

Web Annex XI: Status of women in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (DPKO/DFS)

Within the Secretariat, the field missions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support are noteworthy owing, in particular, to the large number of staff and the difficult locations in which they deploy, 90% of which are non-family. As at 31 December 2013, at total of 6,849 international civilian staff men and women at all levels) encumbered positions in United Nations field missions, representing a decrease of 173 staff since 31 December 2011 at all levels, which makes for a 2.45% reduction in the overall number of staff during the two reporting periods. Of the 2.45%, 0.26% were women.

The reduction in the overall number of staff is primarily due to the retrenchment and downsizing of a number of missions, as well as a result of the Civilian Staffing Reviews that are being carried out across missions, as mandated by the General Assembly.

The reporting period as of 31 December 2013 points to a significant decrease in the percentage of women encumbering positions at the USG level (-4.31%), at the ASG level (-12.31%) and D-1 level (-1.51%), in comparison with the reporting period of 31 December 2011. The noticeable increase took place in women encumbering positions at the D-2 level (8.32%) and at the P-5 level (1.51%).

In order to better understand the continuing challenges faced by field missions in attracting and retaining female staff members, the Department of Peacekeeping Operation, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs have jointly undertaken a study named "Bridging the Gender Gap in Peace Operations", in the course of 2013. The report revealed, among other findings, that only 22% of external applications and 28% of internal applications are from female candidates.

As a follow up to the findings and recommendations of the study, DFS launched a call for applications from member states, civil society, professional organizations, to develop a pipeline of senior women at the D1 and D2 level for jobs in field missions. Sixty-four (64) external highly qualified female candidates were placed on the pipeline, in the areas of rule of law, political and civil affairs and public information. The project has shown positive results, with 3 women being selected within a short period of its launch.

DFS continues to pursue the recommendations put forward by that report, and is currently seeking alternative avenues to expand the talent pipeline to other areas and levels. Additionally, DFS is also seeking to better understand the challenges with retaining female talent and is conducting surveys with former female staff members who have separated from the Organization.

DFS also continues to work with Member States, regional organisations and civil society as well as existing leadership and UN system partners to identify additional female candidates for Head and Deputy Head of Mission positions in peace operations.

Source: DPKO/DFS