



# EARLY WARNING AND RAPID RESPONSE TAKES ROOT IN UN PEACEKEEPING

# RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.

January 2021

T +1 202 558 6958

E [comms@civiliansinconflict.org](mailto:comms@civiliansinconflict.org)

[civiliansinconflict.org](http://civiliansinconflict.org)

**Cover:** August 19, 2020, Fataki, Djugu, DRC:  
*Uruguayan peacekeepers based in Djugu organize  
security patrols around the camp for displaced persons  
in Fataki, in support of the Congolese National Police.*

Credit: MONUSCO/Kevin Jordan

## ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION AND VISION

**Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)** is an international organization dedicated to promoting the protection of civilians caught in conflict. CIVIC's mission is to work with armed actors and civilians in conflict to develop and implement solutions to prevent, mitigate, and respond to civilian harm. Our vision is a world where parties to armed conflict recognize the dignity and rights of civilians, prevent civilian harm, protect civilians caught in conflict, and amend 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. Building on her extraordinary legacy, CIVIC now operates in conflict zones throughout the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and South Asia to advance a higher standard of protection for civilians.

At CIVIC, we believe that parties to armed conflict have a responsibility to prevent and address civilian harm. To accomplish this, we assess the causes of civilian harm in particular conflicts, craft practical solutions to address that harm, and advocate for the adoption of new policies and practices that lead to the improved well-being of civilians caught in conflict. Recognizing the power of collaboration, we engage with civilians, governments, militaries, and international and regional institutions to identify and institutionalize strengthened protections for civilians in conflict.

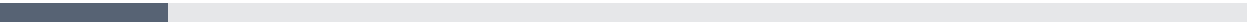
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Daniel Levine-Spound, CIVIC's Peacekeeping Researcher covering the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, authored this policy brief. The brief is based on field and desk research conducted by Levine-Spound and a number of CIVIC staff, including Peacekeeping Director Alison Giffen, Senior UN Advisor Wendy MacClinchey, Senior Global Researcher Lauren Spink, Mali-based Peacekeeping Researcher Seán Smith, Central African Republic-based Peacekeeping Researcher Viola Giuliano, and UN Advisor Josh Jorgenson. This report was reviewed by Giffen, Spink, MacClinchey, Smith, Giuliano, and Jorgenson as well as CIVIC's Executive Director Federico Borello, Europe Director Beatrice Godefroy, and UN Advisor Samuli Harju. In addition, several UN officials and UN peacekeeping experts provided valuable feedback on a draft of the report. Elena Abbott copyedited the report and Audrey Tchakirian designed it.

CIVIC is sincerely grateful to the hundreds of civilians and civil society leaders who have taken the time to speak with us during our research in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan. The importance of early warning and rapid response is fundamentally tied to the protection of civilians, and civilian perspectives must be at the heart of any analysis of the capacities, resources, and policies that UN peacekeeping missions need to predict and prevent threats of civilian harm.

We are also grateful to the UN peacekeeping mission officials, UN Secretariat officials, humanitarians, and peacekeeping experts who were willing to share their perspectives on early warning and rapid response. Their analyses were critical in drafting this brief.

Finally, we would like to thank the Kingdom of the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid for their continued support of CIVIC's Peacekeeping Program. This policy brief would not have been possible without their support.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                         |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Organizational Mission and Vision . . . . .                                                             | iii       |
| Acronyms. . . . .                                                                                       | vi        |
| <b>Executive Summary . . . . .</b>                                                                      | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>The Modern Concept of “Early Warning”: A Brief Overview . . . . .</b>                                | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Nascent Policy and Practice on Early Warning and Rapid Response in UN<br/>Peacekeeping . . . . .</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| The UN Security Council: EW/RR in Peacekeeping Mandates . . . . .                                       | 5         |
| The UN Secretariat: Recent EW/RR Guidance and Tools. . . . .                                            | 6         |
| Peacekeeping Operations: Mission-Specific EW/RR Policies and Processes . . . . .                        | 6         |
| Textbox 1: Early Warning and Rapid Response Policies in MINUSCA and MINUSMA .                           | 7         |
| Textbox 2: Definitions of “Early Warning Mechanisms” and “Rapid Response” . . . . .                     | 8         |
| <b>Lessons Learned Linked to Early Warning and Rapid Response . . . . .</b>                             | <b>9</b>  |
| Early Warning and Rapid Response in the Broader Context of Armed Conflict. . . . .                      | 9         |
| Early Warning and Rapid Response in the Context of UN Peacekeeping . . . . .                            | 10        |
| <b>Conclusion. . . . .</b>                                                                              | <b>18</b> |
| Endnotes . . . . .                                                                                      | 20        |

ACRONYMS

**CAN** - Community Alert Network

**CAR** - Central African Republic (*République centrafricaine*)

**COB** - Company Operating Base

**CLA** - Community Liaison Assistant

**CPP** - Community Protection Plan

**CRSV** - Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

**DPKO** - Department of Peacekeeping Operations

**DPO** - Department of Peace Operations

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

**DFS** - Department of Field Support

**EW** - Early Warning

**EW/RR** - Early Warning and Rapid Response

**EWS** - Early Warning System(s)

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

**FDLR** - Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (*Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda*)

**FEWS NET** - Famine Early Warning Systems Network

**FIOC** - Field Integrated Operations Center

**FJOC** - Field Joint Operations Center

**FO** - Field Office

**FSA** - Flight Safety Assurance

**HIPPO** - High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations

**HoO** - Head of Office

**IHL** - International Humanitarian Law

**ISR** - Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

**JAM** - Joint Assessment Mission

**JMAC** - Joint Mission Analysis Center

**JOC** - Joint Operations Center

**JPT** - Joint Protection Team

**LPC** - Local Protection Committee

**MINUSCA** - United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (*Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République centrafricaine*)

**MINUSMA** - United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (*Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation au Mali*)

**MONUC** - United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo*)

**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*)

**MOU** - Memorandum of Understanding

**NDC** - Nduma Defence of Congo

**OECD** - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OHCHR** - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

**ORCI** - Office for Research and Collection of Information

**POC** - Protection of Civilians

**RJOC** - Regional Joint Operations Center

**SAPRA** - Early Warning and Rapid Response System (*Système d’alertes précoces et de réponses rapides*)

**SCD** - Standing Combat Deployment

**SMG-P** - Senior Management Group – Protection

**SOP** - Standard Operating Procedure

**SUR** - Statement of Unit Requirements

**TOC** - Tactical Operations Center

**T/PCC** - Troop/Police-Contributing Country

**UNDP** - United Nations Development Programme

**UNJHRO** - United Nations Joint Human Rights Office

**UNMISS** - United Nations Mission in South Sudan (*Mission des Nations Unies au Soudan du Sud*)

**UN** - United Nations

**UNSC** - United Nations Security Council

**USAID** - United States Agency for International Development



MINUSMA/Gema Cortes

May 31, 2019, Bandiagara, Mopti, Mali: In Bandiagara market, United Nations Police (UNPOL) and Malian Security Forces undertake joint regular patrols. This patrol convoy interacted with civilians along the way and also talked with government and military officials.

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2010, approximately 200 combatants from armed non-state groups, as well as deserters from the Congolese army, attacked civilians in Walikale territory in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).<sup>1</sup> Over the course of four days, combatants systematically raped at least 300 women, 55 girls, 23 men, and 9 boys “in one of the worst mass rape incidents in the country.”<sup>2</sup> A UN investigation found that the violence occurred within reach of a company operating base (COB) of the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUSCO).<sup>3</sup> The investigation further observed that the COB had not yet recruited a community liaison to engage with the local population, and highlighted other obstacles to response, including “lack of military logistics, the inaccessibility of the telephone network, the poor road conditions, the insecurity in the region, long distances between villages and the remoteness of the area.”<sup>4</sup> Notably, the investigation found that peacekeepers were unaware of “proactive protection and warning techniques that could have maximized their capacity to intervene when the attacks took place.”<sup>5</sup>

The mass rape in Walikale was one of a number of incidents of large-scale violence in the DRC and other UN peacekeeping contexts that prompted peacekeepers, the UN Secretariat, UN Member States, and other stakeholders to increase efforts to ensure that UN peacekeeping missions had the capability and willingness to prevent and rapidly respond to threats of violence against civilians.<sup>6</sup> Ten years later, there is widespread recognition of the importance of missions’ capacity to identify, analyze, and respond to imminent and emerging protection threats—a process referred to as “early warning and rapid response” (EW/RR). However, while there have been notable innovations over the past decade, policy and guidance on EW/RR in UN peacekeeping remain in a nascent state.

*Ten years later, there is widespread recognition of the importance of missions’ capacity to identify, analyze, and respond to imminent and emerging protection threats—a process referred to as “early warning and rapid response” (EW/RR).*

Based on lessons learned from CIVIC’s past research as well as other secondary sources, this policy brief provides insight into EW/RR to support new efforts to strengthen policy and practice in UN peacekeeping. It begins by looking at the evolution of the broader concept of early warning in the twentieth century. It then analyzes EW/RR in the context of UN peacekeeping, including a brief overview of UN Security Council mandate language and UN Secretariat policy guidance on EW/RR. The brief then offers definitions of “early warning mechanism” and “rapid response” (see Textbox 2), which are intended to help readers conceptualize the processes and personnel that make up peacekeeping missions’ EW/RR systems.

The brief concludes with a discussion of key lessons learned from a literature review on early warning in armed conflict, as well as a summary of processes, practices, and tools that are essential to EW/RR in peacekeeping. CIVIC identified these critical elements through research conducted over the past five years on peacekeeping missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Mali (MINUSMA), and South Sudan (UNMISS).<sup>7</sup> The key elements of EW/RR in peacekeeping include:

#### Effective engagement with communities under threat, which requires:

- Maintaining adequate Mission capabilities to enable consistent and safe engagement and information-sharing with communities under threat, including community liaison assistants;
- Developing—or engaging with—community early warning and protection bodies such as community alert networks (CANs) and local protection committees (LPCs);
- Supporting the development and implementation of community protection plans at the local level; and
- Taking steps to address the specific risks of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), such as by ensuring that women make up a significant proportion of community early warning bodies.

#### Linking threat assessments to planning and decision-making, which entails:

- Ensuring that missions have the personnel, mechanisms, and processes needed to effectively gather, analyze, and act upon early warning information regarding protection threats;
- Implementing the UN Peacekeeping Intelligence Policy, including by developing an information acquisition plan that includes protection threats;
- Developing decentralized, field-based analysis, planning, and coordination capabilities that can facilitate effective decision-making and support EW/RR; and
- Developing and implementing a diverse range of responses to early warning alerts, including military and non-military actions.

#### Mobility, which includes:

- Ensuring adequate air assets to gather information regarding protection threats, engage with communities, and rapidly deploy civilian and uniformed capabilities to respond to threats;
- Removing or reducing layers of internal procedures that hinder the ability of military and civilian personnel and assets to deploy quickly;
- Developing civilian surge teams that can deploy to field locations and implement non-military responses to alerts;
- Minimizing or removing caveats imposed by troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) that could unnecessarily constrain rapid response.

## II. THE MODERN CONCEPT OF “EARLY WARNING”: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In the mid-twentieth century, “early warning systems” (EWS) emerged as tools through which stakeholders could better predict and respond to natural disasters and armed conflict.<sup>8</sup> As Anna Matveeva explains, “The origins of ‘early warning systems’ lie in two main sources—disaster preparedness...and the gathering of military intelligence.”<sup>9</sup> Governments, UN agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders have since established early warning systems—sometimes referred to as early warning mechanisms—across the globe.<sup>10</sup> These systems range in terms of thematic focus and exist in a number of contexts, including armed conflicts, natural disasters, and humanitarian crises.<sup>11</sup> They similarly vary in terms of geographic scope, from local initiatives at the community level to regional and global systems. For example, the Beni Peace Forum—a network of Congolese civil society organizations—created SAPRA, an EWS focused on human rights violations in a select number of areas in the North Kivu province of the DRC.<sup>12</sup> In contrast, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET)—funded and managed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)—provides early warning and analysis related to food insecurity across the world.<sup>13</sup>

There is no established global definition for “early warning” or “early warning systems.”<sup>14</sup> Rather, academics, humanitarians, and others tend to define early warning within thematic areas. For example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines early warning systems in the disaster response context as “complex processes aimed at reducing the impact of natural hazards by providing timely and relevant information in a systematic way.”<sup>15</sup> In the armed conflict context, a 2009 paper from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defined early warning as a process that “(a) alerts decision makers to the potential outbreak, escalation and resurgence of violent conflict; and (b) promotes an understanding among decision makers of the nature and impacts of violent conflict.”<sup>16</sup>

Conflict early warning can be understood as a subcategory within the broader early warning field.<sup>17</sup> Practitioners and academics began conceptualizing early warning in relation to armed conflicts as early as the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>18</sup> In 1987, for instance, the UN established the Office for Research and Collection of Information (ORCI), a unit tasked with providing early warning as a component of the Secretary-General’s diplomatic efforts, including by alerting the Secretary-General to potential trouble spots.<sup>19</sup> But the 1994 Rwandan Genocide marked “a key trigger for the evolution of the conflict early warning field” and led to greater recognition around the importance of forecasting situations of mass violence.<sup>20</sup>

Beginning in the mid-1990s, organizations at the international, national, and sub-national levels began implementing conflict EWS. According to Kumar Rupesinghe, these initiatives can be grouped into “three generations” of conflict EWS, all of which continue in the present day.<sup>21</sup> First- and second-generation EWS tend to focus on conflict at the national level. Although they are generally based in the global north, their areas of focus are in the global south.<sup>22</sup> Third-generation EWS can be distinguished from their predecessors in several key ways: they tend to be geographically limited, focusing on conflicts at the local level; they are generally based within conflict-affected regions rather than Western capitals; and they contain a stronger connection between warning and response. According to David Nyheim, “The most effective warning-response links have been established by third generation early warning systems,” which often combine “the functions of information collector and responder.”<sup>23</sup>



October 22, 2017, Bangui, Central African Republic: MINUSCA military and police officials conduct patrols in PK5, a Muslim neighborhood in Bangui.

Contemporary early warning mechanisms implemented by UN peacekeeping missions arguably fall within the “third-generation” of conflict EWS.<sup>24</sup> EW/RR in peacekeeping is intended to allow missions to gather information regarding emerging or imminent threats of violence against civilians and take actions to prevent or mitigate these threats. Though missions’ early warning mechanisms may cover large areas of the countries in which they are deployed, the process of receiving and responding to alerts must be localized and rooted in the conflict dynamics of a particular area. Moreover, the success of EW/RR in peacekeeping hinges on the connection between receiving and responding to alerts. As one peacekeeping expert told CIVIC, “Translating intelligence and community-based warnings into actionable information within hours is the difference between an effective POC [protection of civilians] response and one that comes too late.”<sup>25</sup>

***“Translating intelligence and community-based warnings into actionable information within hours is the difference between an effective POC [protection of civilians] response and one that comes too late.”***

***— UN Peacekeeping Expert***

### III. NASCENT POLICY AND PRACTICE ON EARLY WARNING AND RAPID RESPONSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING

Although the UN Security Council first authorized a UN peacekeeping operation to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence in 1999, it was not until 2011 that the Council explicitly directed a peacekeeping mission to establish an early warning capacity to contribute to the protection of civilians.<sup>26</sup> By this time, however, peacekeeping operations had already begun developing early warning tools to better predict and respond to threats of violence against civilians. In the DRC, for example, the Mission’s early warning tools were “developed in response to repeated cycles of massacres and large-scale human rights violations that the mission was unable to stop.”<sup>27</sup> As MONUSCO explained in a 2014 paper, the Mission responded to incidents in which it failed to prevent large-scale killings—in some instances, near Mission bases—by creating and deploying community liaison assistants (CLAs). These national staff support the Mission’s engagement with local communities and manage community alert networks (CANs) to help gather early warning information regarding protection threats.<sup>28</sup> Other peacekeeping missions in similarly challenging conflict environments have since adopted and adapted the use of CLAs and CANs. Additionally, as discussed in more detail in Section IV of this policy brief, missions have established Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) and Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMACs)—specialized units which play a vital role in missions’ capacity to predict, analyze, and respond to protection threats—as well as a host of other tools relevant to EW/RR.

The UN Security Council, the Secretariat, and individual peacekeeping missions have all played a role in the development of new EW/RR policies. This section briefly discusses the contributions of each.

#### The UN Security Council: EW/RR in Peacekeeping Mandates

The Security Council has included early warning as a component of the POC responsibilities of MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS, and has mandated that these missions strengthen their early warning efforts.<sup>29</sup> For example, MONUSCO’s 2019 mandate requires that the Mission “enhance its community engagement with civilians...to strengthen its early warning mechanism.” It also references “strengthening protection of civilians through early warning and response.”<sup>30</sup>

UN Security Council resolutions offer some guidance as to the objectives and key elements of EW/RR in UN peacekeeping. For example, the 2019 MONUSCO mandate excerpted above recognizes the importance of enhanced community engagement in the Mission’s capacity to improve early warning. The most recent UNMISS mandate requires that the Mission “strengthen the implementation of a mission-wide early warning strategy, including the establishment of an Information Acquisition Plan as part of a coordinated approach to information gathering, incident tracking and analysis, monitoring, verification, early warning and dissemination, and response mechanisms.”<sup>31</sup> The UNMISS mandate incorporates language requiring that the Mission’s early warning systems include “risks of sexual and gender-based violence.”<sup>32</sup>

While some Security Council mandates have detailed guidance on EW/RR, mandates do not fully describe the resources and mechanisms needed to implement an effective EWS. Such detail is appropriately left to the UN Secretariat and missions to develop.

### The UN Secretariat: Recent EW/RR Guidance and Tools

The UN Secretariat began issuing guidance to support peacekeeping operations’ EW/RR efforts in 2015 through the UN’s first official Policy on the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping. The policy instructed missions to include early warning tools and systems in their Protection Action Plans and protection activities.<sup>33</sup> The revised 2019 Policy on the Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping (the Policy) included additional EW/RR requirements and outlined the EW/RR roles and responsibilities of senior mission personnel.<sup>34</sup> The Policy also highlighted the connection between engagement with local communities and EW/RR: “Local engagement may allow for early detection of threats or tensions which can inform mission early warning systems and prevention actions.”<sup>35</sup>

The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Handbook (the Handbook), issued by the Secretariat in 2020, provides the most detailed EW/RR guidance to date.<sup>36</sup> Observing that “a structured early warning system will help the mission gather and analyse information on threats to civilians in a timely manner,” the Handbook offers four “purposes” of an EWS. Included among these purposes is ensuring that missions understand “the indicators, signals, necessary conditions and triggers that make violence against civilians likely to occur,” and that missions have a process “for collecting, sharing and corroborating early warning information within the mission and/or with external actors.”<sup>37</sup> The Handbook additionally discusses mission tools for improving protection of civilians that have been used to strengthen EW/RR, such as CLAs, CANs, Joint Assessment Missions (JAMs), Community Protection Plans (CPPs), Joint Protection Teams (JPTs), and casualty recording.<sup>38</sup>

Despite this welcome progress, Secretariat guidance does not provide overarching definitions for “early warning mechanism” or “rapid response,” nor does it offer a comprehensive description of the personnel, policies, and other capabilities central to the peacekeeping EW/RR process. A lack of more specific definitions and guidance could have certain advantages, such as allowing each mission to develop context-specific EW/RR policies adapted to local POC challenges and the mission’s particular footprint. Yet a lack of definitions and guidance could also contribute to missions developing ineffective EW/RR systems. More detailed guidance could help ensure that missions learn additional lessons from each other, including the need to develop processes that allow for quick alert verification and the need to decentralize EW/RR decision-making. Guidance could also encourage missions to ensure that administrative procedures facilitate rapid movement of mission personnel and to request the personnel, assets, and operating budgets necessary to enable threat assessment, analysis, and rapid response. This brief offers definitions of “early warning mechanism” and “rapid response” (see Textbox 2) to help readers understand the components of peacekeeping missions’ EW/RR systems.

### Peacekeeping Operations: Mission-Specific EW/RR Policies and Processes

In parallel to the Secretariat, UN peacekeeping missions are developing their own EW/RR policy guidance. MINUSCA and MINUSMA, for example, recently adopted EW/RR standard operating procedures (SOPs) in 2019 and 2020, respectively. Both SOPs provide step-by-step descriptions of the EW/RR process, outline the roles and responsibilities of different mission personnel, and offer definitions of “early warning” and “rapid response.” More information highlighting the MINUSMA and MINUSCA SOPs can be found in Textbox 1. UNMISS and MONUSCO have similarly developed mission-specific EW/RR policies.

It is vital that the implementation of these new policies be closely monitored. Missions will undoubtedly run into obstacles in applying EW/RR guidance and may develop innovative solutions to overcome these challenges. These definitions, good practices, and lessons learned should ultimately be woven back into Secretariat-level guidance, shared between missions, and if useful, included in UN policies.

### TEXT BOX 1: EARLY WARNING AND RAPID RESPONSE POLICIES IN MINUSCA AND MINUSMA

In 2019, MINUSCA issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) on the “process” of “early warning and rapid response.”<sup>39</sup> The Mission adopted the SOP to “facilitate the rapid verification and dissemination of early warning (EW) information and rapid decision-making by relevant actors on responses to prevent and/or respond to protection of civilian (POC) threats.”<sup>40</sup> The SOP elucidates six “phases” of EW/RR—including conducting an initial POC threat assessment at the local level, collecting and analyzing information, and responding to imminent and non-imminent POC threats—as well as the roles of Mission personnel in each phase.<sup>41</sup> The SOP defines “early warning” and “rapid response” as follows:

**Early Warning:** “A serious and credible threat from non-state armed actors (including but not limited to self-defense groups, armed groups, and criminal gangs) and/or State authorities that puts at risk the physical integrity of civilians, including human rights violations and IHL infractions. EW differs from simple reporting such as flash reports. These reports generally refer to physical violence, human rights violations and/or IHL infractions which have already taken place. The EW mechanism focuses primarily on gathering, sharing and responding to information on possible incidents that have the potential to directly impact civilians and their physical integrity. Each EW requires a rapid response to be carried out to prevent such violence from occurring.”

**Rapid Response:** “Rapid response to imminent threats are plans, projects, programs, or actions, agreed upon at the local/sector SMG-P [Senior Management Group-Protection], which must be carried out/activated/implemented, to prevent, preempt, or effectively respond to threats against the physical integrity of civilians, in the area of responsibility at local level. Rapid reaction includes: (i) anticipation, prevention, deterrence, use of Urgent Temporary Measures (UTMs)<sup>42</sup>; and/or (ii) effective response, including but not limited to the use of force beyond self-defense, as defined within the MINUSCA POC Strategy 2018. Rapid response is an active obligation of each FO [Field Office] under the joint responsibility of HoO [Head of Office], local/sector Commander and Police Commander.”

MINUSMA finalized an EW/RR SOP in June 2020. Like its MINUSCA equivalent, the MINUSMA SOP provides a step-by-step description of the EW/RR “process” and outlines the responsibilities of different Mission actors.<sup>43</sup> Though the MINUSMA SOP’s definition of “early warning” is nearly identical to its MINUSCA equivalent, the definition of “rapid response” is specifically tailored to the structure of MINUSMA: “Agreed measures by the Crisis Management Team to prevent, pre-empt, or effectively respond to threats against civilians in the area of responsibility at local level. Rapid reaction includes: (i) anticipation, prevention, deterrence; and/or (ii) effective response, including but not limited to the use of force beyond self-defence, as defined in the mandate and the Rules of Engagement. Rapid response is an active obligation of each Early Warning Response Cell member under the joint responsibility of HoO, Sector Commander and Regional Police Commander.”<sup>44</sup>

**TEXTBOX 2: DEFINITIONS OF “EARLY WARNING MECHANISMS” AND “RAPID RESPONSE”**

Based on past field research as well as a review of relevant secondary literature, the CIVIC peacekeeping program has developed working definitions of “early warning mechanisms” and “rapid response” for UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>45</sup> These definitions reflect CIVIC’s understanding of the key processes and personnel that constitute missions’ early warning mechanisms, the range of POC threats early warning mechanisms are intended to address, and missions’ potential responses—military and non-military—to early warning alerts.

**Early Warning Mechanisms:** Early warning mechanisms are information gathering and analysis tools that enable civilians to alert decision-makers to emerging, escalating and imminent threats of violence against civilians in order to facilitate prevention and mitigation efforts.

Peace operations use early warning mechanisms to obtain, verify, and analyze information on immediate-, medium-, and long-term protection threats. Early warning systems strengthen integrated protection of civilians threat assessments and enable the adoption of proactive measures to prevent, deter, and/or respond to violence against civilians.

Early warning mechanisms are vital for a mission’s ability to prevent violence against civilians through a comprehensive, whole-of-mission approach. By enhancing situational awareness, effective early warning mechanisms can help decision-makers understand where protection threats pose the highest level of risk to civilians in order to promote and improve prioritization in the use of resources for timely interventions.

**Rapid Response:** Rapid response denotes any timely initiative or action to prevent or stop a protection threat that is identified by an early warning mechanism. For peace operations, the process of initiating a rapid response includes planning, decision-making, tasking, and actions based on an integrated protection of civilians threat assessment. A mission’s response should be determined in an integrated and coordinated manner, using, as appropriate, the full range of tools and capabilities available to the mission, including a mission’s military, police and civilian components. Responses may be undertaken independently or in collaboration with external stakeholders.

**IV. LESSONS LEARNED LINKED TO EARLY WARNING AND RAPID RESPONSE**

**Early Warning and Rapid Response in the Broader Context of Armed Conflict**

CIVIC undertook a literature review of academic and practitioner research on early warning in armed conflict and identified valuable lessons that may be applicable to EW/RR in peacekeeping. For example, early warning scholarship highlights the importance of strengthening the connection between early warners and responders, developing diverse responses to alerts, and incorporating gender considerations into early warning systems. These lessons draw largely from the work of David Nyheim and Anna Matveeva.

*“The rationale behind introducing gender into early warning rests on the argument that the use of a gender-lens enriches early warning analysis and allows for more appropriate response options equally benefiting men and women.”*

— *Susanne Schmeidl and Eugenia Piza-Lopez*

David Nyheim argues that there are six key elements in conflict early warning good practice, including three that are particularly relevant for peacekeeping contexts: nurturing strong field networks, ensuring regular—rather than ad-hoc—reporting, and establishing a “two-way connection” between warning and response.<sup>46</sup> The two-way warner-responder link is rooted in the assumption that “the raison d’être of current early warning systems is to catalyse informed and effective responses to violent conflicts.”<sup>47</sup> Just as those who warn “reach out” to responders, responders must “reach in,” such as by inviting warners to brief response planners.<sup>48</sup> But bolstering this connection remains a key challenge. Nyheim notes, for example, that while “most early warning systems will be designed to inform and promote response instruments and mechanisms,” the same cannot be said of response mechanisms, which “will not be designed to respond to warning or draw on early warning systems for guiding analysis.”<sup>49</sup>

The strength of the connection between the early warning and the response hinges partially on ensuring that data is actionable. According to Anna Matveeva, “The rule of thumb is that the fewer categories early warning data covers, the more operational the ‘product’ of early warning can be.”<sup>50</sup> Matveeva notes, however, that analysts complain that “raw data” from field monitors comes with little analysis, leading them to discard information which cannot be readily interpreted.<sup>51</sup> If decision-makers cannot make sense of information on protection threats, their capacity to respond will likely be diminished. Efforts to foster exchanges between warners and responders, including by bringing them together in the same room, can potentially help to bridge this gap.<sup>52</sup>

The early warner-responder connection is closely related to another key challenge: developing a diverse range of responses tailored narrowly to the context. According to David Nyheim, “A diverse package of measures is needed to address the multifaceted range of issues in violent conflict contexts. Rapidly changing conflict environments also mean that responses need to be adaptable and flexible.”<sup>53</sup> As discussed further below, rapid response measures should not be limited to military actions or short-term interventions designed to stop violence. Too much focus on violent conflict, Nyheim argues, is “a weakness as it focuses responses on measures to counteract violence, as opposed to on supporting systems that sustain peace.”<sup>54</sup>

Past research has also highlighted the importance of ensuring that EWS adequately take gender into account. According to Susanne Schmeidl and Eugenia Piza-Lopez, “The rationale behind introducing gender into early warning rests on the argument that the use of a gender-lens enriches early warning analysis and allows for more appropriate response options equally benefiting men and women.”<sup>55</sup> Gender considerations should be incorporated at each stage of the EW/RR process, from the collection of data to the formulation of responses. According to a Saferworld briefing, gender-sensitive early warning systems are characterized by “the equal participation of women and men in early warning processes” and “the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators based on context-specific research into gender and conflict dynamics.”<sup>56</sup> Exclusion of women from EWS can result, for example, in a failure to develop indicators that measure types of violence disproportionately affecting women, and it can deprive responders of valuable sources of information. Moreover, Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez also assert that gender sensitive EWS may be better equipped to develop a diverse range of responses: “Gender-sensitive responses in the context of conflict early warning and response processes may lead to the use of a wider range of policy tools, including micro-level responses that take into account the needs of diverse groups at every stage of the conflict cycle.”<sup>57</sup>

### Early Warning and Rapid Response in the Context of UN Peacekeeping

Over the past five years, CIVIC has conducted field research in four mission contexts—MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS—on issues that are integral to effective EW/RR in UN peacekeeping. Through this research, CIVIC has identified important components of effective EW/RR, including: a) consistently engaging with local communities; b) linking threat assessment and analysis to planning and decision-making; and c) mobility. Drawing on CIVIC’s previous research, this section looks at each component in turn. Future research will seek to identify additional capabilities critical to effective EW/RR.

#### Engaging with Communities

*“Community engagement is a critical aspect of UNMISS’s efforts to protect civilians. When done effectively, it can allow UN actors to better understand the environments within which they are operating. Without engaging communities, a peacekeeping operation may struggle to identify protection threats and deteriorating security situations.”<sup>58</sup>*

In line with lessons learned from broader conflict EWS, CIVIC’s field research has found that consistent engagement with local communities is at the heart of effective EW/RR in UN peacekeeping.<sup>59</sup> Mission personnel rely on information from civilians and local civil society in order to predict, understand, plan for, and ultimately respond to emerging POC threats and broader conflict trends. Engaging local communities is vital both for peacekeeping missions’ improved threat assessment and protection planning, as well as for building partnerships between missions and communities under threat. As one UN official explained, “Community engagement is the bedrock of the protection approach and all outreach across uniformed and civilian pillars.”<sup>60</sup> Many components and sections of peacekeeping missions, including military and police personnel, Civil Affairs Officers, and Human Rights Officers regularly engage with communities to implement mandated tasks, including POC. However, as referenced in the section above, peacekeeping missions have also developed mechanisms specifically designed to facilitate communication and information-sharing between missions and communities in order to strengthen EW/RR.



**TOP:** January 1, 2000, Goma, North Kivu, DRC: MONUSCO community liaison assistants (CLAs) engage with community members.  
**BOTTOM:** October 22, 2017, Bangui, CAR: Military and police peacekeepers serving with MINUSCA patrol the PK5 neighborhood in Bangui.

MONUSCO, one of the UN’s longest-running peacekeeping missions, has long been at the “forefront in developing new community engagement tools,” some of which have been replicated by other missions.<sup>61</sup> As discussed in the previous section, the Mission created community liaison assistants (CLAs)—Congolese national staff often deployed alongside MONUSCO’s uniformed personnel. CLAs develop relationships with community focal points and play an important role both in improving the Mission’s situational awareness and understanding of protection threats, as well as in explaining the Mission’s role and mandate to civilians.<sup>62</sup> MONUSCO’s CLAs are tasked with managing two other key community engagement tools: the CANs (discussed in the previous section) and local protection committees (LPCs). LPCs are “groups of community members...who receive MONUSCO training, participate in monthly meetings, identify protection threats in their communities, and develop local protection plans.”<sup>63</sup> As the linchpins of the Mission’s EW/RR system, CLAs are intended to bridge the gap between the Mission and communities, analyzing data and alerts generated by LPCs and CANs, and sharing information with MONUSCO.<sup>64</sup>

**“Community engagement is the bedrock of the protection approach and all outreach across uniformed and civilian pillars.”**

**— UN Peacekeeping Official**

MINUSCA has adapted many of the approaches to community engagement first piloted by MONUSCO in the DRC.<sup>65</sup> As in the MONUSCO context, CLAs play a critical role in MINUSCA’s EW/RR capacities. For example, CLAs support the implementation of community protection plans (CPPs) at the local level. Integrated into the Mission’s early warning mechanism, CPPs “help the Mission to assess POC risks for a given area, providing the Mission with an overview of the security situation by consolidating input from community members and local authorities on perceived threats to the civilian population.”<sup>66</sup> CLAs are additionally tasked with establishing CANs, which often serve as the Mission’s primary source of information on imminent threats to civilians.

In South Sudan, UNMISS has a different approach to recruiting, managing, and utilizing CLAs. There are fewer CLAs in UNMISS than in some other missions, UNMISS CLAs are managed by Heads of Office (HoOs) rather than the Civil Affairs Division, and the Mission lacks an “extensive network of field-based CLAs deployed alongside uniformed personnel in remote locations.”<sup>67</sup> This different approach is one of the reasons that UNMISS CLAs “have not been able to establish early warning networks or alert systems in order to feed this information directly to uniformed personnel for rapid, decentralized response.”<sup>68</sup> However, CLAs do play a role in the Mission’s efforts to improve situational awareness and engagement with communities. UNMISS interlocutors have informed CIVIC that CLAs help to “gain the trust of communities and understand the context in greater detail than international staff.” They also allow UNMISS to “collect information from a wider range of civilians...that feeds into early warning.”<sup>69</sup>

Missions’ community engagement strategies must address the risks of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). As CIVIC has observed, sexual violence is often less visible than other types of violence and may occur in different times and places. Given this reality, “Missions...need to be attuned to the potential for CRSV and make a concerted effort to identify CRSV risks and cases.”<sup>70</sup> In the context of EW/RR, CIVIC’s research has demonstrated the importance of engaging women as well as men in identifying protection threats, including by ensuring “that women make up a significant proportion of the individuals who participate in CANs, LPCs, and other early warning forums.”<sup>71</sup> In their research on gender and early warning, Schmeidl and

Piza-Lopez similarly emphasize the importance of gathering women’s perspectives on protection threats, noting that the “inclusion of women in [the process of determining response options] not only allows for equity by laying the foundations for having both men and women’s needs equally addressed, but also invites a different set of views when deciding upon what response options might be most suitable.”<sup>72</sup>

While CIVIC’s research has identified good practices related to community engagement, it has also shed light on areas that can be improved across missions. Some of these challenges are related to missions’ hiring, training, and utilization of CLAs.<sup>73</sup> Other difficulties are linked to collaboration with national security forces. Host states have the primary responsibility for protecting their civilians, and certain UN peacekeeping missions—including the missions in CAR, DRC, and Mali—are mandated to support national security actors.<sup>74</sup> Cooperating with host state forces can create obstacles to missions’ EW/RR efforts, particularly in contexts where national security actors commit high levels of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. This challenge can take on an additional dimension in the context of mission transition and exit. In the DRC, for example, MONUSCO will ultimately need to transfer EW/RR responsibilities to Congolese authorities. As observed by the 2019 Independent Strategic Review of MONUSCO, “Existing community alert networks and early warning systems should ultimately be entirely managed by state authorities.”<sup>75</sup> The transfer of these responsibilities involves significant challenges in a country where national security forces may not have the capability to respond to alerts and remain regularly responsible for violations against civilians.<sup>76</sup>

### ***Linking Threat Analysis to Planning and Decision-Making***

*“Good intelligence is only useful for protection of civilians if peacekeeping missions can translate it into comprehensive and integrated planning, timely decision-making, and rapid response.”<sup>77</sup>*

In order to effectively respond to early warnings of violence against civilians, peacekeeping missions must have the personnel, mechanisms, and processes needed to acquire, analyze, and act upon information regarding imminent and emerging POC threats.<sup>78</sup> This process can be divided into three phases: gathering and analyzing information on threats, planning, and decision-making. CIVIC’s report, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, explores these phases in detail, including good practices and challenges faced by UNMISS and MONUSCO.

Contemporary peace operations have thousands of personnel across military, police, and civilian components with the potential capacity to identify threats and gather information. But officials require direction, both as to the type of information to focus on as well as how to acquire, store, and share information safely and effectively. As Anna Matveeva has observed, the process of gathering and analyzing early warning data involves challenging dilemmas, including how much data to collect, what information to ignore, and how to ensure that collected information is actionable.<sup>79</sup>

In 2017, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) issued the UN’s first Peacekeeping Intelligence Policy, followed by an updated policy in 2019.<sup>80</sup> The 2019 Policy instructs missions to develop information acquisition plans, establish intelligence requirements, and manage information in common databases. CIVIC’s research has demonstrated that acquisition plans and associated intelligence requirements should include POC threats.<sup>81</sup> However, the degree to which the Intelligence Policy has been implemented varies across missions, and more research is needed to understand whether and how information acquisition plans are connected to EW/RR.<sup>82</sup> CIVIC’s research has also found that gender needs to be integrated into threat assessments, analysis, planning, and decision-making.<sup>83</sup> CIVIC has observed, for instance, that missions should include early warning indicators of CRSV in their information requirements, and found that “data on incidents should be sex-disaggregated whenever possible so that missions know whether perpetrators and survivors are men or women.”<sup>84</sup>

Peacekeeping missions have had capabilities to manage, analyze, and distribute information to planners and decision-makers for some time. In 2006, DPKO directed missions to establish Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) and Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMACs) based on lessons learned in the field.<sup>85</sup> JOCs serve as information hubs at mission headquarters, and increasingly in field or sector headquarters. JOCs are tasked with ensuring “mission-wide situational awareness through integrated reporting on current operations as well as day-to-day situation reporting.”<sup>86</sup> JMACs are tasked with providing Mission leadership “with a capacity to collect and synthesize all-source information to produce medium and long-term integrated analysis.”<sup>87</sup>

Once analyzed, information must be integrated into planning and decision-making forums. Unfortunately, peacekeeping missions have weak and under-resourced planning capabilities at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. For example, CIVIC’s research has found that missions “lack designated and effective joint planning mechanisms at the operational level, which, especially in the absence of strong protection strategies, leaves sections working in silos rather than reinforcing each other’s efforts.”<sup>88</sup> To support decentralized operational- and tactical-level planning and decision-making, missions need more robust coordination, planning, and decision-making capabilities—as well as decision-making authority—in field offices. At the field level, HoOs and battalion commanders must determine how to respond to immediate protection threats, but they face important barriers to information acquisition, planning, and response. For example, a lack of field-level coordinators, or the absence of local-level forums for joint planning between military and civilian officials, can lead to siloed analyses and ultimately to less effective responses to POC threats.

To address these gaps, some peacekeeping missions have experimented with creating field-based capacities that perform functions similar to JMACs and JOCs. In South Sudan, for example, UNMISS has established Field Integrated Operations Centers (FIOC) in all field offices. FIOCs are coordination and crisis-management tools that promote planning, information sharing, and coordination across different Mission sections at the local level. FIOCs are tasked with consolidating Mission reporting into a single operational picture, and they “play a role in coordinating response to reported threats at the field level by facilitating meetings where all Mission personnel can present requests for patrolling and use of air assets.”<sup>89</sup> UNMISS officials have informed CIVIC that FIOCs, though under-resourced, improve the functioning of field offices.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, in CAR and Mali, MINUSCA and MINUSMA have developed field JOCs (FJOCs) and regional JOCs (RJOCs), respectively. FJOCs and RJOCs are intended to improve field-level coordination and information sharing.<sup>91</sup>

MONUSCO has developed similar field-level capacities. Presently, the Mission utilizes field JOCs.<sup>92</sup> However, CIVIC’s previous research analyzed MONUSCO’s prior establishment of Tactical Operations Centers (TOCs)—ad-hoc decision-making forums that brought together MONUSCO civilian and military officials as well as humanitarians in specific areas. In January 2018, MONUSCO responded quickly to an outbreak of violence in the Djugu area of Ituri province, where its intervention was credited with reducing violence and promoting stability. In conversations with CIVIC, stakeholders credited the creation of a TOC with allowing for information sharing and decision-making on where to deploy patrols and mobile bases.<sup>93</sup> Though the Mission no longer utilizes TOCs, the Djugu example demonstrates the importance of local coordination and information sharing for mitigating violence against civilians.

**Mobility**

*“For peacekeeping missions mandated to protect civilians, mobility and reach are key capabilities that determine how quickly and to which locations military, police, and civilian personnel can deploy to prevent and respond to violence.”<sup>94</sup>*

The ability to move uniformed and civilian personnel and assets quickly in response to protection threats remains a key EW/RR challenge for MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS. Each of these



**October 8, 2020, Kajo-Keji, Central Equatoria, South Sudan:** UNMISS peacekeepers undertake a long-distance patrol to Kajo-Keji, Central Equatoria, following heavy floods and reports of conflict. A community leader had appealed to UNMISS and humanitarian partners to rehabilitate the road connecting Kajo-Keji to South Sudan’s capital, Juba.

peacekeeping contexts is characterized by a lack of adequate road infrastructure and challenging terrain. All four host countries experience months-long rainy seasons and flooding, which can cut off road access to unstable regions. Missions also face political, and sometimes violent, challenges to their freedom of movement. Armed non-state groups, government actors, and, at times, frustrated civilian populations restrict missions’ movement with varying severity. South Sudan provides one of the most concerning examples of government obstruction. Between February 16 and May 31, 2020, the Secretary-General reported 55 instances in which the South Sudanese government imposed movement restrictions that impeded the Mission’s ability to implement its mandate.<sup>95</sup>

Beyond the country context, peacekeeping missions are not yet adequately designed or equipped for rapid deployment. The 2015 report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO Report) described the situation as follows: “Physical protection by armed peacekeepers requires adequate infantry and enhanced mobility assets....Whereas some deficiencies in infantry can be addressed by high-mobility vehicles and helicopters, the reality is that many missions with protection responsibilities are currently severely underresourced: some lack critical enablers, while others operate under rules that prevent the full use of those capabilities...”<sup>96</sup> Since the HIPPO Report, the UN Secretariat and Member States have invested in a range of activities to modernize peacekeeping operations and make them more mobile.<sup>97</sup> Though a full exploration of these efforts is beyond the scope of this brief, it is important to note that a number of mission characteristics continue to constrain the mobility of UN peacekeeping missions.

MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS have all faced challenges as they have sought to decrease their dependence on static presence and increase their mobility.<sup>98</sup> Common constraints include, but are not limited to, a lack of adequate air assets, layers of internal procedures that hinder the ability of military and civilian personnel and assets to deploy quickly, and caveats imposed by troop-contributing countries (TCCs). These constraints are described in more detail below.

In Mali, CIVIC's research has highlighted the challenges that MINUSMA faces in protecting civilians. Key among them is that the Mission lacks adequate air assets, including attack and utility helicopters as well as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets. In interviews with CIVIC, stakeholders stressed the importance of having multiple types of aircraft for the Mission's EW/RR process. ISR platforms allow MINUSMA to predict where attacks are likely to take place and, thus, where the Mission needs to station personnel. Attack helicopters play a different role, serving as "one of the most effective means the Mission has to prevent potentially imminent attacks on villages because of their speed and their show of force."<sup>99</sup> Utility helicopters can allow for the rapid deployment of military and civilian officials based on early warning alerts.

Lack of adequate aviation in MINUSMA is connected to one of the key challenges facing conflict EWS: the connection between warning and response. In interviews, stakeholders highlighted examples in which the Mission responded too slowly—or failed to respond entirely—to protection threats due to lack of aviation resources. One MINUSMA military official noted, for example, that it can take the Mission "two to three days" to respond to "flare ups" between armed groups.<sup>100</sup> Without adequate air assets, missions will struggle to engage communities and gain information on threats of violence against civilians (early warning) and to prevent or mitigate these threats (rapid response). Additionally, while air assets are necessary for rapid response, they are similarly vital for MINUSMA's community engagement, a critical aspect of early warning. As CIVIC observed, "Air assets...ensure that Mission personnel can engage with communities to better understand people's needs and concerns."<sup>101</sup>

Mobility is similarly critical for the peacekeeping mission in the DRC. MONUSCO was already planning to decrease its footprint when the Mission underwent significant budget and troop reductions in 2017. Over the following three years, the Mission went from maintaining over 100 bases around the country to operating from around 40 bases in fewer areas. MONUSCO implemented a new protection strategy, "Protection through Projection," to protect civilians with its reduced presence. As CIVIC observed in 2019, the strategy "requires both military and civilian staff to be highly mobile and able to deploy temporarily, without establishing bases, to areas where security appears to be deteriorating."<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Protection through Projection hinges on the development of "capabilities that allow [MONUSCO] to shift personnel quickly to different theaters of operation."<sup>103</sup>

***Without adequate air assets, missions will struggle to engage communities and gain information on threats of violence against civilians (early warning) and to prevent or mitigate these threats (rapid response).***

***Ultimately, unless missions have the assets to deploy personnel "at the first early warning signs of tension," their ability to respond effectively will be limited.***

A central component of MONUSCO's shift to more mobile operations was the development of Standing Combat Deployments (SCDs). SCDs refer to temporary deployments of personnel to remote areas where the Mission does not maintain a permanent presence. Though CIVIC's research found that these mobile deployments can play a role in responding to violence against civilians, SCDs depend on mobility. In interviews with CIVIC in 2018 and 2019, MONUSCO civilian and military officials noted the importance of maintaining adequate air assets and travel budgets, emphasizing the challenge of resource restrictions.<sup>104</sup> Ultimately, unless missions have the assets to deploy personnel "at the first early warning signs of tension," their ability to respond effectively will be limited.<sup>105</sup>

The mobility of civilian personnel and air assets is as critical as the mobility of their military counterparts. Civilian personnel are often key to mediation and dialogue, which can be important in preventing threats of violence. For example, in the lead up to the presidential elections in DRC in December 2018, MONUSCO deployed mobile units to potential hotspots—a move that some Mission stakeholders credited with preventing political violence.<sup>106</sup> According to MONUSCO's public reporting, the Mission organized capacity building for "1,530 civil society actors...in support of efforts to mitigate the risk of election-related violence" in electoral hotspots from 2017 through September 2018, an effort which it characterized as one of its "early warning mechanisms."<sup>107</sup> MONUSCO's effort to anticipate and prevent violence through political engagement with communities exemplifies two of David Nyheim's observations: a) technical solutions should not replace political ones in armed conflict contexts, and b) a diverse range of responses is required to address the challenges stemming from armed conflict.<sup>108</sup> Alongside the provision of physical protection by military components, missions' EW/RR efforts should include political engagement activities undertaken by civilian officials.

MINUSCA, MONUSCO, and UNMISS have all considered or experimented with developing teams of civilian personnel that could be quickly deployed from Mission headquarters to other locations. While simple in theory, this action requires missions to have equipment, such as tents and rations, to enable personnel to stay in remote locations where Mission accommodations may be rudimentary or non-existent.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, civilian officials and air assets often require layers of approval before travel. For example, in 2018 and 2019, CIVIC found that UNMISS civilian officials and military observers, as well as UN country team staff, had to seek a number of permissions prior to traveling. Before undertaking air travel, for instance, the Mission required that personnel secure a Flight Safety Assurance (FSA) from the government or a special assessment from Mission leadership. Such procedures can have adverse consequences—CIVIC found that the process of "securing an FSA or conducting a special assessment can delay or prevent a rapid response to threat."<sup>110</sup>



*May 27, 2020, Malakal, South Sudan: An all-female group of UNMISS peacekeepers from Rwanda, including military and UNPOL officials, take part in a crowd dispersal training exercise.*

## V. CONCLUSION

The process of early warning and rapid response is central to UN peacekeeping operations' efforts to prevent and mitigate short-, medium-, and long-term threats of violence against civilians. Contemporary peacekeeping missions tasked with protecting civilians must contend with a broad range of POC threats across large geographic expanses in which travel may be severely restricted. In complex conflict environments, missions must have the capacity to identify, plan for, and respond to emerging protection threats.

Yet contemporary UN peacekeeping operations face numerous obstacles to implementing effective EW/RR. Peacekeeping operations, including the missions in CAR, DRC, Mali, and South Sudan, must determine how to deploy limited resources, including mobility assets, in order to respond rapidly to myriad threats. In countries with limited road networks and potentially hostile armed groups or state institutions, missions may face particular burdens in terms of effectively engaging with communities to gather information and build trust. Moreover, the process of linking information gathering to effective planning, decision-making, and response remains a critical challenge across UN peacekeeping operations.

Despite these difficulties, missions can take steps to strengthen EW/RR processes. For example, missions' effective use of CLAs can lead to increased engagement with local communities and improved situational awareness. Similarly, efforts to link threat analysis to decision-making, such as through the development of field-office level capacities to coordinate planning and foster information sharing, can facilitate better planning and response at the operational and tactical levels. More broadly, missions can develop policies and procedures that formalize the EW/RR process and lay out the roles and responsibilities of specific personnel. These steps and others can improve missions' EW/RR and increase their capacity to protect civilians.

Caveats imposed by troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) can also impact a mission's ability to deploy in response to protection threats. In the South Sudan context, CIVIC observed that efforts to make the UNMISS Force more proactive and mobile had been hampered by certain Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Statements of Unit Requirements (SURs) between TCCs and the UN Secretariat that placed geographical restrictions on where troops could deploy.<sup>111</sup> Such restrictions, CIVIC found, "undermine the Mission's ability to deploy troops where and when they are needed."<sup>112</sup>

Geographic limitations imposed by T/PCCs are not limited to the UMMISS context. Speaking about peacekeeping more broadly, one expert described the situation as follows: "If a protection threat arises in a new place, the mission needs to be able to reallocate resources to that area and leave them there. But troops have caveats in their MOUs with HQ [UN headquarters in New York] that prevents this kind of flexibility."<sup>113</sup> As missions seek to become more mobile and responsive, T/PCC caveats that unnecessarily restrict where and when uniformed personnel can deploy could pose a significant barrier to mobility.

ENDNOTES

1 The attacks were carried out by members of two armed groups—Nduma Defence of Congo (NDC) and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)—as well as deserters from the Congolese military. On November 23, 2020, a Congolese military court condemned former NDC commander Ntabo Ntaberi, known as “Sheka,” and former FDLR commander Séraphin Zitonda, known as “Lionceau,” to life in prison. The court found both men guilty of war crimes including rape, sexual slavery, and murder. “DRC: Sheka and his Wingman Receive Life Sentences, Victims are Finally Recognized,” *Trial International*, November 23, 2020, <https://trialinternational.org/latest-post/drc-sheka-and-his-wingman-receive-life-sentences-victims-are-finally-recognized/>.

2 “DR Congo: six years on, UN envoy calls for action in Walikale mass rape,” *UN News*, July 29, 2016, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/07/535802-dr-congo-six-years-un-envoy-calls-action-walikale-mass-rape>.

3 MONUSCO and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Final Report of the Fact-Finding Missions of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office into the Mass Rapes and Other Human Rights Violations Committed by a Coalition of Armed Groups along the Kibua-Mpofi Aix in Walikale Territory, North Kivu, from 30 July to 2 August 2010,” July 2011, paras. 16–17, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/UNJHRO%20-%20Final%20Report%20Mass%20Rapes%20Kibua%20Mpofi%20-%20ENGLISH%20TRANSLATION.pdf>.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., para. 17.

6 The mass rape in Walikale territory was preceded by other incidents in the DRC that prompted the peacekeeping mission there to develop early warning capabilities. See Ralph Mamiya and Haidi Willmot, “Early Warning, the Protection of Civilians and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” *African Security Review* 22, no. 2 (2013): 72. The Walikale incident is discussed here because the investigation highlighted a number of lessons learned that remain relevant for missions ten years later. For more on the international response to the Walikale incident, see: “U.N. Security Council holds emergency session on Congo rapes,” CNN, August 26, 2010, <https://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/africa/08/26/congo.rapes/index.html>; “UN Security Council slams mass rapes in eastern DRC,” Global Times, September 8, 2010, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/571209.shtml>.

7 Section IV(b) of this issue brief discusses specific lessons learned from past CIVIC research relevant to EW/RR, with reference to particular reports, issue briefs, and policy briefs. CIVIC’s past research products focused on peacekeeping can be found on the CIVIC Peacekeeping Program’s webpage: <https://civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/where-we-work/peacekeeping/>.

8 Alexander Austin, “Early Warning and the Field: A Cargo Cult Science?” *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* (2004): 4.

9 Anna Matveeva, *Early Warning and Early Response: Conceptual and Empirical Dilemmas*, European Centre for Conflict Prevention, September 2006, 9.

10 For an analysis of UN-supported early warning systems linked to natural disasters, see: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Five Approaches to Build Functional Early Warning Systems*, 2018. For an example of early warning systems established by civil society organizations, see: Kumar Rupesinghe, *FCE Citizen-based Early Warning and Early Response System: A New Tool for Civil Society to Prevent Violent Conflict*, Foundation for Co-Existence, February 24, 2009. For an example of an early warning system developed by a humanitarian organization, see: Catholic Relief Services, *Early Warning Systems in Central DR of Congo: Saving Lives Through Faster Emergency Response*, October 2012.

11 Haidi Willmot, *Improving U.N. Situational Awareness: Enhancing the U.N.’s Ability to Prevent and Respond to Mass Human Suffering and to Ensure the Safety and Security of Its Personnel*, Stimson Center, August 2017, 21.

12 Amanda Lucey and Dimitri Kotsiras, “Broadcasting Peace: Insights and lessons from local peacebuilders in Eastern DRC,” *Peace Direct*, <http://broadcastingpeace.peaceinsight.org/reports/broadcastingpeace/>.

13 On FEWS Net: Famine Early Warning Systems Network, see <https://fews.net/about-us>, accessed September 10, 2020.

14 It should be noted that Alexander Austin does offer a cross-disciplinary definition of early warning, referring to an early warning system as “any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing, regardless of topic, whether they are quantitative, qualitative or a blend of both.” Austin, “Early Warning and the Field,” 2.

15 UNDP, *Five Approaches to Build Functional Early Warning Systems*, 5.

16 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Preventing Violence, War and State Collapse: The Future of Conflict Early Warning and Response*, 2009, 22. In a later publication, David Nyheim—who authored the 2009 OECD report—offers an alternative definition of an EWS in armed conflict, describing such a system as one that: a) “carries out regular and organized collection and analysis of information on violent conflicts and opportunities for peace,” b) “delivers a set of early warning products,” and c) “has operational linkages to response instruments and mechanisms.” David Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict: Time for a Rethink*, Saferworld, October 2015, 23.

17 In its 2009 report, the OECD offers “A Short Contemporary History of Conflict Early Warning.” See OECD, *Preventing Violence, War and State Collapse*, 25.

18 Ibid.

19 J.O.C. Jonah, *Office for Research and the Collection of Information (ORCI)*, 1989. It should be noted that ORCI was disbanded in 1992.

20 Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict*, 3. See also, Lauren Spink, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, November 2018, 13. The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations—commissioned by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2000 after multiple failures of UN peacekeeping missions to prevent violent conflict and protect civilians from atrocities—emphasized “the need to have more effective collection and assessment of information at United Nations Headquarters, including an enhanced conflict early warning system that can detect and recognize the threat or risk of conflict or genocide.” United Nations, *Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in All Their Aspects* (Brahimi Report), UN Doc S/2000/809 (August 21, 2000), para 6(d). The UN’s inability to prevent genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and to protect the inhabitants of Srebrenica the following year were two of the most high-profile failures.

21 Rupesinghe, *FCE Citizen-based Early Warning and Early Response System*, 6.

22 Kumar Rupesinghe describes first-generation early warning systems as follows: “A first generation EW system monitors and analyses conflict outside the conflict regions—in the western countries. It does not intend to monitor conflict within particular conflict countries and regions. Instead, it uses secondary sources like newspapers in collecting information. Therefore, EW systems which adopt only

quantitative approaches in the western countries are included in the first generation.” Second-generation EWS, by contrast, “conduct monitoring within conflict countries and regions,” though analysis is still conducted in the West. Rupesinghe additionally notes that “while the first generation EW systems focus on conflict analysis and do not have effective procedures to communicate with key decision-makers, the second generation EW systems adopted monitoring on the ground, conduct risk assessment researches and carry out active lobbying.” Ibid., 9.

23 Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict*, 17.

24 Though UN Peacekeeping missions should bring together the early warning and rapid response processes, different mission components may be responsible for different aspects of EW/RR. For example, the 2018 Joint Mission Analysis Centre Field Handbook notes: “Early warning is meant to inform decision-making in view of potential pre-emptive action. JMACs are only responsible for the warning/analysis portion, and analysts must be careful to leave it to other sections, normally the JOC, the force and PAD [political affairs division]...to focus on response. This is particularly true for PoC-mandated missions, with PoC advisers and coordination forums focused on the prevention and response to PoC incidents.” UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support (UNDPKO/DFS), *Joint Mission Analysis Centre Field Handbook*, DPKO-DFS Reference 2018.03, 2018, 139.

25 CIVIC interview with UN Secretariat Official, #1, New York, August 2020.

26 See Ralph Mamiya and Haidi Willmot, “Early Warning, the Protection of Civilians and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” *African Security Review* 22, no. 2 (2013): 70; UN Security Council Resolution 1270, UN Doc. S/RES/1270 (1999), para. 14; UN Security Council Resolution 1996, UN Doc. S/RES/1996 (2011), para. 3(b)(ii). UNSC Resolution 1996 established the UN Mission in South Sudan. Note that UN peacekeeping missions had previously made efforts to increase their capacity to predict and prevent threats of violence. For example, ONUC, the first UN peacekeeping Mission deployed in the DRC in 1960, developed a Military Information Branch with wireless message interception and aerial surveillance capabilities. Other missions similarly established intelligence capabilities, ranging from the deployment of intelligence officers to paying local informants, prior to the development of conflict early warning systems in the 1990s. Willmot, *Improving U.N. Situational Awareness*, 29–30.

27 Mamiya and Willmot, “Early Warning, the Protection of Civilians and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” 72.

28 United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), *CLA Best Practice Review*, 2014, 5, 10.

29 See UN Security Council Resolution 2499, UN Doc. S/RES/2499 (2019), para. 32(a)(11); UN Security Council Resolution 2502, UN Doc. S/RES/2502 (2019), para. 29(i)(d); UN Security Council Resolution 2514, UN Doc. S/RES/2514 (2020), para. 8(a)(iii); and UN Security Council Resolution 2531, UN Doc. S/RES/2531 (2020), para. 28(c)(iii).

30 UN Security Council Resolution 2502, UN Doc. S/RES/2502 (2019), para. 29(i)(d).

31 UN Security Council Resolution 2514, UN Doc. S/RES/2514 (2020), para. 8(a)(iii).

32 Ibid., para. 18.

33 UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support (UNDPKO/DFS), *DPKO/DFS Policy on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping*, July 2015, para. 34. It should be noted that the 2015 policy was preceded by the 2010 DPKO/DFS Operational Concept on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. However, the operational concept includes only one reference to early warning and does not provide additional detail on the systems or resources required to implement EW/RR. UNDPKO/DFS, *Operational Concept on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, 2010, para. 19.

34 Department of Peace Operations (DPO), *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Policy*, November 1, 2019, paras. 6–27.

35 Ibid., para. 47.

36 DPO, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Handbook*, 82–100.

37 Ibid., 95.

38 Ibid., 96–103. JPTs are teams made up of civilian, military, and police personnel that conduct field visits “to hotspots to analyse protection needs and recommend preventive and responsive interventions to address them.” CPPs provide overviews of “the security situation, threats to the civilian population, priority communities at risk of violence and actions planned or required to address POC risks” at the tactical level. JAMs are protection field visits made up of mission civilian personnel, United Nations Country Team staff, and relevant NGOs. They are undertaken with the objective of conducting “an assessment to identify threats, inform responses to threats, improve relations with local communities, lower tensions and enhance early warning.” Casualty recording refers to “the process of systematically and comprehensively recording and verifying information on individuals killed and injured in a specific set of circumstances.” Casualty recording is useful for “for ‘real-time’ prevention and protection such as identifying harmful practices and supporting decisions on the deployment of UN forces,” as well as for “planning appropriate responses, including military and political engagement.”

39 Ibid., 196. It should be noted that the MINUSCA Early Warning and Rapid Response SOP is included as an annex in the UN’s *The Protection of Civilians in UN Peacekeeping Handbook* (2020).

40 Ibid., 196.

41 Ibid., 197–201.

42 In the MINUSCA SOP, this term appears as “Urgent Temporally Measures.” However, CIVIC has used the term “Urgent Temporary Measures” in order to mirror the exact terminology in the MINUSCA mandate.

43 Ibid., 4–7.

44 United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, *Standard Operating Procedure: Early Warning and Rapid Response*, Ref. MINUSMA 2020.11, June 15, 2021, 7.

45 It should be noted that the MINUSCA and MINUSMA EW/RR SOPs referenced above provide definitions for “early warning” rather than “early warning mechanism.”

46 Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict*, 5.

47 Ibid., 17.

48 Ibid., 5.

49 Ibid., 18.

50 Matveeva, *Early Warning and Early Response*, 16.

51 Ibid., 17.

52 Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict*, 18.

53 OECD, *Preventing Violence, War and State Collapse*, 68.

54 Nyheim, *Early Warning and Response to Violent Conflict*, 20.

55 Susanne Schmeidl and Eugenia Piza-Lopez, *Gender and Conflict Early Warning: A Framework for Action*, International Alert and Swiss Peace Foundation, June 2002, 7.

56 Saferworld, *Gender and Conflict Early Warning*, May 28, 2014, <https://protectionofcivilians.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/gender-and-conflict-early-warning-Saferworld.pdf>.

57 Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez, *Gender and Conflict Early Warning*, 19.

58 Lauren Spink, “*Let Us be a Part of It: Community Engagement by the UN Peacekeeping Mission in South Sudan*,” Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2017, 1.

59 This sub-section focuses on community engagement in the context of EW/RR and pays particular attention to the role of community liaison assistants across missions. But it should be noted that UN peacekeeping missions’ community engagement efforts are not limited to the EW/RR context. For example, in the UNMISS context, CIVIC has conducted research on the Mission’s approach to sub-national conflict management. The Mission’s approach includes “reducing tensions and building civic space at the local level through civil-military dialogues, rapprochements, social cohesion activities such as inter-communal dialogues, and strengthening of subnational organizations for political engagement.” Lauren Spink, *Protection through Dialogue: How UNMISS is Linking Local Engagement with a National Peace Process in South Sudan*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, June 2020, 6. Further examples of community engagement in peacekeeping—with a focus on South Sudan—can be found in Spink, “*Let Us be a Part of It*,” CIVIC, 2017.

60 CIVIC interview with UN Secretariat Official, #2, New York, August 2020.

61 CIVIC, *Community Engagement by MONUSCO with Reduced Field Presence*, June 2018, 1.

62 Ibid., 4.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 Viola Giuliano, “The UN Peacekeeping Mission in CAR Strengthens Community Engagement in Order to Better Protect Civilians from Ongoing Violence,” Center for Civilians in Conflict (blog), August 4, 2020, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/blog/minusca-strengthens-community-engagement/>.

66 Ibid.

67 Lauren Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility: Providing Protection to Civilians through Static Presence and Mobile Peacekeeping in South Sudan*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, March 2019, 15.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., 21.

70 Lauren Spink, “*We Have to Break the Silence Somehow: Preventing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence through UN Peacekeeping*,” Center for Civilians in Conflict, October 2020, 1.

71 Ibid., 18. While a detailed discussion of CRSV in peacekeeping missions’ EW/RR efforts is beyond the scope of this brief, CIVIC’s report, “*We Have to Break the Silence Somehow*,” discusses missions’ efforts to combat and respond to CRSV—including through EW/RR—in detail.

72 Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez, *Gender and Conflict Early Warning*, 18.

73 For more information on challenges related to CLAs, consult the following sources: Giuliano, “The UN Peacekeeping Mission in CAR Strengthens Community Engagement in Order to Better Protect Civilians from Ongoing Violence”; Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC; and Spink, “*We Have to Break the Silence Somehow*,” CIVIC.

74 UN Security Council Resolution 2552, UN. Doc. S/RES/2552 (2020), paras. 31 (a)(ii), 32(b), and 32 (c); UN Security Council Resolution 2556, UN. Doc. S/RES/2556 (2020), paras.29(i) and 29(ii); UN Security Council Resolution 2531, UN Doc. S/RES/2531 (2020), paras. 28(b) and 28(c). For an overview of several key challenges facing UN peacekeeping missions tasked with both protecting civilians and providing support, see Patryk I. Labuda, *With or Against the State? Reconciling the Protection of Civilians and Host-State Support in UN Peacekeeping*, International Peace Institute, May 2020.

75 *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 (October 25, 2019), 29.

76 In its report on the human rights situation in the DRC between June 1, 2019, and May 31, 2020, the Joint Human Rights Office noted as follows: “Overall, the number of human rights violations and abuses documented by the Joint Office—7,359 cases—increased by 12 per cent compared to the previous reporting period. Countrywide, nearly 47 per cent of the violations were committed by State officials, primarily members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and officers of the Congolese national police.” Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, UN Doc. A/HRC/45/49 (August 24, 2020), para 3.

77 Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 40.

78 Ibid.

79 Matveeva, *Early Warning and Early Response*, 16–18.

80 For more information on the development of the 2017 and 2019 peacekeeping intelligence policies, see Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé, *Finding the UN Way on Peacekeeping Intelligence*, International Peace Institute, April 2020.

81 Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 11.

82 It should be noted that the Department of Peace Operations has developed additional guidance regarding intelligence in peacekeeping operations, including UN-wide peacekeeping intelligence handbooks. According to Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé, “The handbooks compile policies, guidelines, best practices, tips, methodologies, models, templates, and case studies from the UN, consultants, experts, practitioners, academics, and member states. While these handbooks share the same ultimate aim, the development of each has entailed different challenges.” Martin-Brûlé, *Finding the UN Way on Peacekeeping Intelligence*, 7. These handbooks include the *Military Peacekeeping-Intelligence Handbook* and the *Peacekeeping-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Staff Handbook*. The latter notes, for example, that two of the objectives of peacekeeping intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance are “provid[ing] early warning of threats to the security of UN personnel, both uniformed and civilian,” as well as “provid[ing] early warning of threats of physical violence to the local population, in support of the protection of civilians.” DPO, *The Peacekeeping-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Staff Handbook*, September 2020, 7.

83 Spink, “*We Have to Break the Silence Somehow*,” CIVIC.

84 Ibid., 19.

85 Micah Zenko and Rebecca R. Friedman, “UN Early Warning for Preventing Conflict,” *International Peacekeeping* 18, no. 1 (February 2011): 25.

86 UNDPKO, *Policy Directive: Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres, Ref. POL 2006/3000/04* (July 1, 2006), para. 9.

87 Ibid., para. 17. See also, Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 56, which explains that the JOC is an “information hub established at Mission headquarters to ensure Mission-wide situational awareness through integrated reporting on current operations as well as day-to-day situation reporting. During a crisis, the JOC is tasked with operating as the primary facility to support mission crisis management.” The JMAC is the Mission section “that generates integrated analytical products, providing the Head of Mission (HOM) and Mission Leadership Team (MLT) with an understanding of issues and trends, their implications and potential developments, as well as assessments of cross-cutting issues and threats that may affect the implementation of the Mission’s mandate.” Additionally, it is important to note that Intelligence Acquisition Plans, JOCs, and JMACs are designed and mandated to support Heads of Missions and the senior leadership at the strategic level of the mission. CIVIC’s research in DRC and South Sudan indicate that mission-wide mechanisms to support strategic-level planning and decision-making are necessary for effective and timely prevention and response. However, CIVIC’s initial research on EWS has also found that decentralized operational- and tactical-level capabilities are required for effective EW/RR. Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 33, 41; Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC, 14.

88 Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, January 2018, 40.

89 Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC, 14–15.

90 Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 38.

91 CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #2, Bamako, January 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA police official, #16, Sévaré, February 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #33, Sévaré, February 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #34, Sévaré, February 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #91, Mopti, September 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #110, conducted via telephone from Bamako to Gao, September 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #10, Bangui, April 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #68, Bouar, October 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #123, Bangui, November 2020.

92 Written correspondence with MONUSCO personnel, November 6, 2020.

93 This example is discussed in detail in Spink, *Data-Driven Protection*, CIVIC, 47.

94 Spink, *Moving Towards Mobility*, CIVIC, 11.

95 United Nations Security Council, *Situation in South Sudan: Report of the Secretary-General, UN Doc. S/2020/536* (June 15, 2020), para. 85.

96 *Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people (HIPPO Report)*, UN A/70/95, S/2015/446 (June 17, 2015), para. 95. The HIPPO Report also noted that “United Nations bureaucratic systems configured for a headquarters environment limit the speed, mobility and agility of response in the field.” Ibid., para. 35.

97 These initiatives include the Secretary-General’s management reforms seeking to delegate authorities from UN headquarters to peacekeeping missions; high-level events that convened Heads and Ministers of Member States to generate pledges of uniformed personnel, assets, and enablers, including those required for EW/RR; and Secretariat reforms regarding how gaps in the field are identified and how new Member States’ pledges are registered and assessed prior to deployment. See Wolfgang Weiszegger, “Implementing the UN Management Reform: Progress and Implications for Peace Operations,” International Peace Institute, July 2020; Leaders’ Summit on Peacekeeping, 2015, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/leaders-summit-peacekeeping>; “UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial: Summary,” 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial-summary>; 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial, Vancouver, Canada, [https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial-conference-vancouver-canada#:~:text=Canada%20hosted%20the%202017%20UN,in%20Vancouver%2C%20British%2DColumbia.&text=To%20foster%20pragmatic%20and%20innovative,a%20new%20focus%20on%20partnerships;Peacekeeping%20Capability%20Readiness%20System,https://pcrs.un.org/Lists/Announcements/Attachments/17/2019.01%20Peacekeeping%20Capability%20Readiness%20System\\_Guidelines.pdf?Mobile=1](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/un-peacekeeping-defence-ministerial-conference-vancouver-canada#:~:text=Canada%20hosted%20the%202017%20UN,in%20Vancouver%2C%20British%2DColumbia.&text=To%20foster%20pragmatic%20and%20innovative,a%20new%20focus%20on%20partnerships;Peacekeeping%20Capability%20Readiness%20System,https://pcrs.un.org/Lists/Announcements/Attachments/17/2019.01%20Peacekeeping%20Capability%20Readiness%20System_Guidelines.pdf?Mobile=1).

98 Evan Cinq-Mars, *The Primacy of Protection: Delivering on the MINUSCA Mandate in the Central African Republic*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, December 22, 2016, 29; Lauren Spink, *Protection With Less Presence: How the Peacekeeping Operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo is Attempting to Deliver Protection with Fewer Resources*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, January 2018; Seán Smith, *Protecting Civilians in Mali: Why Air Assets Matter for MINUSMA*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, May 2020; Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC.

99 Smith, *Protecting Civilians in Mali*, CIVIC, 20.

100 Ibid., 12.

101 Ibid., 1. CIVIC’s *Protecting Civilians in Mali* report provides examples illustrating the importance of air assets for MINUSMA’s community engagement in several parts of Mali.

102 Spink, “*Protection with Less Presence*,” CIVIC, 3.

103 Ibid.

104 Lauren Spink, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, October 2019, 7; Spink, “*Protection with Less Presence*,” CIVIC, 13.

105 Spink, “*Protection with Less Presence*,” CIVIC, 11.

106 Spink, *Charting a Future for Peacekeeping in the DRC*, 7.

107 MONUSCO, *MONUSCO at a Glance*, September 2018, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/factsheet\\_monusco\\_-\\_september\\_2018.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/factsheet_monusco_-_september_2018.pdf).

108 OECD, *Preventing Violence, War and State Collapse*, 18.

109 Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC, 15–16; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bangui, April 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #6, Bangui, April 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #21, Bangui, April 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #15, Bangui, February 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui, February 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #119, Bangui, November 2020; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #120, Bangui, November 2020.

110 Spink, *Moving Toward Mobility*, CIVIC, 13.

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 CIVIC interview with UN Secretariat Official, #1, New York, August 2020.



MINUSMA/Gema Cortes

*December 19, 2018, Koro, Mopti, Mali: Senegalese peacekeepers serving with MINUSMA conduct an operation to secure the circle of Koro in Mali's Mopti region. During the operation, peacekeepers conducted civil-military activities, including free medical consultations and education sessions.*

**CENTER FOR  
CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT**  
RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.

**T** +1 202 558 6958  
**E** [comms@civiliansinconflict.org](mailto:comms@civiliansinconflict.org)  
**[civiliansinconflict.org](http://civiliansinconflict.org)**