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**Research Report**

## Preparing for protection of civilians in United Nations peacekeeping operations

DIIS Report, No. 2016:10

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Copenhagen

*Suggested Citation:* Allen, Ross; Rosén, Frederik; Tarp, Kristoffer (2016) : Preparing for protection of civilians in United Nations peacekeeping operations, DIIS Report, No. 2016:10, ISBN 978-87-7605-853-1, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Copenhagen

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/197635>

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A full-page photograph of a group of soldiers in camouflage uniforms running on a sandy dune. The soldiers are in various stages of a running stride, with some in the foreground and others further back. The background shows a clear blue sky and some distant structures. A green semi-transparent banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the title text.

# **PREPARING FOR PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

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Layout: Mark Gry Christiansen  
Printed in Denmark by OnPrint.dk  
Coverphoto: UN Photo/Albert González Farran

ISBN 978-87-7605-852-4 (print)  
ISBN 978-87-7605-853-1 (pdf)

DIIS publications can be downloaded free of charge or ordered from [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)

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# FOREWORD

BY PATRICK CAMMAERT

Protecting civilians has been a central theme in the 21st century debates and mandates of the United Nations Security Council and is at the heart of what UN peacekeeping operations are expected to deliver. However, the United Nations track record on protecting civilians often does not meet expectations. In September 2016, I led an independent special investigation into attacks against civilians in Juba, South Sudan, which occurred during an outbreak of violence between opposing forces in the capital in July 2016. The publicly available recommendations of the report highlight a lack of preparedness across the UN Mission in South Sudan to protect civilians as well as shortfalls in management and oversight by the Mission and the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). It also highlights the lack of commitment of troop and police contributing countries to undertake protection tasks effectively. While assaults against civilians have been particularly grim in South Sudan, similar threats are unfortunately the reality in many other mission contexts. As is, regrettably, the missions' inability to offer the protection which civilians legitimately expect of the United Nations.

As this report identifies, one of the major challenges lies with how peacekeepers are prepared to protect civilians. It shows that there is a need for comprehensive and context-specific pre-deployment training programs, standardized for all contributing countries, and for in-mission training to be delivered to incoming troops and police. While training is not a panacea that will resolve all protection challenges, training is needed to ensure that personnel serving under the UN flag understand a Mission's mandate and the rules of engagement that need to be applied in defense of that mandate. To this effect, Member States and DPKO need to do more to ensure

that troops and police are up to task through dedicated and committed partnerships. This report provides a useful explanation of where the gaps are and ideas for how they can be addressed. It should trigger discussions between DPKO, troop- and police contributing countries as well as Member States wishing to invest in training support on how to work together collectively to ensure that UN peacekeepers are better prepared to protect those most in need.

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# PREFACE

On 23 August 2016, the United Nations Secretary-General launched an independent special investigation into two aspects of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan's response to the crisis that erupted in Juba, South Sudan from 8 to 11 July. During these four days, intense fighting saw civilians injured and killed inside displaced persons camps, and government forces attacked international and national aid workers. In the following weeks, South Sudanese women who went outside the displaced persons camp looking for food, were raped by government forces. The special investigation also evaluated whether UNMISS responded effectively to protect civilians from violence.

A number of findings and recommendations from the investigation were made public, including that the Mission suffered from a lack of "preparedness and integration among various components of the mission", which hampered its ability to carry out its protection of civilians mandate.

This report was completed prior to the tragic events in Juba during July 2016, but it echoes the recommendations of the Independent Special Investigation. It also points out the enormous challenges of realising these recommendations.

A major challenge with protecting civilians is the fact that the Protection of Civilians (PoC) as defined by UN Peacekeeping PoC-doctrine is, for many troop and police contributing nations, not a standard military task. Every peacekeeper, from commander to troops arriving to UN peacekeeping mission needs to understand "PoC" theory and how to translate this into practice. At the same time, the distance from New York where UN policy is determined to peacekeepers in the field is enormous. Training is key to bridging this gap.



# INTRODUCTION

Training of peacekeepers and specifically pre-deployment training (PDT) sets United Nations Peacekeeping an enduring test. Presented with acute challenges, the inferior responses of peacekeepers related to the Protection of Civilians (PoC) in a number of recent cases point to the need for a serious re-evaluation of training and training needs. There are currently ten United Nations peacekeeping missions with explicit PoC mandates. Yet there is little knowledge of the extent to which and how Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) to United Nations Peacekeeping train their troops to protect civilians.

This report aims at contributing to the current discussion on PDT by presenting the findings of a survey of Troop Contributing Countries to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and their inclusion of training related to PoC in pre-deployment training. The survey offers a first step towards generating better knowledge of PDT and PoC in the context of UN peacekeeping. The survey was conducted in early 2016.

The survey indicates that it may be useful to consider how to:

- Work towards a shared understanding among UN member states and their defence forces of what PoC means on the most practical level of everyday conduct of peace operations.
- Merge protection-related PDT to include PoC, child protection, gender and human rights into one training cluster.
- Emphasise PoC as an overarching objective and a unique military objective of peacekeeping (compared to traditional soldiering).

- Authorise and also financially enable the DPKO to take on a more prescriptive role in defining content, duration and methodology for PDT, including PoC, to assist member states to build consistency and quality in TCC/PCC PDT efforts (while acknowledging that PDT is ultimately a member state responsibility).
- Ensure up-to-date, tactical level and mission-specific training materials are available to command as well as troop levels.
- Ensure that PDT addresses reactive as well as proactive military responses to threats against civilians.
- Ensure that training equips peacekeepers to work and liaise with other mission actors (police, civilian) and non-mission actors (host government, civil society) to ensure that military responses to threats remain the option of last resort.
- Strengthen global partnerships and consider how PDT and in-mission training can be provided by those who can to those who need it.
- Procure or encourage independent reviews or research that may assist TCCs as well as DPKO to establish better impressions of the everyday life and challenges of TCCs in the field.


## **STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The report first outlines the global arena for PoC and the architecture around the delivery of PDT. It then presents the survey results and identifies a number of initiatives relating to PDT on PoC that have been launched in recent years – many of which address some of the needs and challenges identified through the survey and captured in the recommendations. Finally, it lists a series of recommendations to improve training aspects of PoC.

## **UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS**

Over the last decades, the need to strengthen the protection of civilians caught up in armed conflict has seen increased international awareness. Violence against civilians continues to rise, including the use of explosive devices in urban areas, sexual violence as a weapon of war and direct/systematic targeting of people along ethnic or religious lines.<sup>1</sup> In today's armed conflicts almost all of those killed, injured or harmed are civilians.<sup>2</sup>

The so-called “Brahimi Report”,<sup>3</sup> and the corresponding United Nations Security Council Resolution 1327 (2000), both recommended that peace operations be given clear, credible and achievable mandates and, where appropriate and within their mandates, a credible deterrent capability. It further recommended that the mandated tasks be appropriate to the situation on the ground, including the potential need to protect civilians.<sup>4</sup> The Brahimi Report recommended that the United Nations Secretariat “(...) send a team to confirm the readiness of each potential troop contributor to meet the requisite United Nations training and equipment requirements for peacekeeping operations, prior to deployment. Units that do not meet the requirements must not be deployed.”<sup>5</sup> UNSC Resolution 1327 emphasised “(...) the importance of member states taking the necessary and appropriate steps to ensure the capability of their peacekeepers to fulfil the mandates assigned to them, underlines the importance of international cooperation in this regard, including the training of peacekeepers.”<sup>6</sup> Since then, the United Nations Security Council has increasingly focused on responding to PoC challenges.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, the Council has provided the missions with tougher and more specific mandates, including Council support for robust peacekeeping as a means to protect civilians,<sup>8</sup> and mandates have become much more focused on protecting civilians as a key priority. Policy and doctrine have followed this development.



**There is now a very clear normative framework in place to guide peacekeepers and shape international response to the protection of civilians. This has been emphasised in the recent report by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), which identified protection as a “core obligation” for the United Nations.<sup>9</sup>**

Yet, by all accounts, the training needs identified by the Brahimi Report and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1327 still need to be addressed properly, not least on PoC. An explanation for this gap may be found in the fact that strategic, tactical, and practical (including training needs) implications of the far-reaching PoC ambitions for United Nations Peacekeeping are not fully developed.<sup>10</sup> As recently as 2014 the United Nations Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) found that tactical-level guidance does not adequately address ground realities and complexities when force might be necessary.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, protection mandates are now so broad that they risk losing focus. Confusion arises as protection expectations span

a range of, in themselves often unclear, protection areas, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), conflict-related sexual violence, violence against children, environmental and health protection (i.e. the cholera incident in Haiti), and the breadth of human rights abuses. Altogether, with increasingly ambitious PoC mandates for missions presenting peacekeepers with ever-more complicated protection challenges, the international community displays an underwhelming ability to protect. In that regard, notwithstanding the many other factors impacting the ability to ensure effective PoC, pre-deployment training has emerged as a key concern, as also emphasised in the HIPPO report.<sup>12</sup>

The recent focus on PDT by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and member states alike also needs to be seen in light of the fact that PDT has received less attention than other elements of the United Nations reform agenda such as developing policy and planning frameworks, simply because PDT responsibilities lie with the member states. However, as the demand for better performance and value for money from the United Nations increases and, as sketched out above, the challenges become more complex, the skills and capacities of those who (get reimbursed to) serve under the United Nations flag are gradually more scrutinised. This has spurred a focus on PDT from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and member states alike.

## **A GLOBAL FOCUS ON TRAINING FOR PROTECTING CIVILIANS**

The formation of global training partnerships has been identified as a means to this end. Particular attention has been paid to training related to PoC, which is often highlighted as the current *raison d'être* for United Nations peacekeeping. A comprehensive Training Needs Assessment carried out in 2012–2013 highlighted “in-depth knowledge of human rights and protection of civilians” as a critical priority for UN personnel.<sup>13</sup> Yet there continue to be divergent understandings of peacekeepers’ obligation to protect civilians,<sup>14</sup> how it should be done, and which situations warrant the use of force. This has undermined effective responses and the United Nations and its member states remain underprepared to carry out PoC mandates effectively in diverse and complex mission contexts – often resulting in strategic and tactical confusion on the ground, sometimes with dramatic consequences for civilians. Consequently, evidence on peacekeepers’ performance on PoC has often largely been confined to negative news stories, such as recent events in the Central African Republic<sup>15</sup> and South Sudan.<sup>16</sup>

Obviously, training is one among many factors contributing to the ability of peacekeepers to protect civilians. The reach and material capabilities of peacekeeping missions impose very real constraints on their ability to respond to identified threats.<sup>17</sup> Limited means for early warning, identifying threats and collecting and disseminating intelligence, and limited capacities to move troops, to mention a few issues, typically stand as roadblocks to responding effectively. While acknowledging the range of other issues affecting the ability of peacekeeping missions to protect civilians, the survey from which this document draws its main conclusions focuses only on the role of pre-deployment training.

## **THE COMPLEX ARCHITECTURE OF PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING**

Pre-deployment training is a particularly important way of ensuring that peacekeepers arrive in mission with, at the very least, the basic skills required to work in an international environment.<sup>18</sup> For protection tasks specifically, training in behavioural, social, and attitudinal skills, as well as other relevant skills and tools such as intelligence and communication, which are offered by the United Nations or other TCCs, is critical to ensuring that peacekeeping personnel are equipped to interact with vulnerable people and at-risk populations and that through that interaction are able to provide appropriate protection.<sup>19</sup> This is particularly the case in the contemporary peacekeeping landscape where conflicts are often protracted, take place in “normal” environments (villages, schools etc.) and the boundaries between war and peace, soldiers and civilians, tend to blur.


Recent evaluations of pre-deployment training and training programmes for protection tasks confirm that training adds positive benefits for peacekeeping missions and peacekeepers, both in terms of time saved on arrival by having already equipped them with a thorough understanding of the mission context, and in terms of practical knowledge and skills attainment.<sup>20</sup> But a general awareness of how TCCs and PCCs conduct pre-deployment training remains limited, including on PoC issues. Training on PoC issues, strategy and tactics is particularly important because PoC remains an embryonic concept in the military organisations of most, if not all, countries contributing with police and troops to UN Peacekeeping.

Although the General Assembly resolution 49/37 on training is more than 20 years old, in some respects training and performance management appears as a relatively new concern for United Nations Peacekeeping. More detailed policy, guidance and training resources have been developed over recent years based on a compre-

hensive Training Needs Assessment carried out in 2012–2013<sup>21</sup> and the 2010 “Policy on Training for all United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel”. However, these recent policies and guidance have yet to be fully implemented. PoC training and staffing budgets within the United Nations rely on voluntary contributions by member states and are not a permanent part of training architecture. The system-wide strategic approach to training is less than a decade old and relies on a fragmented network of service providers that includes governments, United Nations entities and third party organisations.<sup>22</sup>

The primary responsibility for actual training and validation of preparedness of peacekeepers for service with the United Nations lies with each T/PCC. Effectively preparing peacekeepers for duty is fundamentally challenging. Developing, delivering and assuring effective pre-deployment training to over 100,000 frequently rotating peacekeepers from 120 contributing countries operating across sixteen mission settings requires a flexible yet consistent, and decentralised yet standardised architecture.<sup>23</sup>

An evaluation of the NORAD Training for Peace Programme,<sup>24</sup> for example, identified a number of coordination challenges and gaps. Weak links between partner organisations can undermine the effectiveness of the training programmes and, therefore, standards. Incentives for partnership and cooperation may not be obvious, resulting in limited engagement between partners to develop and implement a collective strategy where gaps are identified. As a default, individual partners respond to the needs of their individual organisations rather than to the needs of the programme. In this environment, developing and maintaining a benchmark standard is a difficult goal to reach. Moreover, ensuring that training remains relevant and positively impacts peacekeepers’ capacity to respond to protection tasks is an equally great challenge.



**The existence of training resources in itself does not ensure that peacekeepers arrive in missions with an understanding of their responsibilities as well as operational possibilities and constraints when it comes to protecting civilians. What is required is a focused PDT with fresh information from mission areas as well as some mechanisms for testing that the troops learn the core lessons that training is design to convey.**

DPKO and DFS have developed a framework for monitoring and evaluating training, as well as an overall “Operational Readiness Assurance and Performance Improvement Policy”, but it is still in the process of being tested. A key challenge is to ensure that the right people are trained with the right focus and at the right time.

In some cases, contingents may receive very little time for any pre-deployment training, either because there are difficulties finding and recruiting the right TCC or because a contingent has been drafted quickly on an inter-mission rotation arrangement in response to a crisis (e.g. South Sudan in 2013). Sometimes, training personnel may not be available prior to deployment. For good reasons, when crisis erupts the priority of getting boots on the ground often overrules quality assurance concerns. In such circumstances, DPKO should have a backup plan to ensure that peacekeepers learn important tasks on the job.



## THE FINDINGS OF THE GLOBAL SURVEY ON PDT

Following the recommendations of HIPPO for the United Nations Secretariat to support member states in establishing strong global partnerships on training for United Nations Peace Operations, the Danish Ministry of Defence asked the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) to undertake a pilot survey of pre-deployment training practices of TCCs, focusing specifically on PoC training. The survey intended to establish a knowledge base which TCCs, Police Contributing Countries (PCCs), the DPKO, mission leadership and prospective providers of training can use to determine what is needed, to ensure that peacekeepers at all levels and in all functions are most effectively prepared to serve in missions with PoC mandates.

The survey was developed as an online survey covering a range of questions related to PDT. It was launched in January 2016 and distributed to all TCCs and PCCs to United Nations peacekeeping missions and remained open until mid-March 2016. It was distributed in English and French through focal points in permanent missions to the United Nations in New York, and directly to contacts in TCCs that were provided to DIIS by their permanent missions to the United Nations in New York.

Twenty-one responses to the survey were received by the deadline.<sup>25</sup> Of these, ten were fully completed including those of five TCCs in the top 20. The remaining eleven surveys were partially completed. The completed responses, which form the basis for this analysis, include major troop and police contributing countries from the G77 block, as well as from Western bloc member states. However, while the responding nations do represent around one third of all deployed peacekeepers, African TCCs are particularly underrepresented (see Annex I for further information on the survey).

Although the response rate to the survey was lower than hoped for, the responding TCCs collectively represent some 31,500 peacekeepers out of a total of 103,500. This means that the received responses still represent almost a third of all deployed troops.

The responses raise some consistent thematic issues that resonate well with the literature on evaluation and impact of pre-deployment training, of which key texts are referenced in this report.

# KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

## **INTEGRATION AND USAGE OF UN PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING MATERIALS**

Respondents were asked to rank each of the four core pre-deployment training modules (CPTM)<sup>26</sup> in terms of their relevance to deploying for a United Nations operation on a scale of 1 (not relevant) to 5 (very relevant). The average rating for CPTM was 3.5. The majority of respondents confirmed that their pre-deployment training drew on core and specialised training modules developed by the United Nations. Some respondents referenced several of DPKO's core protection materials while others made no such reference. The completed survey responses and follow-up interviews hence indicate that TCCs utilise the United Nations core pre-deployment training materials as the basis for PDT programmes, which might be expected to install an awareness of core thematic issues related to deploying with the United Nations. However, the respondents did not point out which UN training materials inform TCC and PCC training delivery and this aspect thus remains unclear.

## **EXTENT AND METHODOLOGIES OF PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING**

Among the survey respondents, time spent on pre-deployment training varies from country to country, as well as between officers and troops. Some officers reportedly received three weeks of pre-deployment training before training their troops in a "cascading model", i.e. where those receiving training subsequently train other individuals who then in turn train others. Training periods for troops range from four to sixteen weeks.

Time spent on training on protection of civilians within countries also varies. Some officers may receive as little as a few hours of theoretical training, which may be sandwiched between many other core pre-deployment concepts. Some PDT programmes include one week for troops learning about protection of civilians which is taught using a range of learning modalities. The survey responses and follow-up meetings emphasise that time for training is limited given the range of topics and subjects the PDT needs to cover.


Teaching methodologies appear to be relatively consistent. Reportedly, all officers and troops/police undergo a combination of self-paced learning (online or otherwise), class-based learning, practical exercises and field or scenario-based exercises. Training in PoC is delivered through a combination of class-based learning and practical or live exercises. The data does indicate that there are variations in course content, suggesting that there could be considerable variation in knowledge and preparedness between contingents.

The survey found that effective PoC training requires the concepts and requirements to be translated into operational and tactical level tasks and missions. Examples that emerged in the survey responses and interviews<sup>27</sup> about what could be done to make PDT on PoC more effective included: more specific training and analysis on different protection threats; scenarios for rules of engagement when protecting civilians; scenarios for PoC detention points; and specific patrol and observation scenarios. Furthermore, requests were made for briefings on the roles and responsibilities of other actors that form part of the protection framework in mission settings, and without which contingents may mistakenly assume that protection is primarily a military task.

## **UN-SPECIFIC AND POC-FOCUSED TRAINING CONTENT**

PDT needs to cover a range of tactical, operational and conceptual training aimed at integrating troop contributions into a specific UN mission structure and its context. Some of the survey responses highlighted the importance of learning about the history and normative framework of the United Nations (for some troops, this could be their first learning opportunity about the United Nations and international law) but noted that there is little time to engage with specialised training, including on PoC.

The survey and follow-up consultations<sup>28</sup> confirmed that PoC is not a standard military training task. Therefore, it shouldn't be assumed that PoC is covered in standard national military training. Indeed, even though protection of civilians has evolved into a priority and defined concept within the United Nations system, it may still be very new to some national armed forces.<sup>29</sup> PoC comprises a set of practices and objectives that move beyond International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and which many military organisations have not yet embraced on a strategic or a practical level.




**Many nations provide training in what armed forces often label “Civil–Military Coordination”, but this is not (necessarily) focused on protection. Militaries in general focus on defeating a threat as quickly as possible while ensuring that civilians enjoy protection as best as possible under IHL and sometimes IHRL. The concept of protecting a civilian population proactively and without targeting the cause of the threat can seem counter-intuitive to many military planners.**

This is one of the main differences between peacekeeping and traditional soldiering in relation to PoC. Without a common understanding of the sub-tasks that PoC generates for militaries, the confused “fallback” position can, for example, lead to static guards around PoC camps who are unsure of their responsibilities if threatened from the inside or outside.

The survey found that some contingents undergo training as an integrated learning element of the core pre-deployment training which is mandatory for all uniformed personnel serving under the United Nations flag, and which addresses PoC in the context of global norms and international human rights law. Others are exposed to training that covers both broad protection concepts within the framework of international human rights law and specific training, including DPKO's specialised training modules; for example, training on child protection. Most of the respondents confirmed that they were aware that DPKO/DFS have produced guidelines and policy on PoC.

Survey respondents highlighted that PDT should aim at establishing a good understanding of the role of military responses to threats against civilians as well as the critical roles and responsibilities of other mission components. This should also

enable peacekeepers to liaise better with other mission actors (including civilian and police) and non-mission actors (most importantly the host government but also for example civil society organisations) with a view to guaranteeing that military responses to threats remain the last resort.



**Generally, the survey and subsequent interviews<sup>30</sup> indicated a need for DPKO to be more prescriptive about the content, structure and training methodology for training related to PoC, including for specific mission settings.**

The survey triggered repeated calls for more specialised and context-specific training on PoC, including country-specific scenarios. As with many forms of training for peacekeeping and delivery on the ground, the survey also found that there is an important gap in evaluating the effectiveness of training on PoC.<sup>31</sup> This relates both to ensuring that training is delivered effectively as PDT with updates provided once deployed in the mission, and that the training leads to the desired operational changes.

# EXISTING INITIATIVES ON AND RESOURCES FOR TRAINING IN PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

## EXPANDING PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING RESOURCES ON POC

In recent years, the UN has made important strides to address the lack of clarity on the operational meaning and practical implementation of PoC mandates. Some of these are likely to address the needs and challenges identified through the survey. During 2015–2016 we have seen a significant push to improve the effectiveness of PoC in United Nations peacekeeping.<sup>32</sup> The policy on “The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping”<sup>33</sup> and the “Implementing Guidelines for Military Components of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions”<sup>34</sup> military guidance issued by the United Nations Departments of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Field Support (DFS) are critical steps in this direction. So are the Tactical Level Mission-Specific Training Modules on Protection of Civilians and the mission-specific and scenario-based modules developed in 2013.

DPKO’s Office of Military Affairs is currently in the process of developing more detailed guidance on the nature, extent and structure of PDT including indicative timelines and time usage recommendations that can be offered to TCCs and PCCs. In a pilot project DPKO will establish a Training of Trainers centre, initially located in Entebbe, to support the trainers providing pre-deployment training to troops and police in delivering training that is consistent with UN standards and approaches. DPKO has worked with force commanders to put in place targeted in-mission refresher training for peacekeepers before their deployments across the mission area. DPKO has also started to convene annual workshops with key TCCs to examine where the core PDT training materials can be improved to make them more relevant and reso-



nate with the most common challenges of TCCs including in relation to PoC. These are positive initiatives, but the challenge will be to ensure the right messages are conveyed by trainers when they are preparing contingents.

## **ASSESSING THE IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES OF TRAINING**

At mission level the DPKO/DFS “Operational Readiness Assurance and Performance Improvement Policy” will enable force commanders to report more systematically on performance issues and UN HQ to work with TCCs/PCCs directly to address specific challenges materialising across different missions. For example, if peacekeepers provided by a specific TCC continue to struggle with responding to threats against civilians, DPKO could work with the TCC to ensure that pre-deployment training with this specific focus is provided. However, DPKO should also continue to use external assessments of underperformance as and when possible to ensure that challenges are objectively understood.


## **THE CHALLENGES OF TRAINING MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT**

DPKO has struggled to provide effective oversight of PDT. There is a fundamental challenge when it comes to understanding precisely how many people trained through a given training programme end up deploying on mission.<sup>35</sup> As a result of shortfall in capacity for recognising member state training programmes, there has been “insufficient assurance that training of military troops and Formed Police Units have met the required standards.”<sup>36</sup>

While the United Nations is at the heart of the global training architecture, it can only achieve meaningful results with the support of member states and other training partners. Ensuring that the training provided to peacekeepers adheres to a common standard and produces necessary skill sets, irrespective of where it is done or by whom, is the key challenge.

The HIPPO report, while recognising the importance of better training, including for protection of civilians, is short on detail beyond stressing the importance of understanding rules of engagement. The lack of concrete vision might be a reflection of the complexity mentioned above and thus points to a need for creative thinking for

both training developers and TCCs wanting to enhance preparedness for effective tactical responses to threats against civilians.




**Among the many elements that determine the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the performance of individual peacekeepers and their commanders plays a prominent, though often underestimated, role. With close to 105,000 uniformed peacekeepers and 16,500 civilian peacekeepers deployed to sixteen peacekeeping missions, the performance evaluation task is daunting.**

What is also clear is that performance evaluation has received less attention than other aspects of United Nations peacekeeping. In 2010 the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) noted that DPKO's Office for Military Affairs (OMA) had "no methodology or standards for the evaluation of the performance of military contingents in peacekeeping missions."<sup>37</sup> A subsequent OIOS report in 2015 found that OMA needed to improve pre-deployment verification of readiness of military troops and Formed Police Units. The report found that pre-deployment verification only occurs at the stage of initial deployment and not during subsequent rotations, i.e. the standard of long-term rotations is an unknown. In other words, it has historically not been clear whether peacekeepers generally viewed are up to task, especially for complex mandate assignments such as PoC.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey outcome indicates primarily the difficulty of accessing knowledge about PDT. The low response level and the vague responses from many respondents indicate a lack of willingness to engage in this kind of survey. It may perhaps also indicate that TCCs themselves may not have readily available information on what kind of PDT their troops receive before being deployed to United Nations Peacekeeping missions. Whatever the reasons for the low survey response, the received responses do provide us with important information.



**Based on this we may conclude that recently developed United Nations policy and guidance, as well as tactical level training resources, are not automatically integrated into national-level training efforts. More broadly, protection of civilians seems to be more of a consideration within pre-deployment training, rather than a defining strategic concept at the centre of PDT.**

To strengthen the approach to PoC in PDT, the United Nations and member states (specifically the TCCs and PCCs) could consider the following recommendations:

1. Given the primacy of PoC in the vast majority of peacekeeping missions, DPKO and member states should take a more determined approach to defining PoC as an overarching objective of peacekeeping. If effective implementation of PoC were promoted as the success criterion of peacekeeping, training activities would most likely need to be adjusted to conform and be engineered around building the requisite knowledge and skills. Various related protection dimen-

sions, such as child protection, sexual and gender-based violence and human rights, could constitute important elements of the overall protection objective. In other words, PoC could serve as the overall “umbrella” under which all protection-related training would be organised.

2. DPKO/DFS and member states should collectively consider how to tailor PDT to better prioritise PoC during training, including through a more prescriptive role for DPKO/DFS in defining the content, structure, and training methodology of the training related to PoC, including for specific mission settings. PDT should be incentivised to draw on the existing policy, guidance and training resources to answer the critical question of what PoC means in a given operational context and define the responsibilities, opportunities and constraints faced by every peacekeeper deploying to that context. At the same time, there needs to be greater transparency around PDT training curriculums for Troop and Police Contributing Countries in order for DPKO to take a lead role in shaping knowledge transfer to the peacekeepers they pay to serve under the UN flag.
3. DPKO’s online reference library helps to ensure that all of the required material is readily available, but it should also be augmented by a regular communications campaign, especially when new materials or requirements emerge.
4. Emphasis should be placed on developing mission-specific analysis and cases, plus scenario-based training that also address the role of other PoC actors and convey an understanding of the unique but limited role of military responses as a last resort. For this to happen, resources would be required to develop sample cases and scenarios before they can be integrated into training and ensure they remain up-to-date with given protection environments.
5. To ensure more comprehensive responses and that military solutions remain the last resort, in-mission exercises should be undertaken involving all key civilian and military protection actors with a view to establishing a shared understanding of the protection challenges as well as of the most suitable response mechanisms and sequences in different situations.
6. Efforts must also be made to ensure that current analysis is available and that practical training is undertaken by peacekeeping training centres and on the ground with contingents. A mechanism should be developed whereby mission-specific analysis and scenarios are more readily available and easily fed into pre-deployment training through learning and exercises. This could include

PoC training tools that are currently being developed by member states; ensuring that national contingent commanders are able to feed into scenario-based training for future contingents; that lessons learned are drawn from actual PoC incidents, etc. In this context it is important to strike a balance between making training relevant to the specific operating context while not tying learning objectives to specific situations. Every situation in which peacekeepers must respond to protection challenges is different and unique. Hence, what must be developed is the peacekeepers' ability to analyse a given situation and tailor a response drawing on policy, guidance and "successful precedence", while avoiding the potential tendency to simply replicate past responses or use the situation's unfamiliarity as an excuse not to act. The DPKO, missions, contingents and training partners all have a role to play in this regard.

7. An effective mechanism is required to track and measure training. Understanding and improving the linkages between PDT and outcomes in the field requires continuous and structured monitoring. Effective testing and monitoring requires genuine collaboration from countries contributing troops to United Nations peacekeeping. There is a need to move from a perception that TCCs and PCCs are being "audited" to that of a genuine partnership with a shared interest in learning from the past with a view to improving for the future.<sup>38</sup> The fact that troop and police contributing countries do not engage in self-assessment of their responsibility to ensure incorporation of CPTM modules into their PDT poses a further challenge. The DPKO should be supported to further advance self-assessment methodologies and tools for TCCs and PCCs. A first step would be to define performance and effectiveness with regard to PoC, which would enable planners to more clearly see where improvements are required, including in training. Making improvements in this regard will be particularly challenging given the size of the system and the fragmented training architecture. At the same time, this presents an opportunity to put DPKO's new guideline for peacekeeping training evaluation to the test, as well as to accelerate self-assessment by countries contributing troops and police to United Nations Peacekeeping operations.
8. The DPKO and respective peacekeeping operations could also implement more strategic planning and personnel management with incoming T/PCCs. Consistent and effective handover processes between rotating contingents must be in place to ensure that tasks are effectively transitioned and managed by incoming contingents (especially important if oversight of training and preparedness of new contingents is limited).<sup>39</sup> More in-mission planning trips by TCCs should be encouraged and sponsored where necessary as long as six months prior to de-

ployment. This would allow TCCs to modify their own training design and delivery to ensure that the most up-to-date analysis of threats and risks is clearly understood and integrated into PDT.<sup>40</sup>

9. Regardless of the “who-does-what?” in efforts to strengthen PoC aspects of PDT, resources will be needed to develop relevant training materials, to provide training and to monitor that the training is translated into more effective PoC responses. If PoC is indeed considered the *raison d’être* of contemporary peacekeeping, this must be reflected in adequate investment through assessed contributions to DPKO in preparing to do so.
10. Finally, a concerted effort is required to make sense of HIPPO’s call for “strong global partnerships” on training. A mechanism should be established on a trial basis that makes it easier for TCCs to reach out to the United Nations and other TCCs and non-TCCs for assistance to conduct pre-deployment and in-mission training, in particular on Protection of Civilians, with the results measured using the United Nations guidelines for peacekeeping training evaluation. The same mechanism may also make it easier for TCCs and non-TCCs that wish to engage in training activities through the United Nations or bilaterally to identify entry points and partnership modalities.

# ANNEX I

## THE SURVEY AND ITS METHODOLOGY

DIIS started to develop the survey in autumn 2015. In December 2015 DIIS and the International Peace Institute hosted military and police advisers of Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York for a round-table discussion on training challenges and on the survey design. Member states were invited to provide advice to DIIS on the targeting of questions. They were also requested to provide focal points to complete the online survey and for further dialogue. The workshop helped to adjust the survey and ensure that the questionnaire was relevant both to member states involved in deploying contingents and to those providing more specialist resources such as staff officers and military experts. The feedback from participants indicated that the survey design was comprehensive but that information requirements were manageable. It also suggested that the questions developed were appropriately targeted to identify practical gaps in PDT. One member state expressed concerns about the time demand placed on respondents and that the lack of anonymity might deter some member states from responding.

The survey launched in late January 2016 to TCCs and PCCs to United Nations peacekeeping missions and remained open until mid-March. It was distributed in English and French through focal points in permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and directly to focal points in contributing countries. Invitations to complete the survey were sent electronically to member states through their permanent missions in New York. For the top twenty TCCs, additional efforts were made to reach key focal points directly at the capital level. Additionally, the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations supported the distribution by following up directly with military and police advisers to encourage participation. The survey team also made direct follow-up to several TCC focal points in March 2016. The survey deadline was extended by one month to encourage more member states to complete the survey.



# NOTES

- 1 "Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict", 18 June 2015, United Nations, S/2015/453.
- 2 William H. Wiist et al. (2014): "The role of public health in the prevention of war: rationale and competencies", **American Journal of Public Health** 104(6): e34–e47.
- 3 The Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, reported to the UN Secretary-General on 17 August 2000: UN Doc. A/55/305.
- 4 Cutillo, Alberto. **Deploying the Best: Enhancing Training for United Nations Peacekeepers**, International Peace Institute, August 2013; Axmacher, Susanne, **Review of Scenario-Based Trainings for Military Peacekeepers on Prevention and Response to Conflict Related Sexual Violence**, December 2013, <http://www.resdal.org/wps/assets/review-scenario-based-training-crsv.pdf>
- 5 The Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, reported to the UN Secretary-General on 17 August 2000: UN Doc. A/55/305, p. xi.
- 6 UN SC Resolution 1327.
- 7 Security Council Report, **Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict**, 1 May 2015.
- 8 In 2014, for example, the Council authorised a peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic (CAR), and it re-authorised the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) as well as the intervention brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). *Ibid.*
- 9 High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (HIPPO), **Uniting Our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnership and People**, UN Doc. A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p.11.
- 10 Holt, Viktoria K. "The military and civilian protection: developing roles and capacities", **Overseas Development Institute Humanitarian Policy Group Research Briefing**, 22 March 2016. Accessed at <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/329.pdf>
- 11 United Nations General Assembly Document A/68/787, "Evaluation of the implementation and results of protection of civilians mandates in United Nations peacekeeping operations", (2014) p.16.
- 12 There are currently ten United Nations peacekeeping missions with an explicit protection of civilians mandate. The United Nations more broadly has adopted a "rights upfront" approach, putting the protection of human rights at the heart of the organisation and committing to act early and quickly where rights are compromised. United Nations General Assembly Document A/68/787, "Evaluation of the implementation and results of protection of civilians mandates in United Nations peacekeeping operations" (2014) p. 16.
- 13 "Training: A Strategic Investment in UN Peacekeeping", Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment, Final Report, 2012–2013.
- 14 See "Opinions Divided over Protection of Civilians as Fourth Committee Concludes General Debate on Peacekeeping Matters", General Assembly Meetings Coverage, 5 November 2015. Seventieth Session, 14th Meeting (PM). GA/SPD/597.
- 15 See for example Cinq-Mars, E. 2015. "Too little, too late: Failing to prevent atrocities in the Central African Republic", **Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. Occasional Paper Series**. No. 7, September 2015.
- 16 See for example: MSF internal review of the February 2016 attack on the Malakal Protection of Civilians Site and the post-event situation, 2016. [https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/sites/usa/files/msf\\_malakal\\_report\\_2016.pdf](https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/sites/usa/files/msf_malakal_report_2016.pdf)

- 17 See for example Rosén, F. & Tarp, K.N. 2015. "Enabling the Protection of Civilians in UN Peace Operations: It's time for PoC advocates to walk the talk", Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen. **DIIS Policy Brief, no. September, vol. 2015.**
- 18 An evaluation by NORAD of their own Training for Peace Programme noted that training for police officers was particularly valuable given the low skill and experience levels (including international experience) of the officers from developing countries in Africa and Asia that provide the bulk of peacekeepers to United Nations missions. See Elling N. Tjønneland et al. (2014): **Building Blocks for Peace An Evaluation of the Training for Peace in Africa Programme**, Oslo: Norad (Evaluation Department no. 6/14), pp. 50–53.
- 19 Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Evaluation of Child Protection Training, Phase 1 (2012) p.p. 12–14.
- 20 Tjønneland et al. (2014), Kabasha, Khalid, (2013), **Pre-Deployment Training And The Performance of Police Mandate In Peace Support Operations: The Case Of Rwanda National Police**, dissertation submitted to the Centre for Conflict Management, National University of Rwanda; and **Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Behavioural Change Among Security and Defense Forces**, Save The Children, March 2014.
- 21 "Training: A Strategic Investment in UN Peacekeeping, Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment", Final Report, 2012-2013.
- 22 Cutillo, **Deploying the Best: Enhancing Training for United Nations Peacekeepers**, International Peace Institute, p.10.
- 23 Training itself is delivered through a vast network of public and private, national, regional and international peacekeeping training centres. This poses administrative, management and quality control challenges to the United Nations Secretariat, including ensuring that doctrine and policy guidance are adhered to and translated effectively into appropriate and effective training that in the end transfers to more effective and professional peacekeeping in the field.
- 24 Tjønneland et al. (2014).
- 25 We have chosen not to attribute the findings or recommendations to particular member states in the hope that this encourages greater future participation in other similar exercises. Without having liaised directly with those countries not responding, it would seem that some countries are not sufficiently incentivised to participate and that some member states would be reluctant to disclose the nature of their pre-deployment training.
- 26 1. Strategic level overview of United Nations peacekeeping; 2. The establishment and functioning of UN peacekeeping operations; 3. Effective mandate implementation; and 4. Standards, values, and safety of UN peacekeeping personnel. For detailed structure see: [http://cdn.peaceopstraining.org/course\\_promos/cptm/cptm\\_english.pdf](http://cdn.peaceopstraining.org/course_promos/cptm/cptm_english.pdf)
- 27 Interviews conducted with TCCs on 16, 30 and 31 March 2016.
- 28 Interview or email with TCCs, 30 and 31 March 2016.
- 29 Email correspondence or phone interview with TCCs 16 and 30 March 2016.
- 30 Interviews conducted with TCCs on 16, 30 and 31 March 2016.
- 31 Email correspondence with TCCs. Also reiterated in follow up with Uruguay 22 March and 4 April 2016.
- 32 See for example, Karlsrud, J. & Rosén, F., (2013). "In the eye of the beholder? UN and the use of drones to protect civilians". **Stability: International Journal of Security and Development** 2(2), p. Art. 27. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.bo> For a recent public DPKO perspective see: <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2016/drones-are-effective-protecting-civilians>
- 33 See DPKO/DFS Policy, "The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping" Ref. 2015.07.

- 34 Protection of Civilians: Implementing Guidelines for Military Components of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions. February 2016.
- 35 See for example Tjønneland et al. (2014) and Kabasha (2013).
- 36 United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (2015): 'Audit of the Pre-Deployment Process for Uniformed Personnel by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations', Report 2015/69, p. 5.
- 37 See OIOS **Audit Report: Office of Military Affairs** 28 May 2010, "Executive Summary" and pp.18–19.
- 38 Which was also one of the conclusions in the 2013 Training Needs Assessment (**Training: A Strategic Investment in UN Peacekeeping Global Peacekeeping Training Needs Assessment, Final Report**, 2012–2013).
- 39 A military force should expect two weeks of command handover of a task, particularly a complex tactical task such as PoC. While a week should be considered standard for infantry soldiers and staff officers to hand over tasks such as guard posts, patrol routes, introductions to key stakeholders, threat groups, and generally what has worked and which programmes need to be continued and why.
- 40 As suggested by a TCC and a PCC, interviews 22 and 30 March and 4 April 2016.

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