

THE NATO LESSONS LEARNED PROCESS WITH REGARD TO THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER PERSPECTIVES



06 JUNE 2019

BRIEFING BY JALLC LLSO - GENAD
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*The final goal ... is to position gender literacy as a defining aspect of our professionalism...The challenge now is to consistently apply, adapt and adjust **gender-related lessons learned** to today's rapidly changing security environment. We have to demonstrate in practice the relevance of applying a **gender lens** to the complex security challenges of today.*

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to quickly introduce myself. I am Lt Col Charalampos Bakopoulos from Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC).

What I am going to present today, is not about what is the right thing to do but how this can be done through an already established process, the NATO LL process that ensures information sharing, effectiveness and accountability

NATO has always prided itself on being a learning organization; improving over time by capturing hard-won knowledge and applying it efficiently and effectively, transforming to meet the needs of the Allies. The evolution of the gender mainstreaming agenda in NATO is in itself a learning process.

Lessons from NATO missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo have emphasized the need to incorporate a gender perspective consistently at the tactical, operational and also strategic levels. They led to the implementation of process-related and structural changes (such as creation of GENAD position, or the inclusion of the topic in education initiatives and exercises).



Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre

NATO's centre dedicated to support Alliance-wide implementation and sustainment of NATO's Lessons Learned Policy



NATO LL Portal



Analysis



Training



Outreach



Support to Exercises



Lessons Learned
Events

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3

First, some words about Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre...

The JALLC is NATO's lead agent for Lessons learned, a centre dedicated to support Alliance-wide implementation and sustainment of NATO's Lessons Learned policy through monitoring and supervising the NATO lessons learned process within the NATO Command structure and other NATO bodies. It is the lead agent for the collection and sharing of lessons, accomplished through active portal content management of the NATO Lessons Learned Portal, lessons learned analysis and outreach to allies and partners. The JALLC trains, advises and conducts assess activities enabling the establishment and sustainment of effective lessons learned capabilities across NATO.

Achievements

The JALLC is the lead agent, driver and innovator for all things related to lessons learned

The NATO Lessons Learned Portal, which is managed by JALLC, is the single tool for tracking monitoring and exchanging lessons related information.

At the JALLC we believe that LL Training and awareness is a pillar to improve knowledge, skills and mindset

NATO Lessons Learned Policy



NATO Lessons Learned Capability

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4

In the next section, I'll briefly speak about the NATO LL Policy and how it defines the LL Capability.

The NATO LL Policy is applicable Alliance-wide to all NATO bodies, Agencies and staffs. Allies, as well as non-NATO nations contributing to NATO-led operations and missions or participating in NATO activities, are encouraged to use this Policy as guidance and to contribute and exchange best practice and LL in accordance with the Policy's intent.

According to the NATO LL Policy, the NATO Lessons Learned Capability comprises several important elements including a defined and workable business Process, within which, stakeholders can clearly identify their roles and responsibilities; Tools to support the capture, managing, searching and sharing of knowledge including lessons; and a properly resourced Structure wherein trained and experienced staff officers, supported by active Communities of Interest, can manage internal and external organizational learning.

Additionally, a positive learning mind-set across an organization is extremely important, governing the success of real learning, sustained improvement and profitable knowledge-sharing with Allies.

Finally, for any lesson from operations or training experience to be truly learned and adopted throughout an organization, it is an absolute necessity that the leadership team of the organization visibly support the process and participate in Influencing a learning culture through both policy and resourcing.

NATO Lesson Learned Process

*"A Lessons Learned process is a procedure for staffing **observations** arising from an activity and developing them into a **lesson learned**".*

NATO LL Policy

*"The purpose of this procedure is to **learn efficiently** from experience and to provide **validated justifications** for amending the existing way of doing things, in order to **improve performance**, both during the course of an operation and **for subsequent operations**".*

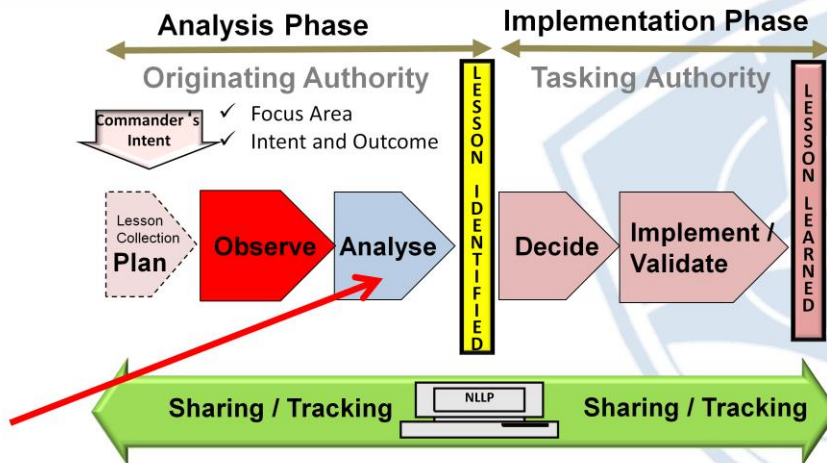
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NATO recognizes that in order to learn, a dedicated procedure needs to be in place, to ensure that mistakes are not repeated and best practices are captured.

According to the NATO LL Policy, "A Lessons Learned process is a procedure for staffing observations arising from an activity and developing them into a lesson learned"

Indeed, NATO key documents on the matter of organizational learning state that the purpose of a Lessons Learned Process is to **learn efficiently** from experience and to **provide validated justifications** for amending the existing way of doing things, in order to improve performance, both during the course of an operation and for subsequent operations.

NATO Lesson learned Process



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6

So, what is a Lesson? The term Lesson is broadly used to describe people, things and activities related to the act of learning from experience to achieve improvements. A Lesson is not learned until something changes in the way we operate.

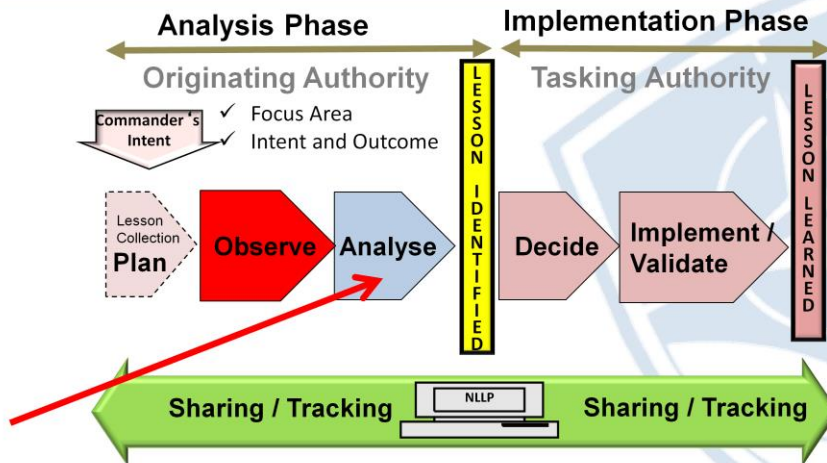
NATO's Lessons Learned Process is depicted above, and is applied to all formal observations made by anyone within NATO, regarding anything, from daily routine activities to conducting an operation, from things that went wrong to best practices. In other words, an observation is a short description of what **ACTUALLY** happened in comparison to what was **SUPPOSED** to happen, or we would like to happen.

As we can see in the figure above, any observation that is submitted as the input to this process, is used as the base for the analysis stage. It's in this stage that the observed issue needs to be identified and remedial actions suggested. That allows us to determine whether the observation is a Lesson Identified. Sometimes that analysis is relatively simple: there is an obvious root cause, the problem is internal, and the solution can easily be found. But sometimes this is not the case, and that's when analytical expertise is required.

I would like to point out the importance of the analysis phase for another reason, that may be of interest to the Gender Community. During this phase, the issues addressed by the originator of the observation are analyzed with the aid of stakeholders and SME's. Ensuring that the GENAD has access to this process, provides us with the perfect opportunity for the gender lens to be applied to all observations regardless they are initially related to gender topics.

Currently, there are only 15 lessons in the NATO Lessons Learned portal categorized as "gender in military operations". That doesn't mean that they are the only ones. It just means those are the only ones that have been categorized or identified as such.

NATO Lesson learned Process



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7

Promoting GENADs or Gender SME's active participation in the analysis phase of the NATO Lessons Learned Process of any NATO entity could result into a great improvement of the way that the gender perspective is institutionalized inside NATO by:

- Improving staffing of gender-related observations from exercises or operations
- Identifying blockages and barriers within the NATO LL Process as related to gender LL inputs.
- Facilitating the sharing and reuse of gender-related information through the NLLP.
- Encouraging the incorporation of gender perspective in other LL products.
- Providing accountability to the process of integrating gender perspective into NATO

NATO Lesson learned Portal

Portal



Lessons Learned Communities of Interest



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8

Now, I would like to tell you more about the NATO Lessons Learned Portal.

The need to share observations, lessons, and best practices was identified early on within NATO as being key to a successful Lesson Learned Capability.

Following the right process, connecting the right people by gathering them through the Lessons Learned Community and using the **appropriate tools**, ensures that Lessons from all over NATO and from all NATO activities are captured, analysed, learned, and shared. And it is this last requirement in particular—the right tool—that would lead to the development of the NATO Lessons Learned Portal (NLLP) we know today.

The NATO Lessons Learned Portal, has become NATO's key tool for the sharing of Lessons Learned and related information. It is a centralized platform, allowing the sharing of Lessons Learned related documents, such as overarching reference documents (Policies, Reports, Handbooks, etc.) and operational and exercises-related lessons (Best Practices, Lessons Identified, Lessons Learned).

The NATO Lessons Learned Portal also supports Lessons Learned (LL) Communities of Interest (COI) which are specific websites on the Portal, designed to facilitate the sharing of Lessons Learned related information and the interaction of users with a common interest on a specific subject within a specific area of expertise.

Communities of Interest



A LL Community Of Interest is much more than the area in the Portal (which is why they are called Community Of Interest areas). A Community Of Interest is the actual community of practitioners with an interest in sharing and promoting knowledge among their peers. The Community Of Interest may exist without the support of a tool, for example through regular meetups, but these days most Communities Of Interest use a tool to support their efforts. The NLLP Community Of Interest areas offer a safe, secure place where the members can store, share and discuss lessons of interest to them. The benefit of such an area in the NLLP, is that when it's properly managed by a community member, it makes the information that is most relevant to this community easily accessible. Often people get frustrated with finding things in the Portal because it contains lessons from across the full range of alliance activities, so there's a lot of irrelevant information to shift through, to find the gems. A properly managed Community Of Interest area, overcomes this issue.

The LL Community Of Interest Area can be created based on a real need identified by one or several organizations. One of them will necessarily act as the Sponsoring Organization for the site and is responsible for the overall content and administration of the Area

The Community Of Interest Area could provide: access to a dedicated Library, where Lessons Learned related information can be published by the Administrator; documents search functionality; a place to announce news and events; links to other websites; other optional elements aimed to fit the community's specific needs. The Community Of Interest Area or part(s) of it can be made accessible to all NLLP Users or only to those authorized by the Administrator.

Value of contributing to the NLLP

WE NEED TO LINK



THE LEARNING
FROM THE PAST

THE ACTIONS
IN THE PRESENT

INNOVATION
IN THE FUTURE

As I mentioned earlier, the NLLP is the single NATO tool for collecting, managing, tracking, monitoring and sharing lessons. It plays a key role in information sharing for any functional area and represents a vital source of information for analysis and decision making.

Contributing to the NLLP can add value to NATO, because:

Any part of NATO can learn from any other part of NATO's experience.

LL products can be easier to find and reuse.

Institutional memory can fuel future analysis and staff work.

LL products can be reused by NATO and non-NATO organizations supporting NATO activities.

Finally I need to emphasise that using the Portal can lead to better exploitation of lessons and high quality LL products can produce far-reaching changes to NATO policy and operations.

SUMMARY

- The NATO Lessons Learned Process is key to supporting NATO as a learning organization including the implementation of the WPS agenda.
- The incorporation of the gender perspective in LL products by actively engaging GENADS in the analysis phase of the NATO LL Process is a practical solution in the endeavor to apply gender lens to the current complex security challenges.
- The creation of a Gender COI in the NLLP may be considered as a venue for the gender community to collect and share Lessons.
- Contributing to the NLLP has a great value in supporting the effort to make gender perspective part of our core values and everyday activities at NATO.

That concludes my presentation. However, I'd like to quickly summarize the main takeaways.

The Lessons Learned process is key to supporting NATO being a learning organization including the implementation of the WPS agenda.

The incorporation of gender perspective in LL products by actively engaging GENADS in the analysis phase of the NATO LL Process is a practical solution on the endeavor to apply gender lens to the current complex security challenges.

Contributing to the NLLP has a great value in supporting the effort to make gender perspective part of our core values and everyday activities at NATO

Overall, the success of all efforts to define the gender as part of our professionalism and working culture is directly supported by an appropriate Situational Awareness of gender-related challenges; by adopting a learning approach to the way that these challenges are addressed; by generating knowledge through sharing the gender-related lessons and best practices with others; by trusting them; and by exploiting these lessons and best practices for the benefit of our organizations and NATO as a whole.

Thank you so much for your interest and attention
I would be happy to answer any questions you may have now

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