

Strengthened Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations: How MINUSMA is Reinforcing its Strategic Planning Unit

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ABOUT CIVIC'S PEACEKEEPING PROGRAM

CIVIC's Peacekeeping Program links in-depth field research in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, and South Sudan to research and advocacy at the national- and international-level. We capture good practices and lessons learned to inform policy and decision-making by UN peacekeeping operations, the UN Secretariat, and UN Member States. In 2019, the Peacekeeping Program is continuing to focus its research and advocacy to address six inter-related objectives that are linchpins to the effective protection of civilians through UN peacekeeping.

- 1) The UN Secretary-General and Member States continue to prioritize the protection of civilians through UN peacekeeping and view POC as an integral part of political strategies and solutions.
- 2) Peacekeeping operation planning and decision-making is linked to assessments of threats to civilians.
- 3) Peacekeeping performance is strengthened by ensuring that mandates are matched with adequate means.
- 4) Accountability systems for peacekeeping operation leadership and personnel are effective and transparent.
- 5) Member States, the UN Secretariat, and peacekeeping operations take steps to prevent, mitigate, and address harm that could result from their own presence, activities, and operations, and the operations of armed actors that they support.
- 6) Communities at risk of violence are safely and effectively engaged in mission planning and activities to protect civilians.

I. OVERVIEW

United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations are one tool that Member States can employ to help promote international peace and security and prevent or halt violence against civilians. The Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was deployed to help stabilize the country in 2013 after the outbreak of violence in 2012. However, what began as a political uprising by marginalized groups in northern Mali in 2012 has become a complex web of inter-connected conflicts involving numerous national, regional, and international military forces, armed ethno-political groups, flaring inter-communal tensions, and violent extremist groups that threaten the lives of civilian men, women, girls, and boys.

Despite the presence of MINUSMA and other international military operations, the number of violent incidents in Mali has continued to climb sharply over the last few years with civilians paying an increasingly heavy price. According to one tally, conflict-related incidents accounted for 71 civilian deaths in 2016, 192 in 2017, and a staggering 815 deaths in 2018, primarily due to rising levels of intercommunal violence in the central regions of Mopti and Ségou.¹ Signs so far this year indicate that threats to civilians will continue to escalate. In March, 157 civilians were killed in an attack on the village of Ogossagou in Mopti. This assault, in which members of the Fulani ethnic group were primarily targeted, was the single deadliest attack on civilians since the crisis began. It spurred what appear to be several retaliatory attacks against Dogon villages, including an attack in the Sobane Da village beginning on June 9 that claimed at least 101 lives and attacks against the Gangafani and Yoro villages

on June 17, in which at least 38 people were killed.² While the government of Mali is primarily responsible for protecting civilians under threat in Mopti and Ségou, the efficient and effective implementation of MINUSMA's mandate is needed more than ever. Civilian lives depend on these efforts.

Peacekeeping operations, like MINUSMA, are different than any other bilateral or regional intervention in conflict-affected countries because they are civilian led, and have military, police, and civilian components that operate under the same banner. This composition allows missions to adopt a multi-dimensional approach to violence. They are also mandated to coordinate activities with UN humanitarian and development agencies that offer a wide variety of protection activities and services to civilians. However, leveraging the strengths of a multi-dimensional and integrated approach to peacekeeping requires strong strategic planning and coordination.

Although it is too early to assess the full impact of the expanded SPU, the early successes of the section are nonetheless worthy of monitoring and supporting.

The Strategic Planning Units (SPUs) in peacekeeping missions are tasked with many of the planning, coordination, and oversight functions vital to successful operations. Yet, even in missions with thousands of personnel deployed, SPUs are often seriously under-staffed—consisting of only one or two individuals. MINUSMA has invested in its SPU by building its capacity and empowering the expanded SPU team of six individuals to work alongside protection of civilians (POC) advisors, military, and police counterparts in a mission-wide integrated planning role.

During research trips to Mali in September 2018 and May 2019, CIVIC interviewed MINUSMA personnel and external stakeholders to better understand how the peacekeeping Mission is working to overcome challenges of integrated

planning and coordination.³ While the scope of CIVIC's research was limited, CIVIC identified some innovative approaches that could strengthen MINUSMA. At the time of CIVIC's research, these efforts were just beginning to take root. Although it is too early to assess the full impact of the expanded SPU, the early successes of the section are nonetheless worthy of monitoring and supporting. Aspects of them could be adapted to and replicated in other missions if they continue to yield positive results.⁴

CIVIC's research identified early and expected benefits of the expanded SPU and new planning forums, including efforts to:

- break down existing silos in analysis and planning;
- improve the Mission's efficiency and impact;
- increase the linkages between threat analysis and operational decision-making;
- ensure a balance between field office activities that are adequately tailored to local contexts but also serve overall strategic aims of the Mission; and
- safeguard against potential harm from MINUSMA activities, presence, and operations.

Based on our research, CIVIC recommends that:

- MINUSMA's leadership continue to reinforce the strengthened role of the SPU and emphasize mission-wide strategic and operational planning initiatives;
- Member States continue supporting these initiatives with adequate funding for SPU positions;
- The Secretariat supports the work of MINUSMA officials to strengthen the SPU and integrated strategic planning, and to capture lessons on good practice from MINUSMA in this area; and
- The Secretariat also ensures that policy guidance and training for military, police, and civilian peacekeepers include clear information on the importance of integrated strategic planning and the respective roles of each component in this regard.



Ceremony at the official launch of MINUSMA's military Center Sector in Mopti, June 24, 2019
MINUSMA /Harandane Dicko

II. THE CHALLENGE OF COORDINATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING IN MODERN PEACEKEEPING

Peacekeeping missions are often deployed into countries where dozens of armed groups with different motivations and tactics are actively operating and targeting civilians. To address conflict in these environments, peacekeepers are authorized and mandated to perform dozens and sometimes hundreds of tasks ranging from supporting the implementation of peace agreements, to stabilization, monitoring human rights violations, and engaging actors in dialogue at the sub-national level. Today, most personnel deployed to UN peacekeeping operations around the world are serving under missions that have protection of civilians as a critical mandated objective. MINUSMA is deployed into a complex environment and mandated to undertake all of these tasks and many others.

The structure and staffing of missions have changed to match the increasingly complex conflict environments into which they are deployed. Modern UN peacekeeping operations are multi-dimensional—composed of military, police, and civilian sections with different specialized roles. Through a joint leadership structure, they are also integrated with and required to coordinate with UN humanitarian and development agencies deployed in country.⁵ In the challenging environments where they are deployed, peacekeeping missions need strong coordination and planning structures to integrate the work of all these actors and successfully implement their multi-dimensional mandates.

The military component of peacekeeping missions—often referred to as the Force—usually has experienced planners in its ranks. The Force is broken up into sections with different tasks. For example, the U5 section is responsible for military planning, while the U3 section translates military planning into operations. Some missions have personnel assigned to a role termed U35 who help to bridge longer-term strategic

planning with operations. The police components of peacekeeping missions also have planning capacity, normally based in the Office of the Police Commissioner, to support strategic planning. While U5, U35, and some UN police officers have technical expertise in military and police planning, many have limited experience working alongside civilian colleagues as part of multi-dimensional UN efforts focused on protection of civilians rather than offensive operations.

Without strong processes and structures in place to lead on strategic and integrated planning, each mission section is left to carry out its activities in a silo.

Although peacekeeping missions are civilian-led operations, personnel within the civilian components and leadership structure of missions are rarely trained as planners. Nor do they have the same depth of experience or culture of strategic and operational planning that exist within most militaries and in the Force components of peacekeeping operations. Since at least 2009, the lack of civilian planners in UN peacekeeping missions and at UN headquarters has been identified as a critical gap in effective peacekeeping.⁶ Ten years later, the gap still exists.

Two integrated mechanisms that enable the coordination of mission operations and planning are the Joint Operations Center (JOC) and Strategic Planning Unit (SPU). The JOC is structured as 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.”⁷ JOCs usually comprise a combination of uniformed and civilian staff dedicated to receiving and integrating reporting from all the different sections of a mission, holding weekly information-sharing meetings, and leading contingency planning. JOCs also lead on crisis

management within missions and coordinate crisis response. Humanitarian and development actors are sometimes invited to JOC-led information sharing forums.

However, JOCs are not mandated to act as a strategic planning body. Because their focus is on situational awareness, information sharing, and coordination, JOC-led weekly meetings usually focus on more immediate threats and actions that will take place over a period of weeks rather than months. Some JOCs have resisted branching into the area of joint planning as it falls outside of the role they are tasked with in UN policies and directives. Other JOCs have increasingly tried to fill the planning gap by managing working groups where peacekeeping personnel across all sections can discuss or develop strategies, policies, and plans. Yet, even where JOCs lead working group sessions that seek to facilitate planning they do not necessarily draw a consistent or high-level group of actors that are empowered by Mission leadership to make decisions.⁸

Without strong processes and structures in place to lead on strategic and integrated planning, each mission section is left to carry out its activities in a silo. The absence of overarching political and protection of civilians strategies makes it difficult for personnel to link their activities in a coherent way that supports achieving mandated tasks. In the best case, siloed activities can be meaningful, but have less impact than if the varied expertise and activities of different sections were used to reinforce each other. In the worst case, sections can communicate different and confused messages to external stakeholders or the action of one section can undermine the activities of another.⁹

In Mali, integrated planning in the past has been particularly challenging, both within MINUSMA and between MINUSMA and UN agencies. Proximity matters for integration. While now housed in the same compound, until recently, the civilian and military components of MINUSMA in Bamako were located in separate bases in different sections of the capital. Significant time was required to

travel between the two bases, which undermined regular communication, coordination, and planning. Moreover, while MINUSMA does not have a counter-terrorism mandate, it is operating in an environment where violent extremist groups directly target MINUSMA bases, personnel, and contractors. Therefore, close coordination or cooperation with MINUSMA can present more threats than benefits to humanitarian agencies if this interaction is not well managed.

III. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT ON PAPER AND IN PRACTICE

Unlike the JOC, the SPU is directed to fulfill a much-needed strategic planning role.¹⁰ The work of SPU personnel comprises a range of activities that include ensuring a comprehensive policy framework is in place, managing strategic planning processes, advising mission leadership teams—including the office of the Chief of Staff—to help them make informed decisions, tracking implementation of reform agendas, coordinating budgeting and resource allocation processes, and leading on outcome and impact measurement. In many peacekeeping missions, this vast range of vital mission activities is relegated to only one or two individuals.

SPU officials are often overstretched and cannot dedicate their full attention to any one of their assigned roles. In interviews conducted by CIVIC in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan in 2018, peacekeeping officials observed that a significant amount of SPU attention is focused on constructing annual budgets and tracking mission activities to report against that budget through an established UN process referred to as Results-Based Budgeting. Because the capacity of SPU staff is so limited, this leaves little time for them to lead on strategic and integrated medium and long-term planning.¹¹ For example, one military peacekeeping official in South Sudan said the SPU, “deals with plans and budgets, but no one is looking out 12 or 18 months to the key stepping stones we need in our lines of effort. So, we are absolutely reactive instead of proactive.”¹²

In addition to the wide range of tasks already included in SPU work plans, SPU officials will soon be responsible for overseeing a new Comprehensive Performance Assessment System (CPAS) for missions. The goals of the CPAS initiative, which many Member States advocated for, are to ensure operational plans are integrated and grounded in local context analysis and allow peacekeeping missions to better assess the impact of their activities and operations in terms of their mandated tasks and goals.

MINUSMA’s approach to improving integration and coordination across Mission sections has involved increasing the size and skillset of the SPU

Currently, missions focus primarily on reporting activities rather than impact. CPAS is a promising initiative that could generate vital data for understanding the contribution a peacekeeping operation makes to peace, security, and the protection of civilians. However, its implementation will place an additional burden on already stretched SPUs unless the existing reporting requirements on SPUs are reduced or SPU staffing in missions is reinforced.

MINUSMA has experienced similar capacity challenges to those highlighted by peacekeepers in South Sudan and DRC. MINUSMA’s approach to improving integration and coordination across Mission sections has involved increasing the size and skillset of the SPU and empowering it to engage in whole-of-mission planning with POC advisors, military, and police counterparts.

IV. STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PLANNING IN MINUSMA

Over the past 12 months, MINUSMA has expanded its SPU team by reorganizing existing resources and budgeting for and hiring additional Strategic Planning Officers. The decision to reinforce the capacity of the SPU was driven by the Security Council's emphasis on enhanced strategic planning in MINUSMA's 2017 and 2018 mandate language and by recognition within the Mission of this need. Stakeholders who spoke with CIVIC about the situation before the expansion of the SPU during our research trips to Mali in July 2017, May 2018, and September 2018, identified many of the same challenges to strategic planning that have affected other missions. MINUSMA personnel observed that, before the expansion of the SPU, Mission officials were working and planning in silos and communicating conflicting messages to external actors.¹³ They also noted that most of the

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- MINUSMA Civilian Official

SPU's capacity was absorbed by budgeting and reporting against the budget.¹⁴ While the Mission had some strategies in place and was in the process of drafting additional strategies to achieve mandated goals, stakeholders expressed concerns that the strategies were not yet sufficiently coordinated or integrated.¹⁵ Nor were these strategies always adequately based on analysis of violent incidents and threats.¹⁶

MINUSMA officials also felt that there was a need to reinforce strategic planning to ensure efficient and effective use of their resources. When MINUSMA was originally deployed, its mandate focused primarily on providing support

to implement the political agreement between the Malian government and armed groups in the north of the country. Since 2015, inter-communal violence has spread throughout the center of the country.¹⁷ Without any significant increase in resources, MINUSMA has had to grapple with how it can protect civilians and secure its own personnel in the center of the country without compromising its political role and operations in the north. MINUSMA's primary strategic priority remains support to implementation of the peace agreement in the North. However, when its mandate was renewed in June 2019, the Security Council added a second strategic priority task that calls on MINUSMA to implement, “a comprehensive politically-led Malian strategy to protect civilians, reduce intercommunal [sic] violence, and re-establish State authority,” in Central Mali.¹⁸

Speaking about the constrained budget in 2018, one MINUSMA civilian official said, “We cannot afford to just do things for the sake of doing them, but [need to] ask, how does this contribute to the political strategy or the plan for the Center?”¹⁹ While stretched Mission resources and pressure from the Security Council for concrete, demonstrable progress presented challenges for the Mission,²⁰ they have also created urgency around improving strategic planning.²¹ A MINUSMA military official told CIVIC that the expanded SPU “really helped with resource prioritization, especially with the current budgetary constraints.”²²

The SPU expansion included hiring a civilian budget and finance officer as well as fully embedding one military planning officer and one police planner in the SPU. At the time of CIVIC's research in May 2019, the SPU comprised four civilian officials, one military official, and one police official. In July, Member States approved the 2019-2020 budget for MINUSMA, including one additional SPU position that will focus on implementing the CPAS initiative.

Since the SPU was gradually expanded, it has had the capacity to begin strengthening strategic planning and ensuring that planning is integrated

across the civilian, military, and police components of the Mission. When CIVIC conducted research in October 2018, the SPU had already begun to make progress creating new forums for integrated strategic planning. In October, Mission personnel told CIVIC that they were hopeful the expanded SPU would allow MINUSMA to use its resources more efficiently and in service of overall Mission objectives and priorities, rather than individual sections. Confusion on who has tasking authority over assets can be a problem for civilian, police, and military personnel alike. Even where tasking authority is clear, integrated planning can help ensure tasking decisions are a consultative process and reflect the overall strategic priorities of the Mission.²³

Several military officials demonstrated this potential through the example of MINUSMA's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) equipment. “Civilian pillars don't understand what they can and can't do with these assets and how they request and how to use them for Mission effects, not just Force effects,” noted one MINUSMA military official.²⁴ Peacekeepers noted that the ISR assets were primarily being deployed based on Force analysis and planning, rather than in consultation with civilian sections, based on their needs.²⁵

MINUSMA officials also observed that the expanded SPU and joint planning could help the Mission ensure its footprint of bases is aligned with mission-wide strategic objectives, not only military objectives and planning.²⁶ “We need a Mission footprint, not a Force footprint,” concluded a MINUSMA military official.²⁷ Some of these expectations were fulfilled in October 2018 when the SPU led a comprehensive review of the Mission's footprint.

Building on the work of the Mission's POC advisors and the civilian head of the Mopti field office, in December 2018, the expanded SPU began supporting the implementation of an existing, long-term strategy for MINUSMA's activities in the Center. Then, in 2019, when the Mission decided to launch an operational response to escalating attacks against civilians in Mopti and Segou, the

SPU played a key role in that response. The unit worked alongside MINUSMA's headquarters and field-based POC advisors, military leadership, and the head of the Mopti field office to ensure that the response was integrated and included coordinated activities across all three tiers of protection.²⁸ Peacekeeping troops conducted operations to improve security while also facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel to carry out activities and engage in dialogue with community members. MINUSMA's initial operation in the Center, referred to as Operation Folon I, was also coordinated with government officials.

“Strategic planning is key to get the protection of civilians as a guiding principle in all planned activities”

- MINUSMA Civilian Official

Reflecting on Operation Folon I, many MINUSMA officials felt that the operation helped deter potential attacks on civilians and improve security, at least in the villages where the Mission was able to engage.²⁹ They viewed the operation as an example of how integrated action could be implemented in practice, and felt that the SPU had played a key role in building “a rapport between these [protection] pillars that didn't exist.”³⁰ A MINUSMA civilian official observed that, “strategic planning is key to get the protection of civilians as a guiding principle in all planned activities” and that the expanded SPU's collaboration with POC advisors was vital in this regard.³¹ In particular, MINUSMA personnel stressed that having military and police planning officers in the SPU has greatly improved the ability of the SPU to effectively lead planning on integrated operations like Operation Folon I.³²

Beyond ensuring that operations in one area of the country are integrated and comprehensive, MINUSMA officials told CIVIC that improved strategic and operational planning could have other benefits. For example, it could ensure that

the Mission was adequately prioritizing between the conflicting demands of multiple heads of field offices³³ and better linking field-initiatives with headquarters priorities.³⁴ Improved, whole-of-mission prioritization could then help MINUSMA avoid becoming overstretched and allow them to stagger military, police, and civilian activities in a way more likely to contribute to stability and achieve results than siloed activities.

Finally, MINUSMA officials told CIVIC that the expanded SPU and strengthened joint planning could also help the Mission to better link operations to threats, pre-empt violence, and take steps to prevent its operations from causing unintentional harm or triggering reprisals against the civilian population. “We have seen the same conflict areas at the same times of the year. Shouldn’t we be mapping those?”³⁵ asked one MINUSMA military official. A second peacekeeper explained that threats were often seasonal. He said, “We need to get into a more deliberate strategy. If we know that every November, problems will start, why not have a protect[ion] operation every November?”³⁶ According to MINUSMA officials, better analysis of threats and civilian-led decision-making could also help ensure the Mission considers potential harm from operations and forego operations that pose a higher risk to civilians.³⁷ “We have to look longer into the future...to see what our short-term action means because it could actually be counter-productive,” emphasized one MINUSMA civilian official.³⁸

The expanded SPU can help build a strong link between threat analysis and planning, but improving the Mission’s integrated response to threats will depend heavily on other sections of the Mission as well. For example, threat analysis is not the role of the SPU. This responsibility lies with military officials in the U2 section of the Force, POC advisors, and peacekeepers in a specialized section of missions called the Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC).³⁹ Additionally, many MINUSMA officials who spoke with CIVIC stressed the key role the JOC will need to play in operationalizing integrated response plans.⁴⁰

To make the Mission more responsive to threats, MINUSMA will likely also need to reinforce how these and other sections in the Mission function. The Secretariat has been supporting the in-mission deployment of a database called SAGE for tracking violent incidents. CIVIC’s research across different peacekeeping contexts indicates that further investment in SAGE is needed to improve situational awareness in peacekeeping operations.⁴¹

MINUSMA officials who spoke with CIVIC explained that they hope the expanded SPU and integrated campaigns can also be tools for improving the linkages between peacekeeping activities and the humanitarian and peacebuilding interventions of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and other international non-governmental organizations.⁴² For example, in February 2019, the SPU led the development and finalization of a three-year Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF) for MINUSMA and the UNCT. The ISF identifies a common vision, joint priorities, and areas for more coordinated work between the Mission and UN agencies. Moreover, during Operation Folon I, MINUSMA took steps to communicate its plans with humanitarian actors, shared some information with them, and worked with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to de-conflict the respective activities of humanitarians and peacekeepers.⁴³

In conversations with CIVIC, humanitarian actors emphasized the importance of aligning strategic priorities and threat analysis between the different stakeholders operating in Mali. With numerous organizations launching programs in central Mali to address inter-communal violence, both humanitarian actors and MINUSMA officials emphasized the need for coordination among these actors to prevent international engagement exacerbating tensions between communities.⁴⁴ Several NGO officials felt that MINUSMA could play a constructive role in improving this coordination. “As an NGO working in peacebuilding, there is no coordination on that area. The UN Mission should be in the lead on that, or a part of that. But, as far as I am concerned, that is not happening,” said one

NGO official.⁴⁵ However, humanitarians stressed the importance of maintaining their operational distance from MINUSMA to preserve their neutrality and access.

Several humanitarian actors expressed concerns that MINUSMA operations in the Center pose an unintentional risk to humanitarians and civilians because armed groups increase their use of improvised explosive devices in areas where these operations are launched. Because of this risk and because information-sharing around the operation was not always timely, CIVIC was informed that a number of humanitarian organizations chose to suspend their activities in areas where Operation Folon I was being carried out.⁴⁶ Improved coordination by the expanded SPU at the strategic level could help align the activities of the Mission and humanitarians. This coordination—alongside ongoing engagement by UN OCHA and the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator under the UN integrated leadership—can help ensure peacekeepers and humanitarians are reinforcing each other’s efforts, without directly linking the activities of these stakeholders during operations.⁴⁷

V. CONCLUSION

CIVIC conducted its research for this issue brief in October 2018 and May 2019. In June 2019, MINUSMA’s mandate was renewed and in July 2019, a new budget was approved for the Mission. As previously noted, the status and importance of protection of civilians was elevated in MINUSMA’s new mandate.⁴⁸ This adjustment to the mandate was much needed in light of escalating violence against civilians in the Center over the past several years. However, the new mandate will place further strain on resources as MINUSMA attempts to continue supporting implementation of the peace agreement in the North while reinforcing its presence and activities in the Center. Despite repeated calls by the Secretary General to match mandates with adequate resources,⁴⁹ the UN General Assembly (UNGA) approved a 2019-2020 operating budget for MINUSMA that is \$11,320,900 less than the Secretary General’s

budget request, and \$7,600,000 less than the expert Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the General Assembly (ACABQ) recommended the Mission be allocated. These reductions come even as the nature of the conflict and MINUSMA’s new mandate require it to increase its activities to protect civilians.

While MINUSMA’s most recent budget request was not fully funded by the UNGA, Member States did approve an additional post for the SPU to implement the CPAS initiative. This is good news for MINUSMA. The Mission’s expanded SPU will be vital in helping it balance the different tasks in its mandate, prioritize activities, and use its resources efficiently on activities that serve strategic aims. Pressure on the Mission to demonstrate its effectiveness and improve efficiency can be constructive and spur innovation. However, reductions and intense budgetary pressure can also undercut Mission performance. As a MINUSMA official stressed, Member States should recognize that “prioritizing means leaving something behind—not doing something.” Member States need to provide appropriate resources for the mandates that they authorize in the Security Council, including by continuing to support the expanded civilian, military, and police staffing of the SPU in MINUSMA going forward.

The expansion of the SPU in MINUSMA has enabled the cell to make progress fulfilling its intended role of leading integrated and strategic planning across Mission sections. Continued support and engagement by MINUSMA’s military and civilian leadership will also be needed to ensure the positive developments identified by CIVIC do not disappear when the military, police, and civilian personnel currently championing them rotate out of the Mission.

1. ACLED Data Export Tool, July 2019, <https://www.acleddata.com/data/>.
2. For additional information about the attacks, see for example, "Le bilan de Sobanou revu à la hausse: <<101 morts au lieu de 35,>> Studio Tamani, July 11, 2019, <https://www.studiotamani.org/index.php/themes/politique/20680-le-bilan-de-sobanou-revu-a-la-hausse-101-morts-au-lieu-de-35>; "Mali massacre victims include at least 24 children-PM," Reuters, June 12, 2019, https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKCN1TD-0QM-OZATP?utm_source=Media+Review+for+June+12%2C+2019&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+June+12%2C+2019&utm_medium=email; "Mali attack: Forces deployed as survivors recall killings," Al Jazeera, June 19, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/mali-attack-forces-deployed-survivors-recall-killings-190619174718672.html?utm_source=Media+Review+for+June+20%2C+2019&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+June+20%2C+2019&utm_medium=email.
3. Some key MINUSMA personnel were also invited to review and comment on this Issue Brief in May 2019.
4. During the September 2018 research trip, CIVIC interviewed 10 MINUSMA civilian officials, 4 MINUSMA military officials, 3 humanitarian actors, and 3 diplomats. In May 2019, CIVIC interviewed 13 MINUSMA civilian officials, 5 MINUSMA military officials, 1 MINUSMA police officer, 2 humanitarian actors, and three diplomats. CIVIC also undertook research trips to Mali in July 2017 and May 2018 during which CIVIC personnel interviewed stakeholders about the context, challenges faced by MINUSMA in implementing its mandate, and the strengths and weaknesses of planning and coordination. These earlier research trips, although not cited directly in this issue brief, have helped to shape CIVIC's understanding of the topics covered here. While this Issue Brief focuses only on the case of MINUSMA in Mali, CIVIC has also undertaken extensive research on analysis, planning, and decision-making in peacekeeping operations, including the role of SPUs, in Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan.
5. In MINUSMA, the joint leadership structure includes a Special Representative for the Secretary-General (SRSG) ultimately responsible for all UN peacekeeping and Country Team operations and a Deputy SRSG, Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator empowered to oversee UN humanitarian and development activities in a country. For background and analysis on the integrated and comprehensive approaches outlined for peacekeeping operations and UN agencies, see for example, Cedric de Coning, *The United Nations and the Comprehensive Approach*, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2008. Peacekeeping mission mandates often call for an integrated approach and this approach is highlighted in UN and humanitarian resolutions and policy documents such as, UN Security Council, Resolution 1894, 2009, Un Doc. S/RES/1894, para. 28; Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), *Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*, 2016.
6. UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks, and Remaining Challenges*, 2009, pp 5-10.
7. UN DPKO, Policy Directive: Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres, July 1, 2006.
8. Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC), *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, November 26, 2018.
9. CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection*, 2018.
10. While the term "strategic planning" is sometimes used to refer to planning that happens at the level of the Security Council, Secretary-General, and UN Secretariat in New York, peacekeeping missions often consider strategic planning anything led at the level of the mission headquarters and leadership that includes coordinated activities across multiple sections and spanning a time period from several months to one year in the future. When this Issue Brief uses the phrase "strategic planning" it is meant to convey this second meaning.

11. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #6, Goma, February 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #37, Kinshasa, February 2018; CIVIC interview with UNMISS military official, #5, Juba, April 2018; CIVIC interview with UNMISS civilian official, #58, Juba, April 2018; CIVIC interview with UNMISS military official, #68, Juba, May 2018, CIVIC interview with UNMISS military official, #90, Juba, May 2018.
12. CIVIC interview with UNMISS military official, #68, Juba, May 2018.
13. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #7, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #13, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #17, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.
14. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #10, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.
15. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #5, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #11, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #13, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #14, Bamako, September 2018.
16. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #1, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #5, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with diplomat, #16, Bamako, September 2018.
17. See for example, International Crisis Group, *Central Mali: An Uprising in the Making?*, July 6, 2016; Morgan Le Cam, "Au Mali, avec les rescapés du massacre d'Ogossago," *Le Monde*, April 8, 2019, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2019/04/08/au-mali-avec-les-rescapes-du-massacre-d-ogossago_5447557_3212.html
18. UNSC, Resolution 2480, UN doc. S/RES/2480 (2019), para 20.
19. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018.
20. Security Council Report, *January 2019 Monthly Forecast: Mali*, December 27, 2018, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2019-01/mali-2.php>.
21. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #13, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.
22. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #26, Bamako, May 2019.
23. Tasking authority on assets is clarified in the memorandums of understanding (MOUs) negotiated between the Secretariat and Member States who are providing the assets. Over the past several years, the Secretariat has been working to create and revise guidance on tasking authority to help support shared and effective use of mission assets.
24. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.
25. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #30, Bamako, May 2019.
26. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #36, Bamako, May 2019.
27. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.

28. The former UN DPKO/Department of Field Support (DFS) Policy on POC outlines three tiers in the operational concept of POC. These are: protection through dialogue and engagement, provision of physical protection, and establishment of a protective environment. UN DPKO/DFS, *The Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping*, April 1, 2015, para. 30.
29. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #22, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #23, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #29, Bamako, May 2019.
30. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #40, Bamako, May 2019.
31. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #22, Bamako, May 2019.
32. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #25, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #26, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #33, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #37, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #40, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #43, Bamako, May 2019.
33. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #10, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018.
34. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018.
35. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018.
36. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018.
37. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #7, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #8, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018.
38. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #32, Bamako, May 2019.
39. JMACs are the section within peacekeeping operations responsible for generating integrated analysis for the senior management of peacekeeping missions to support planning, decision-making, and implementation of mission mandates. A 2006 policy directive from the then Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) outlines their role. UN DPKO, *Policy Directive: Joint Operations Centres and Joint Mission Analysis Centres*, July 1, 2006.
40. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #21, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #26, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #32, Bamako, May 2019.
41. CIVIC, *Data-Driven Protection*.
42. CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor #11, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #19, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #20, Bamako, September 2018.
43. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #25, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #26, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #33, Bamako, May 2019.
44. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #6, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #6, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #12, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #12, Bamako, September 2018; CIVIC interview with MINUSMA civilian official, #22, Bamako, May 2019.
45. CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #12, Bamako, September 2018.
46. CIVIC interview with MINUSMA military official, #26, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #33, Bamako, May 2019; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #39, Bamako, May 2019.
47. Under the UN integrated leadership structure, where both peacekeeping operations and UN agencies are deployed alongside each other, the Special Representative for the Secretary-General (SRSG) is ultimately

responsible for all UN peacekeeping and UN Country Team operations. A Deputy SRSG, Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator is empowered to oversee UN humanitarian and development activities in the country.

48. UNSC, Resolution 2480, UN doc. S/RES/2480 (2019), para 20.

49. See for example, António Guterres, "Remarks to Security Council High-Level Debate on Collective Action to Improve UN Peacekeeping Operations," March 28, 2019, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2018-03-28/collective-action-improve-un-peacekeeping-operations-remarks>.

ABOUT CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT (CIVIC)

Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) works to improve protection for civilians caught in conflicts around the world. We work with armed actors and civilians in conflict to develop and implement solutions to prevent, mitigate, and respond to civilian harm. We bring the voices of civilians themselves to those making decisions affecting their lives.

CIVIC's vision is for a future where parties involved in conflicts recognize the dignity and rights of civilians, prevent harm, protect civilians caught in conflict, and amend harm. To accomplish this, we assess the causes of civilian harm in particular conflicts, craft creative solutions to address that harm, and engage with civilians, governments, militaries, and international and regional institutions to implement these solutions.

We measure our success in the short term by the adoption of new policies and practices that lead to the improved wellbeing of civilians caught in a conflict. In the long term, our goal is to create a new global mindset around robust civilian protection and harm response.

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