

## Learning Activities

Detailed instructions for each learning activity may be found below. Here is an overview of learning activities for the instructor to choose from:

Number	Name	Methods	Time
3.2.1	Diversity Line	Exercise	10 minutes
3.2.2	Diversity Iceberg	Graphic, brainstorm	15 minutes
3.2.3	Practicing Respect for Diversity	Brainstorm	5 minutes
3.2.4	Diversity and Culture in a Mission	Brainstorm	10 minutes
3.2.5	Working with Diversity	Case study, questions	45-60 minutes
3.2.6	Gestures and Meaning	Exercise	10 minutes

## Learning Activity

## 3.2.1

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### Diversity Line

#### METHOD

Exercise

#### PURPOSE

To quickly illustrate areas of commonality and difference through a physical activity

#### TIME

10 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Stand against the wall and listen to the instructor
- The instructor will read statements which are either true or false
- Walk up to the line on the floor when a statement is true for you
- Consider common ground and differences between you and others

#### RESOURCES

- Learning Activity instructions

*Note on use: different “diversity line” exercises exist. This one does not expect people to go deeply into their experiences. The short physical activity can be an energizer.*

### **Preparation**

- Find a space big enough for people to move across the room. Divide the room down the middle.
- Prepare aspects of common ground and difference for the exercise. Choose ones that are not controversial or potentially embarrassing to people.

#### **Examples:**

- From southern / northern hemispheres or a particular continent
- Have worked in a peacekeeping operation before
- Speak a particular language (e.g. French – other likely languages)
- Have a certain nationality (use ones present in the group)
- Like playing sports (or reading, watching movies, doing some kind of art)
- Can play a musical instrument
- Are vegetarian
- Are from a large or extended family
- Are an only child
- Are married / single

### **Instructions**

1. Introduce the exercise as a quick one to show common ground and differences. Get participants to stand on one side of the room. Reassure people you will not be asking anything difficult or embarrassing.
2. Ask everyone to move to the other side of the room if they are .... (fill in the blank, from examples). Those for whom the statement is not true stay where they are.
3. Keep giving examples, 10 – 15. Leave time between for people to notice who is standing where.
4. Ask people what they noticed. Prompt as necessary:
  - a) did groups keep changing?
  - b) did everyone have something in common with others?
5. Although as human beings we tend to focus on differences, peacekeepers deliberately try to find areas of common ground and shared interests.

### **Variations**

Get all participants to stand together. Ask one person to cross the room and call something they are, like or do. Others who are, like or do the same thing cross the room to join the person. Invite a participant on the original side to share something. Repeat at least 10 times. If anyone does raise something potentially difficult or embarrassing, intervene and suggest another. Keep a quick pace, but let people see who is in each group.

## Learning Activity

## 3.2.2

### Diversity Iceberg

#### METHOD

Graphic, brainstorm

#### PURPOSE

To guide participant thinking about different levels of diversity, obvious and more subtle differences

#### TIME

15 minutes

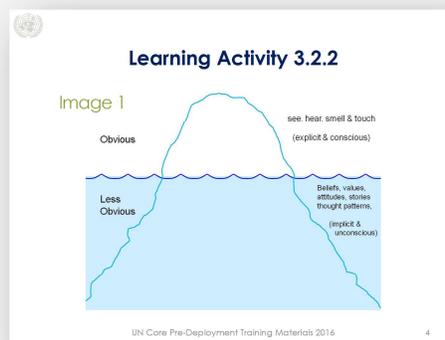
- Brainstorming: 10 minutes
- Discussion: 5 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Consider the “differences” between individuals who deploy to a mission
- What differences are obvious?
- What differences are less obvious?

#### RESOURCES

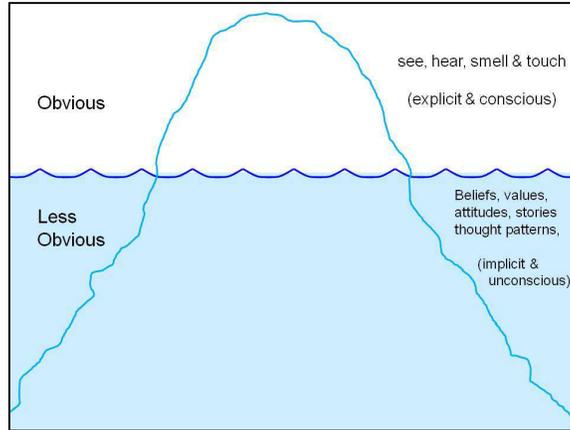
- Learning Activity instructions
- Diagrams (from Lesson 3.2)



Note on use: this exercise is a foundation for later discussions on practicing awareness and respect for diversity in peacekeeping.

**Preparation**

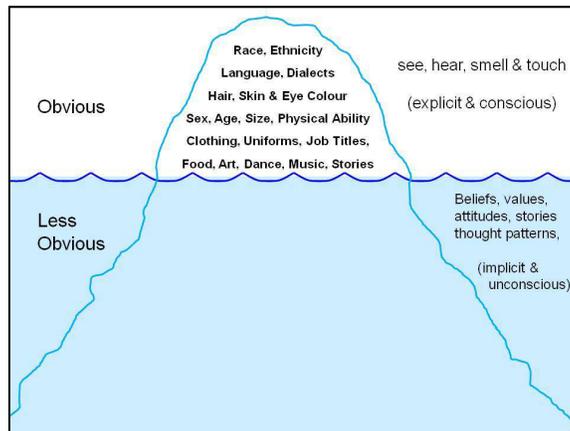
- On a flip-chart sheet or slide, draw an outline of an iceberg. Show the waterline, a wavy line near the top. Leave enough room to add words into the top and bottom of the iceberg. Write “Obvious” and “see, hear, smell, touch” above the waterline; “Less Obvious” and “beliefs, values, attitudes, thoughts, feelings” below the waterline.



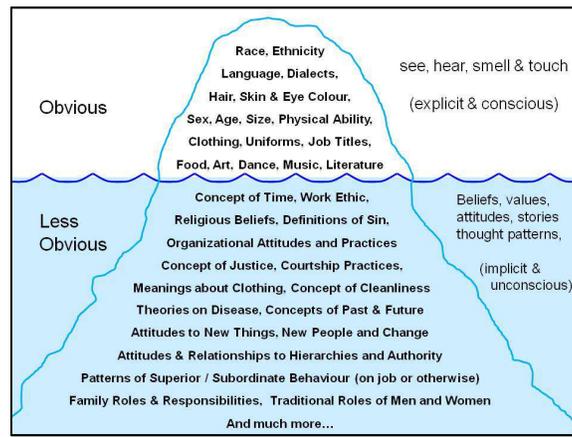
- Choose several examples from Learning Activity 3.2.1 to start the brainstorm. Select several examples of less obvious differences from support below.

**Instructions**

- Recap aspects of difference from Learning Activity 3.2.1. All may be in a peacekeeping mission. This activity separates the obvious from the less obvious.
- Write several examples of obvious differences in the iceberg, above the waterline. Ask participants to call out other obvious differences. Note them. Confirm that each point is obvious. Set aside any points on which people don't agree.
- When people offer no more points, show this slide.



4. Not all differences are visibly obvious. Ask people to reflect on what's below the water-line. Write in several examples, to start. Get participants to read results of the last activity and identify less obvious aspects. Write points in the space below the waterline. Prompt questions:
  - a) Would you notice this immediately?
  - b) Would you find this out after some time?
  - c) Would you need to know a person well to know this?
  - d) How would you discover this aspect of difference?
5. Show the next slide.



6. Ask participants if they have experienced or seen challenges that result from lack of understanding about less obvious differences. Share examples.
7. Summarize key points and close the exercise:
  - a) our culture, life experience and personality colour everything we see and do;
  - b) as human beings, we cannot put these aside when we interact with people different from us;
  - c) we need to be aware of our background and perceptions, to understand how we interpret situations and others' behaviour;
  - d) in a diverse workplace, we have to work to understand others' backgrounds and perceptions, avoiding misunderstanding and inflexibility.

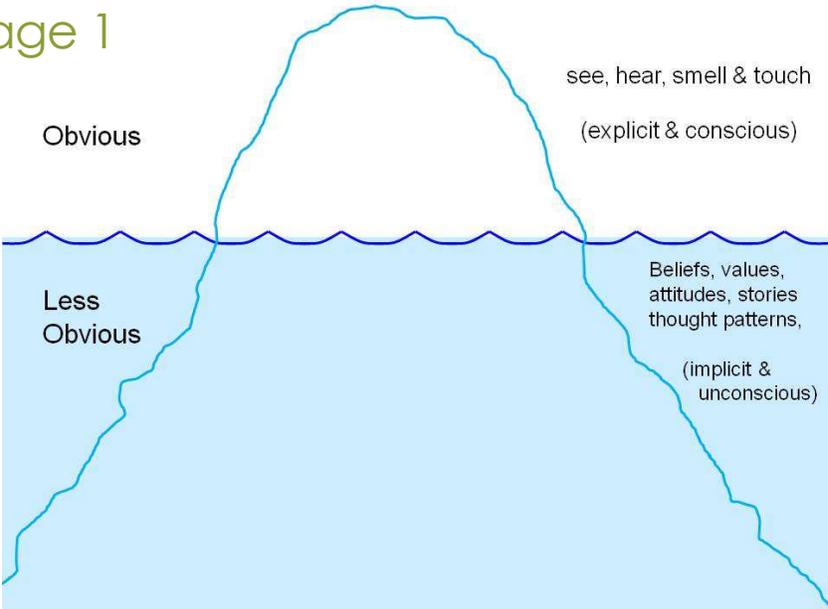
**3.2.2 Diagrams: Diversity Iceberg**

Available as part of presentation slides for the lesson, or as slides for the learning activity.



## Learning Activity 3.2.2

**Image 1**



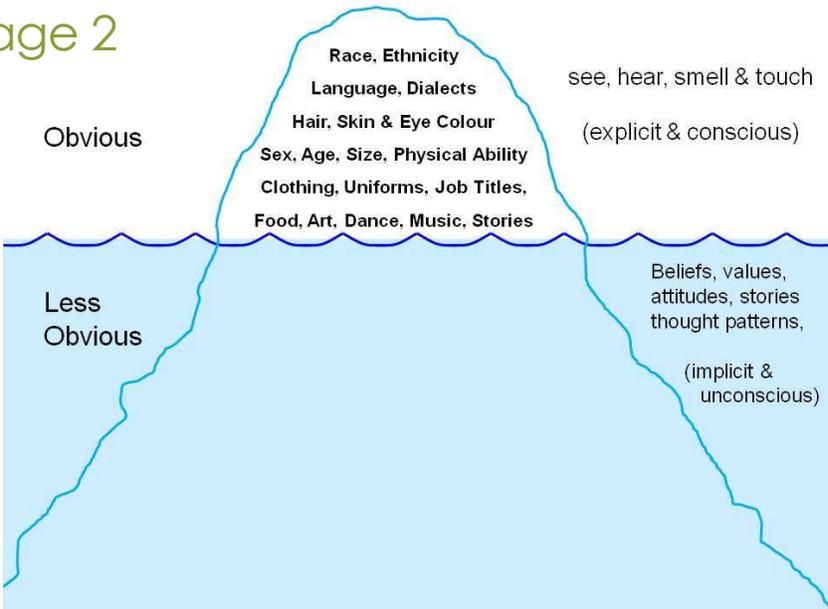
The diagram illustrates the 'Diversity Iceberg' concept. It features a blue mountain-like shape representing the iceberg. The top portion, which is above a wavy blue line representing the water surface, is labeled 'Obvious' and '(explicit & conscious)'. This visible part is associated with the senses 'see, hear, smell & touch'. The larger, submerged portion of the iceberg is labeled 'Less Obvious' and '(implicit & unconscious)'. This hidden part contains 'Beliefs, values, attitudes, stories, thought patterns'. The entire diagram is set against a light blue background.

UN Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials 2016 4



# Learning Activity 3.2.2

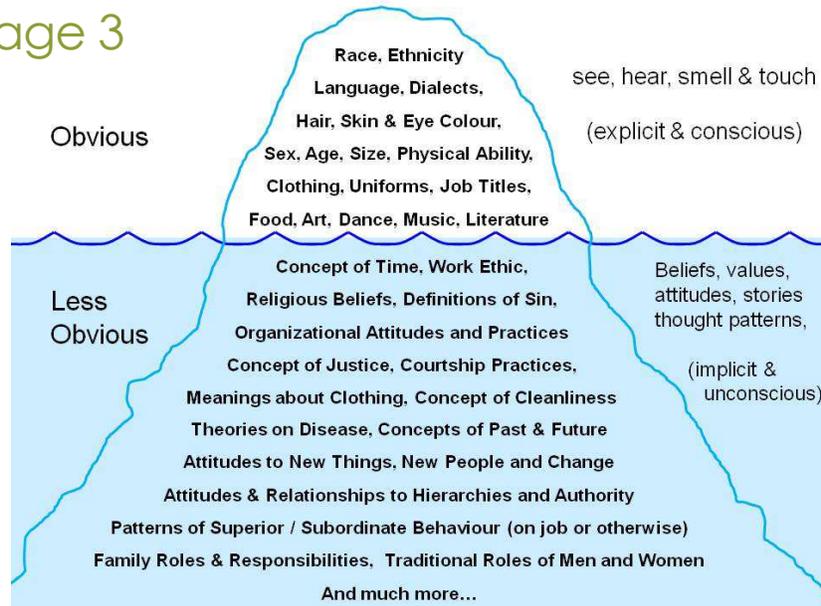
Image 2





## Learning Activity 3.2.2

Image 3



## Learning Activity

## 3.2.3

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### Practicing Respect for Diversity

#### METHOD

Brainstorm

#### PURPOSE

To consider the differences peacekeeping personnel must be aware of as they carry out their work

#### TIME

5 minutes

- Brainstorming: 3 minutes
- Discussion: 2 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Consider each key area of diversity
- What differences must you be aware of?
- How does practicing respect in these key areas of diversity contribute to success in your work?

#### RESOURCES

- Learning Activity instructions

**Preparation**

- Reflect on content in Lesson 3.2.
- Make sure each table group has a flip-chart sheet and pens (stand if available).

**Instructions**

1. Introduce the activity.
2. Ask participants to reflect on diversity as experienced in their lives. Then ask them to consider the peacekeeping environment – both the different people they will work with, and the different people they will meet. Participants must brainstorm answers to the following questions:
  - a) What differences must you be aware of?
  - b) How does practicing respect in these key areas of diversity contribute to success in your work?
3. Use the results of the brainstorming to introduce the content in Lesson 3.2 on Practicing Diversity. Use the content in the lesson to correct the responses received from participants.

## Learning Activity

## 3.2.4

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### Diversity and Culture in a Mission

#### METHOD

Brainstorm

#### PURPOSE

To explore the scope and specifics of “respect for diversity” in peacekeeping

#### TIME

10 minutes

- Brainstorming: 5 minutes
- Discussion: 5 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Consider the different people you will meet and work with in a UN peacekeeping mission
- List categories of difference

#### RESOURCES

- Learning Activity instructions
- Responses to discussion question

**Preparation**

- Prepare a flip-chart sheet or slide with the heading “Diversities/Cultures in a Peacekeeping Operation”.
- Select or locate graphics to prompt brainstorming. Identify aspects of diversity from the images, for prompts in brainstorming.

**Instructions**

1. Introduce the activity. Diversity means “difference”. Diverse means “varied”. Ask people to think about the different people they will meet and work with in a peacekeeping operation. Show the visuals. Encourage those with peacekeeping experience to start.
2. Brainstorm categories of difference. Prompt with obvious examples: nationality, profession (see support, below).
3. Note all points participants raise.

**Variation**

Give each group one visual. Ask them to identify all possible aspects of difference. Consolidate a list with the full group.

### 3.2.4 Responses to Discussion Question: Diversity and Culture in Mission

#### Aspects of Difference

- Race
- Sex
- Religion
- Professional Background
- Age/generation
- Income
- Educational Level
- Language
- Literate / illiterate people
- National staff
- International staff
- Diplomats
- NGO staff
- Paid staff / volunteers (UNVs)
- Military
- Civilian
- Police
- Talkative/Quiet people
- Life experience
- Experience in the UN (peacekeeping, development, humanitarian)
- Headquarters /Field experience
- Sexual Orientation
- Vegetarian
- Physical abilities
- Fitness level and state of health
- Ethnic groups engaged in conflict
- Law-abiding people/Law-breakers
- Vulnerable and marginal groups
- Powerful people

## Learning Activity

3.2.5

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### Working with Diversity

#### METHOD

Case study, questions

#### PURPOSE

To explore how differences can lead to misunderstandings and awkward situations

#### TIME

45-60 minutes

- Introduction and set-up: 5 minutes
- Small group discussions: 15-20 minutes
- Reports to full group: 15-25 minutes
- Debriefing and close: 5-10 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Consider the case studies
- What lessons can you learn?

#### RESOURCES

- Learning Activity instructions
- Case studies and questions

### **Preparation**

- Read the cases. Copy enough cases with guiding questions for all participants.
- Decide on the working groups, between 4 and 8 people.

### **Instructions**

1. Introduce the activity and timing.
2. Hand out the case situations with questions to guide discussion. Remind groups to get a reporter.
3. Let people know when time is almost up, so groups can wrap-up reports.
4. Ask groups covering the same case situation to report after each other.
5. Summarize key messages and close the exercise:
6. Peacekeeping personnel must be aware of the diversities and cultures around them and sensitive to areas of common ground and difference.
7. Respect for Diversity is a core value of the United Nations. The handout from a previous exercise details what the UN means.
8. Every human being has cultural filters. We need to sharpen our awareness of our own biases.
9. Language and cultural norms affect communication. All peacekeepers need to work to ensure understanding.

### **Variations**

- Draw on your own experience with peacekeeping to develop other case situations.
- Work through the case situations with the whole group. This takes less time than working groups, but does not engage everyone.

### 3.2.5 Case Studies and Questions: Working With Diversity

#### Situation 1: “Harmony in movement control”

A European country was responsible for movement control at one peacekeeping mission during the 1990s. The non-commissioned officers in charge were strict in exercising their authority. One corporal had insisted to the Force Commander that they had to abide by United Nations rules.

During rotation of a contingent from a Muslim troop-contributing nation, a delay unexpectedly occurred at Sarajevo airport. It was time for prayers, so the Muslim contingent knelt toward Mecca to pray. Boarding time arrived. The aircraft was scheduled to leave. The corporal had a tight schedule. He could not understand why departing troops were not boarding. He rudely interrupted the prayers, upsetting the Muslim peacekeepers and causing a quarrel.

#### Questions

1. What do you think about this story?
2. What lessons does it suggest?
3. What steps would you take to ensure movement control happened without a cultural clash?

### 3.2.5 Case Studies and Questions: Working With Diversity

#### **Situation 2: “An honour to walk hand in hand”**

*My contingent was among the first to arrive at the harbour of our new mission location. We were well organized and equipped, a bit unusual for my nation.*

*We helped another contingent as they arrived, with material handling, security and transport support. They were very hospitable, and offered to share their kitchen and whatever else they could provide. I was invited to visit their camp after they had settled in.*

*When I arrived on the appointed day, I was surprised to be welcomed at the gate by their battalion commander, a colonel, while I am just a major. What's more, he walked me all around the camp, holding my hand all the time.*

*I felt quite embarrassed, as in my nation men do not hold hands. Men only do that with women.*

*Later I learned he had bestowed on me a great honour by letting all see him holding my hand.*

#### **Questions**

1. What did you learn from this story?
2. How would you react?
3. What are some possible consequences of different ways of reacting?

## Learning Activity

3.2.6

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### Gestures and Meaning

#### METHOD

Exercise

#### PURPOSE

To explore different gestures and their varied meanings in different countries

#### TIME

10 minutes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Consider the different gestures
- What do they have the same or different meaning in all cultures?

#### RESOURCES

- Learning Activity instructions
- Activity material

### **Preparation**

- Identify some hand gestures and facial expressions that have different meanings.

### **Instructions**

1. Introduce the exercise and ask that nobody take offense. The
2. purpose is learning.
3. Show the first gesture, and ask participants what it means. Do they know of other meanings?
4. Work through the gestures with explanations. Invite participants to share others they know of that have different meanings in different contexts.
5. Summarize key messages before closing.
  - a) Communication is non-verbal as well as verbal. Being aware of one's own culture helps avoid misunderstanding.
  - b) Each of us thinks we are "normal". We expect others to understand our gestures and expressions. Others may have a different "normal". Learning about the culture and "norms" of our partners in peacekeeping helps things work smoothly in a mission.

### 3.2.6 Learning Activity Material: Gestures and Meaning

This site shows the following hand gestures and explains meaning in different countries:

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/what-different-hand-gestures-mean-around-the-world.html>

- The forefinger and thumb in a round “O”
- Little finger and index finger up with other fingers down
- The fingers altogether
- Thumbs up
- Crossed fingers
- Index and middle finger in a “V”
- Index finger curling
- Index finger pointing
- Downward palm wave
- Chin flick with hand held inward
- Fist and elbow
- Forehead fist
- Thumb in a fist
- Outward hand, fingers spread

This site has some of the same gestures as the one above, and more:

<https://blog.busuu.com/what-hand-gestures-mean-in-different-countries/>

- Thumbs up
- Come here
- The horn fingers
- Looking at your watch
- The “OK”
- The “V” sign, with palm in and palm out

This site shows 18 gestures that can cause trouble, with photos:

<https://www.yahoo.com/travel/18-gestures-that-can-cause-offense-around-the-114150011797.html>

- The chin flick
- The fig
- Forearm jerk
- The moutza - arm extended, palm out
- The cutis – flicking your thumb from the back of your upper front teeth
- Five fathers – pointing right index finger and grouped finger tips of left hand
- Head shake – left to right, up and down
- Crossing your fingers
- Horns – baby finger and index finger up, other fingers down
- Thumbs up
- Come here gesture
- Crossed arms
- Shaking two fists in front of you
- Slapping the palm of one hand over your other fist
- Shaking hands over a threshold
- Three-fingered salute
- Showing the soles of your foot or using your foot to point to things