



The  
Responsible  
Security  
Association

# ENSURING RESPONSIBLE SECURITY THROUGH GENDER DIVERSITY

ICoCA Research Paper Series on Working Conditions in Private Security

**Applied Research Project**

Authors: Camille Deagostini Maya Warakullei Myrtle-Cleona Priddy

# CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Main Findings	5
1. Introduction	6
2. Gender (Diversity) and Private Security Companies	8
3. Existing Frameworks on Gender Diversity	10
4. Shortcomings and Sources	14
5. Recommendations	18
6. Conclusion	20
Bibliography	22
Annex	24

## Disclaimer

The following report was produced by Masters' students at the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, as part of an applied research project in partnership with International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA).

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of ICoCA.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inspired by how the private security industry could improve the provision of responsible security, this report explores how to achieve this through greater gender diversity. Focusing on the region of East Africa, it examines the efforts that have been undertaken by private security companies and what more could be done by bridging the gap between the need for better gender diversity and the realities of the market.

# MAIN FINDINGS

The report adopts an expanded conception of gender diversity, defining it as the non-hierarchical co-existence of masculine and feminine identities present in the workplace. So, rather than valuing only certain, masculine identities, company cultures must be transformed to embrace a variety of identities as capable of providing quality and responsible security.

Existing frameworks on gender diversity at the international, national and company levels are analysed and their limits discussed. These have pushed firmly for greater inclusion of women in the security sector, especially in senior ranks. Yet, nearly all the policies researched fail to go further, as they do not question whether female participation is meaningful, the role of other gender minorities, nor how the inclusion of women and gender minorities is perceived by their peers. Crucially, there is an apparent lack of specific guidelines on how national and international policies relate to and are meant to be implemented by the private security industry, leading to confusion and less effective coordination between all three levels.

Building on this, the report discusses how the exclusive focus on numerical increases of women in the security sector has generated a superficial form of gender diversity, in which attitudes and company cultures remain unaltered. Indeed, desk research, interviews and recent studies by ICoCA demonstrate the continued presence of gender discrimination. This discrimination takes the form of physical harassment, inappropriate comments, social exclusion and an emphasis on women's "inherent" qualities of empathy, calmness and their less threatening appearance.

Additionally, the report studies how such approaches do not pay sufficient attention to the ways in which men can be mobilised to help shape new, gender diverse company cultures.

Ultimately the identified shortcomings are understood to be rooted in the persistent dichotomisation of gender.

The continued emphasis on bringing more women into the workforce, while important, does not adequately consider how to transform company cultures to truly accept and value their presence. Moreover, there has been insufficient focus on how the reality of operating in a market environment influences company approaches to gender diversity. Indeed, marketing strategies often reinforce harmful stereotypes which may undermine the efforts of companies who are actively striving for gender diversity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Based on these reflections, the report proposes four primary recommendations:**

1. There is a need for greater male inclusion in gender diversity initiatives in order to bring men on board with this agenda and give them a stake in the creation of a new company culture.
2. Work must be done to address female biases through training, guidance and wider forums, so that women may fully benefit from other efforts to improve gender diversity.
3. Client preferences must be considered more consistently and clearer strategies must be developed to address discrimination by clients.
4. Companies must be more intentional in their marketing strategies so as to coordinate with company discourses on gender diversity and feed into company culture.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Article 38 of the International Code of Conduct (the Code) - which is aimed at private security service providers - directly addresses the issue of gender discrimination, stating that Member and Affiliate Companies shall not engage in nor benefit from sexual exploitation, abuse, or gender-based crimes (ICoCA, 2022). It further presents guidelines and resources on preventing and addressing sexual abuse and exploitation (ICoCA, 2019). Despite such provisions, alongside other international and national guidelines, most private security companies (PSC) still fall short in terms of guaranteeing gender diversity and preventing gender discrimination (Simons, 2017; ICoCA, 2023).

It is this persistent lack of gender diversity that this report seeks to unpack looking into why, despite efforts at the international, national and company-level, gender diversity remains out of reach for PSCs. The research is motivated by the belief that a lack of gender diversity inhibits the provision of responsible security. Indeed, it complements current research by the International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA) regarding the impact of poor working conditions – of which weak gender diversity is a component – on companies' respect of human rights.

In particular, the report explores the specificities of how operating in a market has shaped PSC's relationship to gender and the opportunities and challenges it presents for advancing gender diversity. As such, the report is guided by the research question: "How can private security companies improve responsible security by bridging the gap between the need for better gender diversity and the realities of the market?"

Through this question, the report delves into how company culture must be transformed to embrace a vision of gender diversity where all gender identities are accepted and valued as able security providers. It will thus be argued that it is only by examining this more intangible issue of how attitudes and perceptions of gender can be changed, that companies can foster truly inclusive work environments which, in turn, should generate a workforce that is more respectful of human rights. This research eschews a punitive approach, instead acknowledging what has already been achieved by companies and exploring how gender diversity could be improved further.

To dissect all the elements presented in the research question, the report is split into four sections. The first defines key terms, presenting gender diversity as the non-hierarchical co-existence of multiple masculinities and femininities and discussing the gendered history of security privatisation. The second section explores the efforts already undertaken to improve gender diversity in the security sector, at the international, national and company levels, to identify patterns in their approaches and the interplay between them. The third section examines the shortcomings of these measures, specifically their failure to transform company culture, before explaining how these are tied to a limited conception of gender diversity and the realities of operating in a market. Building on this, the fourth section suggests recommendations for how companies may move beyond these current shortcomings.

## 1. Methodology

ICoCA's current research on working conditions focuses on East Africa, particularly Kenya and Tanzania. Given that this report has been produced in collaboration with ICoCA as part of an Applied Research Project, it complements ICoCA's work by examining this same region. The Association has already completed significant research on working conditions of PSCs in these countries which this report hopes to supplement by diving into why gender discrimination remains prevalent (ICoCA, 2023). While generalisations cannot be made across different social, economic and political contexts, research has suggested that the ties between gender and security/war tend to be surprisingly similar across time and space (Goldstein, 2001). Thus, the findings here are likely applicable to PSCs in other contexts.

To construct this report a blend of academic papers, official policies and interviews were examined. The first provided an overarching understanding of the main concepts explored, while analysing policy papers (such as international frameworks and national actions plans) revealed how countries promote gender diversity, as well as whether these were adapted to PSCs. Interviews enabled the researchers to gain insights from individuals immersed in the private security industry (PSI), in order to make the report more relevant. Moreover, the websites of selected PSCs were examined to ascertain better how they present themselves (which strategies and policies are made public, which information and images are displayed etc.) and the extent to which this marketing conforms with or challenges gender diversity.

The Annex at the end of this report provides more information on the interviewees and company websites.

A total of eleven interviews were conducted with private security managers, members of civil society and security guards. These consisted of around 10 questions, which were altered depending on the category of actors. As such, private security managers were given more conceptual questions related to how they and their company define gender diversity, how they feel the industry has done so far and how they perceive the realities of operating in a market and catering to clients' preferences. Interviews with civil society actors centred around how to ensure better cooperation between NGOs, firms and governments, as well as their perceptions of companies' attitudes towards gender diversity. Finally, interviews with guards looked into how they feel about current policies and measures, such as trainings and what their experiences were with gender discrimination, to see if discrepancies could be observed between their answers and those of managers.

Given the relatively low number of interviews conducted, their purpose is not to generate a quantitative study of gender diversity in the PSI. Rather they provide anecdotal evidence throughout the report to confirm or contest the literature and make the findings relevant for the industry. The researchers recognise that there are inherent biases in these interviews. Crucially, although they offer a complete overview of the topic and insights from stakeholders across the industry, a drawback is the difficulty in ensuring accurate answers. Indeed, while civil society actors tended to talk openly and insisted that sexual abuse and discrimination remain prevalent, the guards interviewed were adamant that they had never experienced discrimination and managers, too, tended to focus heavily on the progress that had been made. There is a strong possibility that the lack of confidentiality (given that supervisors were present during the interviews with guards) influenced the answers received.

## 2. GENDER (DIVERSITY) AND PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANIES

This first section defines the key concepts of the research question within the context of this study.

### 1. Private Security Companies

Significant debate surrounds how exactly these companies should be understood and categorised, in terms of their ties to States, the precise activities they undertake and even their status under international law (Singer, 2001). However, for the sake of brevity and coherence, the definition formulated by the International Code of Conduct Association is adopted. The Code defines private security companies as “any Company whose business activities include the provision of Security Services either on its own behalf or on behalf of another, irrespective of how such a Company describes itself.” (ICoCA, 2022). The security services undertaken are extremely diverse, ranging from training, to operational and logistical support, or site security to cite only a few examples (Avant, 2005).

While this demonstrates the complexity of neatly categorising different PSCs, the definition does enable us to distinguish PSCs from private military companies, with the latter also carrying out military and combat operations.

### 2. Gender and gender diversity

Having defined PSCs, the second key aspect that requires attention is gender and gender diversity in the context of private security. Popular conceptions of gender tend to describe it in a dichotomous way, differentiating primarily between men and women and their respective characteristics (Stachowitsch, 2013, p.78). In the security sector, this conceptualisation of gender is rooted in the Western experience of nation-state military institutionalisation, where large-scale male contingents were introduced, thereby establishing a hierarchical definition of gender in which men came to be viewed as the protectors and women as the protected (Ibid.).

By contrast, this research embraces a feminist conception of gender that does not take this dual distinction for granted. Instead, it understands it as the militarisation of men, in opposition to a pacification of those who do not

correspond to the stereotypes and characteristics usually associated with masculinity (Eichler, 2014). In other words, gender is not defined in terms of biological differences, but through the frame of masculinities and femininities (Cockburn, 2013; Eichler 2013).

Masculinity is defined as those sets of values, capacities and practices that are commonly understood to be exemplary for men (Stachowitsch, 2013, p.81). In this sense, scholars agree that it is not so much that women are subordinate to men in the private security industry, but rather that certain masculinities, or masculine identities (which are mainly expressed by men), tend to dominate and be more highly valued than feminine identities (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012, p.498). It is these dominant masculine identities which have been labelled as “hegemonic masculinity” (Van Gilder, 2019, p.154). In the security sector, hegemonic masculinity is characterised by “hypermasculinity” or the “alpha male”, where individuals displaying toughness, physical strength and aggression are considered the most valuable security providers (Johnston & Kilty, 2015; Ombati, 2015; Mobekk, 2010; Van Gilder, 2019).

Femininity is constructed in relation with and in opposition to masculinity and as such is perceived to embody values including empathy, peacefulness and sensitivity (Cockburn, 2013). Crucially femininity is understood as subordinate to the hegemonic standard and this includes the element of sexual orientation. Indeed, the “alpha male” is usually conceived of as heterosexual, with other sexual orientations being considered not “male enough” (Van Gilder, 2019). This therefore also creates a hierarchy in which lesbian women, for example, are believed to be better security providers than heterosexual women, but do not reach the same status as their heterosexual male counterparts (Johnston and Kilty, 2014, p.70). It is this desire to subordinate other gender identities that encourages hypermasculine individuals to discriminate against their colleagues.

Thus, in light of what has been exposed above, this paper embraces gender diversity as a concept that embodies a much broader scope of diversities than merely men and women. It instead sees it as the acceptance of gender minorities who deviate from the “alpha male” representation (Johnston & Kilty, 2015). As such, gender diversity is defined as the non-hierarchical coexistence of all gender identities, regardless of whether they conform to hegemonic norms, where all are believed to be capable of performing the same security tasks to the same standard.

### 3. Neoliberalism and the gendered experience of security privatisation

It is important to define neoliberalism in the context of private security, in order to understand the nexus between it, gender diversity and responsible security.

The rise of PSCs is tied to the shift towards neoliberalism that occurred at the end of the 20th century and, as such, the way these companies are shaped largely reflects this neoliberal logic (Mathonnière, 2004; Delcourt, 2008; Chisholm, 2018). Neoliberalism is characterised by the belief that markets are more efficient at providing services that had previously been the sole responsibility of the State (Bakker, 2003). Thus, a preference emerged for favouring deregulation in as many spheres as possible in order to maximise competition and consumer choice (White, 2018). In other words, self-regulated or deregulated markets, dictated by client demands, are seen as the best way to meet the State’s (and society’s) security needs at the cheapest cost (Ibid.). In line with neoliberal logic, PSCs have emphasised their efficiency, professionalism and expertise to gain a comparative advantage over the public sector (McFate, 2019).

Key to this story is how the very process of security privatisation was itself gendered. Eichler (2013) explains how the rise of neoliberalism coincided with changes in national armed forces, as the abolition of conscription led to a reimagining of the relationship between citizen and State. Here, as the armed forces opened to volunteers, they experienced a transformation of their gender identity, becoming increasingly open to femininity and rejecting conventional hypermasculinity (Ibid., p.312). In this context, individuals who felt the masculine identity of the army had been disrupted, transferred to the private sector (Ibid.).

The result of this is that the PSI has become a site of remasculinisation of security, to respond to the increased

feminisation of the regular armed forces (Eichler, 2015, p.161). This is very visible in the particular type of masculinity put forward by PSCs, which compete on the market against one another primarily by branding themselves as effective, reliable and “ready to go where others will not” ethical hero warriors (Chisolm and Eichler, 2018, p.564). It therefore appears that hypermasculine identities have not disappeared from the security sector but rather have been displaced from the public to the private sector. This gives an insight into why gender diversity remains such a challenge for an industry that was partly created as a safe space for hypermasculine identities.

At the same time, a usually hidden part of the literature discusses how remasculinisation is not as simple as transcribing conventional masculine identities to the private sector, as PSCs have also been reinventing these (Stachowitsch, 2013, p.84). For instance, security firms also market themselves on values usually associated with femininity, such as cultural sensitivity, compassion and flexibility. It is therefore key to grasp, as Eichler emphasises, how the privatisation of security has simultaneously disrupted and reinforced the gender orders outlined above, in such a way that still serves to undermine and delegitimise gender minorities (Eichler, 2013, p.316).

### 4. Responsible Security

Finally, responsible security is understood as the adherence of PSCs to international norms and standards, especially with regards to the respect of the human rights of employees, clients and communities in which they operate (Arostegui, 2015). The international community has adopted frameworks to uphold these human rights standards in security - many of which contain a strong emphasis on gender equality and women’s rights - in the hopes that security will be more responsible (Ibid). Indeed, it has been proven that having more women on sites decreases the likelihood of gender-based violence (GBV) occurring during operations and there is often less abusive use of force (Ibid). Thus, there is an indication that gender diversity is essential for promoting responsible security.

However, as will be discussed, this report takes a deeper approach, arguing there is a need to go further than simply including more women in the PSI and create instead a company culture that embraces gender diversity. This is based on studies that have demonstrated that employees are more likely to adhere to norms and standards that are instilled by company culture, as they do so not because they have to but because they have integrated these values too (Sørensen, 2002; Kolt & Van der Merwe, 2009).

# 3. EXISTING FRAMEWORKS ON GENDER DIVERSITY

Based on these definitions, this section outlines the existing efforts that have been taken at the international, national and company levels, in order to contextualise the shortcomings identified later.

## 1. International Frameworks

Several international frameworks have been developed to address both gender diversity in the security sector and the regulation of PSCs, namely the UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), the International Code of Conduct, the Montreux Document and the DCAF Gender and SSR Toolkit. While the WPS agenda predominantly advocates for the increased and comprehensive inclusion of women in peace and security matters (Peace Women, 2013; UNSCR 1325, 2000), the Code and the Gender and SSR Toolkit provide details on how PSCs may achieve gender diversity. This includes, for instance, contextualising training to the region of operations (DCAF, 2008), or guidance on setting up vetting procedures and reporting mechanisms to increase accountability for gender discrimination (ICoCA, 2021).

However, these guidelines and frameworks have faced criticism. One issue concerns their content, with scholars indicating that their vague nature means companies may have introduced some of the mechanisms they advocate for, but these are rarely accompanied by detailed clarification on their functionality (Vrdoljak, 2010). Indeed, little information is provided regarding, for example, the extent to which reporting mechanisms should be made confidential, the timelines involved with filing complaints, or what disciplinary measures this may lead to, which ultimately discourages individuals from resorting to them (Ibid.). Moreover, specifically regarding the WPS framework, critics have suggested that it focuses excessively on ensuring female participation in security matters, stopping short of looking into how men can be

included in this discussion, whether female inclusion is meaningful and how to ensure that women participating are not held back by their own biases (Duncanson, 2016; Peace Women, 2013; Shepherd, 2016).

A second limitation concerns how far these frameworks relate to PSCs, as there is surprisingly little overlap between them on the question of gender diversity within the PSI, thereby weakening their relevance to companies. Indeed, while the WPS agenda delineates gender diversity recommendations at the international and national levels, it makes no mention of PSCs. In contrast to this, the Montreux Document focuses solely on companies yet mentions gender diversity only sporadically (Government of Switzerland and ICRC, 2008). In those instances where guidance is provided specifically for PSCs, it tends to be characterised by vague goals and recommendations. For instance, the Montreux Document merely mentions the need to prevent unlawful discrimination and sexual abuse with no further guidance on how this should be achieved in practice (DCAF, 2008, p.5; Peace Women, 2013).

These issues were supported by the interviews conducted for this report. Regarding the content of these frameworks, interviewees 1 and 3 mentioned that, despite the high number of female personnel at their firms, gendered biases continued to prevail. Particularly key was the mention that it is not only male employees who have biases, but that women themselves also hold stereotypical beliefs about their own capabilities. This highlights how the current focus on increasing female presence in security fails to fully consider how to ensure that their presence generates meaningful gender diversity,

with female and other gender minority personnel seeing themselves as equal to their male counterparts.

For the second limitation, interviewees from both companies and civil society insisted that there was still much to be done in bridging the gap between international efforts and company policies. Interviewee 3 noted that, although companies are willing to comply with such guidelines, they are not always certain of how these apply to them, limiting their effectiveness until such a time that they are implemented in national laws that explicitly bind the PSI. They even went so far as to argue that companies pay little heed to international guidelines, since they believe companies are the ones playing a leading role in promoting gender diversity in the industry. Interviewees 9 and 10 further mentioned that these frameworks tend to be inaccessible to regular employees. They explained how, in the context of East Africa, guards tend to have less extensive education and knowledge of their rights which, combined with language barriers, render these frameworks less readable for them.

Together, this hints at the need for greater collaboration with national and company efforts, so as to ensure international policies are relevant and accessible to PSCs on the ground.

*There is no point in feeding employees information if they are not able to own it.*  
**(Interviewee 9)**

## 2. National Frameworks

In addition, there have also been national initiatives in Kenya and Tanzania to develop gender diversity in the public and private security sectors, which often draw on the above-mentioned international frameworks. This has been done, for example, by exhibiting high-level political commitment to the issue. In Tanzania, President

Hassan proved his commitment to gender diversity through the appointment of Dr. Stergomena Tax as Minister for Defence and National Service (Nwaka, 2021). Her contributions indicate a desire to challenge existent gendered perceptions in security, as she declared: *"I have decided to break the long-time myth in the defence ministry, there should be a man with muscles"* (Ibid, 2021).

State support was also deemed essential by interviewee 2, who noted how having a female president in Tanzania has had positive effects on female representation, as it set a standard for others. They described the occurrence of a female revolution since her arrival in office. As such, at the nascence of their company there were no female employees in senior positions, where they now have six women on the management team and eight in mid-level management. According to the interviewee, these appointments and shifting attitudes can be directly attributed to such national efforts.

In addition to such symbolic demonstrations of commitment, these ambitions have been verbalised concretely through policies. Kenya has developed a National Action Plan reflecting the WPS's four pillars of participation and promotion, prevention, protection and relief and recovery (KNAP, 2020). These detailed objectives include, for example, the active and developed participation of women in all decision-making levels in institutions for the management and resolution of conflict (Ibid.). The document also sets forth a National Steering Committee made up of governmental ministers, agencies and other stakeholders who provide guidance on the implementation process of the pillars (Ibid).

Ultimately, the objectives fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Service and Gender and are measured through a set of verifiable indicators, such as the number of women in leadership and decision-making positions and whether laws are translated into policies and

strategies (Ibid). In Kenya, the KNAP was supplemented through a key constitutional change which enacted a 30% quota for women in the Kenyan Police Service (KPS) (Onyango and Natarajan 2021).

Although Tanzania is yet to publish an action plan, it has begun a drafting phase (UN Women Africa, 2022) and has already published “Tanzania’s Vision 2025” (United Republic of Tanzania, 2020). This national policy outlines a variety of goals, one of which is the achievement of “High Quality Livelihood” (Ibid., p.12). This goal is to be attained through, among others, “gender equality and the empowerment of all women in all socioeconomic and political relations and cultures”, indicating a belief that gender diversity is an essential element of wellbeing (United Republic of Tanzania, 2020, p. 12).

Both policies, while commendable, face certain shortcomings when it comes to addressing gender diversity in the PSI. Indeed, the KNAP, while extremely detailed, makes little mention of the private sector. In the case of Tanzania, its current policy too lacks the specificity to be useful for the PSCs: it is overall fairly descriptive and contains minimal specific, measurable goals. Overall, much like with the international frameworks, this reduces their relevance and applicability to PSCs trying to advance gender diversity.

Moreover, the 30% quota - in line with previous criticisms - is concerned exclusively with the number of women as a marker for gender diversity. Not only has the 30% mark still to be met (as of 2016 it was still only at 15%), but it has also failed to tangibly improve the working conditions of women in the security sector (Onyango and Mangai, 2017, p.148). Part of the reason for this shortcoming was explained as being due to the challenging nature of the KPS’ work (Ibid.). Here the National Security Council stated it may not be advisable to enlist women in particular areas and assignments, given the dangerous environment, thereby leading to a decrease in the number of women hired in subsequent recruitments (Ibid). This compartmentalisation of women further communicates a prevailing perception of women as suited for lower-risk tasks, confining them to specific, “safer” roles.

The UK’s Women, Peace and Security National Plan provides comparison to those of Kenya and Tanzania. While it is not without its own shortcomings, the UK Action Plan succeeded in formulating an extensive and more regionally- specific, framework. It too draws on the UNSCR 1325’s pillars and identifies five national ‘Strategic objectives’ that reflect the UK’s priorities (UK Women Peace and Security NAP, 2023). These include, amongst

others, increasing women’s meaningful participation and representation in decision-making processes, preventing GBV and increasing accountability of security actors (Ibid.). Every objective also includes detailed evidence, strategies and commitments, which continuously reference specific regional contexts to make the recommendations relevant and applicable.

Overall, the national policies of Tanzania and Kenya suffer from similar limitations to international frameworks, as they too are nebulous with relatively weak implementation mechanisms. PSI interviewees themselves indicate that national frameworks are not always relevant in their day-to-day operations and as such they feel indifferent towards them. Rather, they believe the onus is on companies to inculcate change. Civil society representatives supplemented this, lamenting the lack of national guidelines to frame and foster interactions with PSCs, which further isolates stakeholders from each other and stalls progress.

*Country frameworks neither help nor hinder us; the private sector has been the driving force in gender diversity. (Interviewee 3)*

### 3. Company Frameworks

Given this lack of clarity and interaction between (inter) national and company efforts, it becomes all the more critical to determine how PSCs themselves have sought to advance gender diversity. Selected current company frameworks (see Annex) indicate an acknowledgement of the continued male domination of the Kenyan and Tanzanian PSI (Seneca EA, 2021). There is also recognition of the various forms of discrimination this can lead to, with G4S, for example, considering verbal (name calling, innuendos), non-verbal (exclusion, gestures) and physical (touching, actual or threatened) abuse as discrimination (G4S, 2021, p. 11).

One primary response adopted by companies has been to hire more women. Seneca, for instance, recently appointed CEO Naomi Kipkorir and their website showcases the recruitment of two female employees: one as a Control and Operational Excellence Officer and another as a Human Resource Practitioner. G4S, too, notes in their Ethics Code that 24% of their managerial positions are held by women (Allied Universal, 2021). To support inclusive hiring, many companies provide documentation outlining their hiring procedures. Notably, the G4S Global website presents documents which, in the “Diversity and Inclusion” section, state that recruitment, promotion and development decisions for the firm will be based on objective standards

drawing on their policy of non- discrimination (G4S, 2021). However, specific details for how this non- discrimination is guaranteed are not offered.

This exhibits its limited nature, as Peregrine Risk Management, another ICoCA Member, has a framework with specific guidelines on hiring in the UK. For instance, their website contains an Equal Opportunity Policy which stipulates providing equality for gender, marital or family status (Peregrine Risk Management, 2022). The document further outlines the various types of discrimination which they oppose including direct sex discrimination, sexual harassment and unequal pay. Immense detail is given regarding what these categorisations include, for instance, sex discrimination is defined as an employer treating an employee or prospective employee “less favourably” due to his or her gender, marital status, sexual orientation. It even goes so far as to differentiate between direct and indirect discrimination (Ibid.). The document also includes descriptions for the implementation of the policy: whose responsibility it is, effective communication to all employees through training and management training and induction courses (Ibid.). This is laudable as it expands on the existing frameworks, as well as specifying what is considered discrimination and has accountability measures in place.

In addition to hiring policies, interviews conducted with private security managers revealed the work done to better accommodate women in the workplace. Interviewee 3, in particular, highlighted their company’s support of personnel pregnancy, through the designing of specific maternity-appropriate uniforms, the establishment of a private lactation room and the provision of a designated fridge for storing milk. The company has further established ‘Wonder Woman’, a platform for female staff to discuss challenges and experiences in the PSI, such as workplace violence. They equally described a platform where male and female personnel collaborate on how attitudes could be improved towards gender diversity.

Furthermore, most - though not all - companies analysed provide guidelines on their reporting mechanisms. G4S, for example, mentions their ‘Speak Out’ initiative, which provides employees with a mechanism for challenging inappropriate behaviour by filing a report or calling a toll-free number (G4S, 2021) . Particularly insightful is the inclusion of a hypothetical scenario concerning customer discrimination through the request of gender-specific security officers. Here, the policy offers guidelines on how to respond, noting “we will not breach discrimination laws to get or keep any business. At G4S we will always appoint the best people for the job regardless of their personal characteristics” (Ibid., p. 10).

While all these measures are laudable and demonstrate commitment to enacting gender diversity, some limitations exist. Similarly to national and international frameworks, company efforts are marked by a focus on increasing the number of female employees. This demonstrates how most efforts fail to consider how to achieve gender diversity through cultural changes. Moreover, policies remain general in nature, with some being formulated to be implemented in over 40 different regional offices, limiting their relevance and applicability in East African branches. Most of the company mechanisms studied also remain restricted to internal company knowledge, with few details regarding the reporting processes and the nature of “disciplinary procedures”. This is a problem scholars have hinted at too, as PSCs tend to provide limited information on how reporting mechanisms are implemented in practice and how they guarantee the protection of people resorting to them, which can restrict their use (Vrdoljak, 2010). This was confirmed by interviewees 9 and 10, who insisted that even where such mechanisms exist, employees tend to be unaware of their rights and fearful of retaliation should they speak out. ICoCA’s research, too, provides evidence of the limited knowledge amongst employees of the preventative measures in place to battle sexual harassment, all of which has reduced their impact on gender diversity.

# 4. SHORTCOMINGS AND THEIR SOURCES

Having discussed the existing policies and approaches that frame gender diversity in the private security industry, this section dives into their shortcomings and their sources. This will lay a solid foundation on which to build recommendations to move the industry beyond its current achievements.

## 1. Shortcomings

The above section demonstrates that a multiplicity of guidelines has already been mobilised to enhance gender diversity in the security sector, generating some improvement notably in terms of increasing the number of women employed in the industry (Seneca, 2021). Yet PSCs continue to face significant challenges when it comes to integrating authentic gender diversity into company culture. Indeed, the mere numerical increase of women – which, as interviewees from the PSI reminded us, should also not be overstated – is insufficient proof, on its own, of a transformation of attitudes. Instead, we risk accepting a superficial diversity, where there is a failure to investigate what role women and gender minorities are playing, whether their participation is meaningful and how they are perceived by others (Hudson, 2021).

Firstly, although many firms have some form of internal policy, gender diversity training, or complaint mechanisms, work environments have not been truly altered. Several studies outline how the security sector remains marked by gendered discrimination, be it sexual harassment, verbal comments, or social exclusion (Vrdoljak, 2010; Dowler & Arai, 2008; Herrmann et al., 2020). This has been further confirmed by ICoCA's recent research in East Africa, which suggests sexual harassment remains an issue (ICoCA, 2023). This static nature of work cultures has been extensively researched in national police forces, offering useful insights for the private sector. For instance, one study on the

Northshire police force (UK) found that efforts to promote gender diversity within the force<sup>[1]</sup> had little success with changing the attitudes of their officers (Loftus, 2008). In particular, Loftus describes how it fostered and entrenched greater divides between employees, as white, heterosexual officers complained of excessive political correctness and trainings which were perceived as accusing them of racism (Ibid., p.763). This resulted in them forming even more closed circles in which they felt freer to vent their frustrations and reaffirm their own identities, thereby altering the form and space of discrimination without eradicating it (Ibid).

While it is difficult to ascertain the exact extent of this issue in the PSI, interviews conducted for this report do appear to reveal a similar challenge. Interviewees 1 and 3 highlighted how, despite their respective companies striving for gender diversity, there was still work to do in terms of bringing men into the conversation and making them into active champions for gender diversity. Interviewee 1, for example, described how male employees had requested their own working group after one had been established to deal with female issues at work. Yet once this was offered to them as an option there was far less enthusiasm for it and it has yet to become a reality. Together this implies that masculine individuals may feel frustrated or threatened by the attention that is given to gender diversity, causing them to disengage and undermine efforts to transform working environments and company culture.

[1] These measures included trainings on gender diversity and discrimination, introducing support associations for employees and physically changing the office space through the hanging of posters and distrusting mugs and office supplies that recalled the force's commitment to and official policy on gender diversity (Loftus, 2008, p761).

Secondly, this research found that efforts to achieve gender diversity have focused primarily on women's "inherent" qualities as security providers. Studies examining this issue reveal how companies giving greater visibility to women tend to do so by emphasising their "natural" ability to be empathetic, calm, to interact with other women, or to be perceived as less threatening than their male counterparts (Stachowitsch, 2013, p.82; Johnston & Kilty, 2014, p.66; Arostegui, 2007). For instance, Johnston & Kilty (2014) discuss how male security guards working in a hospital perceived their female colleagues as better adapted to softer tasks that do not involve direct physical confrontation (Ibid., p.68). In particular, they expressed how, when dealing with more violent patients, they preferred not having a female partner, whom they believed would be an extra burden as she would be less able to support them and would need their protection (Ibid.). While recognising that many cultural contexts and social realities outside the company's control may indeed mean that women are better placed to do certain jobs, this approach to gender diversity continues to essentialise women and limit their ability to take on "harder", higher-skilled security tasks (Stachowitsch, 2013, p.82; Johnston & Kilty, 2014, p.58).

As our interviews confirm, this issue has not fully disappeared. Interviewee 2 stated that certain tasks, like night shifts, were usually completely ruled out for women, especially in the East African security context. It also transpired that recruiters still consider it beneficial to hire female personnel specifically for front desk or reception jobs. The main argument for this is that their appearance allegedly enables them to both undertake the core task of ensuring safety (such as monitoring who enters the lobby) while also being "smiley" and "inviting" in a way that best ensures customer service. Interviewees 1 and 2 further mentioned the ability of women to "blend in" better than their male counterparts. While presented as positive

elements, such insights imply that women's selling points are precisely that they are not viewed by others as serious security actors, rather than because they are valued as true assets, capable of performing the same security tasks as men (Johnston & Kilty, 2014, p.66).

Such assumptions are not limited to employers and colleagues, with interviewee 11 sharing how female guards sent to private homes have occasionally been asked by clients to do housework, despite it clearly not being part of their mandate. It was also pointed out that firms branding themselves as more feminine felt there was an assumption that they offered only guardian services (i.e., looking after children) instead of conventional security tasks.

It is further possible that this feeds into another key factor brought up by several interviewees from PSCs: that women are plagued by an unconscious bias, fuelling their own belief that they are unsuited to traditional security tasks. Together this contributes to a company culture in which women and gender minorities are confined to specific tasks, as they are perceived by themselves and those around them as less adequate for the job.

*There is a need to look at female biases and how women are holding themselves back.*  
**(Interviewee 1)**

Overall, these shortcomings indicate work is still required to fundamentally transform company cultures. While the efforts of PSCs in this domain should not go unacknowledged, the deeper question remains of how to ensure gender diversity, as it has been defined here, becomes integrated by all employees and a natural part of day-to-day operations. Only by doing so, can companies truly improve their working conditions and help ensure a responsible provision of security.



## 2. Sources of shortcomings

In order to fully grasp these shortcomings and how to overcome them, it is important to understand their root causes.

The first cause identified here is the fundamentally binary conception of gender and gender diversity that defines both company policies and (int)national frameworks (Acker, 1990, p.146). As previously mentioned, much of the focus has been on increasing the number of women in the PSI and in managerial roles. This diverges from the definition adopted in this report, where gender diversity is concerned with the acceptance of multiple gender identities, regardless of whether they conform to hegemonic standards. Although it must be noted that interviewees certainly mentioned different aspects of gender diversity, such as representation, these often hinged on the idea of “equal opportunities” between men and women. This essentially reduces gender diversity to being about having as many women present as men. Few ventured into the notion of gender diversity as valuing all masculinities and femininities, the nature of the working environment, or the specific challenges faced by gender minorities other than women.

A consequence of this view is that it gives rise to what has been termed a “problem-solving approach” (Eichler, 2015, p.158). Here, the PSI’s key characteristics - namely being dictated by client and company interests and being framed by weak regulation – are taken at face value and assumed to be natural and inevitable. This uncritical lens means gender diversity comes to be considered as an external and incidental factor that negatively impacts company interests (Ibid.). As a result, PSCs fail to appreciate how - as discussed previously - gender is tied to the very process of privatisation and therefore permeates all aspects of their organisations and operations. As such, the response is precisely small, practical policy tweaks, such as changing recruitment practices or increasing training on sexual harassment, rather than envisaging deeper changes (Ibid., p.159). This perception was evident throughout the interviews, with nearly all PSI interviewees mentioning the number of women they had hired and many emphasising the presence of women at the managerial level. While such measures are certainly necessary and should be recognised as positive achievements, they stop short of embracing a more comprehensive view of gender diversity, which would require policies aimed at transforming company cultures.

The second major limitation faced by PSCs is the reality of operating in a market environment. As mentioned in the

initial section of this report, the functioning of the market imposes certain conditions on the PSI, whereby companies must present themselves as an effective, professional and low-cost alternative to state security in order to attract clients (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012). This client focus is where market values intersect with gender, as firms put forward their effectiveness and professionalism by showcasing masculine attributes, such as toughness, braveness and physical prowess, which clients perceive (whether consciously or not) as offering better quality security (Ibid., p.197). Interviewees 1 to 4 strongly corroborated this, with all expressing that they had at some point faced clients who requested male guards.

It was noted that clients sought the masculine attributes of guards who were “big” or “tough” and were wary of pregnant female guards, forcing companies to justify that all their employees are equally competent. Moreover, the pressure to respond to client demands is apparent, as nearly all PSC interviewees mentioned the importance of “customer service” and “customer satisfaction” in their work.

In addition to market realities introducing hegemonic masculinity as a way of structuring the relationship between PSCs and their clients (Ibid.), it also holds significant influence over their marketing strategies. Scholars have examined in depth how marketing - which is immediately visible on company websites - conveys messages about company culture, values and adherence to norms and standards (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012; Cusumano, 2021). Through their use of imagery, logos and colour, PSCs aim to present themselves as efficient, professional and trustworthy (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012, p.203).

To achieve this, they have opted for marketing that essentially makes them indistinguishable from firms in other sectors and give them a clear corporate feel (Cusumano, 2021, p.137; van Steden, 2013). This is done by opting for neutral logos – which usually avoid explicit reference to security, weapons, or the military – and neutral colour schemes – such as blue - which convey a tone of calm and trust, particularly in Western eyes (Cusumano, 2021, p.139).

Interestingly, although on the face of it, this might appear to be less hypermasculine branding (as there are fewer direct references to war or the military), this does not necessarily mean that such marketing eschews the image of security provision as masculine. Indeed, scholars such as Stachowitsch (2013, p.84) suggest PSCs have created new masculinities, whereby they combine traditional masculinities with feminine attributes, such as cultural sensitivity, to generate reimagined masculinities

that are better adapted to today’s corporate world. Thus, although some websites display gender diversity policies and have pictures that include women, the overall message still tends to be masculine. In particular, Joachim and Schneiker (2012, p.503) have shown how most websites still predominantly display images of men providing traditional security tasks, especially those that involve being armed and wearing heavy combat gear. But this also extends to pictures of men in suits and headsets, working behind computers, which illustrates their technical expertise in a way that is masculinised (Ibid., p.502). Conversely, women are often depicted at more desk-type jobs or even as the receivers of security.

To confirm this, this report analysed a variety of PSC websites (see Annex). Admittedly, these websites displayed significant diversity in terms of the pictures they showed, their logos, and public information they had. However, while remaining aware that this is not the case for every website, there did appear to be patterns similar to those described in the literature. In many cases, women were presented behind desks, smiling, whereas men were shown handling dogs, securing gates, or carrying arms. Most crucially, there also appears to be a pattern of women being shown as the receivers of security services in a way that men are not. For instance, certain websites depicted women in the role of mothers, wives and the victims of violence in need of protection

by men from men. Such choices could potentially undermine internal efforts, given that marketing does not just influence outside perceptions of the firms, it also contributes to forming a corporate identity and instilling a certain company culture (Cusumano, 2021, p.137).

## 3. Consequences

Ultimately, the limited definition of gender diversity, combined with the realities of operating in markets, have created very tangible consequences in terms of the working environment offered to PSI employees. This in turn risks harming the provision of responsible security, as a company culture that has not integrated gender diversity is also more likely to reflect those same values onto the community in which they operate (Arostegui, 2015). Indeed, as Dickinson (2017, p.525) reminds us, in a context where there is weak regulation it is all the more important to look at elements like company culture as one of the more subtle ways to ensure norm compliance.

It is only by adopting a broader conception of gender diversity and understanding how it is embedded in all aspects of their operations, that PSCs can begin to introduce measures that guarantee, not only that there are more women and gender minorities present, but also that company cultures are transformed to appreciate their contributions to all aspects of security work.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on these observations of both the efforts and the limitations that exist in the promotion of gender diversity in the PSI, this final section presents recommendations to overcome them. These are not exhaustive by any means, nor do they claim to offer fully-fleshed out policy proposals (which would require a separate report) but suggest initial thoughts on possible solutions to the shortcomings identified.

At the same time, the report recognises how companies may be constrained by broader societal norms. Indeed, East Africa is a region marked by significant security challenges and a patriarchal society, as most interviewees noted. This also explains the reliance on a particular type of masculinity in the PSI, which must be born in mind when reading the below recommendations.

### 1. Bringing men on board

One of the biggest challenges discussed was ensuring that all employees are on board with gender diversity policies and strategies if company culture is to be altered. Interviewee 3, in particular, insisted on the significance of engaging men with this issue in a positive way, making them allies rather than spoilers of the process. Essentially, greater care must be taken to consider how gender diversity policies may impact and destabilise hegemonic masculine identities in the workspace, which is also a space for individuals to form and express their self-worth (Choi & Li, 2020, p642). It is by failing to see that gender diversity is also about men and their identities, that we risk backlash from employees.

Some PSCs in Kenya have already taken steps in this direction, establishing, for example, platforms or groups for “male champions”. Through this, they offer a way for men to be directly and positively involved in establishing

inclusive environments. This could potentially reduce friction, as it provides these individuals with a voice and a stake in the creation of a common culture in which all gender identities have a space, rather than relying on policies and trainings that ask participants to take in information and simply “make space” for other identities.

### 2. Addressing female biases

Linked to the previous recommendation, interviewees from the PSI also touched on an element that has been curiously absent from the researched literature: the role of female biases. Several PSI interviewees mentioned further efforts are needed to ensure that women (and by extension other gender minorities) believed themselves that they were cut out for the job. What this illustrates is that there is a need to both address how those embodying hegemonic masculinity embrace gender diversity, but also how gender minorities gain confidence.

This is particularly complex to do, as it has to be done in tandem with engaging men if it is to be successful. Indeed, studies have indicated how women and gender minorities are frequently expected to “put up with” the discrimination they encounter, in order to gain respect from their colleagues and not be fully excluded from social circles (Johnston & Kilty, 2014). As such, initiatives tackling female biases must appreciate how these stem from the social and work environment in which individuals find themselves, where they have had to accept and adapt to external expectations.

### 3. Responding to client preferences

Operating in a market means firms are often confronted with client preferences that may not align with their own gender diversity goals. Several solutions already exist to try and mitigate this. As mentioned, some companies expressly state in their public policies that such discrimination will not be tolerated and, as interviewee 1 described, others attempt to influence their clients’ perceptions by selling the stories of their successful women to prove their business case.

In addition to such measures, some companies have opted to rest on their selection and training procedures to convince their clients of the futility of distinguishing between male and female guards. This involves reminding clients that since all their guards, regardless of gender, are asked to meet the same criteria (both physical and skills) and then undergo exactly the same training, there is no justifiable reason to ask for a male employee. This implies that ensuring standardised (but non-discriminatory) selection procedures and trainings and actively communicating this, gives companies more leverage against client demands. It further helps provide women with the skillset to take on more conventional security

tasks, rather than hiring them solely for customer service-related jobs.

### 4. Being attentive to marketing strategies

Finally, an undervalued obstacle to achieving gender diversity hinges on PSCs’ marketing strategies. Here, conscious efforts are necessary to avoid falling into the pitfall of essentialising women as softer security providers or mere security receivers. It must be recognised that companies have already taken significant steps in this direction, including showcasing a growing number of women and other minorities in pictures on their websites which accentuate their professionalism and at times toughness. At the same time, there remains a tendency to portray them in exclusively customer-service situations, smiling and discreet.

The challenge is that it is not just about portraying women as tough and brave, but also suggesting that hegemonic masculinity is not the only norm that is beneficial to security provision. This could, for example, mean also showing men in conventionally “feminine” situations, so as to showcase a full range of gendered identities and tasks.

In sum, the hope is that, by adopting these recommendations and actively thinking about how to transform company culture within a market context, PSCs will be able to create work environments in which all employees fully embrace gender diversity as a true asset. In doing so, companies will reach the ultimate goal of guaranteeing effective and responsible security, where clients and individuals in communities are treated with respect and in accordance with their human rights, as outlined in the Code (ICoCA, 2022).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

As part of ICoCA's broader research on ensuring responsible security through better working conditions, this Applied Research Project sought to examine the potential avenues for improving gender diversity in the PSI. This was done by focusing on the question "How can private security companies improve responsible security by bridging the gap between the need for better gender diversity and the realities of the market?"

The research concentrated on East Africa, the current area of interest for ICoCA, though the report is premised on the assumption that these findings are likely to be relevant to other regions too.

Resting on both desk research and interviews with diverse stakeholders in the PSI, the report outlines the multifaceted nature of gender diversity, as well as how the very process of security privatisation must be understood as fundamentally gendered. As such, there is a need for company cultures to be transformed so that gender diversity may be conceived of as the non-hierarchical co-existence of differing feminine and masculine identities. Equally, privatisation must be viewed as a process by which hypermasculine identities were displaced from the public sector and reimagined to fit the purposes of the PSI, which was therefore essentially (and unconsciously) moulded as a space for masculinity.

The report considers these two elements as crucial to explaining why previous policies and initiatives have not yet managed to fully transform the mindsets and work cultures of PSCs. Indeed, by brushing over the complexities of gender diversity and its ties to

privatisation, international, national and company efforts have been confined to problem-solving approaches. These hinge on numerical increases of women in the security sector without considering how to make their inclusion meaningful. Although these efforts are laudable, the report suggests that there is room for further improvement, as employees continue to experience gender discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, social exclusion, female biases and persistent beliefs that women are less suited to "hard" security tasks.

While recognising that companies are constrained by cultural and societal realities – with interviewees in the PSI and in civil society stating that individuals in East Africa face significant pressure to conform to gendered roles – this report has presented four main recommendations to try and move past these. These include (1) creating initiatives that bring men on board and include them in the shaping of a new, inclusive work environment; (2) simultaneously working to address and undo female biases; (3) taking greater care to address and respond to discrimination by clients; (4) and developing marketing strategies that deliberately embrace gender diversity and eschew essentialising different genders.

The report must also be read with an awareness of its limitations, especially as the interviews conducted and the websites examined provide anecdotal evidence rather than comprehensive quantitative data to support its findings. Moreover, information gathered from interviews with PSC employees also suffer from certain shortcomings. Indeed, security guards were interviewed with the presence of their supervisors, which likely skewed the information provided; for instance, they all denied having witnessed any discrimination. Management, too, provided answers that at times felt scripted and strictly followed their company's official narrative on gender diversity. To try and mitigate this, the report also drew on research by ICoCA on working conditions in East Africa, as well as on interviews with civil society actors in Kenya and Tanzania, who have long-standing relationships with local companies and therefore a stronger access to information.

Finally, the list of recommendations suggested are non-exhaustive and the authors hope they will spark inspiration for further research. In particular, it would be of interest to develop all four recommendations to provide more detailed guidance on how to implement them in practice. Further research should also be devoted to how to harmonise efforts at the international, national and company-levels, which was mentioned by PSI interviewees and which has already attracted some scholarly attention (see MacLeod & van Amstel, 2022). It would additionally be beneficial to delve deeper into the stresses that are caused by the double burden women experience between their home and work lives. There is much research on how women, in all industries, are often expected to work full time while also completing all domestic chores, which can

have serious implications for their wellbeing (Dowler and Arai, 2008, p.131; Chisholm & Eichler, 2018).

A fourth consideration that may be of interest is the gender discrimination that sexual minorities face. While this report embraces the idea that gender is about far more than women, it was beyond its scope to fully consider the differing discrimination faced by the LGBTIQ+ community; it was also complicated to broach the subject with interviewees operating in East Africa, where such identities remain largely taboo.

These were beyond the scope of this report, which focused primarily on what *companies* can do but, hopefully, they will offer elements for future research to complement and enrich this report's findings.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4(2), 139–158.

Allied Universal (2021). ESG Report 2021.

Arostegui, J. L. (2015). Gender and the security sector: Towards a more secure future. *Connections*, 14(3), 7-30.

Avant, D. (2005). Private security companies. *New Political Economy*, 10(1), 121-131.

Bakker, I. (2003). Neo-liberal governance and the reprivatization of social reproduction: Social provisioning and shifting gender orders. *Power, production and social reproduction: Human in/ security in the global political economy*, 66-82.

Chisholm, A. (2018). Perspectives on private security: the myth, the men and the markets. In *Handbook on the International Political Economy of Gender* (pp. 196-210). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Chisholm, A., & Eichler, M. (2018). Reproductions of global security: Accounting for the private security household. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 20(4), 563–582.

Cicchini, J., & Herrera, R. (2008). Sociétés militaires privées: la guerre par procuration. *Le cas de la guerre d'Irak*, *Recherches internationales*, 82, 9- 26.

Cusumano, E. (2021). Private military and security companies' logos: Between camouflaging and corporate socialization. *Security Dialogue*, 52(2), 135–155.

Delcourt, B. (2008). La privatisation de la violence et le développement de compagnies privées militaires et de sécurité : état des lieux des débats en science politique. NAERT.

Dickinson, L. A. (2017). Organizational structure, institutional culture and norm compliance in an era of privatization: The case of US military contractors. In *Comparative Administrative Law* (Elgare Online, pp. 566– 581). <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781784718671.00046>

Dowler, K., & Arai, B. (2008). Stress, gender and policing: The impact of perceived gender discrimination on symptoms of stress. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 10(2), 123-135.

Duncanson, C. (2016). Gender and Peacebuilding. *Polity*.

Eichler, M. (2013). Gender and the privatization of security: Neoliberal transformation of the militarized gender order. *Critical Studies on Security*, 1(3), 311-325.

Eichler, M. (2014). Militarized masculinities in international relations. *Brown*

J. World Aff., 21, 81.

Eichler, M. (2015). Private Security and Gender. In *Rootledge Handbook of Private Security Studies* (1st ed., pp. 158–167). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315850986-20/private-security-gender-maya-eichler?context=ubx>

G4S (2021). Business Ethics Policy.

Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) (2008). Gender and Security Sector Toolkit: Private Military and Security Companies and Gender .

Herrmann, A., Seubert, C., & Glaser, J. (2020). Consequences of Exposure to Violence, Aggression and Sexual Harassment in Private Security Work: A Mediation Model. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(11–12), 9684–9711.

Hudson, H. (2021). It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges. *Insight on Africa*, 13(2), 142–159.

International Code of Conduct Association (2021). International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers.

International Code of Conduct Association. (2023). Market Research Findings on Private Security working conditions and Human Rights— Kenya.

International Code of Conduct Association. (2023). Market Understanding Research Findings—Tanzania.

Joachim, J., & Schneider, A. (2022). What does gender got to do with it? PMSCs and privatization of security revisited. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 33(1–2), 196–223.

Johnston, M. S., & Kilty, J. M. (2015). You gotta kick ass a little harder than that: The subordination of feminine, masculine and queer identities by private security in a hospital setting. *Men and Masculinities*, 18(1), 55-78.

Kenya National Action Plan (2020). Kenya National Action Plan for the Advancement of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2020-2024.

Kokt, D., & Van der Merwe, C. A. (2009). The impact of organisational culture on service delivery in a major private security company. *Journal for New Generation Sciences*, 7(2), 114–135.

Leander, A. (2005). The market for force and public security: The destabilizing consequences of private military companies. *Journal of Peace Research*, 42(5), 605-622.

Loftus, B. (2008). Dominant Culture Interrupted: Recognition, Resentment and the Politics of Change in an English Police Force. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 48(6), 756–777.

MacLeod, S., & van Amstel, N. (2022). Private Military and Security Companies and Gendered Human Rights Challenges: Oversight or Blatant Disregard? *Business and Human Rights Journal*, 7, 181–187.

Mathonniere, J. (2004). Soldats à vendre: la guerre privatisée?. *Défense nationale-Paris-Études politiques stratégiques militaires économiques scientifiques.*, 60, 67-79.

McFate, S. (2019). Mercenaries and war: understanding private armies today. National Defense University.

Mobekk, E. (2010). Gender, women and security sector reform. *International peacekeeping*, 17(2), 278-291.

Nwaka, F. (2021). Tanzania's first female defense minister ignites debate – DW – 09/17/2021. [online] DW.com. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/tanzania-first-female-defense-minister-ignites-gender-debate/a-59214644> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2023].

Ombati, M. (2015). Feminine masculinities in the military: The case of female combatants in the Kenya Defence Forces' operation in Somalia. *African Security Review*, 24(4), 403-413.

Onyango, R.A. and Natarajan, M. (2021). Gender equity approach to policing in Kenya: Lessons, challenges and prospects. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 24(2), p.146135572110643. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/14613557211064327>.

Peace Women (2013). Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan Development Toolkit.

Peregrine Risk Management (2022). Equal Opportunities Policy.

Seneca EA (2021). Diversity in the Security Industry – Seneca World. [online] Seneca World. Available at: <https://senacaworld.com/diversity-in-the-security-industry/> [Accessed 28 May 2023].

Shepherd, L. (2016). Victims of Violence or Agents of Change? Representations of Women in UN Peacebuilding Discourse. *Peacebuilding*, 4(2), 121–135.

Simons, P. (2017). Unsustainable International Law: Transnational Resource Extraction and Violence against Women. *Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems*, 26(2), 415–434.

Singer, P. W. (2001). Corporate warriors: The rise of the privatized military industry and its ramifications for international security. *International security*, 26(3), 186-220.

Stachowitsch, S. (2013). Military privatization and the remasculinization of the state: Making the link between

the outsourcing of military security and gendered state transformations. *International Relations*, 27(1), 74-94.

Stachowitsch, S. (2015). The Reconstruction of Masculinities in Global Politics: Gendering Strategies in the Field of Private Security. *Men and Masculinities*, 18(3), 363–386.

Sørensen, J. B. (2002). The Strength of Corporate Culture and the Reliability of Firm Performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47(1). [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2307/3094891?casa\\_token=xDtTbTBgsTsAAAAA:XeEGkO6JuX-DeUPfvFRQh-ePhHTsSKV2\\_COpEcl7CmUkz959pHpYQMKXsuMpip2p-9SJUziWJ4jk](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2307/3094891?casa_token=xDtTbTBgsTsAAAAA:XeEGkO6JuX-DeUPfvFRQh-ePhHTsSKV2_COpEcl7CmUkz959pHpYQMKXsuMpip2p-9SJUziWJ4jk)

The code - ICOCA - international code of conduct association. (2022, July 29) <https://icoca.ch/the-code/>. [Accessed 2 May 2023]

UK Government (2023). UK Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023–2027 . Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office and Ministry of Defence.

UN Security Council. (2000). Resolution 1325.

[https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SC\\_ResolutionW\\_omenPeaceSecurity\\_SRES1325%282000%29%28english\\_0.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SC_ResolutionW_omenPeaceSecurity_SRES1325%282000%29%28english_0.pdf)

United Republic of Tanzania (2020). The Tanzania Development Vision 2025. [online] Tanzania Online Gateway. Available at: <http://www.tzonline.org/pdf/theTanzaniadevelopmentvision.pdf> [Accessed 18 May 2023].

UN Women Africa (2022). Involving women in peace and security: Good practices in the implementation of 1325 National Action Plans in East and Southern Africa. [online] UN Women – Africa. Available at: <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2022/11/involving-women-in-peace-and-security-good-practices-in-the-implementation-of-1325-national-action-plans-in-EA> [Accessed 21 Apr. 2023].

Van Gilder, B. J. (2019). Femininity as perceived threat to military effectiveness: How military service members reinforce hegemonic masculinity in talk. *Western Journal of Communication*, 83(2), 151-171.

van Steden, R. (2013). 'Acting like chameleons': On the McDonaldization of private security. *Security Journal*, 26(3), 294–309.

Vrdoljak, A. F. (2010). Women and Private Military and Security Companies. In *War by Contract: Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law and the Regulation of Private Military and Security Companies* (pp. 280–298). Oxford University Press.

White, A. (2018). Just another industry?(De) regulation, public expectations and private security. *The Private Sector and Criminal Justice*, 65-96.

# ANNEX

These annexed tables provide a brief overview of the companies and their websites analysed, as well as an overview of the profiles of interviewees. These focus on information that allows readers to better situate the information and evidence provided throughout the report. Information on interviewees are deliberately vague (not specifying names or exact details about organisations and companies) to respect the anonymity promised during the interviews. All interviewees and companies are located and operate in either Kenya and Tanzania, offering direct, relevant insight into perceptions and realities of gender diversity in East African private security.

## Overview of Interviews:

Interviewee profiles	Location	Type of organisation	Size of company or organisation (approx.)	Position
Interviewee 1	Kenya	Private security company	Small	Director of Operations
Interviewee 2	Tanzania	Private security company	Large	Director of Operations
Interviewee 3	Kenya	Private security company	Medium	Risk Manager
Interviewee 4	Kenya	Private security company	Large	Head of Customer Experience
Interviewee 5	Tanzania	Private security company	Large	Security Guard in banks
Interviewee 6	Tanzania	Private security company	Large	Security Guard in industrial sectors
Interviewee 7	Tanzania	Private security company	Large	Sight Supervisor for Eco Projects
Interviewee 8	Kenya	Civil society organisation	Small	Gender and Research Consultant
Interviewee 9	Tanzania	Civil society organisation	Small	Executive Director
Interviewee 10	Tanzania	Civil society organisation	Small	Project Development Specialist
Interviewee 11	Kenya	Civil society organisation	Small	National Coordinator

## Overview of Companies

Company profile	Location	Size (approx*.)	Type of services provided
Lady Askari	Kenya	Small	Protective services; enterprise risk management; trainings
Senaca East Africa	Kenya	Medium	Commercial and residential security services; K-9 services; technical solutions provider
G4S Global (Kenyan Branch)	Kenya	Large <i>(approx. 800,000 globally)</i>	Security services; risk management consulting; risk assessment consulting
SGA Security	Tanzania	Large <i>(approx. 17,500 globally)</i>	Security services for school, governments, diplomats, hotels, financial institutions, NGOs, hospitals or other industries
Peregrine Risk Management	United Kingdom	Small	Physical security; travel risk management; risk consultancy; training; asset tracking; threat and intelligence

### \*Size approx.:

- **Small** : < 100 employees
- **Medium**: Between 100 and 250 employees
- **Large**: > 250 employees



**GENEVA  
GRADUATE  
INSTITUTE**

**Graduate Institute Of International And  
Development Studies**

Case postale 1672,  
1211 Genève 1  
Switzerland  
[w. graduateinstitute.ch](http://w.graduateinstitute.ch)



**The  
Responsible  
Security  
Association**

**International Code of  
Conduct Association**

Geneva Nations 3rd Floor  
Rue du Pré-de-la-Bichette 1  
CH-1202 Geneva  
Switzerland  
[e. secretariat@icoca.ch](mailto:secretariat@icoca.ch)  
[w. icoca.ch](http://w.icoca.ch)