



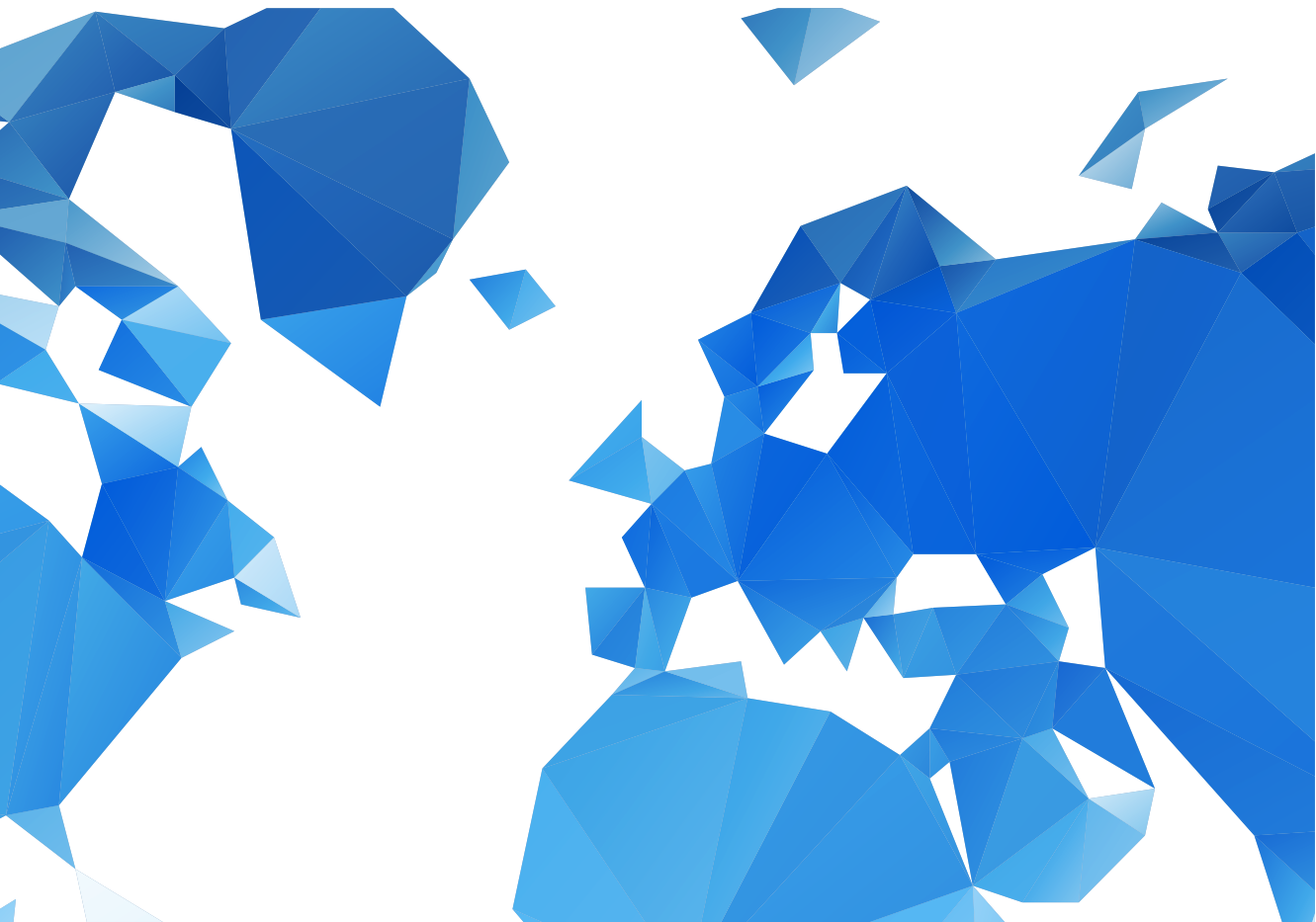
**Finnish Defence Forces
International Centre**

It's All About Mindset

Reflections on the UN Peace

Operations Security Management Course 2022

Minna Ruolanto



Finnish Defence Forces International Centre
FINCENT Publication Series 1/2022

IT'S ALL ABOUT MINDSET

Reflections on the UN Peace Operations Security Management Course 2022

Minna Ruolanto

PUOLUSTUSVOIMIEN KANSAINVÄLINEN KESKUS
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PunaMusta Oy
Joensuu 2022
FINLAND



Abbreviations

FINCENT = Finnish Defence Forces International Centre

METT = Mobile Education and Training Team

QMS = Quality Management System

SOP = Standard Operating Procedures

SW = Syndicate Work

UN = United Nations

UNDPO = United Nations Department of Peace Operations

UNDSS = United Nations Department of Safety and Security

UNOHR = United Nations Office of Human Resources

UNPOSMC = United Nations Peace Operation Security Management Course

UNSMS = United Nations Security Management System

Dear readers!

The Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) has two main tasks: organising military crisis management courses for command and expert personnel in cooperation with national and International partners, such as the United Nations, European Union and African Union; and coordinating the military crisis management training of NATO and partner countries.

FINCENT is a part of the National Defence University, therefore, the academic approach forms the foundation of all courses. Instruction and research are developed and integrated in the University with the aim of constantly improving all activities.

Peacekeeping environments are increasingly complex and tomorrow's crisis management challenges call for a comprehensive approach. Mandate delivery in such environments requires persistent cooperation and focused unity of effort from the personnel conducting these challenging tasks in all UN system components. This important work cannot be done without securing and ensuring a safe and secure environment.

“The Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support, and Safety and Security should ensure that missions have rigorous contingency plans in place that are regularly rehearsed through table-top exercises and rehearsals. All missions should regularly conduct table-top exercises and rehearsals. These plans should be revisited following any significant change in the environment and/or in the mandate...”¹

To support the lessons learned in a recent crisis, in 2018, the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre took the initiative to partner with the UN Department of Safety and Security and to develop a course on security management in UN peace operations “To prepare military, police and UN civilian security personnel for security management-related interaction and co-operation between different components of ongoing and future UN Peace Operations”.

UNPOSMC is designed to reflect the UNDSS Security Risk Management model, which is a tool to analyse and manage safety and security risks to United Nations personnel, assets and operations. The aim of the course is to prepare all UN system components in a peace operations context to ensure that programmes are delivered within an acceptable level of security risk.

Led by the Finnish International Training Centre, a pilot course, with participants from the UN Civilian security, Troop and police-contributing countries, and personnel serving in UN Peace Operations, was conducted in 2019, combining a week of classroom practices and a 4-day field exercise in Niinisalo. A key learning point from the pilot was the need to enhance the required preparation of participants to actively contribute to scenario-based case studies and exercises.

With a pause in 2020 due to the COVID-19 limitations, the course was restructured and successfully delivered fully online in 2021. The analysis of the learning from the pilot and the online delivery confirmed the advantages of delivering the course in a blended format in 2022.

¹ S/2016/924- Executive summary of the independent special investigation into the violence in Juba in 2016 and the response by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan

FINCENT, as the global dean of the peace operations training centres, led the way and provided a full team of professionals in all learning areas and managed the online learning system, all supported by subject matter experts from the UN Departments of Peace Operations and Safety and Security.

The course is built in 3 phases and requires participants to complete the following:

- 6 online courses (Phase I – Online-Self paced),
- 5 full days of online webinars with syndicate works and deliverables (Phase II – Online-Instructor Led), and
- A one-week, in-person learning programme at FINCENT (phase III – Residential-Instructor led).

During the course, students covered 20 modules, learning from each other and experts on the workings of military, police and the UN security Management System in Peace Operations.

The focus to identify and practice best practices to change “...Mission’s established culture of reporting and acting in silos inhibited effective action during a period in which swift, joint action was essential”² both in the planning phase and during security-related crisis or critical incidents. The understanding of UN Values and Behaviours³ was embedded in the technical topics and learning process, providing students with a practical approach to achieve success within UN system operations.

Feedback was highly positive, with 100% of students indicating they would recommend the course to colleagues as an essential element of the preparation for effective security management in peace operations.

The course has proven its value and will continue to be delivered in the coming years. We look forward to seeing you online, at FINCENT, and probably in the field.

Lieutenant Colonel G.S Niclas von Bonsdorff

Commandant FINCENT

Enrique Oribe

Security Training Officer,
Training and Development Section (TDS)
Division of Specialized Operational Support (DSOS)
Department of Safety and Security (DSS)



² S/2016/924- Executive summary of the independent special investigation into the violence in Juba in 2016 and the response by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan

³ See https://i.unu.edu/media/unu.edu/page/24952/Values-and-Behaviours-Framework_Final.pdf

Foreword by the author

This report is a review of the 2022 implementation of the United Nations Peace Operations Security Management course conducted by the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre FINCENT, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), and the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO). The course was conducted in a blended format, in three phases: self-paced online phase, facilitated online phase, and a residential phase.

Reflecting on notes and remarks by the learners, facilitators, and an external observer, a study for course development purposes focused on asking:

1. Which pedagogical solutions supported individual learning processes during the different phases of the course?
2. How does the course implementation support practicing the UN Values and Behaviors framework?
3. How does the interaction during the residential phase add value to the learning process?

Overall, the most important pedagogical choices during the course were clearly structured tasks, professional learning facilitating, and up-to-date lectures by subject matter experts. In addition, especially in the residential phase, discussions and peer support created a platform for learning never available in books or programs.

Practicing and learning the UN Values and Behaviors Framework was challenging during the online phase, and according to the experiences from the course, the most fruitful environment for this topic was the residential phase. Some of the values and behaviors, even though they are meant to be concrete and practical, remain abstract without interaction with colleagues. However, some may be seen as self-evident, if not consciously considered.

As one of the key learning goals was to learn to interact with other components in the field, as well as learning to utilize the UN system in the most efficient way, the residential phase added true value to both learners and facilitators. In practice, the discussions among the group became increasingly multifaceted and fruitful toward the end of the course. All in all, it appears that the course's theoretical standards were on an appropriate level for the participants.

The experiences from the 2022 UNPOSMC support developing the course further in the form of blended implementation. The online phases are accessible with reasonable costs from all around the world, and the residential phase, as it is, could be implemented by the FINCENT Mobile Education and Training Team (METT) anywhere in the world.

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Keywords: *security management, peace operations, training development, FINCENT, United Nations Department of Safety and Security, United Nations Department of Peace Operations*

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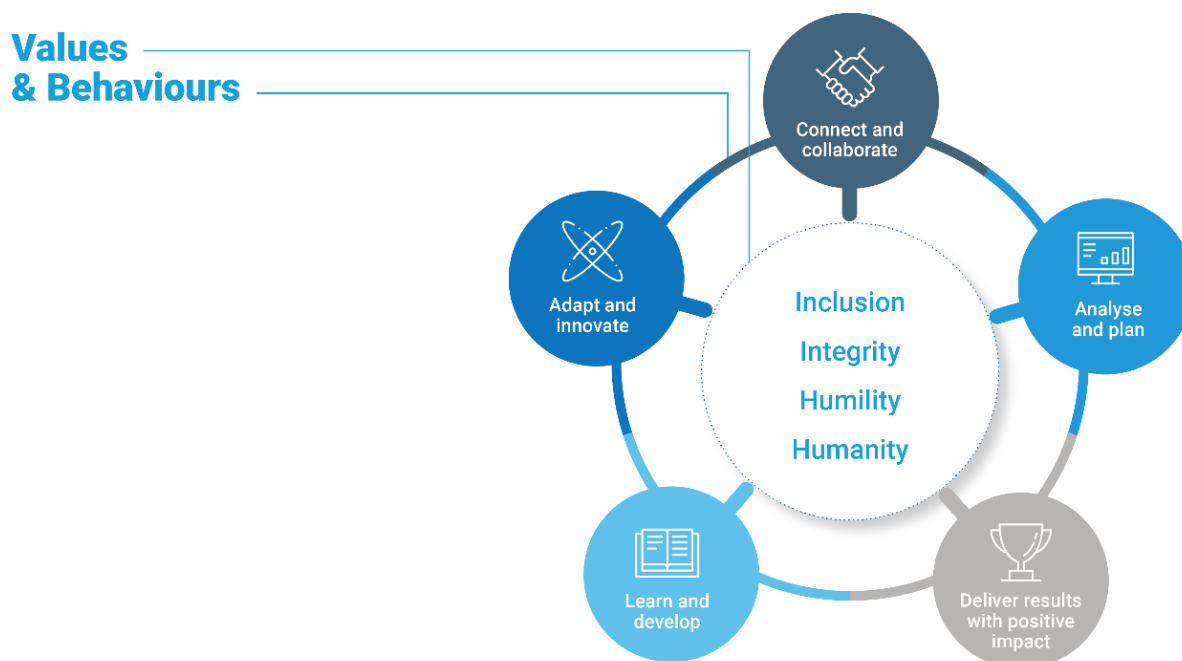
1. About the context

“In these turbulent times, the work of the United Nations is more necessary than ever to reduce suffering, prevent crises, manage risks and build a sustainable future for all.”

António Guterres, Secretary-General (UN 2022)

The current peace and security environment in which the United Nations operates is shaped by converging threats: the evolving nature of conflict, the climate emergency, unregulated cyberspace, and increased geostrategic competition. In addition, the effects of the pandemic continue to affect existing vulnerabilities and conflict drivers as well as hinder the effectiveness of the global collective security architecture. This challenges the ability of the United Nations to respond to threats, prevent, manage and mitigate conflicts, and succeed as peacemaker (UN 2022; also: Cruz 2017).

Hence, operational safety and security will be increasingly crucial elements in supporting the successful work and delivery of complex United Nations peace operations and programs. The strategic priority areas of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) are: supporting and empowering staff to continually strive for excellence, strengthening departmental values and behaviors, and improving ways of working to ensure high-quality and reliable services (UNDSS 2020a), with the UN Values and Behaviors Framework providing the fundamental guidelines (UN OHRM 2021, picture 1).



Picture 1: The UN Values and Behaviors Framework (UN OHRM 2021).

To meet the learning needs of military, police and civilian personnel involved in security management and cooperation between the different components in ongoing and future UN Peace Operations, the Finnish Defence Forces' International Centre FINCENT, UNDSS, and the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO) have jointly produced and implemented the UN Peace Operations Security Management Course (UNPOSMC) (FINCENT 2022a). The first implementation of the UNPOSMC was

conducted in 2019 as a fully residential course. Due the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 course was conducted fully online, and the 2022 implementation was blended.

A study conducted during 2021 UN Peace Operations Security Management Course (UNPOS MC) showed that allocating resources to multinational and multiprofessional online training is a productive way of developing the competences of UN personnel, and in the future, when more courses will be conducted, it will also be increasingly cost effective (Ruolanto & Schroderus 2021).

In addition, the delayed feedback, collected six months after the UNPOS MC 2021, shows that the course is found to be relevant in practice. As learning to actively collaborate and cooperate with different components is one of the key learning aims of the course, it is noteworthy that after the course the learners were more encouraged to engage in interaction with different stakeholders. For example, one learner stated:

“Significant improvement, as I feel more confident to discuss and promote the need for and benefit of good cooperation, coordination, and communication between the different security stakeholders.”
(Learner 1/2021)

However, by emphasizing even more discussion and practice, interaction with stakeholders was recommended by the 2021 course participants. For example:

“In my opinion, the main emphasis of future courses should be on the interaction of components and knowledge of their capabilities. In the event of a crisis – who can support us and how.” (Learner 2/2021.)

“More emphasis on the role and coordination with host country security stakeholders. That aspect is overlooked most of the time in peacekeeping missions. There is a tendency to ignore or downplay the role of the host government.” (Learner 3/2021)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNPOS MC 2021 was conducted fully online. Even though all the participants had an understanding of the circumstances, the most discussed suggestion for improvement was adding a residential phase to the course. For example:

“I would suggest the course should be face to face. It would allow the students to concentrate more and enable much more time to interact with instructors.” (Learner 4/2021.)

“POS MC is a great opportunity for the capacity development of security actors in any peacekeeping environment. As already said, an indoor session would certainly be more productive.” (Learner 5/ 2021.)

In 2022, the recommendations for face-to-face interaction was taken on board, and the course was conducted via a blended solution in three phases: a self-paced online phase (3.6.–1.8.2022), a facilitated online phase (6.9.–5.10.2022), and a residential phase (16.–21.10.2022). The learners represented 13 nations from around the world: Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Germany, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Niger, Pakistan, Romania, Rwanda, South Korea, Türkiye, and Ukraine.

As the UNPOS MC is based on the pedagogical concept of FINCENT, evaluating the relevance of the course is an ongoing process (FINCENT 2020; 2022a; 2022b). This report is a summary of an applied study that focused on investigating how UNPOS MC, as a blended version, succeeded in supporting the learners’ individual learning processes, and what should be developed further. The methodology used is presented in the following chapter. After that, the report covers the notes and observations from all the phases of the course. Finally, I discuss the overall lessons learned and identified.

2. Methodology

In this chapter, I will briefly introduce the methods behind this applied study. It is noteworthy that the study has been conducted for course development purposes, and therefore the questions addressed the roots of the UNPOSMC's overall learning objectives, the FINCENT Pedagogical Concept (FINCENT 2022b), and the UN Values and Behaviors Framework (UN OHRM 2021).

This inductive study addresses the following questions:

1. Which pedagogical solutions supported individual learning processes during the different phases of the course?
2. How does the course implementation support the practicing of the UN Values and Behaviors framework?
3. How does the interaction during the residential phase add value to the learning process?

None of the syndicate sessions or the live workshops were recorded. Therefore, the research assignment was approached via the observations and notes of the researcher. In addition, some of the student feedback and the facilitators' reflections were included in the data.

The data consisted of the following:

- Learners' feedback (After Module surveys)
- Researcher's notes from observing the syndicate work sessions during the facilitated online phase
- The facilitators' feedback from the syndicate work sessions during the facilitated online phase
- The researcher's notes based on observations, and discussions during the residential phase lectures and workshops
- Learners' feedback via the FINCENT Standard After-course Feedback Questionnaire

The course participants were informed about the observation study at the beginning of the course. During the facilitated online phase, the observed syndicate members were informed of the researcher's presence, and the researcher's name was visible as a participant in the Zoom screen view during the observed sessions. At the beginning of the residential phase, the study was introduced again, and the researcher was in the classroom, visible to all present.

This study was inspired by ethnography, which is a useful tool in applied research when looking at practical problems in specific situations, especially when we aim to gain an understanding of the perspective of the people whose experiences and viewpoints we are addressing (see, e.g., Angrosino 2007, Gobo 2011, Jerolmack & Khan 2018). In this setup, the researcher was positioned in an outsiders' role, while the course participants were positioned in expert roles, as the subjects with the knowledge and expertise we are interested in for the study.

All data has been handled confidentially, by the researcher only. In the search for patterns, the data was analyzed anonymously by its content, by arranging the observations into groups. In addition to the patterns, isolated individual remarks were noted, as they often provide valuable insights into the learners' experience, and are therefore important details in the course development process.

It is noteworthy that the data is a product of the interpretations of the researcher in terms of what happened during the sessions in relation to the UNPOSMC course objectives, the FINCENT Pedagogical Concept (FINCENT 2022b), and the UN Values and Behaviors (Appendix 1, Appendix 2), and therefore does not reflect the course's general implementation or the participants' experiences precisely.

When this report was sent to print, all notes made the researcher were destroyed according to the FINCENT disposal process for confidential documents.

3. Building a foundation: Reflections on the self-paced online phase

In this chapter, I will be reflecting on the self-paced online phase, which was conducted between June 3 and August 1, 2022, including a total of 10 to 15 independent working hours. The main objective of the phase was to introduce the learners to the theoretical and operational framework of the course, and to support them in setting personal learning goals (FINCENT 2022b).

To support adult learning principles in practice, the learners were asked to start their personal learning diaries to provide a private space for personal goalsetting and reflections (FINCENT 2022b). The learning diary entries were noted by the researcher and the facilitators throughout the course path, but they are not used as data for this study. In this chapter, all the quoted feedback from the learners are entries in the survey conducted after the self-paced online phase.

Generally, during the self-paced online phase the learners were requested to conduct the tasks independently according to their own schedules, referring to the set deadlines. According to the feedback from previous courses, finding slots for undisturbed studying may be challenging for professionals working in peace operations or in other UN organizations, and therefore room for individual time management was provided. In practice, time management was challenging during the 2022 course, too. Studying appeared to increase the overall workload of the learner, and affected their free time, too:

"I was forced to do this first part of the course during my day-to-day work (or free time). That was hard to manage." (Feedback 1)

However, it appears that some learners had more time available for studying than was requested, as more background reading material was also suggested. On the other hand, some learners had no previous experience of working within the UN security system and for a person new to the context, and the processes within, the self-paced online phase provided a lot to digest:

"There is a lot to learn about UN Security Management. For an outsider it was a lot of information that I could not always connect with my own professional experience. Other participants will not have this problem since they are part of the UN Security system." (Feedback 2)

As the contents of the self-paced online phase was a compilation of independent reading and watching video materials, suggestions for more practical tasks and increasing the use of visual learning materials were made. In addition, a clearer structure of the contents was proposed. Learning about the UN Values and Behaviors Framework (UN OHRM 2021) without interaction from facilitators or colleagues appeared to be shallow.

Overall, all FINCENT courses are built on the constructive learning concept (FINCENT 2022), and it appears the learners had reflected the entire course path already during the self-paced online phase.

"I think all topics are important. I believe that I can understand which topic is more important when I have training in-person on OCT." (Feedback 3)

"Can't wait to have the opportunity to learn more in the following phases." (Feedback 4)

In addition to the general feedback on the self-paced online phase, valuable information about the learners' personal learning needs was collected via subject-matter-specific tests after each topic. All

in all, this time the technical solutions worked as expected, and no major problems related to that were reported.

The key take-aways from the self-paced online phase:

- Tools for reflection: the chosen learning diary format did not appear to be attractive to learners
→ a more inviting solution is suggested for the future as reflection is crucial for learning.
- Cognitive ergonomics: the content was reading-/writing-heavy
→ increasing use of varied methods and concrete practical examples could support different learning needs.
- Interaction: being self-directed is challenging, especially when you are new to the topic
→ short, facilitated discussions of the key points could support the learning process overall.

4. Getting going with the collaboration: Reflections on the facilitated online phase

In this chapter, I will be reflecting on the facilitated online phase conducted between 6.9. and 5.10.2022, consisting of six facilitated working days where the facilitators, lecturers, and learners collaborated in shared platforms in PVMoodle Learning Management System. This phase focused on the key objective of the UNPOSMC: getting to know the multi-professional United Nations operational network, understanding the different UN security actors' roles in the operational context, and learning to collaborate in that context.

In addition to the subject-matter-related topics, the UN Values and Behaviors Framework (UN OHRM 2021) was strongly emphasized in the sessions. Overall, the students were encouraged to actively participate and contribute by sharing their own perspectives, experiences, and views during syndicate work sessions. As the real-life-based tasks for the syndicates were embedded in a fictional Carana scenario, the learners were invited to play a game (FINCENT 2022b).

The first impression of the facilitated online phase was that the learners were professionals striving to perform at their best, teaming up quickly with their new colleagues. Later, during the course path, as the learners got to know each other and became more fluent at using the course-specific learning tools, the discussions became deeper and more fruitful. All in all, it was clearly observable that the UN Values and Behaviors Framework was naturally applied as a foundation for all work (UN OHRM 2021, UNDSS 2020a), and the facilitated discussions appeared to be functional pedagogical choices in the online context.

Regarding the UN Values and Behaviors Framework, a siloed mentality is known to be a challenge that impacts the effectiveness of UN work (UN OHRM 2021, UNDSS 2022) and therefore the course path was designed to bring up mindsets like that, yet none were observed. Instead, the syndicates appeared to actively discuss the challenges they faced, and work for a *psychologically safe* environment in which everyone can thrive. Broadly defined, when the climate is psychologically safe, people feel comfortable to share concerns and talk about mistakes without fear of embarrassment or humiliation. In addition, trust and respect are distinctive in psychologically safe working environments (Edmondson 2018).

The course personnel were constantly working to provide a functional and meaningful learning path for the participants. In addition to the up-to-date feedback requested from the learners throughout the course, the syndicate facilitators suggested details to be improved after each working day. For example, at the beginning of the facilitated online phase, the tasks were not experienced as being clear enough for the learners, so the facilitators suggested revisions to the contents:

“Still some clarity/facilitator guidance is needed for the tasks and templates so that the start of Syndicate work is faster/smoothed.” (Facilitator 1)

“Overall the start of the first SW was bit problematic. Some understood very well and some not. Strong guidance needed. Second SW was technically easier.” (Facilitator 2)

In addition to editing the assignments, the timeframe of the working days was cognitively challenging, and changes were requested. To get back on track, the schedule was adjusted and the practical relevance of the discussed syndicate work was assessed.

“In SW 8 there were challenges achieving the target. Not enough ‘boots on the ground’” (Facilitator 2)

From the perspective of learning, it may be easier for facilitators to observe confusion or difficulties in the task performance than unambiguously or explicitly assessing whether the learning goals have been reached. This is natural for assignments that have several acceptable solutions, which highlight the learning process both reflecting on the way the group functions, and how they use the resources available.

It is noteworthy that during the facilitated online phase, all the groups reached a *performing* stage where the structural features were utilized in supporting their learning, and group energy may be channeled into the task. Within the group, the learners’ roles became flexible and functional (Tuckman 1965, 396). This was especially observable during post-presentation discussions: the conversations were inclusive and fruitful.

Of the UN Values and Behaviors Framework (UN OHRM 2021), connecting and collaborating, and learning and developing were especially observable: listening and being interested in others’ views and expertise as well as contributing to both personal and colleagues’ learning was clearly observable during the sessions. Overall, during the facilitated online phase, discussing and reflecting on the thinking process appeared essential from the perspective of supporting learning that was observable in the following task, for example in more efficient communication and inclusive teamwork.

At the end of the facilitated online phase, as the tasks were cognitively challenging, and the sessions required the person to be still, vigilance issues appeared to be the main disruptive factors for the work flow. Therefore, discussing methods to manage cognitive workload as well as vigilance may be suggested for the next implementation. Thus, the importance of noting the study hours needed in the weekly schedule of the learner should be emphasized.

The key take-aways from the facilitated online phase:

- Task setting: the tasks were not always clear to the learners
→ paying attention to the clarity of the task wording, and in this context, the practical relevance of the task appears to increase the motivation of the learners.
- Time management: time pressure supports focus on the tasks; however, the most fruitful insights occurred during free discussions
→ considering instructional strategies and schedule planning to increase possibilities for spontaneous reflection after a task.
- Personal reflection: the hot wash-ups after working days appeared to be fruitful platforms for reflection; however, the learning diary tool was not considered attractive for the purpose.
- Facilitating: living the UN Values and Behaviors Framework from the perspective of inclusion happened naturally in this phase
→ encouraging all participants to pay attention to evenly shared tasks/talking time.

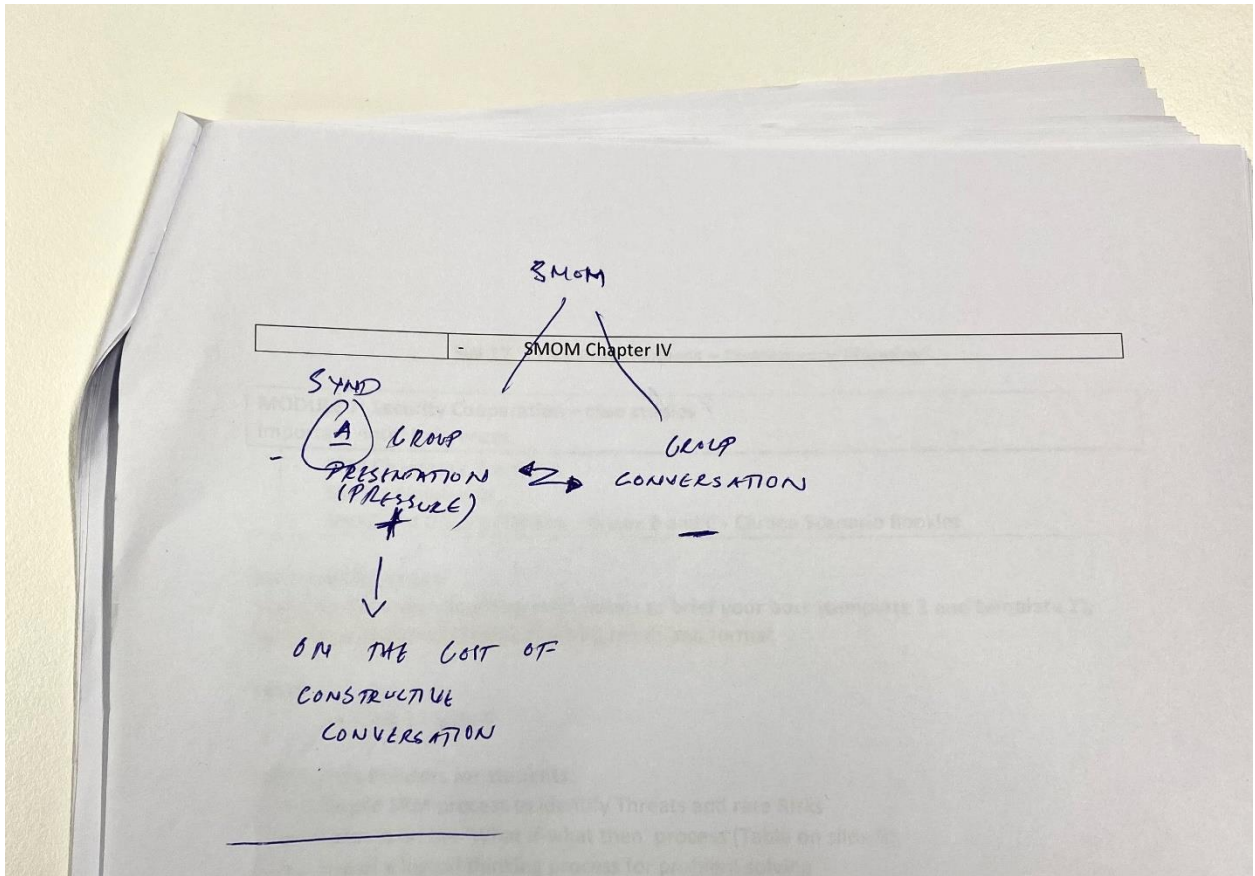
5. Meeting in person: Reflections on the residential phase

Adaptive facilitating was the key to supporting the learning process during the residential phase which is the focus of this chapter. By adaptive in this context, I refer to the facilitators' continuous reflection on the work of the course participants, the observable learning process, and adjusting the tasks and pedagogical tools along the way. In practice, this was done by actively listening to the learners, and adjusting the tasks to enable more creativity and discussion.

Starting to work face-to-face after the facilitated online phase appeared to create a new storming phase in the groups, as the orientation and interdependence of the syndicate members were formed again, and the learners were focusing on understanding what was expected of them (Tuckman 1965). This was observable in behavioral patterns from avoiding conflict and being almost too polite to being dominant, and the syndicate experiencing difficulties in getting a shared picture of the task. In this phase, the support of the facilitators was observably valuable to support group norming processes toward a coherent yet flexible and functional team, where the structures and roles support task performance (for example: Tuckman 1965).

This course is implemented at an advanced level, and the tasks are challenging. For the best possible outcomes, the facilitators noted quickly that more room for discussion and sharing ideas is needed for the syndicate to work on their competence level, and to learn (UN OHRM 2021, FINCENT 2022b). In addition, "team in a team" patterns could be observed in situations where the syndicates were not yet performing at their optimal level.

One of the proposed solutions for rearranging the syndicate work setting was contemplating the use and contents of the ready-made templates that structured the task solutions. The templates experienced as valuable in successful structuring of the work during the facilitated online phase did not support the learning process in all cases in the residential phase. The templates were in some cases experienced as directing the learners' focus into designing a *presentation* of a high standard instead of using the platform as a tool to support conversation and idea sharing (picture 1, p. 14) .



Picture 2: Observation of a facilitator during syndicate work

One of the key goals of the UNPOSMC is to highlight the importance and the mechanisms of the integrated approach for all UN personnel to be able to use the system in a smart way. Hence, training should reflect the real-life phenomena as time pressure, challenges in prioritization, and complexity of the operational environment in multifaceted ways. This may be implemented in role play tasks, which were also experienced as motivating from the perspective of the learners. However, the challenge of role play as a method remains: some people throw themselves into the game more naturally than others; and that is obviously the case in real life, too.

In practice, in order to be able to work effectively together with different components, it is essential to ensure that everyone shares as sharp a picture of the situation as possible. For this to happen, common language is crucial. To support that, reflecting on the observations during the residential phase and defining concepts and abbreviations is of great worth. Professionals discussing with other professionals tend to use jargon to some extent, and if nothing appears to deviate from the expected, it is possible that everyone is thinking about a different thing, and misunderstanding remains hidden. In the worst cases, misunderstandings in meanings may lead to loss of lives in this context.

Therefore, a misunderstanding or a mistake is usually a gift when it happens in training, as it often brings assumptions to light and enables learning from it. In other words, task-setting should challenge the learners to the limits of their current knowledge and provide opportunities for learning new ways of seeing the known context. As observed, the work during UNPOSMC 2022 was conducted at an appropriate level.

Overall, discussions and spontaneous remarks might highlight important issues that were not scripted into the syllabus. For example, the role play method loosened up a discussion on challenges in dealing

with a rude colleague. Hence, scripting a short discussion session on the UN Values and Behaviors Framework could be fruitful in learning about the concept in a safe environment. In practice, discussing assertiveness as a relevant social and communication skill, for example, could be useful when reflected on in this context. Discussions are effective learning tools in a phase where the group is in the performing stage where the energy is channeled into tasks and solutions (for example: Tuckman 1965).

Finally, as the UNPOSMC generally consists of learning goals that are challenging, an overall structure where the day started with a recap of the previous task appeared to be effective. The questions raised demonstrated progress in understanding the contents, as the topics were discussed idiosyncratically, with the participants using their own words and putting their ideas into new perspectives instead of just repeating what had been represented during the course. Supporting these ideas by compiling a list of lessons learned could be motivating for the learner, and is therefore suggested.

The key take-aways from the residential phase:

- **Experientiality:** learning by experiencing is effective
→ role play was appreciated and could be used more in the future.
- **Physical learning environment:** changing table settings affects the interaction
→ whenever possible, consider a setup where everyone can see each other's faces.
- **Sharing ideas:** designing the tasks to integrate the experiences of the participants more than in the current syllabus could be fruitful, and may provide valuable insights into the challenges of ongoing peace operations
→ learning that's never available in books.
- **Learning process:** creating a meaningful and compelling platform for personal reflections is suggested.
→ an option for the PVMoodle Learning Diary tool could be more useful
- **Living the UN Values and Behaviors Framework:** small daily reflections from key successes could be motivating.



Picture 3: The Rector of National Defence University, Brigadier General Mika Kalliomaa observing the group work. (Photo: Eevi Pöntinen/ FINCENT)

6. Conclusions

This report reflected on the path of the United Nations Peace Operations Security Management Course's (UNPOSMC) 2022 blended implementation conducted by the Finnish Defence Forces' International Centre FINCENT, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), and the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO). As a whole, the course implementation was successful, and the set learning goals were reached. In the following, I will conclude by presenting the main findings and observations, and some suggestions for further discussion.

First, in terms of the question of pedagogical solutions that supported individual learning processes during the different phases of the course, the most important learning support element appeared to be clearly structured tasks, where the learners knew what was expected of them. Also, the guidance of the SMEs and facilitators appeared to be effective throughout the course path. During the residential phase, the discussions and interactions among the participants appeared to add significant value to learning.

Second, regarding the course implementation supporting the practicing of the UN Values and Behaviors framework, there were differences between different phases of the course. Even though the UN Values and Behaviors Framework is practical by nature, it appeared to have been perceived as being abstract and possibly self-evident, which led to an observation that the online phase, even though facilitated, did not appear to support the learning of the concept. This is to be noted, despite the fact that the framework was to be individually discussed in the personal Learning Diary (PV Moodle platform), which appeared not to be an attractive task for the learners. However, the discussion facilitated by Enrique during the residential phase (Tuesday), appeared to be fruitful.

Third, referring to the interaction supporting the learning process during the residential phase, from the perspective of an outside observer, the syndicate work sessions as well as all the off-classroom discussions appeared to hit the target: *working together with other components*. As the week proceeded, the discussions and the presentations became more multifaceted. Also, as concrete signs of willingness to collaborate, the participants created a WhatsApp group and asked for a list of contact information for all the course members. Overall, the atmosphere appeared to be psychologically safe, supporting collaboration during the course.

Reflecting on the learning process for the course path as a whole, it is not excessive to state that the interactions and encounters in person added most value for all counterparts. The course is rooted in the United Nations system and structure (Appendix 4), which was brought to life by people, and there is often more than one possible meaningful and equally correct answer to a question. Therefore, facilitated, confidence-inspiring discussions were appreciated. The role and professionalism of the facilitators in particular was recognized. For example:

"Very warm environment, facilitators made the environment extremely comfortable" (Feedback 5)

"I want to say all the instructors were trying to teach us as much as they can with passion. Furthermore, they are all very professional." (Feedback 6)

In addition to enabling learning and living the UN Values and Behaviors in practice, the face-to-face interactions supported more thorough processing of the theoretical course contents in interaction with others. As the course content stresses working with texts, more visual learning materials and active learning methods were suggested for the future. Regarding the theoretical part, increasing discussions from the perspectives of the force commander, police commissioner, and humanitarian program leaders were suggested.

For the online phases to be more learner oriented, I suggest discussing the circumstances and overall workload of the learners. As was the case in 2021, the 2022 UNPOSMC implementations indicate that especially in the mission circumstances, the required should be noted in the total working hours. On the other hand, the fact that most of the learners are working in the missions during the course could be utilized more in learning from peers.

All in all, experiences from the UNPOSMC and other FINCENT course implementations have proved that various online training solutions support learning processes effectively. In addition, online courses are easy to access, they are inclusive, and are also cost-effective. However, as the residential phase adds significant value to the learning process, blended implementation is a meaningful solution for the UNPOSMC in the future.

Furthermore, the blended format enables accessible training solutions, as the residential phase can be conducted anywhere in the world by the FINCENT Mobile Education and Training Team (METT). Overall, a METT implementation could provide valuable perspectives for developing the UNPOSMC concept to the next level, as it provides opportunities for the course design personnel to learn from operation-specific challenges and their on-the-spot solutions.

To conclude, continuing to invest in developing the competencies of UN personnel is expedient and justified: *“We must continue to ensure that peacekeeping operations have the right capabilities in the right place and at the right time, with the right mindset”* (UN 2018). As the operational environment is fluid and constantly changing, the development of training solutions must, in addition to lessons learned, provide the personnel perspectives for dealing successfully with circumstances and events never experienced before. In addition to on-the-job learning, formal training solutions for facilitated reflections are needed in the future.



Picture 4: UNPOSMC 2022 participants and staff (Photo: Eevi Pöntinen/ FINCENT)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Message from the Secretary-General on the United Nations Values and Behaviors Framework

Appendix 2: Overview of the UN Values and Behaviors Framework

Appendix 3: Compilation of After-course Feedback

Appendix 4: The United Nations Entities

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Message from the Secretary-General on the United Nations Values and Behaviours Framework

I am pleased to introduce the United Nations Values and Behaviours Framework, which reflects our goals for our organizational culture over the next decade. This framework, the first of its kind, represents who we are and connects with the values enshrined in our Charter. The framework was created through an inclusive and participatory process with colleagues across the Secretariat, and I thank all who contributed to it.

Our shared values and how we demonstrate them form the basis of the Secretariat's culture; how we in the Secretariat relate to each other, to our work and to the world, and how those with whom we interact experience us. Our culture defines us as an institution; it is more than the sum of each of us. It includes the norms that shape everything we do, from how we engage with each other day-to-day, to how we partner with others to deliver on our most ambitious hopes for the future.

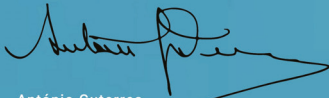
This framework provides a strong foundation for us to build the United Nations 2.0, based on four values: Inclusion, Integrity, Humility and Humanity. These values are brought to life by five behaviours: Connect & Collaborate; Analyse and Plan; Deliver Results with Positive Impact; Learn and Develop; and Adapt and Innovate.

Accompanying the new framework is 'Living Our Values', an attempt to articulate our vision for the culture of the United Nations Secretariat. This vision describes who we are, who we want to be, and why each aspect of our future culture matters. It is aspirational while also rooted in present-day experience.

While this is the first framework of its kind, the values and behaviours referenced in it reflect many previous efforts to build a strong organizational culture, from the competency framework launched twenty years ago to the United Nations System Leadership Framework and the reform process initiated in 2017.

Over time, we have seen significant changes to the mandate and work of the United Nations and to the environment in which we operate, including technological change, social change and demographic change. The framework attempts to reflect this. It considers the constantly changing nature of the world and renews our commitment to the people we serve.

We will only succeed in strengthening the Secretariat as an inclusive and people-oriented organization if we show resolve in working together in alignment with our common values. I invite all colleagues to familiarize yourselves with the framework and to bring the values and behaviours to life in your daily work.



António Guterres,
UN Secretary-General



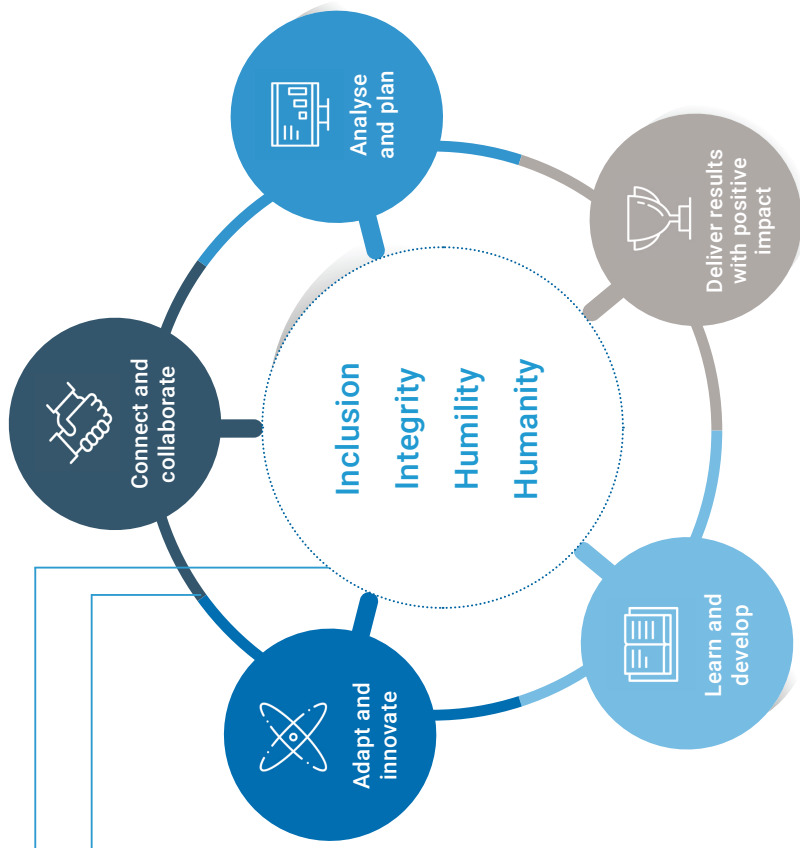


Values and Behaviours

The framework comprises:

- **Four values:**
Inclusion, Integrity, Humility and Humanity
- **Five behaviours:**
Connect and Collaborate; Analyse and Plan; Deliver Results with Positive Impact; Learn and Develop; and Adapt and Innovate
- Overall definitions
- Examples of what it looks like in practice

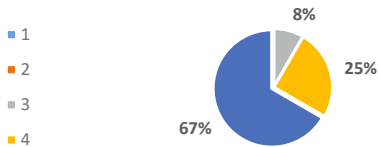
Each behaviour also has examples of how it looks like in practice, but is presented at different levels: all staff, all managers and senior leaders. These are cumulative examples, meaning that the examples under all staff are also relevant for all managers and senior leaders; and those under all managers also apply to senior leaders.



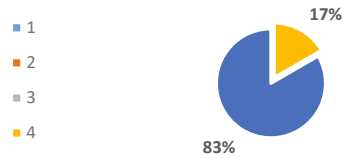
Appendix 3

Appendix 3, Compilation of FINCENT Standard After-course feedback

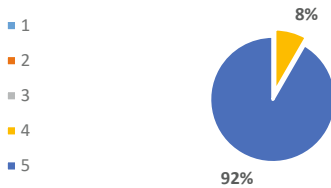
The professional skills of the instructors were very good (avg. 4,6).



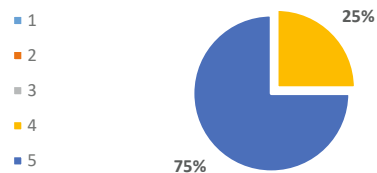
The course had a good combination of relevant lessons and exercises (avg. 4,8).



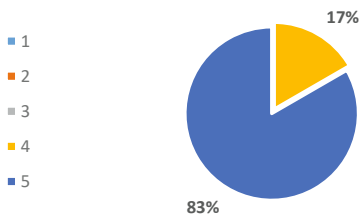
The instruction on the course was carried out professionally (avg. 4,9).



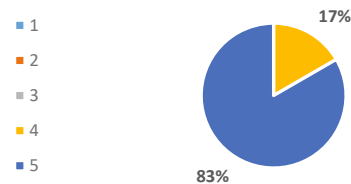
The general goals of the course were achieved (avg. 4,8).



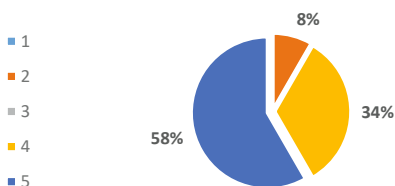
I achieved my personal goals on the course (avg. 4,8).



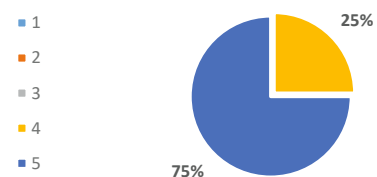
The interaction between the instructors and students was very good (avg. 4,8).



The students' questions and arguments were answered properly (avg. 4,4).



The lessons on this course were current and well suited for the purpose of the course (avg. 4,8).



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