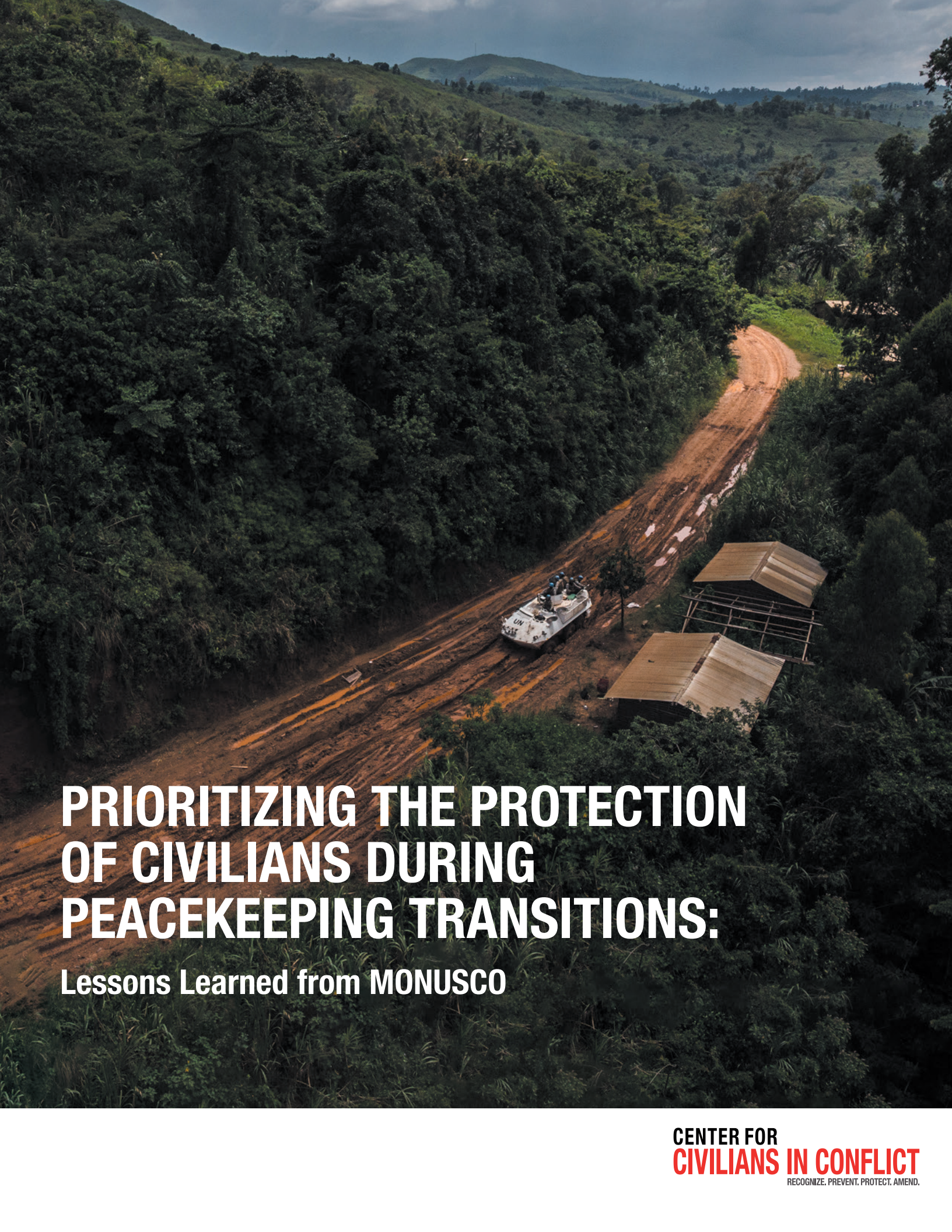


An aerial photograph showing a white UN peacekeeping vehicle with blue markings and soldiers on a muddy, rutted dirt road that winds through a dense, green forest. The road is flanked by steep, forested hillsides. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a cloudy sky. To the right of the road, there are some small, simple structures with corrugated metal roofs.

PRIORITIZING THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS DURING PEACEKEEPING TRANSITIONS:

Lessons Learned from MONUSCO

RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.

November 2022

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Cover:

*November 7, 2021, Ituri province, DRC:
MONUSCO armored vehicles move through Djugu
territory, Ituri province. In recent years, Djugu has
seen a significant uptick in fighting between the
Congolese military (FARDC) and rebels. Violence
has caused mass displacement: presently, over 1.5
million people are displaced across the province.*

Credit: Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION AND VISION

Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) is an international organization dedicated to promoting the protection of civilians in conflict. CIVIC envisions a world in which no civilian is harmed in conflict. Our mission is to support communities affected by conflict in their quest for protection and strengthen the resolve and capacity of armed actors to prevent and respond to civilian harm.

CIVIC was established in 2003 by Marla Ruzicka, a young humanitarian who advocated on behalf of civilians affected by the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Honoring Marla's legacy, CIVIC has kept an unflinching focus on the protection of civilians in conflict. Today, CIVIC has a presence in conflict zones and key capitals throughout the world where it collaborates with civilians to bring their protection concerns directly to those in power, engages with armed actors to reduce the harm they cause to civilian populations, and advises governments and multinational bodies on how to make life-saving and lasting policy changes.

CIVIC's strength is its proven approach and record of improving protection outcomes for civilians by working directly with conflict-affected communities and armed actors. At CIVIC, we believe civilians are not “collateral damage” and civilian harm is not an unavoidable consequence of conflict—civilian harm can and must be prevented.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

ABA: American Bar Association

CLA: Community Liaison Assistant

CPAS: Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System

CPC: *Conseil de Protection Civile*

CSO: Civil Society Organization

DDR: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

DPO: United Nations Department of Peace Operations

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo (*République démocratique du Congo*)

FARDC: Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo*)

HRDDP: Human Rights Due Diligence Policy

INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization

JMAC: Joint Mission Analysis Cell

MONUSCO: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo*)

P-DDRCS: Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (*Programme de désarmement, démobilisation, relèvement communautaire et stabilisation*)

POC: Protection of Civilians

QIP: Quick Impact Project

SSR: Security Sector Reform

UN OCHA: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNAMID: United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur

UNAMSIL: United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

UNCT: United Nations Country Team

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

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April 3, 2020, Darfur region, Sudan: UNAMID police and members of the Sudan Police Force conduct a joint patrol.

I. OVERVIEW

In April 2022, a wave of intercommunal violence broke out in West Darfur, a region of Sudan. In six days, militias killed nearly 200 civilians—including children and health workers—and attacked hospitals, police stations, and other public buildings where civilians had fled. Tens of thousands of people were displaced by the violence.¹ The brutal attacks came less than two years after the UN Security Council (UNSC) ended the mandate of the United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).² Although this particular wave of violence cannot be directly attributed to UNAMID’s withdrawal, analysts had warned that UNAMID’s closure could lead to a deterioration in the security context and increased danger for civilians.³ A joint UN–African Union UNAMID special report in March 2020 asserted, for example, that “the fundamental conflict drivers remain unresolved and exacerbate intercommunal tensions.”⁴ The report also warned that multiple actors in Darfur were continuing to commit serious human rights abuses.⁵

The deteriorating climate in Darfur serves as a reminder of the human costs of poorly managed or premature departures or reconfigurations—known as “transitions”—of peacekeeping missions. These costs may be particularly high when transitions are driven by political imperatives rather than the successful completion of benchmarks that measure evolutions in the protection of civilians (POC) context.⁶ Although other transitions have had less drastic consequences than UNAMID’s withdrawal, they, too, demonstrate the risks of drawdown—particularly when missions have not achieved their protection objectives. For example, the deterioration of the security context in Haiti—from civil unrest to gang violence—marred the departure of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti in 2017.⁷ For missions in transition, mitigating against a “physical security cliff” requires a balance of building national capacity, managing host state consent, and strategic engagement to support the transition of protection activities back to national stakeholders.⁸

BENCHMARKS IN THE CONTEXT OF UN TRANSITIONS

According to the UN’s Guide to Benchmarking, a benchmark can be defined as “a concrete point of reference (in the form of a value, a state, or a characteristic) that has been verified by practice (in the form of empirical evidence, experience, or observation) to lead to fulfillment of more overall objectives or visions.”⁹ The guide further notes that in UN contexts, benchmarking is “a type of monitoring that uses a benchmark as a point of reference against which change and progress can be measured. A benchmark, from this perspective, can be seen as a target that has been defined by an existing standard, a minimum requirement for something to work, the performance of a leading actor in a field of competition...etc.”¹⁰ UN missions have been using benchmarks and indicators during transitions since the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in 2002.

The UNSC has sought to consolidate lessons from UN transitions and to provide guidance to missions during drawdown, including guidance on increased risks for civilians during and after exits. Notably, in an initiative led by Ireland and other stakeholders, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2594 in 2021.¹¹ The resolution positions the protection of civilians at the heart of transitions, emphasizing well-established but unevenly implemented guidance, including guidance on the importance of inclusive transition planning with host-state governments, UN agencies, and civil society. The resolution specifically underscores that “civil society” should include women, youth, and human rights defenders.¹² Additionally, the resolution highlights the importance of realistic assessments of threats against civilians and encourages national governments “to develop and implement national plans, policies, or strategies to protect civilians, which include national benchmarks in advance of peace operations transitions.”¹³

The ongoing drawdown of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) offers an opportunity to assess how the guidance collected in Resolution 2594 is being applied and for the identification of new lessons on peacekeeping transitions. Once the world’s largest and most expensive peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO is in the process of closing field offices and military bases and reducing its presence across the country.¹⁴ In 2021, following UNSC directives, the Mission drafted a joint transition plan (*Plan de transition conjoint*, hereinafter referred to as “the Joint Plan”) with the Congolese government that includes benchmarks for drawdown.¹⁵ But achieving the plan will be difficult. Although the context in the DRC has evolved since the Mission first deployed to the country over two decades ago—notably, the country’s first peaceful transfer of presidential power took place in 2019¹⁶—civilians in eastern Congo contend with hundreds of armed groups who regularly commit horrific abuses, including large-scale extrajudicial killing and sexual violence. The Congolese army (known as the FARDC) remains largely unable to protect civilians and is itself regularly responsible for nearly half of all human rights violations and abuses recorded in the country.¹⁷ The re-emergence of the M23 armed group—which briefly took over the city of Goma in 2012—and the group’s occupation of significant territory in eastern DRC in the spring of 2022 is indicative of the unpredictability of the context.¹⁸

Both the devastating impact of conflict and the perception that the Mission is not adequately protecting civilians have recently fueled anti-MONUSCO sentiment.¹⁹ In July 2022, protesters calling for MONUSCO’s immediate departure attacked Mission bases in several cities. Over thirty Congolese civilians and four peacekeepers were killed in the violence.²⁰ Soon after the protests, the Congolese government publicly called for reevaluating the Joint Plan, though without any specificity as to what this would mean in practice. At the time of writing this brief, MONUSCO had significantly curtailed its activities in parts of eastern Congo due to popular protests.²¹

Focusing on MONUSCO’s ongoing transition as a case study, this brief identifies lessons learned for UN transitions in challenging contexts. While this paper analyzes MONUSCO, it does so in order to draw broader lessons that can inform other missions and the UN more widely. These lessons focus on two interrelated and overarching themes: prioritizing the protection of civilians during withdrawal and ensuring an inclusive transition process. Part II of this brief provides a concise overview of the status of MONUSCO’s transition at both the national and local levels at the time of CIVIC’s research. Part III offers five lessons identified by CIVIC from MONUSCO’s experience that relate to: i) protection of civilian-centered benchmarks and engagement with national authorities; ii) inclusive transition planning and monitoring processes that involve civil society; iii) effectively incorporating missions’ field offices in transition planning; iv) local-level mapping of POC capacities to guide the transformation of mandated tasks; and v) missions’ ability to monitor the implementation of transition plans. The brief is based on 128 interviews conducted in the cities of Goma, Kinshasa, Kalemie, Bunia, Bukavu, and New York between March and September 2022, as well as secondary research.



Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

October 18, 2021, Beni territory, North Kivu province, DRC: Civilians walk past MONUSCO troops in the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) as they conduct foot patrols in the town of Oicha.

As the deteriorating context for civilians in post-UNAMID Darfur demonstrates, the stakes for transitions are high. A MONUSCO withdrawal that does not prioritize the protection of civilians—or include the voices of civil society alongside UN agencies, humanitarian, and government authorities—could have devastating consequences for Congolese communities. Notably, MONUSCO’s transition does demonstrate some improvements over past transition processes and incorporates guidance from Resolution 2594, particularly on the prioritization of the protection of civilians. Going forward, MONUSCO should continue to evaluate its efforts and share lessons for the benefit of other missions.

LESSONS LEARNED

The five “lessons learned” highlighted in this brief are listed below. These lessons are discussed in more detail in Part III.

Lesson 1: Developing POC Benchmarks and Fostering National Ownership

Given that UN peacekeeping operations operate in unpredictable and challenging contexts, transition planning and timing should be flexible and concretely linked to the POC context.

More specifically:

- Missions and national governments should ensure that transition plans are based on the achievement of clear benchmarks, including benchmarks that measure evolutions in threats against civilians and the capacity of non-mission actors to protect civilians;
- Missions must engage early and consistently with government counterparts on transition planning and priorities to promote a common understanding between national authorities and UN officials on drawdown.

Lesson 2: Including and Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

Peacekeeping missions need to build inclusive mechanisms for civil society participation in transition processes, ranging from initial planning to monitoring a mission’s withdrawal against POC benchmarks and evolutions in the security environment. This includes:

- Ensuring that civil society organizations have the opportunity to contribute to the drafting and monitoring of national and local plans for drawdown, including on concrete benchmarks and indicators;
- Prioritizing early, sustained, and substantive efforts to strengthen civil society organizations at the provincial level—especially women-led CSOs and those representing specific vulnerable groups—and planning for how support will continue after mission exit;
- Undertaking a sustained effort to communicate transition plans to civil society organizations and civilians, particularly in areas affected by armed conflict and insecurity.

Lesson 3: “Provincializing” the Transition Process

Because insecurity will often be highest in remote areas of the country in many peacekeeping contexts, missions should include field offices in transition planning processes. Doing so can ensure that provincial/local efforts are aligned with national-level strategic plans. More specifically, missions should:

- Create provincial-level coordination and planning mechanisms on transition that are led by mission field offices and government authorities so as to build local ownership;
- Take steps to ensure maximum coherency between national-level transition plans negotiated in country capitals and field office planning and activities.

Lesson 4: Mapping POC Capacities at the Local Level

At the local level, peacekeeping missions should work in collaboration with UNCT, government, and civil society partners to map POC needs, capacities, and gaps prior to transition and establish frameworks for the potential transformation of tasks. This framework should address UN-specific capacities and policy questions linked to withdrawal, as well as protection capacities of government agencies and CSOs. More specifically:

- Missions and counterparts must determine whether particular mission POC capacities—or POC capacities supported by peacekeepers—need to be maintained after mission departure and, if so, which UN agencies, government offices, or civil society organizations will be responsible for their implementation;
- UN stakeholders should help prevent a physical protection gap by incorporating security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into long-term and multi-stakeholder transition planning;
- Missions must clarify whether they will maintain residual capacity in areas from which they withdraw, as well as what the role of these remaining officials will be.

Lesson 5: Developing Adequate Monitoring Capacities and Policies

Missions must have adequate capacities, policies, and guidance to monitor the implementation of transition plans, including progress on benchmarks and indicators. This requires that:

- Missions develop transparent processes for monitoring transition plans that clarify how different sections and field offices will provide data for reporting and be involved in strategic discussions;
- Missions request the personnel and capacity necessary to effectively monitor transition planning, and that UN Fifth Committee delegates approve these requests.

II. PLANNING FOR MONUSCO'S TRANSITION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In September 2021, MONUSCO and the Congolese government submitted to the UNSC a Joint Plan outlining the “minimum conditions necessary for the progressive and responsible withdrawal of MONUSCO” from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.²² The UNSC requested the Joint Plan in MONUSCO’s 2020 mandate, which called for a plan “defining the practical modalities of the transfer of tasks to the Government of the DRC, the UNCT and other stakeholders.”²³ The plan includes ambitious benchmarks and indicators on an expansive array of subjects, including POC and the inclusion of civilians and civil society organizations in decision-making related to withdrawal.²⁴ Despite some concerns about the inclusivity of the drafting process, as well as the feasibility of meeting the benchmarks, the Joint Plan offers a set of criteria for how the Mission can move toward withdrawal.

EXCERPT FROM THE 2021 JOINT TRANSITION PLAN

The 2021 Joint Transition Plan drafted by MONUSCO and the Congolese government includes 18 benchmarks, associated indicators, and timelines. Notably, the first four benchmarks constitute the “minimum conditions” to be achieved prior to MONUSCO’s withdrawal from the DRC. The first benchmark, which focuses on the protection of civilians,²⁵ is printed below:

Transitions priorities and benchmarks

Benchmark	Indicator	Area of engagement	Responsibility	Timeline
1. Minimum conditions for the drawdown of MONUSCO				
(a) Security and protection of civilians				
1. Significant reduction in armed threats thanks to a comprehensive approach that helps to put an end to the existence of armed groups in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri to an extent that they can no longer cause widespread violence against the civilian population	1. The number of armed groups, the size of their membership and the geographical area where they operate in violence-affected areas declines considerably	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	Government and MONUSCO	By the end of 2023
	2. The capacity and presence of security forces increase in areas where armed groups are present and active	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	Government (FARDC, PNC)	Each year
	3. The PNC is deployed in liberated areas and takes over the security role performed by the FARDC	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	PNC	By 2024
	4. The reconfiguration of the MONUSCO force, in particular its Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), is complete and its engagement in joint operations is effective	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	MONUSCO	By the end of 2024
	5. The number of persons internally displaced owing to armed conflict decreases	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	Government and MONUSCO	Each year
	6. The trust of the population, including women and young people, in the national defence and security forces is rising (polling data disaggregated by gender and by age group)	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	Government	By the end of 2024
	7. The cases of sexual and gender-based violence and other human rights violations drop sharply	Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu	Government	By the end of 2024

MONUSCO and government officials created working groups in Kinshasa to implement and monitor the Joint Plan, including a high-level group chaired by the Congolese Prime Minister and the Mission's Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as well as four sub-working groups focused on different thematic components of the plan, such as the protection of civilians.²⁶ Though all four sub-working groups are co-chaired by MONUSCO and Congolese government officials, each group has representatives from UN agencies, including UNHCR (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and UN OCHA (the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).²⁷

Discussions of MONUSCO's transition are not new.²⁸ The 2021 Joint Plan is the latest in a series of documents mandated by the UNSC focused—in whole or in part—on the Mission's transition, including a 2020 Joint Strategy on MONUSCO's "progressive and phased drawdown" and the 2019 Independent Strategic Review of the Mission.²⁹ Even prior to these initiatives, MONUSCO faced significant UN pressure to downsize. In 2016, for example, MONUSCO had over 100 bases across the country and a troop ceiling of over 19,000. But following cuts to its budget and reductions in its troop ceiling, the Mission pivoted to a more mobile footprint and reduced its presence to only forty bases in six provinces between 2016 and 2019, closing a number of field offices in parallel.³⁰ This trend has continued in recent years. In December 2021, UNSC members approved a troop ceiling for MONUSCO of 13,500 and mandated that the Mission focus on the three provinces most affected by armed conflict: North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.³¹ In line with UNSC directives—and with a view toward focusing on the areas with the most significant threats against civilians—MONUSCO closed its office in Tanganyika province in June 2022.³²

Situated between South Kivu and Haut-Katanga provinces in eastern DRC, Tanganyika has experienced significant conflict over the past decade.³³ During the peak of the violence in 2016 and 2017, ethnic militias carried out regular attacks against civilians, including extrajudicial killings and the destruction of villages across the province.³⁴ But as the context in Tanganyika has improved in recent years, MONUSCO has progressively reduced its presence. Whereas the Mission once had bases across the province, MONUSCO's footprint in the months before withdrawal was limited to an office in the provincial capital of Kalemie and one military base.³⁵

The Mission's withdrawal from Tanganyika was guided by a provincial withdrawal strategy drafted in 2020, prior to the drafting of the national-level 2021 Joint Plan. (As the Tanganyika transition process was already underway at the time of its drafting, the Joint Plan focuses on North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.)³⁶ The Tanganyika strategy outlines the core elements of MONUSCO's work in the province and contains a set of benchmarks to be reached by June 2022, including benchmarks measuring evolutions in the protection context and national capacity at the provincial level.³⁷ To support discussion on different elements of MONUSCO's withdrawal from the province, the Mission established "thematic working groups" in Tanganyika comprised of representatives from MONUSCO, the Congolese government, UNCT agencies, and—in contrast to the Kinshasa-based working groups—civil society organizations.³⁸



November 6, 2021, Ituri province, DRC: Armored MONUSCO vehicles conduct patrols in Djugu territory, Ituri province.

III. LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout its transition, MONUSCO has made efforts to both prioritize POC and build inclusivity into the process. But on both the national and local levels, MONUSCO continues to confront many of the same challenges that previous missions have faced, including difficulties in incorporating the views of non-Mission stakeholders, widespread violence against civilians, and significant anti-Mission sentiment. CIVIC's research has identified lessons from MONUSCO's experience that can be applied to strengthen the Mission's own drawdown process as well as to guide other peacekeeping transitions.

The following section is divided into five "lessons learned" from MONUSCO's experience. Each lesson contains more specific sub-recommendations as well as analysis explaining its rationale.

Lesson 1: Developing POC Benchmarks and Fostering National Ownership

Given that UN peacekeeping operations operate in unpredictable and challenging contexts, transition planning and timing should be flexible and concretely linked to the POC context. More specifically:

- Missions and national governments should ensure that transition plans are based on the achievement of clear benchmarks, including benchmarks that measure evolutions in threats against civilians and the capacity of non-mission actors to protect civilians;
- Missions must engage early and consistently with government counterparts on transition planning and priorities to promote a common understanding between national authorities and UN officials on drawdown.

Chapter VII peacekeeping missions often operate in volatile environments characterized by a broad range of threats to civilians. In the DRC, for example, deteriorations in the security context can be unpredictable, forcing MONUSCO to deploy, redeploy, or reinforce its presence in areas where it previously maintained little or no footprint.³⁹ For instance, the Mission significantly reduced its presence in the Kasai region in 2014 to focus on eastern parts of the country. But following the outbreak of large-scale violence in the Kasais in 2016 and 2017, MONUSCO had to dramatically reinforce its military, civilian, and police presence in the region, including the reopening of field offices.⁴⁰ As of this writing, nearly one year after the drafting of the 2021 Joint Plan, the protection environment in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri is arguably moving further away from the outcomes envisaged in the Joint Plan.⁴¹ And, as discussed above, MONUSCO has faced large-scale protests demanding its departure since July 2022, forcing Mission leadership to significantly curtail activities and operations in some parts of the DRC.⁴²

In areas like eastern Congo, there is a possibility that peacekeeping mission withdrawal could further destabilize fragile areas.⁴³ While there is no way to eliminate this possibility, missions, national governments, and UNSC member states can take steps to reduce the risks. Namely, peacekeeping operations and national governments should ensure that transition plans include detailed benchmarks measuring threats against civilians. Relatedly, missions should engage national authorities early and often to ensure that there is a common understanding between government and UN officials that drawdowns are based on the achievement of benchmarks rather than fixed timelines. UNSC member states can support these efforts by avoiding references to timelines or dates for withdrawal in mandates and by endorsing conditions-based drawdowns. These recommendations are discussed in more detail below.

Establishing POC Benchmarks and Indicators

The inclusion of POC benchmarks in peacekeeping transition plans can help ensure that decisions on where, when, and how to withdraw from particular areas are based on concrete data linked to the protection of civilians. In the DRC, a number of interlocutors asserted that MONUSCO closures in fragile areas can undermine security, leading to increases in armed group activity, violations by national security forces, and attacks against civilians.⁴⁴ By conditioning reductions in the Mission's presence on benchmarks—particularly those measuring the POC environment and the protection capacity of government actors—the 2021 Joint Plan should lead to a withdrawal that is more sensitive to the context.⁴⁵

While it is vital to develop benchmarks that condition drawdown decisions on reductions in threats against civilians, it is similarly important to ensure that benchmarks are measurable. MONUSCO officials told CIVIC that some of the Joint Plan's benchmarks are vague and do not allow for easy monitoring.⁴⁶ As one official explained, "The benchmarks and indicators aren't necessarily the kinds you would have for programmatic work. They are vague, broad, and complicated to measure."⁴⁷ Ultimately, the utility of a transition plan will be determined by the success of its implementation, which the quality and measurability of its benchmarks will partially determine.⁴⁸ As noted in Lesson 3, translating national plans to the provincial level can provide an opportunity to develop more context-specific, measurable benchmarks.

UNSC member states have a role to play in ensuring that transitions are conditions-based. Namely, the UNSC can avoid references to specific withdrawal dates in mandates and instead call for plans that are clear, flexible, and based on the achievement of measurable benchmarks (with a particular focus on POC). Even if references to withdrawal dates are aspirational, part of political compromises, or mentioned alongside benchmarks, they could still lead to uncertainty regarding whether a mission's withdrawal is based on conditions or fixed timelines—a concern that is highlighted further below. Transition decisions in the UNSC are often the result of intensely political processes and driven by many considerations, including budgetary concerns, that are disconnected from threats against civilians. But member states should understand that tying mission withdrawal to pre-determined dates could endanger civilians.⁴⁹

Finally, missions' capacity to ensure that drawdown is pegged to protection-related benchmarks also requires that they have adequate financial support from the Fifth Committee (the UN's budgetary committee).⁵⁰ In the past, rapid reductions in MONUSCO's budget have led to base closure decisions in areas where insecurity and threats to civilians remained high.

Engaging Early and Consistently with Host-State Governments on Transition

Though missions cannot ensure that governments actively engage in transition planning, they can increase the likelihood of national buy-in.⁵¹ Notably, missions can include government counterparts from the earliest stages of the transition process, potentially through the establishment of coordination mechanisms. In the DRC, for example, the 2020 Joint Strategy was perceived by external actors as a Mission product that involved almost no consultation with government actors. In contrast, the process of drafting the 2021 Joint Plan took place through regular consultations between the Mission and the Congolese government, with opportunities for UN agencies to contribute.⁵² Stakeholders emphasized that the 2021 process demonstrated significant improvement in MONUSCO's efforts to include non-Mission actors.⁵³ Going forward, the national thematic working groups on transition could foster continued consultations between the Mission and government authorities.⁵⁴



Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

October 18, 2021, Beni territory, North Kivu province, DRC: MONUSCO troops in the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) conduct foot patrols in the town of Oicha.

Despite the challenges to achieving consensus on the Joint Plan, both government and Mission personnel noted that interlocutors found compromises on key issues and managed to finalize a national plan with benchmarks. The prioritization of the protection of civilians, for example, is a result of Mission advocacy and government officials' flexibility.

In conversations with CIVIC, stakeholders acknowledged the challenges of finding agreement between MONUSCO and government authorities on transition planning, including differences in priorities.⁵⁵ One government official said that the DRC government did not agree with the Mission's view of POC, stating, "POC is part of the priorities [of the Joint Plan], but in our logic, we do not know how to protect the civilians better than by securing them. When there is peace, there is no need for protection. So POC should be the consequence of the pursuit of peace and security.... In the plan, POC is a priority, but for us, it is a distraction."⁵⁶ Moreover, some humanitarians and Mission officials expressed concern about the willingness of their government counterparts to engage in the working groups moving forward, while others highlighted disagreements in monitoring the plan.⁵⁷ "The difficulty," one humanitarian shared, "is whether the authorities will take this on. Ownership is for the authorities, we want them to work on this, and that is why we are doing this process in their offices. But they need the capacities."⁵⁸

There has also been disagreement between government authorities and MONUSCO officials on whether MONUSCO's drawdown is timebound or tied to the achievement of benchmarks. As noted, the Plan includes "indicative timelines," the latest of which is 2024. However, it makes clear that reaching the conditions outlined in the benchmarks is a requirement for the Mission's withdrawal.⁵⁹ Thus, UN officials view 2024 as a target date for the achievement of indicators that would allow for MONUSCO's departure rather than a fixed departure date.⁶⁰ Indeed, at the time of CIVIC's research, Mission officials expressed doubt that the indicators outlined in the plan would be achievable by 2024.⁶¹ One MONUSCO civilian official, for instance, asserted, "It's not realistic that these conditions [in the Joint Plan] will be there by 2024. If you look at basic responsibility to protect civilians, from Ituri to Nyunzu, people are getting killed at an abnormal rate, the situation is chaotic, and I don't see that improving anytime soon."⁶² Presidential elections in 2023, as well as the potential deployment of a regional military force under the auspices of the East African Community in the DRC, could further reduce the likelihood of meeting the benchmarks.⁶³

The UN has consistently asserted that withdrawal should be based on "end states" rather than "end dates," including in public statements.⁶⁴ But two government interlocutors who spoke with CIVIC saw 2024 as a firm date for Mission departure.⁶⁵ One official, for example, said, "I am satisfied with the benchmarks. But it wasn't easy to get MONUSCO to agree to depart in 2024."⁶⁶ The Mission will likely need to undertake additional work to ensure that counterparts understand that MONUSCO's transition is based on the "end state" outlined in the benchmarks rather than the potential "end date" of 2024. Engagement with national authorities will be particularly critical given the Congolese government's August 2022 announcement that it would "reevaluate" the Joint Plan in light of protests.⁶⁷ As of the writing of this brief, the government has not yet indicated what such a "reevaluation" will entail. But whether the government seeks to draft a new plan, modify the Joint Plan, or leave the Joint Plan in place, significant political engagement will be necessary to ensure buy-in for a drawdown that is conditions-based and tied to the POC context.

Despite the challenges to achieving consensus on the Joint Plan, both government and Mission personnel noted that interlocutors found compromises on key issues and managed to finalize a national plan with benchmarks. The prioritization of POC, for example, is a result of Mission advocacy and government officials' flexibility.⁶⁸ The creation of the Joint Plan also opened up engagement opportunities. One MONUSCO civilian official described the Joint Plan as a "consensus political document" that "opens up a political space which didn't exist before."⁶⁹ Another MONUSCO official stressed that "the fact that there is a negotiation with the government on minimum conditions [for MONUSCO's withdrawal] is extremely good.... The transition plan and benchmarks are a very good start for engagement."⁷⁰

Likewise, in Tanganyika, stakeholders credited early and consistent communication by MONUSCO on drawdown with helping ensure clarity and support preparedness, particularly for government authorities. As one Mission official said, "Once we drafted the [Tanganyika] exit strategy, we overcommunicated it. This is important, and the reason is simple. If people don't understand the exit strategy, they cannot own it. We

spoke with substantive sections about this, we spoke with civil society, with agencies, and with government authorities.”⁷¹ Several provincial government officials highlighted the importance of this communication.⁷² One government official asserted, “MONUSCO communicated sufficiently with us, because we know the date that they will leave; on June 30th, they will completely close. MONUSCO also communicated with the government about certain facilities, such as the materials that they have, which they would like to provide to the government.... MONUSCO always asks the state to be involved.”⁷³ Although other officials claimed they had more limited awareness of the Mission’s strategy, MONUSCO’s efforts to communicate plans to authorities in Tanganyika were generally appreciated and can serve as an example for other missions.⁷⁴

Missions cannot ensure that government counterparts will engage earnestly on transitions and cannot expect to close all of the gaps between government and mission perspectives. More broadly, international actors involved in transition processes must be aware that different interests are at play and that not all political actors support a gradual, conditions-based transition. But as MONUSCO’s example demonstrates, early and regular engagement on transition at the national and provincial levels with government counterparts can increase the likelihood of national ownership in transition processes, improve preparedness, and close some gaps in prioritization. Moreover, to avoid misaligned expectations around the transition, missions and other actors need to clearly communicate whether withdrawal is ultimately contingent on achievement of benchmarks or on pre-determined dates.

Lesson 2: Including and Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

Peacekeeping missions need to build inclusive mechanisms for civil society participation in transition processes, ranging from initial planning to monitoring a mission’s withdrawal against POC benchmarks and evolutions in the security environment. This includes:

- Ensuring that civil society organizations have the opportunity to contribute to the drafting and monitoring of national and local plans for drawdown, including on concrete benchmarks and indicators;
- Prioritizing early, sustained, and substantive efforts to strengthen civil society organizations at the provincial level—especially women-led CSOs and those representing specific vulnerable groups—and planning for how support will continue after mission exit;
- Undertaking a sustained effort to communicate transition plans to civil society organizations and civilians, particularly in areas affected by armed conflict and insecurity.

Civil society organizations can also contribute to the protection of civilians directly, including through monitoring security trends, liaising between security forces and civilians, and managing early warning networks.

Particularly in contexts such as the DRC, where conflict-related sexual violence remains a devastating element of ongoing armed conflict, women’s participation—and the participation of members of other vulnerable groups—must be prioritized in all phases of transition planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Civil society representatives are often embedded within—or are themselves from—the conflict-affected communities that missions are mandated to protect. They are often well placed to provide analyses of the security situation in different parts of a country—including changes in threats civilians are facing and the government’s capacity to protect them—and they may have different views from national authorities. CSOs can also contribute to the protection of civilians directly, including through monitoring security trends, liaising between security forces and civilians, and managing early warning networks.⁷⁵ Transition processes that effectively include CSOs should be more responsive to the protection context and better capitalize on the capacities of local actors to contribute to protecting civilians.

Because state authorities tend to be male-dominated, including CSO perspectives can help peacekeeping missions improve the gender balance of their interlocutors. One MONUSCO official stressed, for instance, that CSO consultations are “a way to make sure women are adequately represented, because women are often not in government.”⁷⁶ In Resolution 1325, the UNSC highlighted the need to “increase [women’s] role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution” and affirmed that women’s participation is essential “in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building.”⁷⁷ Particularly in contexts such as the DRC, where conflict-related sexual violence remains a devastating element of ongoing armed conflict, women’s participation—and the participation of members of other vulnerable groups—must be prioritized in all phases of transition planning, implementation, and monitoring.⁷⁸

MONUSCO’s efforts to include CSOs, and the obstacles it has faced in doing so, offer key lessons for peacekeeping missions in transition. These lessons include the importance of providing opportunities for CSOs to participate in drafting, monitoring, and implementing transition plans as well as prioritizing efforts to strengthen civil society at the provincial level. In addition, missions and host-state governments can undertake sustained efforts to communicate transition plans to communities and civil society organizations, particularly in areas where the Mission maintains a presence. These sub-themes are discussed below.

Including CSOs in Planning for and Monitoring Transition

Including civil society in conversations about peacekeeping transition is essential to ensuring the process is sustainable. Yet nearly one year after the drafting of the Joint Plan in the DRC, opportunities for CSO participation in the national transition process have been limited. Although interlocutors informed CIVIC that some CSOs were able to provide comments on the Joint Plan before the benchmarks were finalized, they questioned whether these comments were meaningfully taken into account.⁷⁹

For instance, one MONUSCO civilian official commented, “The transition plan was presented and discussed with [some] civil society organizations, but that isn’t to say that they influenced the content.”⁸⁰ Generally, interlocutors felt that more civil society involvement in drafting the Joint Plan would have been valuable.⁸¹

***“Civil society should be there and will be there.
But how and when? We don’t have an answer yet.”***

— MONUSCO civilian official

Moreover, the national working groups on transition are limited to MONUSCO, government, and UNCT officials.⁸² Several Mission officials asserted that the Congolese government was resistant to including CSOs in the process and viewed national-level working groups as bilateral UN-government forums.⁸³ A government official told CIVIC that the government should serve as the primary interlocutor with civil society: “MONUSCO is here to support the government, and it is the government which works with civil society. So, we ask them to look a little, and their opinions are consulted. Consultation is the best formula.”⁸⁴ Faced with government reticence, the Mission has made some efforts to include civil society voices outside of the national working groups. For example, two MONUSCO officials said that the working group focused on POC and human rights asked CSOs to provide feedback on data used to measure progress against the benchmarks.⁸⁵ But there remains no systematic effort to include civil society in the national transition process. As one MONUSCO civilian official explained, “Civil society should be there and will be there. But how and when? We don’t have an answer yet.”⁸⁶

In contrast, CSOs were more meaningfully included in planning for the drawdown in Tanganyika province. The provincial-level working groups established to guide MONUSCO’s drawdown process in 2021 included CSO leaders, a number of whom discussed their involvement in the process with CIVIC.⁸⁷ Interviews in Tanganyika indicated that CSOs, particularly in the provincial capital of Kalemie, were generally aware of the Mission’s departure date from the province and were consulted during the transition process.⁸⁸ There was some disagreement, however, as to the extent to which CSO opinions had been considered in planning.⁸⁹ One CSO leader said that “MONUSCO has taken account of our opinions and that is reflected in the plans which were proposed.”⁹⁰ A civil society leader who noted that their organization had benefitted from the Mission’s presence, however, recommended that MONUSCO “take into consideration the opinions and the observations of civil society” and “put in place the proposals submitted by civil society.”⁹¹ CSOs also had varying levels of awareness regarding the details of the transition planning beyond the June 2022 departure date.⁹² Ultimately, it is clear that MONUSCO took significant steps to include CSOs in consultations on the Mission’s transition from Tanganyika, but that further efforts would have been useful.

Following MONUSCO’s example, other missions should include civil society in drafting and monitoring transition plans. Given potential government resistance, missions should be prepared to use their good offices to advocate for civil society participation in a space free from reprisals. To do this, missions can supplement their own political and context expertise with relevant UN system-wide guidance, such as the UN’s Guidance Note on the Promotion and Protection of the Civic Space, as well as the experience of UN and humanitarian agencies.⁹³

The UNSC can also contribute to inclusion by requesting formal structures for consultation with civil society organizations. MONUSCO’s mandate requires the Mission, government, and UNCT to work “in liaison with civil society” on the transition.⁹⁴ In MONUSCO’s new mandate—and in the mandates of other missions—UNSC member states should consider stronger language to formalize the participation of CSOs in the transition process. Member states could also request that missions include information on civil society inclusion in their reporting on transition.

COORDINATION WITH UN AGENCIES ON TRANSITION PLANNING

In transition contexts, UN agencies should play central roles both in drafting transition plans and in measuring evolutions in the security context (for more information on MONUSCO's coordination with UNCT, see Lesson 4). In the DRC, UN agency officials highlighted the Mission's efforts to include UNCT members in drafting the 2021 Joint Plan.⁹⁵ One agency official noted that the "door is really open for the agencies, and this is the most important thing."⁹⁶ Another official explained that MONUSCO had incorporated agency feedback into the Joint Plan's indicators, describing the process as "quite inclusive for us as the UN."⁹⁷ The official underlined agency input on issues related to humanitarian access, protection, and conflict resolution.⁹⁸ As noted in Lesson 1, this level of coordination is an improvement compared with past consultations.⁹⁹ One UNCT official noted, for example, that while agencies had felt excluded from past transition planning, their agency is "really included in the [present] process." The official credited this change to the efforts of MONUSCO leadership, stating, "The new Special Representative of the Secretary-General had insisted that transition planning include humanitarian actors."¹⁰⁰

MONUSCO's national and provincial working groups have facilitated coordination on different elements of the Mission's transition with UN agencies. The national-level groups were in their early stages at the time of CIVIC's research in Kinshasa, and it is not yet certain how effective they will be—particularly following the outbreak of anti-MONUSCO protests in July 2022. However, these groups do offer a potential forum for communication between agencies, MONUSCO, and government authorities.¹⁰¹ Notably, in Tanganyika, UN agencies co-led the five thematic groups overseeing the Mission's transition.¹⁰² Beyond these working groups, UN agencies, MONUSCO, government officials, and humanitarians have coordinated on transition through the triple nexus process, which brings together humanitarian, development, and peace actors.¹⁰³

Strengthening and Supporting Civil Society Organizations

In Tanganyika province, MONUSCO is widely credited with strengthening civil society, including through the efforts of the Mission's Civil Affairs Division to map civil society organizations and support their activities.¹⁰⁴ In conversations with CIVIC, a number of civil society leaders highlighted these efforts as one of the primary values of having the Mission in the area.¹⁰⁵ One civil society leader described their organization as the "fruit of MONUSCO," noting the Mission's efforts to help them build a network, receive international funding, and train other organizations.¹⁰⁶ A government official similarly emphasized the importance of the Mission's efforts: "Today, MONUSCO has the value of supporting us in terms of the civil society. It is like MONUSCO has helped to professionalize our civil society."¹⁰⁷ Having a higher level of organization has allowed CSOs to more effectively contribute to conversations on Mission drawdown.

However, several civil society leaders expressed uncertainty as to whether they would have similar opportunities to collaborate with UNCT members, INGOs, and government offices after MONUSCO's departure.¹⁰⁸ One civil society leader said, "I think MONUSCO's activities will be taken up by UN agencies, so we as civil society, we asked if MONUSCO could include us in what they are doing, so that when they are gone, the civil society will know where to start...but in the two months [that MONUSCO will remain in the province], I don't know if this will happen."¹⁰⁹ Another civil society leader felt similarly: "MONUSCO accompanied us to bring us to what we are today, but they did not help us to access the UN agencies.... We told them this many times, but nothing has been done."¹¹⁰



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November 6, 2021, Ituri province, DRC: MONUSCO peacekeepers conduct a patrol in a village close to the town of Kilo-Mission.

“MONUSCO accompanied us to bring us to what we are today, but they did not help us to access the UN agencies...We told them this many times, but nothing has been done.”

— Congolese civil society leader

As noted above, civil society can contribute meaningfully to the protection of civilians. For instance, civil society leaders have worked with MONUSCO on peaceful cohabitation between communities, sexual and gender-based violence, and early warning of protection threats in Tanganyika.¹⁰⁰ But for these organizations to contribute going forward, they need to understand which actors will take the “lead” in these areas following the Mission’s departure. Given their good offices role, their capacity to engage with a broad range of actors, and their connections to civil society, missions are well placed to facilitate civil society partnerships with UN agencies and other actors prior to their transition from particular areas. This can be done informally, or through pre-existing coordination mechanisms such as transition working groups or the protection cluster.



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MONUSCO/Daili ten Hove

Top: November 5, 2021, Ituri province, DRC: Aerial views of the town of Kilo, where units of MONUSCO peacekeepers are stationed to protect civilians affected by renewed fighting between the FARDC and rebel groups. **Bottom: June 18, 2022, Tanganyika province, DRC:** Representatives from MONUSCO, UN agencies, NGOs, the IDP community, and the host community visit an IDP camp near the village of Tabac Congo in Tanganyika province. The visit took place in advance of MONUSCO's official withdrawal from Tanganyika on June 30, 2022.

Strategic Communication on Transition

Transition plans may be negotiated by missions and national governments in host-state capitals, potentially far from the communities most affected by conflict. This distance can cause gaps in communication. In the DRC, for example, local communities often have little awareness of transition planning, which contributes to confusion, misinformation, and frustration toward the Mission.¹¹² Cognizant of these challenges, the UNSC has recognized the importance of strategic communication during transitions. The president of the UNSC issued a statement in July 2022, for example, explaining that “a proactive approach to strategic communications by United Nations peacekeeping operations may contribute to creating conditions conducive to the smooth reconfiguration of United Nations presence...*the transition process, including roles and responsibilities of any reconfigured United Nations presence, must be understood by the local population.*”¹¹³

MONUSCO’s experience demonstrates the importance of strategic communications on transition. Nearly one year after the drafting of the Joint Plan, interlocutors told CIVIC that awareness of the plan’s contents and even its existence was limited, including in the eastern provinces where the Mission maintains a presence.¹¹⁴ One civil society leader who had frequently engaged with MONUSCO in the past expressed frustration regarding the Mission’s limited efforts to share the plan.¹¹⁵ Several MONUSCO officials similarly highlighted communication as a significant weakness in the transition.¹¹⁶ “We really dropped the ball on this,” said one MONUSCO civilian official. “We treated the transition plan like something we dust off and reference every three months [prior to reporting against the benchmarks]. But it should be a living document that is socialized to the Congolese public in general, and we have failed to do that.”¹¹⁷

Concerns about strategic communications were particularly salient in interviews that CIVIC conducted following the outbreak of anti-MONUSCO protests in July 2022.¹¹⁸ Going forward, increased communication on the transition—including the Joint Plan and the closure of field offices—could help to counter the widespread narrative that the Mission seeks to remain in the DRC indefinitely, as well as explain that MONUSCO is drawing down on the basis of an agreement with the government.

Mission officials informed CIVIC that MONUSCO has undertaken more sustained efforts to communicate on its transition since the protests.¹¹⁹ One MONUSCO official, for instance, highlighted dialogues with civil society, students, and journalists, as well as increased social media engagement.¹²⁰ But in contexts where missions face widespread distrust, it is important to publicize transition planning—and progress toward withdrawal—as soon as possible. As discussed in Lesson 3, better inclusion of field offices in transition planning could empower local mission actors to better communicate missions’ plans. Lastly, it should be noted that national governments, as equal partners in the transition process, should also communicate on transition planning.

Lesson 3: “Provincializing” the Transition Process

Because insecurity will often be highest in remote areas of the country in many peacekeeping contexts, missions should include field offices in transition planning processes. Doing so can ensure that provincial/local efforts are aligned with national-level strategic plans. More specifically, missions should:

- Create provincial-level coordination and planning mechanisms on transition that are led by mission field offices and government authorities so as to build local ownership;
- Take steps to ensure maximum coherency between national-level transition plans negotiated in country capitals and field office planning and activities.



April 25, 2021, Tanganyika province, DRC: Community members buy and sell food products in the central market of the town of Manono.

Facing calls for MONUSCO's withdrawal, the Congolese government has, at least temporarily, halted their participation in the Kinshasa working groups, leaving the transition in a state of ambiguity. In such a context, provincial level coordination bodies could allow for continued collaboration at the local level.

Many activities and operations related to peacekeeping transitions, such as efforts to strengthen the justice chain, support the demobilization of armed groups, and undertake military operations to protect civilians, occur outside host-state capitals—often in areas with weak state institutions and an armed group presence. Similarly, much of the data required to measure against benchmarks in transition plans, particularly related to POC, will be gathered from zones of ongoing insecurity. Given the local dimensions of transition, missions should effectively incorporate field offices in transition planning and implementation. Namely, missions can establish provincial coordination mechanisms on transition led by field offices, UNCT agencies, and, ideally, provincial authorities. Missions should also work to ensure that field office planning and activities reflect, as much as possible, the objectives of national-level transition plans. Both recommendations are discussed in more detail below.

Transition Mechanisms at the Provincial Level

Recent events in the DRC attest to the importance of “provincializing” peacekeeping transitions. As discussed in Lessons 2 and 4, MONUSCO established transitional working groups prior to its withdrawal from Tanganyika Province. But the Tanganyika transition began before the drafting of the 2021 Joint Plan in Kinshasa and the creation of the Kinshasa-level working groups. In contrast, the three provinces where MONUSCO will maintain a presence going forward (North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri) are yet to develop similar mechanisms. Mission officials referenced nascent efforts to create provincial working groups led by field offices but, approximately one year after the Joint Plan’s finalization, these mechanisms are not operational.¹²¹ Thus, there are no cohesive mechanisms to implement the Joint Plan at the provincial level, such as by engaging in discussions with UNCT, civil society, and government partners on the transformation of Mission tasks (discussed in Lesson 4).

The value of provincial transition structures has become clearer in the context of anti-MONUSCO protests in July 2022. Facing calls for MONUSCO’s withdrawal, the Congolese government has, at least temporarily, halted their participation in the Kinshasa working groups, leaving the transition in a state of ambiguity.¹²² In such a context, provincial-level coordination bodies could allow for continued collaboration at the local level. Provincial bodies could also help spread awareness of the Mission’s transition, particularly if they included CSOs, as in Tanganyika.

Coherence Between National and Provincial Plans

In the years leading up to the drafting of the Joint Plan, MONUSCO developed provincial strategies intended to address protection issues in specific geographic areas and to determine the conditions necessary to allow for field office and base closures.¹²³ Mission officials told CIVIC that these strategies remained relevant in shaping MONUSCO's activities and operations.¹²⁴ When asked about transition, several interlocutors asserted that the Joint Plan had taken account of these strategies, pointing to common priorities and objectives.¹²⁵ One MONUSCO civilian official, for instance, claimed that the Mission "made sure that some of the benchmarks and indicators [in the Joint Plan] were anchored in the provincial strategies that we have."¹²⁶ But, as of this writing, there has been limited progress in translating the Joint Plan to the provincial level, either by adjusting current provincial strategies around the Joint Plan's benchmarks (and potentially the development of province-specific indicators) or through the development of new provincial plans focused on the implementation of the Joint Plan.¹²⁷ Absent either effort, it is not clear how field offices can effectively structure their actions to achieve the conditions laid out in the Joint Plan.

It should be noted that ensuring a connection between national- and provincial-level transition planning requires personnel and resources. When asked about limited progress in bringing the transition process to the field office-level, several MONUSCO officials noted that only a small number of officials were tasked with connecting national and provincial transition planning processes.¹²⁸ Interlocutors agreed that concerted staff attention would have proved helpful in working with field offices to implement the Joint Plan.¹²⁹

Lesson 4: Mapping POC Capacities at the Local Level

At the local level, peacekeeping missions should work in collaboration with UNCT, government, and civil society partners to map POC needs, capacities and gaps prior to transition and establish frameworks for the potential transformation of tasks. This framework should address UN-specific capacities and policy questions linked to withdrawal, as well as protection capacities of government agencies and CSOs. More specifically:

- Missions and counterparts must determine whether particular mission POC capacities—or POC capacities supported by peacekeepers—need to be maintained after mission departure and, if so, which UN agencies, government offices, or civil society organizations will be responsible for their implementation;
- UN stakeholders should help prevent a physical protection gap by incorporating SSR and DDR into long-term and multi-stakeholder transition planning;
- Missions must clarify whether they will maintain residual capacity in areas from which they withdraw, as well as what the role of these remaining officials will be.

Peacekeeping missions undertake a range of activities that can contribute to the protection of civilians, including creating early warning networks and establishing intercommunal dialogue structures to facilitate conflict resolution.¹³⁰ In transition contexts, there is a risk that protection initiatives created or supported by a mission will cease functioning after withdrawal.¹³¹ But the geographic drawdown of a UN peacekeeping mission does not signal the end of the UN's presence in a particular region or country. UN agencies remain following a mission's withdrawal and coordination between missions and the UNCT is vital to a successful transition. As observed in the Secretary-General's 2022 report, "Past experience demonstrates that improved strategic and operational coherence between missions and country teams is correlated with better-planned and managed United Nations transitions."¹³² The importance of coordination with the UNCT is similarly reflected in the 2021 UNSC resolution on peacekeeping transitions (Resolution 2594).¹³³

Other protection actors remain in addition to the UNCT, including national and international non-governmental organizations, members of civil society, and, of course, government authorities. However, other POC actors rarely have staffing or budgets comparable to a peacekeeping mission, and it is unrealistic to expect that they will be able to fill all of the gaps left by a mission's departure. UN agencies, for instance, lack military and police capacity and define protection differently than missions. To foster a sustainable transition that prioritizes POC and addresses as many gaps as possible, it is vital for missions to map out key POC activities and capacities with the UNCT, government actors and civil society partners at the provincial level. These stakeholders—many of which may be members of the protection cluster¹³⁴—can collaboratively determine whether and how initiatives can be maintained or transformed to address the same need. As noted in the UN's handbook on POC, "In any transition, the mission will need to coordinate with other protection actors to determine what protection functions of the mission may be continued via other means, and where there may be gaps."¹³⁵

Mapping POC capacities and gaps is a separate step from the drafting of broader strategies and benchmarks on transition. It requires detailed discussions on the expertise and activities of all potential protection actors, the risks that are likely to materialize with a mission's departure, and how to fill as many gaps as possible while recognizing that the activities may not be replicated at the same scale (or in the same way) as they were before. It also requires that a mission's counterparts have a clear understanding of the extent to which the mission will remain active in the area after official closure—whether through monitoring, potentially re-opening a base if the situation deteriorates, or maintaining residual staff despite the absence of any bases or field offices.¹³⁶

While mapping can help avoid some gaps, drawing down a peacekeeping mission risks leaving a void in physical protection that only national security forces can fill. But, as noted above, many contemporary UN peacekeeping missions with Chapter VII mandates operate in contexts with security forces that are too weak or abusive to effectively protect civilians from non-state armed groups. In such environments, mission withdrawal from certain areas can result in increased abuses against civilians by both national security forces and armed groups. To mitigate these risks during transitions, UN actors can play a role in supporting the development of comprehensive security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) plans.¹³⁷ Comprehensive plans are particularly important given that SSR and DDR can take decades to achieve and are vulnerable to backsliding.

Primarily drawing on research in Tanganyika province, the sub-sections below further explore the importance of efforts to map and address protection-related gaps likely to result from mission drawdown, as well as efforts to address gaps in physical protection with long-term SSR and DDR plans.

Planning for the Transformation of POC-Related Tasks Prior to Departure

In April 2022, approximately two months before MONUSCO's withdrawal from Tanganyika, CIVIC discussed recent efforts to map POC capacities, as well as gaps likely to result from MONUSCO's drawdown, with a range of stakeholders in the province. MONUSCO and non-Mission interlocutors stressed that, primarily through the working groups created to monitor transition, MONUSCO facilitated discussions on the gaps that would be created by the Mission's departure as well as which MONUSCO activities could potentially be undertaken by other actors.¹³⁸ A UNCT official whose agency leads one of the working groups explained that the group identified "what the gaps were... and then we identified what we needed to do in order to fill these gaps...as well as who could do this and what the budget would be."¹³⁹ Interviewees also shared an example of how one agency proposed joint projects with MONUSCO through the transition structures.¹⁴⁰ Finally, several officials noted that working group members had made decisions regarding agencies taking over specific services, including Radio Okapi, a radio station created by MONUSCO.¹⁴¹



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April 23, 2021, Tanganyika province, DRC: Close to the Luvua River, farmers return to their settlements with produce and firewood.

But while UN agencies engaged in discussions with the Mission for over a year prior to departure, UN officials shared concerns that efforts to map POC activities and gaps came too late in the planning process and left many questions unanswered.¹⁴² The Secretary-General's June 2022 report on MONUSCO, for instance, stated that "The United Nations country team, jointly with MONUSCO, is finalizing a joint programmatic transition plan for Tanganyika ahead of the Mission's withdrawal."¹⁴³ Although such efforts are important, MONUSCO's interlocutors could have benefited from mapping activities and drafting a plan significantly *in advance* of Mission withdrawal. One agency official who had a positive view of MONUSCO's engagement with the UNCT overall noted, "We should have started this transition process earlier. It shouldn't haven't been only six or eight months ago that we began to do detailed work.... What I would recommend for Tanganyika, if we did this again, would be that, two years before, MONUSCO says, 'we are going to leave, how can we work together?'"¹⁴⁴ Other UNCT officials similarly underscored the fact that key questions related to the Mission's withdrawal—including the transformation of specific tasks related to POC, humanitarian access and escorts for UN agencies, and coordination of UN support to national security actors—were left at least partially unanswered in the months before the Mission's withdrawal.¹⁴⁵ A government official also highlighted the ambiguity in the potential transformation of tasks for different MONUSCO activities, stating, "The attribution of tasks hasn't happened yet.... Each MONUSCO section needs to figure out how to get close to the people who will receive their tasks."¹⁴⁶

Delays in identifying organizations to replace MONUSCO's protection efforts may result, in part, from UN funding structures. UN peacekeeping missions are funded through assessed contributions of UN member states—specifically, the contributions come from the annual UN dues that member states must pay if they wish to remain in good standing and fully participate in UN forums. In contrast, UNCT activities are funded by voluntary contributions from member states. The activities of INGOs and civil society organizations, meanwhile, are funded by a web of voluntary government and private contributions. As has been demonstrated in other contexts, voluntary funding from member states for UNCT, INGO, and civil society actors does not necessarily increase when peacekeeping missions end and may in fact decrease, or cease altogether. This challenge, referred to as “the financial cliff” in peacekeeping transitions, requires integrated, longer-term financing strategies based on identified gaps developed by missions and other partners, including international financial institutions.¹⁴⁷ A plan for securing or realigning resources should be developed by local, national and international partners to take on responsibilities related to protection, human rights and peacebuilding.

Early warning is an example of an area where MONUSCO has taken action to identify other actors capable of fulfilling its role and to gradually hand over responsibilities. But it also demonstrates some of the challenges in doing so. A central element of MONUSCO's efforts to protect civilians in eastern Congo, early warning systems are generally managed by the Mission's Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs)—Congolese national staff who share alerts with MONUSCO officials and, in some instances, state security forces who can potentially take armed action to address threats.¹⁴⁸ CLAs are tasked with establishing and supporting Local Protection Committees (LPCs), which are groups of Congolese civil society leaders and civilians who share “early warnings” of threats with MONUSCO and other protection actors and develop protection plans. In Tanganyika, MONUSCO officially “transferred” its early warning system to *Conseil de Protection Civile* (CPC), a Congolese government agency within the Ministry of Interior. CPC receives support from the American Bar Association (ABA) and manages early warning systems in parallel to MONUSCO's in some parts of eastern DRC.¹⁴⁹ As part of the transfer, MONUSCO organized a handover event in which provincial leaders officially recognized the role of CPC in leading provincial early warning efforts.¹⁵⁰ The Mission has also connected CPC officials to protection networks, taken members of their staff on field missions to areas of the province with high levels of POC threats, and provided some training.¹⁵¹ However, despite assistance from the ABA and its status as a government entity, CPC has extremely limited capacity and uncertain funding prospects.¹⁵²

“The question is the sustainability of these [protection] tools, because we cannot expect local government and civil society and communities to work without financial resources. ...Until these entities have resources, both financial and human, their sustainability is in question.”

— MONUSCO civilian official

Ongoing financial support will be necessary to sustain this vital service going forward. But in interviews with CIVIC two months before the Mission's departure from Tanganyika, stakeholders expressed doubt about whether CPC could maintain the early warning systems established by MONUSCO. According to one government official, CPC was only receiving reports from two LPCs, both of which are close to the provincial capital of Kalemie, and it was not receiving reports from civilians in areas more affected by armed group violence.¹⁵³ Moreover, as CPC neared the end of its funding stream with ABA, it was unclear whether another international organization or UN agency would provide financial support to its activities.¹⁵⁴ "The question," as one MONUSCO civilian official explained, "is the sustainability of these tools, because we cannot expect local government and civil society and communities to work without financial resources. ... Until these entities have resources, both financial and human, their sustainability is in question."¹⁵⁵

As missions negotiate the potential transformation of tasks to UN agencies or government authorities, they should also take steps to ensure the effective implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP). The HRDDP—which all UN actors, including peacekeeping missions and UN agencies, are required to implement—regulates the support that UN bodies provide to national security forces and to civilian officials with authority over national security forces. The HRDDP requires that, before providing support, UN entities assess whether there are "substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of the receiving entities committing grave violations of international humanitarian, human rights or refugee law."¹⁵⁶ If such a risk exists and cannot be mitigated, the policy requires that support be ceased or withheld.¹⁵⁷ Thus, during drawdown, the handover of resources, such as offices, vehicles, or gasoline, to state security forces must be in compliance with the policy.

Although the HRDDP is a UN system-wide policy, UN agencies often have less awareness of the policy than do missions, which have human rights sections typically responsible for HRDDP implementation.¹⁵⁸ Particularly given that agencies may play a greater role in supporting state security forces after mission departure, it is critical that UN agencies and missions discuss how the policy will be implemented in areas where missions are withdrawing.

Addressing the Physical Protection Gap by Incorporating SSR and DDR into Long-Term and Multi-Stakeholder Transition Planning

In conversations with CIVIC, interlocutors stressed that effective DDR and SSR processes are vital for the safe drawdown of MONUSCO.¹⁵⁹ In Tanganyika, for instance, MONUSCO officials, civil society leaders, and humanitarians highlighted the FARDC's weaknesses and perceived inability to protect civilians as a central risk for MONUSCO's withdrawal.¹⁶⁰ "The worry is that six months or one year after the departure of MONUSCO, will the capacity of the FARDC and the authorities be there?" asked one humanitarian. "Our fear is really about capacity," the official added.¹⁶¹ Several individuals also asserted that the Mission's presence in Tanganyika had a positive impact on the FARDC's behavior and expressed concern that MONUSCO's withdrawal would result in an increase in human rights violations by national security actors.¹⁶² One civil society leader explained that she was "worried about the military and the police. These authorities are bad for human rights. Some of them are now ashamed to commit certain human rights violations, but after MONUSCO leaves, these authorities will not be scared."¹⁶³ A Tanganyika government official agreed, asserting that "MONUSCO has a real impact on the behavior of the FARDC and PNC. They avoid harming the population because of MONUSCO's presence."¹⁶⁴ Mission officials highlighted that the *comités de suivi*—local monitoring mechanisms developed by authorities but largely supported by MONUSCO—also had a positive impact on security forces' accountability and respect for human rights.¹⁶⁵ Other stakeholders noted that Tanganyika continues to contend with armed groups and told CIVIC they feared an increase in attacks following MONUSCO's departure.¹⁶⁶

“[I am] worried about the military and the police. These authorities are bad for human rights. Some of them are now ashamed to commit certain human rights violations, but after MONUSCO leaves [Tanganyika], these authorities will not be scared.”

— Congolese civil society leader

Challenges linked to DDR and SSR in the DRC are not unique to Tanganyika. Over the past two decades, national-level DDR and SSR initiatives have failed to stem the continued spread of armed groups or to establish national security forces capable of protecting civilians. As one analyst observed, “Since 2003, at least three DDR programs have been launched nationally, without any decisive progress. A significant number of the current members of armed groups have gone through such DDR programs before taking up arms again in a movement of ‘circular return’ and a ‘recycling of rebels.’”¹⁶⁷ The record on SSR is similarly grim: past initiatives have generally been ad hoc projects initiated by bilateral partners, none of which have dramatically overhauled the Congolese military.¹⁶⁸ The Congolese government has launched several recent initiatives that could potentially improve the situation, including a dialogue process called “the Nairobi Process” that began in April 2022 with certain armed group leaders to discuss disarmament and political settlements.¹⁶⁹ Additionally, in 2021, Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi announced a new DDR program known as the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Reintegration and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS).¹⁷⁰ He has also taken some tentative steps toward SSR, such as replacing high-level military officials suspected of committing grievous human rights abuses.¹⁷¹

MONUSCO has made some efforts to address SSR and DDR gaps in transition planning. The Joint Plan, for instance, does not specifically reference SSR, but it has benchmarks and indicators related to it, such as the need for “the capacity and presence of security forces in areas where armed groups are present and active.”¹⁷² The Joint Plan does directly recognize the finalization of the P-DDRCS strategy and its implementation as one benchmark for drawdown.¹⁷³

SSR and DDR are complex, expensive, long-term processes that UN peacekeeping missions are not always well placed to lead on.¹⁷⁴ But missions can play a role in coordinating the SSR/DDR efforts of international actors, such as bilateral military training and investment by international financial institutions.¹⁷⁵ In the DRC, for example, MONUSCO has used its good offices to create platforms for engagement between international financial institutions, government authorities, and member states engaging in bilateral military training.¹⁷⁶ Such efforts should take place well in advance of transitions, but, given the long timeline for successful SSR and DDR, they will likely also need to be a component of transition planning. Other UN actors, such as the UNCT and UN regional envoys, can support such efforts. These practices were highlighted in a 2021 strategic review of peacekeeping support to SSR, which found that it is “important for the United Nations to...ensure that missions and agencies work together on SSR from the earliest moment to also enable smoother transitions and to ensure success over the longer term.”¹⁷⁷ Lastly, missions and other actors should include civil society in developing DDR and SSR strategies and processes.¹⁷⁸

Clarifying a Mission's Residual Capacity

In communicating its plan for withdrawal from Tanganyika, MONUSCO informed partners that the Mission would leave behind a small “residual capacity” composed of members of different substantive sections following its official withdrawal from the province. But during CIVIC’s research, interlocutors were uncertain as to which Mission sections would remain, what capacities they would have, and what activities remaining Mission staff would undertake.¹⁷⁹ As one humanitarian put it, “I have not gotten a concrete response in terms of which [MONUSCO] sections will remain.”¹⁸⁰ Interlocutors also expressed confusion as to what the role of MONUSCO’s remaining military base in Bendera—an area in northern Tanganyika near the border with South Kivu—would be following the official closure of the Mission’s presence in the province. (Due to remaining POC threats in northern Tanganyika, MONUSCO determined that the Bendera base would remain operational following the closure of the Mission’s provincial field office in Tanganyika.)¹⁸¹

It should be noted that CIVIC’s research in Tanganyika took place prior to the approval of the Mission’s budget by the Fifth Committee, the UN body tasked with determining the annual costs of peacekeeping missions.¹⁸² Before the budget was approved, MONUSCO may have been unsure of which posts would be approved and thus unable to make final decisions on its residual capacity. Despite specific limitations on MONUSCO, however, one clear takeaway for other contexts is that missions should provide as much clarity as possible on what residual capacity will remain following the closure of a regional office in order for government officials, UNCT members, and CSOs to better prepare and plan.

Lesson 5: Developing Adequate Monitoring Capacities and Policies

Missions must have adequate capacities, policies, and guidance to monitor the implementation of transition plans, including progress on benchmarks and indicators. This requires that:

- Missions develop transparent processes for monitoring transition plans that clarify how different sections and field offices will provide data for reporting and be involved in strategic discussions;
- Missions request the personnel and capacity necessary to effectively monitor transition planning, and that UN Fifth Committee delegates approve these requests.

Benchmarks are only an effective tool for tying peacekeeping transitions to security realities if missions have adequate capacity to accurately measure, assess, and report against them. Developing robust means for monitoring these processes can increase prospects for transparency while also serving as an opportunity to hold governments accountable for their responsibility to protect civilians.¹⁸³ As observed in the UN’s *Guide to Benchmarking*, “Monitoring mechanisms are critical to the successful implementation of strategic frameworks for peace consolidation.... Proper benchmarking requires skilled personnel and *specifically allocated resources*.”¹⁸⁴ To ensure the success of transition planning, missions must develop processes through which information from all mission components can be provided, evaluated, and factored into reporting. To date, peacekeeping missions have struggled with evaluating their impact and have limited experience and capacity in measuring benchmarks or indicators. Missions undergoing transitions need sufficient personnel and resources to monitor benchmarks, which should be requested in mission budgets and approved by UN Fifth Committee delegates.¹⁸⁵

Developing Transition-Monitoring Processes

Peacekeeping missions have different mechanisms, personnel, and tools through which they gather and analyze information, some of which could be useful for monitoring against benchmarks and indicators in transition plans. MONUSCO, for example, has multiple monitoring and data-tracking systems through which it



Hugh Kinsella-Cunningham

November 6, 2021, Ituri province, DRC: United Nations peacekeepers speak with a priest in a displacement site for civilians fleeing armed conflict in Ituri province.

brings together and assesses information gathered by its military, police, and civilian components. One of these systems is SAGE—an incident reporting and database system rolled out by MONUSCO and other missions in recent years. Through SAGE, MONUSCO “contributors” across the Mission provide data on incidents, including incidents with direct relevance for POC.¹⁸⁶ MONUSCO has also begun to roll out the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System (CPAS), a “comprehensive, results-based reporting and performance-assessment tool” that can help Mission leadership “assess their operations better” and that provides “concrete data to make evidence-based decisions.”¹⁸⁷ Notably, CPAS can allow missions to more effectively evaluate the impact of their own actions, see trends related to the protection of civilians, and ensure that data is meaningfully feeding into strategic decision-making.¹⁸⁸ Beyond SAGE and CPAS, MONUSCO’s Joint Mission Analysis Cell (JMAC) is also central to the Mission’s capacity to analyze information and forecast future evolutions in the POC environment.¹⁸⁹ Based on independent sources and reporting from other sections, JMAC produces valuable assessments for Mission decision-makers.¹⁹⁰ Although JMAC’s work is focused on the context rather than measuring Mission impact, JMAC could contribute to monitoring benchmarks and indicators.

Several Mission officials asserted to CIVIC that SAGE, CPAS, and JMAC would, in the future, contribute to the Mission’s monitoring of the benchmarks in the Joint Plan, and that UNCT members would similarly provide data.¹⁹¹ But at the time of CIVIC’s research, MONUSCO was still in the early stages of determining *how* monitoring would take place and how different sections and offices would contribute.



May 4, 2021, Tanganyika province, DRC: An aerial view of the town of Pension in Tanganyika province.

In their first report on the benchmarks, MONUSCO and the Congolese government were largely unable to provide meaningful measurements. The report contained extremely limited contextual analysis relative to the benchmarks and, in the case of certain indicators, stated that it lacks adequate data to provide any analysis.¹⁹²

Peacekeeping missions have different structures, resources and capacities, and there is likely not a “one size fits all” approach to monitoring transition plans. But, based on their experiences in MONUSCO and in the DRC, interlocutors described how elements of transition monitoring can be optimized.¹⁹³ These include:

- Ensuring that a mission’s substantive civilian sections, as well as the military and police components, are regularly inputting information to SAGE;
- Ensuring a clear connection between SAGE and CPAS, such that incidents recorded in SAGE from across a mission are “fed” into the CPAS database;
- Refining the CPAS results framework to align it with the benchmarks in the transition plans;
- Formalizing JMAC’s role in the monitoring process. The role could involve analyzing and interpreting data that is gathered by other sections and reflected in SAGE and CPAS.

As discussed in Lesson 2, UN agencies—particularly those that focus on protection—and CSOs should also regularly contribute to monitoring benchmarks.¹⁹⁴ Agencies including UNHCR and OCHA have important monitoring capacities and tools to track protection incidents and early warnings of violence, including in areas where missions may have a more limited presence. Moreover, the UN benchmarking guidelines specifically recommend the creation of an “internal reference group, consisting of strategic planners from the mission and from the United Nations Country Team (UNCT)...to ensure that...existing competencies and resources, including data sources, within the United Nations systems are fully exploited.”¹⁹⁵

Lastly, it should be noted that, given the joint nature of transition planning, it is just as important for national governments to develop mechanisms necessary for monitoring and measuring against benchmarks. But MONUSCO officials asserted that government counterparts did not appear to have invested significant resources in gathering data.¹⁹⁶ Missions should be prepared for the fact that host-state governments may have very limited monitoring capacity.

Requesting Necessary Capacities for Monitoring and Approving Budget Requests

Even with clear strategies in place for how benchmarks are to be monitored, missions also need adequate personnel with the right expertise to monitor implementation and progress toward benchmarks. As noted above, SAGE and CPAS are two of the MONUSCO tools that should play a role in the Mission’s efforts to monitor against the benchmarks in the Joint Plan. But in conversations with CIVIC, MONUSCO officials expressed concerns about the Mission’s analytical structures and resources.¹⁹⁷ For example, two MONUSCO officials highlighted that the Mission has only one database manager dedicated to SAGE, which could compromise the quality of information. They felt that database managers in field offices would improve the quality of the data.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, CPAS has remained chronically underfunded and understaffed in missions since its creation. Some missions have requested additional funding for CPAS-focused posts, but these have been denied by the Fifth Committee. Other missions have told CIVIC that they need additional capacity to implement CPAS but do not feel they can request additional resources in the UN’s current budgetary environment, which encourages either zero growth or reductions.

Before drawdown, missions should identify the personnel and capacities needed to analyze information and monitor progress, and they should consider requesting additional resources if necessary. In annual budget requests, missions should indicate that these posts will help monitor and report on transition indicators. Fifth Committee delegates should avoid cutting mission budgets in ways that could compromise their capacity to report against benchmarks, and they should approve specific budgetary requests that are vital for monitoring the drawdown of a mission.¹⁹⁹

IV. CONCLUSION

Contemporary peacekeeping missions with POC mandates operate in challenging environments, characterized, in part, by widespread armed group violence against civilians, weak and abusive security forces, and limited state authority. In such contexts, missions remain important protection actors. But in countries like the DRC, armed group violence—and the fundamental drivers of armed conflict—are unlikely to be resolved prior to mission withdrawal. And as the context in Darfur following UNAMID’s withdrawal makes clear, mission drawdowns can further destabilize already fragile environments.

Despite the undeniably political nature of decision-making in the UNSC, the protection of civilians must remain the prevailing priority in peacekeeping transitions.

This raises an important question: how can peacekeeping operations, and the UN bodies which mandate and support them, ensure that withdrawal does not lead to devastating consequences for civilians?

There are no simple answers. But as MONUSCO’s example makes clear, there are steps that missions, host-state governments, civil society organizations, and the UNSC can take to reduce these risks. First, despite the undeniably political nature of decision-making in the UNSC, the protection of civilians must remain the prevailing priority in peacekeeping transitions. Particularly when transition plans are developed in contexts of continued armed conflict, these plans must reflect the importance of POC. This emphasis requires the inclusion of measurable benchmarks addressing the security context as well as the capacity of government actors to protect communities. A responsible and conditions-based drawdown must be sensitive to evolving security and political dynamics in host countries, particularly when these dynamics increase the risk of threats against civilians. Moreover, the drafting of transition plans presents an opportunity for missions to advocate on the importance of POC to national authorities, who may have divergent priorities.

Secondly, MONUSCO’s drawdown demonstrates the importance of fostering an inclusive and transparent transition. The process of implementing and monitoring transition plans should meaningfully include a range of actors critical for a sustainable drawdown, such as UN agencies and government actors. Civil society organizations, most of all, are prone to being excluded from these vital processes. Given that they represent the civilians who missions are mandated to protect, CSOs should be at the center of conversations about the future of peacekeeping missions and the conditions necessary for a sustainable departure.

Thirdly, MONUSCO’s drawdown highlights the importance of “provincializing” transitions. Although national plans may be negotiated in capitals, the concrete process of transition—from the drafting of province-specific plans to the transformation of key responsibilities to other actors—will necessarily also take place in more remote areas. Planning should go beyond broad, national-level strategies and should address gaps in protection activities that will be created by a mission’s departure. Particularly at the local level, this will likely require missions to engage with government actors, UN agencies, and civil society interlocutors to map key

POC activities and capacities, as well as to determine whether other actors can help fill protection gaps. Additionally, given the contexts in which many contemporary peacekeeping missions operate, progress on both the institutional reform of security forces and the disarmament of non-state armed groups is vital to achieving the POC goals within any transition plan. Efforts by UN and non-UN actors to address both SSR and DDR must be factored into transition planning.

Finally, missions in transition must develop processes—and request resources—to measure against benchmarks in transition plans. Absent such mechanisms, missions may struggle to ensure that transitions are linked to threats against civilians and national protection capacities. Clarifying data sources, monitoring roles, and methods is essential for assessing progress and can foster a more transparent process.

There is no single recipe for ensuring that peacekeeping transitions do not further destabilize fragile contexts. But lessons from MONUSCO's ongoing drawdown can help other missions avoid the worst consequences for civilians. These lessons can also inform future UN guidance on transitions, as well as actions that the UNSC can take to support missions approaching challenging drawdown processes.

Civil society organizations, most of all, are prone to being left out of these processes. Given that they represent the civilians who missions are mandated to protect, CSOs should be at the center of conversations about the future of peacekeeping missions and the conditions necessary for a sustainable departure.

ENDNOTES

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- 38 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022. In addition, see: UN Secretary-General, *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, UN Doc. S/2022/252 (March 21, 2022), para. 64: “In preparation for the withdrawal of MONUSCO from Tanganyika by June 2022, the United Nations engaged with provincial authorities and other stakeholders through joint working groups on the protection of civilians and human rights, stabilization, support to State institutions, operations and strategic communication.”
- 39 CIVIC, *Protection with Less Presence*, January 10, 2018.
- 40 United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo, “MONUSCO deplores the ongoing hostilities and escalating violence in the Kasais,” April 5, 2017, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/monusco-deplores-ongoing-hostilities-and-escalating-violence-kasais>.
- 41 “UNHCR deeply concerned by renewed violence displacing thousands in North Kivu, DR Congo,” *UNHCR*, May 27, 2022,

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2022/5/629087f94/unhcr-deeply-concerned-renewed-violence-displacing-thousands-north-kivu.html>; “East DR Congo violence worsening despite ‘state of siege’ – UN,” *Al Jazeera*, June 17, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/17/east-congo-violence-worsening-despite-military-rule-u-n-experts>.

- 42 It should be noted that protests against MONUSCO in the DRC are not new. Indeed, as observed on the *Po na GEC* podcast, Lucha (a prominent Congolese civil society organization) first organized a protest demanding that MONUSCO undertake more offensive operations against armed groups in 2013. In recent years, protests against the Mission have grown in size—and in the intensity of demands—as the Mission has faced increasing calls for its departure. However, the 2022 protests took place on an unprecedented scale. “Que reproche-t-on à la Monusco ?” *Po Na GEC* (podcast), July 29, 2022, https://soundcloud.com/gec-crg/que-reproche-t-on-a-la-monusco?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing.
- 43 CIVIC, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, October 2019.
- 44 Daniel Levine-Spound and Samuli Harju, “The UN risks a failed drawdown in Congo if it doesn’t listen to civilians,” *The New Humanitarian*, December 6, 2021, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/2021/12/06/un-risks-failed-drawdown-congo-if-it-doesn-t-listen-civilians>; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #99, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #100, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #101, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #102, Kalemie, April, 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #150, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #105, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 45 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #154, Kinshasa, May 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
- 46 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #84, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 47 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
- 48 For more information on ensuring that benchmarks are measurable, see United Nations, *Monitoring Peace Consolidation: United Nations Practitioners Guide to Benchmarking*, 2010.
- 49 UNSC member states should also be cautious regarding the nature and timing of reporting requirements. While it is critical for missions and host states to report against benchmarks, several interlocutors asserted, for example, that the quarterly reporting requirement imposed in MONUSCO’s 2021 mandate was arduous, shifting too much of the Mission’s attention to monitoring the Joint Plan when it should have been focused on implementation. As one MONUSCO civilian official explained, “The quarterly reporting requirement...shifted [our] focus on reporting and deviated necessary attention from ‘how’ benchmarks and indicators should be met.” CIVIC Correspondence with MONUSCO, August 2022.
- 50 For more information on the Fifth Committee, see Lisa Sharland, *How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN*, International Peace Institute, May 2018.
- 51 In the DRC, for instance, MONUSCO has faced important disagreements with the Congolese government. Previously, during the presidency of Joseph Kabila, MONUSCO regularly struggled to coordinate priorities and operations with the Congolese government. As Adam Day observed, “In MONUSCO...the Council demanded in 2015 that the mission jointly develop an exit strategy with the host government. In response, the mission leadership developed proposals that included the full range of mandated activities, a sequenced draw down plan based on gradual improvement in the security, political and human rights situation, and a set of final conditions that needed to be reached prior to full withdrawal. The government flatly refused, insisting that MONUSCO’s full withdrawal could be predicated solely upon a reduction of the security threat posed by priority armed groups, without any reference to the political, humanitarian or human rights aspects of the mandate.” Day, *Improving Security Council Practice in Mission Settings*, 12.
- 52 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #69, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #81, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 53 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #84, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #68, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 54 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 55 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #69, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #93, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, Goma, March 2022.
- 58 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 59 Secretary-General, *Transition plan of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, UN Doc S/2021/807 (September 12, 2021), Annex I, 26, Benchmarks 1–4.
- 60 It should be noted that the question of end states vs. end dates is not unique to MONUSCO. As Adam Day notes, “Council practice has not always been clear on the specific role of benchmarks: are they conditions that must be met prior to a mission’s departure, or merely signposts to inform decision-making? And how can the Council reconcile an end date with an end state, a mandate that includes both a

fixed/final date for the mission, and benchmarks which may or may not be met prior to that date.... Importantly, the Council has not explicitly required that all 'core' benchmarks be met in order for a mission to transition out, thus leaving significant grey areas when it comes to measuring whether enough progress has been made in complex settings." Day, *Improving Security Council Practice in Mission Settings*, 10

One way to understand the nature of "2024" is to refer to MONUSCO'S 2019 Independent Strategic Review (ISR), which similarly recognized the importance of a context-based withdrawal. The ISR recommended that "the timeline for an exit of MONUSCO should be an absolute minimum of three years." But the ISR specifically included "red lines" that would "[justify] a pause in the transition." These included, for example, if "the FARDC's capacity and will to assume responsibility for security and to protect civilians is not guaranteed in the provinces that should be vacated by MONUSCO's Force." While the Joint Plan does not include "red lines," failure to achieve the benchmarks that make up the "minimum conditions" should, functionally, constitute a red line justifying a delay in the Mission's withdrawal. See, *Transitioning from stabilization to peace: An independent strategic review of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, UN Doc. S/2019/842 (2019), 22, 33.

- 61 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #98, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #165, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #154, Kinshasa, May 2022.
- 62 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, April 2022.
- 63 International Crisis Group, *East Africa's DR Congo Force: The Case for Caution*, August 25, 2022, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/great-lakes/democratic-republic-congo/east-africas-dr-congo-force-case-caution>; "RDC : Pourquoi la présidentielle de 2023 est en grand danger," *La Libre Afrique*, September 18, 2022, <https://afrique.lalibre.be/72539/rdc-pourquoi-la-presidentielle-de-2023-est-en-grand-danger/>.
- 64 For example, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, stated in October 2021 that "there is absolutely no plan that would have predetermined the inevitable departure of MONUSCO in three years, four years, or five years, because that would be an artificial timeline disconnected with the reality on the evolution of the situation in the country." Lydie Betya, "Jean-Pierre Lacroix: 'The Population have Told UN: Stay and be More Present,'" MONUSCO, October 22, 2021, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/jean-pierre-lacroix-population-have-told-us-stay-and-be-more-present/>; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 65 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #69, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 66 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 67 Clément Muamba, "Réévaluation du plan de retrait de la Monusco en RDC: le gouvernement saisit Bintou Keita pour la tenue des travaux," *Actualite.CD*, August 20, 2022, <https://actualite.cd/2022/08/20/reevaluation-du-plan-de-retrait-de-la-monusco-en-rdc-le-gouvernement-saisit-bintou-keita>. Notably, however, uncertainty related to end states vs. end dates is not unique to the DRC. In the drawdowns of UNOCI (the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire) and UNMIS (the United Nations Mission in Sudan), decision-makers faced uncertainty as to whether benchmarks in transition planning were required indicators that needed to be achieved prior to departure or indicators merely meant to guide decisions. The DRC case further highlights the risks of including aspirational or target timelines in a transition plan, even if they can prove useful for planning and accountability. Day, *Improving Security Council Practice in Mission Settings*, 9–10.
- 68 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #154, Kinshasa, May 2022.
- 69 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
- 70 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #154, Kinshasa, May 2022.
- 71 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 72 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #106, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #114, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #128, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #131, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 73 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #114, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 74 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #123, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #132, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #133, Kalemie, April 2022. It should be noted that MONUSCO has coordinated with provincial government officials during a time of substantial political turnover. In 2021, then-governor Zoe Kabila, brother of former Congolese president Joseph Kabila, was stripped of his position following a motion of censure from the provincial assembly. Thus, the Mission engaged with an interim governor throughout key parts of its transition process. Then, in May 2022, only two months prior to the Mission's transition from the province, a new governor was elected in Tanganyika. See: Romain Gras, "DRC: Zoe Kabila has been removed as governor of Tanganyika," *The Africa Report*, May 12, 2021, <https://www.theafricareport.com/87277/drc-zoe-kabila-has-been-removed-as-governor-of-tanganyika/May>; José Mukendi, "Élections du gouverneur au Tanganyika : Julie Ngungwa de l'UDPS élue," *Actualite.CD*, May 6, 2022, <https://actualite.cd/2022/05/06/elections-du-gouverneur-au-tanganyika-julie-ngungwa-de-ludps-elue>.
- 75 Daniel Levine-Spound and Samuli Harju, "The UN risks a failed drawdown in Congo if it doesn't listen to civilians," *The New Humanitarian*, December 6, 2021, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/2021/12/06/un-risks-failed-drawdown-congo-if-it-doesn-t-listen-civilians>; "Broadcasting Peace: Insights and lessons from local peacebuilders in Eastern DRC," *Peace Direct*, March 24, 2020, <http://broadcastingpeace.peaceinsight.org/reports/broadcastingpeace/>.
- 76 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
- 77 UN Security Council Resolution 1325, UN. Doc S/Res/1325 (2000), preambular para. 5.
- 78 CIVIC, *Early Warning Takes Root in UN Peacekeeping*, January 2022, 12–13; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022. UN Secretary-General António Guterres similarly emphasized the need to include "civil society groups – especially those

representing women, minorities and young people,” in transition processes. United Nations, “UN Secretary-General’s remarks to Security Council Ministerial Open Debate on ‘Peacekeeping and UN Transitions,’” September 8, 2021, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-09-08/un-secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-ministerial-open-debate-peacekeeping-and-un-transitions-delivered>.

- 79 CIVIC interview with civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #104, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #90, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
 - 80 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
 - 81 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #64, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #85, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 82 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC Interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 83 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #81, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 84 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #70, Kinshasa, March 2022. It should be acknowledged that some MONUSCO officials also shared concerns that CSOs at the national level can be politicized or politically affiliated, and thus not necessarily representative of popular opinion. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022. It should also be noted that the cited government official’s perspective does not reflect MONUSCO’s role. Particularly at the provincial level, MONUSCO collaborates with, gathers information from, and seeks to empower civil society organizations.
 - 85 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #80, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 86 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #90, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 87 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #120, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
 - 88 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #143, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #147, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #148, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #145, Kalemie, April 2022.
 - 89 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #147, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #148, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #149, Kalemie, April 2022.
 - 90 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #147, Kalemie, April 2022
 - 91 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #145, Kalemie, April 2022.
 - 92 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #140, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #143, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #141, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #147, Kalemie, April 2022.
 - 93 The guidance note stresses the importance of better understanding trends for preventive action, such as by monitoring laws and practices that restrict fundamental rights and public debate and using new technologies to protect civic space online from threats like disinformation campaigns. The guidance note directs UN staff to use the “Three P’s”: participation, protection, and promotion. This entails using fair and transparent rules, channels, and processes for participation as well as drawing on policies, strategies, and initiatives from across the UN system focused on the participation of specific vulnerable groups. The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) could look at models such as those created by UNHCR, the UN World Food Programme (WFP), and the UN International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), which have created a “Partner Portal”—a shared civil society database to strengthen transparency and partnerships across United Nations agencies. See UN Guidance Note: Protection and Promotion of Civic Space, September 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/CivicSpace/UN_Guidance_Note.pdf.
- Other relevant guidance documents include the UN system-wide community engagement guidelines (https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org/peacebuilding/files/documents/un_community-engagement_guidelines.august_2020.pdf), as well as the Common Minimum Standards for Multi-stakeholder engagement in the UN Development Assistance Framework (<https://unsdg.un.org/resources/common-minimum-standards-multi-stakeholder-engagement-undaf>). These guidance products, and the experience of implementing them, further underscore the need for strong coordination with the UNCT and other protection actors in transition planning.
- 94 UN Security Council Resolution 2556, UN. Doc S/Res/2556 (2020), para. 51.
 - 95 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #75, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #80, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #81, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 96 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #83, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 97 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #81, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 98 Ibid.
 - 99 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #152, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; additional CIVIC consultations with INGO officials, diplomats, and Mission officials.
 - 100 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022.
 - 101 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #81, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.

- 102 Ibid.
- 103 MONUSCO correspondence with CIVIC, August 2022. For more information on the triple nexus approach, see Emma Fanning and Jessica Fullwood-Thomas, *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations?*, Oxfam, June 26, 2019, <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620820/dp-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-260619-en.pdf;jsessionid=19D7B5A8D240348CE52058EAEF336ECD?sequence=1>; Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *Country Brief on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Democratic Republic of the Congo*, <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-09/Country%20Brief%20on%20the%20Humanitarian-Development-%20Peace%20Nexus%20%28Democratic%20Republic%20of%20Congo%29.pdf>. Tanganyika is a priority area for nexus implementation in the DRC.
- 104 CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #139, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #142, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #145, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 105 Ibid.
- 106 CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 107 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #114, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 108 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #125, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #115, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 109 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #115, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 110 CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 111 CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #105, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #139, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #144, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 112 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, August 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #174, location undisclosed, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #173, location undisclosed, September 2022.
- 113 UNSC, “Statement by the President of the Security Council,” UN Doc. S/PRST/2022/ (July 12, 2022), 3–4, italics added. It should be noted that DPO has also provided significant guidance on strategic communications, including in the 2020 handbook on the protection of civilians and in the 2016 Policy on “Strategic Communications and Public Information.” Chapter 7 of the Handbook, for instance, focuses on “Communicating about POC” and includes a helpful table outlining communication considerations and objectives for different stakeholders. DPO, POC Handbook, 69–72. Department of Public Information, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and Department of Field Support, *Policy: Strategic Communications and Public Information*, Ref. 2016.11, January 1, 2017.
- 114 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, August 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #174, location undisclosed, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #173, location undisclosed, September 2022.
- 115 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #64, Goma, March 2022.
- 116 CIVIC correspondence with MONUSCO, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, August 2022; CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #64, Goma, August 2022.
- 117 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, August 2022.
- 118 Correspondence with MONUSCO, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, August 2022.
- 119 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #175, Kinshasa, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #177, Kinshasa, September 2022.
- 120 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #178, Kinshasa, September 2022. The official also noted widespread disinformation campaigns in the DRC, as well as the Mission’s limited resources and capacities related to strategic communication.
- 121 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #174, location undisclosed, March 2022.
- 122 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #80, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 123 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #84, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, March 2022.
- 124 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #90, March 2022, Kinshasa; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #104, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, March 2022, Goma.
- 125 Ibid. It should be noted that one MONUSCO official who spoke with CIVIC strongly disagreed, stating, “[The provincial strategies] have been forgotten. It’s a shame because there was a lot of work, and they provided a plan of reference for everyone to be held accountable and we don’t have that anymore.” CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 126 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022.
- 127 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #173, location undisclosed, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #174, location undisclosed, September 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kinshasa, August 2022.
- 128 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO official, #174, location undisclosed, September 2022.
- 129 Ibid.

- 130 CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, November 2018; CIVIC, *Early Warning and Rapid Response Takes Root in UN Peacekeeping*, January 2021; UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO), *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook*, 2020.
- 131 CIVIC, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, October 2019.
- 132 UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General: Transitions in United Nations peace operations," UN Doc. S/2022/522 (June 29, 2022), para. 21.
- 133 UN Security Council Resolution 2594, UN. Doc S/Res/2594 (2021), paras. 1, 3.
- 134 In the DRC and other contexts, the protection cluster brings together different protection actors, including UN agencies, INGOs and civil society organizations. As explained by UNHCR, protection clusters, "should make it possible to prevent and respond to human rights violations and meet the protection needs of affected populations in a coordinated and predictable manner. By collecting and sharing information on protection risks and needs, and applying an integrated approach to assessment, monitoring and analysis, protection clusters can identify protection priorities that should guide the development and implementation of sectoral strategies." UNHCR, *Emergency Handbook: Protection Cluster*, <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/82064/protection-cluster>.
- 135 DPO, *POC Handbook*, 137.
- 136 CIVIC, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, October 2019.
- 137 A 2021 independent review of UN peacekeeping mission support to security sector reform described SSR as the effort "to change the capabilities, organizational cultures and institutional frameworks that govern the security and justice sectors so that organizations with the power to coerce provide security – instead of insecurity – in a legitimate manner. The central insight of SSR is that security organizations must function as public service institutions in an accountable and efficient manner if they are to support broader developmental progress. SSR contributes to this endeavour by gradually increasing the extent to which formal, hybrid and informal security forces act as professional providers of public service based on international standards of human rights, gender equality and accountability." Waldemar Very, Herve Auffret, Erwin van Veen, Fairlie Chappuis, *Towards Better Security Governance: Learning from the Road Travelled*, 2021, 4, https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/220121_-_towards_better_security_governance-learning_from_the_road_travelled_final.pdf. The UN has defined DDR as follows: "The objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants together make up a complex process with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions. This process aims to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when combatants are left without livelihoods and support networks during the vital period stretching from conflict to peace, recovery and development. DDR also helps build national capacity to assist in the reintegration of ex-combatants and to support communities receiving ex-combatants and working for their peaceful and sustainable reintegration. Through a process of comprehensively disarming combatants, preparing them for civilian life and providing them with opportunities for sustainable social and economic reintegration, DDR aims to support this high-risk group so that they become stakeholders in the peace process." United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, *Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards*, 2010, 24.
- 138 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #101, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #108, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #124, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 139 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #120, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 140 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #124, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #108, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 141 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #120, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #124, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 142 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #122, Kalemie, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #123, Kalemie, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 143 UNSC, *United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc S/2022/503 (June 22, 2022), para. 62.
- 144 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #120, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 145 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #121, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #105, Kalemie, April 2022. One UN agency official underscored the importance of agencies maintaining direct access to provincial authorities rather than communicating with government actors through peacekeeping missions. CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #152, Goma, March 2022. Although other agency officials highlighted that missions can help communicate agency messages to provincial authorities, it is clear that agency leaders will benefit from clearly established communication channels with provincial authorities, particularly in transition contexts. CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #123, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 146 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #118, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 147 Assessed Contributions, More Support for Peacebuilding Fund Key to Meet Growing Field Needs, Speakers Say, as Fifth Committee Reviews 2022/23 Proposed Peacekeeping Budget," UN doc. GA/AB/4386 (May 12, 2022), <https://press.un.org/en/2022/gaab4386.doc.htm>; "UN Transitions: Sustaining Peace and Development Beyond Mission Withdrawal," 2020, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/20200210_sg_report_on_pb_and_sp_-_transitions_thematic_paper_final_online_0.pdf; Paige Arthur, "UN-IFI Cooperation during Peacekeeping Drawdowns: Opportunities for Mutual Support," Center on International Cooperation, March 2021, https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/cic_un-ifi_cooperation_during_peacekeeping_drawdowns_april_2021.pdf; Conor Foley and Ibrahim Wani, *Evaluation of Transitions from Human Rights Components in UN Peace Operations to Other Types of Field Presences*, OHCHR, June 2020.

- 148 CIVIC's past research has attested to the value of early warning systems, but also to the risk that these systems will collapse as the Mission withdraws from a particular area. For more information, see CIVIC, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, October 2019.
- 149 *The Conseil de Protection Civile* (CPC) was created through a 1996 legislative act. The CPC's stated mission is to develop and implement a strategy and plan of action regarding disasters that have occurred or are likely to occur. "Décret n° 025 portant création du Conseil de protection civile, en abrégé «CPC»,," September 11, 1996, <https://www.leganet.cd/Legislation/Droit%20Public/Ordre/D.11.09.1996.htm>. Since the CPC's establishment nationally, multiple provincial governments have issued decrees explicitly recognizing the CPC, including the governments of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri provinces.
- 150 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #107, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #110, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #111, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 151 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #107, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #109, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 152 In correspondence with CIVIC, one MONUSCO civilian official suggested that the Mission can take steps to improve the capacity of CPC through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs): "small-scale, low-cost projects, funded by our missions, that are planned and implemented within a short timeframe" and "respond to the needs expressed by local communities." (On QIPs, see "Quick Impact Projects for Communities," UN Peacekeeping, [https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/quick-impact-projects-communities#:~:text=Quick%20Impact%20Projects%20\(QIPs\)%20are,needs%20expressed%20by%20local%20communities.](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/quick-impact-projects-communities#:~:text=Quick%20Impact%20Projects%20(QIPs)%20are,needs%20expressed%20by%20local%20communities.)) CIVIC correspondence with MONUSCO, August 2022. UN Agencies and MONUSCO could also consider advocacy with the Ministry of the Interior to provide consistent funding to CPC.
- 153 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #107, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 154 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #107, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #110, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #120, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 155 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022. It should also be noted that a functional early warning system is only as effective as its response, and it is far from certain that state security forces will have the capacity to respond to alerts. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #28, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #112, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #107, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 156 UN Secretary-General, "Human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces," UN Doc. A/67/775, S/2013/110 (March 5, 2013), para. 1.
- 157 "Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations Support to Non-United Nations Security Forces: Guidance Note and text of the Policy," 2015, 25.
- 158 CIVIC, *Enabling Support While Mitigating Risk: MONUSCO's Implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy*, June 2020, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/policy/enabling-support-by-mitigating-risk/>.
- 159 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #99, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #87, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #89, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #95, Goma, April 2022.
- 160 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #99, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #100, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #101, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #102, Kalemie, April, 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #150, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 161 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #105, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 162 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #129, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #117, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 163 CIVIC interview with civil society leader, #116, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 164 CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #129, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 165 CIVIC correspondence with MONUSCO, August 2022. For more information on these committees, see CIVIC, *Enabling Support While Mitigating Risk: MONUSCO's Implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy*, June 2020, 14, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/policy/enabling-support-by-mitigating-risk/>.
- 166 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #105, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #108, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with CSO leader, #141, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 167 Reagan El Miviri, "Does the New Disarmament and Demobilization Program Stand a Chance of Success?" *Kivu Security Tracker*, September 16, 2021, <https://blog.kivusecurity.org/does-the-new-disarmament-and-demobilization-program-stand-a-chance-of-success/>.
- 168 For an overview of past SSR programs in the DRC, see: Hans Hoebeker, Christian Chiza, and Bienvenu Mukungilwa, *The Old is Dying and the New Cannot be Born (Yet?): Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Insecure Livelihoods Series, January 2022.
- 169 International Crisis Group, *Easing the Turmoil in the Eastern DR Congo and Great Lakes*, May 25, 2022, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/great-lakes/democratic-republic-congo/b181-easing-turmoil-eastern-dr-congo-and-great-lakes>; Florence Morice, "RDC: flou dans l'organisation et les objectifs des discussions de Nairobi," *Radio France Internationale*, April 26, 2022.
- 170 El Miviri, "Does the New Disarmament and Demobilization Program Stand a Chance of Success?" *Kivu Security Tracker*, September 16, 2021.

- 171 As noted in a recent report, “Despite the [Tshisekedi] presidency cautiously tiptoeing around the leadership of the security forces, several key stalwarts of the Kabila regime who symbolized its impunity, violent repression and corruption have been removed and proceedings have been launched against several.... [For example] John Numbi, a former police chief and FARDC general, is pursued by the Congolese justice department and has fled the country.” Hoebeke, Chiza, and Mukungilwa, *The Old is Dying and the New Cannot be Born (Yet?): Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Insecure Livelihoods Series, January 2022, 40; Rached Mzoughi, “MONUSCO Police Form General Information Officers of the PNC,” MONUSCO, September 12, 2019, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/monusco-police-form-general-information-officers-pnc>; “Appui à la justice : la MONUSCO soutient l’organisation d’une audience foraine à Kalemie,” MONUSCO, May 19, 2020.
- 172 UN Secretary-General, *Transition plan of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Benchmark 1, Indicator 2.
- 173 Ibid., Benchmark 3, Indicators 1–3.
- 174 See, for example, a series of case studies on the UN’s rule of law work: Adam Day and Jessica Caus, *Rule of Law and Sustaining Peace, Towards More Impactful, Effective Conflict Prevention*, United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, 2021, http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8342/RuleofLaw_Overarching.pdf.
- 175 Damien Lili, *Considering the Protection of Civilians during UN Peacekeeping Transitions*, International Peace Institute, 2021, 14. In addition, in the recent independent review of UN peacekeeping support to SSR, the authors observed that, “the unique comparative advantages of support by the United Nations for SSR results from its role as a multilateral convenor of unmatched legitimacy as well as the scale of the resources – not least of which is political will – that it can mobilize in support of peace and stability.” See Very et al., *Towards Better Security Governance: Learning from the Road Travelled*, 1. Similarly, the 2015 Report of the Independent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations (known as the “HIPPO Report”) asserted, “The United Nations can and should play a convening and coordinating role in security sector reform if so requested by the Government, making sure coherent reform efforts take place in all security sectors.” See UN Secretary-General, *High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations Report*, UN Doc. A/70/95–S/2015/446 (June 2015), para. 159.
- 176 OIOS similarly recommended that the Mission use “its good offices, coordination function and facilitation role to (a) support the Government’s prioritization of security sector reform; (b) increase national ownership; and (c) build strategic partnerships with international partners based on a comprehensive security sector reform implementation road map.” See OIOS, *Outcome evaluation of United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo support provided to the rule of law and security institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, 17. Similarly, the 2019 Independent Strategic Review of MONUSCO recommended that, “With respect to SSR, MONUSCO should encourage bilateral actors and donors to provide the necessary technical and financial support to consolidate the gains thus far achieved and to support the implementation of the key components of this reform agenda.” See *Transitioning from Stabilization to Peace: An Independent Strategic Review of MONUSCO*, 2019, 22.
- 177 Very et al., *Towards Better Security Governance: Learning from the Road Travelled*, iii.
- 178 See CIVIC, *Toolkit: Advancing the Protection of Civilians in Conflict*, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/tools/toolkit-advancing-protection-of-civilians-in-conflict/>.
- 179 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #8, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 180 Ibid.
- 181 CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #101, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with Congolese government official, #106, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #123, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 182 Lisa Sharland, *How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN*, International Peace Institute, May 2018.
- 183 Yvan Yenda Ilunga, *MONUSCO’s 2021 Mandate Renewal: Transition and exit*, 2021, NUPI, 17.
- 184 *Monitoring Peace Consolidation: United Nations Practitioners Guide to Benchmarking*, United Nations, 2010, 20. Italics added.
- 185 For more information on the peacekeeping budgeting process, see Lisa Sharland, *How Peacekeeping Policy Gets Made: Navigating Intergovernmental Processes at the UN*, International Peace Institute, May 2018.
- 186 According to the MONUSCO SAGE SOP: “First, it is used to collect all MONUSCO information/situational awareness inputs from Mission components/sections, field offices and other contributing UN entities on a daily basis. Secondly, it provides the Mission with an integrated and standardized online incident/event/activity database that helps ensure that the information reported by the Mission is accurate, timely, relevant, and actionable in support of subsequent decision making. Thirdly, Sage provides tools for basic analysis and presentation of data.” MONUSCO, *Standard Operating Procedure: MONUSCO SAGE Reporting System*, 3–5. For more information on SAGE, see CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, November 2018.
- 187 DPO, *POC Handbook*, 52.
- 188 CIVIC, “We Have to Break the Silence Somehow.” *Preventing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Through UN Peacekeeping*, October 2020, 40; International Peace Institute (IPI), *Accountability System for the Protection of Civilians*, December 2020.
- 189 For more information on JMAC, see CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Missions*, November 2018, 31.
- 190 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; past consultations with CIVIC. The 2006 Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Directive on JOC and JMAC explains that the JMAC provides “the Head of Mission (HOM) and Senior Management Team (SMT) with a capacity to collect and synthesize all-source information to produce medium and long term integrated analysis.” JMAC is specifically required to “acquire and integrate information from all mission components and other sources in order to develop analytical products that are timely, accurate, complete and usable.” United Nations DPO, *Policy Directive: Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres*,

Ref. POL 2006/3000/04 (2006), paras. 18, 19. Past CIVIC research has consistently reflected the value of JMAC in peacekeeping missions, including MONUSCO. For more information, see: CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Missions*, November 2018; CIVIC, *Early Warning and Rapid Response Takes Root in UN Peacekeeping*, January 2021.

- 191 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #72, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #78, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #165, Goma, May 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #74, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 192 For instance, Indicator 5 of Benchmark 1 reads: “The trust of the population, including women and young people, in the national defence and security forces is rising (polling data disaggregated by gender and by age group).” Rather than measuring against the indicator in question, the report acknowledges the inability to do so: “New survey data disaggregated by gender and age group would be needed in order to determine the extent to which the defence and security forces may have begun to regain the trust of the population, since the beginning of the state of siege in North Kivu and Ituri Province.” The reporting acknowledged a lack of data on other indicators as well, including indicators related to the resolution of customary power conflicts, popular perceptions of insecurity caused by armed groups, and representation of women in community mechanisms. See UN Secretary-General, *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, UN Doc. S/2022/252 (March 21, 2022), Annex A, 19–30, Indicator 1.5, 1.8, 6.1, 8.1.
- 193 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #152, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official #79, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 194 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #66, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian, #152, Goma, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, Goma, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official #79, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 195 *Monitoring Peace Consolidation: United Nations Practitioners Guide to Benchmarking*, United Nations, 21.
- 196 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #80, Kinshasa, March 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #104, Kalemie, April 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #88, Kinshasa, March 2022.
- 197 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, location withheld; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #103, Kalemie, April 2022.
- 198 CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, location withheld; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #63, Goma, March 2022.
- 199 For more detailed analysis of the personnel, tools, and capacities that peacekeeping operations use to analyze and gather information, see CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection*, 2018.



Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

November 6, 2021, Ituri province, DRC: Aerial views of the Ituri Rainforest, in Djugu territory, Ituri province, where fighting has taken place between the FARDC and rebel groups.

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