Pursuing Coordination and Integration for the Protection of Civilians

Introduction

For UN peacekeeping operations, the protection of civilians (POC) is a multidimensional endeavor. Beyond physical protection, it encompasses protection through dialogue and engagement and the establishment of a protective environment. POC has therefore been defined as a "whole-of-mission" activity and is implemented by the military, police, and civilian components of peacekeeping operations in a coordinated manner. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO, restructured in January 2019 as the Department of Peace Operations, or DPO) and Department of Field Support's (DFS, restructured in January 2019 as the Department of Operational Support, or DOS) policy on the protection of civilians also establishes that POC needs to be pursued through a "comprehensive approach" and "in cooperation with humanitarian actors."[1] Indeed, coordination between peacekeeping operations and other protection actors, including humanitarian organizations, is necessary to prevent and respond to complex, multifaceted protection crises.

Over the years, the UN and its member states have promoted comprehensive approaches and integrated structures and processes to improve coherence and consistency between political peacekeeping, humanitarian, human rights, and development efforts undertaken by the UN and its partners. For POC specifically, coordination between the military, police, and civilian components of peace operations; between peace operations and UN agencies, funds, and programs; and between the UN system and other protection actors has been pursued to maximize impact in the field. Joint planning, analysis, and action at these three levels are key to leveraging different types of expertise, tools, and responses in a holistic way in order to better prevent and respond to threats to civilians.

However, while the UN's normative and policy frameworks provide the basis for coordination and organizational arrangements have been set up to facilitate integrated efforts at these three levels, recent developments in the peace and security sphere have reinvigorated the debate over the costs and benefits of integration. Coordination for POC has proven to be increasingly difficult in non-permissive environments where, for example, peacekeepers may be perceived as party to the armed conflict or as having too close or tense a relationship with the host state or non-state actors. Integration in such

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1 United Nations, DPKO/DFS *Policy on Protection of Civilians*, 2015, available at http://providingforpeacekeeping.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2015-07-Policy-on-PoC-in-Peacekeeping-Operations.pdf .

contexts has led to debates around the preservation of humanitarian space, the independence of human rights advocacy, and the security of actors too closely linked to peacekeeping efforts.

This issue brief analyzes the costs, benefits, and challenges of the coordinated and "integrated" approaches to POC in peacekeeping contexts. It considers the added value of mission-wide and system-wide coordination for POC and concerns over comprehensive coordination between peacekeeping and humanitarian actors, which have different rationales and methodologies for protection. In a context of UN reform emphasizing prevention and political strategies, it questions the political and institutional push for more comprehensive POC strategies and reflects on the associated risks. It also offers considerations for how to coordinate and integrate multi-actor efforts in order to better protect civilians.

Different Levels of Coordination for the Protection of Civilians

This paper focuses on three levels of coordination and integration for the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping contexts: (1) in-mission coordination between the military, police, and civilian components; (2) coordination between the mission and the UN country team; and (3) broader coordination between the mission, the UN country team, and all relevant external actors operating in a given theater, including NGOs, government authorities, and civil society. For the purposes of this issue brief, the authors describe these three levels as multidimensional, integrated, and comprehensive approaches, respectively, and focuses on international protection actors.[2]

THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH: MISSION-WIDE COORDINATION

To respond to the multifaceted crises and needs in conflict and post-conflict settings, multidimensional peacekeeping operations combine uniformed and civilian expertise and activities. By exploiting the comparative advantages of their military, police, and civilian components, they seek to fulfill the numerous tasks assigned by their Security Council mandates, including providing security, supporting political processes, monitoring human rights, disarming and reintegrating combatants, and restoring and extending state authority. The broad mandates and comprehensive ambitions of peace operations have made coordination and joint initiatives essential for their success. Many of the tasks they implement require a holistic approach that addresses both the symptoms and the root causes of violence and instability. Neutralizing, disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating fighters in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), supporting the implementation of the peace process in Mali, or building the capacity of state institutions in the Central African Republic (CAR) demand that all mission components work together on several fronts to maximize impact, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability.

The protection of civilians is among the tasks that rely most heavily on multifaceted and multidimensional efforts. Defined as a priority for the UN missions in CAR (MINUSCA), DRC (MONUSCO), Mali (MINUSMA), and South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as in the joint AU-UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID), protection of civilians goes beyond physical protection by military components. The UN DPKO/DFS policy on POC defines protection of civilians as encompassing dialogue and engagement, the provision of physical security, and the establishment of a protective environment.[3] As all components of peacekeeping operations contribute to these three tiers, POC is inherently a "whole-of-mission activity" that requires "concerted and coordinated action between uniformed and civilian components of a mission under the mission's protection of civilians strategy."[4]

Indeed, protecting civilians from physical violence involves using the full spectrum of activities, tools, mechanisms, and tactics related to military action, police work, and civilian initiatives at a UN peacekeeping mission's disposal. The military component can be crucial to deterring and

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2   These terms have sometimes been used interchangeably to refer to different types and levels of inclusivity in the context of UN coordination efforts.

3   United Nations, DPKO/DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians, 2015.

4   Ibid. The UN Secretariat also recently developed an addendum to the DPKO/DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians, dedicated to the question of accountability for POC. The document breaks down roles and responsibilities for senior leaders of all mission components.

countering perpetrators by its presence and proactive use of force. Police complement their military counterparts in managing threats to civilians related to social unrest and criminality. Civilians contribute to protection through political negotiation, mediation, human rights monitoring, sensitization, and community engagement. Political affairs officers, for example, can identify and negotiate political solutions at the local and national levels and can exercise substantial influence by advising and supporting national authorities in peace processes. Civil affairs officers work at a more local level, empowering civil society and facilitating community-based dialogue and local mediation. By organizing local peace committees or discussions between groups, they can help defuse ethnic, religious, or economic tensions and de-escalate conflict fed by long-standing grievances and mistrust. The expertise of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) officers in reducing community violence is also crucial to prevent youth from joining armed groups by providing them with alternative education, training or employment opportunities and giving them a chance to engage in activities useful to the community. Public information specialists also have a crucial role to play in conveying messages that promote POC, counter hate speech, and appease social tensions.

In many cases, the mere presence of civilian staff, including visits or collocation with local prosecutors, judges, or police officers, can deter potential perpetrators, defusing threats of physical attacks, intimidation, or harassment. A mission's civilian and police activities related to monitoring abuse and investigating incidents also contribute to deterrence.[5] In addition, all of a mission's components conduct capacity-building activities to strengthen the capacity of the host state and civil society to protect civilians in the long term.

Civilian, police, and military components have a better chance to be effective in their specific interventions when they share analysis and conduct joint planning of protection activities. By sharing analyses of political, social, and security dynamics, civilian sections can help their military and police colleagues better understand protection needs and hotspots and contribute to the design of appropriate protection plans and responses. Joint planning can maximize impact by offering a range of parallel solutions to risks of violence. In 2013, for example, MONUSCO's military component planned offensive operations in conjunction with the DDR section, allowing the neutralization of armed groups to be pursued both through the use of force and through civilian initiatives incentivizing disarmament and demobilization. Beyond joint planning, the collocation of military, police, and civilian peacekeepers can help all components coordinate, push each other to protect civilians more proactively, and hold each other accountable.

Multidimensional peace operations have developed several mechanisms and tools to coordinate POC between the military, police, and civilian components and better exploit each actor's comparative advantage. Structures differ in each mission but usually include coordination mechanisms dedicated to POC at the senior management level (e.g., MONUSCO and MINUSCA's senior management groups on protection or UNAMID's protection management group) and a working-level coordination structure (e.g., MINUSMA's protection task force, MONUSCO and MINUSCA's protection working groups, or UNAMID's joint protection group).

The position of senior protection adviser was recently created within UN peacekeeping missions to further institutionalize and professionalize POC coordination. Depending on the mission, the POC adviser reports to the special representative of the secretary-general (SRSG), deputy SRSG (DSRSG), or chief of staff. The protection adviser is expected to develop the POC strategy, facilitate information sharing and analysis, coordinate efforts across all components, advise the leadership on POC, and ensure that POC is prioritized throughout the mission.[6] Beyond the regular meetings between

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5   Because they report and document abuse, civilian peacekeepers are perceived as witnesses of the conflict and wardens of the fight against impunity. Their monitoring can influence the behavior of local actors—including armed groups, which are often cautious about their image and want to be perceived by the international community as legitimate and cooperative actors. Armed groups also understand that civilian peacekeepers may build cases for future criminal justice. In such contexts, human rights, child protection, or police officers can exercise critical influence on the behavior of potential perpetrators.

6   The five major peace operations mandated to protect civilians (MONUSCO, MINUSCA, MINUSMA, UNMISS, and UNAMID) have a POC advisor position built into the staffing table. The protection adviser position has been reinforced by additional staff over the years, leading to the establishment of POC units in these missions. According to the UN Policy on POC, "Commensurate with the tempo and complexity of protection of civilians activity in the mission, dedicated

sections and components, this adviser offers specific expertise on POC, helps different mission sections orient their analyses and activities to maximize POC impact, find solutions to threats to civilians, and better sequence POC actions. The POC adviser and his team seek to mobilize relevant colleagues, act as the secretariat for POC coordination mechanisms, and promote cooperation on POC between the mission and external actors.

Additionally, the mission's joint operations center (JOC) is an integrated entity comprised of civilian and military personnel. It was established to support the leadership team's decision making through the provision of integrated situational awareness. The JOC processes the information received by the mission on a daily basis, consolidates reports from all mission components, dispatches relevant information to specific components, and convenes crisis management fora to coordinate operations and jointly address emergencies—including protection crises.[7] In some missions, joint operations planning teams also shape and sequence operations to address priority threats and agree on coordinated and mutually reinforcing operations conducted by the different sections.

In addition to these structures, field missions have developed specific tools promoting a multidimensional approach to analysis of and action on threats to civilians. MONUSCO has been an especially important laboratory in this regard. After failing to respond adequately to threats to civilians due to lack of coordination between civilian and uniformed personnel, the mission established many tools to pool expertise. Learning from the lessons of the 2008 Kiwanja massacre,[8] MONUSCO's predecessor mission, MONUC, established joint protection teams comprised of members of

different sections such as political affairs, civil affairs, human rights, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence, and DDR. These multidisciplinary teams are now frequently deployed to engage with local communities and assess protection needs in specific hotspots in order to inform and support the military and police components in establishing protection plans and align them with communities' needs. In addition, the mission hired community liaison assistants—national civilian staff living and working alongside UN troops on military bases—to facilitate regular interaction with communities, understand their protection needs, and support sector commanders in developing appropriate protection responses. Similarly, MONUSCO's community alert networks and early-warning mechanisms are often jointly established and managed by military and civilian components.[9]

These tools have been replicated in other missions. Peace operations have notably developed initiatives to make interventions more multidimensional such as joint investigation teams, joint assessment missions, and joint effects working groups.[10]

THE INTEGRATED APPROACH: SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION

Beyond in-mission coordination, issues related to broader coherence, consistency, and coordination have long been the object of discussion in the UN system. In the 2000s, recognizing the multifaceted nature of human security, governments, agencies, and organizations sought to "pursue greater synergy, harmonization and complementarity" in peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts.[11] This led to the development of what the UN now calls the "integrated approach." The integrated approach aims at ensuring coherent strategies for common goals across the organization and acknowledges

capacity may be required to support and advise mission leaders in their efforts to manage the mission's POC activity and coordinate early warning analysis and response, planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, or training tools and processes related to POC under the POC Action Plan. Such capacity can be established, as required, through the appointment of an appropriate number of Protection of Civilians Advisers attached to the POC lead and heads of field offices, as well as through the nomination of POC focal points within all relevant mission components." United Nations, DPKO/DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians, 2015.

7   See United Nations, DPKO/DFS Policy and DPKO/DFS guidelines on Joint Operations Centres, 2014.

8   In November 2008, an estimated 150 people were killed in Kiwanja, DRC, half a mile away from United Nations peacekeeping forces. See Human Rights Watch, *Killings in Kiwanja: the UN's Inability to Protect Civilians*, December 11, 2008.

9   For example, MONUSCO's Community Alert Networks have been established by the civil affairs section and its community liaison assistants, who provided community focal points with phones, radios, or sim cards to call an emergency number, so that alerts could be given to community liaison assistants or sector commanders in case of imminent threat. See MONUSCO, Protection of Civilians and Protection Tools, available at https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/protection-civilians-and-protection-tools .

10 In MINUSMA, the establishment of a "joint effects working group" in 2018 was meant to reinforce civil-military planning of joint missions to the field in order to jointly identify priority hot spots and to combine military deployment and civilian activities in given areas. See Namie Di Razza, "Protecting Civilians in the Context of Violent Extremism: The Dilemmas of UN Peacekeeping in Mali," New York: International Peace Institute, October 2018.

11 Cedric de Coning, *The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach*, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2008.

that multidimensional peace operations would be more effective as part of a system-wide response that links the political, development, humanitarian, human rights, rule of law, and security dimensions of peacebuilding.[12] The main rationale behind the integrated approach, therefore, is to improve the coherence of all UN activities and exploit all comparative advantages.[13]

In order to implement integration across the UN system, the UN set up "integrated missions." A UN integrated mission involves a specific configuration of the UN presence in a country, where planning and coordination among UN entities are integrated into a single country-level UN system. In conflict and post-conflict situations where the UN has a country team and a multidimensional peacekeeping operation (or special political mission), the UN presence is considered integrated, regardless of the structure in place. Most commonly, the SRSG is the senior UN representative heading the whole UN presence in the country, including the peace operation, agencies, funds, and programs. In the peace operation, the SRSG is supported by two DSRSGs responsible for providing overall vision and leadership to the strategic planning and implementation of the mission's activities. For UN agencies, funds, and programs, the resident coordinator (RC) leads the UN country team and the humanitarian coordinator (HC) leads the humanitarian country team.

These functions are typically combined in a single person assuming a triple hat—the DSRSG/RC/HC. Such a structural arrangement signals full integration, with the RC/HC becoming part of the UN peacekeeping operation. The idea is that this person will be in a better position to represent the humanitarian and development perspectives in the work of the mission.[14] Because the integrated approach is closely linked to UN peacekeeping operations, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) is the lead agency responsible for its implementation.

However, there is no single model for structural integration and "arrangements can take different structural forms, reflecting the specific requirements and circumstances."[15] In Darfur, for example, where UNAMID is a joint peacekeeping mission between the African Union and the UN, the mission is not structurally integrated. There is a RC/HC for Sudan and a separate joint special representative and deputy joint special representative for UNAMID. Even still, UNAMID and the UN country team work closely in an integrated manner, and the mission has POC/humanitarian liaison section interacting with the UNCT and HCT.[16]

Because of these variations, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reframed the integrated approach as a process rather than a specific structure. The idea is that "form follows function" and that structures are highly dependent on specific circumstances in a given conflict or post-conflict setting. The UN integrated approach is currently guided by the 2013 policy on integrated assessment and planning, which is expected to be updated in 2019. The integrated mission planning process guidelines provide the framework for setting up new UN integrated arrangements and reviewing existing ones. These documents set up minimum requirements for the integration of information sharing, analysis, planning, and decision making.[17]

As UN system-wide integration has become a defining trait of peacekeeping contexts, POC has also been defined as being better served through

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12 The 2008 capstone doctrine recognizes that a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation "is likely to be far more effective when it is deployed as part of a United Nations system-wide response based on a clear and shared understanding of priorities, and on a willingness on the part of all United Nations actors to contribute to the achievement of common objectives." As noted by the UN Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, "Integration is the guiding principle for the design and implementation of complex UN operations in post-conflict situations and for linking the different dimensions of peacebuilding (political, development, humanitarian, human rights, rule of law, social and security aspects) into a coherent support strategy." United Nations, Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, 2013, available at
https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/UN-Policy-on-Integrated-Assessment-and-Planning_FINAL_9-April-2013.pdf .

13 Coherence refers to the effort to direct the wide range of activities undertaken in the political, development, human rights, humanitarian, rule of law, and security dimensions of a comprehensive approach system towards common strategic objectives. See de Coning, 2008.

14 Ibid, p. 19

15 United Nations Secretary-General Decision on Integration No. 2011/10.

16 UNAMID, Protection of Civilians/Humanitarian Liaison Section, POC Bulletin, September 2017, available at
https://unamid.unmissions.org/humanitarian-protection-strategy-coordination-0 .

17 When the UN presence is integrated in a country, the UN must develop an integrated strategic framework—a planning tool that outlines a shared vision and analysis, strategic objectives, coordination and implementation arrangements, as well as monitoring. See United Nations, Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, 2013.For example, in Sudan, an integrated strategic framework defines shared strategic objectives of UNAMID and the UN country team, including the enhanced physical protection of conflict-affected population; early warning and early response; creation of a protective environment; and the increased capacity to respond to protection needs on the ground.

integrated approaches. In 2009, the Security Council underlined the "importance of a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach by the principal organs of the United Nations, cooperating with one another and within their respective mandates" for the protection of civilians.[18] Specific mission mandates call for integrated approaches, such as the Security Council's resolution calling on UNAMID and the UN country team in Sudan to ensure the "establishment of integrated mechanisms for joint analysis, planning, coordination, monitoring, and decision-making, especially for joint operational planning for the military and police on protection of civilians."[19]

Typically, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) are essential protection actors complementing the protection action of a peacekeeping operation. OHCHR—through human rights monitoring, investigations, sensitization to international humanitarian law, and the fight against impunity for human rights violations and abuse—can contribute to building a protective environment.[20] OHCHR has established a joint human rights office in multidimensional peace operations like MONUSCO, which act both as the human rights section of the peace operation and the OHCHR office in the country. This integrated structure enables human rights officers to benefit from the mission's logistics, means, access, and influence, while ensuring the full integration of human rights concerns into the mission's activities.

UNHCR has a specific protection mandate for refugees and displaced persons, while OCHA coordinates humanitarian action. Both agencies therefore lead important parts of the response to protection needs and are usually invited to participate in missions' POC coordination mechanisms such as the protection working group and the senior management group on protection. However, as opposed to OHCHR, these UN agencies are humanitarian actors, and their work is therefore guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. As such, even in the context of integration, they try to maintain some distance from the broader UN system, and in particular from UN peace operations.

The policy on integrated assessment and planning and the integrated mission planning process allow not only for coordination but also, when needed and appropriate, for a healthy distinction between different UN entities. It acknowledges "most humanitarian interventions are likely to remain outside the scope of integration, which can, at times, challenge the ability of UN humanitarian actors to deliver according to humanitarian principles."[21] This flexibility is also recognized in the 2008 capstone doctrine for UN peace operations, which states that "structural or programmatic integration between United Nations actors must be driven by an assessment of whether or not it will add real value and improve the impact of the United Nations engagement" and that "forcing integration where it is not needed may well be counter-productive."[22]

THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH: EXTENDING COORDINATION TO EXTERNAL PARTNERS

This shift to the integrated approach within the UN has provided space to consider collaboration with other partners outside the UN system. The UN capstone doctrine recognizes that UN peacekeeping operations are part of a broader approach to deliver peace, and that the UN "has the unique ability to mount a truly comprehensive response to complex crises."[23] The comprehensive approach, as framed by the peacebuilding community, seeks synergies among all relevant actors to build sustainable peace. Given the breadth of the activities it pursues and its role on the international stage, the UN is a natural actor to implement the comprehensive approach and pursue inclusivity in its broad efforts to support countries in conflict or post-conflict situations.[24]

18 UN Security Council, Resolution 1894 (2009), UN Doc. S/RES/1894

19 UN Security Council, Resolution 2148 (2014), UN Doc. S/RES/2148.

20 OHCHR, *Human Rights and the Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping: Approaches, Methodologies and Tools*, 2018.

21 United Nations, Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, 2013.

22 United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations Department of Field Support, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines, 2008, available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/capstone_eng_0.pdf .

23 Ibid.

24 De Coning, 2008.

In Resolution 1894 (2009), the Security Council emphasized a need for "a comprehensive approach to facilitate the implementation of protection mandates through promoting economic growth, good governance, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for, and protection of human rights."[25] The Security Council also requested that the secretary-general "ensure that all relevant peacekeeping missions with protection mandates incorporate comprehensive protection strategies into the overall mission implementation plans and contingency plans… under the leadership and coordination of the SRSG, with the full involvement of all relevant actors and in consultation with United Nations Country teams."[26] As a result, the Secretariat developed a framework for drafting comprehensive POC strategies in UN peacekeeping operations, and all peace operations with a POC mandate have developed such a strategy. These strategies generally map protection threats, vulnerabilities and risks, protection actors inside and outside the mission, and coordination mechanisms to pursue a comprehensive approach to POC. They aim to identify ways to leverage perpetrators and influential partners that can strengthen the impact of the mission's POC interventions.

The 2015 UN policy on POC also emphasizes the need to pursue POC efforts through a "comprehensive approach" to complement the work of the three components of the mission as well as the UN country team, exploit the comparative advantages of "the multiplicity of actors that contribute to providing protection of civilians," and analyze the "optimal positioning and appropriate modes of engagement of the mission vis-à-vis local, national, sub-regional and international protection actors."[27] Host governments, parallel forces, humanitarian actors, NGOs, and civil society organizations each have a role in protecting civilians, making them essential partners for UN missions mandated to protect local populations.

According to the UN policy, POC should especially be done "in cooperation with humanitarian actors and in respect of humanitarian principles" given their role in protecting civilians.[28] Humanitarian protection work aims to ensure full respect for the rights of the individual under international law and is guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, and non-discrimination.[29] Although definitions of protection of civilians vary in the peacekeeping and humanitarian communities, some of their respective protection activities overlap, and synergies can be built.[30] Beyond dividing the work, respecting mutual spaces, and notifying each other of their operations, and beyond the traditional question of whether to use military actors to facilitate access and protection for humanitarian work, having the mission coordinate with humanitarian actors can help make all protection activities more effective.[31]

In an effort to foster a comprehensive approach, the UN has set up structures that aim to include non-UN organizations and actors. Part of the SRSG's role is to foster coherence with external actors in the country.[32] Furthermore, the growing involvement of the UN in humanitarian action was consolidated in the 2005 humanitarian reform agenda, which created the cluster approach. The clusters aim to gather and coordinate both UN and non-UN organizations, by sector of humanitarian action, give access to common funding mechanisms.[33] The protection cluster in particular gathers not only humanitarian actors, but also representatives of peacekeeping missions. Usually co-led by UNHCR and an NGO working on protection, the protection cluster enables information sharing and joint planning to exploit synergies between the mission, the country team, and NGOs.

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25 UN Security Council, Resolution 1894 (2009), UN Doc. S/RES/1894.

26 Ibid.

27 UN, DPKO/DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians, 2015.

28 Ibid.

29 International Committee of the Red Cross, Professional Standards for Protection Work Carried out by Humanitarian and Human Rights Actors in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence, Third Edition, 2018, available at https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/0999-professional-standards-protection-work-carried-out-humanitarian-and-human-rights .

30 In UN peace operations, POC refers to the protection from the threat of physical violence, while humanitarian actors pursue a rights-based approach of protection, beyond physical violence, and seek to obtain full respect for the rights of the individual. See Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action, available at http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/IASC%20Guidance%20and%20Tools/iasc-policy-on-protection-in-humanitarian-action.pdf and UN DPKO/DFS Policy on Protection of Civilians, 2015.

31 De Coning 2008 pp. 21-22.

32 Revised Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions, January 17, 2006, released under a note from the secretary-general on February 9, 2006.

33 Some NGOs and the ICRC have chosen to be solely "observers" in the clusters.

The humanitarian reform agenda also strengthened the role of the humanitarian coordinator, whose role is to lead and coordinate the wider humanitarian community in a country, beyond the UN system.[34]

UN missions have also developed protection-specific tools and activities to facilitate coordination with external actors like non-UN humanitarian organizations. MONUSCO, for example, established the "Must-Should-Could Protect" matrix as a joint planning exercise between the mission and the humanitarian community to identify and prioritize POC hotspots where UN troops should deploy.[35]

Strong Drives toward Integration

There are several rationales for and factors behind the push for more coordination and integration at all levels. In terms of ensuring that POC is effective, coordinating efforts among the wide variety of protection actors maximizes the impact and capacity of each to prevent and respond to threats to civilians. From an organizational perspective, budget cuts, reduction of troops, and peacekeeping transitions incentivize the Secretariat to consider integrated and comprehensive approaches. From a political perspective, a stronger focus on prevention and political strategies and solutions has reinforced the role of unarmed civilian strategies in complementing military efforts. From an operational point of view, hostile and non-permissive environments have reduced the space for peacebuilding and humanitarian actors and pushed them to work together more closely for security, access and logistical reasons.

THE PUSH FOR EFFECTIVENESS: MAXIMIZING IMPACT FOR POC

Coordination and integrated planning and analysis help to maximize effectiveness of all protection actors, through the thoughtful division of tasks and efforts, in order to build synergies and complementarity between their comparative advantages and respective work. They are therefore generally associated with better results for the protection of civilians, while a lack of coordination and common vision is often highlighted as contributing to failure.

Although coordination tools were established, there has been a push for even stronger multidimensional coordination between the three components of peacekeeping missions in recent years, in light of the many remaining gaps in integrated training, planning, and operations. Several investigations and reports, including the Cammaert report looking into the Juba crisis of July 2016 and the Amoussou report on MINUSCA's POC response to violence in southeast CAR in 2017, highlighted deficiencies in joint planning and the tendency to work in silos as crucial factors behind POC failures.[36] The lack of a civilian presence in UNAMID's team sites in the most remote areas of Darfur has been pointed out as a crucial gap, limiting the military's interaction with communities and thus its ability to understand local dynamics and protection needs to inform tactical plans.[37] In Alindao, Central African Republic, the absence of civilian staff and community liaison assistants combined with a lack of effective communication with humanitarian actors has been highlighted as a contributing factor in MINUSCA's failure to prevent a November 2018 massacre in a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs).[38]

To respond to such gaps, missions have been working to continually improve joint planning and responses. UNMISS conducted more joint tabletop exercises that included all mission components following the Juba incidents.[39] MINUSMA has strengthened its coordination mechanisms, encouraging chiefs of sections to attend protection

34 Inter-Agency Standing Committee, Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Coordinators, available at
     https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/Revised_HC%20TOR-3.pdf .

35 The matrix was established in 2006, after concerns arose following joint operations by the UN and the Congolese army.

36 Executive summary of the independent special investigation into the violence in Juba in 2016 and the response by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan,
     November 1, 2016, UN. Doc S/2016/924, available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1635591.pdf ; United Nations Secretary-General, Note
     to Correspondents on the Findings of the Central African Republic Special Investigation, January 24, 2018, available at
     https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2018-01-24/note-correspondents-findings-central-african-republic .

37 Phone interview with UNAMID official, February 4, 2019.

38 Interview with DPO official, New York, February 4, 2019.

39 UN Security Council, Letter Dated 17 April 2017 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council, UN Doc. S/2017/328, available at
     https://unmiss.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/sg_letter_to_sc_on_implementation_of_cammaert_recommendations_19_04_2017_0.pdf .

working group meetings and establishing a new senior mission leadership forum dedicated to POC for biannual strategic discussions.[40]

At the UN system level, many integrated mission tools have demonstrated how impact can be maximized when the country team and the peace operation join their efforts for POC. In Darfur, UNAMID and the UN country team have jointly mapped protection hotspots, including IDP settlements and farming areas. This has allowed them to plan their responses to the most serious threats requiring physical intervention by the military component of UNAMID, while also designing unarmed strategies for areas that cannot be covered by peacekeepers. In some instances, UNAMID and the humanitarian country team conducted joint missions to provide humanitarian assistance to populations in need.[41] Depending on the context, integration can also open doors for humanitarian dialogue—particularly with government authorities.[42] Coordination within the UN and beyond has also played a role in facilitating the provision of security by peacekeeping operations to humanitarian actors or for humanitarian activities.

THE OPERATIONAL PUSH: SECURITY AND LOGISTICAL CONSTRAINTS IN NON-PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Another reason for the push for more coordination and integration of POC efforts is the operational environment. In non-permissive theaters, both peacekeeping missions and humanitarian actors face hostility from the host government or armed groups and need to navigate a shrinking space to operate and conduct their protection activities. In this context, working together—and even sometimes in the same compounds—is an operational necessity.

Peacekeeping operations are often mandated to provide security for the delivery of humanitarian aid, and the use of armed escorts and air assets has,

in some contexts, been crucial for facilitating protection of civilians through humanitarian action.[43] In CAR, for example, where criminal groups have targeted humanitarian actors, MINUSCA was able to secure areas where humanitarians could work.[45] In the DRC, MONUSCO is currently facilitating the work of health actors responding to the Ebola outbreak in conflict-affected parts of the country.[44] In Darfur, UNAMID has provided armed escorts to humanitarian actors delivering and monitoring assistance and conducting assessments and other operational activities.[46]

In South Sudan, the creation of POC sites in and around UNMISS military bases required both the intervention of peacekeepers to provide physical protection and of humanitarian actors to provide aid. These POC sites, initially meant to be short-term, became entrenched due to ongoing conflict and insecurity, and their populations therefore required extensive assistance and protection. Despite reservations due to the need to preserve a neutral and independent humanitarian space and to ensure the distinctiveness of humanitarian actors, the humanitarian imperative, as well as the unpredictable security situation, led humanitarian actors to work and stay in these sites. They therefore had to operate in close coordination with peacekeepers providing protection from external threats and ensuring security within these sites.

Beyond providing security, peacekeeping operations have also helped coordinate protection actors in some contexts. For example, when the Sudan protection cluster ceased functioning after the Sudanese government blocked UNHCR's deployment of international staff in 2013, UNAMID's joint protection group became the only available forum for coordinating POC in Darfur and hosted the Darfur-based country team in lieu of the cluster.[47]

40 Di Razza, 2018.

41 UNAMID, Joint UNAMID-HCT Provides Medical and Material Support to People Affected by Mudslides in East Jebel Marra, September 24, 2018, available at https://unamid.unmissions.org/joint-unamid-hct-provides-medical-and-material-support-people-affected-mudslides-east-jebel-marra .

42 IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action, September 8, 2015, p. 12, available at https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/150908_un_integration_review_-_iasc_pha_tt_2015.pdf .

43 Ibid, p. 11.

44 Interview, humanitarian expert, New York, November 2018.

45 WHO, New Measures and Strong Partnership Having Positive Impact on Ebola Response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, News Release, November 8, 2015, available at https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/08-11-2018-new-measures-and-strong-partnership-having-positive-impact-on-ebola-response-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo .

46 UN Security Council, African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur—Report of the Secretary-General, UN Doc. S/2019/44, January 14, 2019.

47 Phone interview with UNAMID official, February 4, 2019.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL PUSH: BUDGET CUTS AND TRANSITIONS

The coordinated and integrated approaches have also seen renewed interest in the current context of budget cuts, reductions of troops, and peacekeeping transitions. Asked by member states and headquarters to do more with fewer means, UN missions have to find creative ways to protect civilians when military bases close and troops are consolidated. In this context, some have seen the reinvigorated debate on the integrated approach as a convenient ex post facto justification for budget cuts.[48] As member states, particularly major financial contributors to peacekeeping, seek to move toward leaner and cheaper peace operations, small civilian presences can seem like a less-expensive alternative to UN troops. Accordingly, the cost-effectiveness of unarmed strategies has received increased attention in the POC debate.[49] Missions are consequently being led to increase their investment in civilian expertise and build partnerships with other actors to ensure continued effectiveness on the ground. In the context of the transition and withdrawal of missions, coordinating with UN country teams and external partners that will be staying after missions leave seems necessary to reduce protection vacuums.

In the case of Darfur, preparations for the upcoming transition and exit of UNAMID have led the mission to strengthen both in-mission and UN-system integration. As the mission reduces its presence and capacities, it has had to shift toward civilian-led rule of law and human rights activities and increase emphasis on the first and third tier of POC ("dialogue and engagement" and "establishment of a protective environment"). It also established integrated structures with UN agencies and mission staff to better organize the handover of tasks for the upcoming departure of peacekeepers. Due to the reduced number of troops, the mission

has to prioritize the areas most affected by violence in the Jebel Marra region for the provision of physical security, while closely working with the country team to coordinate protection activities in other areas. Through their Sector Joint Protection Groups, the country team and the mission's civilian component have undertaken integrated exercises to map hotspots and organize different various responses—from physical security to reinforcement of rule of law, and from the strengthening of communication with local communities to the training of national police.

THE POLITICAL PUSH: PREVENTIVE, POLITICAL, AND UNARMED STRATEGIES

Integrated approaches are also more appealing in a context of increased focus on prevention and political solutions. Since the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) advocated for the "primacy of politics" and cautioned against the militarization of peace operations and the secretary-general vowed to prioritize prevention, discussions on reconnecting protection agendas with political strategies have emerged.[50] To counterbalance the militarization of POC, many have promoted "unarmed civilian strategies" and integrated efforts.[51] Military personnel in peace operations and troop-contributing countries also tend to criticize the lack of accountability for the civilian and political side of missions, which also have roles and responsibilities related to POC.[52]

Although the integrated approach has existed for years, it now tends to be presented as an innovative idea because of its convenient value to current political discussions. There are different dimensions to this debate. Political strategies need to be reconnected to the protection of civilians in UN peace operations. The two work streams have tended to be separated—and sometimes are

48 Interviews, New York, December 2018.

49 An Arria Formula meeting on unarmed approaches for the protection of civilians was held on December 1, 2017. The concept note highlighted the timeliness of the discussion as "methods that are field effective, cost effective and demonstrative of a potential to sustain peace need to be scaled up." The deputy permanent representative of the Netherlands mentioned the financial benefits of unarmed civilian protection in peacekeeping: "Where we can make use of civilian protection, it is a relatively economic tool. In times of budget cuts for peacekeeping, we need to consider whether we can reach similar results using tools, such as unarmed protection, that are significantly cheaper." Kingdom of the Netherlands, Statement Arria-formula Meeting on "Unarmed Approaches for the Protection of Civilians," December 1, 2017, available at
https://www.permanentrepresentations.nl/latest/news/2017/12/01/statement-arria-unarmed-approaches-for-the-protection-of-civilians .

50 Namie Di Razza, "Reframing the Protection of Civilians Paradigm," New York: International Peace Institute, 2017. Ralph Mamiya, "Protection of Civilians and Political Strategies," New York: International Peace Institute, 2018.

51 UN Security Council, Arria Formula Meeting on Unarmed Approaches to the Protection of Civilians, December 1, 2017.

52 Interviews with member state representatives, New York, November-December 2018.

considered contradictory endeavors, causing POC to be perceived as a never-ending task distracting from exit and longer-term strategies. Policymakers are striving to overcome this artificial distinction. They are supporting the value of political action for protection (including dialogue and engagement with protection actors, potential perpetrators, and stakeholders with leverage over perpetrators) and the necessity of protection work to ensure that any political process contributes to sustaining peace.

However, some interviewees shared concerns that focusing on political solutions and unarmed activities may dilute responsibilities for POC and exonerate military components and troop-contributing countries from their duties. Others warned that this renewed attention on integration and civilian POC strategies should not distract from the utility of military tools and the use of force, described as the unique added value of UN peacekeeping operations compared to other protection actors.[53] While political strategies and activities can contribute to POC and sustainable solutions, their value should not overshadow the responsibilities of the military side and the seriousness of failures to provide physical protection when it is needed.

Risks Associated with Integration

INTERNAL CHALLENGES IN PEACE OPERATIONS

Despite strong incentives for in-mission coordination and the many coordination structures that exist, many peace operations still do not coordinate sufficiently among their different components. Organizing protection working group meetings does not always guarantee that the information shared will be exhaustive and relevant or that joint planning will truly occur.

In-mission tensions may even arise due to competing objectives and methodologies. When the Security Council mandated MONUSCO to conduct offensive operations against armed groups

in 2013, the new posture of the mission as a potential party to the conflict raised concerns about the collocation of and cooperation between the civilian and military components. Civilians had to consider the potential loss of leverage and access to armed groups they used to interact with for protection work related to human rights, child protection, and civil affairs in a context where their military colleagues would target these groups.[54] Similarly, in Mali, the perceived proximity between UN forces and counterterrorism forces has complicated the protection work of civilian sections and, in some instances, reduced their ability to conduct protection activities.[55]

In other cases, striking the balance between the political engagement of the political affairs section and mission leadership, on the one hand, and human rights monitoring by OHCHR joint offices, on the other, can be challenging. Human rights sections, with a dual reporting line to DPO in New York and OHCHR in Geneva, have to ensure the independence of the human rights agenda in missions that are involved in highly political processes and polarized conflicts.[56] The position of the mission, acting in support of host states, can constrain impartial human rights monitoring of violations perpetrated by host-state forces.

The UN has developed policies to manage these tensions, such as the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy prohibiting UN support to non-UN actors likely to perpetrate grave violations of human rights. Beyond policies and structures, however, it falls to the leadership to make the right calls when contradicting voices arise in the mission and to prioritize POC. Senior mission leadership is critical to ensure a cohesive approach to POC in multidimensional missions and to instill a sense of joint responsibility and shared accountability for POC.

THE TENSION BETWEEN POLITICO-MILITARY MISSIONS AND HUMANITARIAN WORK

Broader integration with non-mission actors, particularly humanitarian actors, has also been the object of much debate due to the challenges and

53 Interview with UN official, New York, December 2018; Interview with humanitarian expert, New York, November 2018.

54 In 2013, civilian activities had to be suspended in areas controlled by M23, when MONUSCO decided to avoid interacting with the armed group.

55 Namie Di Razza, "Protecting Civilians in the Context of Violent Extremism," New York: International Peace Institute, October 2018.

56 Alexis Guidotti, Challenges for Human Rights Sections of UN Peace Operations, *Global Peace Operations Review*, December 13, 2016, available at https://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/challenges-for-human-rights-sections-of-un-peace-operations/ .

risks associated with these actors being perceived as too closely linked to the political and security objectives of the peacekeeping mission.

UN missions and humanitarian actors have different mandates, and there are fundamental differences in their values and principles. While humanitarian actors abide by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, peacekeeping operations are driven by political and military objectives. Recognizing this, OCHA has stressed that although it supports coordinated engagement by the humanitarian country team in integrated assessment and planning processes, "humanitarian operations are mostly outside the scope of integration."[57]

Nonetheless, one of the consequences of system-wide integration is that the perception of UN political or peacekeeping entities influences that of UN humanitarian entities. Given the role of the humanitarian coordinator and OCHA in representing and coordinating the humanitarian community, including non-UN humanitarian actors, UN integration affects the broader humanitarian community. The impact of this structural link on the protection activities of humanitarian actors has been the object of tension and discussion for close to two decades.[58] The central concern is that integration can create a perception of alignment between UN missions and humanitarian actors, which jeopardizes the latter's independence, neutrality, and impartiality and risks politicizing humanitarian action.

Therefore, one determinant of the structural model chosen for the UN presence in a country is the degree to which association with a peacekeeping operation can negatively impact the work of humanitarian actors. OCHA has developed a policy proposing different degrees of integration for the humanitarian coordinator and OCHA within UN missions.[59] It is unclear, however, to what extent OCHA truly has an influence on these decisions.[60] The policy on integrated assessment and planning and its corresponding handbook provide for the need to take into account the risks of integration for humanitarian activities.[61] In practice, however, these decisions seem to be made based on political considerations.[62] In Somalia, for example, UN Security Council Resolution 2093 provided for the structural integration of the humanitarian country team within the political mission, despite concerns raised by humanitarian actors.[63]

In an integrated context, where humanitarian aid is included in the general frame of the UN's work in a country, it can be difficult for humanitarian actors to unambiguously differentiate themselves and demonstrate their independence. Humanitarian actors have raised concerns about the loss of independence in integrated settings and the outsized influence of political priorities compared to humanitarian needs.[64] This is particularly true when the humanitarian coordinator is also the DSRSG/resident coordinator, although the extent of the challenge strongly depends on leadership and personalities. Some understand the importance of a principled humanitarian space and are therefore in a good position to protect it.

In some contexts, however, the triple hatted DSRSG/RC/HC position has been criticized as allowing "the [UN] system to state that humanitarians are listened to while political decisions are taken with little interference."[65] In other words, the inclusion of the humanitarian coordinator role makes it seem as though humanitarian considera-

57 OCHA, CMCoord Field Handbook, 2018.

58 See, for example, Espen Barth Eide, Anja Therese Kaspersen, Randolph Kent, and Karen von Hippel, *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*, Independent Study for the Expanded UN ECHA Core Group, May 2005; Victoria Metcalfe, Alison Giffen, and Samir Elhawary, *UN Integration and Humanitarian Space: An Independent Study Commissioned by the UN Integration Steering Group*, Overseas Development Institute, December 2011.

59 UN OCHA Policy Instruction, "OCHA's structural relationships within an integrated UN presence," May 1, 2009, available at http://afgarchive.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/default/files/OCHA%E2%80%99s%20Structural%20Relationships%20Within%20An%20Integrated%20UN%20Presence.pdf .

60 Arthur Boutellis and Jeremie Labbe, "Peace Operations by Proxy: Implications for Humanitarian Action of UN Peacekeeping Partnerships with Non-UN Security Forces," *International Review of the Red Cross*, December 31, 2013.

61 IAP Working Group, *Integrated Assessment and Planning Handbook*, December 2013, available at http://repository.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/387407/2014%20IAP%20HandBook%20LOW%20RES%20spreads.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y .

62 IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, *Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action*, p. 22.

63 UN Security Council Resolution 2093 (March 6, 2013), S/RES/2093, para. 21.

64 De Coning 2008, p. 23; Norwegian Refugee Council, *A Partnership at Risk? The UN-NGO Relationship in Light of UN Integration*, p. 7, available at https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/a-partnership-at-risk.pdf ; IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, *Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action*, p. 26.

65 Alejandro Pozo Marín, *Perilous Terrain : Humanitarian Action at Risk in Mali*, Médecins Sans Frontières, March 2017.

tions are on an equal footing, even though political objectives ultimately take precedence. It can also directly affect the prioritization of humanitarian action. In some countries, for example, political considerations led the DSRSG/RC/HC to prioritize areas recently brought under government control for humanitarian assistance, directly challenging the humanitarian principle of impartiality.[66]

Peace operations today are often deployed in contexts where the host state is challenged by non-state actors and seeks to restore and extend its authority. As a result, peace operations in countries like CAR, the DRC, or Mali have stabilization mandates, which aim to help states in crisis restore order and stability. Such missions are by no means neutral, as opposed to humanitarian work, which is guided by the principle of neutrality. Peace operations are also sometimes mandated to support the extension of state authority in areas where the state's legitimacy is contested, which can undermine perceptions of the UN as an impartial actor among some parties to the conflict as well as local populations.[67]

UN missions operate in polarized contexts where tensions exist between different communities or armed groups. As a result, missions are sometimes led to use force and conduct operations against those who threaten civilians. Some missions are authorized to use all necessary means, up to and including deadly force, to prevent or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians. As such, UN peacekeeping operations can become parties to an armed conflict. Although this determination is often controversial, some consider MONUSCO and MINUSMA to be parties to the armed conflicts in DRC and Mali respectively.[68] As they seek to deliver on protection mandates more effectively, UN peacekeeping operations may overemphasize military action.[69]

These political and military postures create heightened concerns for humanitarian actors. In the past, for example, the humanitarian community has been asked to support the return of IDPs as part of stabilization strategies.[70] In South Sudan, humanitarian actors are also expected to support the return of IDPs from the POC sites managed by UNMISS and are involved in uncomfortable debates on the voluntary character of these returns and their impact on the social and political fabric of the country. When the perception of impartiality, neutrality, and independence of humanitarian actors is challenged, this creates security risks for humanitarian workers, which affects their ability to access civilians in need. In some contexts, this can lead to humanitarian actors being directly targeted. This risk has become particularly acute where missions have been given so-called "robust" mandates.[71] Indeed, when peacekeeping operations are involved in armed clashes with one party to the conflict, any association with humanitarian actors becomes extremely problematic.

The increased practice of what some experts have described as "peace operations by proxy"—in which UN peacekeepers partner with national or regional non-UN security forces engaged in armed conflict—further complicates the perception of humanitarian action in contexts where the UN presence is integrated.[72] Although not a counterterrorism force per se, MINUSMA was mandated to "reduce the threat posed by terrorist organizations and associated groups,"[73] and has been drawn in to complement and support counterterrorism efforts conducted by the French Operation Barkhane and the G5 Sahel.[74] Such an association creates even starker risks of being perceived as partial actors.

Integration can affect the quality and depth of humanitarian coordination, as some non-UN humanitarian actors may want to avoid any associ-

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66 IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action, p. 10.

67 Jake Sherman and Adam Day, "Political Solutions Must Drive the Design and Implementation of Peace Operations," *IPI Global Observatory*, June 20, 2018.

68 See for example Giulia Marcucci, *The War Report 2018: Democratic Republic of Congo: Conflict in the Eastern Regions*, Geneva Academy, January 2019; Patrick Cammaert, "The UN Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," New York: International Peace Institute, July 2013; Geneva Academy, Non-international Armed Conflicts in Mali, last updated January 31, 2019, available at http://www.rulac.org/browse/conflicts/non-international-armed-conflits-in-mali#collapse4accord .

69 Ralph Mamiya, "Protection of Civilians and Political Strategies," New York: International Peace Institute, May 2018.

70 IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, *Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action*, p. 10.

71 See UN Peacekeeping, Principles of Peacekeeping, available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/principles-of-peacekeeping .

72 Arthur Boutellis and Jeremie Labbe, "Peace Operations by Proxy: Implications for Humanitarian Action of UN Peacekeeping Partnerships with Non-UN Security Forces."

73 UN Security Council Resolution 2100 (2013), UN Doc. S/RES/2013/2100.

74 Namie Di Razza, "Protecting Civilians in the Context of Violent Extremism," New York: International Peace Institute, October 2018.

ation with the UN in particularly complex contexts and therefore disengage from the OCHA-led coordination of humanitarian aid.[75] Humanitarian actors' necessary engagement with parties to armed conflict, in particular non-state armed groups, may also become more difficult if they are too closely associated with peacekeeping operations.[76] As a result, humanitarian actors in some contexts may decide to avoid working in areas in which peacekeeping operations are engaged.

Additionally, integration can impact humanitarian access by seeking to apply common standards to a wide range of actors. The UN Department of Safety and Security provides risk analysis for the whole UN system in a country, but it may not factor in the unique nature of humanitarian action. This can make its analysis too risk-averse for humanitarian actors. As highlighted in OCHA's landmark 2011 "Stay and Deliver" report, "the objective for humanitarian actors in complex security environments… is not to avoid risk, but to manage risk in a way that allows them to remain present and effective in their work."[77]

Considerations for Effective POC-Driven Integration

The UN's normative and policy framework provides the basis for multidimensional, integrated and comprehensive coordination, and UN structures were set up to facilitate such inclusive approaches. While there is a concerted push for enhanced integration and coordination, coordinated approaches should remain tailored, modular, and context-specific, allow space for dynamic and continuous adaptation of processes, and ultimately serve the protection of civilians. Several considerations should be taken into account to ensure that integration efforts effectively protect civilians.

FROM COORDINATION STRUCTURES TO A SHARED CULTURE OF PROTECTION

The processes, structures, and policies for coordinated approaches to POC are mostly in place. Integrated structures often enable different actors to sit together in joint discussion fora, share information, and raise awareness of their activities. However, structures do not always guarantee meaningful information sharing, incentivize fully integrated strategies, or mutually influence programming. For example, the position of a POC adviser in a peacekeeping mission presents both advantages and drawbacks. Depending on their position, these advisers' influence may be significantly limited, as was highlighted in the 2016 evaluation of POC strategies.[78] The fact that such advisers generally have a lesser grade than chiefs of sections (P5 versus D1) has hampered their capacity to truly influence sector commanders or heads of sections. POC advisers sometimes report to one of the DSRSGs, which can limit their outreach to parts of the mission that report to the other DSRSG and to the police and military components. Finally, the very presence of a POC adviser can defeat the original purpose of the position, which is to mainstream POC and integrate it across the board. In some cases, UN staff have reported that responsibility for POC is diluted when there is a POC unit, as some sections consider that unit to be responsible for all POC work throughout the mission. In MONUSCO, roles and responsibilities for POC coordination were unclear to many staff, as a specific section was assigned to "lead" POC (first the civil affairs section, then the human rights section), with the POC adviser operating parallel to it.[79] UNAMID, MINUSMA, and UNMISS have also seen long periods without senior protection advisers because

75 Norwegian Refugee Council, *A Partnership at Risk? The UN-NGO Relationship in Light of UN Integration*, p. 3.

76 IASC, Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, *Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action*, p. 12.

77 See OCHA, Stay and Deliver, 2011, available at https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Stay_and_Deliver.pdf ; Ashley Jackson and Steven A. Zyck, *Presence and Proximity: To Stay and Deliver, Five Years On*, 2017.

78 UN, Evaluation of Mission-Specific Protection of Civilians Strategies, September 2016.

79 In 2016, "very few MONUSCO staff could identify the individual responsible for POC coordination or authoritative policy advice. Most were unclear about the 'centre of gravity,' for POC and about the respective POC roles of the JHRO and Civil Affairs Division, which manages the corps of CLAs and plays a key role in community outreach and reinforcing local protection capacities." Ibid., p.30.

of recruitment and deployment delays, which have weakened POC coordination processes.

In addition, existing structures have not overcome the continued lack of effective and meaningful coordination of POC in every major multidimensional peace operation. While the focus is often on coordination and integration between entities, there are also deficiencies in internal coordination within each structure and entity. The lack of cohesiveness and coordination between each section of each mission component, between each agency in the country team, and between external partners affects the overall comprehensive approach. In addition, the focus on the three levels of coordination inside UN missions, the UN system, and the protection community should not overshadow the need for integration and coherence between other dimensions. Though expansion on this is outside of the scope of this report, coordination and coherence between headquarters and the field, between the policy and the operational spheres, and between strategic and programmatic work are as critical to POC as multidimensional, integrated and comprehensive approaches.

Important gaps remain in ensuring a culture of integration with truly proactive, frank, and impact-driven joint planning and analysis. Stakeholders in the field have notably highlighted the lack of meaningful and full cooperation between humanitarian actors and missions, partly due to persisting mistrust and competition and, in some contexts, concerns over reducing the space for principled humanitarian action.[79]

As a result, although protection actors now regularly meet to coordinate POC activities, integrated meetings tend to simply involve an exchange of briefings on each actor's activities rather than being used as an opportunity for joint planning. While coordination and integration should strengthen common efforts and synergies, it has sometimes, paradoxically, contributed to a deeper division and siloing of tasks. Instead of triggering better ways to work together, it can dilute any sense of ownership of POC and feed blame games between different protection actors, using the "comprehensive approach" to highlight

other actors' faults and inefficiencies. A coordinated and integrated approach to POC should go beyond the structural and process-driven organization of fora for discussion and the artificial accumulation of involved actors.

Moreover, integration should not be seen only as a cost-saving and stop-gap measure in a context of transitions and budget cuts. Resources are needed to ensure multidimensional approaches to POC, and both member states and the Secretariat still have to encourage, facilitate, and invest in recruitment and deployment of civilian expertise in POC hot spots.

THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN POC EFFORTS

With respect to humanitarian actors in particular, the push for integration should consider the distinctive nature of humanitarian protection activities and modus operandi. Coordination between peacekeeping operations and humanitarian actors should be based on impact-driven analysis that takes their comparative advantage for POC into account and promotes complementarity. It also needs to consider risks for humanitarian actors that can come from being associated with broader UN political efforts in particular country contexts. Unlike development or peacekeeping actors, humanitarian organizations need to engage with host states in a way that preserves their neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Being too closely associated with politically motivated actions can have a detrimental effect on how local populations and armed groups perceive humanitarian actors, which can in turn reduce humanitarian access and create security risks. This needs to be taken into account when deciding on the type of structural integration in a particular context. Where the decision is made to fully integrate, triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HCs must also consistently consider humanitarian issues and concerns in their decision making. While political and military action are integral parts of peace operations' POC strategies, humanitarian action must remain principled and strictly focused on addressing needs and alleviating suffering.

80 Interviews with UN officials and humanitarian actors, Bamako, June 2018; phone interviews with UN officials, January 2019.

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