Introduction

In the period from 13th to 25th May 2018 RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation together with the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM) and the Personnel Department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia co-organized the “Gender Training of the Trainers Course (GToT)”. The importance of integrating the gender perspective in military operations in order to increase operational effectiveness had prompted NATO, as well as other national and multinational defence organisations to address, regulate and implement the integration of the gender perspective, both on the duty level and on the level of participation in Peace Support Operations (PSO).

This two-week Course prepares instructors and trainers to successfully plan, conduct and evaluate education, training and exercises on how to integrate the gender perspective within their own respective functional area. Its content provides the participants with the knowledge on frameworks and guidelines regulating gender in military operations as well as skills and competencies required to effectively plan, conduct and evaluate training on security sector personnel in both the national and international context. The subject Course was a direct result of five years of successful cooperation between the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, and RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation.

The GToT curricula was built based on the NCGM template certified by NATO with some improvements and adjustments in accordance with the lessons learned from previous similar training events held from 2014 onwards.
This year the Course continued to grow in terms of the regionally-owned aspect: for the first time the Course Director came from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina and most of the syndicate leaders and instructors came from the SEE region, while only one syndicate leader was a representative of the Swedish Armed Forces.

Out of this number 25 were Course students while the rest were involved in the Course execution as academic, administrative or support personnel.

### Execution

The GToT Course was a 10-day training event designed as a combination of lectures, corresponding individual and syndicate work, followed by a practical exercise and the final exam. Prior to their arrival the students were obliged to complete the NATO "ADL 169" online Course "Improving Operational Effectiveness by Integrating the Gender Perspective". Hence they arrived with a common level of knowledge on the subject matter.
contribute to joint work primarily as members of a designated group - a syndicate. The joint work started on 14th May with the Course opening ceremony during which Welcome addresses were given by RACVIAC Deputy Director, Brigadier General Gordana Garašić.

Brigadier General Garašić reminded the participants about the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security adopted in 2000 saying that “its historical value and weight is in the fact that it recognizes the disproportional impact that war and conflict have on women and children. Furthermore, it highlights the fact that historically women have been left out of the peace processes and stabilization efforts. To have a gender perspective means to be able to detect if and when men and women are being affected differently by a situation due to their gender”, she stated.

After a brief Official opening of the Course the work continued with participants’ introductions and a presentation of the general academic and administrative information which primarily included the learning outcomes and objectives of the Course, the Course schedule, and the individual responsibilities including a final exam. Furthermore, the syndicate system of work was presented and the four syndicates themselves were established (a syndicate set-up).

In the academic part the students were initially introduced to some of the basic training assessment tools, instructional strategies and techniques.

The first Course day ended with the Team building event which was designed to support the Course objectives and had the primary purpose of facilitating the students’ informal introduction, initial syndicate bonding and creation of the positive competitive spirit among the syndicates.

During the second day the students were introduced to the various gender related terms and definitions, the interlink between culture, religion and gender, the requirements, the learning objective and target audience analysis, international humanitarian law and human rights, framework and United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. The day concluded with the individual task of reading UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions.

Day three of the Course was dedicated to the familiarization with the main provisions of NATO BI-SC Directive 40-1(2017) and how to identify the gender perspective as a tool in the Commander’s operational tool kit. Additionally, students learned how to apply the gender perspective at the strategic, operational and tactical level in military tasks. The day concluded with conflict-
related sexual and gender-based violence topic and as a part of this topic a movie, “Greatest Silence”, was presented to the students, followed by a discussion.

Day four was dedicated to instructional strategies and methods, how to prepare the lesson plan/training module, how to plan gender training at different levels, and how to identify the training requirements and learning objectives for different target audiences. A part of this was the related syndicate work on how to use active learning methods in gender education and training.

The final day of week one of the Course started with tips on how to train as a trainer followed by lessons plans for gender education and training. Later on a panel discussion, “How to Improve Tactics and Techniques by Integrating the Gender Perspective”, moderated by Deputy Course Director LTC Sandra Jonjić, took place. The panelists were BG Gordana Garašić, Col Boženko Devoić, Lt Fleur Posthumus, and Cpt Tatjana Šolaja.

The key event was the practical outdoor exercise on how to use role playing in gender integrated training, which was held during day six. This type of exercise facilitates an active understanding of the information and gives participants the opportunity to apply new skills and abilities. The simulation serves as a rehearsal on how to conduct future activities.

On day eight the schedule included the time dedicated for the final exam preparations that were supported by the syndicate leaders and instructors. This was the pinnacle of the Course efforts from the students’ side after which the graduation day came.

The day after that was the graduation day. Beside the RACVIAC Deputy Director BG Gordana Garašić the ceremony was attended by LtCol Lars Berglund, CO NCGM. All students succeeded in their final exam thus confirming their own instructional qualities and professionalism.

During the last day of the Course a final assessment took place and involved all Course actors.

Conclusions

As a result of last year’s recommendations and lessons learned this year the Course was conducted as a 10-day event, lasting from...
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8 a.m. till 4 p.m., which proved to be very efficient, giving the students and instructors enough time for Course programme elaboration and self-study. In this way the instructors' final preparations were carried out prior to the start of the Course as an advanced two-day preparation session, separated from the Course schedule.

The engagement of an instructor from the Swedish Armed Forces gave a new dimension to the whole event thus additionally expanding the Course’s reach beyond the SEE.

This event is also specific in terms of evaluation which is done in real time and on a daily basis for the Course academic purposes and using the modern IT solutions (Survey Monkey - online questionnaire and survey).

This Course is the longest and also the most demanding RACVIAC activity in terms of the instructing staff involved and the level of applied IT support.

This particular RACVIAC training activity is an excellent example of the highest possible level of cooperation and synergy achieved among the three main organizational partners in utilizing mutual resources and support.

RACVIAC should make all possible efforts to maintain an international environment and involvement of the key partner organizations (NCGM, CAF GS) in the future as well.

Group Photo - Field Trip to National Part “Plitvice Lakes”

Compiled by SSR Pillar, RACVIAC

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