors is crucial for peacebuilding, mediation, and reconciliation within communities. For instance, in Mbomou Prefecture, MINUSCA integrated survivors of sexual violence in its program on women participation in political life and facilitated their participation in dialogue sessions focused on the revitalization of the peace agreement.



Authorities and MINUSCA meet with inhabitants of Mboki in CAR as part of efforts to strengthen the capacities of members of the local Technical Security Committee. © MINUSCA

MILITARY CRSV FOCAL POINTS are appointed by the Force Commander in the mission's Force Headquarters and Sectors to work closely with the Senior Women's Protection Adviser and integrate CRSV in their areas of work. The military CRSV Focal Point in Force Headquarters advises the Force Commander and military branches on the prevention and response to CRSV and acts as a bridge between the military, civilian, and police components to promote comprehensive responses to CRSV.

“ My role is to advise the Force Commander in MONUSCO on Gender, Child Protection, and CRSV matters, including the development and implementation of directives and policies. Using innovative ways to promote these agendas within the military component is key. To succeed, it is also crucial to collaborate strongly across the Mission: by working together, we have a greater impact for reducing CRSV and human rights violations. We have notably had huge success with our 13 female and mixed engagement teams who conduct daily patrols, often to remote villages, offering security, advice, education and sensitization programs. I also help provide CRSV training to all Force elements and, by request, to national counterparts. My motivation for this role has been through meeting children who have been victims of CRSV and conflict. We must work together to end CRSV and provide a better world for the adults of tomorrow. ”

Lt Col Sophie Gregory, CRSV Focal Point in Force Headquarters in MONUSCO
from August 2021 to June 2022



Objective 2 – Ending impunity for CRSV

Peacekeeping operations must support the fight against impunity for CRSV, including through advocacy for credible investigations and prosecutions, promoting effective remedies for victims/survivors, and supporting legislative and policy reform.

STORY 7 MONUSCO Assistance to judicial authorities lead to convictions for CRSV and protection of survivors during judicial processes

MONUSCO provided technical and financial support to Congolese judicial authorities for the conduct of national investigations and court hearings for sexual violence cases in collaboration with external partners such as the Panzi Foundation and Physicians for Human Rights. In 2021, despite challenges posed by the “state of siege” in Eastern provinces, the UN Joint Human Rights Office supported 12 Joint Investigation Teams and 16 mobile court hearings organized by military and civil justice authorities throughout the country to bring to justice the perpetrators of serious human rights violations, including CRSV. During the year, Congolese military courts convicted a total of 118 members of national armed forces, 28 members of the national police, and ten members of armed groups for CRSV-related crimes. MONUSCO also ensured the safe participation of victims and witnesses in emblematic judicial proceedings such as the trial against a former armed group chief, Chance Mihonya Kolokolo who led a Raïa Mutomboki faction operating in South Kivu. In September, the provincial military court found him guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including by murder, rape, and recruitment and use of children, and sentenced him to life imprisonment.



Mobile court hearing for rape cases held in Uvira, DRC, in September 2021. © MONUSCO



A peacekeeper from MINUSCA engages with women and children in CAR during the celebration of International Women's Rights Day, on 8 March 2022 © MINUSCA

STORY 8 MINUSCA Integrated and coordinated efforts in support of accountability for CRSV

MINUSCA continued to assist the national *Joint Rapid Response Unit to Prevent Sexual Violence against Women and Children* (UMIRR) in Bangui with an integrated and coordinated approach that leveraged expertise of Women's Protection Advisers, the UNPOL Specialized Police Teams on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, Justice and Corrections, the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, UNDP, among others. This collaboration enabled capacity building of national investigators on investigating sexual violence cases, including CRSV, and helped ensure the effective collection of evidence and transfer of cases to the relevant prosecutors' offices. In October 2021, MINUSCA and partners also facilitated the deployment of judicial actors to conduct further investigations of sexual violence crimes perpetrated in Kaga-Bandoro and financial partners provided assistance towards the UMIRR's geographical expansion in Bouar, one of the CRSV hotspots in the country, to enable further investigations into armed groups' violations. With regards to assistance to survivors, the Mission, UNDP, the UN Team of Experts along with other UN agencies, including UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM, jointly supported national authorities in improving the UMIRR's internal referral system and the quality of multisectoral services provided to survivors.



Click [here](#) to watch a video to learn more about UMIRR and the impact of COVID on sexual and gender-based violence in CAR.

STORY 9 MINUSMA High-level advocacy and technical assistance to bring CRSV cases to court

In Mali, MINUSMA continued to advocate with the Minister of Justice and judges from the *Specialized Judicial Unit* for progress in prosecuting CRSV crimes committed during the Islamist occupation and Tuareg rebellion in North Mali in 2012-2013 and recent CRSV cases in North and Central Mali. Last year, MINUSMA and the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict released an evaluation report of the judicial response to crimes of CRSV, which focused on pending case files against more than 200 victims of CRSV. Building on this, in June 2021, MINUSMA and the Team of Experts supported the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and the Ministry of the Promotion of Women, Children, and Family to assess progress in judicial proceedings for CRSV cases and to conduct a prioritization of emblematic case files. Civil society organizations that accompany and support survivors from North Mali since 2012 participated in the workshop to contribute to the stocktaking exercise. As a result of this workshop, judicial authorities decided to prioritize four cases complaints. MINUSMA and the Team of Experts will continue to collaborate with judicial authorities, civil society organizations, and survivors so that these cases are investigated and prosecuted in line with international standards and a survivor-centered approach.

The TEAM OF EXPERTS on the RULE OF LAW and SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT (the “Team of Experts”) was created by Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) to assist national authorities in strengthening the rule of law, with the aim of ensuring criminal accountability for perpetrators of CRSV. The Team of Experts is based at the UN Headquarters in New York and, since it became operational in 2011, has undertaken missions and deployments to CAR, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Guinea, Iraq, Liberia, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur) and Syria.

“ Within the Team of Experts, I work closely with national judicial authorities to address impunity for CRSV. More specifically, I support legislative reform and strengthen national capacity to investigate and prosecute CRSV. In 2021, I partnered with MONUSCO and the Justice and Corrections Standing Capacity to assess the judicial response to CRSV in the DRC. This assessment identifies gaps and recommends priority actions for national authorities to enhance criminal accountability, judicial capacity, and responsiveness to victims, including through the provision of reparations. To have the greatest impact, all our work is done in close collaboration with peacekeeping missions and UN Country Teams. It is only through these partnerships that the UN can promote a truly victim-centered national rule of law response. ”

Ms. Marion Deniaud, Judicial Affairs Officer,
Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict



© Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict



In Bria, CAR, beneficiaries of a Community Violence Reduction project discuss with a MINUSCA Community Liaison Officer to prepare the harvest of a corn field. © MINUSCA

Objective 3 – Awareness and condemnation of CRSV

Peacekeeping operations must raise awareness and condemn CRSV, including through the provision of an evidence base for action through the operationalization of the CRSV monitoring, analysis, and reporting arrangements (MARA).

STORY 10 MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO and UNMISS Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting on CRSV

Documentation of trends and patterns of CRSV is a critical tool for preventing and responding to these crimes, including ensuring accountability. In CAR, Mali, the DRC, and South Sudan, the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA) Working Groups brought together CRSV focal points from all mission components and sections, as well as members of UN Country Teams and Humanitarian Teams, to analyze and share information on CRSV incidents and coordinate prevention and response strategies. Nearly 90% of incidents recorded in the 2021 Secretary-General's Annual Report on CRSV came from mission settings with an established MARA Working Group which is coordinated by Women's Protection Advisers. Missions have also facilitated extensive consultations with civil society organizations and contributed to the Special Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Girls Who Become Pregnant as a Result of Sexual Violence in Conflict and Children Born of Sexual Violence in Conflict released in January 2022 (click [here](#) to read).



A Medical Unit of the Uruguayan contingent provides psychological assistance to displaced women and unaccompanied children in Mugunga, DRC, in February 2021. © MONUSCO



STORY 11 MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO and UNMISS Raising public awareness on CRSV and ending stigma against survivors



Under the leadership of Heads of Missions, MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS leveraged public information tools, such as radios and social media platforms, to raise awareness on CRSV and promote empowerment of survivors around international days and campaigns, including International Women's Day on 8 March, the International Day on the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict on 19 June, and the 16 Days of Activism against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in November and December. For instance, UNMISS

released a video on stigma faced by survivors of CRSV on social media which was produced in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare (Click [here](#) to watch). This year again, the Mission supported the Council of Churches of South Sudan in disseminating key messages in a public statement to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. MONUSCO used Twitter to amplify the voices of elected officials condemning sexual and gender-based violence. In MINUSCA, the Senior Women's Protection Adviser regularly participated in the Mission's press conference together with the Deputy Director of the UMIRR to inform the media about the activities to fight against impunity for sexual violence. Across these missions, awareness-raising workshops on CRSV and related topics were organized with multiple audiences, including women's groups, community leaders, members of civil society organizations, youth, students and many more.

Number of publications related to CRSV and sexual and gender-based violence published by the missions on their social media and website pages in 2021:



At least
59 publications



At least
60 publications



At least
30 publications



At least
39 publications

Mission leaders stand to end CRSV

“ When it comes to CRSV, the job is not so much to multiply texts and conventions, but to work for their implementation, which is a long-term task. This requires the mobilization of our Malian partners and at all levels. ”

MINUSMA Head of Mission



Click [here](#) to listen to MINUSMA's Head of Mission El-Ghassim Wane who spoke at a round table on gender-based violence in Mali on the waves of Radio Mikado, together with the Senior Women's Protection Adviser and the President of the Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des droits des Femmes (APDF), in December 2021. © MINUSMA

“ Often survivors are stigmatized by their own communities for what happened. From their stories, we have learnt that the burden of stigma can be as lethal as the violence itself. Security forces and other armed groups must intensify all preventive efforts. I urge them to hold to account all those who commit, command or condone CRSV. Furthermore, families, communities and institutions must acknowledge the suffering endured by survivors of sexual violence and must stand ready to empower survivors. ”

UNMISS Head of Mission

Click [here](#) and [here](#) to watch UNMISS' Head of Mission Nicholas Haysom advocating for collective action to prevent CRSV in two video statements marking the International Day on the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict and the 16 Days of Activism campaigns.



STORY 12 MONUSCO Raising awareness of communities to detect, report and protect against CRSV

In the DRC, MONUSCO raised awareness on CRSV concerns through community protection and capacity building activities for civil society, local authorities, women associations, and Local Protection Committees. These Committees accompany and support the community's efforts to identify the major protection threats it faces and create synergy to develop local resilience mechanisms to address them. MONUSCO assisted Local Protection Committees in updating their Community Protection Plans by integrating specific protection threats such as CRSV risks and mitigating measures for women and girls. During the year, at least 1126 people, including 276 women, were sensitized on protection, including CRSV, by the Civil Affairs Section.



Joint Protection Team in Kobu Djugu © MONUSCO



The UN Police interacts with the local population at the market during a patrol in the region of Menaka, Mali, which has experienced increasing insecurity as a result of attacks by terrorist groups and other armed groups. © MINUSMA

Objective 4 – Building capacity of national actors to address CRSV

Peacekeeping operations must contribute to building national capacity, including justice, law enforcement, and military authorities and supporting the implementation of national commitments on CRSV.

MISSION LEADERSHIP'S commitment is critical for CRSV to be effectively prioritized across the mission. The Head of Mission/Special Representatives of the Secretary General (SRSG), Force Commander, Police Commissioner, Military and Police Sector Commanders, and Heads of Offices all have specific responsibilities to prevent and respond to CRSV. Leadership must notably ensure CRSV is integrated into analysis, planning and operations at every stage of a mission's life cycle.

“ Since I started my role as Police Commissioner in MINUSCA, I undertook a vast sensitization and training campaign to change attitudes towards sexual violence. Many people are influenced by misconceptions which unconsciously promote sexual violence and undermine efforts to prevent or prosecute it. The campaign aims to dispel these misapprehensions. I launched this campaign with sensitization seminars for Central African prosecutors and judges, as well as MINUSCA personnel. Many participants have testified that the seminars have profoundly transformed their understanding of the issue of sexual violence. One of them who is a judge said that he will no longer be the same judge after the sensitization. ”

Christophe Kabango Bizimungu, Police Commissioner in MINUSCA since June 2021



In Bocaranga, CAR, MINUSCA soldiers and military observers conduct an Area domination operation to secure and interact with the population. © MINUSCA

STORY 13 MINUSMA Training future Malian policers and commissioners on handling CRSV cases

In June 2021, MINUSMA and the Malian Police Academy launched a joint project to integrate new CRSV modules within the national police training curriculum and to build the capacity of the Malian police on CRSV. The project was a response to high rates of underreporting from survivors due to prevailing impunity and aimed to prevent the sexual violence perpetrated by members of the national police. Thanks to this initiative, future police officers and commissioners in Mali were trained to effectively handle cases of CRSV, uphold good conduct and ultimately contribute to fighting against the current culture of impunity. The Malian Police leadership also designated two high-level and regional CRSV focal points across the country. Since the beginning of the project, MINUSMA has trained more than 4434 students from the Police Academy, including 910 women, as well as 25 instructors who are progressively taking charge of dispensing the courses with support from Women's Protection Advisers. In parallel to these capacity-building efforts, UNPOL increased the number of operations and patrols in areas with higher sexual violence incident rates. Gender focal points in the northern and central regions of Mali also continued to raise awareness and build the capacities of the Malian Security Forces on preventing and addressing CRSV.



In June 2021, the new partnership between the Malian Police and MINUSMA on capacity-building of the national police on CRSV is launched
© MINUSMA

STORY 14 MONUSCO National armed forces and police sign deeds of commitments on CRSV following training sessions

In the context of the mission's drawdown, MONUSCO has accentuated efforts to support the Congolese Government with the implementation of the national Action Plans on CRSV of the armed forces (FARDC) and of the national police (PNC) signed in 2015 and 2019 respectively. This has included provision of technical assistance by the Senior Women's Protection Adviser to the Special Advisor to the President in assessing progress made on implementation of these action plans and sustained advocacy to the FARDC Commission and PNC Division for Women and Children Protection. In 2021, the UN Joint Human Rights Office delivered 13 trainings on human rights and CRSV which benefitted nearly 190 armed forces and 130 police elements, leading to the signature of 180 deeds of commitments, including by 10 military Generals and 30 senior military Commanders and three police Generals and 15 senior police Commanders. In parallel, UNPOL and the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict supported the national police with the operationalization of a Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Case Management and Archive System in 12 locations and the establishment of 10 gender desks in police stations across the country, which is increasing their effectiveness in processing and investigating cases.



In July 2021, MONUSCO raised awareness of national security forces on human rights, including CRSV © MONUSCO



The Special Police Team on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence organized a workshop for police investigators in December 2021 © MONUSCO



Female peacekeepers from the military, civilian and police components of MINUSCA. © MINUSCA

Objective 5 – Empowerment of survivors of CRSV

Peacekeeping operations must support the empowerment of survivors of CRSV, through participation in political processes and referral for support services.

STORY 15 UNMISS Release and reintegration of former abductees and CRSV survivors

Since early 2021, UNMISS facilitated the release, family tracing and reunification of 142 victims (42 women, 54 boys and 46 girls) abducted within the context of intercommunal violence in Jonglei and the Pibor Administrative Area in South Sudan. Interventions were carried out within the framework of the Reconciliation Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund (RSRTF) which promotes comprehensive and durable approaches to addressing root causes and structural drivers of conflict. The project, which has received positive feedback from Government officials and community members, aims to reduce cycles of violence at the community and local levels and establishing lasting peaceful co-existence. This is attained through advocacy for the prevention of the abduction of women and children, who are frequently exposed to sexual violence during their captivity and through support for the return and reintegration of the victims wishing to return to their families and communities. Despite ongoing intercommunal tensions, the project has contributed to the improved local peace and conflict dynamics in 2021, which was marked by a stark decrease in abductions in this area compared to 2020. The project also facilitated the provision of humanitarian and protection assistance to abductees, tailored to their individual needs, in line with a survivor-centered approach, while they awaited reunification. This included, for instance, trauma counselling and other forms of comprehensive case management for sexual violence survivors. Gender and age-sensitive community mobilization and awareness-raising activities focusing on protection risks were organized to ease the reintegration of victims within communities. Moreover, nearly 500 women and girls were empowered to act as change agents and prevent abductions and different forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including CRSV.

STORY 16 MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO and UNMISS Promoting access to reparations for CRSV survivors

All four missions have established collaboration with the Global Survivor's Fund with the objective of increasing access to reparations by survivors of sexual violence, including CRSV. In the DRC, MONUSCO is notably advocating for and supporting the Congolese Government to draft a legislation on the provision of reparations for survivors of CRSV, including through the creation of a national reparations fund, in collaboration with the Global Survivors Fund and the Panzi Foundation. In CAR, the participation of the Global Survivors Fund in the MARA Working Group has raised awareness and engagement of the Working Group members on the issue of reparations. Furthermore, a close collaboration was established with the Fund to build synergies in programming with survivors' associations and ensure their informed engagement with the UN.



Two-day workshop on survivor-centered investigation and fact-finding techniques for allegations of sexual violence organized by UNMISS in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Peacebuilding, Ministry of Health, and the national police. © UNMISS



STORY 17 MINUSCA Honoring civil society organizations promoting the rights of CRSV survivors

MINUSMA continued to collaborate with, and provide capacity building and material assistance to, six civil society organizations dedicated to supporting CRSV survivors since the 2012 crisis, when widespread cases of rape, sexual slavery, and forced marriage were reported. These organizations have notably helped to document cases of CRSV, initiated judicial proceedings against perpetrators, and assisted survivors participating in judicial process. In June 2021, MINUSMA organized a ceremony to honor the work of these six organizations and to handover medical kits so they can continue assisting survivors in respect of the COVID-19 prevention measures.



In June 2021, MINUSMA honors six civil society organizations working to promote access to justice for CRSV survivors.
© MINUSMA



Click [here](#) to listen to Oshcard Kouadio, Women's Protection Adviser in MINUSMA since 2015. He speaks about sexual violence trends and the work of MINUSMA to prevent and respond to CRSV in Mali (in French).



In Bangui, CAR, women participate in a parade on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of the proclamation of the country on 1 December 2021 © MINUSCA

Way forward

The **Action for Peacekeeping's (A4P) Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations** endorsed in 2018 reiterated commitments to

support tailored, context-specific peacekeeping approaches to protecting civilians, emphasizing the protection of women and children, and to hold all peacekeepers—particularly leadership—accountable for ensuring effective performance. In 2021, the UN Department of Peace Operations adopted **Action for Peacekeeping+ (A4P+) priorities** to accelerate progress on the implementation of the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations. In line with this ambition, the Department of Peace Operations commits to further strengthening peacekeeping missions' delivery of the CRSV mandate.



Our efforts to support the prevention and response to CRSV will continue to include the following areas of work:

- ▶ Promotion of whole-of-mission and coordinated approaches to mandate implementation, led by senior leadership, and in support of national commitments on CRSV
- ▶ Provision of user-friendly policy, guidance, and technical support on CRSV by Headquarters
- ▶ Learning from past transitions to ensure CRSV prevention and response is fully integrated into future mission transition processes
- ▶ Updating specialized and scenario-based training on CRSV so that personnel capacity to prevent and respond to CRSV is enhanced
- ▶ Contributing to enhanced coordination and coherence on CRSV across the UN system, notably through sustained participation in the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict network
- ▶ Helping to raise awareness on CRSV among UN Member States and the broad public to increase support to this mandate.



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Reference and contact

"2021 Annual Summaries of Activities and Good Practices in Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence by United Nations Peacekeeping Missions"

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🐦 [@UNPeacekeeping](https://twitter.com/UNPeacekeeping)

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