

UN Peacekeeping and CPAS: An Experiment in Performance Assessment and Mission Planning

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Cover Photo: Peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan, February 26, 2021. UN Photo/Gregorio Cunha.

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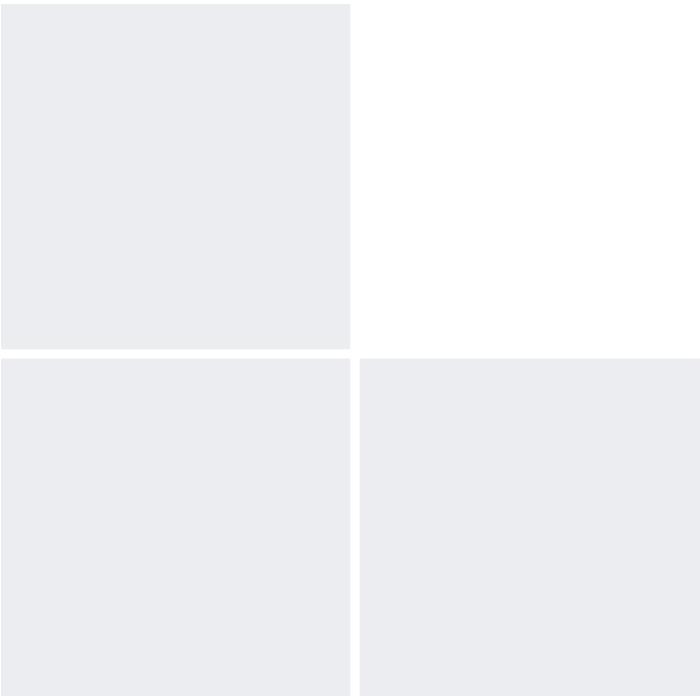
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ABBREVIATIONS

A4P	Action for Peacekeeping
C-34	General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations
CPAS	Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System
DPET	UN Division for Policy, Evaluation, and Training
DPO	UN Department of Peace Operations
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MINUSCA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINURSO	UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSMA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
RBB	Results-based budget
SAGE	Situational Awareness Geospatial Enterprise
SG	Secretary-general
SRSG	Special representative of the secretary-general
UNDOF	UN Disengagement Observer Force
UNFICYP	UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNISFA	UN Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMIK	UN Interim Mission in Kosovo
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
UNMOGIP	UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization
WPS	Women, peace, and security

Executive Summary

Since 2018, the UN Department of Peace Operations' (DPO) Division for Policy, Evaluation and Training (DPET) has been rolling out the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS) across all UN peacekeeping operations. CPAS sets out a framework for mission officials to interrogate how their operations impact stakeholders and processes in the country and whether these impacts are helping missions achieve their mandated priorities. While DPET has developed a standard methodology for CPAS, missions have tailored it to their own contexts and needs.

CPAS is a multifaceted system that engages many parts of missions' operations, but it has had a particularly notable impact in three areas: data collection and analysis, impact assessment, and mission planning. CPAS has helped missions collect both quantitative and qualitative data on their performance and impact more regularly, centralize this data, easily visualize it, and analyze longer-term trends. At the same time, missions have continued to face challenges related to the collection, quality, and interpretation of data.

CPAS's contributions to mission-wide impact assessments are among its most impactful, clearly understood, and widely accepted contributions. CPAS offers a clear methodology and diverse tools to help missions undertake impact assessments to complement their traditional narrative-based reporting and analysis. However, CPAS impact assessments can be time-intensive, and they do not always clearly feed into external reporting.

Compared with its well-understood value as an impact-assessment tool, CPAS's role in the mission planning process faces much greater scrutiny within missions and throughout headquarters. Although CPAS has the potential to help missions improve strategic planning, thus far it has had less impact in shaping how missions adjust their priorities or plan future operations.

Several cross-cutting issues have had an impact on

how missions understand, implement, and value CPAS, including: mission-wide integration; mission leadership and mission-wide ownership; capacities and skill sets; CPAS's alignment with other peacekeeping planning tools; thematic priorities for UN peacekeeping; and dynamics between UN headquarters and field missions.

CPAS is a worthwhile and imperfect experiment in UN peacekeeping that has challenged missions to rethink how they assess performance and undertake strategic planning. With CPAS now operational in all peacekeeping operations, the following recommendations are intended to help missions, headquarters, and member states sustain CPAS into the future:

- **Peacekeeping operations** should include CPAS-specific information in handover notes; share the topline of CPAS frameworks and impact assessments with UN headquarters; improve the design, tracking, and communication of CPAS recommendations; provide detailed overviews of CPAS impact assessments in the secretary-general's reports to the Security Council; broaden CPAS participation to the UN country team and other UN entities in the country or region; and incorporate local views of mission performance and impact into CPAS
- **UN headquarters** should publish CPAS fact sheets on mission websites; incorporate CPAS exercises and assessments into senior leadership training exercises; expand training materials on data analysis and visualization; and align CPAS with other UN planning and reporting processes.
- **Member states** should provide consistent political support and attention to CPAS; increase funding for civilian planning and data-management posts; and include CPAS in peacekeeping curricula at national peacekeeping and police training centers.

Introduction

UN peacekeeping operations are under considerable pressure to demonstrate their performance and impact. This is not a simple endeavor, as missions implement wide-ranging mandates in countries with intractable political and security crises. But it is nonetheless an organizational imperative: UN peacekeeping is a multi-billion-dollar enterprise that deploys over 79,000 personnel around the world. Member states, UN officials, and host populations alike demand systematic and detailed assessments of how UN peacekeeping operations are achieving their mandates and improving their operations.

Discussions within the United Nations about mission planning and performance have gained momentum since 2017. Member states on the Security Council, the General Assembly's Fifth Committee, and the General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) have provided the UN Secretariat with unambiguous directives to improve in these areas.¹ The Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative and the A4P+ Priorities (2021–2023) are designed to focus political and policy attention on key areas to improve mission performance. And during this time, the UN Secretariat has developed and updated several policies and guidance documents to improve existing practices for planning and impact assessment.²

Before CPAS, the UN Secretariat did not have a stand-alone methodology or tool for assessing missions' performance against their mandated priorities. Traditional strategic assessment processes were often disproportionately driven by UN headquarters, rigidly scheduled, or narrowly focused.³ In response, the Department of Peace

Operations' (DPO) Division for Policy, Evaluation and Training (DPET) set out in 2017 to create a dedicated performance assessment system for UN peacekeeping that could provide a systematic, context-specific, and adaptive approach for assessing a mission's impact. Five years later, the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS) has evolved from a pilot project into a full-fledged system in all UN peacekeeping operations.

CPAS is a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system designed to help UN peacekeeping missions assess their own impact and improve their operations. It sets out a framework for mission officials to interrogate how their operations directly impact stakeholders and processes in the country and whether these impacts are helping missions achieve their mandated priorities. It also sets out a process for missions to continuously assess their progress and regularly update their strategies and operations based on the analyses and recommendations that its personnel produce. The system draws on quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the mission's impact on changes in the country context. While DPET has developed a standard methodology for CPAS, missions have tailored it to their own contexts and needs.

CPAS has received numerous accolades since its introduction.⁴ But now that the system is operational in all UN peacekeeping missions, there is growing demand for concrete evidence of the system's impact. Most prominently, the Fifth Committee's July 2022 cross-cutting policy resolution on UN peacekeeping requested that the secretary-general prepare a dedicated analysis of CPAS's implementation, lessons learned, and impact on mission performance and planning.⁵ And while a considerable study by the Norwegian

CPAS is an ambitious and imperfect experiment by the UN to challenge itself to rethink how it assesses mission-wide performance and undertakes strategic planning.

¹ See: UN Security Council Resolution 2436 (September 21, 2018), UN Doc. S/RES/2436, para. 1; UN Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, UN Doc. S/PRST/2018/4, January 31, 2018; UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/75/19, March 17, 2021; UN General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Doc. A/72/19, March 15, 2018, para. 102; UN Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, UN Doc. S/PRST/2018/10, May 14, 2018.

² A full list of these can be found here: UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System, "Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework (IPPAF)," March 2022, pp. 18–23.

³ Daniel Forti, "Independent Reviews of UN Peace Operations: A Study of Politics and Practice," International Peace Institute, October 2021, pp. 2–4.

⁴ The system was shortlisted for one of the UN secretary-general's Innovation Awards in 2019 and was selected as one of the "100 Solutions for Peace" at the November 2020 Paris Peace Forum.

Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) accompanied CPAS's conceptualization and design in 2018, there has not been an independent assessment of the system's implementation and impact.⁶

CPAS is an ambitious and imperfect experiment by the UN to challenge itself to rethink how it assesses mission-wide performance and undertakes strategic planning. This paper analyzes the rollout and implementation of CPAS to date and its initial impact on UN peacekeeping.⁷ It begins by summarizing the CPAS methodology and charting the system's rollout. It then evaluates CPAS across three core areas: data collection and analysis, impact assessment, and mission planning. The paper then analyzes six cross-cutting issues that have shaped CPAS's implementation and impact. It concludes with reflections on CPAS's trajectory and offers recommendations to UN peacekeeping missions, UN headquarters, and member states.

Overview of CPAS

CPAS's methodology and tools have evolved since it was first introduced in mid-2018. The system has also undergone a lengthy rollout, not only due to the complexity and novelty of the instrument itself but also due to unforeseen disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic. This section introduces the CPAS methodology and tracks important milestones in the system's rollout.

Unpacking the CPAS Methodology

At its most aspirational, CPAS helps peacekeeping operations improve their performance through an iterative process of assessing their substantive impact. By creating multiple decision points for

mission-wide reflection, assessment, and adjustment, the system is also envisioned to help missions become more flexible and adaptable in their planning efforts. The CPAS methodology includes three main components: a context mapping, a results framework, and impact assessments (previously known as performance assessments).⁸

Context mapping: During the context mapping, officials from all parts of the mission participate in multiple brainstorming discussions to articulate priority objectives, identify drivers of change,⁹ and map stakeholders the mission will need to engage to shape dynamics in the country.¹⁰ This analysis serves as the basis for the mission to develop and refine its CPAS results framework. Priority objectives are often distilled from the Security Council mandates and mission leadership's own political vision.¹¹ The context mapping goes in-depth on national stakeholders' "knowledge, attitudes, positions, or behaviors," allowing officials to explicitly discuss assumptions underpinning the mission's strategy.¹² The CPAS methodology asks missions to do a context-mapping exercise at least once a year, but in practice this is only done on an as-needed basis.

Comprehensive Results Framework: The results framework sets out a logical relationship between the mission's priorities and how its operations are intended to help achieve these priorities. It includes four layers (in descending order): mission priorities, intended impacts (i.e., change in the overall context), intended outcomes (i.e., change in the behavior of key stakeholders), and outputs (accomplishments of mission activities; see Figure 1).

5 UN General Assembly Resolution 76/274 (July 7, 2022), UN Doc. A/76/274, paras. 48–50.

6 DPET prepared a report about the implementation of CPAS in October 2022 following an internal stock-taking process. For additional background, see: Cedric de Coning and Emery Brusset, "Towards a Comprehensive Results-Based Reporting and Performance Assessment Framework: For UN Peacekeeping Operations," Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), 2018.

7 This research is based on a desk review of primary and secondary literature and forty-seven interviews with fifty-five UN officials at both headquarters and in peacekeeping missions. MINUSCA, the first mission to set up its CPAS framework, received particular attention during the research, and sixteen of the interviews were with MINUSCA personnel.

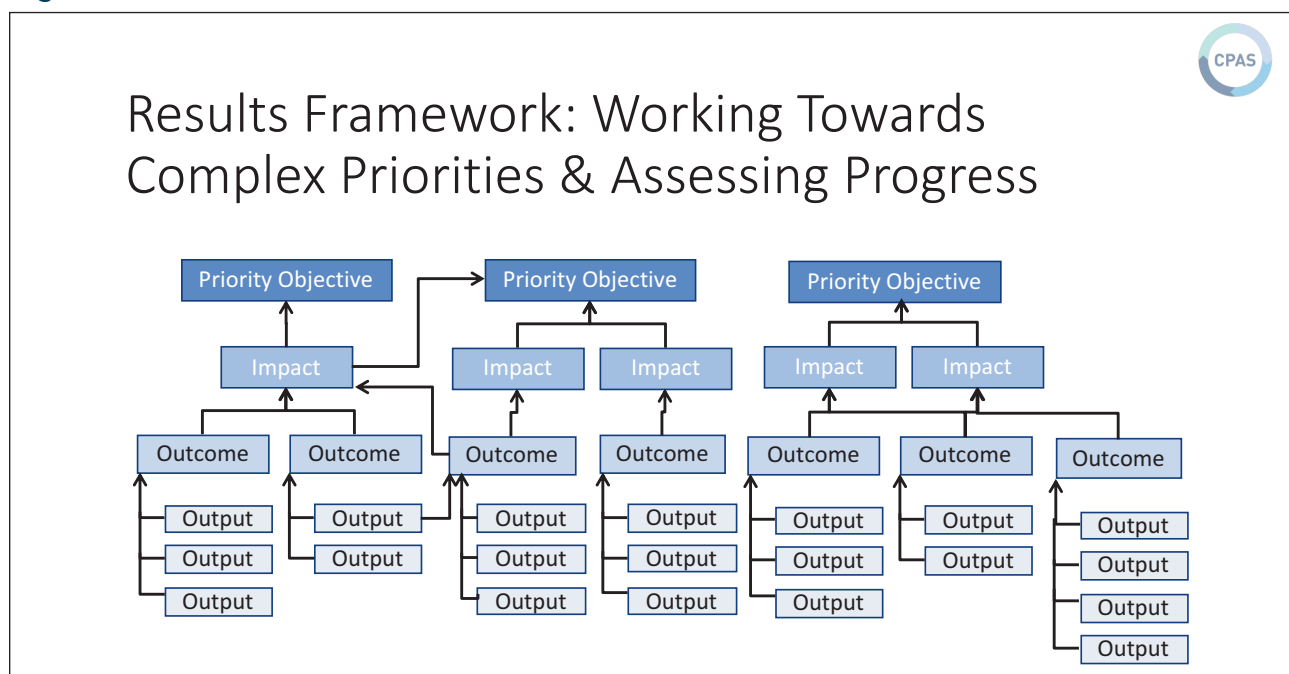
8 In August 2022, DPET changed the name of these exercises from performance assessments to impact assessments to focus more on mission impact instead of activities and to avoid the perception that CPAS assessed the performance of individuals or components. Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

9 Drivers of change are trends or events that either positively or negatively impact a mission's abilities to achieve its priority objectives. CPAS is intended to capture issues missions are mandated to engage on or are able to influence.

10 Namie Di Razza, "Accountability System for the Protection of Civilians: Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System," International Peace Institute, December 2020, p. 1, available at <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CPAS-Factsheet.pdf>.

11 Interview 14 with UN headquarters official, May 2022.

12 Di Razza, "Accountability System for the Protection of Civilians," p. 2.

Figure 1. Model CPAS results framework¹³

The intended impacts and outcomes are assessed by qualitative and quantitative indicators. Each indicator can be linked to multiple parts of the results framework, assigned to a relevant mission component or section for follow-up, tagged for specific themes (e.g., women, peace, and security or the protection of civilians) or processes (e.g., reports of the UN secretary-general or the A4P+ framework), and disaggregated by variables like gender or geography. Mission personnel regularly enter data into the online platform, and CPAS also allows them to provide supplementary qualitative analysis to contextualize each data point. The CPAS indicators allow missions to track progress against mandated tasks at the strategic and at the stakeholder level; some missions also use their results frameworks to overlay output indicators with impact data.¹⁴

Impact assessment: The impact-assessment exercises bring together mission officials from all components to evaluate the mission's substantive

performance against its results framework. Mission officials analyze data captured in CPAS to compile evidence-based assessments of the mission's performance and impact, propose recommendations to mission leadership, and identify ways to improve the results framework. These assessments also let the mission interrogate the relationship between its outputs and intended outcomes and impact, asking how effectively it is influencing key stakeholders to bring about intended impacts. Each output is scored on a scale of 1–4, from not effective (1) to very effective (4).¹⁵

During the impact-assessment exercises, mission personnel review the underlying data and analyses and assess each impact and outcome area based on whether there has been “strong progress,” “some progress,” “no progress,” or a “deterioration.” Facilitators try to stimulate discussions around three broad sets of questions: “What does the data tell us? How did the mission contribute to this

At its most aspirational, CPAS helps peacekeeping operations improve their performance through an iterative process of assessing their substantive impact.

¹³ UN Department of Peace Operations for Policy, Evaluation and Training (DPET), “CPAS Presentation,” March 2022 (on file with author).

¹⁴ Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

¹⁵ The previous CPAS methodology included a stand-alone process to evaluate each output according to its relevance, extent, and duration (RED assessment). DPET removed this step from the CPAS methodology in September 2021 to make the impact-assessment exercises more concise and focused on impact. See: Di Razza, “Accountability System for the Protection of Civilians,” pp. 4–5; Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

Box 1. Examples of CPAS priority objectives, intended impacts, and intended outcomes

Priority objectives refer to areas of focus that are clearly aligned with the mission leadership's political vision and the Security Council mandate.

MINUSCA: Sustainably reduce the presence and threat posed by armed groups in CAR and enhance [the protection of civilians].

MONUSCO: Improve security, protection of civilians, and respect to human rights.

Intended impacts refer to the changes the project causes to the overall context.

MINUSCA: New Government and parliament are legitimately elected in what is and what is perceived to be a free, fair, inclusive, and credible manner, and as per constitutional requirements.

MONUSCO: Reduced presence and activity of Armed Groups, militias and armed elements threatening the civilian population.

Intended outcomes are the medium-term consequences of the mission activities, including the change in behavior of key stakeholders.

MINUSCA: [Internal security forces] and [Central African armed forces] to provide the necessary security to enable free, fair, and inclusive elections to take place, including ensuring the security of voters, candidates, and the electoral process.

MONUSCO: Increased presence, capacity and professionalism of State defense and Security services to prevent and mitigate threats posed by Armed Groups.

Outputs are the direct, immediate products of mission activities.

MINUSCA: Implementation of community violence reduction programmes for community members, including youth prone to violence and recruitment by, and elements associated with armed groups.

MONUSCO: Training and logistical support to [Congolese armed forces] to facilitate deployment and operations.

issue? And what can we do better?"¹⁶ The analyses and recommendations that emerge from the impact assessments are captured in reports and presentations for senior mission leadership.

DPET has encouraged all missions to complete at least two impact assessments each year. Some missions have started doing "light" impact assessments every six months to evaluate their performance at only the impact and outcome level or across only one priority area.

The online CPAS platform includes tools to help missions conduct their impact assessments. The Performance Dashboard lets officials examine indicators, analysis, graphics and maps, and

recommendations at the mission-wide level (based on all priority areas) or at lower levels of the results framework. The online platform also allows officials to generate several reports:

- Summary impact reports provide analysis of mission performance at only the highest levels of the CPAS results framework. Visualizations of this data can be attached as annexes.
- Detailed impact reports (formerly called "full performance assessments") are more comprehensive, containing detailed data visualizations and analysis at all levels of the CPAS results framework as well as recommendations submitted by mission officials.

¹⁶ Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

- Indicator reports let missions extract all data and graphs at any time; this is particularly useful ahead of the data-based impact assessments.
- The recommendations tracker centralizes all recommendations and monitors whether each has been endorsed by mission leadership, which mission section is responsible for implementation, and the status of implementation.

Two features of the CPAS methodology are notable. First, CPAS's flexible design allows missions to regularly update their results frameworks in response to volatile and dynamic conditions in the country. The quality of analysis developed through CPAS matures as missions collect more data against their baselines and make improvements based on what they learn from previous cycles.¹⁷ For example, after their first impact assessment, officials in the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) found that some of the initial indicators were too ambitious, making it hard to collect accurate data. This led them to make significant changes to their framework.¹⁸ These updates can also reflect changes in the country context, as when the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) added indicators on improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to its CPAS results framework after they became prevalent throughout the country in 2021.¹⁹ CPAS enables missions to update their analyses and operations more holistically and quickly than they can with mission workplans or budgets.²⁰

Second, the system's flexibility allows missions to tailor CPAS to their context. While the interface and structure of CPAS is the same in all missions,

the methodology is flexible enough to allow different missions to use CPAS in the ways that best suit their needs. For example, multidimensional stabilization missions that operate in volatile security contexts may benefit from frequent context mappings and detailed impact assessments. This may not be as urgent for legacy peacekeeping missions that have static Security Council mandates or are operating in contexts defined by long-standing conflicts; however, these missions still benefit from CPAS's systematic approach to collecting and analyzing data on mission performance, which allows them to better substantiate their operations.²¹

Tracking the Rollout and Implementation of CPAS

Between August 2018 and September 2022, UN peacekeeping operations completed thirty-eight CPAS impact assessments.

DPO started rolling out CPAS in August 2018 with its launch in the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and

concluded the rollout to all UN peacekeeping missions in December 2021 with the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). Between August 2018 and September 2022, UN peacekeeping operations completed thirty-eight CPAS impact assessments that have generated over 300 recommendations (see Table 1).²²

Each mission's rollout of CPAS has followed a common process. DPET visits the mission and meets with mission personnel to introduce the CPAS methodology, help establish a multi-tiered governance structure, and facilitate induction trainings.²³ Mission leadership then outline its

¹⁷ Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

¹⁸ Interview 7 with UN headquarters official, April 2022.

¹⁹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Central African Republic: The Ever-Growing Threat of Explosive Devices," October 17, 2022.

²⁰ Interview 32 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 43 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

²¹ Interview 3 with UN headquarters official, March 2022.

²² UN General Assembly, *Overview of the Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Budget Performance for the Period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 and Budget for the Period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023*, UN Doc. A/76/717, February 22, 2022, para. 80.

²³ The lowest level is the CPAS focal point, who is responsible for managing the CPAS online platform, organizing all CPAS activities, leading the preparation of all CPAS reports, coordinating with mission personnel and headquarters officials, and ensuring all CPAS data entry occurs on schedule. The focal point coordinates the CPAS working group, which includes representatives from all mission components and sections (who are often the focal points for their sections) and is responsible for entering data and participates in all CPAS-related exercises and activities. The CPAS implementation group includes decision-making officials and sits as a bridge between the working group and mission leadership. The group is responsible for reviewing updates to the results framework or draft impact-assessment reports and monitoring the extent to which CPAS recommendations are implemented. Mission leadership holds the highest level of authority in the CPAS structure and is responsible for providing strategic direction to the CPAS process.

Table 1. Status of CPAS's implementation in UN peacekeeping operations²⁴

Location	CPAS Launched	Completed First Impact Assessment and Revised Framework	Number of Completed Cycles (both light and full)	Most Recent Impact Assessment	Data Collection Intervals	CPAS Focal Point
MINUSCA	August 2018	Yes	5	October 2021	Monthly	Joint mission planning unit
UNMISS	October 2018	Yes	5	July 2022	Quarterly	Strategic planning unit
UNIFIL	December 2018	Yes	4	July 2022	Quarterly	Office of the principal coordinator
UNFICYP	January 2019	Yes	10	June 2022	Monthly	Joint mission analysis center
MONUSCO	April 2019	Yes	1	April 2022	Monthly	Strategic planning unit, office of the chief of staff
MINUSMA	August 2019	Yes	3	July 2022	Quarterly	Integrated strategic planning unit
UNMIK	November 2019	Yes	4	August 2022	Quarterly and Semiannually	Office of the chief of staff
MINURSO	December 2019	Yes	2	September 2022	Monthly	Joint mission analysis center
UNDOF	May 2021	Yes	1	December 2021	Monthly	Office of the head of mission/force commander
UNMOGIP	November 2021	Yes	2	July 2022	Monthly	CPAS secretariat led by a military information officer
UNTSO	November 2021	Yes	1	September 2022	Monthly	Office of the senior legal adviser
UNISFA	December 2021	No	0	Spring 2023 (planned)	***	Office of the chief of staff/principal officer

* DPO piloted a CPAS rollout in UNAMID in September 2020, but this was discontinued when the mission closed in December 2020.

²⁴ Updated as of September 2022. Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

priority objectives, and mission and headquarters colleagues co-facilitate the first context-mapping session. Once mission personnel prepare a results framework and it is endorsed by mission leadership, the formal CPAS cycle begins as mission personnel begin collecting data.

Missions experienced similar hurdles during their CPAS rollouts. Much of the start-up period is spent educating mission personnel on the system's objectives, methodology, and online platform. CPAS focal points devoted considerable time to working with their counterparts across the mission and helping them balance their existing workloads with the new reporting requirements. Scheduling constraints and mandatory personnel rotations often slowed the start-up process, especially as missions expanded the initial context-mapping session into large group discussions. Nonetheless, these hurdles diminished over time; the missions that set up CPAS more recently faced smaller learning curves than the missions that preceded them.²⁵

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the rollout and early implementation of CPAS in many missions. It delayed the rollout by over a year in UNMOGIP, the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).²⁶ The pandemic forced some missions to pause the implementation of CPAS altogether and led others to spend extra time completing tasks.²⁷

CPAS in Practice

CPAS is a multifaceted system that engages many parts of missions' operations. This section examines CPAS across three prominent dimensions of its structure and scope: data collection and analysis, impact assessment, and mission planning.

Data Collection and Analysis

The collection, structuring, monitoring, and analysis of data is foundational to CPAS. Peacekeeping operations have traditionally struggled to collect data on mission-wide performance and impact, but CPAS has helped initiate larger changes in UN peacekeeping by more regularly engaging personnel on data collection and analysis.²⁸

Each mission has its own data requirements for CPAS, depending on the complexity of its results frameworks. Smaller missions often have lighter data-collection requirements (for example, UNMOGIP collects data for approximately fifteen indicators), while larger missions with more complex mandates need to collect more data (for example, MINUSMA reports on over seventy indicators). The CPAS methodology asks missions to develop indicators for their outcomes and impact, largely drawing on data they already collect. Some missions also report on activity-based data when they are unable to identify any other data sources, though this practice is not common.

Data visualization is one of CPAS's biggest selling points.²⁹ The integration of graphs and charts into the online platform has helped missions consistently analyze trends across multiple indicators. DPET and mission personnel have prioritized automating the creation of charts, graphics, and maps from CPAS data, and these visuals are frequently used in internal briefing materials and external reports.

DPET is working with missions to gradually incorporate external data sources into their CPAS platforms. The UN's Situational Awareness Geospatial Enterprise (SAGE) is the most common external source: MINUSCA, the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and the UN

²⁵ Interview 2 with UN headquarters official, March 2022.

²⁶ DPET, "CPAS Presentation," November 2020 (on file with author).

²⁷ Interview 7 with UN headquarters official, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 18 with UN peacekeeping officials by email correspondence, May 2022.

²⁸ Marion Laurence, "What Are the Benefits and Pitfalls of 'Data-Driven' Peacekeeping?" University of Ottawa Centre for International Policy Studies, December 2019; Samuli Harju, "#POC20 Series: Data on Performance Needed to Make UN Peacekeeping Budgets Right on the Money," Center for Civilians in Conflict, June 11, 2019; de Coning and Brusset, "Towards a Comprehensive Results-Based Reporting and Performance Assessment Framework"; Adam Day, "Can Data Save U.N. Peacekeeping?" *World Politics Review*, February 21, 2019.

²⁹ Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 5 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) currently incorporate SAGE-collected data into their results frameworks, and the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), UNISFA, the UN Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), UNMISS, and UNDOF plan to follow suit in the coming months.³⁰ MONUSCO and UNMOGIP use incident data collected by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), and other missions plan to use this data. Some missions are in the preliminary stages of using data collected by other UN entities in their CPAS frameworks, including from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).³¹

CPAS has helped missions improve their use of data in multiple ways. It has encouraged missions to become more comfortable collecting data on substantive performance and impact. Prior to CPAS, mission-wide data collection was limited to results-based budgets (RBB)

CPAS has helped initiate larger changes in UN peacekeeping by more regularly engaging personnel on data collection and analysis.

(which focused only on activity-based outputs), tracking of military or police operations, and reporting on security incidents through SAGE. However, these systems do not allow for iterative analysis, nor do they allow mission personnel to weave together quantitative data with qualitative analyses on mission performance. One official highlighted the contrast between previous approaches and CPAS, saying, “Our mission captured lots of data on incident reporting. Separately, there was a lot of narrative analysis about these incidents, but the two weren’t married. Now, in CPAS, you can bring them together cohesively.”³²

Capturing qualitative data is an important part of the CPAS process. Some components of a peacekeeping mission do substantive work that is inherently quantifiable (e.g., incidents of human rights violations or the number of ex-combatants

disarmed and demobilized). However, many mission personnel have struggled to quantify political issues that do not have obvious quantifiable outcomes over a discrete period.

In response, CPAS focal points in missions have helped their colleagues find ways to standardize and score qualitative developments. For example, UNTSO uses CPAS to monitor both qualitative and quantitative outcomes of the meetings its leadership holds with various government counterparts: the mission scores each meeting based on the value of the information that comes from the discussions and writes a short analytical summary to accompany each data point.³³ Other missions have employed proxy indicators to assess issues that do not have discrete data points. For example, UNMOGIP used data on visa management and encounters among domestic security forces as proxy indicators to assess the health of the relationship between India and Pakistan.³⁴

CPAS has also helped missions better centralize raw data and accompanying analyses. Although CPAS is not the only data repository that missions use, it has become the most prominent because it covers the entire mission’s substantive performance.³⁵ Prior to CPAS, missions routinely collected data on operations, and to a lesser extent on their impact, but stored them in separate systems. Through the CPAS rollout process, officials were able to not only map various data sources within a mission but also consolidate them into a single platform.³⁶

The expansion of CPAS as a centralized data hub has also led missions to better standardize and cross-reference existing data to improve overall data quality. For example, one UN official recalled that prior to CPAS, three different components of UNFICYP (the force, the police, and the civil affairs section) would make separate records in SAGE of a

30 Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

31 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 7 with UN headquarters official, April 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

32 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022.

33 Interview 20 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

34 Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022.

35 The August 2022 A4P+ Results Report (November 2021–April 2022) highlights that five missions use more than one specialized data repository: MINURSO (3), MINUSCA (4), MONUSCO (6), UNIFIL (3), and UNISFA (2).

36 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

single security incident between Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the UN-controlled buffer zone. CPAS helped the mission improve its working methods by delegating one component to enter data on the security incident and request that the others sign off on the data to ensure its veracity.³⁷

CPAS has also enabled missions to conduct real-time and iterative data analysis. Prior to CPAS, substantive data was often captured in static Microsoft Word or Excel documents for a single reporting period. This meant that the information and analysis had a short shelf life: it was difficult to look at longer time horizons in one file, and it was hard to juxtapose this data with related indicators captured elsewhere.³⁸ But through an iterative and centralized approach, CPAS has helped missions track changes in real time and over long periods of time. For example, MINUSCA's use of CPAS to track monthly violations of the 2019 peace agreement in CAR helped the mission supplement its political analysis of the signatory armed groups and refine its engagement strategies with each signatory.³⁹

Despite this progress, missions have experienced some challenges with the data side of CPAS. Concerns over data collection, quality, and interpretation are common when working in peacekeeping settings and are not exclusive to CPAS. Nonetheless, these issues have negatively impacted the implementation of CPAS, especially in the early stages. For example, mission personnel often struggled to identify concrete outcome or impact indicators. Developing and improving indicators involves an unavoidable period of trial and error and often requires missions to complete light or full impact assessments before realizing that changes are needed.⁴⁰ This extended period of refinement can make it challenging for missions to produce quality analysis early on in the CPAS life cycle.

In addition, mission personnel can be inconsistent in how they collect and interpret this data. While CPAS provides an overarching structure and platform for data collection, the lack of explicit guidance within missions has forced personnel to rely on their own interpretations of indicators. For example, different national contingents have their own criteria for counting peacekeeping patrols, including the time of day a patrol begins or ends, the distance traveled, and its purpose.⁴¹ Different interpretations of a single indicator can jeopardize the underlying assumptions about how the mission evaluates itself and articulates its impact. CPAS focal points are working with counterparts to help resolve these incidents, and DPET has hired an external consultant to examine data-quality issues.⁴²

Multiple officials also emphasized that the quality of CPAS data depends on the accountability of the individuals who are designing the frameworks and entering the data.⁴³ Designing the CPAS results framework is a balancing act between what the mission can effectively assess and what it can use to highlight its impact. As a result, the system depends on how officials strike a balance between reporting data that most accurately captures the impact of the mission and reporting data that most favorably portrays their performance. As characterized by one official,

At each level, the data's credibility belongs to the officers and sections that report; you are forcing them to be more accountable for what they put down in the analysis and reporting on their achievements and assessments. And if the granular level assessments are inaccurate then the whole thing [CPAS] will be inaccurate. If all works well, then you improve the whole layer of accountability.⁴⁴

This concern is amplified by limited external engage-

37 Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022.

38 Interview 20 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 46 with UN headquarters official, July 2022. This has been a systematic challenge for UN peacekeeping. See: UN Peacekeeping, "Final Report: Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping," December 22, 2014, p. 137.

39 MINUSCA fact sheet, February 2022 (on file with author).

40 Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

41 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 21 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

42 Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

43 Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 32 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022. This was also a problem with the SAGE system for UN peacekeeping. See: UN Peacekeeping, "Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping," September 2021, p. 20.

44 Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

ment with each mission's CPAS framework, as very few UN officials outside of the mission—let alone national partners with whom the mission works—are familiar with how the mission uses CPAS to assess their performance.

Impact Assessment

CPAS's contributions to mission-wide impact assessments are among its most impactful, clearly understood, and widely accepted contributions to date. CPAS offers a clear methodology and diverse tools to help missions undertake impact assessments. However, missions have varying experiences with the usefulness of impact-assessment reports beyond CPAS-related processes.

Impact-assessment exercises are designed to provide leadership with a clear overview of the mission's recent performance, as well as concrete feedback and recommendations to shape upcoming decisions. The underlying data and analyses are also expected to help mission leadership shape a more accurate narrative about the mission in its reporting and strategic communications efforts.

CPAS's contributions to mission-wide impact assessments are among its most impactful, clearly understood, and widely accepted contributions to date.

Missions derive multiple benefits from CPAS's impact-assessment functions. CPAS provides a clear methodology and structure for using multiple data sources to assess priorities and outcomes, which is not something that existed prior to CPAS. This structured approach has helped officials uncover new linkages between issues they thought were previously unrelated. One official described how, with CPAS, "the different layers of data come together like a mosaic, and we see the interlinkages or correlations much better."⁴⁵

While CPAS impact assessments are valuable complements to missions' traditional narrative-based reporting and analysis, they cannot replace them. CPAS is not an algorithm that independently offers conclusions about a mission's performance;

mission personnel are integral to CPAS because they interpret the data that CPAS helps them collect and craft it into cohesive analyses.⁴⁶ This process is what helps them identify the likely causes and possible implications of data trends, assess how the mission contributed to these trends, and recommend whether (and how) the mission should adjust moving forward.

Mission personnel perceive CPAS impact assessments to be time-intensive processes. While some missions required multiple weeks to complete impact assessments when CPAS was relatively new (due to a host of procedural and logistical issues), recent assessments have required missions to allocate, on average, ten to twelve working hours spread over a few days.⁴⁷ The time required to complete a CPAS impact assessment decreases as missions become more familiar with the system and its methodology. However, some missions have needed multiple weeks to approve final versions of

CPAS reports, which have unintentionally rendered some of the analyses outdated and dampened enthusiasm for the process among mission personnel.

DPET has collaborated with missions to address these concerns. Some missions (MINUSMA, MINUSCA, UNIFIL, UNFICYP, and UNMISS) have used a light impact-assessment methodology to produce quality reports that require less time.⁴⁸ Other adjustments to the CPAS methodology (discussed in more detail below) have aimed to streamline existing processes to make the system more manageable on a daily basis.

However, there are inherent tradeoffs to these approaches. Some personnel argued that the RED analysis is among the more important analytical features of the CPAS methodology since it forces the mission to articulate how it expects to influence key stakeholders and the country context and to triangulate data collected in other parts of the system.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022.

⁴⁶ Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 47 with UN headquarters officials, July 2022.

⁴⁷ Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

⁴⁸ Interview 1 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 2 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

⁴⁹ Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022.

Box 2. How MINUSCA has used CPAS impact assessments

As one of the missions that has completed the most impact assessments, MINUSCA provides valuable illustrations of how CPAS can enable concrete evaluations of a mission's work at critical junctures.

Between 2019 and early 2021, MINUSCA used CPAS impact assessments to better understand how its activities aimed at the restoration of state authority impacted its overall approach to the protection of civilians. Mission personnel used CPAS to map the deployment of state officials, justice and corrections officers, and security personnel across the country's provinces. They then juxtaposed the data on these deployments with data on reported security incidents at various time intervals. This allowed the mission to evaluate the relationship between the presence of civilian state authorities and security incidents and determine whether the redeployment of state officials led to reductions in incidents involving civilians.⁵⁰ This analysis demonstrated the value of further integrating the mission's support for restoring state authority into other parts of the mission's mandate.

MINUSCA also used CPAS to evaluate its performance following the post-election rebellion in CAR between December 2020 and February 2021. CPAS enabled the mission to map its force's posture against groups affiliated with the Coalition of Patriots for Change (*Coalition des patriotes pour le changement*) and the location of national security forces and voting stations. The impact assessment helped officials review which regions the mission should have identified as higher-risk prior to the elections and evaluate whether the mission's security strategy was commensurate to these potential threats. This allowed the mission to determine that its security planning had not prepared it for the potential of a large-scale rebellion and that its strategy had been premised, in part, on government security personnel remaining in their posts. The evaluation also demonstrated the mission's positive impact on electoral turnout and participation, particularly in the capital, Bangui, where MINUSCA troops were heavily concentrated.⁵¹

Others argued that the analysis of outputs is too time-consuming for the mission to undertake regularly and does not meaningfully alter the top-line analysis presented to mission leadership.⁵²

Impact assessments are most effective when CPAS focal points combine long-term analysis conducted through CPAS with short-term operational updates.⁵³ This requires a CPAS framework with extensive data and mission personnel who are empowered to innovate new responses or decision-making processes. For example, UNFICYP officials used CPAS to help generate one-page briefing notes shortly after the mission's morning situational briefings; these notes provided deeper analysis that responded directly to questions about incident reports that military leaders asked during the

briefings.⁵⁴

CPAS impact assessments have varying levels of impact on missions' external reporting. The most obvious is the value of CPAS in feeding into the secretary-general's (SG) reports to the Security Council, which are the primary tool for reporting to member states. By streamlining data collection and generating short analyses across all mission priorities, CPAS allows missions to better highlight their impact in their reports. Five peacekeeping missions have used CPAS assessments to help inform the drafting of their SG reports.⁵⁵

Impact assessments do not always feed into SG reports in a straightforward manner, however. Missions struggle to align their CPAS cycles with

50 Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; MINUSCA fact sheet, June–October 2020 (on file with author).

51 Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 34 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 40 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

52 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

53 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022.

54 Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022.

55 MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNFICYP, and UNIFIL.

internal timelines for preparing SG reports.⁵⁶ Moreover, most SG reports are structured differently than CPAS results frameworks because they have their own policy process and political audience, limiting how much of the CPAS narrative and analysis can be transposed without significant revisions.⁵⁷ As a result, missions and their headquarters counterparts are weary of overly-relying on CPAS as a source of information for SG reports, even if it is valuable for generating regular analysis and consolidating multiple data points.⁵⁸

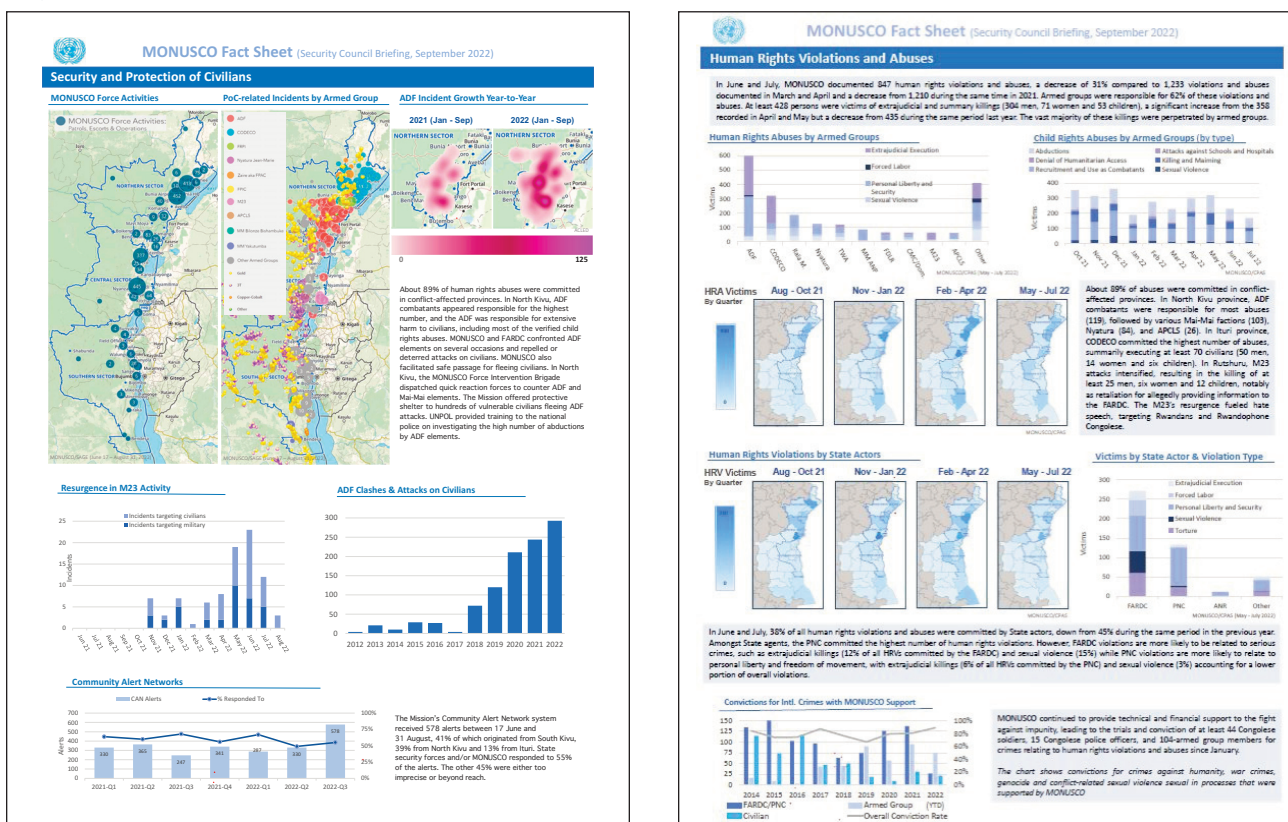
By contrast, CPAS has been instrumental in helping missions prepare fact sheets for the Security Council. Fact sheets feature charts and visuals developed through CPAS, which are sometimes accompanied by short analytical summaries from recent impact

assessments (see Figure 2).⁵⁹ Seven missions have developed fact sheets since CPAS was established.⁶⁰ Successful fact sheets provide data-driven analyses that reinforce or expand upon missions' own assessments of their context and performance.

Mission Planning

Compared with its well-understood value as an impact-assessment tool, CPAS's role in mission planning processes faces much greater scrutiny within missions and throughout headquarters. Although CPAS has the potential to help missions resolve widely acknowledged shortcomings in strategic planning, thus far it has had less impact in shaping how missions adjust their priorities or plan future operations.

Figure 2. MONUSCO fact sheet (September 2022)



56 Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

57 UNFICYP is the first mission to have restructured its SG report to match its CPAS results framework. Interview 47 with UN headquarters official, July 2022; Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

58 Interview 45 with UN headquarters officials, July 2022; Interview 47 with UN headquarters officials, July 2022.

59 To date MINUSCA, MONUSCO, UNFICYP, and UNDOF have prepared fact sheets for the Security Council, and more missions hope to regularly do so moving forward. Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 17 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 46 with UN headquarters official, July 2022.

60 MINURSO, MINUSCA, MONUSCO, UNTSO, UNFICYP, UNDOF, and UNIFIL.

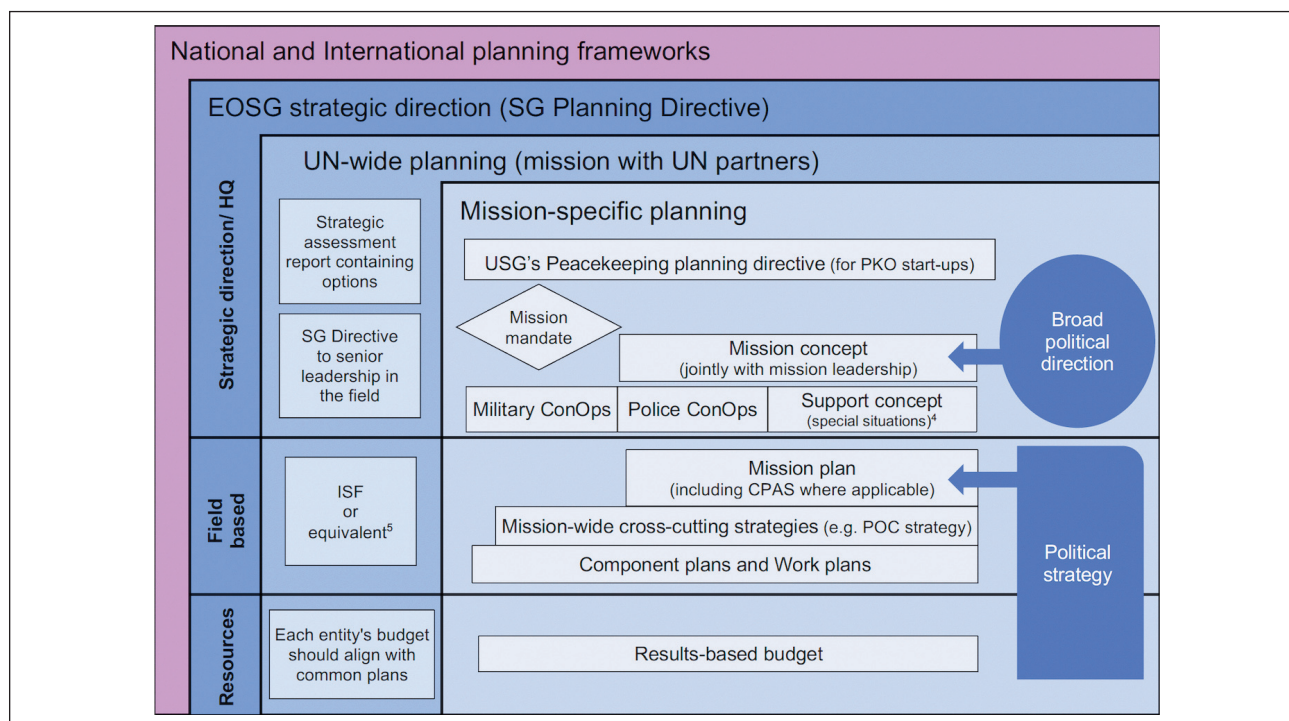
UN peacekeeping missions confronted a plethora of planning documents and processes even before CPAS's creation (see Figure 3). Mission and headquarters officials frequently acknowledged three challenges with this landscape. First, the various documents missions use for strategic planning are not interactive and therefore quickly become outdated and uncoordinated. Second, there are too many headquarters-centric planning requirements that do not impact missions' daily planning processes. And third, each planning document was generated by a different stakeholder and for a different process. The result is that many missions felt like they did not have a single, integrated plan.⁶¹

The CPAS methodology attempts to resolve some of these challenges. At its most aspirational, the results framework serves as a detailed plan for operationalizing the mission's mandate.⁶² CPAS could serve as a mission planning tool because of three critical

elements: its whole-of-system and integrated approach, its iterative methodology, and its interactive platform. While DPET initially developed CPAS as an impact-assessment tool, it quickly expanded the system's title to embrace the methodology's inherent planning components.⁶³

CPAS's most apparent impact on planning so far has been to help missions refine their own planning processes. For example, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) used CPAS to revise the strategic priorities and objectives formally documented in its mission plan, as the strategy articulated in its new CPAS results framework more accurately reflected the country context and the mission's potential impact.⁶⁴ MINUSCA used CPAS to revise its mission strategy through a bottom-up approach, fostering direct alignment between different planning documents.⁶⁵ The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission

Figure 3. Planning documents for UN peacekeeping operations⁶⁶



61 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

62 DPET, "CPAS Presentation," March 2022 (on file with author).

63 CPAS was originally called the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System, but its name was changed during the pilot period to the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System. Interview 24 with UN headquarters officials, May 2022.

64 Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022.

65 Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

66 Updated graphic shared by UN officials, October 2022. The original graphic can be found here: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "Policy: Planning and Review of Peacekeeping Operations," UN Doc. Ref. 2016.09, January 2017. This graphic may change following anticipated revisions to the policy in late 2022 or early 2023.

Box 3. MINUSMA's incorporation of CPAS into monitoring of quarterly planning processes

The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) currently uses its CPAS framework to help monitor progress toward quarterly priorities established by Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) El-Ghassim Wane. These quarterly priorities include targets on internal mission processes related to reform, coordination, and force effectiveness, which do not neatly overlap with the mission's CPAS results framework. MINUSMA's quarterly priorities are meant to provide higher-level strategic guidance to the mission, and the data indicators and targets were developed by the mission's sections based on what they understood to be a measure of success. MINUSMA's integrated strategic planning unit presents updates to mission leadership each quarter, drawing on analysis developed through CPAS to explain the underlying direction of each priority, as well as any recommendations from mission personnel that are already captured in the CPAS framework. This approach helps bring CPAS directly into the SRSG's decision-making processes and helps mission leadership make corresponding adjustments based on the existing targets.

in Mali (MINUSMA) used CPAS to help design indicators for its existing mission plan instead of developing a separate CPAS results framework, allowing the mission to improve the quality of its existing plan while avoiding duplicative work.⁶⁷ And MINURSO used CPAS to significantly revise its mission plan following the November 2020 collapse of the cease-fire between Morocco and the Polisario Front.⁶⁸

Nonetheless, skepticism about CPAS's value as a planning tool persists among mission personnel.⁶⁹ Part of this skepticism is rooted in systemic challenges with mission planning.⁷⁰ CPAS was not designed or intended to solve all of these issues, but the system is nonetheless critiqued because it is portrayed by headquarters to be a comprehensive planning tool.

DPET is working with other parts of DPO to mainstream CPAS across all other planning frameworks. For example, upcoming revisions to

the UN's 2013 Integrated Assessment and Planning Policy and DPO's 2016 Policy on Planning and Review of Peacekeeping Operations and Guidelines for the Mission Concept are expected to reference CPAS.⁷¹ One important policy change is that missions will be allowed to use their CPAS results frameworks as alternatives to formal mission plans, an acknowledgment that CPAS can provide a methodology and product that contribute to effective mission planning.⁷²

Skepticism about CPAS's value as a planning tool persists among mission personnel.

Another planning-related concern is that CPAS frameworks are not currently closely aligned with the UN's results-

based budget process (discussed in more detail below). Mission planning at the operational level depends considerably on how the mission's budget is allocated and how many outputs it must deliver. Individuals across MINUSCA's civilian sections, for example, repeatedly dismissed the utility of CPAS to their planning efforts because individual and section workplans did not depend on the analyses generated through CPAS.⁷³

67 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022.

68 Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

69 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 21 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

70 These challenges include limited timely and effective strategic guidance, gaps between planning guidance and methodologies and planning frameworks, and insufficiently staffed mission planning units. UN DPO "Systemic Issues in Peacekeeping in 2020: Note to Mr. LaCroix and Mr. Khare," April 2020, paras. 4–10 (on file with author).

71 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 24 with UN headquarters officials, May 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

72 The mission plan is the field-based and mission-specific strategy that links UN strategic guidance to the mission's political strategy and operations.

73 Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 32 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 39 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

Recommendations emerging through CPAS processes—and their effective implementation—provide a link between impact assessment and iterative planning. The CPAS online platform has a dedicated recommendations tracker that was built in response to a request from UNFICYP officials.⁷⁴ While officials in MINUSCA, MINURSO, UNMOGIP, and UNIFIL use the recommendations tracker, others (particularly in the large multi-dimensional missions) have not systematically embraced this functionality.⁷⁵

Mission personnel from MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNIFIL, UNFICYP, and UNMIK highlighted that recommendations derived through CPAS have improved aspects of their operations.⁷⁶ Some recommendations have encouraged missions to reconfigure their force postures, update communications strategies to counter disinformation, strengthen analytical capabilities, consolidate early-warning mechanisms, develop specialized trainings for national institutions, and review advisory support to host-state security forces. One official also highlighted CPAS's value as a platform for proposing recommendations that were free from perceived political constraints, as CPAS processes encouraged creative thinking and more organic collaboration.⁷⁷

However, missions are still learning how to effectively implement recommendations. One challenge is that mission leadership does not consistently communicate whether and how CPAS recommendations are implemented.⁷⁸ This can leave officials feeling disheartened about CPAS because they do not know whether their efforts have any

impact on the mission's direction, a particular challenge in MINUSCA.⁷⁹ One official stressed that poor communication and limited transparency around CPAS recommendations not only reduced internal accountability for the entire process but also prevented the mission from undertaking risk-based strategic planning.⁸⁰

Other challenges are linked to the inherent learning curve for using CPAS. One of the system's stand-out features is its bottom-up approach to generating recommendations on mission strategies and operations, a unique practice within UN peacekeeping. The draft recommendations that

CPAS has improved how different parts of peacekeeping operations align their goals and collaborate on operations.

emerge through this process vary in quality, impact, and relevance. Given CPAS's relative novelty in most missions, it can take personnel multiple cycles to feel

empowered to propose concrete changes to mission strategies and operations; some early recommendations have either confirmed existing strategies or suggested minor adjustments to internal operations.⁸¹ Each mission's organizational culture can also affect the implementation and monitoring of recommendations from both CPAS and other exercises like strategic reviews and assessments, evaluations, and audits.⁸²

Cross-cutting Issues

Even as each UN peacekeeping mission is at a different stage in operationalizing CPAS, certain cross-cutting issues have consistently had an impact—both positive and negative—on how missions understand, implement, and value CPAS. This section examines six of these issues in greater

⁷⁴ Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022.

⁷⁵ Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 18 with UN peacekeeping officials by email correspondence, May 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

⁷⁶ Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 18 with UN peacekeeping officials by email correspondence, May 2022; Written communication with UN headquarters officials, October 2022.

⁷⁷ Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

⁷⁸ This challenge is not unique to CPAS, as missions and headquarters have also tried various approaches to consolidating and monitoring implementation of recommendations from the Office for the Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership, strategic reviews and independent reviews of peacekeeping missions, the UN Board of Auditors, and the Fifth Committee. The integrated operational team for CAR developed a pilot project called MINDSIGHT to help MINUSCA monitor all these recommendations, but this did not last past the initial phases.

⁷⁹ Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 34 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 39 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

⁸⁰ Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022.

⁸¹ Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

⁸² Written communication with UN officials, October 2022.

detail: (1) mission-wide integration; (2) mission leadership and mission-wide ownership; (3) capacities and skill sets; (4) alignment with other peacekeeping planning tools; (5) thematic priorities; and (6) dynamics between UN headquarters and field missions.

Mission-wide Integration

CPAS has made a positive impact on mission-wide integration, improving how different parts of peacekeeping operations align their goals and collaborate on operations.⁸³ In early 2022, seven peacekeeping missions reported that their CPAS results frameworks or mission plans were “slightly improving” mission integration, while another four reported that they were “significantly improving” integration.⁸⁴ Although CPAS was not explicitly designed to improve mission-wide integration, its methodology and collaborative ethos encourages closer and structured cooperation among different mission components and sections.

The CPAS context-mapping and impact-assessment exercises most directly contribute to improved integration. These processes are some of the only mission activities that encourage substantive inputs from all uniformed, civilian, and mission-support components; they also provide space for mission staff to freely challenge one another’s assumptions, develop common analysis, and identify future opportunities.⁸⁵ This bottom-up and integrated approach challenges the prevailing organizational culture of siloed work and top-down management.⁸⁶ CPAS has also helped uniformed personnel engage their civilian counterparts more regularly, providing them with a better understanding of how their operations fit into missions’ overall strategy while systematizing previously informal modes of cooperation.⁸⁷

These benefits have played out differently from mission to mission. For example, MINUSMA’s September 2021 impact assessment helped the mission realize that three different sections were using separate early-warning databases; afterward, they unified these systems into a mission-wide mechanism.⁸⁸ One of MONUSCO’s recent assessments helped the mission’s police component better align parts of its training curricula with the approaches used by the mission’s protection of civilians advisers and spurred discussions about designing joint trainings.⁸⁹ And when MINUSCA refined its CPAS results framework in 2021, its electoral affairs division and gender section worked closely with UN Women to develop new CPAS indicators on women’s participation in the upcoming elections; these discussions quickly expanded into exploration of possibilities for structured programmatic collaboration.⁹⁰

Mission Leadership and Mission-Wide Ownership

Ownership and investment in CPAS vary from mission to mission. The working-level officials who use CPAS most frequently tend to value the system’s objectives and approaches. However, mission leadership and section chiefs are often more skeptical of CPAS.

Mission leadership plays a critical role in the CPAS process. It provides the strategic vision for the UN’s role in the country and how the mission should operationalize its mandate, thereby shaping the results framework’s priority areas and intended impacts. At a substantive level, mission leadership endorses the results framework and engages with its analyses and recommendations. At an operational level, it sets the tone for how other personnel engage with CPAS.⁹¹

83 CPAS is considered a key deliverable under the A4P+ Action Plan’s priority on strategic and operational integration.

84 UNISFA is the only mission that does not yet have a leadership-endorsed results-based framework to assess mission-wide performance. UN Peacekeeping, “A4P+ Baseline Report (November 2021–April 2022),” August 2022, p. 3 (on file with author).

85 Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

86 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

87 Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 40 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 44 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 46 with UN headquarters official, July 2022.

88 Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

89 Interview 46 with UN headquarters official, July 2022.

90 Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 42 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

91 Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

Mission leadership most readily advocates for CPAS when the system's products offer new information or analysis, recommend nuances or adjustments to existing approaches, or feed into daily decision-making processes and management styles.⁹² But some SRSGs and force commanders remain skeptical of CPAS and are concerned by the time and resources it requires.⁹³ DPET recognizes these challenges and is actively soliciting mission leaders' views on ways to improve CPAS.⁹⁴

Inconsistent leadership support reflects a broader “chicken-and-egg” dilemma. Leadership needs to signal its demand for CPAS to foster mission-wide buy-in, but this demand will only come once each mission's CPAS framework can add value to its long-term planning or daily decision-making processes.⁹⁵ However, each CPAS framework needs to sufficiently mature from a data and institutional perspective before it can generate quality analyses, and widespread mission buy-in is necessary to generate the data needed to reach this level of maturity.⁹⁶

Because CPAS is a mission-driven system, changes in senior leadership can either ignite momentum for it or hinder progress. In some cases, leadership changes have given CPAS focal points new openings to demonstrate the system's potential, while in others it has sapped momentum and led to counterproductive changes in existing planning processes.⁹⁷

Mid-level leadership, including chiefs of staff and section heads, also impacts how much support CPAS receives in each mission. Section heads participate in multiple CPAS processes and oversee missions' programmatic work. Personnel in

smaller missions like UNMIK, UNMOGIP, and MINURSO highlighted widespread support for CPAS, with leadership and section heads alike actively encouraging its development. By contrast, multiple officials stressed that various section heads do not consider CPAS relevant to their daily work.⁹⁸

Officials suggested multiple reasons for this gap. Some felt that the setup of mission sections—where one person coordinates all reporting and planning—silos other parts of the team from engaging with CPAS.⁹⁹ Others suggested that section heads shy away from CPAS because it might raise questions about their team's performance if the data does not show substantive progress.¹⁰⁰ Others noted that section heads require strong signals about CPAS from mission leadership to engage with the system.¹⁰¹

If left unresolved, these challenges could hasten a broader sense of fatigue with CPAS. Absent clear mission-wide ownership, CPAS could become perceived as just a data-collection tool. Many officials are fatigued by CPAS's heavy data-entry requirements—with one MINUSCA official characterizing it as “feeding the data beast”—and indicated that they did not feel any ownership over the system because other parts of the mission do not value it in the same way.¹⁰²

Capacities and Skill Sets

CPAS is a methodologically detailed and time-intensive process, and its early successes depend on officials being comfortable overseeing data analysis and M&E, as well as a baseline level of data literacy throughout the mission. Reducing CPAS's

92 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022.

93 Interview 13 with UN Peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 17 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

94 DPET has hired a consultant to independently survey senior-level officials in UN peacekeeping missions about their views and experiences with CPAS. DPET, “TOR: Senior Advisor for the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System,” June 2022 (on file with author).

95 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, July 2022.

96 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

97 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

98 Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 32 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 34 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 36 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

99 Interview 36 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 39 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

100 Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

101 Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 39 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

102 Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

operational burden and building new skill sets are thus among the biggest challenges confronting CPAS. While CPAS requires less day-to-day work as it gets up and running and mission personnel become familiar with it, there is often a steep learning curve for personnel who are not familiar with M&E or strategic-planning practices. One of the system's underlying benefits is that it introduces mission personnel to M&E approaches and encourages them to regularly test their assumptions and interrogate their impact. This laudable approach to fostering organizational change takes time; multiple officials shared that it took them between six months and one year before they felt comfortable with CPAS's objectives, terminology, and workflow.¹⁰³

Mission-wide impact assessment and context-mapping discussions often require multiple days of dedicated time, and CPAS reports can take weeks to finalize. These time demands are amplified by insufficient mission capacity for strategic planning, as civilian-led strategic planning teams are often understaffed and tiny relative to missions' other analytical sections (joint operations centers and joint mission analysis centers). CPAS focal points are often simultaneously coordinating mission-wide processes to support results-based budgeting, regular SG reports, and mission plans and concepts, leaving them overstretched.¹⁰⁴

In summer 2022, DPET instituted multiple changes to the CPAS methodology to make it "stronger and lighter where possible," responding to feedback from a June 2022 survey of mission personnel and the outcomes of DPET's annual workshop in

Absent clear mission-wide ownership, CPAS could become perceived as just a data-collection tool.

September 2021.¹⁰⁵ DPET now encourages missions to combine context-mapping discussions with discussions about the CPAS frameworks into one process and to conduct performance assessments less frequently while still collecting data monthly. Other changes are intended to increase training for mission personnel and share new practices with each mission's CPAS secretariat and implementation group.¹⁰⁶

Missions have varying levels of personnel with the skill sets needed to operationalize CPAS. Some missions had separate data-collection and reporting systems prior to CPAS, which helped build basic data literacy and reduce the learning curve. However, most civilian personnel working in peacekeeping missions do not have strong data-

analysis or M&E skills.¹⁰⁷ CPAS has helped expose more personnel to the foundations of how to structure and analyze quantitative data, making it an early accelerator

of the digital transformation of UN peacekeeping.

Multinational troop rotations can exacerbate capacity issues related to CPAS. Some uniformed officers quickly learn the CPAS methodology, as it is similar to reporting processes in their national militaries.¹⁰⁸ But frequent rotations of uniformed personnel (oftentimes every six or twelve months) impedes CPAS's implementation, as the steady turnover requires a continuous cycle of teaching and onboarding.¹⁰⁹ Unanticipated gaps in implementation can occur if rotation schedules are unexpectedly delayed, which can leave uniformed planning posts vacant for extended periods of time.¹¹⁰

103 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 35 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

104 Interview 20 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

105 UN DPET, "Streamlining CPAS," 2022 (on file with author); UN DPET, "Technical Readout of CPAS Annual Workshop, Part 1: Streamlining and Enhancing CPAS Across Peacekeeping Operations" (on file with author).

106 UN DPET, "Streamlining CPAS," 2022 (on file with author).

107 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping, May 2022; Interview 27 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 41 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; UN Peacekeeping, "Strategy for the Digital Transformation," pp. 16–17.

108 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 20 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

109 Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

110 Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

DPET is acutely aware of these challenges. It has developed extensive written and video onboarding material for mission personnel, hosts monthly online training sessions, convenes biweekly meetings with CPAS focal points, and operates a support hotline to answer individual queries.¹¹¹ Headquarters also consistently works with missions to develop the light methodology to alleviate capacity burdens, trying to make CPAS a tool that not only generates robust, reliable plans, data, and analyses but is also practical to implement. DPET also convenes an annual workshop with CPAS focal points, conducts surveys, and hosts ad hoc meetings to solicit feedback on the system and discuss emerging issues.¹¹²

Headquarters is trying to make CPAS a tool that not only generates robust, reliable plans, data, and analyses but is also practical to implement.

Alignment with Other Peacekeeping Tools

DPET has worked to align CPAS with other peacekeeping policies and tools. CPAS was developed in close consultations with missions, and DPET is prioritizing interoperability between multiple systems instead of making CPAS a single, all-encompassing tool.¹¹³ Nonetheless, CPAS is one of many competing political and policy priorities within DPO, suggesting that it must be continuously adapted to the organizational landscape.

Although CPAS and the A4P+ monitoring framework are distinct initiatives, reducing unintended duplication remains a clear area for progress.¹¹⁴ While both are data-driven frameworks measuring the performance and impact of UN peacekeeping, they take opposite approaches to a

similar objective. CPAS uses a mission-owned and highly contextualized approach to assess impact, which makes it difficult to compare missions' frameworks and indicators.¹¹⁵ By contrast, the A4P+ monitoring system requires all missions to report data on the same sixty-plus indicators, which provides a global overview of peacekeeping's impact but does not provide a contextualized or unified analysis of each mission's impact.¹¹⁶

The rollout of the A4P+ monitoring framework between late 2021 and early 2022 frustrated mission officials because they saw it as duplicative with CPAS. While DPO held preliminary conversations about using the CPAS platform to house A4P+, it ultimately developed a separate online reporting application.¹¹⁷ This led mission personnel (many of whom oversee reporting for both frameworks) to feel "inundated" by heavier reporting processes, especially since many indicators for these frameworks do not overlap.¹¹⁸ And despite DPO's efforts to consult widely during the development of the A4P+ framework, it is perceived as more headquarters-driven and headquarters-focused than CPAS. Some missions have tried to reduce duplication between the two systems. For example, UNIFIL has identified some indicators in its CPAS framework that feed into the A4P+ monitoring framework and has given them a dedicated tag to easily identify them.¹¹⁹

Bridging divides between CPAS and results-based budgeting (RBB) is a long-term endeavor for DPO. Although both frameworks are intended to help

111 Interview 6 with UN headquarters officials, April 2022; Interview 13 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 17 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 46 with UN headquarters official, July 2022.

112 Interview 3 with UN headquarters official, March 2022.

113 Interview 1 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 24 with UN headquarters officials, May 2022.

114 UN Peacekeeping, "A4P+ Baseline Report (November 2021–April 2022)."

115 During CPAS's pilot phase, DPET sought to develop a core set of indicators for all CPAS frameworks. However, this approach was abandoned in favor of the current, context-driven approach.

116 UN Peacekeeping, "A4P+ Baseline Report (November 2021–April 2022)," p. 1.

117 Interview 24 with UN headquarters officials, May 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022.

118 The A4P+ monitoring framework has approximately sixty indicators. Some missions, like UNTSO, have thirty-one total CPAS indicators. DPO's Integrated Assessment and Planning Unit (which oversees the A4P+ framework) automated data collection for approximately twenty-one of the sixty-one indicators. For the others, DPO tried to partially match the A4P+ indicators with those the mission was already collecting data on. See: Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022; Interview 19 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 20 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, May 2022.

119 Interview 11 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022.

articulate mission plans, they diverge in one critical way: RBB structures financial plans based on outputs, while CPAS anchors mission plans in intended impacts and outcomes. This misalignment leads mission personnel to assess their own performance and plan based on whether they meet their RBB outputs, not based on CPAS's impact analysis.¹²⁰

Operational considerations make alignment even more challenging. The RBB's structure and methodology are inflexible compared to those of CPAS because UN member states and the Office of the Controller closely govern it. The budget cycle for UN peacekeeping goes from July 1st to June 30th, and planning for the following year's budget begins in September of the present budget year. This makes it impossible for missions to plan based on current performance, and they instead develop their future budgets based on the outcomes of the previous financial cycle.

The UN is gradually trying to bridge this divide. The under-secretary-general for peace operations and the Office of the Controller issued instructions to missions permitting them to begin to use their CPAS results frameworks to inform their RBB systems.¹²¹ For the 2023–2024 budget period, missions have been asked to use “CPAS indicators to supplement or amend some RBB indicators of achievement” and “reflect outputs from the CPAS results framework in the RBB budget.”¹²² These new

One of CPAS's unexpected benefits has been to help DPO embrace a more structured and data-driven approach to tracking progress on thematic issues.

changes are expected to help missions better reflect their impact throughout their budgets and to “more clearly demonstrate the relationship between resources and results.”¹²³

As a new initiative, MINUSCA is attempting to articulate its CPAS results framework within the UN Umoja system's Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting tool, which allows the mission to connect all parts of its results framework to programmatic spending and individual performance.¹²⁴ As one official characterized it, “CPAS can be the living version of the RBB.”¹²⁵

Support to Thematic Priorities

One of CPAS's unexpected benefits has been to help DPO embrace a more structured and data-driven approach to tracking progress on thematic priorities, such as the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda and gender mainstreaming; peacekeeping transitions; and the response of UN peacekeeping missions to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DPO's Gender Unit has used CPAS to monitor progress against the fifteen core indicators of DPO's WPS accountability framework.¹²⁶ In 2021, the Gender Unit integrated the WPS accountability framework into the CPAS online platform.¹²⁷ Eight missions now report against the WPS accountability framework through CPAS.¹²⁸ This integration has reduced reporting burdens while allowing UN

120 Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 31 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 36 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 39 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 41 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

121 UN General Assembly, *Observations and Recommendations on Cross-Cutting Issues Related to Peacekeeping Operations: Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions*, UN Doc. A/76/760, May 3, 2022, para. 79; UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System, “Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework (IPPAF),” p. 58; Interview 24 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022; Written communication with UN officials, October 2022; UN DPET, “Guidance on Use of CPAS to Inform 2023/24 RBBs” (on file with author).

122 UN DPET, “Guidance on Use of CPAS to Inform 2023/24 RBBs” (on file with author).

123 UN Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and UN DPO, “Strengthening the Results-Based Budget Framework,” Field Operations Finance Division and DPET-CPAS Team, September 19, 2022 (on file with author).

124 Umoja is the UN's online enterprise platform for human resources, accounting and budgeting, and supply-chain management. It released this tool in December 2020. See: Umoja, “Umoja: New Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting Solution,” available at <https://umoja.un.org/news/umoja-new-integrated-planning-management-and-reporting-solution>; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, June 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

125 Interview 24 with UN headquarters officials, May 2022.

126 These indicators are grouped into four pillars: prevention, participation, protection, and management. For more information, see: UN DPO, “Gender Equality and Women, Peace, and Security Resource Package,” January 2020. Some missions also use CPAS to collect data on nine elective indicators. DPO “Gender Equality and Women,” p. 165; UN DPO, “Lessons Learned Document: Women, Peace and Security Accountability Framework,” Annex (on file with author).

127 UN DPO, “Lessons Learned Document,” pp. 3–4 (on file with author).

128 MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNFICYP, UNIFIL, UNISFA, UNMIK, and UNMISS.

officials to better evaluate trends and progress on WPS.¹²⁹ It has also created an entry point for DPO's Gender Unit and mission-based gender advisers to become more involved in shaping CPAS results frameworks, especially in preparing gender-disaggregated indicators.¹³⁰ And the dashboards, automated reports, and WPS-focused fact sheets have improved how missions communicate WPS-related performance to UN leadership and member states.¹³¹

DPO is exploring how CPAS could support missions undergoing transitions, with early efforts focused on MONUSCO. When refining its CPAS results framework in November 2021, MONUSCO identified which parts of the framework could inform reporting on its eighteen transition benchmarks.¹³² The mission also prepared a CPAS fact sheet for its June 2022 briefing to the UN Security Council that incorporated some elements related to the transition process. But CPAS will need to overcome multiple hurdles to become a systematic tool for transition planning. In particular, questions about data ownership and veracity become more prominent in situations where the mission is working closely not only with the UN country team but also with the host governments and local communities.¹³³ Nonetheless, there is clear support from UN headquarters and in several missions to expand on this potential.¹³⁴

CPAS's usefulness in tracking UN peacekeeping missions' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the potential for further innovation to use the system to address emerging issues. Following the pandemic's onset, DPET set up an interactive tracker within CPAS to help missions

monitor their response to the pandemic. MINUSMA was the only mission to take advantage of this feature, using it to better understand the spread of COVID-19 in Mali and monitor how the mission reprioritized its activities in response.¹³⁵ Other missions did not take advantage of this feature, as other parts of DPO and UN agencies, funds, and programs in peacekeeping settings had set up separate processes to monitor similar information.

These thematic uses of CPAS exemplify how its flexibility and structure can support UN peacekeeping beyond the core remit of the results framework. Other parts of DPO have also initiated preliminary discussions about whether CPAS would be an effective platform to support their efforts.

Dynamics between Headquarters and the Field

CPAS has been shaped by both positive and negative dynamics between UN headquarters and peacekeeping missions. CPAS is a mission-driven and mission-owned system backed by consistent support from headquarters, and DPET continuously adapts its methodology and the online platform based on missions' feedback.¹³⁶ This approach stands in stark contrast to previous UN initiatives that have either placed headquarters as the driver of all strategic processes or rolled out standardized tools that are incompatible with most missions' needs.¹³⁷ DPET's client-driven approach has fostered a tangible spirit of collaboration between CPAS focal points and headquarters.¹³⁸

129 Interview 12 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 15 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 18 with UN peacekeeping officials by email correspondence, May 2022; Interview 42 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

130 Interview 12 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 15 with UN headquarters official, May 2022.

131 Currently, CPAS's WPS platform generates five products: the data-collection platform, a WPS indicators dashboard, automated WPS reports, WPS operational progress reports, and WPS fact sheets. UN DPO, "Lessons Learned Document," pp. 3–4; Interview 12 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 15 with UN headquarters official, May 2022.

132 UN Security Council, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary General, UN Doc. S/2021/807, September 17, 2021, pp. 26–40, para. 69; Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 14 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022.

133 Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 14 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022.

134 Interview 10 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 14 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022.

135 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 25 with UN peacekeeping official, May 2022.

136 Interview 3 with UN headquarters officials, March 2022; Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, April 2022.

137 Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 38 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

138 Interview 5 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 9 with UN peacekeeping official, April 2022; Interview 16 with UN peacekeeping officials, May 2022; Interview 33 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022.

However, this orientation toward missions has had unintended drawbacks. DPET prioritized implementing CPAS in all missions and has only recently begun to systematically collaborate on CPAS with counterparts in other headquarters departments. Apart from DPET's CPAS team, headquarters entities, including each mission's integrated operational team, cannot see missions' results frameworks and the underlying data unless the missions grant them access.¹³⁹ So while headquarters officials may broadly support the system's objectives, they are unable to use CPAS-generated data or analysis in their day-to-day work.¹⁴⁰ This practical challenge negatively impacts substantive alignment and cohesion between headquarters and the field.

A gap has also emerged between UN headquarters' communication of CPAS's impact and potential and missions' use of the system in practice. Officials in both headquarters and missions shared the view that DPET has not effectively managed expectations around the system, because it has "overpromised" on what CPAS can deliver in the short term and the system is "trying to do everything."¹⁴¹ Part of this challenge is inherent to CPAS's long-term approach: the quality of its insights depends in part on a consistent dataset tracked over a long period of time, so during its preliminary phases it is not sufficiently mature to fulfill its full potential. Nonetheless, lofty expectations have placed officials who work on CPAS in a challenging position, as they need to simultaneously communicate tangible accomplishments while avoiding fatigue with the system due to unmet expectations.

There is also growing pressure from member states and senior UN leadership for missions to demonstrate concrete results from their implementation of CPAS. CPAS has come under increasing focus from UN member states on the Security Council and the General Assembly's Fifth

Committee, with detailed requests for a lessons-learned study and mission-specific implementation plans. Moreover, almost all of the DPET team working on CPAS at UN headquarters is funded through extrabudgetary financial support, leaving this valuable part of the CPAS infrastructure vulnerable to sudden changes in member-state interest or financial capacity. In addition, the implementation of CPAS features in prominent DPO accountability structures like the A4P+ monitoring framework and in senior leadership compacts.¹⁴² As the political imperative for CPAS to demonstrate progress grows, there will be a rush of interest and support in the short term that may not be sustainable if the tool does not meet these expectations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

CPAS is a worthwhile and imperfect experiment in UN peacekeeping that has challenged the organization to rethink how it assesses performance and undertakes strategic planning. The system emerged at a moment of heightened political pressure on UN peacekeeping missions, which are being asked to provide more rigorous evidence to substantiate their impact. That CPAS not only survived the past five years but also grew from a pilot project into an institutionalized part of UN peacekeeping is a testament to how its objectives and methods have resonated across different missions.

The UN's experience with CPAS offers several positive takeaways that could inform how future UN peacekeeping initiatives are conceptualized and implemented. First, the principles of context-sensitivity, flexibility, and adaptation that underpin CPAS should be at the core of future tools and processes. Even though missions like MINUSCA, UNMIK, and UNTSO have vastly different mandates and structures, all of them have found

¹³⁹ Some integrated operational teams have deployed their officials to participate in context-mapping or performance-assessment exercises and to help draft results frameworks.

¹⁴⁰ Interview 36 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 37 with UN peacekeeping official, July 2022; Interview 45 with UN headquarters official, July 2022; Interview 47 with UN headquarters officials, July 2022.

¹⁴¹ Interview 4 with UN headquarters official, March 2022; Interview 8 with UN peacekeeping officials, April 2022; Interview 21 with UN headquarters official, May 2022; Interview 28 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 29 with UN headquarters official, June 2022; Interview 45 with UN headquarters official, July 2022; Interview 47 with UN headquarters officials, July 2022.

¹⁴² In the fall of 2021, the under-secretary-general for peace operations sent a code cable to all missions clarifying that they would need to provide updates on the status of their CPAS frameworks during their annual reporting processes.

some value in CPAS because it is adaptable to their specific context, organizational culture, and operational needs.

Second, CPAS draws value from being a mission-anchored tool whose methodology is driven by integrated analysis by working-level personnel. This bottom-up and integrated approach allows all mission personnel to collaborate and interrogate missions' assumptions, analyses, and performance. Many officials who work with CPAS felt the positive ethos of the collaboration between headquarters and the field. Missions are continuously providing feedback to headquarters so the tool and its methodology can be adjusted to their specific needs.

And third, CPAS is designed to be an adaptive system that fosters continuous reflection and refinement. Many of the obstacles that mission personnel currently experience with CPAS are partially due to its novelty in most missions. A lengthy start-up period is required to set up CPAS and make a wide range of personnel more comfortable with the process. CPAS also depends on collecting accurate data over an extended period so that it can show consistent trends or changes in key indicators. As a result, missions go through unavoidable periods of trial and error during the first year of CPAS. But as missions gain experience with CPAS and begin to draw on lessons from other missions, the tool becomes more refined.

UN officials will also need to address persistent challenges with CPAS if it is to become a long-term feature of UN peacekeeping. First, mission ownership over CPAS needs to expand beyond those who work most closely with the tool, including to mission leadership and middle management. But fostering ownership is not just a matter of providing induction trainings and sample products. Instead, it requires officials to have the skills and empowerment to draw on CPAS for analyses and to feed its products directly into leadership's decision-making processes. It also requires mission leadership to clearly communi-

cate the structure, scope, and frequency of data and analyses it needs to inform its decisions, and the rest of the mission needs to adapt existing processes to provide this. Ultimately, CPAS can only inform the high-quality analysis and narratives required to drive political engagement and shape decision-making with the buy-in of mission leadership.

Second, CPAS will not be sustainable if it requires missions to devote significant time and resources to the process. This is among the greatest concerns for mission leadership and personnel, and UN headquarters has worked with them to reduce time frames and minimize duplicative reporting processes. Although part of this time crunch can be attributed to CPAS's extended start-up phase, these constraints have been felt by all missions, including those that have worked with CPAS since 2018. UN member states' structural underinvestment in missions' civilian planning capacity has only exacerbated these concerns. DPET will need to strike a delicate balance between the time commitments it can realistically ask of missions and the quality of the analyses produced.

Third, CPAS will need to become more transparent, inclusive, and outward-facing to improve both its quality and its impact. The initial rollout and start-up phase naturally gravitated toward the missions to secure their ownership over the process. But outside of a few new data sources, there is little external engagement with CPAS. This means that there is no outside feedback about the design of each mission's framework, the indicators and data sources they use to assess their impact, or the assessments and conclusions missions reach based on the data. This practice reinforces a persistent trend across UN peacekeeping where the UN is perceived to grade its own homework.

With CPAS now operational in all peacekeeping operations, UN officials can grapple with a new cycle of ideas and challenges. The following recommendations are intended to help missions, headquarters, and member states address these questions and sustain CPAS into the future.

The principles of context-sensitivity, flexibility, and adaptation that underpin CPAS should be at the core of future UN tools and processes.

Recommendations for UN Peacekeeping Operations

Include CPAS-specific information in handover notes: In the short term, all civilian and uniformed personnel who hold CPAS reporting responsibilities should include information about this work in their handover notes when leaving their position. They could include information about the process their office used to collect data for each indicator, the parameters for measuring and interpreting the data before entering it into CPAS, the structure of any qualitative analysis accompanying data entries, and challenges and opportunities for each indicator or the entire results framework.

Share the topline of CPAS frameworks and impact assessments with UN headquarters: In the short term, missions should give permission to select UN DPO entities to regularly view (but not edit) their CPAS results frameworks and visual dashboards. Missions should also circulate copies of the leadership-endorsed summary impact assessment reports to these entities. This practice would improve awareness in headquarters of how missions evaluate their own performance and reduce misunderstandings of CPAS's utility and limitations. It would also allow missions and headquarters to better harmonize how they collaborate on internal and external reporting processes.

Improve the design, tracking, and communication of CPAS recommendations: In the medium term, all UN peacekeeping missions should systematically track the recommendations that emerge from the CPAS process. When preparing CPAS recommendations for senior leadership, each mission's CPAS secretariat and CPAS implementation group should suggest how to prioritize the recommendations and add risk-assessment criteria to each recommendation.¹⁴³ Missions should send out internal memos biannually that communicate the implementation status of all recommendations.

Provide detailed overviews of CPAS impact

assessments in the secretary-general's (SG) reports to the Security Council: In the medium term, peacekeeping missions should use their regular reports to the Security Council to share more detailed information about their CPAS frameworks and impact assessments. While all missions provide summaries of CPAS's implementation in their annual budget reports, only a few have provided process-related updates in their SG reports, and none have provided substantive summaries.¹⁴⁴ As missions' CPAS frameworks mature, they should provide more detailed information in at least one SG report per year about how the mission has assessed its performance, specific recommendations endorsed by mission leadership, and refinements made to the CPAS framework.

Broaden CPAS participation to the UN country team and other UN entities in the country or region: In the medium term, missions should continue expanding CPAS processes to include relevant UN entities in the country and the immediate region. Missions should systematically include data collected by other UN entities in their CPAS framework and include them in discussions around their context mapping or impact assessment. Where possible, missions should align CPAS indicators with indicators featured in the UN sustainable development cooperation framework. While the agencies, funds, and programs in the UN country team are obvious counterparts, missions should also explore how other peacekeeping missions or special political missions with overlapping mandates or areas of operation could feed into these conversations.

Incorporate local views of mission performance and impact into CPAS: In the medium term, missions should engage host-country stakeholders on CPAS and incorporate the views of community leaders, representatives of civil society and NGOs, and local and national government officials into their analyses. Whether through stand-alone sessions or existing processes (both CPAS and non-

¹⁴³ The risk assessment should align with existing UN policies and procedures for risk assessment such as the risk matrix used in the UN's Security Risk Management Manual. See: UN Security Management System, "Chapter IV: Security Management," in *UNSMS Security Policy Manual*, April 18, 2016, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ MONUSCO, UNIFIL, MINURSO, and MINUSCA. See: UN Security Council, *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2022/503, June 22, 2022; UN Security Council, *Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006) during the Period from 26 October 2021 to 18 February 2022: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2022/214, March 11, 2022; UN Security Council, *Situation Concerning Western Sahara: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2021/843, October 1, 2021; UN Security Council, *Central African Republic: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2021/571, June 16, 2021.

CPAS), missions should introduce national stakeholders to how they interpret their mandate and evaluate their performance, share topline findings from the analysis, and solicit feedback on the pillars of each mission's CPAS framework and areas for improvement. Missions should also explore ways to incorporate national perceptions of the UN's performance into the data they collect through CPAS. The systematic inclusion of national perspectives in CPAS can help strengthen the UN's legitimacy and refine its assessment of its performance. Engaging with these stakeholders may also help missions set expectations about what they can do and counter misinformation about them.

Recommendations for UN Headquarters

Publish CPAS fact sheets on mission websites: In the short term, DPO should publish all finalized mission fact sheets on the UN peacekeeping website. These resources are effective tools to communicate missions' priorities and performance. If they are made available to the diplomatic community, they should also be available to the wider UN community. In 2020, DPO's Information Management Unit set a precedent for this practice when it published fact sheets for some missions, although these did not include visuals generated from CPAS data.¹⁴⁵

Incorporate CPAS exercises and assessments into senior leadership training exercises: In the medium term, DPET should begin integrating CPAS-related material into training sessions, briefings, and inductions for senior mission leadership (both civilian and uniformed). This course material should introduce these officials to the CPAS methodology and platform, outline its advantages and limitations, and provide concrete examples of how senior leadership in other missions has used analysis and recommendations from CPAS in their decision-making. DPET should also work with the Integrated Training Service to incorporate sample CPAS analyses and products into scenario-based training exercises for mission leadership.

Expand training materials on data analysis and visualization: In the medium term, DPET should expand its portfolio of training material to build the capacity of mission personnel to analyze data and create visuals from the CPAS online platform and other relevant data sources. This would help mission personnel feel more comfortable serving as end-users of CPAS and empower them to more systematically engage with CPAS to inform their daily work. This would also help DPET push back against the prevailing perception of CPAS as primarily a data-entry tool.

Align CPAS with other UN planning and reporting processes: In the long term, DPET should accelerate its collaboration with other parts of DPO and the wider UN system to align CPAS with existing policies, processes, and tools for mission-wide data collection, planning, and impact assessment. Progress could be made in two areas: ensuring that guidance provided by DPO and the Office of the Controller is universally implemented and well understood by both missions and member states; and gradually linking CPAS results frameworks with section, team, and individual workplans. These steps are foundational to making CPAS a more relevant tool for mission planning at the individual and section level and to helping all parts of a mission understand how they contribute to mandate delivery.

Recommendations for Member States

Provide consistent political support and attention to CPAS: In the short term, UN member states should continue to politically support and scrutinize the implementation of CPAS. Security Council members could encourage discussions about CPAS's implementation during DPO's annual briefing on peacekeeping performance (pursuant to Resolution 2378) or during a dedicated Arria-formula meeting on CPAS. The Security Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations could also convene a session on CPAS during the 2023 calendar year to gain more insight into CPAS's technical implementation. Member states on the General Assembly's

¹⁴⁵ UN DPO and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Information Management Unit, "UNMISS Mission Fact Sheet," January 21, 2020; Information Management Unit, "MINURSO Mission Fact Sheet," January 21, 2020; Information Management Unit, "UNDOF Mission Fact Sheet," January 21, 2020; Information Management Unit, "MINUSCA Mission Fact Sheet," January 21, 2020.

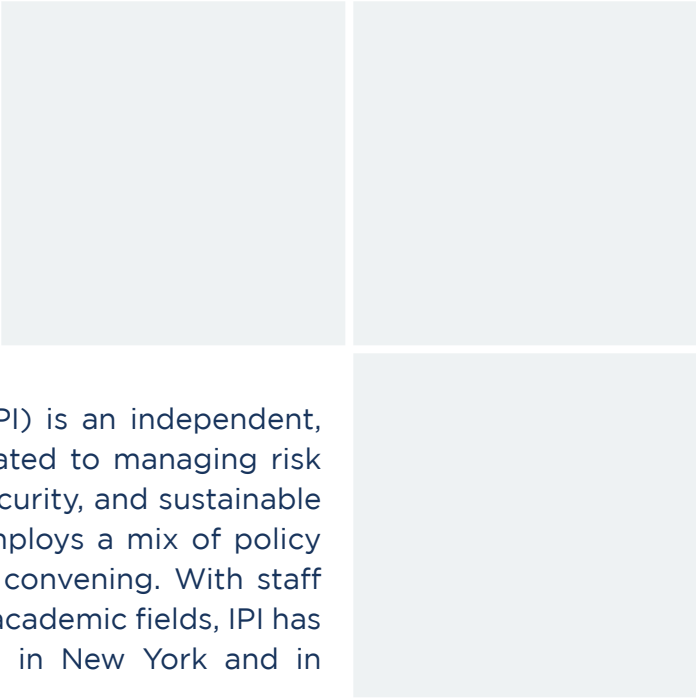
Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) can also support this process by requesting a dedicated briefing on CPAS in advance of the 2023 substantive session. They could also expand upon existing language in the C-34's most recent substantive report by including a provision that DPO should "encourage missions to systematically align their CPAS results frameworks with other mission reporting and planning tools."¹⁴⁶

Increase funding for civilian planning and data-management posts: In the medium term, UN member states on the General Assembly's Fifth Committee should approve additional posts in UN peacekeeping operations for civilian experts in planning and data management. These posts would not only help missions more effectively support the implementation of CPAS but also reduce the burden of extensive planning and reporting tasks that fall on sections that are understaffed in most missions. They would also help peacekeeping operations implement many of the initiatives set out in the UN Data Strategy and the secretary-general's Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping.

Include CPAS in UN peacekeeping curricula at national peacekeeping and police training centers: In the medium term, member states that host national or international peacekeeping training centers should request support from DPET to integrate introductory trainings on CPAS into specialized training materials for peacekeepers. This would have the long-term benefit of reducing the learning curves that uniformed officers may face when assuming an assignment as a CPAS reporting officer.

Pledge additional funding for CPAS and for mission strategic-planning capacity at the 2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference: In the medium term, member states could consider including political, financial, and capacity support for CPAS in their pledges at the 2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in Ghana. Specific pledges could include financial contributions to DPET to sustain CPAS's implementation, financial support to individual missions that is earmarked for planning-related projects or functions, or the seconding of uniformed personnel with planning expertise to UN peacekeeping missions with planning expertise.

¹⁴⁶ UN Doc. A/75/19, para. 100.



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