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## Guidelines

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# Protection of Civilians: Implementing Guidelines for the Military Component of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

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## **DPO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS: IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES FOR THE MILITARY COMPONENT OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

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### **A. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE**

- 1. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework and practical guidance for the implementation of military tasks required to fulfil the Protection of Civilians (POC) mandates in peacekeeping operations.
- 2. Protection of Civilians is a strategic objective mandated by the UN Security Council in peacekeeping operations. Since the first edition drafted in 2015, UN peacekeeping practices on POC has continued to evolve, reflecting operational and contextual realities. This update complements and builds upon official policies and guidelines in UN peacekeeping, including the Policy on POC (2023) (hereafter referred to as the “POC Policy”) and ‘The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Handbook (2020)’.

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### **B. SCOPE**

- 3. These guidelines apply to all military personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations with POC mandates. Key personnel of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), including decision-makers, planners, and trainers, will find these guidelines useful for the planning and preparation (including training) of contingents for UN peacekeeping operations.

4. These guidelines focus on the role of the military component in a UN peacekeeping operation in protecting civilians from all threats of physical violence. This includes violence that is occurring and violence that has a realistic possibility of occurrence, including sexual violence, from all perpetrators, including non-state or state actors.
  5. These guidelines apply specifically to the mandate to protect civilians. However, the implementation of other protection-related mandated tasks must be aligned and complementary. The planning considerations described in these guidelines must consider the impact on and the impact from other protection mandates and tasks on military operations and activities.
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## C. PROCEDURES

### C.1. Defining POC Mandates in UN Peacekeeping Operations

#### 6. POC Mandate Definition

- 6.1. Where mandated, POC is a priority mandate in UN peacekeeping defined as: **“without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the host state, integrated and coordinated activities by all civilian and uniformed mission components to prevent, deter or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians within the mission’s capabilities and areas of deployment through the use of all necessary means, up to and including deadly force”**.<sup>1</sup>
- 6.2. As directed by the Security Council, POC must be prioritized in all decisions regarding the allocation, deployment and use of available mission capacity and resources.<sup>2</sup>
- 6.3. The POC mandate of UN peacekeeping operations occurs alongside broader UN efforts and is a common objective shared by all UN actors in order to ensure protection underpins all UN action. Within peacekeeping, in addition to the POC mandate, there are other protection mandates such as the mandate to promote and protect human rights, specialized mandates such as child protection and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). The POC mandate is also fundamentally linked to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas. Understanding and interpreting the scope of the POC mandate requires consideration of the interaction and complementarity of these other protection mandates, tasks and efforts.
- 6.4. In planning and executing mandated POC tasks, the military component must understand that POC encompasses protection from threats of violence in any form which is likely to lead to death or serious physical injury of civilians, regardless of the source of the threats. This can include, but is not limited to, threats posed by non-state armed groups, self-defence groups, host state, foreign defence and security forces, other state agents, and state-sponsored armed actors (including other security personnel), as well as violent extremist groups.
- 6.5. Any form of violence likely to lead to death or physical injury of civilians includes both direct and indirect attacks; attempts to kill, torture, maim, rape and other forms of sexual

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<sup>1</sup> See the POC Handbook (2020), Section 1.2.

<sup>2</sup> S/RES/1894 (2009).

violence and abuse including sexual slavery; forcibly displace, starve, pillage, abduct or arbitrarily detain, kidnap, disappear or traffic persons; forced marriages; or the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. It also includes harm associated with the presence of explosive ordnance, including mines, explosive remnants of war, and improvised explosive devices. When protecting civilians, threats include both violence against civilians which has materialised and is ongoing, and violence that has the realistic potential to occur. Thus, a threat does not need to be imminent, unless specified in the related Security Council mandate and subsequent mission-specific rules of engagement (ROE).

- 6.6. While executing tasks related to the POC mandate, the military component must understand the impact POC tasks have on other related protection mandates (e.g., human rights, CRSV, child protection). All relevant mission components should be involved in the identification and gender-responsive analysis of potential constraints, under the supervision of mission leadership. It is essential that the military component coordinate and work with civilian and police protection units as well as other entities with complementary roles such as gender units and Human Rights Components to prevent and mitigate any harm caused to civilians as a result of the military's operations, presence or mandated activities.

## 7. Protection Framework

- 7.1. **International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHL).** POC is based in international human rights, humanitarian and refugee laws and reflects the desire of the Security Council to protect civilians from harm in any situation of armed conflict. Therefore, POC is a core element of UN mission mandates to protect rights and promote obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. As such, the human rights roles and responsibilities<sup>3</sup> of military peacekeeping personnel provide fundamental support for implementing POC mandates. Effective prevention and response to threats of violence requires that military peacekeepers establish close and effective operational links with POC Advisers or Focal Points, Human Rights Components, and other relevant protection actors within the mission.
- 7.2. **Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.** The promotion and protection of Human Rights is a core responsibility of all UN personnel and entities. The military component has an important role to play in the successful implementation of the mission's human rights mandate. For example, they provide assistance to human rights personnel who conduct investigations, have monitoring and reporting tasks, provide mentoring, advice, or advocacy to advance human rights, including in the context of security sector reform processes. All relevant action in this area shall be undertaken in coordination and consultation with the mission's Human Rights Component and the Gender Advisory Unit.
- 7.3. **Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV).** The military component in a peacekeeping operation must protect persons against sexual violence. CRSV refers to any form of sexual violence which occurs in the context of conflict, such as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity against women, men, girls, boys, or gender-diverse people. While most recorded cases of CRSV are against women and girls, given their position of often increased

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<sup>3</sup> See Policy on Human Rights in United Nations Peace Operations and Political Missions, 1 September 2011. ([http://ppdb.un.org/Policy Guidance Database/POLICY Human Rights in Peace Operations and Political Missions.pdf](http://ppdb.un.org/Policy%20Guidance%20Database/POLICY%20Human%20Rights%20in%20Peace%20Operations%20and%20Political%20Missions.pdf))

vulnerability in conflict and post-conflict situations, men and boys, as well as gender-diverse people can also be victims of CRSV. Often, armed actors use sexual violence as a tactic of war to traumatize or to displace communities. All relevant planning and actions in this area shall be undertaken in coordination and consultation with the mission's Women Protection Adviser, the Gender Advisory Unit, Child Protection Unit, and Human Rights Component (HRC).

7.4. **Child Protection.** Children are particularly vulnerable in situations of conflict. The military component in a peacekeeping operation has a responsibility regarding the protection of children. Security concerns and threats to children often extend to the following grave violations: (1) killing or maiming of children; (2) recruitment or use of children in armed forces and groups; (3) attacks against schools or hospitals; (4) rape or other forms of sexual violence against children; (5) abduction of children; and (6) denial of humanitarian access for children<sup>4</sup>. A child's need for protection must be considered at all levels of command when planning, coordinating and executing tasks. All relevant action in this area shall be undertaken in coordination and consultation with the mission's Child Protection Advisers, Women Protection Advisers and Gender Advisers.

7.5. **Gender Equality and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.** The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda encompasses a set of UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) starting with UNSCR 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions that promote gender equality in peacebuilding and peacekeeping and recognize the vital role of women in international peace and security. The WPS Agenda consists of four pillars: prevention; participation; protection; and relief and recovery. The resolutions repeatedly emphasize the need for better integration of women's rights and gender perspectives in peace operations.<sup>5</sup> Peacekeeping personnel should have a complete understanding of the full range of threats in order to adequately respond to them. Gender-responsive conflict analysis will facilitate broadening the contextual understanding of threats and facilitate gender-responsive POC.

7.6. Peace and security can only be achieved and sustained if all members of society, regardless of gender, social or cultural identity, have equal rights and opportunities in terms of protection, access to resources and services, participation in decision-making, and other basic rights.

## 8. POC Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. **Host State Responsibilities.** The host state bears the primary responsibility to protect civilians, consistent with its obligations under international human rights and, humanitarian and refugee law. This highlights the importance of supporting and if needed, strengthening the protection efforts and capacity of the host state. It does not diminish the authorization for the mission to act independently to protect civilians, when the host state is unwilling or unable to do so, or where government actors themselves pose a threat to civilians.

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<sup>4</sup> For further information on the '6 Grave Violations against Children,' see SC/RES/1612 (2005) on monitoring and reporting on grave violations committed against children in times of armed conflict.

<sup>5</sup> The WPS UNSCRs 1325 (2000), 2242 (2015) and 2493 (2019) reiterate the need for peace operations to integrate women's needs and gender perspectives into their work, while SCR 2122 (2013) specifically calls on missions to address the security threats and protection challenges faced by women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings.

- 8.2. **POC is a whole-of-mission responsibility.** Ensuring the protection of civilians requires a comprehensive approach, which involves integrated planning and coordination of all relevant mission components. Key to an integrated approach is a joint threat assessment, integrated analysis, structured and regular information sharing, and planning at all levels, in line with the mission's POC strategy. All components must mainstream, prioritize and coordinate gender-responsive<sup>6</sup> POC activities in their plans, activities, training, monitoring and evaluation. The comparative advantages of different components and sections, which may have different modes of engagement and types of expertise, must be leveraged through constant coordination and integration. Additionally, the mission's POC Adviser should be systematically included in the mission's integrated information-sharing, planning and analysis mechanisms and fora.
- 8.3. **Active duty to protect.** Activities to protect civilians must be planned, deliberate, and continuous. All mission components must actively work to prevent, pre-empt, and respond to threats to civilians, and not simply react to attacks. This includes dialogue and engagement with a broad range of actors and groups, including women networks and leaders, create a presence in areas under threat, creating a credible deterrent and proactive posture, and supporting national, sub-national and local protection capacities.
- 8.4. **Planning.** Activities to protect civilians must assess the full range of – potentially differing - threats and their specific implications to each part of the population, which includes women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, those economically disenfranchised, ethnic, political or religious minorities<sup>7</sup>. Planning should also take into consideration the consequences of any action on each part of the population. Only when threats are considered, and appropriately addressed for each group can benefits be considered equally, so that inequality is not perpetuated. It is paramount to ensure a “Do-No-Harm-Approach”, which assesses potential harm and implements measures to mitigate it.
- 8.5. **Advisers or Focal Points.** Civilian POC Advisers or Focal Points are deployed to missions with POC mandates. They are responsible for supporting mission leadership on POC analysis, planning and response, and coordinating POC mandate implementation, including liaison and engagement with the UN Country Team (UNCT) and humanitarian protection actors. They advise how the mission can assist national authorities in strengthening POC capacities and support mission components (including military and police) to ensure that POC concerns are adequately reflected in mission operations. POC Advisers are also responsible for facilitating the development and implementation of the mission POC strategy and related guidance for the protection of civilians by all components.
- 8.6. **Conduct and Discipline of UN Peacekeeping Personnel.** Peacekeepers must uphold the highest standards of integrity enshrined in the UN Charter. The view of the UN Peacekeeper by host populations as protectors is crucial to peacekeeping's success. In this respect, the UN policy of ‘zero tolerance’ regarding Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

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<sup>6</sup> A gender-responsive approach to planning and operation integrates gender perspectives in analysis (of situations/contexts/dynamics- mapping processes); factors all aspects of gender/sex-disaggregated data (women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, those economically disenfranchised, ethnic, political or religious minorities) and considers how gender shapes and informs the trends and analysis influences interventions. This also includes the composition and representation of both genders in actual response measures. Gender responsiveness is required by everyone, in every situation, and in every context.

<sup>7</sup> “Each part of the population” includes women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, those economically disenfranchised, ethnic, political or religious minorities, if not mentioned otherwise.

remains a key demand on the behaviour of peacekeepers at all levels. Other forms of misconduct, including sexual harassment against other peacekeepers, is also not tolerated. It acts as a breeding ground for other misconduct and can significantly jeopardize performance and therewith the ability and credibility of UN Peacekeeping personnel to protect civilians.

- 8.7. **Humanitarian and Development Actors.** UN agencies and NGOs that undertake a broad range of Humanitarian and development activities to protect civilians are also entitled to protection under IHL during armed conflict. This includes where groups and individuals are under sanctions or counter-terrorism measures are present. A systematic, close coordination and information-sharing process including on women, peace and security with these UN agencies and NGOs is essential. It should follow established mechanisms, i.e., the Protection Working Group (PWG), the relevant UN Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination platforms and those required under the UN Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP). Humanitarian actors rely upon the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence to discharge their mandates effectively and safely. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a clear “distinction” between their role and the role of political and military actors, during peacekeeping operations.

## 9. Military Roles and Responsibilities related to POC

- 9.1. **Military Personnel.** All military personnel are responsible for integrating protection mandates into their work and it is the responsibility of every military person to plan and execute POC operations in a way that considers how each part of the population may be affected differently by the conflict and subsequent UN actions. This includes recognising the varied gender roles and norms held by women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people in peace, conflict and post conflict situations, and how these shape individuals’ vulnerabilities, as well as their capacities to respond to threats.
- 9.2. **Focal Points.** Military focal points are appointed to ensure all protection tasks are integrated into the work of the military component on different levels. Through coordination with other relevant mission actors, focal points create synergies between all efforts directed toward the implementation of protection mandates.
- 9.3. **Deputy Force Chief of Staff Operations.** The coordination of the military’s participation in the various collaboration mechanisms for the implementation of the POC mandate is the responsibility of the Deputy Force Chief of Staff Operations (DFCOS Ops) at the FHQ level<sup>8</sup> and the Sector/ Battalion Chief of Staff at the Sector/Unit level, unless specifically otherwise designated.
- 9.4. **Military Protection Adviser.** For protection mandates other than POC, the military component should assign military focal points at the FHQ/SHQ/Battalion level and – if necessary - military units. These Focal Points are to foster collaboration and should also work as advocates to ensure the integration of the Child Protection, CRSV and Human Rights mandates within the work of the FHQ/SHQ/Battalion or unit.

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<sup>8</sup> For those missions without a DFCOS level, the coordination responsibility is with the Force Chief of Staff (FCOS).

9.4.1. Instead of assigning up to three different military focal points, it is recommended to appoint one dedicated Military Protection Adviser (MPA) at the FHQ/SHQ level and at Battalion level.

9.4.2. The MPA is to support the military leadership in coordinating the other protection activities (other than POC) and to establish routine working relationships with stakeholders to streamline information exchange related to protection issues and to ensure coordination of relevant stakeholders within the military component (such as U-3, U-5, U-9).

9.4.3. The MPA provides focus, advice, and guidance to the military leadership on UNSCRs, UN and mission-specific SOPs, rules and regulations related to the Child Protection, CRSV and Human Rights mandates, in support of and in close coordination with those responsible for the implementation of the POC mandate (usually the DFCOS Ops).

9.5. **Military Gender Adviser.** The Military Gender Adviser (MGA) is responsible for coordinating and guiding the implementation of the UNSCR mandates on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and cross-cutting gender-related resolutions in the work of UN military components. The MGA supports the implementation of these resolutions at the operational as well as the tactical level. In this regard, the MGA advises the military component on how to integrate a gender perspective into planning, staff work, and operations. The MGA is responsible to identify, respond and advise on the impact of the work of military peacekeepers on the different groups in the local population to ensure that security concerns, needs and priorities are adequately and equitably addressed throughout all phases of peacekeeping operations.

## 10. Operational Concept: Three Tiers of an Integrated POC Approach

10.1. UN peacekeeping operations mandated to protect civilians have a range of instruments and approaches at their disposal. These are categorized under three mutually accommodating and reinforcing tiers and are implemented simultaneously and strategically per the mission mandate, mission phase, and the situation on the ground. There is no inherent hierarchy or sequencing between the tiers. The POC mandate is implemented at all levels of the mission and all components have a role to play in each of the tiers. Action under all three tiers is integrated through the overall mission's POC strategy and resulting plans.

10.2. Across all three tiers, UN peacekeepers utilize both armed and unarmed approaches to protect civilians. Unarmed Approaches to Protection (UAP) include the full range of protection activities undertaken by civilian and uniformed personnel that do not involve the projection of military power, or the threat or use of force<sup>9</sup>. UAP should be carried out as part of a larger comprehensive and integrated approach that includes high level political engagement and the threat or use of force by uniformed peacekeepers.

10.3. **Tier I. Protection through Dialogue and Engagement.** Dialogue and engagement are effective tools for preventing and mitigating threats to civilians and may reduce the need for reliance on physical protection by the mission. This can include

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<sup>9</sup> These can include conflict resolution activities at national and local level; human rights monitoring, investigations, reporting and capacity building; engagement with armed actors to persuade them to cease or at least mitigate harm to civilians; protection through unarmed presence to deter violence against civilians; capacity building of protection actors, including state security forces and civil society; as well as other related activities.



political interventions by the mission leadership or tactical level actions to engage local leaders, including traditional, religious, and women leaders, as well as relevant stakeholders, communities, potential perpetrators and parties to the conflict, including non-state armed actors. Tier 1 reinforces the primacy of politics in resolving conflicts, and the role of peacekeeping in the de-escalation of tensions and pursuit of sustainable political solutions.

10.4. Dialogue and engagement are carried out by all mission components (civilian and uniformed) at the local and national levels. The military component can play a supportive role in this tier. However, as the primary responsibility for POC lies with the host state, a crucial role for the military component is to engage with state security forces at all levels to promote the protection of civilians and to encourage that alleged perpetrators are held accountable. The military component should also engage with armed actors, including state and non-state actors, to advocate for them to cease or minimize harm to civilians and respect International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law. All UN support to non-UN security forces, including in the context of fulfilling the protection of civilians' mandate, must be implemented in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces (HRDDP).

10.5. **Tier II. Provision of Physical Protection.** This tier encompasses activities by all mission components (civilian and uniformed) to physically protect civilians, whether through protective presence, facilitating safe passage or refuge, interposition or finally the show or use of force by the uniformed components to prevent, deter, pre-empt, mitigate, and respond to situations in which civilians are under threat of violence. This includes implementing dedicated protection activities to meet the different and specific needs of and risks faced by each part of the population. Tier II is usually the primary focus for military components.

10.6. If civilians are under the threat of violence, a proactive response may be required, including but not limited to:

- Show of force as a deterrent;
- Inter-positioning between the (armed) actors who are posing the threat and civilians under the threat of violence;
- Military action directly against armed actors with a clear hostile intent to harm civilians.

10.7. In missions with a POC mandate, and in line with the mission-specific ROEs, the use of force, up to and including deadly force should be used to protect civilians, even if it is targeted against host state security forces.

10.8. To prevent and deter threats to civilians, uniformed mission components must have a proactive posture and mindset. UN military units, often in concert with UN police, must act swiftly and decisively, in accordance with mission-specific ROEs and use the requisite force within capabilities and areas of responsibility, when preventive mechanisms of the mission and/or the host state's security forces fail to protect civilians, or are a source of the threat.

10.9. Steps to mitigate harm to civilians should be undertaken taken before, during and after the implementation of operations. Before an operation, a full risk assessment must

be conducted and contingency plans for the protection of civilians developed in systematic consultation with the POC Adviser and relevant civilian components and, where appropriate, host state authorities and UN and non-UN humanitarian actors

10.10. Mitigation measures are particularly important in relation to operations that may include the use of force. Mission leaders should ensure that rigorous measures are taken to prevent all instances of direct or indirect harm, through the establishment of tools, mechanisms and processes. These should be coordinated at the FHQ and SHQ levels to systematically:

- Identify how the peacekeeping operation's presence and activities could affect civilians prior to the execution of an activity or operation.
- Take steps to try to prevent or mitigate the harm that could result from the activity or operation.
- Track the positive and negative impact of the operation on the civilian population.
- Take steps to integrate lessons learned to prevent or mitigate future harm.

10.11. **Tier III. Establishing a Protective Environment.** UN Peacekeeping Operations undertake a range of activities to help establish an environment that enhances safety and supports the rights of civilians. These activities usually are programmatic and designed with committed resources for peacebuilding and conflict prevention/resolution objectives. In Tier III, the military component can play a key role or provide support to civilian or police-led activities. Examples include the promotion of the Rule of Law and Security Sector Reform through capacity building by uniformed personnel to their counterparts in the host state security forces and the implementation of community violence reduction programmes. Efforts undertaken for the restoration and extension of state authority (such as rehabilitation or construction of police stations, courthouses, or prisons), the survey and clearance of explosive ordnance, the prevention of illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons and the creation of conditions conducive to the return, reintegration, or resettlement of IDPs or refugees are also considered parts of the Tier III approach to POC.

## 11. Operational Concept: The POC Response Phases

11.1. POC requires actions with both short- and long-term focus, based on analysis of the operating environment. The analysis should include the phase of the conflict, relevant legal frameworks, the mission's mandate, POC strategy and associated ROEs, as well as the nature of the threat, informed by gender-responsive conflict analyses.

11.2. The strategic approach to POC, and the three tiers, are implemented in four phases which do not necessarily occur in sequential order. Specific approaches or tasks relevant to different phases may be undertaken simultaneously or independently. Activities and objectives under each phase will vary dependent on the specific operational context, the mission's mandate, mission-specific ROEs, and actions of other protection actors. Different approaches may be necessary within one mission in different areas depending on the situation and the priorities identified in the mission's POC strategy.

11.3. **Phase 1. Prevention.** Prevention activities are usually conducted in areas where no direct threat to civilians has been identified. Activities are aimed at ensuring maximum gender-responsive situational awareness including assessing all potential threats that civilians may face, reassuring the local population of the mission's intent to protect them (within the mission's capabilities), and deterring actors that target civilians directly or indirectly. All actions should take into consideration the specific protection needs of each part of the population and be coordinated with civilian and military protection advisers.

11.3.1. For the Military Component preventive actions, based on a thorough analysis of the operating environment, taking into account special considerations regarding the needs of the population, including those specific for women and girls as well as gender-diverse people. These actions may include:

- conducting patrols, checkpoints, temporary operating bases or other visible presence to deter any potential threat to civilians;
- engaging with local authorities and communities (including women's groups and civil society organizations to understand their protection issues, needs, and priorities), and coordinate with relevant protection actors as necessary;
- conducting Key Leadership Engagement (KLE) with:
  - senior leaders of Host State military or security forces to ensure a shared understanding and approach to preventing the risks and threats to civilians;
  - senior leaders of armed groups, if the situation permits, to develop a shared understanding and approach to the risks and threats to civilians;
  - local authorities and community leaders;
- information gathering and gender-responsive analysis;
- reporting on the security situation as well as the civilian needs and violations of rights, while providing age and sex disaggregated data;
- supporting other protection actors who can deploy to areas at risk;
- conducting UN-CIMIC activities, like supporting the implementation of QIPs;
- conducting public information activities, information operations including specific awareness on sexual and gender-based violence prevention;
- supporting community early warning processes and promoting women's full, equal and meaningful participation in these activities;
- providing a secure environment for refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) to reduce the vulnerability of diverse groups within the population and ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are addressed.

11.3.2. Any potential threat to civilians must be reported via the reporting chain to the appropriate protection section of the UN peacekeeping operation and higher HQs via the chain of command. Preventive force deployment and posture should be based on an understanding of these potential threats in order to direct UN military responses and to deter possible attacks on civilians before they occur.

11.4. **Phase 2. Pre-Emption.** Where prevention measures prove or are deemed to be insufficient, or when heightened risks are detected, more active pre-emptive measures may be required. Pre-emption activities include both physical and information activities.

11.4.1. The military component can deploy forces and increase actions, based on a thorough analysis of the operating environment, taking into account special

considerations regarding the needs of the population, including those specific for women and girls as well as gender-diverse people. These actions could include:

- deploy forces and adjust locations and patrol routes (if possible, in consultation with local communities) to deter the harm to civilians and to potential vulnerable groups within the population;
- deploy high-visible patrols in key locations;
- provide a deterrent force when presented with credible information of a direct threat to civilians;
- intensify patrols to monitor or occupy areas identified as gathering sites of perpetrators of violence against civilians;
- intercept or interdict groups planning to attack civilians and defuse situations before hostile acts can be carried out;
- protect children in areas of known or suspected recruitment of children;
- prevent access to weapons or other resources that are planned to be used against civilians;
- conduct information operations with a focus on preventing harm to civilians;
- increase liaison and dialogue with government and non-state armed actors, and potential parties to a conflict; either conducted by the military component themselves in coordination with relevant protection actors, or in support of activities conducted by other mission entities, and
- support the Human Rights Component on enhancing human rights monitoring, reporting and advocacy.

11.5. **Phase 3. Response.** If physical violence materializes, more active measures to deter potential aggressors from conducting hostile acts may be necessary. The role of the military component will be critical in this phase.

11.5.1. Direct military action should be considered an option, such as the interposition of peacekeepers between a vulnerable civilian population and hostile elements or the use of force as a last resort when the civilian population is under threat of physical violence<sup>10</sup>.

11.5.2. Military activities could include:

- Intercept, interdict or conduct direct actions against groups attacking civilians – noting that the group could include children recruited by armed forces or groups;
- provide physical protection to civilians including specific protection to those at heightened risk of CRSV;
- provide escort to civilians at risk of violence;
- establish buffer zones to prevent the movement of armed forces or armed groups into areas occupied by civilians;
- ensure freedom of movement and area security for civilians;
- defend protected areas such as Internally Displaced People (IDP) or refugee camps or sites and safe corridors; and
- support the deployment of POC and other protection personnel to areas at risk of human rights violations.

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<sup>10</sup> For some missions, the UNSC mandate explicitly authorize the use of force only when there is an imminent threat of physical violence against civilians.

11.6. **Phase 4. Consolidation.** This range of activities addresses the stabilization of a post-crisis situation. The aim is to assist the local population and host authorities to return to a safe and secure environment and create the conditions in which the risk of a return to crisis is significantly lowered.

11.6.1. In this phase, the military component must liaise with the mission's civilian and police components to restore state security functions and civilian state authority as well as facilitate humanitarian access as appropriate in coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team through relevant coordination mechanisms.

11.6.2. In this phase, the military component plays a critical support role to various mission activities. In addition to providing a safe and secure environment to enable other mission entities to conduct their tasks, the military can assist mission activities such as:

- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR);
- Security Sector Reform (SSR);
- Survey and clearance of explosive ordnance;
- Weapons and ammunition management (WAM);
- advocate with security forces on issues of impunity;
- support security conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance;
- support dialogue and reconciliation activities and promote women's full, equal and meaningful participation in these activities;
- upon their request, and in line with established coordination mechanisms, provide escorts and area security for humanitarian actors (as part of the mission mandate to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance);
- promote and protect Human Rights, including measures to end human rights violations;
- contribute to creating conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return, resettlement or local integration of refugees and IDPs.

## 12. The Mission's POC Strategy<sup>11</sup>

12.1. UN peacekeeping operations with a POC mandate must have a comprehensive and integrated whole-of-mission POC strategy. The POC objectives, indicators, and plans must be integrated across all mission components as a key aspect of all mission-level planning processes, cycles, and strategies. The military component and its leadership have to be actively engaged in the development and revision/updating of the Mission's POC strategy.

12.2. **Purpose.** The mission's POC strategy will guide the mission's strategic approach to POC, enable monitoring and evaluation of progress and identify challenges, and serve as a tool for strategic engagement with stakeholders, including the Security Council and TCCs. An action plan to support the POC strategy must be implemented through a whole-of-mission approach by all relevant mission components, including within the military component, from Force HQ, through Sector to Unit HQ, in order to:

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<sup>11</sup> More details on the mission's POC Strategy can be found in the POC Handbook.

- establish a benchmark of physical violence against civilians in the mission area;
- identify priority threats of violence against civilians and the criteria for setting those priorities;
- establish strategic outcomes, objectives, and indicators for the implementation of the POC mandate;
- define the mission approach to POC and key activities across the three tiers for different categories of threat;
- clearly define the roles and responsibilities of mission components in supporting the implementation of the POC mandate;
- establish a framework for mission component strategies and work plans to reflect agreed POC priorities;
- establish mechanisms for internal coordination and external engagement;
- determine key documents, activities, and processes to enable preparedness on POC;
- incorporate concise criteria and guidance to identify and set operational and tactical POC priorities, and sequencing of tasks to address them.

### 13. Strategic Communications and Public Information

- 13.1. Strategic communications and public information (SCPI) must support the effective implementation of the mission's mandate. Under the authority of the Head of Mission, the Chief of Strategic Communications and Public Information is responsible for the development and delivery of the mission communications strategy, including narrative and messaging, and ensuring its integration with the mission's overall Concept of Operations, Mission Directive, SRSG Compact, and Mission Support Plan.
- 13.2. Public information activities and strategic communications can be used to influence behaviour, prevent or stop attacks on civilians, including sexual and gender-based violence, and respond to issues such as hate speech and the malevolent use of social media which may lead to threats to civilians. Furthermore, public information can be used to encourage respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law, encourage peace and reconciliation, promote women's full, equal and meaningful participation in these processes, and provide a reliable and impartial source of information.
- 13.3. The mission's communication strategy must include concrete objectives and activities on POC using contextually appropriate media and languages to target specific actors, including potential perpetrators and communities at risk, with specific attention to women and groups who are in a situation of increased vulnerability, such as children. Information shall be tailored and provided equally to women and men, girls and boys. The mission must engage with the media on the POC mandate and communications must also be used to manage expectations about the role and capacities of the mission.
- 13.4. **Role of the Military in SCPI.** In the military component, the Military Public Information Officer (MPIO) ensures the integration of strategic use of communication means in military planning and daily force activities. The Chief MPIO also acts as an adviser to the Force Commander for military strategic communications related matters.

- 13.4.1. MPIOs work in close collaboration through the direction of the Chief SCPI or spokesperson. The Chief SCPI or the spokesperson must provide guidance and, when required, training to the MPIOs and should ensure that MPIOs are fully briefed on the mission's communication strategy and understand their role in its implementation.
- 13.5. **Address misinformation, disinformation and hate speech.** In peacekeeping settings, mis-, disinformation and hate speech pose a threat to civilians and the safety and security of peacekeepers and can undermine mandate implementation. Failing to address these leaves the potential for an information vacuum where misunderstandings and false beliefs can develop and be exploited. In many mission contexts, this may augment conflict and/or pose a challenge to mission credibility. Mis-/disinformation are increasingly used as a weapon of war and may worsen the threats to civilians if not challenged.
  - 13.5.1. Strategic communications should be used to prevent or stop attacks on civilians by influencing behaviour, contributing to shape perceptions and control narratives. The POC communication strategy should distinguish between mis-/ disinformation about the mission and mis-/disinformation and hate speech intended to provoke violence against civilians. Monitoring and analysis of the information environment should be carried out, as this is critical for early warning of emerging disinformation narratives, and early response.
- 13.6. **Expectation Management.** There is often misunderstanding regarding the capacity of peacekeeping operations to protect all civilians. This can lead to unreasonable expectations from the local population, host government and other national and international actors. The Force must clarify the military component's role and contribute, in coordination with civilian components of the mission, to manage the expectations of the local population and the international community.
  - 13.6.1. Expectation management should be an integral part of the mission's communication strategy, stating the key messages for target audiences and explaining how the mission's POC strategy will be implemented. The aim is to describe how protection of civilians will be achieved with the resources available while being realistic about the mission's capabilities and limitations.

## C.2. POC Planning and Coordination

14. All missions with a POC mandate should establish integrated POC planning and coordination forums at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. In addition to all relevant mission components, these forums should include as appropriate, other protection actors outside of the mission, like humanitarian actors and members of the UN Country Team. Moreover, given that the primary responsibility to protect civilians lies with the host state, missions should also ensure the ongoing coordination and dialogue between the mission and host state authorities on protection issues.
15. In order to ensure success and lasting impact, military and police operations to protect civilians should be shaped and implemented under a whole-of-mission prevention and response plan for each priority threat identified, including contingency plans as required. **Joint planning and analysis between police, military and civilian components, including mission support, is key to ensuring that actions under all POC tiers are aligned, coordinated and mutually reinforcing with military and police deployments and operations.**

## 16. Planning Levels in UN Peacekeeping Operations

- 16.1. Within the UN-Secretariat, the Department of Peace Operations is responsible for providing the mission with policy, guidance and strategic direction.
- 16.2. The Head of Mission is part of this planning process and is – with the support of the Mission Leadership Team – responsible for defining the strategic objectives for the mission and operational objectives for subordinated components.
- 16.3. The respective Component Heads at the Mission Headquarters are not only part of the strategic planning as members of the Mission Leadership Team, but they are also responsible for translating the strategic objectives into operational plans. Thus, operational planning for the military is conducted at the Force Headquarters Level, under guidance from the Head of the Military Component.
- 16.4. While the Sector Headquarters are usually responsible for the planning of tactical operations within their area of operations, it is not unusual for Force Headquarters to conduct tactical planning for military units for some operations to ensure the necessary cooperation with other military and civilian mission assets. In missions without a Sector level, the tactical planning of operations has to be conducted at Force Headquarter level.
- 16.5. This section has described the different coordination mechanisms at each level, including the contribution of the military component in these coordination mechanisms. The planning levels are not always clearly defined in UN Peacekeeping and require constant coordination.

## 17. POC Coordination at the strategic level

- 17.1. **A strategic-level body, composed of the mission's senior management, bears overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the mission's POC strategy.** This can be achieved by including POC in the agenda of an existing mechanism, or by creating a separate body, for example, a Senior Management Group on Protection (SMG-P). The mission POC lead<sup>12</sup> should ensure that Secretariat participation and support is considered for such an entity, assisted by the mission's Senior POC Advisers or Focal Points. In addition to the mission's senior management, if an SMG-P is established, it should include Country Representatives of UN entities with protection mandates, as appropriate.
- 17.2. The Head of the Military Component has an important part to play as a member of the mission's senior management Team (SMT). The HOMC provides critical input, in line with the CONOPS and OPORDER, including a statement on the military component's strategy, capacities, and resources. Analysis of challenges and threats of violence against civilians should be gender-responsive and take full advantage of the analytical capacities of the POC unit, Human Rights Component and other mission components as relevant, including CRSV and CP. Next to providing the military input to this strategic-level body and liaising with the mission leadership including DMS/CMS on POC, it is also

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<sup>12</sup>While the development of the mission's POC strategy is placed under the overall responsibility of the senior mission leadership, a designated lead amongst senior mission leaders can be appointed to oversee and guide daily POC mandate implementation and coordination mechanisms. Most missions place this responsibility in the hands of one of the Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSGs), though protection of civilian activities are not confined to a single "pillar" of the mission. POC is whole-of-mission.



the responsibility of the HOMC to ensure that the decisions of the SMT will be implemented by the military component accordingly.

## **18. POC Coordination at the operational level**

- 18.1. The effective protection of civilians requires coordinated action at the Mission Headquarters from all components, including the Force, UNPOL, civilian substantive sections and mission support.
- 18.2. Short to mid-term (1-12 months) joint operational planning is in some cases the responsibility of an integrated Operations Planning Team (OPT), or equivalent. An OPT is often placed under the mission's Chief of Staff, to plan for and coordinate all joint operations by the mission, including POC. Where the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) facilitates the coordination of operational activity, it should, in coordination with the POC Adviser or Focal Point, help ensure coordinated POC operations. Whichever forum is used (OPT or JOC), senior mission leadership, including the HOMC, is responsible for timely and effective decision-making to respond to threats to civilians. They must ensure the implementation of POC as a cross-cutting mandate and a priority, including through implementation of the decisions of the strategic level Senior Management Group [on Protection]
- 18.3. As all mission components play a role in implementing the POC mandate, missions should also establish an integrated operational level POC coordination forum (e.g., Protection Working Group), responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of the POC Action Plan. This operational POC forum is chaired and managed by the POC lead, the POC Adviser or Focal Point or any other staff member designated by mission leadership.
- 18.4. For example, the Protection Working Group could:
  - conduct POC assessments and analysis, support POC analysis and actions taken by field offices, and prioritize threats of violence against civilians across the mission;
  - coordinate POC early warning and response at the operational level, including identifying and monitoring situations where the response requires support or action from Mission Headquarters;
  - take decisions on rapid reactions related to POC when this has not been done at the tactical level or requires additional resources;
  - take decisions on planning, reporting, public information and training under the POC action plan;
  - contribute to mission strategic planning processes, particularly monitoring and reporting;
  - highlight areas for consideration by the strategic-level SMG-P and develop gender-responsive recommendations for all vulnerable parts of the population to be presented to the SMG-P for further advice and guidance and, when necessary, submit to the mission's Senior Leadership Team; and
  - ensure appropriate information-sharing and coordination with protection actors outside the mission.

18.5. It is essential for the military component to ensure regular participation at the appropriate level in these coordination mechanisms, in order to meaningfully participate in integrated analysis, planning and decision-making for POC. **The coordination of the military's participation in these mechanisms for the implementation of the POC mandate at the operational level usually lies within the Deputy Force Chief of Staff Operations (DFCOS Ops) at FHQ level<sup>13</sup> and the Sector/ Battalion Chief of Staff at Sector/Unit level.**

18.6. The Military Component. To ensure a maximum effect in implementing the POC mandate, FHQs, Sector and Unit Commanders should regularly consult relevant actors on POC tasks in order to better understand the risks, ensure a whole-of-mission response, establish priorities, sequence and synchronize interventions, and coordinate preferred courses of action.

18.7. To do so, the military component is expected to:

- share information (while clarifying confidentiality issues) on threats to and vulnerabilities of civilians, and gender-responsive analysis. The main actors in threat assessments include the POC unit and POC coordination mechanisms, Joint Operations Centre (JOC), substantive civilian sections such as the Civil Affairs Section and the Human Rights Component, Gender Unit, Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC), Security Operations Centres (SOCs), UNPOL Criminal Analysis Section and the Humanitarian Protection Cluster.
- plan military operations to protect civilians, in coordination with other mission components;
- establish appropriate coordination mechanisms/structures at FHQ, Sector and Unit levels and developing mission-specific POC guidance, including directives and SOPs, informed by gender-responsive conflict analysis.

## 19. POC Coordination at the tactical level

19.1. At the tactical level, mission components contributing to POC mandate implementation will focus on developing situational awareness and preventing or responding to threats of violence against civilians. The last two activities will result in the development of a local POC threat analysis through the POC Threat Matrix.<sup>14</sup> When required and relevant, local POC plans may also be drafted at the tactical level for a specific geographical area: a region, province, county, territory, or an IDP/refugee camp, village or group of villages. Such local POC plans must include at least information on the protection risks including gendered risks, as well as the activities, capacity and roles and responsibilities of protection actors in the area.

19.2. A local level Working Group on Protection may be established to coordinate the implementation of the POC planning at the regional/local level, in close coordination with the POC Adviser or Focal Point. The Head of Office may be considered the WG lead with the relevant mission components (including the military commander at this regional/local level, like Sector Commander or Unit's Commander) and relevant representatives from the UNCT. The WG should:

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<sup>13</sup> For those missions without a DFCOS level, the coordination responsibility lies within the Force Chief of Staff (FCOS).

<sup>14</sup> For further information and an example of the POC Threat Matrix, See POC Handbook (2020), Section 8.3.

- share information and analysis on threats to civilians with particular attention to the specific and differential threats faced by each part of the population;
- Identify emerging threats and take decisions on immediate actions related to POC;
- take decisions on planning, reporting, public information and training under the POC action plan;
- contribute to mission strategic planning processes, particularly monitoring and reporting; and
- highlight areas for consideration by the SMG-P and develop recommendations to be presented to the SMG-P for further advice and guidance and submit to the mission's Senior Leadership Team when necessary.

19.3. To ensure the effective implementation of the POC mandate, FHQs, Sector and Unit Commanders, as well as UN Military Experts on Missions, like Military Observers, must regularly coordinate with the relevant POC counterparts of all other mission components, in their area of operations. This coordination includes information sharing on threats to, and vulnerabilities of, civilians to develop common information, analysis and priorities. The primary in-mission actors conducting or supporting threat assessments include POC officers in the field, the POC coordination mechanisms, JMAC and JOC, and substantive components like the Civil Affairs Section and Human Rights Components.

### C.3. Military Operations for POC

#### 20. Operational Imperatives of Military Operations for POC

- 20.1. **Pro-activeness.** Military operations for POC must take a pro-active approach, through the use of preventative or pre-emptive measures which are coordinated with the full range of civilian, police, and military protection advisers. This approach serves as deterrence and builds confidence with the civilian population. The Force must actively manage and control situations, rather than simply react, and address threats before they become critical. **Prevention remains the most effective and sustainable form of protecting civilians.**
- 20.2. **Understanding.** There is a requirement to develop an understanding of the various factors that may expose certain groups among the civilian population to harm. Ongoing and iterative actions aimed at providing or increasing understanding and situational awareness, can lead to an increased understanding of the security needs of the population and the threats to civilians. Ensuring that gender analysis is integrated in all actions will further improve and increase understanding as well.
- 20.3. **Prioritization.** No mission is resourced to simultaneously protect all civilians in its area of responsibility at all times. Identifying risks of physical violence against civilians and prioritizing them is therefore essential, based on, for example, the gravity, scale, and likelihood of harm to civilians. Such analysis should be in line with the mission's POC strategy and be conducted alongside other mission actors who have information regarding population centres, displacement charts, threats, explosive ordnance

contamination, gender-responsive conflict analysis, etc. When implementing the POC mandate, the Force Commander and his or her staff must prioritize tasks and assign resources according to the greatest and most likely threats of physical violence to civilians.

20.4. **Operational Accountability.** Failure by the peacekeeping mission to protect civilians regardless of the threat may create the perception that the UN lacks the will and capacity to perform its mandate. Such perceptions undermine the deterrent capacity of peacekeeping operations and may cause further attacks against civilians, other protected persons, or the UN itself. Accountability and responsibility to act is paramount to ensure a proper implementation of the POC mandate.

20.5. Important aspects of operational accountability are:

- The HOMC/FC has the ultimate responsibility for the enforcement of the ROE;
- Military units are accountable for any failure to execute the Force Commander's (or other commanders) orders, provided such orders are consistent with the ROE and Mandate;
- For missions having a mandate to use "all necessary means" to protect civilians, have the appropriate ROE to authorize the use of force, up to and including deadly force, to protect civilians, including IDPs and refugees under threat of physical violence. Failure to act in circumstances warranting such action despite being mandated to do so and with the authorization provided by the ROE may lead to disciplinary action.
- Disciplinary action, if warranted, would be the responsibility of the TCC (although the mission leadership has certain roles and responsibility, such as recommending repatriation).

## 21. Use of Force for POC

21.1. All peacekeeping activities potentially impact the protection of civilians, regardless of intention or planned use of force as a last resort.

21.2. The mission-specific ROE should provide the overall direction on the conduct of the gradual use of force, including to protect civilians, in compliance with the International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law. The use of force should be proportional to the threat and should be graduated up to and including the use of deadly force where necessary to protect civilians in defence of the mandate.

21.3. Depending upon the nature of the threat, peacekeepers may not have enough time to apply a gradual increase in the use of force and may have to act immediately and decisively by resorting to deadly force.

21.4. In accordance with the POC Policy, when engaged in military operations, missions are to anticipate, prevent, track, minimize and address collateral damage and other direct and indirect harm, including adverse consequences for the safety and security of civilians or civilian objects and infrastructure. Military operations should also make efforts to mitigate harm to civilians before, during and after the planning and execution of operations.

21.5. Under the POC mandate, the ROE allows the use of force against any source of physical violence as soon as a threat against civilians has been identified. **The protection of civilians is not limited to defensive actions to secure civilians after an attack is underway.**

21.6. The Use of Force is a command responsibility. The Force Commander is responsible to ensure that all personnel under their command understand and follow the ROE. This responsibility also applies to commanders of national contingents.

21.7. In the field, the military Chain of Command should ensure that all military personnel correctly understand and interpret the ROE, maintain a robust mindset and stand ready to proactively protect civilians.

## 22. Civilian Harm Mitigation

22.1. Despite the mission's best efforts, harm can be caused in an inadvertent or unintended manner to civilians as a result of military or police operations. To minimize and mitigate such impact on civilians, planning and preparation are essential. During the planning phase for specific operations, military activities should be analysed for situations that may exacerbate the civilians' social, economic, cultural, physical and psychological vulnerabilities and gender inequality. In consultation with communities at risk, steps should be taken to reduce potential harm, (e.g., safe corridors or protected areas). With due consideration of confidentiality, the inclusion and active involvement of local civilian and police protection experts in the military planning process can have a considerable impact on mitigating harm caused to civilians.

22.2. Civilian harm mitigation and prevention measures must be at the heart of peacekeeping, its missions, operations and activities. When attempting to neutralize hostile actions, military personnel, under the ROE, must ensure utmost care and take steps to avoid harming civilians and damaging civilian property or assets. Commanders at all levels should improve matters by regularly reinforcing ROE awareness and carefully controlling the appropriate and proportionate use of force.

22.3. After major operations, the military component must conduct an After-Action Review (AAR) with relevant mission components including the POC Adviser or Focal Point, the Best Practices Officer, Gender Unit, and the Human Rights Component. AARs identify key lessons that inform future operations and provide recommendations on mitigating any negative effects of previous actions. AARs can also evaluate the use of public communications and information transmitted through local, UN, and international media to assist POC, including social media. Any civilian harm should be included in the AAR.

## 23. Operational Order (OPORD)

23.1. The Force Commander's OPORD translates all strategic and operational concepts and directives for the mission into formal military orders for coordinated military action throughout the Area of Operations. The OPORD to SHQs/Unit HQs allows the Force Commander to assert their guidance on POC, ensuring that all personnel within the military component are fully aware of their responsibilities, duties, and the obligations/roles of others, both inside and outside the mission.

- 23.2. The OPOD should capture specific issues and tasks for POC listed in the CONOPS, and special care should be taken to capture the POC challenges unique to each Area of Operations. It should describe the main threats posed to civilians<sup>15</sup> in the mission's Area of Operations and how POC actions will deliver tangible effect. The OPOD also describes<sup>16</sup> specific actions on POC to be carried out by Sectors/Units.

## **24. Military Planning considerations for POC tasks**

- 24.1. Good planning is the cornerstone of successful UN military operations. Each TCC has its own national planning process to plan operations at the tactical level. However, in the multinational environment of UN deployed military field Headquarters, the UN-Military Decision-Making Process (UN-MDMP) is established as the planning process to enhance interoperability, therefore by facilitating combined operations at the Force and Sector-levels.
- 24.2. UN Military Peacekeeping-Intelligence (UN-MPKI) supports military planning in the UN-MDMP process by ensuring that an analysis of the physical, human and terrain information is conducted and, in coordination with civilian components of the mission, that data on the population is collected and analysed as part of the peacekeeping-intelligence process. The use of key indicators on threats, leading to military options and actions, must also be integrated into the peacekeeping-intelligence collection and analysis.
- 24.3. Whenever available and possible, such data and information must be age and sex disaggregated for a calibrated and efficient response.<sup>17</sup> This data and information helps to understand differences in access to and impact of POC operations and actions on men, women, girls, boys and gender-diverse people.
- 24.4. Regardless of the planning process used, there are specific planning considerations for military tasks related to implementing the POC mandate. Operational staff work such as the CONOPS, orders and policies published on behalf of the FC should always be reviewed in reference to the protection mandate.
- 24.5. A detailed overview on the POC planning considerations within the UN-MDMP is provided in Annex A.

## **25. Risks and Threats of Violence Against Civilians**

- 25.1. POC is a whole-of-mission responsibility, and it is of critical importance among mission components, to have a common understanding of the threats affecting civilians. The identification and prioritization of threats and risks to civilians is a process, usually led by the Mission POC lead with the support of the POC Adviser. It includes all mission

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<sup>15</sup> Threats posed to civilians should include a description of the nature of the violence (e.g., opportunistic or politically targeted), the history of attacks against civilians, i.e., ethnic cleansing, widespread/systematic sexual violence and other human rights violations, causes and motivations of the main perpetrators, etc.

<sup>16</sup> The description should underline the involvement of other specialists/experts e.g., Special Forces, UN Military Experts on Mission (UNMEMs), mission liaison Officers, JLOC and cooperation requirements with other parts of the mission e.g., Human Rights. The OPOD should clearly outline POC obligations of the required force components. It should also provide a complete laydown of the Military Component's Task Organisation and Dispositions to provide the optimum concentration and coverage of military units, commensurate with the envisaged threats to civilians.

<sup>17</sup> When it is impossible to collect age and sex disaggregated data and information, it is essential to specify the reasons for that, which can help understand the context in which PKOs are operating and to improve the POC strategy.

components (civilian, police, and military), and will often require engagement with the UN Country Team, the host state, affected communities, intermediary bodies and humanitarian actors and should be reflected in the mission's POC strategy.

- 25.2. Understanding why and how civilians are harmed, and who is harming them, is a prerequisite for a military component to execute the tasks needed to implement a POC mandate in any conflict area. This understanding should include a thorough knowledge on the gender roles and norms present in the local communities, how these roles and norms impact the conflict and how the conflict impacts these roles and norms in return. This is important to help prevent violence against different groups of the population, including men, women, boys, girls and gender-diverse people. Furthermore, civilians can also be harmed during the course of hostilities or due to indiscriminate means, thus not only as a result of direct or indirect targeting. Understanding these variations in threats towards diverse groups of the population is a prerequisite for tailoring responses that may reduce the severity of the threat without causing more harm in the process.<sup>18</sup>

## 26. Early Warning Systems

- 26.1. POC threat and risk assessments rely on a constant collection and analysis of all information related to POC. Particularly in dynamic contexts, missions must maintain constant situational awareness to enable planning and timely response to threats to civilians. A structured gender-responsive early warning system will help the mission gather and analyse information on threats to civilians and enable the adoption of proactive measures to prevent credible threats against civilians. Gender-responsive early warning also contributes to better resource allocation, facilitates a comprehensive, whole-of-mission approach to POC, and enhances early action and prevention. **The military component must be an active participant in the mission's early warning systems including proactive sharing of information.**
- 26.2. Early Warning Centres (EWC). Whenever there is no early warning and rapid response (EWRR) system established by another mission entity, like in remote military operating bases or sites, a military EWC can be established to serve as the information hub for POC to complement the EWRR systems that should be in place at MHQ and SHQ level. The military EWCs provide a common operational picture for patrolling, check points and other activities conducted in the AOR. These EWCs create a mutually reinforcing relationship between the deployed force and the local population by developing trust. The EWCs should ensure a regular information exchange with all protection actors in the area to enhance the mission's overall situational awareness and to foster early warning of threats to civilians, including (potential) incidents of sexual violence, gender-based violence, and grave violations against children.
- 26.3. EWCs should have POC capacities including:
- A database of prominent local persons including women leaders and security issues, including threats to civilians and vulnerabilities.
  - An information collection plan, to be implemented by the EWCs, military operating bases, Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs) and UN Military Experts on Mission in consultation with the POC Unit, Human Rights Component and other relevant mission components, such as Gender Units

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<sup>18</sup> One possible tool for planners is described in "Protecting Civilians from Violence – A threat-based Approach to Protection of Civilians in UN Peace Operations", see Reference Documents.

and Child Protection Sections/Units. This information collection should be synchronized with the military unit's Information Requirements.

## 27. Tools for Information Gathering, Early Warning and Response

27.1. Peacekeeping operations require sustained engagement with local communities and diverse groups within a population. It is important to identify and differentiate the impact of the conflict on the distinct groups of the population by responding to security concerns throughout all phases of a UN peacekeeping operation.

27.2. UN mission interaction with local populations should be rooted in values of respect and dignity, taking into account cultural and religious aspects, and **always applying the “Do-No-Harm-Principle”** to avoid exposing people to additional risks as a result of the mission's action. Engagement and consultations with communities including specific consultations with women networks and their leaders, yield important data and information on local situations and priorities, contributing to a better understanding of the vulnerability of diverse groups and identifying needs and priorities. This situational awareness has to be shared with other POC actors and conveyed to decision makers for more effective implementation of the POC response.

27.3. Below is a set of tools, stemming from best practices within UN field missions that effectively operationalise community engagement, enhancing POC implementation:

27.3.1. **Community Liaison Assistants (CLA)** CLAs are national staff, managed by a Mission Civil Affairs Section (CAS) or, exceptionally, by Heads of Field Offices, who are deployed in the field and work in close collaboration with UN uniformed components to support the implementation of the POC mandate. CLAs act as interlocutors between the deployed UN military units/sub-units and the local communities, local authorities, and other relevant actors. CLAs ensure effective liaison and engagement with local communities and facilitate the design and implementation of POC tools, including but not limited to early warning mechanisms, such as the Community Alert Networks (CANs) as well as the design and implementation of Community Protection Plans (CPP), where applicable. CLAs can also participate in Joint Protection Teams (JPTs) and monitor the impact of protection activities. CLAs also provide support to conflict mediation, local-level protection planning, coordination and follow-up of field visits and patrols/operations, that may eventually strengthen the resilience of local communities. The confidentiality and security of CLAs must be considered and respected at all times.

27.3.2. **Community Alert Network (CAN)** CANs are tactical-level early warning tools. They are human and/or technology-based communication systems to reinforce the capacities of communities to protect themselves by enhancing and organizing their means of communication. They aim at providing early warning information on threats to communities or individuals at risk of violence and can assist tactical-level Mission presences (including COBs and TOBs) to triangulate information and prevent or respond to threats. A CAN is able to facilitate and enable a community at risk to contact the closest Mission presence and alert them to likely impending threats.

27.3.3. **Joint Protection Teams (JPTs)**. JPTs are small teams comprising civilian, police, and military peacekeeping personnel to assess protection needs on the ground and recommend preventive and responsive interventions to address those needs by



conducting field visits. Usually coordinated by the Civil Affairs Office or Human Rights Component, a JPT provides an analysis on political, security and social dynamics in the area to identify threats, build ties and improve relationships between the mission and local communities, decrease tensions and enhance gender-responsive early warning. Ideally, the JPT will be joined by UN Military Experts on Mission (like Military Observers) or other military specialists, depending on the tasks of the specific JPT. Depending on the security situation, especially in remote areas, the mission's military component may be required to provide additional force protection to a JPT.

**27.3.4. UN Military Experts on Mission (UNMEM), UN-CIMIC officers and members of the Engagement Platoons** are military personnel who routinely interact with communities. Their role is vital as their work ensures interaction with each part of the population. The presence of diverse peacekeepers in terms of gender, age, culture, linguistic profile, or rank can positively impact planning and effectiveness of the protection and response strategies. For instance, for cultural reasons, the local population might find it more appropriate to speak with someone of the same gender-identity. As such, women and girls might feel more comfortable confiding in women peacekeepers, particularly when informing about certain types of violations, such as CRSV. Peacekeeping should strive to reflect the populations it serves, by deploying men and women peacekeepers.

## **28. Planning at Sector and Unit level**

- 28.1. Sectors must produce their own POC plans, based on guidance or direction from higher headquarters. They need to clearly specify tasks, locations, reserves, and liaisons. These plans should reflect the POC intent of the higher Commander, and contingency plans developed and rehearsed for possible military response and action.
- 28.2. Deployed units must continuously convey a state of readiness and professionalism. They should have operating bases in close proximity to the more vulnerable population and have a POC focus. Sustained presence in the local community is crucial. Accordingly, military units must be deployed to cover high risk areas in a coordinated manner and retain operational flexibility to respond quickly through deployment of permanent, temporary, or mobile operating bases. Military bases are also key to facilitate the deployment and outreach of other mission components to remote hotspots, and the military component should remain prepared to assist other components in their projection.

## **29. Reporting**

- 29.1. Through patrolling, observation posts, check points, outreach, and engagement, military personnel shall record all allegations of human rights violations and abuses, or signs of deterioration or impending violence. It should also immediately report any allegations along the Chain of Command and to the regional JOC to be shared with all relevant actors including humanitarian actors, while observing human rights principles.
- 29.2. Monitoring and reporting should be particularly responsive in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including CRSV, grave violations against children, rape, killing, maiming, abductions, attacks on or use of schools and hospitals by armed groups or armed forces, and denial of humanitarian access.

## **30. Monitoring and Evaluation of Results**

- 30.1. Mission and force plans must clearly specify activities, incidents and indicators to be monitored, in close coordination with the POC unit, Human Rights Component and other protection actors to guide implementation and subsequent monitoring and reporting requirements. There is a need to define what will be monitored, including gender-responsive analysis, who will collect the data, and the modalities for sharing the associated data with relevant parts of the mission. For example, the number of civilians killed, injured, raped, displaced; the number of violent attacks, tribal clashes and weapons seized; the level of explosive ordnance contamination; the number of IDPs, and the perception of physical insecurity are a few examples of data that could serve as indicators and benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of a POC mandate.
- 30.2. Analysis of data, effects and evaluation of results should be factored into current and future planning.

## 31. Training

- 31.1. **Pre-Deployment Training.** Before arriving in the mission area, TCCs are responsible for ensuring that every member of the military component has received appropriate and complete pre-deployment training to be prepared for their duty as a member of a peacekeeping operation. Pre-deployment training must include training on DPO's POC Concept, gender and WPS, and if possible, also include training on the respective mission's POC strategy<sup>19</sup>.
- 31.2. **Induction Training.** After arrival in the mission area, and before starting operations, all individually recruited military personnel (i.e., Military Staff Officers and UNMEMs) must undergo a special induction training, led by the mission's Integrated Mission Training Centre (IMTC) in close cooperation with the U-7, to ensure familiarization with the mission and its POC mandate. Where possible, unit commanders and their training officers should also join the mission induction training in order to conduct additional in-mission awareness sessions for personnel in their respective units.
- 31.3. **Ongoing Training.** The HOMC shall support the ongoing training of all military personnel in various areas related to the implementation of the mission's mandate. In coordination with the IMTC and training focal points of substantive sections, this training should include integrated POC trainings (including mission-specific scenarios), to further understand mission specifics and to better coordinate with police and civilian components.
- 31.4. **Rules of Engagement (ROE) Training.** It is a commander's responsibility to ensure that all military personnel fully understand their mission-specific ROE. It is important that training includes specific scenarios on the use of force related to POC and is refreshed regularly throughout the time of deployment.

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## D. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Civilian Harm Mitigation:** Civilian Harm is harm caused to civilians as a result of the mission's military and police operation, and Civilian Harm Mitigation refers to the methods used to prevent, track, mitigate and address that harm.

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<sup>19</sup> If TCCs know the mission their units/soldiers are deploying to, pre-deployment training can be tailored to mission specific information and include training on the specific POC strategy as well as the mission-specific Rules of Engagement.

- Civilians:** For the purposes of the POC mandate, everyone is to be considered a civilian, except for: members of the armed forces; members of an organized armed group with continuous combat function; and civilians directly participating in hostilities, for such time as they do so. In case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered a civilian. When international humanitarian law applies to UN forces, they must comply with it, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. This obligation is independent of the POC mandate.
- Gender-responsive approach/planning/operation:** A gender-responsive approach/ planning/operation integrates gender perspective in analysis (of situation/contexts/dynamics- mapping processes); factors all aspects of gender- or sex-disaggregated data (women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, those economically disenfranchised, ethnic, political, or religious minorities) and considers how gender shapes and informs the trends and influences interventions. This also includes the composition and representation of all genders in the actual responsive measures.
- Population:** When discussing the population, each part of the population needs to be considered: women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, those economically disenfranchised, ethnic, political or religious minorities. Only when those parts of the population are considered, they can be appropriately addressed and each part of the population can benefit equally, so that inequality is not perpetuated.

The above definitions support the understanding of POC mandates. They do not replace or supersede mission ROE, specific legal advice or the decisions of senior mission leadership in specific situations.

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## E. REFERENCES

### Normative or superior references

United Nations Charter

United Nations Security Council Resolutions on the Protection of Civilians: 1265 (1999), 1270 (1999), 1296 (2000), 1674 (2006), 1894 (2009), 2145 (2014), 2222 (2015), 2286 (2016), 2417 (2018), 2475 (2019)

United Nations Security Council Resolutions on WPS: 1325 (2000); 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2010); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013); 2242 (2015); 2467 (2019); 2493 (2019) and 2538 (2020)

Reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group: A/63/19 (2009), A/64/19 (2010), A/65/19 (2011), A/66/19 (2012), A/72/19 (2018), A/74/19 (2020), A/75/19 (2021)

ST/SGB/1999/13 Observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law

ST/SGB/2003/13, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

Human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, A/67/775 (2013)

United Nations Policy on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping (2023)

DPO Handbook on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping (2020)

OHCHR/DPKO/DPA/DFS Policy on Human Rights in UN Peacekeeping Operations and Political Missions (2011.20)

DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, 1 June 2017

DPKO/DFS Policy on the prohibition of child labour in UN peacekeeping operations, 1 November 2013

DPO/DPPA Manual for Child Protection Staff in United Nations Peace Operations, 2019

DPO/DPPA/OHCHR/SRSG-SVC Policy on United Nations Field Missions: Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, December 2019

DPO/DPPA/OHCHR/SRSG/SVC United Nations Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, 2020

DPKO/OHCHR Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations Support to Non-United Nations Security Forces, Guidance Note and text of the Policy, 2015

### **Related procedures or guidelines**

United Nations Peacekeeping: Principles and Guidelines, DPKO-DFS (2008) (“Capstone Doctrine”)

DPO Policy on Peacekeeping-Intelligence (2019.08)

DPKO/DFS Policy on Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (2018.01)

DPKO/DFS Guidelines on the role of United Nations police in protection of civilians (2017.12)

DPKO/DFS Guidelines on the Use of Force by Military Components in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (2016.24)

DPO Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security Resource Package

Specialized Training Material (STM): UN Comprehensive Protection of Civilians Training Materials (CPOC) for Military Units

Reinforced Training Materials:

- Comprehensive Protection of Civilians (CPOC) for UN Military
- Child Protection for UN Military

### **Other related references**

Reports of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict: (S/2016/447), (S/2017/414), (S/2018/462), (S/2019/373), (S/2020/366), (S/2021/423), (S/2022/381)

Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action (2016)

Stian Kjeksrud, Alexander W. Beadle, and Petter HF Lindqvist (2016). *Protecting Civilians from Violence – A threat-based Approach to Protection of Civilians in UN Peace Operations*. A joint FFI/NODEFIC-report. Kjeller/Oslo.

## **F. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

32. The Office of Military Affairs will ensure and support the implementation of these Guidelines.

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## **G. CONTACT**

33. This document was developed by OMA and any queries or comments should be directed thereto.

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## **H. HISTORY**

34. This is the second edition of the “Protection of Civilians: Implementing Guidelines for Military Components of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions” and supersedes the 2015 DPKO/DFS Guidelines.

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**APPROVAL SIGNATURE:**  
**Jean-Pierre Lacroix, USG, DPO**



**DATE OF APPROVAL: 20 September 2023**

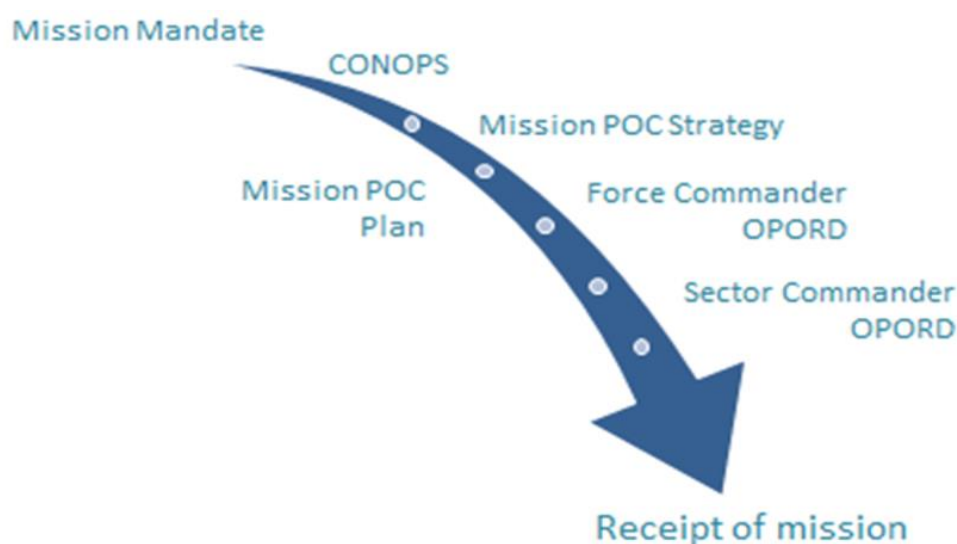
## Annex A

### **Operational Planning for Protection of Civilians at Force, Sector and Unit level**

Using the UN Military Decision Making Process (UN-MDMP), as described in the UN Infantry Battalion Manual, this annex identifies planning considerations that may be used for the protection of civilians.

The UN-MDMP is designed to be applied in a UN FHQ for operational and tactical planning functions and can be used analogously at Sector/Brigade/Battalion HQ. Each TCC has its own planning process, but the UN has established its own standard designed to enhance interoperability, thereby facilitating combined operations at the Force or Sector-level.

The planning considerations on POC described in this annex are applicable and should be included in national/contingent processes.



*Figure 1 Planning in Peacekeeping Operations*

Figure 1 shows the flow from a mission's mandate to the operational plans for military units. It shows the series of planning steps in peacekeeping missions, many with an emphasis on POC.

In UN peacekeeping, the mission is derived from the strategic documents, beginning with the Security Council mandate. Guided by the strategic (Mission Concept, Mission Plan) and operational level documents (CONOPS, POC Strategy) shown on the graph, the relevant headquarters in a field mission will then determine the orders (OPORD).

### **The UN Military Decision Making Process (UN MDMP)**

The following chart illustrates the phases of the Military Planning Process required to reach the identified objectives, of which POC will be a priority. It depicts the key planning steps that are common to most planning processes and relevant for military planners.

Good planning is the cornerstone of successful UN military operations. The UN Military Decision Making Process (UN MDMP) is designed as a tool to complement national doctrine. The UN MDMP also ensures inclusion of the UN MPKI Analysis of the Operating Environment (AOE), incorporating assessments of the physical, human, and information terrain, as outlined in the MPKI Handbook.

This process includes an analysis of the operating environment, mission analysis, development, and comparison of Course of Actions (COA), COA selection, and the preparation and delivery of orders. Thus, it is a comprehensive process that forces planners to consider the full scope of determining factors before presuming a military solution. POC, Child Protection and CRSV considerations need to influence every step of the decision-making process.

Coordination is a cardinal guiding principle for POC planning. Local POC strategies and plans must be developed in coordination and cooperation with all POC actors at the operational and tactical level in a specific geographical area (region, province, county or territory, or an IDP/refugee camp, village, or group of villages). Substantive and administrative components of the UN mission, UN Country Team, humanitarian actors, host nation forces and local communities are to be integrated and consulted while planning to benefit from all appropriate expertise, tailor more comprehensive COAs that enable all to assume their fundamental roles and responsibilities to promptly address threats to civilians.

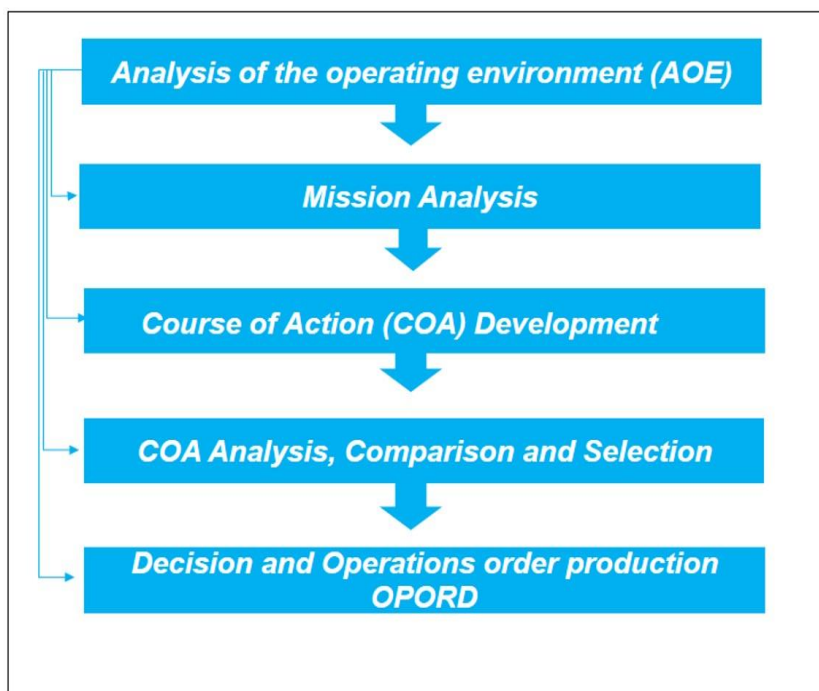


Figure 2 Steps of the UN-MDMP

## **1. Analysis of the Operating Environment**

What? Gain complete picture of the Operating Environment

Who? FCOS, DFCOS Ops, U-2, U-3, U-5, U-9, Advisers and SMEs (e.g. POC Adviser)

The AOE is the primary method used to develop a detailed understanding of the operating environment (OE) to gain a complete picture of the OE and all relevant factors on operations at the tactical level. For POC tasks the analysis requires a comprehensive approach, placing the human factor at its centre.

Planners must consider the overall situation including the vulnerability of civilians and the clear or potential threats they are facing as well as identify their nature.<sup>20</sup>

Analysis of the Operating Environment (AOE) at unit level is normally completed by the unit's MPKI cell (S-2), which should draw on information and peacekeeping-intelligence from Sector (G-2) and Force-level (U-2) evaluations. Additional detail can be found throughout the MPKI handbook, but the AOE is a continuous process, and S-2 personnel must work to update it constantly, particularly during operations.

Coordination with the POC Adviser or Focal Point and other relevant UN protection staff is essential to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the OE related to POC. This is normally coordinated by the DFCOS Ops.

The AOE involves the following three key steps, which should incorporate the factors, deductions, and tasks for the analytical framework:

### **1.1. Operating Environment Evaluation**

Analyses the physical, human and information terrain.

The physical terrain evaluation analyses the effect of terrain features such as terrain relief, bodies of water, road networks, urban areas, culturally or environmentally important sites, natural resources and other physical factors. The evaluation of the physical terrain should consider natural threats to the population and/or the ability of UN uniformed and civilian components to execute POC tasks.

The human terrain evaluation analyses the effect of human terrain features such as tribal, ethnic, and religious groups, and areas that are supportive or unsupportive of UN operations and mandate implementation. Intersectional factors such as gender roles and norms, age, economic status, religious or legal codes, beliefs, traditions, behaviors, values, Conflict Resolution Mechanisms, traditional and informal leaders, Disruptions/Resiliencies, and how forces or armed groups mobilize in the AOO, are used to identify different groups within the population, and used to identify potential tension points or areas between these various groups.

For this purpose, tools like the ASCOPE – PMERSCHII-PT<sup>21</sup> matrix are a useful guide to a deep understanding on human actors and factors.

The information terrain evaluation analyses the effect of communications infrastructure,

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<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed description of Threats to Civilians and how to integrate a threat analysis in the planning process, see Annex B (Threat Based Approach to POC)

<sup>21</sup> PMERSCHII – PT (Political, Military, Economic, Religion, Social, Cultural, History, Information, Infrastructure, Physical and Time factors).

ASCOPE (Areas, Structures, Capabilities, Organization, People and Event factors)



communications blackspots, internet and media penetration, on UN operations and mandate implementation. Weather and its impact on mobility, visibility, and sustainability of operations must also be considered.

## **1.2. Actor Evaluation**

Uses analytical tools to identify relevant non-UN actors' intent, capabilities, strengths, weaknesses and other critical factors including the gender norms and roles and how they shape conflict.

The Actor Evaluation has a dual purpose. First, it elaborates on those actors/groups that are likely to have a (significant) impact on UN operations and the operating environment itself. Secondly, it enables a threat analysis that is critical to Sub-Step 3: Situational Integration.

An evaluation of threat actor's capability, intent, and opportunity is central to planning. Guidance on methodologies relevant to actor evaluation is included in the MPKI handbook, which details tools and techniques for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, and Center of Gravity analysis.

Apart from the threat actor evaluation, this phase also assists planners to understand key local personalities, influencers and community groups, including men, women and gender-diverse people, who the mission is likely to engage with during operations. It identifies whether local actors are likely to support or oppose the UN presence and can generate a greater understanding of vulnerable population groups.

POC mission success is dependent on understanding local perceptions, therefore gathering baseline perception data is critical. Such data should include gender-responsive conflict analysis which among others considers how gender shapes and is shaped by conflict. To be effective, local perceptions must be understood and documented. This understanding can be gained through several mechanisms: surveys, focal groups. etc. The most valuable data (but also the most resource-intensive to obtain), come from population surveys. Local communities have a critical role to play in their own protection. Peacekeepers need to engage local community representatives including women leaders and their networks, not only to determine the risks and threats they face, but also to understand their role in peacebuilding and to identify ways to empower them.

Human Terrain Mapping (HTM) is also a means of portraying key actors within the OE. Moreover, Link Analysis provides an understanding of how the various actors are linked to each other and describes the nature of the linkages between them.

## **1.3. Situation Integration**

This is an informed, predictive assessment that integrates the understanding of the operating environment and the actors within it. In this phase, potential future scenarios are generated and threat actor courses of action (as opposed to UN mission courses of action) are developed and evaluated.

This phase allows to plan against a range of POC scenarios, usually focused on the most-likely threat actor and most dangerous scenarios. The development of these threat actor courses of action is important for the Situation Integration as it will inform planning, risk mitigation, and force protection measures.

In conventional military operations, threat actor COAs are central to the planning process. In a UN context, the impact of UN operations on other relevant actors must also be assessed, including the likely reaction to UN operations by local key leaders, and vulnerable population groups.

The Contemporary Operating Environment is complex and must be continuously assessed to understand how it will be impacted by our activities and the activities of threat actors.

## **2. Mission Analysis**

What? Clearly define the tasks needed to be accomplished.

Who? FCOS, DFCOS Ops, U-2, U-3, U-4, U-5, U-6, U-8, U-9, Advisers and SMEs (e.g., POC Adviser)

After the AOE, Mission Analysis is necessary to clearly define the tasks which need to be accomplished by the military units. This step should result in restated (tailored to the respective unit) mission, planning guidance, Commander's intent, incorporating purpose, method and end state.

In developing and maintaining POC operational plans, the mission area of responsibility must be carefully analyzed. Priorities must reflect existing and potential threats to civilians, taking into account gender considerations for each part of the population. The Force, in coordination with the mission's POC Adviser and other mission and UN stakeholders should make these assessments covering immediate, future and enduring/temporary threats to civilians.

### **2.1. General considerations**

The first step in Mission Analysis is to identify the tasks given in higher commands order/directive for the own area of responsibility, including given restrictions. The given tasks and restrictions can be classified as follows:

Tasks	An effect to be achieved in respect of a threat actor, terrain or UN Forces
Specific Tasks	Tasks specifically assigned to a unit by its higher HQ
Implied Tasks	Something that is not specified by higher HQ in the original order, but needs to be carried out to achieve the mission
Mission Essential Tasks	Tasks that, if not included in the plan, could cause the unit to fail in its mission
Constraints	Something that limits the plan
Clarification	Something that requires clarification from higher HQ
Information Requirement	Information that is required for planning purposes
Focused Question	A specific question, normally posed by the unit's Commander to the staff
Planning Guidance	A conclusion that guides the unit's staff

**UN Mission Analysis follows these steps, all of which are developed considering available factors, necessary deductions and possible output:**

- Identification of the Commander's intent. This establishes the reason for the unit's mission and is used to craft the restated mission.
- Identification of specific tasks
- Identification of constraints, restrictions and freedom of action
- Assets available. The assets that the unit has, and any assets that may have been

temporarily assigned to it by a higher level.

- Acceptable levels of risk. This is assessed in all spatial dimensions (front, left and right flanks, rear area, and overhead). Risk should be classified (high to low) so that it can be prioritized and mitigated accordingly.
- Time (key operational timings), threat actor (details taken from the AOE phase), space (determine the AO), and Terrain (from the AOE, identifying key and decisive terrain features, and operational effects that the UN Inf Bn needs to achieve in respect of it).
- Actual or Likely changes to the situation. Use of the S-2 (UN MPKI) is necessary in this case. How can the situation change and how will this effect UN operations, and/or how has the situation changed? Much of this will come from the AOE provided by the S-2 cell.
- Implied tasks.
- Mission essential tasks.

## **2.2. POC Considerations in Mission Analysis**

During the assessment of operational factors in the mission analysis, the planner has to consider all POC aspects, guided by POC Strategy, Mission Plan and other relevant documents, like CONOPS or OPORDs.

Key to identifying tasks is coordination with relevant protection actors, especially POC Adviser or Focal Point, to identify POC tasks that are not in the direct responsibility of the unit and to coordinate support to the mission substantive sections, UN Country Team (UNCT), humanitarian actors or to host nation authorities. Capacities of protection actors in a specific area must be complementing and supplementing each other's tasks and activities.

Better coordination helps to ensure a unified understanding of threats to civilians and of appropriate POC action, and also helps to operationalize POC. This should be informed by the mission's POC Strategy and Plan.

### **2.3.1 Identify POC Key Factors**

While conducting the mission analysis, the considerations stemming from these questions should be factored in the analysis. Key Factors have a decisive influence on the military planning. In addition to the factors assessed in a standard military planning process (e.g. time, space, force), specific threats to each part of the population are to be considered as a distinct category in the factor analysis.

These Key Factors for POC can include:

- How is POC stipulated in the UNSCR mandate?
- What is the role of military forces in protecting civilians? (Include supporting roles to other mission components.)
- What are specified, implied and essential military POC tasks?
- Does the UN Peace Operation have the capacity to address the threat, in whole or part?
- What are the constraints that affect the conduct of POC tasks and operations (such as distances and timings)?
- What are the limitations of our own force's capabilities?
- What are the Host Government forces capabilities and willingness to protect civilians?
- What community early-warning and protection mechanisms are in place? What is the percentage of women compared to men participating in these mechanisms?
- What are the different roles of women, men, boys, girls and gender-diverse people in preventing or driving conflict?
- What are the security threats and risks faced by women and girls and what are their protection needs and priorities?

- How imminent is the threat to civilians in the AOO?
- Where is the threat to civilians most imminent?
- What military capabilities do perpetrators require to attack civilians in the ways they want?
- Who are the civilians, where are they, and are they static or are they moving?
- What are the most dangerous consequences of inaction for civilians - for the mission and overall peace/stabilization process?

### 2.3.2 Analysis and Deduction of POC Key Factors

Each Key Factor must be analysed using the following three steps:

- Describe – examine the relevant aspect of the Key Factor without providing an evaluation of the fact or any assumptions
- Assess- evaluate the factor and identify the implications of this factor in relation to the task
- Deduce- provide information which shapes own action to execute the task (answer the “so what?”-question)

A set of deduction marks the end of this planning step: It is a summary of all deductions established in the factor analysis, whether summarized in a list and/or stated on a planning map. Deductions, based on the above analysis, specifically on the nature of the threat against civilians, must be grouped according to the phases of the Operational Concept for POC: Prevention, Pre-emption, Response, and Consolidation.

## 3 Course of Action Development (COA)

What? Establish options that will fulfil the assigned task

Who? FCOS, DFCOS Ops, U2, U3, U4, U5, U6, U8, U9, Advisers and SMEs (e.g. POC Adviser)

### 3.1 The purpose

In this step two or more feasible COAs, based on the deductions made from previous planning steps, will be developed. Those COAs need to fulfil the assigned mission or military tasks, based on the threat actor COAs developed by U-2. The COA development is a process which leads from very general deductions to more and more specific tasks and actions.

### 3.2 Determination of tactical tasks

For each deduction from the previous planning step, a proper tactical task must be determined in the areas identified.

**Generic Military tasks** related to POC that could shape the COA development are listed here (along the four phases of POC):

Deduction: <b>Prevention Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response
<u>Nature of threat:</u> Where no clear threat to civilians has been identified (longer term).  <u>Example:</u> Perpetrators commit atrocities against civilians in other sectors, threat not	<u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage communication with key stakeholders, including women’s organizations, and potential perpetrators;</li> <li>• Remind all actors of their obligations under international law and consequences for violations;</li> <li>• Reassure the local population of the mission’s intent to protect them;</li> <li>• Ensure physical security for civilians and their means of survival;</li> </ul>

## Annex A: Operational Planning for POC at Force, Sector and Unit Level

Deduction: <b>Prevention Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response
imminent but potential of spill over.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct patrols to dominate the AOO and understand the local dynamics.</li> <li>• Organize joint patrols with civilian components of the mission in order to obtain updated understanding of the situation related to protection needs;</li> <li>• Establish checkpoints with women and men soldiers;</li> <li>• Monitor and report Human Rights violations and abuses.</li> </ul> <p>Civilians are best protected when threats of violence against them are prevented through coordinated action from all mission components. The measures in the phase of prevention are aimed at reassuring the local population of the mission's intent to protect them and intend to resolve potential tensions before a threat develops.</p>

Deduction: <b>Pre-emptive Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response (examples)
<p><u>Nature of threat:</u> Where likely threats are identified and attacks against civilians are anticipated (short term).</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Attacks against the population in valley A must be prevented</p>	<p><u>Examples:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase robust patrolling to act as a deterrent;</li> <li>• Conduct pre-empted deployment (Quick Reaction Forces (QRF), Special Forces or Reserves);</li> <li>• Organize joint patrols with civilian components of the mission;</li> <li>• Use force pre-emptively to contain threats by disarming armed actors (per mandate/ROE);</li> <li>• Clear and destroy the source of threat as per mandate and ROE</li> <li>• Intercept and neutralize hostile acts (checkpoints, security cordons and blocking positions);</li> <li>• Deter or defend against attacks on civilians (patrols, escorts, maintain presence, observation and liaison, protect areas/zones like villages, markets, public buildings or camps);</li> <li>• support full range of protection related monitoring, reporting, analysis, and advocacy.</li> </ul> <p>Pre-emption is pro-active; military forces should intercept, neutralize, or defuse situations before hostile acts can be carried out. The pre-empted deployment / use of intervening forces, QRF, Special Forces or Reserves can deter or prevent an incident.</p>

Deduction: <b>Response Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response (examples)
<p><u>Nature of threat:</u> Where attacks against civilians are imminent or occurring (short term).</p>	<p><u>Examples:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positioning troops to create a buffer zone and deter attacks on civilians;</li> <li>• Use coercive force against perpetrators in accordance with ROE as a last resort (attack helicopters, reconnaissance, rapid deployment, show of force and direct actions);</li> </ul>

## Annex A: Operational Planning for POC at Force, Sector and Unit Level

Deduction: <b>Response Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response (examples)
<p><u>Example:</u> Armed group, known for targeting civilians, gather forces close to unprotected village.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stop physical violence faced by children and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) including Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and compel the aggressor to comply.</li> </ul> <p>In some situations, a threat of violence to civilians may not have been anticipated or could not be prevented due to a lack of proper capabilities such as communications, peacekeeping-intelligence, and mobility. When the threat of physical violence to civilians is apparent or underway, more active measures aimed at deterring potential aggressors from conducting hostile acts may be necessary. The level of response may need to escalate to the use of force, up to and including the use of lethal force, depending upon the threat and the ROE.</p>

Deduction: <b>Consolidation Phase</b>	Tactical Task/Response (examples)
<p><u>Nature of threat:</u> Where violence against civilians is subsiding (longer term).</p> <p><u>Example:</u> Armed group retreats or is repelled after attack on village.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish cordons, local security and/or defence positions</li> <li>Assessment of remedial and preventive measures</li> <li>Reassure and assist the local population</li> <li>Support host authorities' mediation, restoration of rule of law, DDR, SSR, and return to a state of normalcy</li> <li>Secure the return of internally displaced persons and refugees,</li> <li>Ensure local security and/or defence positions</li> <li>Defend protected areas (IDP/Refugee camps and sites, safe corridors)</li> <li>Collect evidence of violations of international law and notify relevant civilian experts,</li> <li>Support deployments of protection staff to areas at risk</li> <li>On request, assist in the delivery of humanitarian aid</li> <li>Protect the delivery of humanitarian aid (convoys, secure storage facilities or camps)</li> </ul> <p>Consolidation activities are typically multidimensional responses involving political, humanitarian, military, and police activities to create the conditions in which a return to crisis is diminished. Follow-up remains crucial. After an attack or hostile act, the local population will require continued support, aid, protection, and reassurance.</p>

### 3.3 Development of own options

In order to develop options, a combination of tactical tasks for each area identified must be selected. The key question that has to be addressed at this point is:

**“What must be done where and when?”**

### **3.4 Troops to Tasks Analysis**

At this point, the number of forces will be calculated, which are required to carry out all selected tactical tasks for each of the options. Because every peacekeeping mission is different, there are no standardized numbers for a tactical task. Experience and imagination of the military planners are crucial.

The key question that has to be addressed at this point is:

***“What combination of resources and capabilities is best suited to execute the required task?”***

### **3.5 Development of COAs**

Subsequently, the tasks that have to be fulfilled in each location (sector) and which forces (or other mission entities when integrated planning) are being assigned including as sequence of the deployment, must be determined.

The staff should develop at least two different COAs for each assigned task. Generally, each COA will be depicted visually and in words, often on a COA board<sup>22</sup>, which should outline: the mission, the commander’s intent, scheme of manoeuvre, a purpose, method and end state and information requirements. Each COA must then be considered from a threat perspective, and it is necessary to consider the impact of the COA on non-threat actors such as vulnerable civilian groups, local key leaders and other important actors of the local environment.

It is important that a COA has the following elements:

- What (the tasks that the unit will execute in respect of relevant actors and terrain).
- When (critical timing parameters).
- Where (geographical locations where military effects will be achieved).
- How (the unit’s concept of operations, incorporating tasks).
- Why (the purpose of the mission which must align with higher commander’s intent).

Coordinated actions with relevant protection actors should be planned taking into consideration all sections of the local community – including women, men, girls, boys and gender-diverse people – in particular those in vulnerable or marginalized situations, and with a view to empower them and support the mechanisms and community-based organizations including women-led community structures they have established to ensure their own protection. Communities are in the best position to identify their own vulnerabilities and related threats. Addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and vulnerabilities affecting civilians or taking them into account when designing the protection response, will ensure a sustainable impact. Military personnel must be mindful in their engagement with communities not to expose people to risk or cause harm through their engagement. Whenever conducting joint operations with the host state are conducted, the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN Support to non-UN Security Forces (HRDDP) has to be applied.

### **3.6 Evaluation of the COAs**

In the end, each COA will be evaluated and it has to meet the following requirements:

- it is feasible (it can be accomplished with available resources),
- it is acceptable (to UN policy, and levels of risk),
- it is complete (that it addresses all aspects of the mission or task),

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<sup>22</sup> An example of a COA board is contained in the MPKI manual.

- it is exclusive (when comparing it to other UN COAs it is markedly different, thereby ensuring that different COAs are not subtle variations of a favoured plan) and
- it is suitable (that it will accomplish the plan).

This evaluation type is known as **FACES** and should be considered when COAs are being developed.

#### **4. COA Comparison and Selection**

What? Determine the most suitable COA

Who? FCOS, DFCOS Ops, U-2, U-3, U-5

The purpose of the COA comparison is to determine the most suitable COA. This involves the identified COAs are first analysed individually and then compared against each other using approved criteria.

Several analytical frameworks can be used for this, but a simple “Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis” will reveal the relative merits of each COA. Alternatively, planners may just list the advantages and disadvantages associated with each COA. It may also be useful to measure a COA against a set of weighted criteria such as: surprise; flexibility; simplicity; security; force protection.

#### ***Key steps to reach a decision on the most adequate COA could include:***

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of each COA, focusing on the cost/benefit to protect civilians against each of the possible threat scenarios, including consideration of risk mitigation.
- Establishing a decision matrix that scores critical areas in each COA to be able to rank the COAs against each other.
- Though HQs would usually not have a simulation capability, it is still possible and recommended to conduct “scenario-gaming exercises” to test the suitability, feasibility, and completeness of selected COAs.

Fundamentally, COAs aim to reduce or eliminate the risk of physical violence against civilians. Development of COAs is considered under each of the four phases of response. Even preventive and pre-emptive action requires careful planning. For all COAs, civilian harm mitigation must be considered rigorously.

#### **5. Decision and OPORD Production**

What? Commander's decision and orders

Who? FC, FCOS, DFCOS Ops, U-2, U-3, Advisers and SMEs (e.g. POC Advisers)

The COA comparison is presented to the Commander who, after being briefed on an overview of each COA, together with their relative strengths and weaknesses, likely reactions to the threats and any UN-specific criteria (ROE, UN principles, POC, etc.), makes an informed decision on which COA will be taken.

The Commander then issues a decision and concept, which forms the basis of Warning Orders (WARNORDs) to subordinate units and commanders. An OPORD or Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) will then be produced.

All orders should include the following: Situation, Commander's Intent, Mission, Execution, Logistics, Command and Control, and Communications Paragraphs.



**ANNEX B****POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Levels**

This Annex is divided into two parts, the first part provides scenarios, possible military action as well as indicators to watch, followed by a second part that exemplifies how to assess threats in POC related scenarios and the format of mitigation measures.

**POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Levels**

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE</b>	<b>WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:</b>	
In all POC scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always intervene and, when necessary, engage with force against armed elements threatening civilians as authorized by ROE. In doing so, ensure all measures are taken to prevent negative consequences on civilians.</li> <li>• Always provide objective and clear information on the security situation and potential threats to the civilian population. This should also include age and sex disaggregated data on refugees and IDPs in assembly points, when possible.</li> <li>• Always provide accurate and clear information for the civilian population and authorities, when possible, on the threats they are facing in a way that does not put them at further risks (Do No Harm).</li> <li>• Ensure patrols (mixed if possible) in areas of firewood/water/food collection, farms and markets, at times agreed upon with the population, taking into account the different protection needs of women, men, girls and boys in consultation with and based on their respective gender roles and norms in the local community. Always conduct foot patrols where possible.</li> <li>• Upon deployment, the unit/commanders should familiarize themselves with the protection actors in or close to their base.</li> <li>• Always be proactive (Tier II – protection from physical violence/prevention phase)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement of armed groups (AGs)/armed elements (AEs)</li> <li>• Hostile intent (communiqués, graffiti, etc.)</li> <li>• Closeness to IDPs and Refugees of AGs/AEs</li> <li>• Suspect presence of AGs/AEs in firewood areas, roads to marketplaces.</li> <li>• Early warnings indicating CRSV cases</li> </ul>

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE</b>	<b>WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact every substantive protection actor within the mission area according to the incident.</li> <li>• Apply the ROE whenever crisis escalates.</li> <li>• Gender considerations including gender-responsive conflict analysis must be taken into account in every mission planning/operation including implementation, monitoring and reporting.</li> <li>• If faced with the threats and violence practiced by AGs against populations, peacekeepers (military and/or police) must always analyse their capacity and resources before intervening. And given their capabilities at the moment, analyse whether to intervene or request additional support.</li> <li>• Ensure frequent meetings with the government, local authorities and leaders of armed groups (if they are open for dialogue), protection actors, local community leaders including women's leaders and their networks. Make sure POC is always part of your agenda.</li> <li>• Show UN presence day and night (Proactivity).</li> <li>• If possible, include Engagement Teams when approaching or engaging with civilians.</li> </ul>	
If faced with civilians who are fleeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure the safety of the fleeing population. Secure the route or position the unit—within capabilities —between the AGs/AEs and the civilian population and inform the population of measures taken.</li> <li>• All armed elements present among the population must be identified, disarmed (per mandate/ROE), and separated/neutralized by relevant authorities and along with DDR principles.</li> <li>• Stop the advance of armed groups if necessary to protect civilians.</li> <li>• Provide escort to the fleeing population as possible until a safe area.</li> <li>• Inform and coordinate with all UN military units and host country.</li> <li>• Request assistance to SHQ and support with transport according to your resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence/ movement of AGs/AEs in the vicinity</li> <li>• Capacity, intent and modus operandi of AGs/AEs presenting a potential threat</li> </ul>

Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE	WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:	
If civilians gather around a UN base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing protected sites within capabilities supports the protection of civilians.</li> <li>• Establish security arrangements in and around the site.</li> <li>• Stop the advance of armed groups to the extent that it does not undermine the protection of the civilians who are gathered around the base.</li> <li>• Prevent AGs/AEs from entering camps or IDP/refugee sites and do not pressure civilians to stay (or to leave).</li> <li>• Liaise with IDPs/refugees' representatives including women leaders to learn about their specific needs and concerns.</li> <li>• Engage with local authorities and women networks and their leaders.</li> <li>• Disarm and separate combatants from civilians, in a manner that does not put civilians at further risks.</li> <li>• Request mission/sector HQ support for the identification of protection needs, including special needs of women, minors, elders, and people living with disabilities.</li> <li>• Identify alternative safe areas, in coordination with authorities and in consultation with protection actors and other relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Consider joint patrols with local security forces, in a manner that does not expose civilians to further risks.</li> <li>• Except in extremis, protected sites should be outside, not inside, UN camps (for Command and Control (C2), security, operational efficiency reasons).</li> <li>• Ensure to immediately inform the situation to the Sector HQ and request for reinforce peacekeeping units.</li> <li>• Request logistics support in order to fulfil the basics needs of the civilians.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence/movement of AGs/AEs in the vicinity</li> <li>• Capacity, Intent and modus operandi of AGs/AEs presenting a potential threat</li> <li>• Early warnings concerning CRSV</li> </ul>

Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE</b>	<b>WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:</b>	
If it's necessary to secure IDP/refugee sites, camps and other settlements	<p>With the support of relevant mission's substantive sections and Community Liaison Assistants (CLAS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with IDP/refugee representatives and local security actors and UNPOL as well as UNHCR to establish security arrangements in and around the sites.</li> <li>• Establish an emergency communication system with IDP representatives including women representatives and relevant protection actors.</li> <li>• Assess main physical security threats with IDP representatives (including those specific to women, children, and elders).</li> <li>• Provide area security patrols outside the IDP/ refugee sites but intervene inside IDP/refugee sites only when civilians are under imminent threat and in the absence of an effective Police (UNPOL; National) presence.</li> <li>• Ensure that AGs/AEs are separated from civilians and that they are not present in or in the vicinity of IDP/refugee sites.</li> <li>• Identify safe areas for displaced persons. Civilians must be consulted and be able to make an informed choice as well as the local authorities.</li> <li>• Assist with humanitarian assistance if necessary.</li> <li>• Try to separate the population by groups of family. Single male and female should have different barracks, preferably apart from each other.</li> <li>• Prepare contingency plans for any cases of threat against the refugee site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence/ movement of AGs/AEs in the vicinity</li> <li>• Capacity, intent and modus operandi of AGs/AEs presenting a potential threat</li> <li>• Early warnings (CRSV</li> </ul>

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE</b>	<b>WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:</b>	
If faced with civilians on civilians (crowd on crowd) violence <sup>23</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually, the military only acts as a as a third responder in support of local security forces and UNPOL; if these are not present, use caution/care in containing violence - within capabilities, identify and engage with ring leaders, maintain impartiality, and conduct inter-positioning if necessary.</li> <li>• Enhance situational awareness to understand the dynamics.</li> <li>• Build up additional troops (reserves, etc.) as convenient.</li> <li>• Place riot control troops on standby, specialized troops, to act on orders.</li> <li>• Provide medical/first aid assistance.</li> <li>• Provide safe corridors for civilians fleeing the area of confrontation.</li> <li>• If the situation has the potential to escalate to a threat to life, intervene with a gradual response (ROE as established in the mission's mandate):</li> <li>• Verbal Commands should be utilized when a hostile person/group is not deterred by the physical presence of peacekeepers and may refuse to listen or take lawful instructions. The use of voice either in providing direction or in appeasing the crowd should be considered.</li> <li>• Non-lethal Soft Techniques such as tear gas and other riot control measures can be used as deterrent techniques if the situation deteriorates.</li> <li>• Using non-lethal Hard Techniques -if there is a threat to life- such as weapon strikes and takedowns –when non-compliant subjects assault civilian population (short of killing or causing permanent injury).</li> <li>• If the civilians attacked are within a protected zone, the area around this protected zone is to be declared a no weapon zone; a safe distance should also be maintained between two different (ethnic/religious etc.) communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Isolated) incidents between individuals/ small groups of different (ethnic, religious, etc) groups</li> <li>• Hostile preparations,</li> <li>• Hostile graffiti, media statements, etc.</li> <li>• Local Government decisions</li> <li>• Diseases outbreaks</li> <li>• Movement of a crowd towards another;</li> </ul>

<sup>23</sup> For guidance on riot control, check DPKO/DFS Guidelines Military Support for Public Order Management in Peacekeeping Missions, August 2016

Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE</b>	<b>WITHIN THE MISSION'S FORCE HEADQUARTERS, GUIDANCE RELATING TO PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, INCLUDING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR UNITS/ COMMANDERS /PEACEKEEPERS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If crowd/demonstrators etc. ask to meet with the Unit representatives, a meeting should be coordinated (who, why, where, etc.), a secure area must be identified and visitors should be checked prior to entry. Such activities should be covered by a security detachment which can swiftly react in case of exchange of fire or sudden fighting.</li> <li>• Attackers must be dealt with sternly and pursued.</li> </ul>	
If crowds gather in front of UN bases or hinders peacekeepers freedom of movement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid confrontation.</li> <li>• Widen the base perimeter.</li> <li>• Use loudspeakers to communicate with/appease crowd. Consider communicating in a language that is understood by the majority.</li> <li>• Identify and engage with ring leaders to negotiate and dissuade them from attacking UN personnel and premises or from obstructing movement.</li> <li>• If the crowd resorts to violence/throwing of stones or improvised incendiary devices (Molotov cocktail, etc), the response should escalate proportionately, aiming at reducing possible harm.</li> <li>• Mission-specific ROEs remain applicable in all scenarios.</li> <li>• If freedom of movement is hindered, use alternative routes. If it is not possible, return to the base and report.</li> <li>• Avoid confrontation and immediately report by radio to the SHQ.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostility from AGs/AEs who are against UN presence in the country.</li> <li>• Local Government decisions.</li> <li>• Diseases outbreaks.</li> <li>• UN members' misconduct/ wrongdoings against the local population</li> </ul>

## Conflict Related Sexual Violence Scenarios

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE</b>	<b>CRSV FRAMEWORK: CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CRSV) REFERS TO INCIDENTS OR PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE SUCH AS RAPE, SEXUAL SLAVERY, FORCED PROSTITUTION, FORCED PREGNANCY, ENFORCED STERILIZATION OR ANY OTHER FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OF COMPARABLE GRAVITY, THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY STATE AND NON STATE ACTORS.</b>	
Protection measures in all scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discerning CRSV:</b> it can be committed against women, men, girls, boys, or gender-diverse people. CRSV incidents can occur in conflict or post-conflict settings or other situations of concern such as political/religious/economic strife. It can be invisible as victims are not testifying, based on stigma or other reasons, and it can be used as a tactic of war.</li> <li>• <b>Active patrolling:</b> patrolling marketplaces, water/firewood collection points and other places frequented by women, girls, and others provides locals a greater sense of security. Targeted areas should be identified in consultation with women. Including trained female peacekeepers could enhance effective interaction with local women and girls, as they might feel more comfortable to talk to someone of the same gender. They may raise relevant information for further CRSV risk analysis and prevention or any other data of interest of the mission. It is therefore crucial that peacekeepers are trained to gather and manage critical information on CRSV. Engagement Teams (ET) can be important military capabilities to tackle CRSV matters by engaging with the population and local leaderships, including women leaders and their networks, in order to raise relevant/sensitive information to prevent sexual violence. Women peacekeepers could potentially also be positive role-models for women and girls in local communities and empower them.</li> <li>• Active patrolling day and night.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The link<sup>24</sup> with conflict may be evident in the profile and motivation of the perpetrators, the profile of the victims, the climate of impunity, the weakened State capacity, violations of the ceasefire agreement.<sup>25</sup></li> <li>• Early warning indicators</li> </ul>

<sup>24</sup> This scenario is not a POC scenario per se; it is more related to a self-defence situation but is considered here—for the sake of completeness—as it might entail, in extreme cases, harm to civilians.

<sup>25</sup> For further details, see S/2014/181 and “The Analytical & Conceptual Framing of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict”, UNIWOMEN, UNACTION, DPKO, June 2010 (<http://www.stoprapenow.org/uploads/advocacyresources/1291722944.pdf>)

Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE</b>	<b>CRSV FRAMEWORK: CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CRSV) REFERS TO INCIDENTS OR PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE SUCH AS RAPE, SEXUAL SLAVERY, FORCED PROSTITUTION, FORCED PREGNANCY, ENFORCED STERILIZATION OR ANY OTHER FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OF COMPARABLE GRAVITY, THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY STATE AND NON STATE ACTORS.</b>	
	<b>Reporting:</b> In order to better prevent and respond to CRSV, information about threats and CRSV incidents should be recorded and shared swiftly along the chain of command, in consonance with the principle of “do no harm,” (maintaining confidentiality) according to the Mission’s established reporting procedures. It is critical to understand that given the trauma caused by CRSV, underreporting of CRSV is common, also among men and boys. No victim should be interviewed on experienced CRSV.	



Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE</b>	<b>CRSV FRAMEWORK: CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CRSV) REFERS TO INCIDENTS OR PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE SUCH AS RAPE, SEXUAL SLAVERY, FORCED PROSTITUTION, FORCED PREGNANCY, ENFORCED STERILIZATION OR ANY OTHER FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OF COMPARABLE GRAVITY, THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY STATE AND NON STATE ACTORS.</b>	
If a crime of sexual violence is being committed or about to be committed or has been committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervene and deter sexual violence from any armed actor and other unarmed actors.</li> <li>• Remind the attacker/perpetrator and those associated with the attacker/perpetrator that they are in breach of both national and international Law and of the consequences of the crime.</li> <li>• Document the event, and in the case that it involves defence or security forces personnel, document which military/police unit, or other elements are accused as perpetrators (the military usually does not conduct investigations, but if photos or videos are taken as evidence, do not take pictures/videos of the victims).</li> <li>• Report immediately via the chain of command to Human Rights Component and WPA/CPA and/or gender unit.</li> <li>• With their consent, bring the survivor(s) of sexual violence to safety and out of the sight of the perpetrator(s) and inform of referral system and assistance.</li> <li>• Do not interview the victim(s).</li> <li>• Establish the gender and age/range of the survivor and confirm if the victim is a child (any person under the age of 18).</li> <li>• Hold the perpetrator(s) and turn him/her/them over to the civilian authorities or the local police.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of Physical marks</li> <li>• Lack of eye contact</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Unwillingness to speak, particularly to men.</li> </ul>
In need of referral arrangements and Survivor assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In many remote mission locations, military units are the first point of contact for a CRSV victim. The on-scene commander is required to take action in accordance with mission specific referral arrangements (to be checked with WPAs). Military units/commanders must:</li> </ul>	

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE</b>	<b>CRSV FRAMEWORK: CONFLICT RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CRSV) REFERS TO INCIDENTS OR PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE SUCH AS RAPE, SEXUAL SLAVERY, FORCED PROSTITUTION, FORCED PREGNANCY, ENFORCED STERILIZATION OR ANY OTHER FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OF COMPARABLE GRAVITY, THAT MAY BE CAUSED BY STATE AND NON STATE ACTORS.</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide immediate support to CRSV victims (e.g., first aid, food, water, clothing, as well as safety and security), preferably by means of a peacekeeper, who is well-trained to assist victims of CRSV, if preferred by the victim a peacekeeper of the same gender.</li> <li>• Do not force the victim to speak if they refuse to.</li> <li>• Get consent of the survivor before reaching out to local authorities after the knowledge of protection actors.</li> <li>• Respect their privacy.</li> <li>• Obtain informed consent of the victim with regard to whom to inform.</li> <li>• Ensure rape victims have access to medical care (especially post-rape medical care, including PEP<sup>26</sup> within 72 hours of the incident to prevent HIV infection<sup>27</sup>).</li> <li>• If possible and with the victim's consent, take the victim to the closest clinic to get professional aid.</li> </ul>	

<sup>26</sup> PEP: Post Exposure Prophylaxis

<sup>27</sup> Each mission has an HIV focal point, trained HIV PEP Kit custodians and designated physicians who are very conversant with the HIV PEP Guidelines and administration of the kits. They should be contacted if and when any case that may require a PEP Kits is encountered. If the probable case is non-UN personnel, they should be referred to the local health facilities for management.

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units
DO's and DON'Ts	
Action to be carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly liaise with local leaders including women leaders and their grass-roots networks, authorities, protection actors, UNPOL to discuss, prevent and tackle POC related subjects (UN-CIMIC).</li> <li>• Pertinent information must be documented according to the principle of “do no harm”.</li> <li>• Respect the victim’s decisions, dignity and confidentiality and preserve evidence.</li> <li>• Ensure restraint, maturity and discretion and follow specified referral arrangements.</li> <li>• Follow detention procedures and keep documentation/digital records.</li> <li>• Assume sexual violence has taken place.</li> <li>• Abide by the “Do no harm” principle.</li> </ul>
Action not to be carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed questioning of victims of sexual violence should not be carried out. This should be left to the experts.</li> <li>• Victims of sexual violence should not be interviewed/ investigated/photographed. This should also be left to relevant protection actors.</li> <li>• No follow-up should be carried out. It is the responsibility of human rights officers and the WPAs and other relevant protection actors.</li> <li>• No action, such as informing authorities, should be taken without informing WPAs and all other substantive protection actors (Gender Unit, Child Protection Unit, Human Rights Component, Legal Adviser, ...)</li> <li>• Do not reveal the personal information of any survivor and do not violate confidentiality.</li> </ul>

### **Child-Protection Scenarios**

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units	Indicators to watch
<b>CHILD PROTECTION SCENARIOS</b>	<b>PROTECTING CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICTS IS A FUNDAMENTAL PEACE AND SECURITY CONCERN HIGHLIGHTED BY A NUMBER OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS, AND UN MILITARY COMPONENTS RETAIN AN IMPORTANT ROLE AND SHOULD SEEK TO RESPOND ALONG THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES</b>	
At all times, prevent, respond, monitor, and report on grave violations	In addition to physically protecting children, UN military units, peacekeepers and commanders support children by contributing to preventing, responding, monitoring and reporting on the six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict (killing or maiming; rape and other forms of sexual violence; recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups; abduction; attacks on schools or hospitals; denial of humanitarian access).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abductions</li> <li>• Forced recruitment</li> <li>• Sexual violence</li> </ul>
If military or armed groups are seen/ reported using children as fighters, labourers, sexual slaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervene, seek release of recruited children, and deter child recruitment.</li> <li>• Report any information to Child Protection (CP)/ Human Rights officers (HRO). Document the activity, i.e., which group/unit/commander and treat evidence with confidentiality.</li> <li>• Remind military personnel and armed groups that the recruitment of child combatants and the use of children for forced labour and/or sexual slavery are illegal including under international human rights and humanitarian law.</li> <li>• Patrol (joint/mixed) in communities exposed to threats of child recruitment.</li> <li>• Only house children in UN bases as a temporary protection measure, while waiting for the relevant Child Protection actors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rounding up, recruiting, kidnapping, or using children (girls and boys) for forced labour and/or sexual slavery who appear to be below 18 years of age; if in doubt, consider them as children and refer them to the mission's Child Protection actors</li> </ul>

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Scenarios	POC actions to be taken by military units
DO's and DON'Ts	
Action to be carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and report grave violations committed against children.</li> <li>• Ensuring all personnel are trained on child protection issues. The recruitment of child soldiers is a widespread tactic of war in many mission areas, and it remains highly important to train and prepare for these situations.</li> <li>• Situational awareness of the presence or absence of children can contribute to a gender-responsive early warning analysis.</li> <li>• Information-sharing protocols should be established with the child protection team, taking into account confidentiality and the sensitivity of dealing with children's issues. Reporting would normally include the type of violation, number of girls and boys affected, the perpetrator, location and time of incident.</li> <li>• Respect the privacy of the children.</li> <li>• Abide by the "Do no harm" principle.</li> <li>• Give primary considerations to the best interest of the child</li> <li>• Provide First Aid kits</li> </ul>
Action not to be carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children should not be put in the direct line of danger or used for peacekeeping-intelligence gathering in military/UN operations. Schools/hospitals are not to be used for any military/UN operation.</li> <li>• Children should not be interrogated or photographed. When information is sought, children should be interviewed by a child protection expert or human rights officer to prevent traumatization.</li> <li>• As a rule, a military unit should never hold a child in detention. However, the holding of children may be done only as a last resort and for the shortest possible time. When children are detained, they should be held in separate quarters from adults (except if detained with a family member, in which case the family unity shall be preserved, provided that this is in the child's best interest), girls must be separated from boys, and children in contact with the law (e.g., victims and witnesses) shall be separated from children in conflict with the law (e.g., perpetrators). Children should be handed over to child protection units in the mission or UNICEF at the earliest possible opportunity<sup>28</sup>.</li> <li>• The handing over of children to authorities should always be done in coordination with the mission's child protection experts. Special assurance must be obtained from the host state authorities prior to handing over children to government child protection authorities, and a risk assessment must be conducted.</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> In accordance with the 2020.13 SOP – The Handling of Detention in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions, this should be within no longer than 48 hours.

## Annex B: POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the likely event that children are present in the host state security forces or other armed groups/spoilers, efforts to rehabilitate them must be initiated in accordance with Mission Headquarters directives. Utmost care, restraint and judgment must be used when encountering children during operations, particularly when delivering measured responses based on the ROE.</li><li>• UN personnel must refrain from all forms of child exploitation and abuse.</li><li>• Do not take pictures of or film children.</li></ul>
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**Template Sample to Assess the threat for POC SCENARIOS**

Identify the scenarios within your AOR and foresee possible threats to civilians under which POC activities will need to be implemented. Then, use the format suggested below to assess the POC situation.

POC SCENARIO WITHIN AOR					
No. #	THREAT	LIKELI-HOOD	POTENTIAL TARGETED POPULATION <sup>29</sup>	CONSEQUENCES & RISKS	CAPACITY OF THE BATTALION

<sup>29</sup> If possible, potential targeted population should be differentiated by groups (men, women, boys, girls and gender-diverse people)

## Annex C: Template Sample for the Assessment of POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

After assessing the THREATS on the POC SCENARIOS, develop mitigating measures and planned responses. For that, use the following format to be prepared in case you face a threat of violence against civilians.

OVERVIEW OF THE SCENARIOS				
Possible developments:				
Possible consequence # 1:				
Likely POC impact:				
Possible consequence # 2:				
Likely POC impact:				
Executive Summary:				
Threats/Violations to occur, against whom	Mitigating and preparatory measures	Date	Reactive measures in response	Comments



Annex C: Template Sample for the Assessment of POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

**EXAMPLE**

POC SCENARIO WITHIN AOR					
No .#	THREAT	LIKELI-HOOD	POTENTIAL TARGETED POPULATION	CONSEQUENCES & RISKS	CAPACITY OF THE BATTALION
1	Threat to life and/or threat of severe physical injury; direct or indirectly related to the rebel militia <i>modus operandi</i> .	HIGH	<p>Local population</p> <p>Women in general, specifically women who are farmers working on fields</p> <p>Children</p> <p>Humanitarian workers</p>	<p>Threat to the Protection of Civilians in general, including killings.</p> <p>Displacement of villagers and high rates of sexual violence committed against women and girls, but also against men and boys</p> <p>Sexual Exploitation and Abuse due to the lack of security.</p> <p>Abduction of children with the aim to use them as soldiers and sex slaves.</p> <p>Disruption of humanitarian aid for the deteriorated security and strong presence of rebels.</p>	<p>Show presence with the UN patrols day and night, establish and maintain a safe environment.</p> <p>Engage with the leaders of the villagers and the civilian population and ensure that women are also consulted in order to obtain suitable information and improve the security in the AOR.</p> <p>Increase patrols in the affected areas in consultation with the local communities.</p> <p>Support all humanitarian workers.</p> <p>Try to establish communication with the leaders of the rebel militia and set restrictions to them specially in all matters related to POC.</p> <p>Disrupt all the militia military operations.</p>

## Annex C: Template Sample for the Assessment of POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

OVERVIEW OF THE SCENARIOS	
Possible developments:	Militia attacks a specific village due to the lack of security.
Possible consequence # 1:	Civilian population remains under imminent threat
Likely POC impact:	Displacement of people, CRSV, and the demand for medical attention and basic needs.
Possible consequence # 2:	Abduction of people in the community to increase the militia, including children and others who are in a situation of heightened vulnerability, e.g. based on the gender roles and norms present in the local community
Likely POC impact:	Children associated with armed forces or armed groups and cases related to CRSV
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>RISK OF DISPLACEMENT POPULATION</p> <p>GENERAL RISK OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND VIOLATIONS</p>	

# Annex C: Template Sample for the Assessment of POC Scenarios for Force, Sector and Unit Level

Threats/Violations to occur	Mitigating and preparatory measures	Date	Reactive measures in response	Comments
<p>Civilians flee their homes.</p> <p>Increased number of children associated with armed forces or armed groups</p> <p>Increased number of cases of CRSV</p>	<p>Monitor the situation closely</p> <p>Obtain accurate information</p> <p>Carry out the communication with the SHQ or FHQ</p>	dd/mm/yy	<p>Increase patrols in the affected areas.</p> <p>Disrupt all the militia military operations.</p>	<p>Establish continuous communication with the humanitarian workers within the AOR.</p>