Introduction to Misinformation/Disinformation

Lesson 1.8

Lesson Contents

- Overview / Introduction

- Definitions / terms

- Misinformation and Disinformation in peace operations

Learning Outcomes

- Define and provide examples of misinformation and disinformation

- Explain the potential impact of this threat on military and police units at the tactical level

Definitions

- **Misinformation-** false or inaccurate information; getting facts wrong, reported in error (unintentional)

- **Disinformation-** false information deliberately created, disseminated with the intention to mislead, manipulate, or cause harm

- **Propaganda-** biased or disinformation to promote an opinion

- **Malinformation-** facts but exaggerated to mislead or harm

- **Fake news-** disinformation or malinformation stories presented by news organisations

- **Psychological operations (PSYOPS)-** propaganda used to lower morale or operational efficiency of a group

How we saw it

How it really happened

Fake News Classification

- Satire/parody (not necessarily intended to cause harm)

- Misleading content

- Imposter content

- Fabricated/invented content (deception purpose)

- False connection (image vs content)

- False context (genuine content but falsely associated)

- Manipulated content (genuine info but images manipulated)

False

Harmful

Misinformation

False Connection
Misleading Context

Disinformation

False Context
Imposter Content
Fabricated Content
Manipulated
Content

Malinformation

Leaks
Harassment
Hate Speech

Impact to the UN Mission

- Undermining trust and cooperation

- Interfering with communication

- Manipulating public opinion against UN mandate

- Impeding Decision-making

- Safety and security of UN personnel

- Force Protection UN military and police units

- Destabilise the conflict area of operations and region

Impact to UN Police / Military Units from Mis/Dis Information Attacks

- Endangering operational security

- Hindering intelligence collection

- Disrupting situational awareness

- Tactical access to areas, freedom of action

- Undermine trust from local communities

- Force Protection / Freedom of action & Movement

- Impede tactical operations

How to respond

- Robust Force Protection planning

- Strengthening information sharing

- Establishing information verification systems

- Regular threat assessments of the information and human terrain

- Strengthening digital security

- Local community engagement programmes

- Training and awareness, reporting

Who are the Potential Attackers Groups

- State-Sponsored entities

- Non-State armed groups

- Media manipulators

- Online influencers and social media manipulators

Driven by political, ideological, economic, or tactical, strategic motivations, and their activities can hinder the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

"Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the combination of algorithms proposed with the purpose of creating machines that present the same capabilities as the human being"

Artificial intelligence (AI) can potentially assist actors involved in spreading misinformation and disinformation against United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Impact of AI Use

- Social Media manipulation

- Algorithmic manipulation

- Natural language processing (NLP)

AI-based technologies can be employed to develop fact-checking tools, content verification systems, and automated detection algorithms to identify and mitigate the spread of mis / dis- information

Partners who can help

Learning Activity 1 (Group Discussion)

How might Mis/Disinformation impact the UN unit tactical operations?

Instructions:
- Divide into smaller groups
- Group discussions
- List the impacts on a white board
- Report back to plenary

Take Away

- Be aware and recognise misinformation and disinformation

- Misinformation and disinformation can significantly impact peacekeeping operations at UN Mission and unit level

- Promoting accurate information

- Collaborating with partners

Questions