

Protection of Civilians Scenario Exercise



Photo credit: Annemieke Verrijp, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department (DMM).

Introduction

The protection of civilians is at the heart of PAX's work. On the ground in regions of conflict, PAX works with local activists and civilian organisations to examine how civilians can best be protected against the destructive effect of war.

As part of its Strategic Partnership (2016-20) with the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs, PAX helped organize a training on the Protection of Civilians (PoC) in Rwanda in 2016. The Netherlands, the US and Rwanda co-organized this training that took place between November 9-17, 2016, at the Rwanda Peace Academy (RPA) based in Musanze. The training was attended by military, police and civilian staff from 14 African nations that contribute to peacekeeping missions on the African continent.

The training culminated in a scenario exercise to test the skills and capacities taught and discussed during the training. PAX input to training components focused on Community Engagement strategies and Human Security Threat Analysis. This scenario was prepared by PAX with input from the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA) and the RPA. The general goal for this scenario exercise was to work towards a comprehensive approach to PoC by roleplaying the different roles and capacities actors can have in a realistic scenario. Participants were asked to split into four groups they had worked with before and create a presentation of their course of action, providing insufficient time and a complex context to mimic actual mission circumstances. After a short presentation the groups were asked to discuss the chosen courses of action and evaluate to what extent these contributed to the protection of civilians and how they might collaborate with other actors inside and outside the mission.

This document thus contains a rather context specific scenario exercise that cannot be replicated without structurally linking the course components to the skills required for this scenario. We hope publishing this exercise can inspire other training efforts for PoC to apply realistic scenario's with an explicit aim to improve coordination and effectiveness of peacekeeping missions.

PAX
Sint Jacobsstraat 12
Utrecht, the Netherlands
rouw@paxforpeace.nl
www.protectionofcivilians.org



Set up of exercise

Four groups made up of all sectors (civil society and the civilian, police and army mission components) will work together. The scenario takes place in South Sudan and will focus on the role of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

Group 1 will represent **Civil Society in South Sudan**¹

Group 2 will represent **Civilian components within UNMISS**

Group 3 will represent **Police within UNMISS (UNPOL)**

Group 4 will represent **Military component within UNMISS**

Timelines

There are 3½ hours available for this exercise, from start to evaluation:

- ◆ 15 minutes of introduction and explaining basics of this exercise
- ◆ 1 hour of preparation time in the four groups
- ◆ 5 minutes' presentation for each group to provide insights and answers to questions
- ◆ 90 minutes of facilitated discussion between sector groups on most viable activities and challenges in cooperation
- ◆ 30 minutes of plenary to discuss outputs, share lessons learned and evaluate choices made

Goals for exercise

1. Analyze human security situation and find sources for information in context
2. Identify partners for direct action to protect civilians
3. Apply lessons learned from previous sessions in the training.

Context in South Sudan²

It is December 18, 2013 in Juba and war broke out in full again since December 15. After tensions reached boiling point in a final attempt to reconcile the two main actors in government (president and vice-president) violence ensued in the capital of South Sudan. The president hails from the Dinka community whereas the vice-president comes from the Nuer community. These groups have a history of conflict and it is feared this outbreak of violence is now igniting along these ethnic lines. UNMISS (following up the 'UN Mission In Sudan', UNMIS) was initiated after the independence of South Sudan from Sudan, mainly to help in state building in the youngest country in the world. The main activities UNMISS has been undertaking so far is to assist in State Building, trying to do DDR for the large number of people said to be in South Sudan's army (the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)), and SSR. The mandate for UNMISS at this point reflects the wide range of these activities under the header 'State Building'. The state of South Sudan has been accommodating various armed

¹ this group consists of a loose group of South Sudanese activists, religious actors, female groups, development and humanitarian actors across the country

² Note this scenario is loosely based on actual events in South Sudan, while some events are lumped together in time or space to enhance the learning component. Many shortcuts are made and in no way, does this scenario represent the complexities of South Sudan in 2013 or any other time.

groups by providing them a place in government through a “big tent policy” and an open amnesty since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which marked the beginning of the peace process with Sudan. The following is the only available information you have at this point:

- ◆ There has been fierce fighting throughout Juba including the use of artillery and RPGs for 4 days now, but it is not entirely clear who is fighting who and what the stakes are for the parties fighting;
- ◆ There are many rumors of ethnic killings in Juba with door-to-door searches where languages are used to identify ethnicity after which mass killings and rapes are said to be taking place;
- ◆ Citizens from the Nuer ethnic group were reported to have been targeted by elements of the SPLA;
- ◆ Getting access to the population in Juba is made very difficult by a large amount of roadblocks. These roadblocks seem to be manned by people in SPLA uniforms, but it is not clear what party within the SPLA is controlling what checkpoint;
- ◆ About 10.000 people have turned to the UNMISS bases in Juba and demand to be let in and be protected. Most of the people showing up seem to be from the Nuer ethnic group and numbers are growing rapidly;
- ◆ It looks like among the people seeking refuge in the UNMISS compounds there are people belonging to the SPLA as there are people in uniform and some try to bring in their weapons whereas others are seen to bury their weapons before trying to enter the gates of the UNMISS compounds;
- ◆ Rumors start to go around that after civilians from the Nuer ethnic group were targeted by elements from the SPLA in Juba, the Nuers might organize to exert revenge on people from the Dinka tribe living in Bor. Bor has a mixed population, among others with Dinka and Nuer living together;
- ◆ Bor has a UN base just outside the city which is close to the airport;
- ◆ There are 10.000 people in UNMISS, 6000 military staff, 2000 police and 2000 civilians in different branches like Political Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs. (Juba has 2000 military staff, 500 police and 800 civilians, Bor has 100 military staff, 20 police and 20 civilians, the rest are spread out over the rest of South Sudan). 50 countries contributed to this total amount of 10.000 staff within UNMISS³;
- ◆ There are very few force multipliers available, such as air assets and armored vehicles.

Instruction and questions for all four groups

- ◆ List and explain the activities you can undertake to protect civilians at this moment in time;
- ◆ What information do you need to undertake your PoC activities in a responsible manner?
- ◆ Who can you work together with to get this information?
- ◆ Who can you work together with to undertake the most useful PoC activities at this moment in time?

³ These are all fictional numbers chosen to facilitate the goals for this exercise

For facilitators only!

Potential actions⁴ for each sector

Military

- Go out on patrol to find out if mass killings are taking place (reporting, monitoring, investigating)
- Protect the UNMISS compounds where people flee to
- Force protection of mission elements
- Try to scramble forces for 'hot-spot' protection efforts

UNPOL

- Community policing in UN compounds
- Collecting evidence for mass killings
- Crowd control in UN compounds overrun by people fleeing for violence

Civilians in UNMISS

- Reach out to the main political figures to try to calm the situation
- Use radio and networks to counter hate speech
- Humanitarian efforts to help people within UNMISS compounds
- Collect information through their South Sudanese counterparts
- Liaising with South Sudanese mil and pol components to determine/assess situation

South Sudan civil society organizations

- Create information network with colleagues in situation to figure out what is going on
- Reach out to religious leaders to reach leaders and counter hate speech
- Provide information to UNMISS in the hope they can react and protect civilians
- Collect information through their South Sudanese counterparts

All

- What to do about Bor, is there anything all actors can do as preparation for what might happen in Bor?
- Will you evacuate parts of your teams? Who exactly and how do you go about it?

⁴ These are suggestions only. Use depending on added value to facilitated discussion, this is not an exhaustive checklist and there are no perfect solutions to anything in this scenario. That is exactly the point.