Unitar Online Catalogue

Intercultural Competencies in Peace Missions [2026]

Peace

Type:	Course
Location:	Web-based
Duration:	12 Months
Thematic Area:	Peacekeeping
Website:	http://www.unitar.org
Price:	$0.00
Event Focal Point Email:	ptp@unitar.org
Partnership:	IOF/France

BACKGROUND

Peace operations take place in multicultural environments where personnel from different national, linguistic and institutional backgrounds must work together to support local authorities and populations. Beyond operational skills, success in such missions depends heavily on the ability to understand, respect and adapt to local cultures and customs.

While most pre-deployment training briefly addresses diversity and respect, it rarely explores interculturality as a core operational competence. This limits the ability of peace personnel to engage effectively with local communities and to

prevent misunderstandings or tensions arising from cultural differences.

Interculturality must therefore be understood as a dynamic and transformative process—one that requires self-awareness of personal biases, empathy, active listening and adaptability. Moreover, gender and intersectionality are central to understanding power relations and cultural dynamics within missions. The persistence of institutionalised forms of masculinity in military and police environments can influence attitudes and interactions, making it essential to integrate gender-sensitive and intersectional approaches into intercultural training.

Recognising these needs, UNITAR and OIF have joined forces to develop a comprehensive online course that combines theoretical knowledge with practical examples drawn from missions in Lebanon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti. The course is designed to be both accessible and relevant for peace personnel operating in French- and English-speaking contexts.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

The International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), with support from France and in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), has developed the first online course on intercultural competencies in peace missions.

This training aims to equip military, police, and civilian personnel with the tools necessary to work effectively in diverse and complex socio-cultural environments. It seeks to go beyond linguistic proficiency, enabling participants to understand and navigate local cultural, social, and organisational dynamics to enhance operational effectiveness and foster sustainable peace.

By strengthening intercultural competencies, the course contributes to improving collaboration within missions, promoting inclusive approaches sensitive to gender and diversity, and building trust between peacekeepers and local communities.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The *Intercultural Competencies in Peace Missions* course consists of four modules, each subdivided into five lessons, for a total estimated duration of 15

hours of self-paced learning.

Each module integrates theory and practice, drawing on real-life experiences from peacekeeping operations to help participants develop the competencies required to operate effectively in culturally diverse environments.

At the end of each module, participants will complete a short assessment to consolidate their learning. Upon successful completion of all modules, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion issued by UNITAR.

Key Areas of Focus

- Cultural Adaptability: Understand the socio-cultural and historical contexts of host countries to engage effectively and respectfully with local communities and authorities.
- Gender and Intersectionality: Apply gender-sensitive and intersectional approaches to promote inclusion and equity in interactions.
- Skills for Complex Environments: Strengthen abilities in active listening, empathy, verbal and non-verbal communication, and teamwork within multicultural settings.

METHODOLOGY

This is an online, self-paced course organised into five main modules. In each module, learners are presented with key concepts, practical examples and exercises designed to help them integrate theory with practice.

TARGETED AUDIENCE

This course targets:

- Military, police and civilian personnel working or preparing to work in peace operations;
- Individuals interested in enhancing their understanding of intercultural communication and cooperation within the context of peacekeeping.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The course is available in French. Please access this page to register for the French course.