

Multi-Domain Operations and the Gender Perspective

What is it?

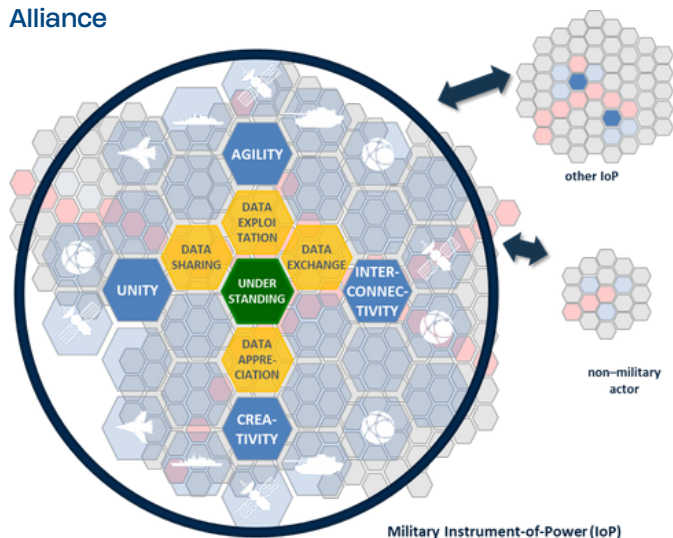
MDO is defined as “the orchestration of military activities, across all operational domains and environments, synchronised with non-military activities, to enable the Alliance to create converging effects at the speed of relevance”. MDO represents a pivotal shift in NATO’s military approach which empowers the Alliance to strategically influence events and synchronize efforts with external stakeholders. NATO’s digital transformation will lead the Alliance’s ability to operate decisively across all domains.



Military Implications of Gender in MDO

MDO will enable NATO’s Military Instrument of Power to prepare, plan, orchestrate and execute synchronised activities in collaboration with other Instruments of Power, stakeholders and actors. Integrating the gender perspective can help the Alliance understand and operate in complex environments, disentangling male/female behaviours embedded with cultural and societal conditions. The gender perspective helps decision-making in operations, targeting, influence and StratCom. Integrating gender in MDO, together with other human elements, supports the grasp of political, economic, military, societal and legal realms.

Guiding Principles on the Path to an MDO-enabled Alliance



Gender Analysis in MDO

Gender analysis is the systemic gathering and examination of information relating to gender differences and social relations between men and women which allow us to identify and understand gender inequalities. The centrality of data in MDO calls for Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD). SADD could be considered as a strategic asset which the Alliance should exploit and explore further.

So what for NATO?

NATO Digital Transformation aims at enabling and facilitating the planning and conduct of MDO in a complex security environment. Implementing the WPS Agenda and the gender perspective in NATO’s military activities, missions and operations is critical but extremely complex, as it functions as cross-functional, cross-cutting, cross-level and multi-domain. The implementation of WPS and the gender perspective requires orchestration and synchronisation with multiple actors and stakeholders, which will ultimately contribute to enhance NATO’s capacities and converge to increase effectiveness. NATO should seize the opportunity granted by its Digital Transformation efforts to enable and develop the capacity to integrate the gender perspective in MDO.

The connection between MDO and the gender perspective is still underdeveloped. However, NATO’s new Women, Peace and Security Policy endorsed at the 2024 Washington Summit can shape the way ahead with its mandate of operationalising the gender perspective in all of NATO’s core tasks and shape a gender-responsive leadership for the Alliance.