

STRENGTHENED EARLY WARNING IN UN PEACEKEEPING FIELD OFFICES: Innovations in MINUSCA and MONUSCO

ABOUT CIVIC'S UN PROGRAM

CIVIC's UN Program works with Member States to ensure that UN bodies and the UN Secretariat prioritize the protection of civilians in their responses to armed conflict. Drawing on CIVIC's direct engagement with communities under threat and with armed actors in diverse contexts, we raise awareness of protection concerns and offer pragmatic, evidence-based recommendations to improve UN policy and practice.

CIVIC's peacekeeping work is based on the theory that UN peacekeeping reform should be civilian focused and must occur at the local, national, and international levels to be sustained. To achieve this objective, CIVIC conducts field-based research and strategic advocacy in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, and South Sudan, as well as at UN Headquarters in New York and in UN Member State capitals. At the local level, CIVIC documents the perspectives of communities under threat, local authorities, armed actors, humanitarians, and the peacekeeping personnel carrying out daily activities to protect civilians. At the national level, CIVIC engages with peacekeeping operations' headquarters, national civil society organizations, UN agencies, international NGOs, embassies, and host-state government representatives. Through this work, we capture and share good practices and lessons learned within and between peacekeeping mission contexts. CIVIC also translates what it learns at the local and national levels into recommendations that policy and decision makers—including UN Secretariat officials, UN Member States, and civil society—can take forward in multilateral forums.

In addition, CIVIC's UN Program leads in-depth research and strategic advocacy on key thematic priorities for the protection of civilians (POC), including Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), the climate–security nexus, national implementation of International Humanitarian Law and national POC policies, Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs), localization of POC action and community engagement, and addressing mis- and dis-information.

I. OVERVIEW

In the conflict-affected contexts where UN peacekeeping missions with Protection of Civilians (POC) mandates are deployed, civilians often contend with severe, complex, and rapidly evolving threats to their physical security rooted in unresolved legacies of violence. Several peacekeeping missions with POC mandates have been developing better tools in the form of Early Warning and Rapid Response (EW/RR) systems¹ to quickly understand the protection threats to civilians, decide how best to intervene, and rapidly set potentially life-saving responses in motion. This issue brief looks at bottom-up innovations at the local level in peacekeeping missions that can help improve EW/RR through better coordination of civilian and uniformed (military and police) peacekeepers.

Slow responses to protection threats can leave civilians exposed to significant harm in peacekeeping contexts where violence against civilians is rampant, including in the form of indiscriminate and extrajudicial killings, torture, and sexual violence. In the year leading up to June 2022, UN Secretary-General reports on the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) reported 562 conflict-related civilian deaths and over 1,000 cases of violations or abuses of human rights.² In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), nearly 1,000 civilians were killed in 2022 in instances of violence against civilians in North Kivu alone, while over 1,100 were killed in North Kivu in 2023.³ The human toll of violence against civilians in contexts where UN peacekeeping operations are deployed underscores the difficulty of mitigating the sources of this violence amid complex factors that include the fragmentation of armed actors and the regionalization of conflicts, as well as the urgency of redoubling efforts to protect civilians as a shared priority of the UN and international community.

Many protection threats to civilians arise in remote areas far from Mission Headquarters (MHQ). Peacekeeping Field Offices thus coordinate the collection of information about these threats through the mission's civilian, police, and military components using a range of capacities and mechanisms, including community liaison assistants (CLAs), community alert networks (CANs), local protection committees, and local peace and reconciliation committees. Field Offices also coordinate mission activities and operations intended to address protection threats, such as the good offices role of the Head of Office (HoO) and the patrols or Quick Reaction Forces of the military component. However, UN peacekeeping faces a serious gap in implementing effective EW/RR at the Field Office level in part because of specific factors that constrain Field Offices from quickly sharing information across components to facilitate comprehensive and coordinated mission responses to protection threats. This issue brief will address some of these factors, as such challenges can lead to consequential impacts for vulnerable civilians who are most at risk, including women and children. Furthermore, inaction and late reactions by peacekeeping missions have been primary criticisms levied against missions by communities under threat of violence.⁴

Between 2019 and 2020, two Field Offices in different missions independently developed new approaches to facilitate more integrated and rapid information sharing—a key element of processing early warnings of protection threats that enables rapid responses and can save lives. Both initiatives were bottom-up developments that sought to improve the flow of critical information within Field Offices given the structural challenges they face. In the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the Bouar Field Office piloted a new Equateur Region Communications and Operations (ERCO) Centre⁵ to improve integration and coordination among Field Office sections. In the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the Beni Field Office created the Integrated Operations & Coordination Hub (Beni Hub) to consolidate and disseminate early warnings of protection threats and minimize response times.

This issue brief is based on field research conducted in 2022 in four locations and updated remotely in 2023 and 2024: Bangui and Bouar in the CAR, and Goma and Beni in the DRC. Twenty-eight interviews were conducted in each country, for a total of 56 interviews with civilian, military, and police peacekeeping personnel, along

with some representatives of civil society organizations. Daniel Levine-Spound, CIVIC's former Peacekeeping Researcher for the DRC and South Sudan, conducted the interviews in the DRC. Dixon Quenensse, Senior Program Manager of CIVIC's UN Program, contributed substantively to the interviews conducted in the CAR. Citations are provided for all interviews that were directly consulted in the drafting of this paper. A draft was shared with key stakeholders for review before publication.

After describing the basic mission- and field-level EW/RR architecture and persistent challenges to information sharing, joint analysis, and integrated decision-making, this issue brief will introduce the ERCO and the Beni Hub along with some of the common challenges both mechanisms face. Then, the brief will present research findings and analysis of the demonstrated positive impacts of these mechanisms, including improvements in integration for field-level EW/RR. These insights can be instructive for other peace operations. Finally, the issue brief synthesizes several significant findings from the research that can help guide policymakers at UN Headquarters and in peacekeeping missions. In terms of scope, this publication does not address many wider dynamics and issues affecting early warning and rapid response. For example, a critical step in the EW/RR chain is collecting accurate, timely information on threats to civilians, mainly from affected communities. However, an exploration of community engagement in the field, including community alert networks and tools, was outside the scope of this research. Similarly, while rapid and effective responses to early warnings are critical to deliver interventions that prevent harm to civilians, the issue of rapid response is contingent on a range of factors that this issue brief does not address.⁶

II. CHALLENGES TO PEACEKEEPING EW/RR AT THE FIELD LEVEL

Mission EW/RR systems

Peacekeeping EW/RR systems are designed to allow missions to gather information regarding emerging or imminent threats of violence against civilians and take appropriate and timely actions to prevent or mitigate these threats. Missions have been developing and refining EW/RR systems for over a decade.⁷ These systems are concentrated in MHQ, where much of the human and technological capacity exists. EW/RR uses a wide range of peacekeeping structures, from protection-

oriented mechanisms to all mission tools for integrated analysis, planning, and decision-making. The concept and implementation of EW/RR varies across peacekeeping missions and components, however, which contributes to some duplication of efforts and disconnects among actors.⁸

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A mission's Joint Operations Center (JOC) is a critical structure for functioning EW/RR systems.⁹ In MINUSCA, for example, the JOC facilitates decision-making by providing a platform for senior Mission leadership to assess information and strategize responses to emerging threats, including through a weekly synchronization meeting and a matrix of early warnings maintained on a Word document that is updated daily.¹⁰ Although the Mission uses UNITE-Aware,¹¹ into which the JOC inputs the majority of incidents,¹² the early warning matrix is maintained separately from UNITE-Aware.¹³ MONUSCO's JOC also maintains a matrix of protection incidents, although these are all inputted into SAGE, MONUSCO's situational awareness platform. An audit of MINUSCA by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) found that despite facilitating regular Operational Coordination Team meetings, neither the JOC nor any other Mission component was responsible for tracking and monitoring the implementation of agreed action points.¹⁴ Two interviewees reflected this finding, telling CIVIC that the JOC's coordination role was not an active one.¹⁵

Missions also have dedicated mechanisms among mission and non-mission stakeholders for longer-term analysis and coordinated decision-making on evolving protection threats. MONUSCO and MINUSCA have standing integrated mechanisms at MHQ level, including

the Protection Working Group (PWG)¹⁶ and the Senior Management Group for Protection (SMG-P).¹⁷ Joint Mission Analysis Centres (JMACs) contribute medium- to long-term protection threat analysis, which can help direct early action to prevent harm to civilians.¹⁸ Moreover, since CIVIC's research was completed, MINUSCA reactivated a peacekeeping intelligence and early warning coordination mechanism with weekly meetings chaired by the Chief JMAC.¹⁹

Field-level EW/RR systems and their challenges

Past CIVIC research found that even though missions' early warning mechanisms often cover large parts of the host country, "the process of receiving and responding to alerts must be localized and rooted in the conflict dynamics of a particular area."²⁰ Similarly, present research findings underscore that, in order to be rapid and effective, responses to evolving threats to civilians require quick verification, coordination, and decision-making at the local level where threats arise.²¹

Therefore, Field Offices should play a vital role in the EW/RR system beyond the MHQ-level mechanisms and processes discussed above. In MINUSCA and MONUSCO, each Field Office has a field JOC (F/JOC) that collects information from various Mission sources. The F/JOC works to verify the information and support the Head of Office in managing a response.²² The Missions' JMACs also have focal points in several Field Offices who work closely with and advise the Head of Office.²³ In addition, the Missions convene field-level formats of the Senior Management Group on Protection, which meets every two weeks to discuss, analyze, and make decisions regarding protection threats in specific localities. In MONUSCO, this is known as the Senior Management Group on Protection – Provincial, or SMGPP, and includes all the key components of the Mission as well as UN agencies with a protection mandate.²⁴

In MINUSCA, although some officials thought the existing EW/RR architecture consisting of the JOC, F/JOCs, and early warning focal points was functioning adequately,²⁵ most of the capacity and mechanisms for EW/RR at the time of CIVIC's research were concentrated at the level of Mission Headquarters (MHQ) or Force Headquarters (FHQ). One official assigned to the JOC pointed to the challenge of various sections in the same Field Office sending different information to their respective Headquarters counterparts, noting the need for more integrated information sharing and coordination at the



Credit : Hugh Kinsella

18 October 2021: Aerial view of the town of Oicha, Beni Territory, North Kivu

field level.²⁶ CIVIC's research found that the Bouar Field Office grappled with integration challenges across civilian and military components, hindering the effective flow of information about early warnings or rapidly developing protection incidents.²⁷ Two OIOS audits from 2020 and 2021 pointed to the same challenge.²⁸

Gathering integrated information on protection threats across multiple actors at the Field Office level is a common challenge for peacekeeping missions. In the DRC, CIVIC's research in 2018 demonstrated MONUSCO's difficulties in this regard,²⁹ and research findings from interviews conducted in 2022 suggest these challenges remained valid even with the F/JOC systems in place.³⁰ Capacity constraints in Field Offices contributed to these shortcomings. For example, before the Beni Hub was created, the Beni Field Office did not have a duty officer at night (when many alerts originated), meaning that the dissemination of alerts was limited.³¹

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Integration and coordination challenges also affect responses to evolving protection threats. Analyzing systemic issues facing UN peacekeeping, a 2020 Office for Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership (OPSP) note called attention to the need for stronger integrated units in Field Offices to support coordinated activities under the direction of the Head of Office.³² In the DRC, both uniformed and civilian officials pointed to serious challenges of cross-component cooperation in responding to early warnings and planning operations.³³ While the SMGPP fills an important role in sharing protection information and coordinating analysis across

components and with other protection actors—as well as in tracking the implementation of action points—it does not serve the purpose of coordinating responses on a daily basis.³⁴ According to one official CIVIC interviewed, the pre-Hub early warning system in Beni was not set up to integrate information across sources or to centralize alerts.³⁵

Components and sections at the Field Office level often operate in silos, leading to fragmented responses and limited collaboration in addressing POC challenges.

In the CAR, MINUSCA officials explained to CIVIC that components and sections at the Field Office level often operate in silos, leading to fragmented responses and limited collaboration in addressing POC challenges.³⁶ An OIOS audit raised consequential coordination issues, citing a particular case in which the military forcefully removed an armed group's blockade without consulting the Head of Office, who had been working with local representatives to improve the relationship with the armed group.³⁷ One UN official cited rapidly evolving situations that required coordinated responses but were instead dealt with in siloes, with Mission personnel reporting to MHQ but not with colleagues in the Field Office.³⁸ Likewise, military and civilian officials told CIVIC that mandate delivery would be improved and responses to protection threats would be faster if there were greater decentralization and integration at the field level.³⁹

Finally, beyond information sharing and operational challenges, Field Offices have been limited in their ability to track and evaluate responses to protection incidents, which hampers the monitoring of implementation and learning. Multiple MONUSCO interviewees reported that the primary tool used to compile alerts, the F/JOC's protection matrix, was inadequate for tracking and assessing responses to early warnings.⁴⁰ The lack of integrated monitoring of responses to alerts had deadly consequences, according to one official. They told CIVIC that the disconnect between components led to inaction and prevented accountability in instances where the Mission did not respond.⁴¹

III. NEW FIELD OFFICE MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVED COORDINATION

The Equateur Region Communication and Operations Centre

After Field Office leadership in Bouar, CAR, identified shortcomings in whole-of-Mission coordination at the field level, they developed the concept for a Bouar Communication and Operations Centre (BoCO) in July 2019.⁴² Subsequently, as a result of a restructuring of MINUSCA's Field Offices, the BoCO concept was intended to evolve into the Equateur Region Communication and Operations Centre (ERCO) in 2023. At the time of CIVIC's interviews, the ERCO was still being developed and remained at the conceptual stage rather than being operational.⁴³

The ERCO concept entails three main elements: a physical facility at the Bouar Field Office site to co-locate personnel from integrated units as well as some representatives of civilian sections and uniformed components; improved coordinated processes for sharing and analyzing information; and a technical platform called the Field Operations Management Application, or FOMA, to consolidate information on incidents in real time to facilitate timely decisions and track responses.⁴⁴ The initiative was thus designed to enhance integration among different components at the Field Office level both by physically co-locating personnel and by increasing the degree of coordination.⁴⁵ The expected benefits of the ERCO included smoother coordination of stakeholders in the Field Office, faster communication and command and control to monitor operations, a centralized location for regular and specialized F/JOC meetings, and a standing integrated platform for crisis management.⁴⁶ It should be noted that the ERCO is not designed to focus solely on supporting the implementation of MINUSCA's POC mandate. Many of the incident types that trigger an ERCO report are related to protection of civilians, but they also include accidents or threats to the Mission, for example.⁴⁷

In December 2020, the ERCO (then the BoCO) was reviewed by an OIOS audit that recommended MINUSCA consider implementing similar mechanisms in other Field Offices.⁴⁸ In 2022 and 2023, officials shared with CIVIC that the ERCO was serving as a pilot project for all Field Offices to replicate, pending the development of an SOP.⁴⁹

The Beni Integrated Operations & Coordination Hub

The establishment of the Beni Hub stemmed from an evaluation conducted in response to MONUSCO's struggles to respond to widespread protection incidents in Beni territory in late 2019. The evaluation, completed in January 2020,⁵⁰ highlighted weaknesses in MONUSCO's protection efforts, particularly the need for better management of early alerts of protection threats and enhanced coordination in responding so as to reduce civilian casualties.⁵¹ Operationalized in 2021, the Hub is composed of the F/JOC and representatives of Civil Affairs,⁵² the Joint Human Rights Office, the Force, and UNPOL. It serves as a centralized platform for consolidating early warnings and fostering collaboration across civilian and uniformed components.⁵³ This arrangement is intended to facilitate the rapid transmission of alerts to improve situational awareness and speed up responses.

The Beni Hub was expanded in May 2021 to include more staff. The Hub developed communications tools—including a dedicated Hub duty phone and WhatsApp and Signal groups—to use alongside preexisting tools like email-based reporting.⁵⁴ During CIVIC's interviews, MONUSCO was piloting an Early Warning App developed by the UN Secretariat and MINUSMA, but MONUSCO shared that the App was not currently in use as of this publication.⁵⁵ According to one interviewee, the flow of information was more regularly directed through the Hub and its associated communication tools after the Hub's expansion and through improved awareness of its functions.⁵⁶

The ERCO and Beni Hub both serve to co-locate and improve coordination among the sections that are central to processing early warnings. Still, significant differences between the ERCO and the Beni Hub should be noted. The latter is specifically designed to play a role in the early warning and rapid response system in Beni, but it is not designed as a platform for decision-making.⁵⁷ By contrast, the ERCO is not explicitly an EW/RR tool but rather a cross-component coordination tool for information sharing and operational coordination on a range of daily issues and types of acute crises, including those related to protection threats.

Common challenges

While not identical in their intended function and structure, the ERCO and Beni Hub face some common challenges. Finding an adequate number of staff with the right skills is a significant challenge in Field Offices.

One former MINUSCA HoO told CIVIC, “When you're a Head of Office, you feel like you have a skinny structure around you. You are very much alone.”⁵⁸ Indeed, a 2021 OIOS audit of MINUSCA's JOC identified serious staffing challenges in both the MHQ JOC and F/JOCs, including both vacancies and limitations of experience and skills.⁵⁹ One police official suggested that UNPOL may need more human resources to continue its current work in Bouar while dedicating capacity to the ERCO.⁶⁰

MONUSCO officials agreed that the lack of capacity and the right skill sets—including language skills—was a serious impediment to the full functioning of the Hub.⁶¹ The staff assigned to the Hub also retain their responsibilities for substantive or operational work outside the Hub, which two officials identified as diminishing the capacity available to dedicate to Hub functions.⁶² At the time of CIVIC's interviews, another two officials also expressed concern that there remained a lack of understanding of the Hub and Mission personnel's respective roles.⁶³

When it comes to protecting civilians from imminent threats in both the CAR and the DRC, many interlocutors pointed to the significant challenge of mobilizing timely and effective Mission responses to early warnings and alerts. The most serious impediment is not early warning, communication, or integration, but the Mission's failure to respond in many circumstances. There are various reasons for these failures, ranging from inadequate responses by the national security forces and inaction by contingents to environmental factors like impassable roads.⁶⁴ Such failures can undermine the population's faith in a mission, which can, in turn, contribute to serious operational or political challenges to mandate implementation.⁶⁵

Finally, while it was not a focus of CIVIC's interviews, it is notable that these developments in EW/RR are taking place ahead of the upcoming withdrawal of MONUSCO and a wider context of UN peacekeeping missions planning for some form of transition. Among the numerous challenges missions face in these periods—and central to the UN's POC legacy in the host country—is the sustainability of early warning mechanisms. If they are to transition to being locally and nationally led, the UN needs to engage host governments to maintain or replicate early warning tools like CANs, local protection committees, and local peace and reconciliation committees. These tools could continue helping communities address protection threats after peacekeepers depart.⁶⁶ Significantly, such efforts may require the support of other protection actors in the interim, as well as sufficient resourcing where possible and in areas of greatest vulnerability.

IV. IMPROVING INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION FOR EW/RR

While the ERCO and Beni Hub cannot fully address the above challenges, they do offer models for improving integration and coordination at the Field Office level, which can strengthen early warning and even improve response times in consequential ways. Specifically, important lessons can be learned from efforts to improve the flow of accurate information, increase coordinated analysis and decision-making, and track and assess mission responses.

Information collection, verification, and processing

CIVIC's research showed that the Beni Hub clearly improved the flow of information in the Field Office. Creating the Hub itself did not automatically solve information-sharing challenges, however. Rather, these were addressed through several steps. First, components needed to staff the Hub fully.⁶⁷ Then, officials assigned to the Hub worked to increase mutual understanding of the Hub's and Force's responsibilities and practices.⁶⁸ At the time of CIVIC's research, Mission officials reported that sections understood the Hub's role as a central channel through which to report timely information.⁶⁹

The Beni Hub clearly improved the flow of information in the Field Office.

Nevertheless, barriers to integration still exist. Sections need to ensure the protection of sensitive information they have collected—particularly, as one interviewee explained, the Joint Human Rights Office.⁷⁰ Also, various sections or components have different methodologies for collecting information, which can cause a misalignment in the Hub's information consolidation and reporting.⁷¹ Still, the Hub has facilitated much more rapid information verification and has provided a platform for sharing JMAC analysis of POC trends and hotspots, which in turn can promote faster responses.⁷²

In Bouar, the ERCO has also created a promising framework for more coordinated and systematic information collection and verification. As part of the ERCO concept, the HoO produced a list of 35 different types of incidents and identified the relevant Mission personnel responsible for

reacting to each incident type. Out of the 35 categories, 30 require predefined actions under the HoO's concept.⁷³ The current process for conveying alerts involves communications technology like email and telephone, which can be slow if personnel are away from their offices or inundated with other tasks.⁷⁴ The ERCO is intended to change the nature of communication among sections through new technology platforms and the co-location of key stakeholders.⁷⁵

The ERCO also presents an opportunity for more systematic and constructive engagement with important actors from the local community during crises.

Integrated analysis and joint decision-making

Beyond simply enhancing the flow of information to the right stakeholders on time, the Beni Hub and ERCO are expected to improve the degree of joint analysis and decision-making in the field. CIVIC's research in the DRC, however, showed mixed opinions on whether the Beni Hub contributed to more integrated analysis, coordination, and decision-making. On the one hand, some Mission personnel stated that while the Hub effectively improves information sharing, it is not designed to directly conduct joint analysis, planning, and decision-making.⁷⁶ On the other hand, several officials felt that by co-locating representatives of civilian and uniformed components the Beni Hub has helped build better working relationships and increased joint analysis.⁷⁷ Two officials also said that an indirect, positive result of the Hub's creation has been greater cooperation between Civil Affairs and the Force, leading to improved relationships and engagement by the military component with local authorities and the population.⁷⁸ The better communication achieved by the Beni Hub did not just speed up the alert process but, in some instances, actually led to improved response times.⁷⁹ Still, the Hub's potential to facilitate more integrated decision-making by field-level leaders should not be overstated. Mission personnel assigned to the Hub do not have the authority to task Mission components, including the Force contingents that may need to respond to an alert.⁸⁰

In the CAR, some Mission personnel were optimistic that the ERCO could improve coordinated decision-making over time.⁸¹ The OIOS audit of the Bouar Field Office, which was conducted very early in the project's lifespan, already found that the ERCO was "effective in improving coordination between functions in the Bouar Field Office ... despite still being under implementation."⁸² One official noted to CIVIC in 2023 that, even at the MHQ level, the physical separation of components presented a tangible challenge to effective coordination.⁸³ Thus, co-location should automatically reduce some barriers to coordination. Moreover, a UN official based in Bouar told CIVIC that the ERCO is not just an "information center" but an "operations center" meant to support collective decision-making and coordinate joint responses. This structure can make Mission actions more integrated and accelerated.⁸⁴ The ERCO also presents an opportunity for more systematic and constructive engagement with important actors from the local community during crises. Indeed, the ERCO concept identifies a wide range of stakeholders who may be engaged on any given incident. A draft list of actors includes nineteen government and civil society stakeholders, including political and religious leaders, women and youth representatives, and security sector actors.⁸⁵ This list, provided to CIVIC in 2022, represents a level of inclusive community engagement that is key to effective POC in practice.

Monitoring and assessing responses

BA crucial part of the EW/RR cycle is tracking and monitoring what actions a mission has taken, analyzing the results, and understanding any lessons learned or ways in which future responses could be improved. In Bouar, the ERCO concept is not explicitly designed to facilitate assessment and evaluation of responses⁸⁶, and at least one interviewee was not sure whether it would facilitate monitoring and analyzing responses⁸⁷. However, if implemented, the proposed technical platform (the FOMA) would serve the purpose of tracking alerts and incidents, including responses⁸⁸.

Despite its successes in improving communication and coordination, the Beni Hub, does not solve the problem of systematically tracking and assessing Mission responses, either. Rather, tracking and assessing Mission responses has been left to individuals taking the initiative to actively follow up with relevant actors.⁸⁹ The Hub receives generic updates on whether a response occurred or not, which can be reflected in SAGE, but these updates come without detailed

information that would inform an assessment of the response and its outcome.⁹⁰ According to one official, CLAs will sometimes report back to the Hub on actions taken by the Force, but these reports differ from what the Force has reported.⁹¹ Two MONUSCO CLAs explained how they send alerts to the Hub and clarify details when Hub personnel ask, but they are not aware of the Mission's response or involved in following up with the affected community regarding the Mission's response.⁹² For its part, the Force maintains its own "alert response" tracking system at HQ level, but this is not shared outside the military component.⁹³

CIVIC found, therefore, that neither mechanism fundamentally altered the level of monitoring and follow-up on Mission responses to early warnings. However, by centralizing information and facilitating communication between Mission components, both the ERCO and the Beni Hub could potentially enable a more thorough analysis of response effectiveness going forward.

V. EMERGING LESSONS

The ERCO and Beni Hub are significant field-level innovations because they decentralize the information processing needed to quickly understand and act on early warnings of protection threats. Based on mission-by-mission assessments of their effectiveness, peacekeeping operations—including and beyond MINUSCA and MONUSCO—should consider rolling these mechanisms out more widely and sharing lessons on them, including as part of missions' POC strategies.

The ERCO and Beni Hub are significant field-level innovations because they decentralize the information processing needed to quickly understand and act on early warnings of protection threats.



Credit : Josh Jorgensen

6 October 2022: A UN Police vehicle providing security for MINUSCA's Mission Headquarters in Bangui, CAR..

Based on the research presented in this issue brief, five initial lessons for the UN and Member States emerge. First, the fact that such similar mechanisms were developed in two different missions indicates the need for more systematic decentralization and integration in multidimensional peacekeeping missions more broadly. Mission leadership and the Secretariat can encourage the strengthening of field-level, context-specific mechanisms that improve information sharing and coordination, and they should prioritize the resources needed to operate effective Field Office early warning systems.

Second, missions deploying these tools may want to consider further strengthening and clarifying their role in wider mission efforts to record and analyze responses to early warnings, both to improve performance and for internal accountability purposes across components. These areas were found to be challenges in both MINUSCA and MONUSCO at both the Headquarters and field levels, as neither the ERCO nor the Beni Hub concepts are currently designed or intended to address this gap.

Third, when a mission is drawing down or exiting the country, it might want to consider how to support building non-mission actors' capacity to adopt some of the important platforms, tools, and relationships among local partners developed or enhanced by field-level EW/RR mechanisms. In this regard, MONUSCO's current efforts to hand over the functioning of various protection instruments, including CANs, can serve as a test case and example.

Fourth, while Field Office mechanisms should be context-sensitive to the mission, country, and region, the UN can help provide some standard tools, like technical platforms or information on lessons learned and best practices—a process that the Secretariat has already initiated. Many tools, like the Early Warning App developed by MINUSMA, the FOMA being designed by MINUSCA, and even the model of an integrated information hub, could be useful for a range of UN and non-UN missions. Applicable to a range of contexts, such tools could enable joined up, conflict-sensitive protection responses by UN agencies and their partners (within their mandates and capacities) after a mission draws down.⁹⁴

Fifth, Member States interested in improving peacekeeping missions' implementation of their protection mandates should ask for more information on these types of mechanisms and what additional resources or capabilities they need. The ERCO and Beni Hub were developed to fill a gap in POC implementation, but the pressure for zero growth in peacekeeping budgets and

drawdowns could risk undermining these innovative tools, as well as potential future ones. More generally, Member States supporting future peace operations, whether UN peacekeeping missions or other types of field missions, could draw lessons from localized innovations that improve the protection of civilians in order to help adapt and operate them in other contexts.

Cover image:

*30 March 2023: Displaced civilians
fetching water in Bulengo Displace-
ment camp, North Kivu Province, DRC*

Credit: Hugh Kinsella.

1. MONUSCO does not use the term “rapid response.” While each mission’s structure and processes are different, MONUSCO’s Early Warning and Response systems are similar to those in missions that use the EW/RR terminology, like MINUSCA and MINUSMA.
2. UN Doc. S/2021/867, UN Doc. S/2022/119, and UN Doc. S/2022/491: Secretary-General’s Reports on the Situation in the Central African Republic. Secretary-General Reports used different reporting methods following this period, so a more recent analysis of trends in civilian fatalities is not possible. However, data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project showed a decrease in civilian fatalities from 2022 to 2023. See: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), www.acleddata.com
3. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), www.acleddata.com
4. For example, in addition to the risks to civilians, another important impact of ineffective responses to early warnings in the eastern DRC has been decreased trust in the Mission, which has contributed to increased anti-MONUSCO sentiment. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #44, eastern DRC, February 2022.
5. At the time, the mechanism was named the Bouar Communication and Operations Centre (BoCO).
6. For CIVIC publications that address these issues, see: <https://civiliansinconflict.org/our-work/where-we-work/peacekeeping/>.
7. Daniel Levine-Spound, *Early Warning and Rapid Response Takes Root in UN Peacekeeping*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, January 2021, 5. <https://civiliansinconflict.org/early-warning-and-rapid-response/>
8. Ibid., 6.
9. Ibid., 14.
10. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #7, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #11, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #15, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #26, Bangui, October 2022.
11. UNITE-Aware is a peacekeeping situational awareness platform and database used to record and report incidents as well as other functions that support operational planning and coordination.
12. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2021/053, para. 23.
13. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #12, Bangui, October 2022. Other MINUSCA operations centers include the Military Operations Center, which is connected to the JOC, the Joint Task Force operations center focused on Bangui, the Security Operations Center run by UN Department of Safety and Security, and the Police Operations Center. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #12, Bangui, October 2022.
14. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2021/053, para. 27.
15. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #12, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023.
16. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #19, Bangui, October 2022.
17. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the civil affairs programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2018/063, para. 27.
18. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #20, Bangui, October 2022. Varying understandings of missions’ early warning Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has led to different perspectives on the relationship between the type of analysis that JMACs undertake and mission EW/RR efforts. For example, one military official assigned to the MINUSCA JMAC held the view that there isn’t a role for the JMAC in early warning, which they considered to be a short-term process compared to the JMAC’s medium-to-long-term perspective (CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #20, Bangui, October 2022). However, the MINUSCA SOP on EW/RR does include a critical (if not central) role for the JMAC in analyzing early warning information and informing a decision on the appropriate response. See, Standard Operating Procedure on Early Warning and Rapid Response, MINUSCA, 2019.
19. The Mission Peacekeeping-Intelligence Coordination Mechanism (MICM) was reactivated following the approval of an action plan to enhance the Mission’s peacekeeping-intelligence and early warning capacity in April 2023. The MICM is chaired by the Chief of Staff under the overall leadership of the SRSg. Its weekly meetings take an integrated approach, with relevant Mission components and sections (JMAC, JOC, UNPOL, Force, POC, CAS, PAD, UNDSS, Human Rights Division, and the Field Coordination Office) as well as United Nations Country Team members (e.g., UNMAS and UNHCR) gathering to discuss specific issues of interest in order to provide analysis for MINUSCA leadership on a regular basis, including by identifying protection of civilians hotspots.
20. Levine-Spound, 4.
21. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022.
22. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #22, Bangui, October 2022.
23. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #20, Bangui, October 2022.
24. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; MONUSCO POC Strategic Framework, 2021, section VI.
25. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #11, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #12, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #17, Bangui, October 2022.
26. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #18, Bangui, October 2022.
27. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #7, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023.
28. A 2020 OIOS audit of the Bouar Field Office pointed to inadequate communication, including the failure to channel reporting through the F/JOC to verify information and to deconflict the information being reported to MHQ. See: Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the operations of the Bouar Field Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2020/063, para. 16. A separate audit of MINUSCA’s JOC indicated that this is a challenge across Field Offices: Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2021/053, para. 33.
29. Lauren Spink, *Data-Driven Protection: Linking Threat Analysis to Planning in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, November 2018, 34. <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/research/data-driven-protection/>
30. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #5, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022.

31. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #32, eastern DRC, February 2022. Although the Force operations staff did maintain a 24/7 watch, this is not an integrated unit. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022.
32. Maj. Gen. Jai Menon, "Systemic Issues in Peacekeeping in 2020," Office for Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership, para. 14.
33. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #32, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #43, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #51, eastern DRC, February 2022.
34. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #11, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022.
35. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022.
36. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #5, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #22, Bangui, October 2022.
37. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the operations of the Bouar Field Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2020/063, para. 16.
38. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022.
39. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #8, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #22, Bangui, October 2022. At the time of publication, MINUSCA noted that, in May 2023, the Mission adopted a new political strategy with a view to fostering integration and decentralization in mandate implementation, including on the protection of civilians.
40. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #59, eastern DRC, February 2022. This is a longstanding issue: a 2017 OIOS audit found that in Beni, as well as in other Field Offices, "the military component did not record the actions they took in response to [protection-related] alerts and reports received including descriptions, dates and times of their actions." See: Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of military operations for the protection of civilians in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Report 2017/011, para. 14.
41. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022.
42. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the operations of the Bouar Field Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2020/063, para. 17.
43. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #5, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022.
44. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; Bouar Communication and Operations Centre, MINUSCA Sector West Presentation, January 2022; FOMA Plan presentation, 2023.
45. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023. In terms of the physical structures, the initiative involves the construction of a facility with a conference room, JOC room, briefing room, and components' radio rooms.
46. Bouar Communication and Operations Centre, MINUSCA Sector West Presentation, January 2022.
47. Draft BoCO Mechanism List of Incidents, September 2022.
48. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the operations of the Bouar Field Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2020/063, para. 19.
49. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #21, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023.
50. MONUSCO, Independent assessment of MONUSCO's response to recent attacks against civilians in Béni area, DRC, Jan. 20, 2020, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/independent-assessment-monusco%E2%80%99s-response-recent-attacks-against-civilians-b%C3%A9ni-area-drc>.
51. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #13, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022.
52. Civil Affairs officers play an important role in early warning in both MINUSCA and MONUSCO, as they manage the Community Liaison Assistants and Community Alert Networks from which the majority of protection-related alerts originate.
53. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #13, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #52, eastern DRC, February 2022; MONUSCO POC Strategic Framework, 2021, section V.
54. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
55. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022. See also: Seán Smith, *Early Warning and Rapid Response: Reinforcing MINUSMA's Ability to Protect Civilians*, Center for Civilians in Conflict, April 2021. <https://civiliansinconflict.org/reinforcing-minusmas-ability-to-protect-civilians/>
56. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
57. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022.

58. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #19, Bangui, October 2022.
59. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the Joint Operations Centre in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2021/053, paras. 17–18.
60. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022.
61. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022.
62. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
63. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #37, eastern DRC, February 2022.
64. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #22, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #23, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with humanitarian actor, #6, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #11, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #32, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #44, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #59, eastern DRC, February 2022.
65. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #37, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #42, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #44, eastern DRC, February 2022.
66. For more analysis of challenges and needs in transition settings, see: CIVIC, *Prioritizing the Protection of Civilians During Peacekeeping Transitions: Lessons Learned from MONUSCO*, November 2022, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/policy/prioritizing-the-protection-of-civilians-during-peacekeeping-transitions/>; CIVIC, *Integrated United Nations Approaches to Protection During Peacekeeping Transitions: Lessons Learned from MONUSCO*, November 2023, <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/policy/integrated-united-nations-approaches-to-protection-during-peacekeeping-transitions-lessons-learned-from-monusco/>.
67. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
68. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #59, eastern DRC, February 2022.
69. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO police official, #45, eastern DRC, February 2022.
70. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022.
71. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022. The need for consistent reporting from sections and for systematic use of the SAGE database point to the important role of the JOC, which is responsible for these imperatives within the Hub.
72. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #59, eastern DRC, February 2022.
73. Draft BoCO Mechanism List of Incidents, September 2022.
74. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #5, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA military official, #15, Bangui, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #27, Bangui, October 2022.
75. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #5, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022.
76. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #14, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #52, eastern DRC, February 2022.
77. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #11, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #13, eastern DRC, February 2022.
78. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #51, eastern DRC, February 2022.
79. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #13, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #29, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
80. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #9, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #10, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #11, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #13, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #52, eastern DRC, February 2022.
81. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #4, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023.
82. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Audit of the operations of the Bouar Field Office in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Africa Republic, Report 2020/063, para. 19.
83. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #28, Bangui (conducted remotely), February 2023.
84. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022.
85. BoCO List of Actors.
86. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; Bouar Communication and Operations Centre, MINUSCA Sector West Presentation, January 2022.

87. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #22, Bangui, October 2022.
88. CIVIC interview with MINUSCA civilian official, #3, Bouar, October 2022; CIVIC interview with MINUSCA police official, #6, Bouar, October 2022; FOMA concept presentation, 2023.
89. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #32, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #34, eastern DRC, February 2022.
90. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #7, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #37, eastern DRC, February 2022.
91. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #4, eastern DRC, February 2022.
92. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #42, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO civilian official, #44, eastern DRC, February 2022.
93. CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #51, eastern DRC, February 2022; CIVIC interview with MONUSCO military official, #52, eastern DRC, February 2022.
94. The effective use of these tools would require adequate training and resources, as well as coordination to avoid the creation of redundant or overly burdensome expectations. For more analysis of the use of these tools by non-mission actors during and after a peacekeeping transition, see CIVIC, *Integrated United Nations Approaches to Protection During Peacekeeping Transitions: Lessons Learned from MONUSCO*, November 2023.

ABOUT CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT (CIVIC)

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

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

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

RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.