The background of the entire page is a photograph with a warm, orange-brown color cast. It depicts a group of people, including several in military uniforms and berets, and others in civilian clothing. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. In the foreground, two women are seated, one holding a white folder or document. The overall mood is positive and collaborative.

# Amplifying Voices for the Protection of Civilians

---

Improving standards and accountability of  
PoC and military operations

**PAX PoC Program Annual Report 2020**

## Program Summary

MFA Reference Code: DSH-4000002936  
Period of Implementation: 1 September 2019 – 31 December 2023  
Funding Partner: Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Stabilization & Humanitarian Aid (DSH)  
Total Budget: €11.002.413

## PoC Program

The PAX Protection of Civilians (PoC) programs seeks to increase the effectiveness of PoC interventions by facilitating that civilians can hold local and international security actors to account, and by enabling and motivating security actors to design and implement protection strategies that are civilian-centered.

## About PAX

PAX works together with committed citizens and partners to protect civilians against acts of war, to end armed violence, and to build a just peace.

## Contact

For more information about this program please visit [www.protectionofcivilians.org](http://www.protectionofcivilians.org). You are also welcome to contact Hans Rouw, PoC Program Lead ([rouw@paxforpeace.nl](mailto:rouw@paxforpeace.nl)) or Carrie Huisman, PoC Partnership Coordinator ([huisman@paxforpeace.nl](mailto:huisman@paxforpeace.nl)).

## Cover photo

© Rieneke de Man (2015)

This program is supported by the **Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs** as part of its foreign development policy.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Program Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Program Overview	3
1.2 Program Context Analysis	5
1.3 Key Results Achieved	8
1.4 Lessons Learned & Learning Agenda	14
1.5 Program Planning & Management	16
<b>2. Project Reports</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 Human Security Survey-Iraq (HSS-IQ)	19
2.2 Human Security Survey-South Sudan (HSS-SS)	30
2.3 Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA)	41
2.4 Protection in Practice (PiP)	50
<b>3. Annexes</b>	<b>60</b>
3.1 Results Framework	60
3.2 Summary of all Monitoring Data	61
3.3 Organogram	67

# 1. Program Summary

## 1.1. Program Overview

PAX is the largest peace organization in the Netherlands. We work to protect civilians against acts of war, to end armed violence and to build inclusive peace. We work in conflict areas worldwide, together with local partners and civilians who – just like us – believe that everyone has a right to a dignified life in a peaceful society.

The following report reflects upon the annual reporting period from January-December 2020 for PAX's Protection of Civilians (PoC) Program, *Amplifying Voices for the Protection of Civilians: Improving standards and accountability of PoC and military operations*. The ambitious multi-year initiative was developed by PAX in close consultation with our strategic partners within the Department of Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and began in late 2019.

**The PoC Program is designed to enable national and international PoC actors to develop and implement security interventions that are more inclusive, civilian-focused and relevant to local protection needs. It is also central to our purpose to help civilians hold these PoC actors accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities to ensure adequate human security.** The ultimate objective of the PoC Program is that to civilians living in conflict are safer and are able to live their lives free from fear. Our programmatic approach involves four core components:

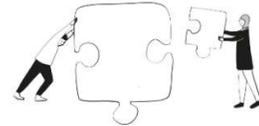
### Research

PAX developed the Human Security Survey (HSS) to give civilians in conflict a voice. Local researchers interview people about security risks, protection needs, perceptions of security providers and prospects for further conflict or peace. The HSS is currently conducted in Iraq and South Sudan. Other research efforts focus on civilian harm and the effectiveness of international military missions, among other themes.



### Influencing Policy

Using lessons learned in the field, we inform security-focused policy discussions at key international institutions like the UN, NATO and the EU. We connect local security needs to policy makers at the international level to make protection strategies more relevant and inclusive. We do this through advocacy, convening expert roundtables and organizing an annual PoC Conference.



### Dialogue

The findings of the Human Security Survey (HSS) and other research efforts are used to bolster civilians in their engagements with relevant governments, armed groups and international military missions. This way, local civil society can advocate for the interests of often marginalized communities and hold security providers accountable for fulfilling their protection duties.



### Advice and Training

PAX helps develop tailored training and practical exercises for military personnel. We also advise military forces before and during missions. We aim to help militaries understand the local situation, the expectations of civilians and the most effective PoC interventions. In order to do so, we work with training centers and promote both threat-based approaches and community engagement.



PAX's PoC team includes thematic and process experts from around the world, and we implement all aspects of the program in close coordination with trusted international partner organizations, as well as our counterparts at the Dutch MFA. For a detailed version of the program's Results Framework, please refer to **Annex 3.1**.

## 1.1.1. Project Descriptions

The PoC Program includes four complementary projects that work from the grassroots to the international level, collectively addressing both the supply and demand sides of protection.

### **Human Security Survey (HSS)**

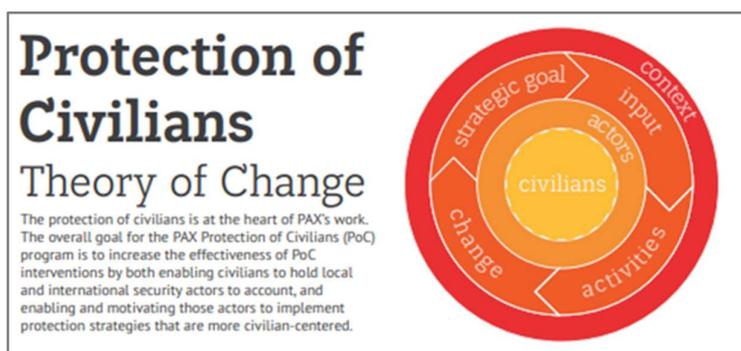
The Human Security Survey (HSS) is a novel research and dialogue methodology developed by PAX's PoC team to expand civilians' voice and agency on the key protection issues that affect them. Currently implemented in both Iraq and South Sudan, PAX and its partners conduct large-scale quantitative research on a wide range of topics, including the nature of security threats facing civilians, the impact of these experiences on their daily lives and civilians' expectations for the future. We then bring the research findings back to local communities to create opportunities for dialogue about civilian security priorities with key authorities from local government, security forces, religious and social institutions, local armed groups and civil society. At the international level, the HSS is used to influence the policymaking efforts of diplomats and troop contributors active in these environments by providing first-hand data about the realities facing conflict-affected populations.

### **Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA)**

The commitment to protecting civilians in conflict is firmly on the international agenda, and key institutions like the United Nations (UN) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) possess defined policies around PoC. In practice, however, missions still struggle to effectively protect civilians living in situations of conflict. It is challenging to identify the population's various protection needs and then to match these to the often limited capabilities and resources available to a given mission. This project addresses that challenge: PAX connects international PoC actors with communities living in conflict and helps them make appropriate and strategic policy decisions. We use local perspectives to inform more inclusive, relevant strategies and hold decision makers to account. This way, we put civilian perspectives at the center of protection.

### **Protection in Practice (PiP)**

For a mission to succeed, military personnel must thoroughly understand both their own responsibilities and the operating context. To act in accordance with PoC policy and mitigate potential civilian harm, military personnel need to be adequately trained and equipped with the right technical capabilities. This project seeks to meet the information needs of international military actors and institutions from a variety of different angles. PAX contributes to PoC-focused training and exercise modules that are grounded in field realities. PAX also advises missions and disseminates best practices regarding data-driven decision making and how to evaluate the effectiveness of military interventions from a civilian protection lens. Finally, this project facilitates greater transparency and accountability of military missions by promoting clear guidelines and methods for tracking, reporting and responding to civilian casualties and other forms of civilian harm.



*The PoC Program's Results Framework is further detailed in Annex 3.1 of this report*

## 1.1.2. Program Partners

In order to inform and influence the wide range of stakeholders required to improve the protection of civilians in conflict, PAX has cultivated a core set of trusted partner organizations. Collectively, the program team enjoys a wide and relevant network, with local partners that have access to local conflict-affected communities, as well as relevant authorities and security forces; and international partners that contribute longstanding relationships and credibility with policymakers in international institutions and bilateral

member states. The inclusive nature of the partnership also benefits the program due to the presence of diverse perspectives and wide-ranging expertise. Our core partners on this program include:

<b>Al-Ghad League for Woman &amp; Child Care (Al-Ghad)</b>	<b>Frontlines Lab</b>
Al-Ghad is a national NGO based in Iraq. Their mission is to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people in several governorates across the country. They are actively engaged in projects promoting the wellbeing of women and children, including raising awareness about mines and explosives, educational and recreational programs, financial aid and protection assistance.	The Frontlines Lab is a joint initiative between New America, Arizona State University, Drexel University and PAX. The consortium advances an integrated approach to research and systems analysis, digital forensics, computer modeling and digital technology design with an aim to preventing and reducing the impact of violent conflict on civilians and civilian infrastructure.
<b>Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)</b>	<b>The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)</b>
AMA is a South Sudanese NGO working to promote human rights and communities to work towards their own development. They also work on peace and community security, social justice, sustainability, livelihoods and capacity development.	The Netherlands is committed to building a safe, stable and prosperous world. To contribute to this broader foreign policy goal, the Department of Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) uses an integrated approach to humanitarian aid, reconstruction programs and improvement of security, rule of law and governance, particularly in crisis and (post-) conflict settings. The PoC team partners with the Dutch MFA to develop training modules on PoC and provides policy advice based on research in conflict areas.
<b>Catholic Diocese of Torit–Justice and Peace Commission (CDoT-JPC)</b>	<b>The Stimson Center</b>
JPC-CDoT is a faith-based organization working in South Sudan that actively engages with diverse communities to work for a better future for the members of the community and for more peace and security in their region as a whole.	The Stimson Center is a neutral policy research center working to promote international security, shared prosperity and justice through applied research and independent analysis, deep engagement and policy innovation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, their award-winning research serves as a roadmap to address borderless threats through coordinated action. Stimson provides strategic guidance to NATO on PoC issues.
<b>Iraqi Al-Amal Association (Al-Amal)</b>	<b>Wand Al-Khair Human Organization (WAHO)</b>
Al-Amal is a non-political, non-sectarian NGO that builds capacity and raises awareness about social issues in Iraq. Its goal is to foster peace, sustainable development, gender equality and respect for human rights, and has programs around income generation, advocacy on law reform, psycho-social support, legal assistance and training courses.	WAHO is an Iraqi NGO on a mission to ensure a dignified life for people affected by displacement, including host communities. To achieve this, they organize a variety of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities to protect human rights, promote social justice and battle discrimination. WAHO implements projects to advocate for women’s empowerment, provide legal assistance, support emergency livelihoods and enhance access to justice.
<b>Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society (Al-Firdaws)</b>	
Al-Firdaws is a local NGO based in Iraq that promotes women’s rights and supports youth, particularly greater economic empowerment and political participation. They provide training and education on leadership skills and democracy, and engage diverse communities to work together for a better future. Al-Firdaws also works to demilitarize communities and support those who are affected by conflict.	
PAX also collaborates closely with other peer organizations, international institutions and PoC experts working towards shared goals of advancing human security and mitigating the reverberating effects of conflict on civilians. Some of these include: <b>Every Casualty</b> , <b>Airwars</b> , <b>Bellingcat</b> and <b>1(German/Netherlands) Corps</b> , among others.	

## 1.2. Program Context Analysis

### 1.2.1. Thematic Context

There are two key dynamics that affected the more internationally-focused components of our program in 2020. First, progress towards truly operationalizing PoC policies that exist on paper within bodies like NATO

was relatively muted this year, potentially signaling incomplete political will and resources to support the change processes underway. **While the commitment to protecting civilians in conflict is firmly on the international agenda and key organizations like the UN and NATO possess defined policies around PoC, many missions still struggle to effectively protect civilians in practice.** Even when PoC-oriented policies exist, institutions and their member states still need to devote the necessary time and resources to developing operational plans and financing comprehensive approaches to PoC. However, during 2020 we observed less notable prioritization for PoC among some of our most important stakeholders under this program. This dynamic simultaneously increases the importance of this project's advocacy for comprehensive approaches to PoC, but also makes it more difficult to cultivate visible, global champions of PoC on the international stage.



*The program articulates the strategic, operational and ethical imperatives of improving PoC policy and practice*

**A key development in the PoC field – to which we as a program directly contributed in 2020 – was the growing attention to so-called “reverberating effects” of conflict on civilian populations.** There has never been consensus on the definition of civilian harm, and most military actors and policymakers prefer to focus exclusively on counting direct casualties, meaning those injured or killed during a military action. PAX argues that this more narrow conception is insufficient when it comes to a proper discussion of the political, economic, moral, humanitarian and strategic implications of conflict. Instead, PoC actors must also take into account the often indirect, but longer-lasting negative effects of conflict, such as the destruction of infrastructure, the loss of livelihoods and impacts on mental health, among others. PAX is emerging as one of the leading civil society voices on this theme, and will leverage its platform to continue advocating for military missions to utilize improved measures for tracking, analyzing, responding to and, ultimately, mitigating all forms of civilian harm.

## 1.2.2. Iraq

Overall, the security situation remained complex in Iraq throughout 2020, and the pandemic only served to further damage an already crippled economy and a government suffering from low public trust. In May 2020, a new Prime Minister, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, assumed office after multiple failed attempts to form a government by other political leaders. Al-Kadhimi made many promises to pursue electoral reform, create jobs, respond to abuses by security forces and improve the country's response to COVID-19; however, **protests continued throughout the year across Iraq as citizens remained dissatisfied with the pace of change.** Well over 500 activists were victims of arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, and promises of justice and compensation by the new government went unmet.<sup>1</sup> Notably, many prominent local activists were violently targeted and even killed in 2020, particularly in Baghdad and the South. As a result of threats directed at the staff of one of our own partners, the organization had to pause all public activities for a period of time out of concern for their safety. The shrinking civic space in Iraq and threats to free speech are worrying trends.

**The pandemic also had significant implications for the nature and quality of our engagement with both Iraqi authorities and international military missions.** Iraqi ministries did not want to discuss any intervention or policy that did not involve direct COVID-19 response, thereby limiting opportunities for advocacy at the local, governorate or national levels. The pandemic also prompted international security forces to make structural changes. The US military withdrew troops from multiple military installations and transferred control from Coalition Forces to Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Concurrently, the NATO Mission in Iraq (NMI) began preparing to expand its mandate and footprint from 2021 onwards, which may generate new opportunities to engage. These shifts will have implications both for the security context as well as for the PoC Program's planned advocacy and training efforts in Iraq.

---

<sup>1</sup> For more details, see [Human Rights Watch's summary of events in Iraq in 2020](#).

### 1.2.3. South Sudan

The Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) between the national government and main armed opposition that was signed in September 2018 held throughout 2020, although its implementation remains slow and incomplete. While recent political developments around the structure of the country's administrative boundaries and management structures facilitated a breakthrough in forming the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) between longtime rivals President Salva Kiir and first Vice-President Riek Machar in February 2020, significant underlying governance challenges remain. Many states, including HSS survey areas, remained without effective, formal leadership for almost a year.

While fighting between the former political factions has decreased, communal violence within and between communities seems to be on the rise, and few institutions are equipped to diffuse the tensions. **As a result of the de facto power vacuum at the local level, there were no formal structures in place to prevent or manage existing communal tensions or violence.** Although the insecurity levels in the previous year do not appear to be as grave as the 2016-17 period, the security improvements, confidence and stability witnessed after the signing of the original ARCSS in 2018 appear to fade as the peace process stumbles and root causes of conflict remain unaddressed.

In another important shift in 2020, UNMISS decided to withdraw from its longstanding "PoC sites" in several areas across South Sudan, transferring the responsibility to the local authorities for protecting internally displaced people (IDPs). Many civilians and experts alike doubt whether these security forces will be able to provide effective and inclusive protection to IDPs or host communities.



*Devastating floods displaced communities and threatened human security long after the end of the rainy season*

Lastly, 2020 brought a truly dramatic rainy season to South Sudan, and the subsequent floods resulted in largescale internal displacement and competition over scarce resources like food, water and grazing lands. Beyond having implications for our ability to implement planned activities, these conditions made clear that

**physical security and armed violence are closely linked to shifting climatic and environmental conditions, and these will continue to impact the broader humanitarian situation and conflict context** in South Sudan in the years to come.

### 1.2.4. PoC and the COVID-19 Pandemic

While the COVID-19 pandemic overshadowed preexisting conflict and human security dynamics, it did not make the work of PAX or its partners any less relevant in 2020. If anything, **the pandemic exacerbated many of the underlying inequalities, injustices and protection concerns that are so closely intertwined with conflict dynamics in the contexts in which we work.**

The pandemic placed impossible strain on weak national and local public health infrastructure and prompted unrest in already fragile environments. The international community simultaneously looked inward, reducing financial commitments to international humanitarian and development aid and contributing minimal focus to peace operations. Rising voices for nativism and populism were not conducive to pursuing collective solutions to global problems, making "international solidarity seem like an unaffordable luxury."<sup>2</sup> Those most vulnerable, like those displaced from conflict or suffering from acute natural disasters, are left without support and out of the public eye. These factors could spell a series of unfolding crises, even after the intense initial phase of the pandemic has passed, particularly in the Global North.

---

<sup>2</sup> See remarks from Robert Malley in *The Gulf Times* on [The International Order After COVID-19](#).

PAX and its partners adapted as quickly and effectively as possible to the “new normal” of engaging with one another purely via telephone and email. The majority of staff shifted to working from home; at first temporarily, then eventually acknowledging that it would be the norm for the foreseeable future. The project teams also adjusted workplans to conduct many planned activities using remote, virtual platforms. This worked out in some cases better than expected, even having indirect benefits regarding the size and inclusivity of attendance rosters for key events like our annual PoC Conference; however, this kind of adaptation worked best at the international level and for expert events. Given connectivity limitations and digital security concerns, it was not feasible to convene local authorities in contexts like Iraq and South Sudan – much less regular citizens – in events hosted using tools like Zoom. Even counterparts from important institutions like the UN, NATO and national ministries experienced access limitations as a result of internal policies.



*Program staff engaged virtually with partners in Iraq and the USA*

**The COVID-19 pandemic therefore hindered access and ease of communication with key stakeholders, both in the field and with the UN, NATO, European Union (EU) and key member states.** While we continued to work with many of our known interlocutors based in The Hague, New York and Brussels, meeting and forming new relationships proved to require more time and effort than in normal circumstances. We were also forced to postpone our ambitions to better publicize our HSS data and reports through physical launch events in Iraq, South Sudan and internationally, which would have served to attract new relevant local, national and international protection actors who could make use of our unique findings and analysis.

All members of the program team severely limited travel in 2020, aside from a few opportune trips to the field immediately prior to the lockdown protocols that swept much of the world. **Our local partners also experienced less access to their own constituencies and project areas as a result of the pandemic.** Starting in March, Iraqi authorities imposed restrictions to movement and public gatherings aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus, including closing airports and ports of entry and repeatedly imposing curfews. Officials in South Sudan imposed comparable travel restrictions and social distancing guidelines, taking a rather cautious approach given that the country by late 2020 still possessed just one COVID-19 testing machine and limited facilities for treating patients with severe disease. As a result, project activities in both countries were significantly limited during the first three quarters of the year, as conducting trainings for enumerators or convening community dialogues was not logistically feasible nor sufficiently safe.

In the project-level reports that follow, we detail the many adaptations that we made throughout 2020 to ensure continued progress towards our objectives under this program. However, we are also honest in highlighting the scale of impact that the global pandemic had on our ability to do our work and to do it well. As we wrote in our 2019 annual report, when these conditions were all still so new and unknown, “we are hoping to take advantage of this opportunity for reflection, for focus, and for expressing solidarity with our partners and affected communities in meaningful ways.” While we have done our best to use the time strategically to adapt to more efficient ways of managing our program, as well as to refocus efforts and resources based on continuous reflection and learning, we do look forward to a such a time as we can again work together face-to-face with our partners and communities on the ground.

## 1.3. Key Results Achieved

### 1.3.1. DSH Standard Indicators

The PoC Program contributes relevant results to two of DSH’s Standard Indicators. See the table below for details about the type of institutions and individuals that we engaged with in 2020 to build capacities in human security and protection. For a full accounting of progress towards each of our project- and program-level monitoring indicators, refer to **Annex 3.2**.

Indicator	2020 Results	Comments
# of formal/informal institutions strengthened in the field of human security	<b>10 institutions in total</b> <i>20% military, 80% civilian</i> <i>70% formal/state, 30% informal/nonstate</i>	<u>Civilian and informal institutions:</u> The Broker, chiefs/traditional leaders in South Sudan  <u>Formal institutions:</u> The International Organization for Migration (IOM)  <u>Military institutions:</u> The Norwegian Defence International Centre (NODEFIC); Land Training Center Bernhardkazerne, Dutch Royal Army
# of people trained in the field of human security	<b>97 trainees in total</b> <i>13% military, 87% civilian</i> <i>57% male, 33% female</i>	The majority of those counted refer to enumerators trained as part of the HSS projects in Iraq and South Sudan (84/97), and the remaining 13 were Dutch military officers attending a training for Army Majors at the Land Training Center in Amersfoort.

### 1.3.2. Outputs & Outcomes by Results Area

Each of the project-level reports following this summary provide a great deal more detail as to the results achieved in 2020 and their significance, as well as explanations of programmatic adaptations and reasons for underperformance. Included below are highlighted immediate results.

**Long-term outcome 1: Civilians in conflict improve their human security situation through constructive engagement with (inter)national security actors**

In light of the global pandemic and the associated implementation delays and limitations on both domestic and international travel throughout much of 2020, PAX and its local partners made relatively little progress towards the LTO 1 in both Iraq and South Sudan this year. Access restrictions and a shift in priorities towards COVID relief made it very difficult to engage with either national or international PoC actors in the two HSS countries. **The most visible contribution to this outcome in 2020 was the annual PoC Conference in December, one day of which was fully dedicated to the theme of *People & Protection* and featured the work of the HSS projects as well as other initiatives to grant civilians a greater voice in security issues.**



Visual notes from Day 2 of PoCCon highlighted core messages around community engagement. See more of the event's visualizations [here](#).

The Program aims to have a greater influence on more systemic-level security and protection dynamics in 2021 and beyond via more focused and consistent evidence-based advocacy efforts at the national level in Baghdad and Juba, as well as with international military missions and relevant troop contributing countries. This is a priority for the HSS teams (as well as counterparts from the EIA and PiP projects) in 2021 and beyond.

While progress was limited at higher levels, there are very tangible examples of positive developments resulting from project activities at the very local level, particularly in South Sudan, which substantiate the intervention strategy that elevating civilians' voices can result in improvements in human security

**Short-term outcome 1.1: Protection policies and practices in Iraq and South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings**

During the second half of 2020, PAX staff and partners worked creatively to adapt the training protocols and HSS methodology to accommodate public health best practices to keep both the enumerators and respondents as safe as possible during the survey process. The most significant results for STO 1.1 include:

**HSS Iraq**

- ◆ 2.295 respondents interviewed (1.127 men, 1.168 women)

- ◆ 3 rounds of data collection completed (Basra, Kirkuk, and Salahaddin governorates)
- ◆ 2 multi-day training courses in conflict-sensitive (and COVID-safe) research methods
- ◆ 46 enumerators trained and hired onto data collection teams (25 men, 21 women)
- ◆ 1.078 views of online publications of HSS findings

### **HSS South Sudan**

- ◆ 1.325 survey respondents interviewed in 3 regions (*Jonglei, Lakes and Unity states*)
- ◆ 3 four-day training courses in conflict-sensitive (and COVID-safe) research methods
- ◆ 28 enumerators demonstrating necessary skills to join data collection teams (*7 women, 21 men*)
- ◆ 1 data summary published detailing key findings (*Jonglei*)
- ◆ 344 total pageviews – an average of almost 30/month – of online publications of HSS findings
- ◆ 1 [launch event](#) to introduce the new HSS partner organization and celebrate expansion of the project to a 5<sup>th</sup> state in South Sudan

All of the 2020 data from Iraq and South Sudan will be analyzed, validated in the field and presented publicly via infographics, narrative reports and interactive data dashboards in 2021. The HSS teams will utilize their expanded social media presence<sup>3</sup> to share these outputs, as well as updates from our local partners about community engagement activities emerging from the dialogue phase with a wider audience.

During the period when fieldwork was not possible, **PAX used the time strategically to explore a longstanding desire to develop remote research modes in complement to our existing survey methodology.** In Iraq the team is piloting the use of chatbot technology to reach out to particularly marginalized or underrepresented groups. In South Sudan, the team is piloting a longitudinal expert panel to solicit timely input from local (in)formal authorities in response to shifting dynamics on the ground. In both cases these new research efforts will supplement the broader HSS methodology and generate new lessons learned.



*The purpose of the HSS is to amplify civilian's perspectives and priorities*

***Short-term outcome 1.2: Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in Iraq and South Sudan***

### **HSS Iraq**

Given that the data collection process was delayed until Q4 and that there were pandemic-related restrictions in place in Iraq limiting public gathering, **it was unfortunately neither safe nor logistically feasible to conduct any community engagement activities in any of the targeted governorates during 2020.** However, in the interim our local partners at Al-Firdaws rapidly mobilized their network and leveraged their credibility with local populations to raise awareness about COVID-19. The campaign included distributing hygiene products and informative leaflets on how to limit exposure and transmission. In addition to providing a valuable service to their community, Al-Firdaws gained valuable lessons about local advocacy and raised its public profile.

### **HSS South Sudan**

Local Community Security Committees (COMSECOMs) remained operational throughout 2020, conducting a variety of impactful activities and generally exceeding the project's expectations. These efforts are detailed further in the HSS South Sudan project of to this report. Below is a summary of progress towards STO 1.2 during 2020:

- ◆ 4 COMSECOMs were active in 4 targeted states
- ◆ 17 local community engagement or awareness-raising activities, including a series of effective mediation and dispute resolution processes

---

<sup>3</sup> Visit the [HSS Facebook page](#) or connect with PoC Program staff on LinkedIn to learn more.

- ◆ **300+** community members, local government officials and security actors participating in the community engagement events
- ◆ **5** radio talk show programs featuring HSS findings and COMSECOM members, purportedly reaching thousands of listeners in Jonglei and Lakes States

**Long-term outcome 2: UN, NATO, T/PCCs and missions increasingly articulate and implement inclusive protection of civilians policies and practices**

### **Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA)**

The EIA project ended 2020 reasonably on track with regards to implementing intended activities and achieving primary outputs; however, the consequent impact of these results appears more limited than desired due to their virtual nature throughout the COVID-19 crisis. **Progress towards our desired longer-term policy changes within the UN, NATO and EU, as well as targeted bilateral countries was impeded to some extent due to the pandemic and associated uncertainty.**

The longer-term objective of the EIA project is to inform more inclusive PoC policies and practices among targeted institutions and missions. To facilitate these results, the PAX and its partners seek to organize expert-level events at UN and NATO headquarters that highlight civilian-centered approaches to PoC, and work with specific missions or member states to develop or adapt their own strategies to better incorporate civilian perspectives. Some key intermediate results were achieved this year, including:

- ◆ **1 roundtable event** on engaging local populations in UN peacekeeping, organized in partnership with the governments of the Netherlands and Uruguay, the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) and Cordaid
- ◆ **1** proposal for a PoC Action Plan for the Netherlands provided to the Dutch MFA

**Short-term outcome 2.1: T/PCCs gain knowledge about their current capacity for civilian-centered protection and how to increase their PoC capacity**

Under STO 2.1, the EIA project aims to engage NATO and UN member states in practical dialogues about how to improve their capacity for civilian-centered protection. Some of the key results in 2020 include:

- ◆ **1 side event** during at UN PoC week on UN peacekeeping training for PoC co-hosted by the governments of Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Rwanda and Uruguay, and with **~100** attendees
- ◆ **1 side event** during the UNSC Open Debate on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda
- ◆ **1 recommendations brief** on gender-sensitive capacities of UN peacekeeping operations
- ◆ **1 report** on operationalizing PoC under UN A4P priorities
- ◆ **12** specialized protection experts serving on Expert Advisory Team to NATO
- ◆ **418** participants attended PAX's 3-day **PoC Conference**
- ◆ **100+** participants attended Stimson's first **annual conference** on NATO and the future of PoC

PAX quickly adapted its approach for engaging key stakeholders in 2020 to virtual platforms, as pandemic conditions demanded. The EIA project convened a number of practical and well-attended expert roundtables on the sidelines of international policymaking debates, each of which consolidated key lessons learned that can inform future advocacy and advisory work under this program.



One of the featured keynote speakers at PoCCon was former Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Bert Koenders

**In 2020 PAX's PoC team also decided to substantially expand the size and scope of its annual PoC Conference, this year bringing together our network three full days, each of which addressed a critical theme: National Contributions to PoC, People & Protection and the Reverberating Effects of Civilian Harm.** Conducting the conference for the first time as a virtual event required a great deal of additional preparatory work, and also forced PAX to sharpen its facilitation skills. In the end, it was worth the effort.

Despite the challenges that technology can pose, especially when trying to make an online platform available and interactive for participants from around the world, we firmly believe that **the event was larger and more inclusive than it ever could have been were we to have organized it in person in the Netherlands.** We achieved our aims of convening a diverse audience of experts, including over 400 representatives from military institutions, the UN, NATO, local and international NGOs, academics, diplomats and local civil society from dozens of countries. We see it as our role to pursue STO 2.1 of informing T/PCCs about how to improve their PoC capacity by means of these kinds of engagements with audiences that bring together diverse perspectives and expertise.

The PoC team received a great deal of positive feedback on the content and format of the event,<sup>4</sup> in particular for the interactive nature of the discussions in the virtual platform. We were so pleased with the outcomes of the event that we intend to maintain the larger ambitions in terms of scope and inclusivity that so defined the 2020 annual conference in future events in the years to come. We also commit to pursuing additional means of improving accessibility so that local voices can contribute more directly to these critical moments of dialogue and learning.

Our partners at Stimson also held their planned conference online and exceeded their own expectations for the scale and quality of the workshop sessions. They convened approximately 100 experts from diverse institutions to explore the implementation status of NATO's PoC Policy. (The policy was first agreed to in 2016, but is not yet fully incorporated into doctrine and practice.) **The event served to identify research areas around the PoC Policy and consider how future conflict scenarios facing NATO may need to take into address issues related to civilian harm in particular.** Members of their Expert Advisory Team will take up these points in future engagements with NATO. The first day of the invite-only conference was recorded and can be viewed on [their website](#). In the future, Stimson hopes to broaden the audience to facilitate an even larger exchange of ideas around military contributions to mitigating harm.

***Short-term outcome 2.2: UN and NATO focus on PoC and inclusive community engagement in their operational plans and policies***

The EIA project also focuses specifically on promoting inclusive community engagement practices within UN and NATO missions. Below is a summary of the key results achieved towards STO 2.2 during the year:

- ◆ **1** roundtable event on engaging local populations in UN peacekeeping (*detailed under LTO 2*)
- ◆ **1** [joint statement](#) from over 40 civil society organizations about the proposed European Peace Facility (EPF)

From a PoC perspective, the proposed EPF risks increasing the risk of harm to civilians in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Therefore, PAX worked in 2020 with a coalition of peer NGOs to discuss concerns and consolidate clear recommendations to the EU in response to key components of the EPF structure. **The NGO coalition work was well received in Brussels, as evidenced by positive responses from EU member states, subsequent expansion of the civil society network and media attention garnered for the joint statement.** PAX sees the EPF as a key strategic priority to continue pursuing in 2021.

***Long-term outcome 3: Targeted military missions increasingly implement data-driven decision-making, civilian harm tracking procedures, and comprehensive assessment of PoC effectiveness***

The PiP project works work to embed civilian perspectives in PoC-focused training, policy, doctrine and assessment in order to improve the quality and relevance of protection in field missions. Early on in the year, when the pandemic started to affect our work and limited our ability to travel to build relationships with key military missions and institutions internationally, the project team reoriented towards activities

---

<sup>4</sup> Here are a few illustrative comments we received via our attendee feedback form: *"The virtual conference was absolutely perfect because it gave interactive discussions and room for asking questions." "I commend the organizer for trying its best to promote productive engagement and inclusivity." "Want to thank you for opening up my world. I am very field based... - without online access this would never have happened for me. Now I will keep in touch more regularly." "I was happy to see local practitioners (working in their home country) involved, but would like to see even more of this." "...Great conference - one of the best I have ever attended"*

and research plans that would still be possible remotely. While some progress was made towards two of the core themes of the project, data-driven decision-making (STO 3.1) and comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness (STO 3.3), a sharper focus was centered around the topic of civilian harm (STO 3.2).

The PoC Program team consistently receives requests from key counterparts in military institutions in our network to provide training and advice. There is a great deal of demand in particular at the national level from the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, but also from more specific components of the Dutch Armed Forces. While training efforts and simulation exercises will ramp up significantly in 2021 – including with T/PCCs outside of the Netherlands – the PiP team still pursued a variety of regular training and relationship building efforts in 2020 with the Army Officers' Training Center in Amersfoort, Finnish Defense Forces International Center (FINCENT) and the First German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC).

In order to scale up the desired results, the project needs to build working relationships with new missions and military institutions as well. While pandemic conditions during 2020 limited our ability to engage with NATO HQ, the EU and the UN, as well as key field missions, having additional dedicated staff and hopefully less stringent travel restrictions will facilitate new opportunities in the year to come.

***Short-term outcome 3.1: Targeted missions have increased knowledge of, capacity, and willingness for evidence-based and data-driven decision-making on PoC***

Progress towards STO 3.1 was somewhat delayed due to the global pandemic and will be developed further in 2021 and beyond. However, some of the critical initial scoping research and planning took place this year, such as:

- ◆ 1 [desktop baseline study](#) on data-driven protection<sup>5</sup>
- ◆ 1 internal planning document outlining research and activities in 2021-2023

This research will serve as the foundation for future advocacy, policy guidance and training efforts around the theme of data-driven protection throughout the remainder of the program.

***Short-term outcome 3.2: Targeted missions have increased capacity and mechanisms on independently verifiable civilian harm tracking, analysis and response***

In 2020 the PiP project focused on activities and outputs that could be achieved despite restrictions associated with the global pandemic. The theme that provided the most opportunities was STO 3.2; below is a summary of the key results achieved during the year:

- ◆ 1 [desktop literature review](#) on contemporary civilian harm tracking tools and investigation mechanisms
- ◆ 1 [position paper](#) outlining PAX's approach to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response
- ◆ 1 [discussion paper](#) investigating key challenges and best practices related to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response to feed into a research, advocacy and training agenda
- ◆ 1 [policy brief](#) on transparency measures around civilian casualty reporting shared with the Dutch MoD and Parliament
- ◆ 13 case studies on specific civilian harm events (part of a [book to be published in 2021](#))
- ◆ 1 [recommendation brief](#) summarizing outputs of the presentations, panels and roundtable discussions from day 3 of the annual PAX PoC Conference on *Civilian Harm Reverberating Effects*
- ◆ 1 research agenda on gaps and opportunities for civilian harm-related research activities in 2021 and beyond
- ◆ 1 start session of the 'Roadmap Process,' following formal agreement between the Dutch MoD and a consortium of NGOs to jointly address Dutch policy and practice on civilian harm
- ◆ 1 video and discussion paper introducing a proposed civilian harm modeling tool developed cooperation with the Frontlines Lab

The project's main achievements in 2020 include a series of desktop studies on civilian harm tracking, analysis and response. These fed into a number of policy briefs aimed at PoC policymakers and practitioners,

---

<sup>5</sup> The study on data-driven protection was completed in December 2020, though only published officially in 2021.

as well as a strategic position paper that defines and communicates our own programmatic priorities for 2021 and beyond. Most notably, the research will culminate in a comprehensive book called *On Civilian Harm*, to be published next year.

**Another of our most significant achievements in 2020 was the kick off of the so-called “Roadmap Process,” a series of meetings to review the Dutch military’s civilian harm reporting and mitigation policies and practices.** PAX, as the lead coordinator of a consortium of likeminded NGOs, negotiated and agreed with the Dutch MoD in 2020 on pursuing the effort. This outcome reflects a substantial change in behavior by the MoD in terms of their willingness to discuss their policy and practice directly with civil society. Ultimately, PAX hopes it will result in countries like the Netherlands becoming more transparent and better equipped to manage and mitigate civilian harm incidents in the future.

The PiP team was also particularly proud that – despite the global pandemic – we were able to organize one full day of the PAX PoC Conference around the theme of the reverberating effects of the use of force on civilians. We brought together researchers, activists, civilian and military practitioners from numerous organizations and institutions to jointly identify lessons learned, best practices and opportunities for better mitigating civilian harm in future military operations. Growing our thought leadership on civilian harm issues will set the PiP project up well to incorporate this expertise into advocacy, training and advisory efforts in 2021 and beyond.



*The theme of civilian harm tracking, analysis and response was a central focus in 2020*

***Short-term outcome 3.3: Targeted missions have increased knowledge about and increased willingness to engage in comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness***

The in-mission evaluation component of the PiP project was always meant to phase into implementation in 2021, although remains somewhat behind schedule. As part of laying the ground work for future comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness in the field, PAX contributes to a series of training efforts to build foundational knowledge and skills in PoC. Some of the corresponding outputs from 2020 include:

- ◆ Advised on NODEFIC Human Security E-portal course package
- ◆ Contributed to updated module on ‘PoC failures’ to FINCENT’s CPOC course

The PiP team will continue to contribute to these, as well as more bilateral and in-mission training efforts in 2021 and beyond.

## 1.4. Lessons Learned & Learning Agenda

### 1.4.1. 2020 Team Learning Event

In August 2020 PAX’s PoC team came together for a one-day session with the purpose of exploring the program’s Learning Agenda. The objectives of the participatory workshop were to: refine the team’s learning questions at the project and program levels; begin developing an operational plan for answering these questions (in a way that is streamlined into our regular work as much as possible and incorporates diverse and inclusive perspectives); and discuss how we will utilize this new knowledge to inform our own programming and to contribute to broader learning across the PoC field.

As part of the process of developing the learning agenda, the team took stock of our current practices around learning and adaptive implementation. We discussed the quality of evidence currently available to inform our decision-making; asked ourselves whether we are equally good at learning from success and failure; and questioned if we are sufficiently consultative with our partners when it comes to learning. Staff then characterized practices for reflection and information-sharing that we need to either start, stop, or do

differently. The team then spent the rest of the day **developing and refining our learning questions to ensure their novelty, utility and feasibility.**

The PoC Program sees our learning agenda as an iterative process, rather than a one-off conversation or static document. While we will therefore be in a continual process of developing and updating the learning agenda, it will hopefully fulfill a variety of key purposes, both within and outside of the PoC program.

Objectives of the PoC Program learning agenda	
<p><b>Internally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reinforce a culture of reflection and continuous improvement</li> <li>◆ Facilitate evidence-based decision making and management</li> <li>◆ Enable adaptive implementation in a proactive, rather than reactive fashion</li> <li>◆ Foster collaboration and the sharing of ideas across projects and partners</li> <li>◆ Test our Theories of Change and assumptions</li> <li>◆ Enable more systematic documentation and knowledge management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Externally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Grow PAX's thought leadership, name recognition, and credibility in the field</li> <li>◆ Stimulate sector-wide learning among peer institutions</li> <li>◆ Contribute to and benefit from the learning agenda of DSH</li> </ul>

## 1.4.2. Learning Questions

The learning questions that emerged from discussions between PAX and its partners are listed below; however, **the key reflections and lessons learned through implementing the program in 2020 are detailed in the project-level chapters of this report.**

### Program-level learning questions

1. What does meaningful accountability to civilians in conflict really look like in practice? How does it differ for different protection actors and institutions both nationally and internationally?
2. What does constructive community engagement by CSOs, NGOs, the UN, local and national security actors and international institutions look like, both currently and ideally?
3. Are data and evidence enough? How do we go beyond generating interesting information towards fostering ownership for taking action rooted in local priorities?
4. What are the best mechanisms for internal engagement that go beyond information sharing and facilitate both strategic and practical collaboration?

### Project-level learning questions

#### HSS Iraq

1. How can we facilitate safe and effective community engagement at the local level that serves to build bridges between civilians and decision makers, even when their interests are not aligned?
2. How can we have more targeted lobbying at the national level (including with like-minded organizations such as CIVIC and NDI) and with international actors both in Iraq and their HQs (like targeting the Dutch CBMI, NATO, etc.?)

#### HSS South Sudan

1. How can we best develop and implement a coherent lobby and advocacy strategy jointly with partners and colleagues that enables us to collectively and effectively engage with UNMISS, other relevant UN agencies and T/PCCs regarding PoC and community engagement issues in South Sudan?
2. How can we and our partners constructively build an advocacy network with South Sudanese political and security authorities, and most effectively encourage them to improve their PoC strategies?
3. How can we help address the perceived "law enforcement gap" by community members and local authorities alike across South Sudan?

### EIA

1. How can we go from being “interesting” to “relevant and persuasive” when engaging international security actors? What makes a policymaker change behavior based on our interaction – is it mainly an effect of our position, network, unique data, recommendations, or other factors?
2. How can EIA stimulate more comprehensive approaches to PoC in the Netherlands between MFA departments and MoD, and in coordination with the UN, NATO and the EU? How can we go from policy coherence to implementation coherence?

### PiP

1. How do we best formalize our relationships with military actors, particularly vis-à-vis training?
2. What is the “gold standard” with regards to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response?
3. How do we recognize or prevent cooptation – as opposed to cooperation – in joint efforts with missions and militaries? How can we best contribute to facilitating the implementation of lessons learned in targeted missions?

## 1.5. Program Planning & Management

### 1.5.1. The Team

The PoC Program welcomed two new local partners in late 2020 who will become critical to the implementation of the HSS projects from 2021 onward. The new partner in Iraq is Wand Al-Khair Human Organization (WAHO), and the new partner in South Sudan is the Catholic Diocese of Torit-Justice and Peace Commission (CDoT-JPC). Both are described in the partner overview above and further introduced in the project-level reports.

These new organizations joined the program at a point when pandemic conditions required that we restructure elements of how our partnership functions. **While it was always the ambition for our local staff and partner organizations to take on more significant roles in managing and monitoring activities on the ground in each subsequent year of the program, COVID-19 sped up the timeline significantly. This is truly one of the most noteworthy unintended benefits of the circumstances of the last year.** Our local partners in Iraq and staff in South Sudan took on new and much more technical roles with ease and grace, delivering the enumerator trainings on their own for the first time. They also became responsible for other technical components of preparing for and managing the data collection process, such as setting up the mobile devices. The subsequent data appeared to be of similar quality as in years’ past, which is a testament to the partners’ competence now in conflict- and gender-sensitive research methods, and their familiarity with the HSS protocol. While the new partners will still need a period of onboarding and learning, the expectation is that they will similarly take on these new roles during subsequent survey cycles.

The PoC team at PAX underwent a number of staffing changes over the course of 2020. **We welcomed two new colleagues to the PiP team in December, Marc Garlasco and Marco Grandi.** Both were active-duty servicemen and have significant first-hand experience serving in field missions. While we originally set out to recruit a single Military Specialist to feed into various components of the PiP project (and to provide valuable insight to the program as a whole), in the end we opted to hire two individuals: one to focus specifically on building out our training capacities, and the other to contribute to building strategic relationships and coordinate high-level advocacy. (Although in practice they will regularly work together). We are lucky to have these two lend their expertise to our team. For more details, feel free to read their bios on our website and connect with them virtually or – hopefully soon – in an upcoming event.

The HSS Iraq team also opted partway through 2020 to eliminate a newly-created staff position based in Baghdad. While under normal circumstances it may have been very useful to have a local field coordinator to oversee the wide range of activities and the selection and onboarding of a new project partner organization, there was less utility for this function given the scaled-down workplan for 2020. Further, now that the partners are taking on more direct responsibilities for project management, there is less need for an additional layer of oversight and management. The team will reassess this decision as needed in 2021.

## 1.5.2. Budget and Spending to Date

The pandemic-related constraints already detailed extensively above and in the project-specific reports had a significant impact in the PoC Program's ability to implement activities and allocate resources as originally planned in 2020. **A large number of interventions were canceled, postponed or adapted, resulting in significant underspending across most activity budget lines. There were also lower than projected personnel costs in both the HSS Iraq and PiP projects in particular as a result of the teams not being at full capacity during much of the year.** See below for a summary of spending in 2020 in relation to original projections, followed by project-by-project explanation. This annual report is also accompanied by formal external audit reports covering all PAX and PoC program partners from 2019-2020.

The PoC Program will follow up with our counterparts at DSH in 2021 to discuss a series of creative proposals for how to reallocate existing underspending during the remainder of the grant across a mix of new, delayed and expanded initiatives linked to the program's theory of change and strategy.

<b>Human Security Survey (HSS) Iraq</b>				
<b>Budget Line</b>	<b>Balance Y1</b>	<b>Budget Y2</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total Balance</b>
<b>A. PAX Central</b>				
A.1 PAX Central Personnel	29.393	191.950	216.197	5.147
A.2 PAX Central Activities	52.227	60.000	167.219	-54.992
A.3 PAX Central Office	11.110	215.824	203.191	23.743
A4. PAX Central Evaluations & Audits	11.000	50.000	24.055	36.945
<b>Subtotal PAX Central</b>	<b>103.730</b>	<b>517.774</b>	<b>610.661</b>	<b>10.843</b>
<b>B. Human Security Survey (HSS) South Sudan</b>				
B.1 HSS South Sudan Personnel	10.026	159.829	140.725	29.130
B.2 HSS South Sudan Activities	73.761	184.175	87.018	170.918
B.3 HSS South Sudan Audit & Other	5.000	15.000	-	20.000
<b>Subtotal HSS South Sudan</b>	<b>88.787</b>	<b>359.004</b>	<b>227.743</b>	<b>220.049</b>
<b>C. Human Security Survey (HSS) Iraq</b>				
C.1 HSS Iraq Personnel	12.865	159.829	122.378	50.316
C.2 HSS Iraq Activities	-8.174	200.106	104.484	87.447
C.3 HSS Iraq Audit & Other	10.269	62.850	-	73.119
<b>Subtotal HSS Iraq</b>	<b>14.960</b>	<b>422.785</b>	<b>226.863</b>	<b>210.882</b>
<b>D. Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA)</b>				
D.1 EIA Personnel	-5.547	113.201	149.438	-41.784
D.2 EIA Activities	-355	64.250	3.092	60.803
D.3 EIA Stimson Personnel	11.298	71.438	73.891	8.844
D.4 EIA Stimson Activities	27.172	141.231	96.452	71.951
D.5 EIA Stimson Audit & Other	17.443	66.907	38.618	45.732
<b>Subtotal EIA</b>	<b>50.011</b>	<b>457.027</b>	<b>361.491</b>	<b>145.546</b>
<b>E. Protection in Practice (PiP)</b>				
E.1 PiP Personnel	14.177	165.876	102.007	78.046
E.2 PiP Activities	16.853	152.000	44.443	124.409
E.5 PiP Audit & Other	1.000	6.000	-	7.000
<b>Subtotal PiP</b>	<b>32.030</b>	<b>323.876</b>	<b>146.450</b>	<b>209.456</b>
<b>F. Overhead/indirect costs</b>				
F.1 Costs of support staff	2.238	82.084	80.200	4.122
F.2 Not Directly Allocable Costs	10.027	304.678	269.388	45.318
<b>Subtotal Overhead</b>	<b>12.265</b>	<b>386.762</b>	<b>349.588</b>	<b>49.439</b>
<b>Subtotal Program</b>	<b>301.783</b>	<b>2.467.228</b>	<b>1.922.796</b>	<b>846.215</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	14.286	49.345		63.631
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>316.069</b>	<b>2.516.573</b>	<b>1.922.796</b>	<b>909.846</b>

### **HSS Iraq**

Due to the pandemic, PAX and its partners were only able to undertake data collection in 3 locations towards the end of the year (November-December 2020), rather than the 4 rounds that were originally

planned. This meant that not only were we not able to sign on formally with a new partner for Diyala, but we were also not able to conduct any community engagement interventions or any other associated activities with it, which were scheduled for after the data collection. Moreover, since access to Iraq was also restricted, the team was only able to visit the country before the lockdown started once in February-March 2020 to hold a country-level inception meeting for existing partners and to meet with the short-listed partners for Diyala. All other planned international travel was canceled.

### ***HSS South Sudan***

Pandemic-imposed travel restrictions caused PAX to cancel 3 scheduled international trips to South Sudan and postpone 2 planned rounds of data collection until 2021. Therefore, fewer data collectors were trained and deployed in the more limited number of areas we could survey. Postponing the project launch and data collection in Eastern Equatoria also meant delaying all field activities and management costs (salaries, office support) associated with our new partner, CDoT-JPC. Planned advocacy visits, partner trainings and report-launch events also had to be postponed to 2021.

### ***EIA***

Underspending in EIA activities is largely due to two factors: first, many costs associated with the annual PoC Conference were allocated to the Central Activities line item (A.1), rather than EIA. (A lateral move of resources was proposed in the updated workplan submitted to DSH in August 2020.) Further, both Stimson and PAX had to cancel significant planned international travel and migrate many activities to virtual settings. Apparent overspending on EIA personnel (D1) is a result of using FTE calculations projected in the original project proposal, and not the existing staffing structure since amended and approved. This issue will be resolved in future reports. Stimson had higher than projected personnel costs in 2020, although this was discussed with DSH during the mid-year workplan update and 2021 annual workplan processes.

### ***PiP***

The PiP project focused on implementing activities in 2020 that could be completed remotely, and therefore limited activities primarily to desk-based research and analysis. The team postponed significant international travel and planned consultancies to conduct baseline research across all three thematic activity areas until fieldwork is again feasible. Additionally, the team delayed recruiting for an open staff position (that of the Military Trainer) as a result of pandemic limitations, only signing the eventual contracts in December 2020 and thereby incurring significantly lower personnel costs than in the original planning.

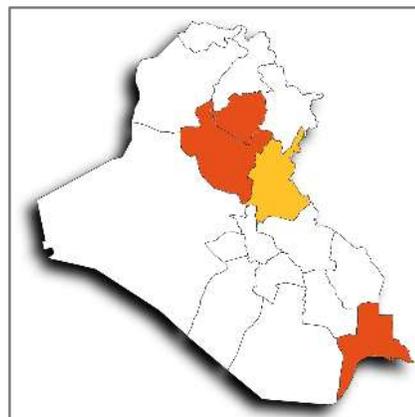
## 2. Project Reports

### 2.1. Human Security Survey – Iraq

#### 2.1.1. Project Summary

The Human Security Survey (HSS) is a methodology developed by PAX to collect evidence on civilians' experiences, perceptions, and priorities regarding security in order to strengthen their claim-making capacity. The project consists of complementary and iterative activities, including:

- ◆ Conducting large-scale surveys to increase the understanding of local security dynamics and trends from a civilian perspective;
- ◆ Facilitating local dialogues with civilians and authorities to identify local priorities and supporting community security committees' efforts to hold security providers accountable; and
- ◆ Engaging in evidence-based advocacy with national and international institutions to ensure that protection activities respond to civilians' needs.



HSS locations: Basra, Kirkuk, Salahaddin (current), and Diyala (forthcoming)

The theory underlying the HSS is that **by involving civilians in discussions about the protection issues that affect them every day, security policies and their implementation will become more reflective of and responsive to local needs, priorities, and capacities.** In order to achieve this, the HSS facilitates the generation of both rigorous data and inclusive community engagement. By repeating this cycle over multiple years, PAX and its partners can track trends and work to effect more sustainable change. The survey itself is therefore best seen as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself.

The HSS project was established in Iraq in 2016, and the first cycle of data collection and community engagement began in 2017 in Basra and Kirkuk governorates. In 2018 the project expanded to Salahaddin, and from 2021 will also include Diyala governorate.

The project's core partners include the Iraqi Al-Amal Association (Al-Amal), the Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society (Al-Firdaws), and Wand Al-Khair Human Organization (WAHO),<sup>1</sup> each of which play a critical role in the planning, implementation, management, and adaptation of all components of the project.

#### 2.1.2. Progress Overview



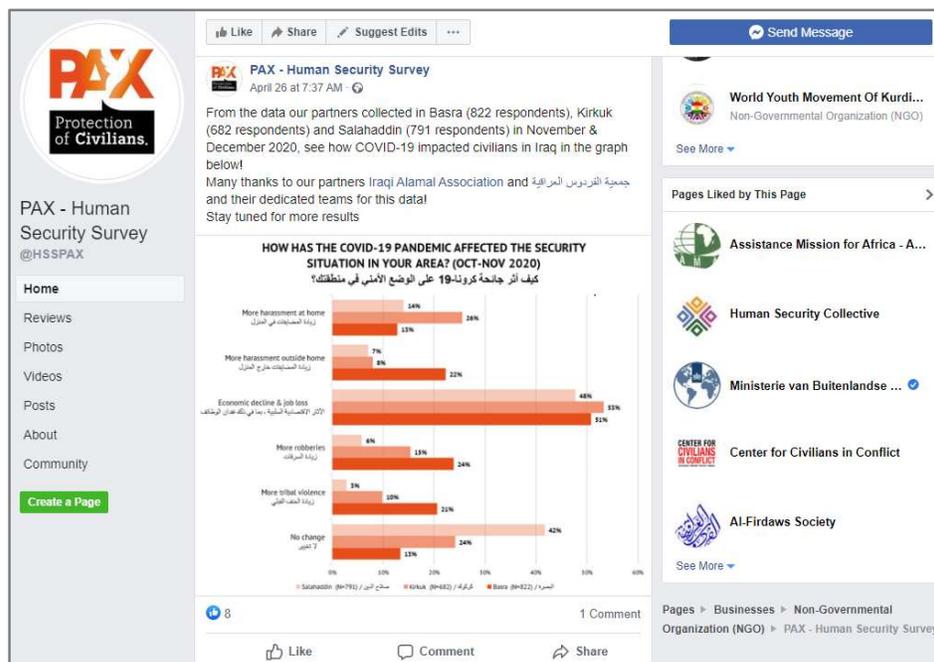
When compared against the original project workplan from the program's inception phase (prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic), the project can be considered behind schedule. However, the revised workplan submitted to DSH midyear provided a valuable opportunity to reflect and set more realistic targets for the remainder of the reporting period. **The project team and partners were able to accomplish a great deal in the second half of 2020, exceeding expectations in some aspects of the intervention, while falling short of our ambitions in others.**

<sup>1</sup> Note that WAHO formally joined the HSS and the PoC Program in late 2020, although field activities in Diyala governorate will begin in 2021.

Data collection occurred in three target governorates (Basra, Kirkuk, and Salahaddin) during November and December. The key achievement in this phase of the project cycle was that PAX's longstanding partners, the Al-Amal and Al-Firdaws took the lead in training the enumerators for the first time, with PAX serving in a supporting role. This reflected a positive move towards more local ownership and greater resource efficiency that will be maintained after the end of pandemic conditions.

Importantly, this shift in roles had no adverse implications for the quality or quantity of data received. **A total of 2,295 respondents (1,127 males and 1,168 females)<sup>2</sup> were interviewed across the three locations by 46 (25 males and 21 females) enumerators.** Note that since data collection was only possible in late Q4, detailed data analysis and subsequent community engagement activities from the current survey cycle will follow in early 2021, conditions permitting. Similarly, the ongoing pilot with the Centre for Innovation (CFI) at the University of Leiden using a chatbot-based survey methodology continued through the end of the year, and will enter its next phase in 2021.

Together with the HSS South Sudan, the project launched a [Facebook page](#) to communicate interesting updates with our audiences in Iraq and South Sudan, as well as globally. While initiated originally as another sort of pilot to test whether it would prove to be an effective means of reaching interested followers in both countries, **social media engagement is now firmly part of our strategy for disseminating survey results, raising the profile of our local partners, and sharing lessons learned across both project contexts.** In another example of an effort to improve awareness of the project, Al-Firdaws also took the initiative to document the HSS in a [short video](#).



*The HSS Facebook community includes more than 400 followers and enables PAX and its partners to share project updates and facilitate constructive dialogue about PoC issues with a diverse global audience*

While limits on international travel hampered our ability to organize in-person events or planned national and international advocacy, PAX and its partners still contributed to a series of constructive discussions about human security conditions in Iraq. For instance, day two of PAX's [Protection of Civilians Conference](#) in December focused around the theme of *People & Protection* and provided ample opportunities to highlight the results of our HSS work. The sessions included presentations from local partners alongside other key stakeholders, such as the Dutch Ambassador to Iraq and peer institutions like CIVIC and SIPRI.

<sup>2</sup> These figures reflect only “cleaned” data that will be used for analysis, and do not include surveys scrubbed from the dataset due to incompleteness, ineligibility, inconsistency, or the presence extreme outliers, each of which could negatively affect the accuracy or reliability of the research findings.

These sessions were also livestreamed on the HSS Facebook page to increase accessibility for local audiences in both Iraq and South Sudan.

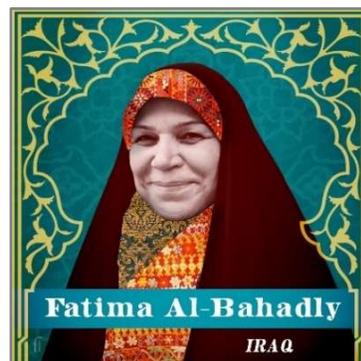
**The HSS Iraq project overcame significant obstacles and delays in 2020, as PAX and its partners proved adaptable and committed to ensuring continuing progress towards the PoC Program's objectives in Iraq.** The team is well placed to make even greater progress in 2021, even if pandemic conditions necessitate continued adaptations in the year to come.

### 2.1.3. Project Context Analysis

Overall, the security situation remained complex in Iraq during 2020, even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated the economy and further deteriorated public trust in government. The year began with the killing of Iranian General Qassem Suleimani and Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis, deputy chief of the pro-Iranian Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) by an American airstrike, which resulted in frequent rocket attacks on embassies in the Green Zone, as well as Baghdad and Erbil airports throughout the year. This worsened the security situation in the country, which was already experiencing another wave of public protests starting in October 2019. In May 2020, the new Prime Minister, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, assumed office after two other prime minister-designates failed to form a government. Al-Kadhimi is not affiliated with any Iraqi political party and has made many promises to pursue electoral reform, justice for those harmed during protests and a more effective approach to targeting COVID-19; however, **throughout the year protests continued across Iraq as citizens remained dissatisfied with the pace of change.**

During this period, many civil society activists were violently targeted, especially in Baghdad and the South. Among the most prominent affected were Dr. Hisham Al-Hashemi, Reham Yaqoub, and Lodya Remon Albarti,<sup>3</sup> the latter of whom escaped the assassination attempt against her. These conditions meant that discussing sensitive issues like security and public perceptions of security actors was not appropriate or safe, either for our partner staff or would-be respondents.

Soon after the killing of Yaqoub and the assassination attempt on Albarti in August, social media posts began circulating in Basra targeting Iraqi activists who had met with staff from the US Consulate. These posts, and the activists specifically identified in them also included the founder and director of Al-Firdaws, Fatima Al-Bahadly. As a result of these threats, the staff of Al-Firdaws had to cease all public activities for a number of weeks out of concern for their own safety. However, in an apt contrast to these conditions, Ms. Al-Bahadly and Al-Firdaws were honored in 2020 with both the [Front Line Defenders' Middle East and North Africa award](#) and the [Distinguished Partners for Women, Peace and Security award](#) for their tireless efforts to protect women affected by war and strengthen their role in peacebuilding, as well as to combat the militarization of youth in Basra.



*Our longtime partners at Al-Firdaws earned multiple deserved accolades in 2020*

Starting in March 2020, Iraqi authorities imposed restrictions to movement and public gatherings aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. These measures include restrictions on travel, such as the closure of airports and points of entry along land borders and maritime boundaries, as well as limitations on domestic movement. While international flights restarted in August, in Federally controlled areas the government repeatedly imposed curfews. As a result of these conditions, project activities were significantly limited during the first three quarters of the year, as conducting trainings for enumerators or convening community dialogues was not logistically feasible or sufficiently safe. However, in Q4, once travel and in-person meetings became possible again as the infection numbers declined and everyone adapted to new ways of working (like wearing masks, maintaining social distance, etc.), trainings and data collection for three field locations were able to occur.

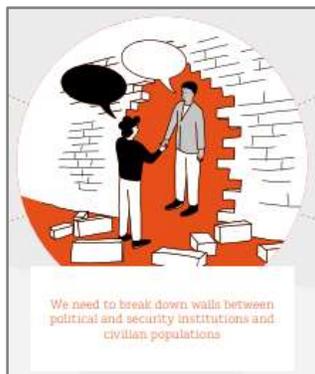
---

<sup>3</sup> While not under this program, PAX's Middle East team has worked extensively with Lodya Remon Albarti in the past. She evacuated to Erbil in 2020 not only to seek better medical attention, but to also protect herself.

**The pandemic conditions also had significant implications for the nature and quality of our engagement with both Iraqi authorities and international military missions.** Through the end of the year Iraqi ministries did not want to discuss any intervention or policy that did not involve direct COVID-19 response; therefore, our partners could also not use this time to advocate with authorities at either the local, governorate or national levels, as there was no attention for protection issues. Further, the form and scale of international engagement in Iraq is also in flux. In January 2020, immediately following the airstrike that killed General Suleimani, the Iraqi Council of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution to obligate Iraq's government "to work towards ending the presence of all foreign troops on Iraqi soil."<sup>4</sup> In the months that followed, the US military withdrew troops from six bases and consolidated to three, transferring control of military installations to Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). While waning political support from Baghdad certainly played a role, this move also reflected perceived achievements in the multi-year mission to root out the Islamic State in Iraq, a response to persistent threats from Iranian proxies, and a broader reaction to the global pandemic. Concurrently, the NATO Mission in Iraq (NMI) began preparing to expand its mandate and footprint from 2021 onwards. These shifts will have implications both for the security context as well as for the PoC Program's planned advocacy and training efforts in Iraq.

## 2.1.4. Key Results Achieved

***Long-term outcome 1: Civilians in conflict improve their human security situation through constructive engagement with (inter)national security actors***



Visual notes from PAX's PoC Conference reiterate the intervention logic of community engagement

The contextual dynamics detailed above significantly hindered project implementation until the final three months of the year, when conditions allowed the project team to quickly implement a host of activities. As a result, PAX and its partners concede that limited contributions were made towards the PoC Program's desired longer-term results in 2020. We hope to make up a lot of ground in the year to come by restarting community engagement efforts at the local level, ramping up advocacy efforts with national-level institutions in Iraq such as the Ministry of Interior and Council of Ministries, and collaborating strategically with international missions like NATO and the EU.

For a full summary of progress towards all HSS project indicators, please refer to **Annex 3.2** of the overall PoC Program Annual Report.

***Short-term outcome 1.1: Protection policies and practices in Iraq and South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings***

All of the HSS' research efforts fall under STO 1.1, and remarkably, the project was able to meet nearly all of its data collection targets in the three governorates targeted through this project in 2020.

- ◆ **2.295** respondents interviewed (1.127 men, 1.168 women)
- ◆ **3** rounds of data collection completed (Basra, Kirkuk, and Salahaddin governorates)
- ◆ **2** multi-day training courses in conflict-sensitive (and COVID-safe) research methods
- ◆ **46** enumerators trained and hired onto data collection teams (25 men, 21 women)
- ◆ **1.078** views of online publications of HSS findings

**Data collection in all three targeted governorates occurred during November and December 2020.** While the training and research processes had to be significantly adapted in accordance with public health guidance, we remain proud of our partners that they were able to conduct these activities while keeping themselves and our respondents safe.

<sup>4</sup> [Oasem Soleimani: Iraqi MPs back call to expel US troops](#), BBC News, 5 January 2020.

In Kirkuk, enumerators were selected from one of the youth projects Al-Amal was running, while in Salahaddin, there was a combination of both old and new enumerators, the latter of whom were selected through a competitive open recruitment process. As a result, a full four-day training was conducted in Erbil for both teams jointly (24-27 October), led primarily by Al-Amal staff with multiple years' worth of experience contributing to the HSS. The Netherlands-based Project Lead and Data Analyst joined the training sessions online. Given that Al-Firdaws utilized its existing team, most of whom have been collecting data for the HSS since 2017, they conducted a condensed two-day refresher training in Basra (7-8 November). The training was led by senior Al-Firdaws staff, with the Project Lead joining online for question-and-answer sessions.

**Featured Story: Celebrating new roles for local partners**



*Al-Firdaws led a refresher course for the enumerators in Basra*

**One of the most important unintended consequences of adapting to the pandemic was that the local partners had the opportunity to take on more direct management of technical components of the HSS Iraq project.**

Notably, experienced members of both organizations took the lead in recruiting and training local enumerators in 2020, demonstrating increased ownership. While the partners had taken on more substantial roles in the training process in recent years, this is the first time that PAX staff served purely in a support function. Now that members of each organization have participated in multiple rounds of data collection and community engagement, this was a clear way of highlighting just how much their own technical competencies have grown in training and conflict-sensitive research methods.

Both partners also took lead on setting up the mobile phones for data collection for the first time. This is a relatively technical and time-consuming process, as for security purposes the phones are fully reset prior to each

data collection cycle. Both Al-Amal and Al-Firdaws followed the device setup protocol, uploaded and tested the surveys in the Kobo Collect mobile platform and ensured that the data would be encrypted during transfer to PAX's servers. **Being responsible for these critical components of preparing for data collection were both empowering to the partners and contributed to them building new research and digital security capacities that they can apply in other programming in the future.**

Critically, these changes had no adverse effect in the quality of data collected during the survey. They also contribute to the research process being more efficient and localized, which will free up PAX staff for other strategic endeavors, like expanding international advocacy efforts. Finally, both organizations relied particularly on younger staff members to fulfill these new functions, evidence that **the leadership within the partner organizations also sees it as their responsibility to cultivate both the skills and confidence of the next generation of civil society in Iraq.**

While pandemic conditions forced us to move perhaps faster in the direction of localization, it was always the intention to transfer more responsibilities towards the partners as the HSS project progressed. It is certainly one of the most positive changes to come from an otherwise difficult year. The PoC program established multi-year contracts for our existing partners in large part to solidify our commitment to one another and to contribute to strategic and sustained engagements on the ground. We are so pleased to see our partnerships in Iraq continue to develop and grow.

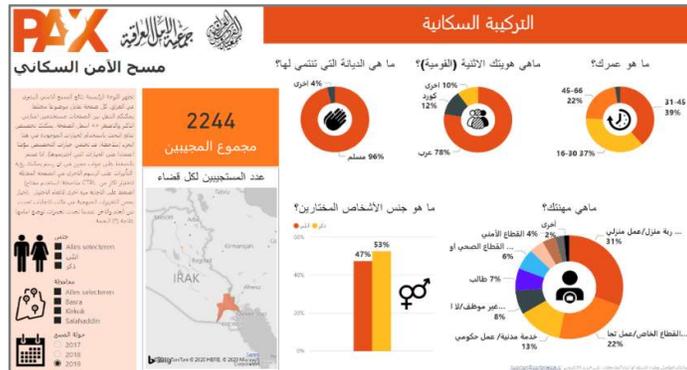
In addition to the pandemic conditions, other factors also posed unanticipated challenges to the data collection process in both Basra and Kirkuk governorates. For instance, in Basra the team had to pause efforts from time to time due to heavy rains and stagnant water, which impeded travel. Notably, **a new module about environmental issues as added to the Basra survey this year, which should generate interesting reflections about how climate change and ecological dynamics are linked to conflict.** In Kirkuk, enumerators could not survey the Al-Riyadh region within Hawija district and Al-Rashad region in Daquq district as a result of access and security issues. While the team waited for the security conditions to improve in both locations, by mid-December it was mutually decided to not wait any longer, and targets were amended as a result.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, a number of authorities in Kirkuk also underwent a change in positions,

<sup>5</sup> During each survey cycle, target numbers of respondents are provided to the local partners at the sub-district (*nahya*) level, further delineated by gender and rural vs. urban communities. The total overall target value (650-800

which meant that previously obtained permits were no longer valid to continue with data collection. Despite having official permission from central authorities in Baghdad, it took time to receive updated permission letters.

Given that data collection concluded so late in the year, thorough cleaning and analysis will occur in 2021, at which point the new findings will be available in the interactive [HSS Iraq Dashboard](#) and subsequent analytical reports. This analysis will also feed into planned community engagement efforts in all three governorates, as well as both national and international advocacy.

During the period when fieldwork was not possible, PAX used the time strategically to explore a longstanding desire to develop remote research modes in complement to our existing survey methodology. The goal is to have another methodological tool at our disposal to validate existing HSS findings, test out new questions prior to integrating them into the standard questionnaire, target specific sub-groups for follow-up research and enable more timely data collection in response to shifts in the local context. **In 2020 we began a new partnership with technical experts at CFI to pilot an open source chatbot tool for remote data collection that would help us engage with respondents via their mobile device or computer.** While the HSS methodology aims to achieve a representative sample, it is at times useful to be able to more detailed analysis with or about specific sub-groups. Our partners have in the past heard from local authorities that they are interested in knowing what academics in particular think about the security situation, so CFI and our partners at Al-Amal suggested piloting a targeted survey with students, faculty, and staff from the University of Salahaddin. The pilot survey will take place in 2021 and will enable us to assess the feasibility and utility of remote data collection targeting other key populations that are difficult to reach or might add salience to our analysis.



The data dashboards are updated after each survey round and are available in both English and Arabic. For more information, see [www.protectionofcivilians.org](http://www.protectionofcivilians.org).

**Short-term outcome 1.2: Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in Iraq and South Sudan**



Al-Amal Executive Director Jamal Al-Jawahiri presents alongside the Dutch Ambassador to Iraq during a PoC Conference session on community engagement during uncertainty

Given that the data collection process was delayed until Q4 and that there were pandemic-related restrictions in place in Iraq limiting public gathering, **it was unfortunately neither safe nor logistically feasible to conduct any community engagement activities in any of the targeted governorates during 2020.** Furthermore, as described above, authorities from local, national and international institutions were so consumed by COVID-19 response efforts and had little will or resources available to devote to the civilian protection-focused discussions that we would typically facilitate in a normal year of project implementation. However, here, too the project team was able to make some adaptations to enable continued progress towards results.

Notably, PAX and its partners engaged diverse audiences through online discussions, rather than in-person meetings. **During the annual PoC Conference in December, one day was fully dedicated to the theme of**

completed surveys per governorate – enough to enable that a random sample can be assumed to be representative of the broader population) is allocated geographically by population density according to the best and most recent available official population estimates. Specific sub-regions may be excluded from the sample if they are too unsafe or otherwise inaccessible during the time of the survey, though the team aims to make this as localized as possible to limit systematic bias in the dataset. For more details about the HSS methodology, see an overview on [our website](#).

**People & Protection** and featured the work of the HSS initiatives in both Iraq and South Sudan to grant civilians a greater voice in security issues. Stakeholders engaged directly as presenters for these sessions included the Dutch Ambassador to Iraq, Michel Rentenaar; a Policy Officer from the Conflict Prevention Unit at the Dutch Ministry of Defense, Major Marnix Provoost; an independent Iraqi political analyst, Sajjad Jiyad; and a number of experts from peer institutions like CIVIC, SIPRI, the Human Security Collective and our partners at AL-Amal. These sessions were also livestreamed on the HSS Facebook page to reach wider audiences in both Iraq and South Sudan.

It is worth acknowledging that online meetings and trainings were explored as options for pursuing community engagement and advocacy efforts with civilians and authorities within Iraq as well. However, this approach did not gain much traction with Iraqi officials for a variety of technical, logistical and security reasons, especially at the Ministerial level, which means that face-to-face communication is still necessary.

The project team therefore making forward-looking plans to target key institutions for advocacy and to provide structured guidance for protection actors in Iraq once conditions allow. For instance, the PoC team and its partners at AL-Amal intend to build on previous engagements with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI) initiated under an earlier PAX program to which the HSS contributed, the NAP 1325 program: *Engendering the Transition to Peace and Security in Iraq*. AL-Amal seeks to continue working on developing a Code of Conduct (CoC) for the police in Iraq focused on greater respect for human and women's rights in partnership with the Women's Empowerment Directorate at the General Secretariat for the Council of Ministries (WED). This effort will require high-level engagement with policymakers in Baghdad, followed by validation sessions with field-level security personnel in HSS-targeted governorates to provide practical input into the draft CoC. This neatly ties in with the programmatic objective of having security policies more tailored towards civilian needs. Furthermore, the relevance of this initiative follows naturally from the HSS data itself, which indicated over the last four years in all targeted governorates that the police are both the most consistently present and trusted security actors present in their communities. The anticipated results of this intervention include:

- ◆ Approval and implementation of the CoC on Human and Women's Rights for security personnel within the Iraqi MoI;
- ◆ Iraqi security personnel better adhere to Human and Women's Rights principles, especially during civil unrest and tensions; and
- ◆ Improved relationships between civil society and the police in targeted governorates and elsewhere within Iraq.

### **Unanticipated Results**

Together with youth groups from Basra, our partners at AL-Firdaws led an educational campaign targeting poorer communities that suffer from a lack of access to basic services, including adequate health care. **AL-Firdaws rapidly mobilized its network and leveraged its credibility with local populations to protect people by raising awareness about COVID-19.** The campaign included distributing hygiene products, detergents, masks and plastic gloves. They also disseminated informative leaflets on how to limit exposure and transmission through improved hygiene, how to practice proper social distancing and how to manage cases of infection in their communities.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the year and even during the HSS data collection process, the AL-Firdaws team took the opportunity to share materials and brochures about



*AL-Firdaws staff used their platform to share public health advice with underserved communities during the pandemic*

<sup>6</sup> For more details, see a [blog post on our website](#) detailing how our partners took on new roles during the pandemic.

these important public health considerations. In addition, Al-Firdaws also distributed flyers to raise awareness during the global campaign: [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#) in Basra.

## 2.1.5. Implications for Planning

### ***Updates to our approach***

An new opportunity to explore with regards to international advocacy and training efforts relates to the expansion of the NATO Mission in Iraq (NMI), which is not only increasing its total number of personnel on the ground, but will also broaden its geographic presence from Baghdad to other governorates. With the PiP and EIA projects also working closely with NATO headquarters and field missions, more tangible ways to work with NMI and to include them in the engagement with the Iraqi MoI will be explored during the coming year.

Given existing underspending from last year, the HSS project has the potential to expand within Iraq to other regions. The project is considering expanding next to Missan governorate with Al-Firdaws as its partner there as well. Also in the South, Missan does not have a lot of presence of international NGOs; however, the rise of protests in the area and rising insecurity since 2019 shows the potential added value of HSS interventions.

### ***Updates to partnerships and management***



*PAX and its partners during the annual 2020 strategy meeting in Iraq*

In February, just weeks before COVID-19 restrictions came into place, the project team met in the field with three potential partner organizations to facilitate our expansion into Diyala governorate. These were selected following a careful due diligence process and consultations with a number of trusted local experts. After a series of face-to-face meetings, Wand Al-Khair Human Organization (WAHO) was selected as the new HSS partner in Iraq. While a very localized organization focused on Diyala governorate and Tooz Khurmato district in Salahaddin, WAHO has three offices with staff working to provide legal

protection, combat administrative corruption and support livelihoods programming. They are a diverse organization, which facilitates greater access across religious and ethnic communities in the region. **WAHO's team is very enthusiastic about working together and sees great potential for the contribution that the HSS project can have in addressing security issues in their governorate.** The official contract with WAHO was signed in December, and the partnership will begin in earnest in early 2021.

A dedicated Senior Field Officer (SFO) was hired in early 2020 and based in Baghdad, although unfortunately it did not prove to be a useful management structure, particularly in a year with so little fieldwork. With the existing partners stepping up and training enumerators themselves, and Al-Amal willing to take on an expanded role on national-level advocacy, we decided to continue without this field-based position for the time being.

## 2.1.6. Lessons Learned

### ***Contributions to program-level learning questions***

**4. What are the best mechanisms for internal engagement that go beyond information sharing and facilitate both strategic and practical collaboration?**

The PoC Program enabled PAX and its partners to create more opportunities during each year to engage in collaborative and inclusive planning, management and learning. While the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the kind and scale engagement we had originally envisioned, **the HSS team was luckily able to meet together in Iraq during the inception phase for a country-specific kick off meeting.** This was a valuable

moment to involve more of the partner staff than in a typical strategy meeting where perhaps only organizational directors would be present. The partners themselves saw it as a useful moment to come together to network and exchange information.

The HSS Iraq Project Lead also found it enlightening to travel to South Sudan for the HSS project kick-off meeting there as well. She was able to share details and experiences of implementing the same project in Iraq with the partners in South Sudan, and **the broader program team again recognized the importance of facilitating moments of learning between the two countries**, particularly since our partners are genuinely interested in what is happening in each other's contexts. To further continue this process and expand access to a larger audience already active on social media, the HSS teams created a joint Facebook page to share project information, but also to feature our partners, celebrate their successes and grow their thought leadership around PoC themes. In Iraq, there are certainly still some sensitivities that we need to approach carefully given how activists have been targeted as of late – and particularly using social media platforms – although we and our partners have been pleased with the quality and quantity of engagement to date.

#### Learning Through Practice: Case study on remote research pilots in Iraq

**Both the global pandemic and the trend of violence targeting of activists in Iraq made the need for remote data collection very evident in 2020.** Given the relatively high rates of both internet penetration and smartphone usage across age groups and socioeconomic classes across the country, web-based research modes are sufficiently feasible in Iraq. As described above, the HSS team developed a pilot with the Centre for Innovation (CFI) to collect complementary data through the use of chatbot technology in 2020. This builds upon learning from previous study conducted in Iraq with a social science research firm called Upinion. While this pilot occurred under an earlier, concluded grant, its results have continued relevance to the HSS project.

The core hypothesis we wanted to test was whether a remote means of connecting with respondents (one that does not involve sitting face-to-face with a stranger) would result in higher reporting rates of particularly sensitive experiences of insecurity, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

**The Upinion pilot clearly demonstrated that topics like SGBV still remain taboo and reporting rates do not automatically increase if respondents are provided with a private, secure online channel. Conversely, the pilot actually revealed that skilled in-person interviewers might be better able to solicit accurate data by building a rapport with respondents when engaging on such sensitive topics.** During a standard HSS interview, enumerators can explain the confidentiality procedures in more detail and also address any specific questions that respondents may have. With an online survey, the easiest recourse for a respondent who becomes uncomfortable or confused during the process is to simply exit the survey. We also identified a number of important data limitations in the original Upinion pilot, such as the oversampling of men and people from larger cities, as well as lower-than-desired response rates in

general, which made the findings less generalizable.

**While this experience substantiated our existing methodological choices, it did not diminish our interest in finding effective ways to complement our existing survey with a means of engaging with respondents remotely.** Like with so many other challenges faced in the broader development sector, technology can be a useful tool, but is not a panacea.

In the ongoing pilot study with CFI, the target audience is narrowly focused during the initial phase to both enable us to test out the chatbot technology, and to experiment with a number of means for mitigating the challenges experienced in the initial pilot. We believe that a tool built to be conversational like the chatbot will more closely mirror the feel of an in-person interview than a standard online survey. We have also built into the script the types of reminders already in the standard HSS questionnaire reminding respondents that their contributions are anonymous and that they are free to skip questions that make them uncomfortable. Further, we will develop a thoughtful and iterative strategy for disseminating the link to reach our target audience and relevant sub-groups as efficiently and effectively as possible. For instance, the links to the chatbot will be shared through the local partner in secure WhatsApp groups and over email, which will hopefully foster greater acceptance and trust (in contrast with the Facebook advertisement strategy utilized by Upinion).

The CFI pilot at the University of Salahaddin will conclude in Q2 2021 and will generate a great deal of additional learning that we will both directly integrate into future remote research efforts, and will share with our partners and peer institutions through informal engagements and publicly via our website or potential future events.

Finally, the HSS Iraq and PiP project teams began collaborating in 2020 on joint research in Hawija about the immediate and reverberating effects of the Dutch airstrike in 2015 that killed some 70 civilians and

profoundly affected the broader community. The HSS Iraq Project Lead contributes field expertise and networks, while the PiP team will integrate the findings into their advocacy and advisory work with the Dutch Ministry of Defense and other targeted partners when sharing best practices regarding tracking, responding to and mitigating civilian harm incidents. This is a strong example of how the different components of this program build upon one another in pursuit of broader objectives.

**Contributions to project-level learning questions**

1. *How can we facilitate safe and effective community engagement at the local level that serves to build bridges between civilians and decision-makers, even when their interests are not aligned?*
2. *How can we have more targeted lobbying at the national level (including with like-minded organizations such as CIVIC and NDI) and with international actors both in Iraq and their HQs (like targeting the Dutch CBMI, NATO, etc.)?*

PAX and its partners were unfortunately unable to devote time and effort to the two key components of the HSS project covered by these questions: community engagement and advocacy. As pandemic conditions continue to improve and access limitations lift, we hope to be able to pursue and consolidate learning on these points in 2021. In the meantime, we will pursue additional innovative means for adapting our implementation process to enable us to bring the HSS data back to the community level and to engage with key protection actors in Iraq, such as sharing findings and stories on social media, producing or contributing to podcasts or radio programs and virtual launch events for publications.

## 2.1.7 Budget Summary

<b>Human Security Survey (HSS) Iraq</b>				
<b>Budget Line</b>	<b>Balance Y1</b>	<b>Budget Y2</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total Balance</b>
C.1 HSS Iraq Personnel	12.865	159.829	122.378	<b>50.316</b>
C.2 HSS Iraq Activities	-8.174	200.106	104.484	<b>87.447</b>
C.3 HSS Iraq Audit & Other	10.269	62.850	-	<b>73.119</b>
<b>Subtotal HSS Iraq</b>	<b>14.960</b>	<b>422.785</b>	<b>226.863</b>	<b>210.882</b>

# 2. Project Reports

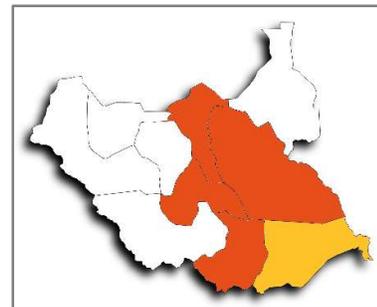
## 2.2. Human Security Survey – South Sudan

### 2.2.1. Project Summary

The Human Security Survey (HSS) is a methodology developed by PAX to collect evidence on civilians’ experiences, perceptions, and priorities regarding security in order to strengthen their claim-making capacity. The project consists of complementary and iterative activities, including:

- ◆ Conducting large-scale surveys to increase the understanding of local security dynamics and trends from a civilian perspective;
- ◆ Facilitating local dialogues with civilians and authorities to identify civilians’ priorities and aiding community security committees’ efforts to hold security providers accountable; and
- ◆ Engaging in evidence-based advocacy with national and international institutions to ensure that protection activities respond to civilians’ needs.

The theory underlying the HSS is that **by involving civilians in discussions about the protection issues that affect them every day, security policies and their implementation will become more reflective of and responsive to local needs, priorities, and capacities.** In order to achieve this, the HSS facilitates the generation of both rigorous data and inclusive community engagement. By repeating this cycle over multiple years, PAX and its partners can track trends and work to effect more sustainable change. The survey itself is therefore best seen as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself.

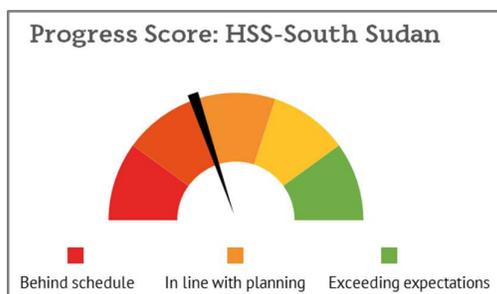


*HSS locations: Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, and Unity states (current), and Eastern Equatoria state (forthcoming)*

The HSS project was established in South Sudan in 2016, and the first cycle of data collection and community engagement began in 2017 in four states: Central Equatoria (Juba county), Jonglei (Bor South, Twic East and Duk counties), Lakes (Yirol West, Yirol East and Awerial counties), and Unity (Payinjiar county). From 2021 the project will also expand to Eastern Equatoria state (Magwi county).

The project’s core partners include the Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA) and – since late 2020 – the Catholic Diocese of Torit–Justice and Peace Commission (CDoT-JPC), as well as a network of local civil society actors and enumerators with whom we have longstanding relationships. In coordination with PAX’s Utrecht- and Juba-based staff, our partners play a critical role in the planning, implementation, management, and adaptation of all components of the project.

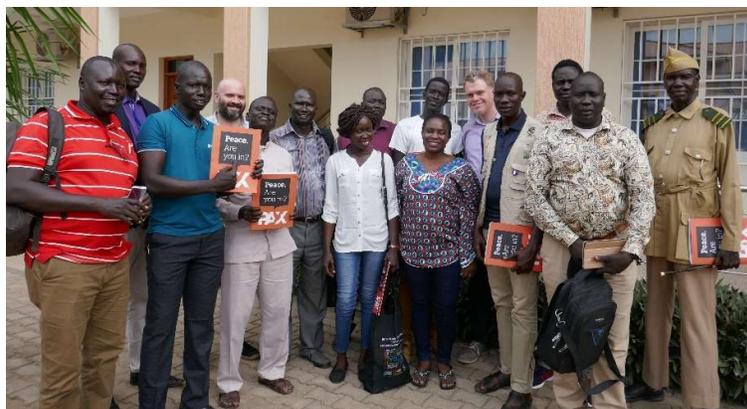
### 2.2.2. Progress Overview



The year kicked off well with an in-country strategic meeting to outline the project’s ambitious plans with regards to continued data collection and community engagement in existing HSS localities, plus the opportunity to expand to a fifth region in South Sudan. **The inception workshop was the first of its kind for the project, bringing together all local field partners as well as at least one representative from each of the local community security committees (COMSECOMs) to share experiences and inspiration, as well as basic operational**

information for the project partners. Participants also jointly designed the year's workplan and discussed how they would monitor and report on the project's progress. In addition, all stakeholders were informed about the linkages between the HSS in South Sudan and the other projects within the PoC Program in order to both understand the program's relevance to the situation in South Sudan and to identify the partners' anticipated contributions to work happening internationally.

Unfortunately, immediately after the inception workshop the global COVID-19 pandemic hit, imposing restrictions on both travel and gatherings that affected implementation through the second quarter of 2020. Fortunately, the third and fourth quarters allowed for a gradual return of field activities, although a number of HSS locations were affected by devastating floods during the rainy season. Data collection therefore took place under difficult circumstances in three targeted states, and all associated data feedback sessions were postponed until 2021. As a result, our ambitious initial (pre-pandemic) targets for field data collection and community engagement were unattainable, as were plans to engage in person with local partners, colleagues and peer institutions and key PoC actors within South Sudan, although PAX and its partners worked exceptionally hard in the second half of the year to make progress towards intended results.



*Attendees at the inception workshop in Juba made strategic plans for the year and engaged in participatory learning efforts, laying the groundwork for effective partnerships that would withstand the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic that hit just weeks later*

As a result, our ambitious initial (pre-pandemic) targets for field data collection and community engagement were unattainable, as were plans to engage in person with local partners, colleagues and peer institutions and key PoC actors within South Sudan, although PAX and its partners worked exceptionally hard in the second half of the year to make progress towards intended results.

**Strategically, the HSS project team utilized the enforced pause in fieldwork to invest in other opportunities to develop the project, such as :**

- ◆ Onboarding a new project partner and extending our network with a formal launch into Eastern Equatoria state;
- ◆ Transferring more operational responsibilities to project staff in Juba and partners in the field;
- ◆ Leveraging the local presence of the COMSECOMs to organize more local community engagement and awareness-raising activities than planned, expanding the project's profile in targeted communities and among local authorities;
- ◆ Building a more visible online presence and engaging a larger, active support base;
- ◆ Developing a more robust (inter)national advocacy strategy framework; and
- ◆ Designing a new methodology in the form of an Expert Panel Survey (to be piloted in 2021), in which the perspectives and experiences of local security experts will be used to complement existing HSS data.

All told, the HSS in South Sudan achieved a great deal in 2020, particularly in light of the very challenging operational conditions. PAX and its partners proved to be adaptable and strategic, and are well positioned to pursue greater ambitions again in 2021.

### 2.2.3. Project Context Analysis

The Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) between the national government and main armed opposition that was signed in September 2018 held throughout 2020, although the implementation of the agreement was slow and incomplete. The international community put intermittent pressure on the South Sudanese government and key main stakeholders, but the lack of any real alternative to the current peace process meant that this rarely led to a more speedy or inclusive course of action. Nevertheless, the reintroduction of the 10-state system from the controversial 32 states imposed in 2017 proved to be a bold and rather unexpected move by President

Salva Kiir, which led to a breakthrough in forming the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) together with the former opposition party (Riek Machar's SPLA-IO). The ever-fragmenting map of the last four years had increased tensions over leadership and borders, while also further dispersing already impossibly small budgets with which to govern. So while likely to be a positive change, the slow appointment of new local government administrations until now, both on state and county levels, meant that many states, including HSS survey areas, remained without effective leadership for almost a year. **As a result of the de facto power vacuum at the local level, there were no formal structures in place to prevent or manage existing communal tensions or violence.**

In general, media reports as well as provisional HSS survey results from 2020 suggest a worsening security situation across many parts of South Sudan. Although the insecurity levels in the previous year do not appear to be as grave as the 2016-17 period, **the initial security improvements, confidence and stability shown after the signing of the original ARCSS in 2018 seems to have faded as the peace process stumbles forward and governance challenges persist.** While fighting between the former political factions has decreased, communal violence within and between communities seems to be on the rise, and few formal institutions are equipped to counter or manage these challenges.



*Civilians bear ever-heavier burdens associated with the reverberating effects of armed conflict*

In another important shift in 2020, UNMISS decided to withdraw from its longstanding “PoC sites” in several areas across South Sudan, including the PoC site in Bor (Jonglei). By transferring the responsibility of the camp to the local authorities, many internally displaced people (IDPs) felt pressured to either return to their communities, or else remain in the camp under local security arrangements (as many doubt whether these local authorities can take up the responsibilities to protect IDPs as well as host communities effectively). Our relationship with the Civil Affairs Department within UNMISS deteriorated partly because of staff rotations, but also because the department seems to have become less open to engaging with partners outside of the mission at the moment. A key priority for 2021 will be restoring this relationship. **We have to somehow bridge the vastly different narratives going on between the international community (which tends to over focus on implementation of the peace agreement, political stability and elections) and that of South Sudanese themselves (concerned more with the rise of communal violence and the need to invest in conflict resolution, law enforcement and security sector reform).**



*HSS enumerators continued working in Greater Yirol (Lakes state) despite the effects of severe flooding*

On top of an unstable political and security landscape, our survey areas were also hit by natural disasters, as the rainy season saw exceptional flooding in 2020. Many parts of Jonglei and Unity states were affected when the waters from Nile River and its tributaries covered the houses, agricultural fields and cattle grazing lands that so many communities rely on for many months, even after the rains had ceased. Thousands of community members had to flee inundated areas and seek refuge in higher grounds, putting even more pressure on scarce resources, battling food insecurity, scarcity of drinking water, shrinking grazing land and the spread of diseases. These conditions also tend to strain social and conflict dynamics as communities compete for basic needs, a significant consideration for the future as climate change results in more frequent and dramatic flood and drought cycles. Unfortunately, local attempts to protect the riverine areas with dykes and channels have largely failed so far. Last year's flooding clearly demonstrated that **those of us working on conflict issues cannot afford to discuss physical security and armed violence in**

**isolation from the climatic and environmental factors that will continue to impact the broader humanitarian situation and conflict context.**

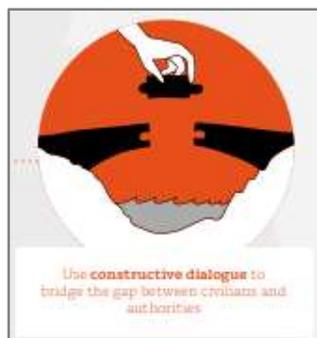
These political, social and environmental challenges, coupled of course with the health risks and travel restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, had a profound effect on the implementation of the HSS throughout 2020. After the PAX office in Juba re-opened following its brief hibernation during the second

quarter of the year, field operations resumed in Jonglei, Lakes and Unity states. However, these areas were severely affected by the 2020 floods, and were only provided new state and county leadership in early 2021, thereby restricting capacities to address ongoing communal tensions and cattle raids.

## 2.2.4. Key Results Achieved

**Long-term outcome 1: Civilians in conflict improve their human security situation through constructive engagement with (inter)national security actors**

In light of the global pandemic and the associated implementation delays and limitations on both domestic and international travel throughout much of 2020, PAX and its local partners made relatively little progress towards the longer-term objectives of the HSS South Sudan project this year. There were simply very few opportunities to engage with either national or international PoC actors in South Sudan given access



Central to the project logic is creating opportunities for civilians to hold (inter)national PoC actors accountable

limitations and competing priorities for key institutions that were forced to reorient towards COVID relief. However, there were still **shifts in the protection landscape during the last year – such as UNMISS removing its police and military protection contingents from various PoC sites – that highlight the continued relevance of the work of the HSS to identify civilians’ security needs and hold both national and international protection actors accountable for meeting their obligations to local communities.**

The project aims to have a greater influence on more systemic-level security and protection dynamics in 2021 and beyond via more focused and consistent evidence-based advocacy efforts at the national level in Juba, as well as with UNMISS and relevant troop contributing countries. This is a priority for the HSS team (as well as counterparts from the EIA and PiP projects under the larger PoC Program) in 2021 and beyond.

As is evidenced clearly and repeatedly below, there were numerous instances of very tangible local changes in security dynamics in targeted localities in South Sudan. We believe that these examples of using timely data to inform community engagement serve to substantiate the project’s intervention strategy that elevating civilians’ voices can lead to improvements in human security.

For a full summary of progress towards all HSS South Sudan project indicators, please refer to **Annex 3.2** of the overall PoC Program Annual Report.

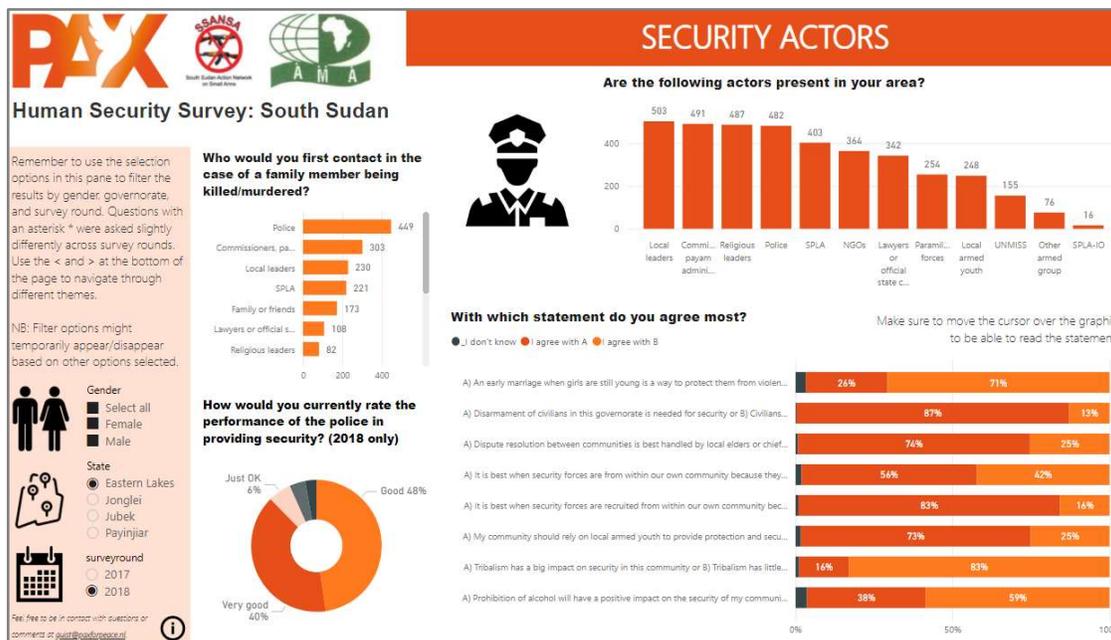
**Short-term outcome 1.1: Protection policies and practices in Iraq and South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings**

During the second half of 2020, the HSS team in South Sudan emerged from a short hiatus and quickly implemented a series of important activities to collect and disseminate data in three targeted regions. **PAX staff and partners worked thoughtfully and creatively to adapt the training protocols and HSS methodology to accommodate public health best practices to keep both the enumerators and respondents as safe as possible throughout the survey process.** The most significant immediate results for STO 1.1 include:

- ◆ 1.325 survey respondents interviewed in 3 regions (*Jonglei, Lakes and Unity states*)
- ◆ 3 four-day training courses in conflict-sensitive (and COVID-safe) research methods
- ◆ 28 enumerators demonstrating necessary skills to join data collection teams (*7 women, 21 men*)
- ◆ 1 data summary published detailing key findings (*Jonglei*)
- ◆ 344 total pageviews – an average of almost 30/month – of online publications of HSS findings
- ◆ 1 [launch event](#) to introduce the new HSS partner organization and celebrate expansion of the project to a 5<sup>th</sup> state in South Sudan

We were able to initiate the third data collection cycle of the HSS from the third quarter of 2020 onwards, gathering more context-specific datapoints and enabling trend analysis across at least three years of data across each of the targeted locations. This will paint a more detailed picture of how the security situation, as well as the perceptions among participating communities have developed over time. We expect this data and additional analysis will make the results of the HSS more relevant and appealing to local, national and

international protection actors. As in previous years, we ended up with more women than men in the survey sample (65% to 35%, respectively), providing an interesting opportunity for a gendered analysis and particular insight into the experiences and perspectives of female community members. While the project team was able to generate one data summary report about Jonglei, the remainder of the 2020 data will be further analyzed and published next year.



HSS findings are presented in narrative analyses and infographics, as well as interactive data dashboards. For more information, see: [www.protectionofcivilians.org](http://www.protectionofcivilians.org).

The implementation delays, in combination with restricted opportunities for international travel and conducting in-person community meetings, forced us to postpone the presentation of new data into 2021. This includes most notably the community security dialogue sessions organized in the regions where we collect the data for the purpose of validating the findings and facilitating detailed conversations about the priorities communities would like to address. We were also forced to move away, at least temporarily, from our plan to publicize our HSS data and reports through physical launch events in Juba and internationally, which would have served to attract relevant local, national and international protection actors to our unique findings and analysis. In the meantime, the project team strategically invested time in developing a more thorough and sustainable advocacy strategy, instead of engaging in one-off lobby trips and visits. This next phase of the project will be critical for helping PAX, its partners and communities achieve STO 1.2 and see the HSS findings be put to use as intended to inform actual protection strategies at the local level.

**In part as a response to these physical access challenges, the HSS team focused on growing its local constituency by publicizing our work on social media, through which progress regarding field activities and preliminary data can be shared in a direct, if virtual way.** Utilizing sites like Facebook and LinkedIn provides an opportunity to share developments that will in turn lead to more inspired COMSECOMs. These committees then engage in more



With over 400 followers, the HSS Facebook community is an interactive means of engaging diverse constituents and facilitating learning in both South Sudan and Iraq

relevant local follow-up activities in the field, thereby improving local presence and visibility of the HSS. Already in 2020 the [HSS Facebook page](#) led to increased engagement between COMSECOMs and local (informal) actors like Commissioners, payam administrators and chiefs during their field activities, providing a forum for sharing general peace messages or leading to further dialogue and addressing specific forms of communal violence directly with local stakeholders. While internet penetration remains quite low in South Sudan, this is still a useful and complementary means of engaging with authorities. More significantly, the younger generation (among whom enumerators and COMSECOM members) tend to be more active on Facebook, and love seeing their own work and region on display. They also garner a sense of what kind of work is happening in other survey areas which adds to inter-regional solidarity between enumerator groups and COMSECOMs, as well as increased inspiration for campaigns and activities.

PAX was also very pleased to organize a public launch event in December 2020 with staff from its new partner, the Catholic Diocese of Torit-Justice and Peace Commission (CDoT-JPC), alongside representatives from government, the security sector and civil society. The acting governor of Eastern Equatoria state, Fr. Ausilio Odume, offered his enthusiasm for the HSS, saying “*We want people to come up like this and support us so that we work together. We cannot address and solve the problems of this country through only the government – it will never succeed.*”<sup>1</sup> Our partners at CDoT-JPC are eager as well and see this as a valuable means by which to help both civil society and local authorities design more effective peacebuilding interventions.

***Short-term outcome 1.2: Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in Iraq and South Sudan***

The community engagement component of the HSS project consists of two main building blocks: the community security dialogue sessions and follow-up community engagement activities by the COMSECOMs. The course of the most recent data collection cycle meant that community security dialogue sessions – where collected data is presented, assessed and prioritized – did not yet take place in 2020. Despite this, the existing COMSECOMs remained operational throughout the year,<sup>2</sup> and in some survey areas were even more active than expected, delivering some interesting results. Below is a summary of progress towards STO 1.2 during 2020:

- ◆ 4 Community Security Committees (COMSECOMs) were active in 4 targeted states
- ◆ 17 local community engagement or awareness-raising activities
- ◆ 300+ community members, local government officials and security actors participating in the community engagement events
- ◆ 5 radio talk show programs featuring HSS findings and COMSECOM members, purportedly reaching thousands of listeners in Jonglei and Lakes States

Throughout 2020 the COMSECOMs in all four existing HSS regions organized more field activities than expected, engaging with local (in)formal actors like Commissioners, payam administrators and chiefs during various events and meetings. **These efforts provided a forum for sharing general peace messages in some cases, and directly addressed specific incidents or forms of communal violence with local stakeholders in others.**

The COMSECOM in Payinjiar (Unity) conducted mediation meetings in three different villages where community leaders, police and local government officials addressed cycles of revenge killing. In these areas rival clans had killed various members of one another’s communities; however, they agreed to reconcile, allowing local authorities to intervene and vowing to end the practice of revenge killing in favor of the rule of law. The same COMSECOM also engaged communities directly in response to intercommunal cattle raids that were endangering the fragile local peace agreement between neighboring Dinka communities.

---

<sup>1</sup> The December launch event in Torit was covered by trusted local media outlet [Radio Tamazuj](#).

<sup>2</sup> Every COMSECOM follows the Community Action Plan (including the top five security priorities) agreed to by the community security dialogue participants. Even in a situation like this year where there was no new data available, the COMSECOMs deferred to the latest action plan available, at least until a new dialogue process produces a new list of priorities (or confirms the previous one).

The committee aided in the retrieval of stolen cattle and met with youth engaged in cattle raids and addressed some of the youth and “spear masters (witch doctors) who had instigated them.

Similarly, the COMSECOM in Jonglei also facilitated a mediation effort between local chiefs in two villages in Jonglei who agreed to settle a communal land dispute by setting up a joint committee to address the mutual sharing of water points, a sensitive issue due also to the presence of IDPs resulting from recent floods. **Each of these interventions emerged as priorities during community security dialogue sessions and were tangible examples of the types of communal violence issues identified as being on the rise in the HSS data where communities saw few practical means for recourse.**

### Featured Story: Community engagement in 2020

In 2018, the Nuer of Payinjar county in Unity state engaged in a successful bottom-up peace process with their neighboring Dinka of Lakes state to end years of cattle raids and retaliatory killing. Our local field partner Assistance Mission in Africa (AMA) engages with local communities and authorities to monitor interactions between Yirol (Dinka) and Payinjar (Nuer) communities for incidents that could potentially undermine the joint peace agreement. **AMA is very well connected to communities and trusted by local leadership on both sides of the border, which makes them such an important field partner for the HSS.**

After initial progress was made in opening up markets and cattle grazing areas, it became clear that cattle raiding did not stop entirely, and even increased during the course of 2020. The main cause is the existence of armed youth that were excluded from the formal peace negotiations, and therefore do not honor the resulting agreement. However, ongoing cattle raids and revenge killings between and among all sides made it hard for the communities to enjoy the benefits of peace, as both people and cattle still could not move freely between the communities, use market facilities and share grazing grounds for fear of raids, looting and killings.

Immediately following reports in December 2020 of cattle raids near Yirol, AMA and members of the Unity-based COMSECOM joined local authorities from Payinjar on a field mission to Pachak payam, situated along the border of the two states. The mission retrieved 145 of the reported 400 stolen cows, and helped identify the armed youth held responsible for the raid. In the meantime, they collected testimonies about why some

spoilers in the community, were actively undermining the current peace agreement and explored how to convince them to join the peace agreement and refrain from future acts of criminality and communal revenge.

Based on these testimonies, AMA returned a few weeks later to conduct a meeting with so-called “spear masters,” otherwise referred to as shamans or witch doctors, who often hold considerable (informal) power in the community. They can motivate youth to engage in potentially deadly cattle raids and are believed to be capable of guaranteeing a successful raid or making participating youth invincible against bullets through their rituals and sacrifices. After two meetings involving spear masters and armed cattle keepers in cattle camps in the Unity-Lakes border area with the aim to collect their grievances and share them with local government officials, police and cattle camp leaders, the parties involved agreed to end their violent raids and commit themselves to the community peace agreement, which was again reconfirmed with a conference in early 2021).



COMSECOM members met with local “spear masters” to settle disputes related to cattle raiding

The COMSECOMs in Jonglei and Lakes also leveraged their platform and increased their visibility by participating in a number of popular local radio talk shows. These five programs covered relevant security issues ranging from land disputes, cattle raiding, child abductions, girl elopement and forced marriage and COVID-19. Given the wide reach of radio as a platform in South Sudan, each program had the potential to reach up to thousands of community members. The conversations were also participatory; dozens of community members (including many women) called in live to comment or ask questions. According to the COMSECOM members and our partners, local responses were very positive to the radio talk shows, and hopefully these efforts will continue in the future.

PAX traditionally has a productive working relationship with local authorities in South Sudan, who are mostly committed and well-intentioned; however, their capacities and resources were especially challenged in 2020. As a result of increased local engagement between the COMSECOMs and local security stakeholders, as well as starting our third data collection cycle in some areas, **PAX and its partners**

witnessed an increased level of trust in the HSS among local government, security actors and civil society, leading to a good working relationship which enables the uptake of any agreements made during past and future community engagement activities.

Finally, while limits on international travel hindered our ability to organize in-person events or planned advocacy efforts, PAX and its partners still contributed to a series of informative discussions about human security conditions in South Sudan. Most notably, day two of PAX's [Protection of Civilians Conference](#) in December focused around the theme of *People & Protection* and showcased the results of our HSS work. The sessions included presentations from local staff and partners alongside other key stakeholders, such as the Force Commander from UNMISS, a Policy Officer at the Dutch Ministry of Defense, and expert researchers from institutions like SIPRI and the Austrian Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution. These sessions were also livestreamed on the HSS Facebook page to facilitate participation in both South Sudan and Iraq.



*Lt. General Shailesh Tinaikar, Force Commander at UNMISS provided his insights during PAX's PoC Conference. Recordings from all sessions are available on [our website](#).*

## 2.2.5. Implications for Planning

### **Updates to our approach**

Most challenges in 2020 were linked to the global COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in postponing data collection and community engagement activities at the local level, as well as advocacy visits, launching events or facilitation and advocacy trainings to partners at the national and international levels. However, these challenges did not lead to far-reaching strategic changes to previous plans and methodologies beyond postponing these activities to 2021.

Aside from COVID-19, the other external factor that most impacted programming in 2020 was undoubtedly climate change. Extensive flooding affected areas and communities that we survey, which meant that (even more than usual) we had to avoid planning field activities during the rainy season. The weather events of 2020 showed that the effects and aftermath of the floods could be felt for many more months, even after the rainy season ended. Indeed, it is not only our own fieldwork that is affected by natural disasters exacerbated by climate change, but local social, political, economic, and conflict conditions as well. As a result, we will incorporate sensitivity to these dynamics into how we implement our HSS methodology, and will consider additional questions into the HSS questionnaire and dialogue sessions to assess public perceptions about the relationships between climate, the environment and human security.



*Not being able to fulfill our obligations to bring the data back to participating communities was a big frustration for PAX in 2020*

Collecting data via in-person interviews on a large scale during a pandemic was incredibly difficult due to restrictions on international and domestic travel, limited freedom of movement by enumerators, and feeding the data back to communities in a responsible way was nearly impossible as a result of inaccessible local authorities and the inability to safely organize public gatherings and dialogues. As a result, the **HSS team has developed a longitudinal expert panel methodology in 2020 to complement the existing survey. This will enable us to collect data more frequently from informed local stakeholders, including in response to significant events or shifting dynamics.** The data will also serve to validate HSS results and enable us to test potential new questions for the HSS questionnaire. The research will specifically collect the perspectives of (in)formal local political authorities and security providers who are experts on local law enforcement and security provision. These expert views on local security should complement the community views and experiences solicited via the HSS, and give us more insights regarding the current dynamics and capacities regarding the supply side of protection.

After seeking advice from both technology experts as well as partners in the field, remote surveying using online tools (like the chatbot platform currently being piloted by the HSS Iraq project) proved impractical in reality. Instead, the project will pursue a more labor-intensive, but ultimately more feasible method of face-to-face and phone-based interviews by field partners or local consultants. This effort will be fully piloted and tested in 2021, with the potential for scaling up to all five research locations based upon lessons learned.

Finally, one of the most critical ambitions for the year to come is to begin implementing a more robust (inter)national advocacy strategy both inside and outside of South Sudan,<sup>3</sup> in coordination and cooperation with PoC partners, PAX colleagues and peer institutions with expertise in the region. More specifically, HSS staff intend to establish deeper relationships and more consistent communication with representatives from both national government agencies and international stakeholders (e.g. UNMISS, other UN agencies, key embassies, INGOs), and to conduct launch events or bilateral briefings to publicize new research findings. Further, the HSS project will increasingly contribute to the training of military staff either in or headed to South Sudan by embedding research data and local expertise into training curricula and pre-deployment briefings.

### ***Updates to partnerships and management***

The global pandemic also contributed to a hugely significant development in how the project is managed, in that local staff and partners became much more responsible for day-to-day implementation in 2020. This included, for the first time, direct responsibility for technical components of the project like enumerator trainings and oversight of the research process. **While transferring more ownership to the local level has always been an ambition of the project, the limitations posed on international travel necessitated that this process occur on a faster timeline. This is likely to have significant benefits in the future for both tangible matters like the cost of certain activities and speed at which activities can be implemented, but also more intangible aspects of ownership and sustainability.**

As described in detail above, PAX is very pleased to now be working with CDoT-JPC in Eastern Equatoria state. While it was not an ideal year for onboarding a new partner, their staff was able to participate in a number of key moments of engagement throughout the year, including the inception workshop and the formal kickoff event in Torit. The enthusiasm exhibited by the partner is infectious: *“This is a very important exercise which strengthens our roles as civil society organizations and as churches to carry out the work of peacebuilding based on the evidence we are introducing...[The] HSS helps us to reach down to the grassroots and assess people’s perspectives on their own lives, on how they see their lives, those factors that tend to interfere with their peace and welfare. So this will help us soon to be able to design peacebuilding interventions based on evidence to address real issues in time.”* We as a PoC Program are excited to see how this partnership develops going forward.



*The December kickoff event with CDoT-JPC was successful and well-attended*

## 2.2.6. Lessons Learned

Many of the lessons learned in the HSS South Sudan project in 2020 were very practical and operational in nature, though we also worked towards answering some of the deeper questions we have posed at the program and project levels.

The global COVID-19 pandemic confronted PAX with practical challenges as our regular travels were impossible and we were forced to limit ourselves to online communications. This required coming up with

---

<sup>3</sup> Some of the key focus areas of this advocacy are likely to include (but not be limited to): security sector reform (SSR), training and equipping police, addressing protection issues in remote areas without legitimate security forces, facilitating and monitoring local peace agreements and ceasefires, promoting grassroots peace processes and supporting successful civilian disarmament campaigns.

creative ways to stay connected with South Sudanese field partners, COMSECOMs and relevant PoC actors. Although the lack of reliable or quality internet access makes online engagement with South Sudan (especially beyond the capital, Juba) very challenging, we managed to expand our support base via social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook, sharing results from research efforts, informing and inspiring our South Sudanese constituency with stories about community engagement efforts by COMSECOMs and generally contributing to the discourse about civilian protection issues in South Sudan. This regular communication with key stakeholders was informative and motivating, both of which were necessary for a sense of continued progress in an otherwise very difficult year.

### **Contributions to program-level learning questions**

- 1. What does meaningful accountability to civilians in conflict really look like in practice? How does it differ for different protection actors and institutions both nationally and internationally?***

Meaningful accountability for communities in South Sudan means as a civilian being able to meet and voice your opinion on relevant security issues. In a situation where security and governance actors cannot – or will not – easily engage directly with communities, organizations like PAX and its partners can use their convening power to facilitate more targeted meetings (especially with marginalized or spoiler groups), which can still be regarded as valuable for all parties involved.

### **Contributions to project-level learning questions**

- 1. How can we best develop and implement a coherent lobby and advocacy strategy jointly with partners and colleagues (EIA and PiP) that enables us to collectively and effectively engage with UNMISS, other relevant UN agencies, and T/PCCs regarding PoC and community engagement issues in South Sudan?***
- 2. How can we and our partners constructively build an advocacy network with (national-level) South Sudanese political and security authorities, and most effectively encourage them to improve their protection strategies?***

The last year enabled PAX and its partners time to make progress in laying the groundwork to design and implement an advocacy strategy that encompasses both national and local institutions within South Sudan, as well as international organizations and military missions active in the country. In the upcoming period we will concretize this further by aligning this strategy with the PAX country team colleagues in South Sudan, as well as the EIA and PiP colleagues within the PoC Program to enhance scope, scale and sustainability.

UNMISS engagements proved challenging, as some key contacts within the Civil Affairs Department (CAD) rotated, while contentious decisions on PoC site withdrawal also made productive and open communication with UNMISS more difficult. We hope and expect that the advocacy strategy, as well as improved coordination and cooperation across the PoC Program and with colleagues from PAX and relevant peer institutions will improve our access to CAD and other key departments within UNMISS, as well as the wider UN system with regards to South Sudan.

- 3. How can we help address the perceived “law enforcement gap” by community members and local authorities alike across South Sudan?***

This question requires further explicit exploration in future years of the program.

## **2.4.7 Budget Summary**

<b>Human Security Survey (HSS) South Sudan</b>				
<b>Budget Line</b>	<b>Balance Y1</b>	<b>Budget Y2</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total Balance</b>
B.1 HSS South Sudan Personnel	10.026	159.829	140.725	<b>29.130</b>
B.2 HSS South Sudan Activities	73.761	184.175	87.018	<b>170.918</b>
B.3 HSS South Sudan Audit & Other	5.000	15.000	-	<b>20.000</b>
<b>Subtotal HSS South Sudan</b>	<b>88.787</b>	<b>359.004</b>	<b>227.743</b>	<b>220.049</b>

## 2. Project Reports

### 2.3. Engaging International Actors on PoC

#### 2.3.1. Project Summary

The commitment to protecting civilians in conflict is firmly on the international agenda and key institutions like the UN and NATO possess defined policies around PoC; however, missions still struggle to effectively protect civilians in practice. The Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA) project works to **inform PoC actors about the needs and capacities of civilians in conflict and advocates for integrating diverse civilian perspectives into PoC policies**. We do so in order to improve transparency and accountability of international military missions, and to facilitate more effective practices for the protection of civilians. The main components of the project's approach consist of:

- ◆ Advocating for inclusive civilian perspectives to be integrated into trainings and policies associated with military missions and UN peacekeeping operations;
- ◆ Engaging constructively with UN and other international security actors or institutions on how to improve transparency, accountability and effectiveness in PoC;
- ◆ Organizing public events and expert-level roundtable sessions on the sidelines of international PoC discussions; and
- ◆ Convening an annual international PoC-focused conference to enable learning and engagement between international practitioners (civilians and military), policymakers, researchers and civil society on challenges and best practices in the PoC field.

The EIA project lends a particular focus on NATO through its partnership with the Stimson Center. In 2016, the NATO Policy on PoC made protection a goal of future operations, kicking off development of a military concept on PoC, an action plan and guidance. Whether in active security operations, train-and-assist missions or support to disaster relief, NATO policy is to mitigate harm from its own actions and protect civilians from the harm of others. To support NATO's success, Stimson, in partnership with PAX, developed an innovative project to cultivate and offer external research and technical expertise to NATO as they continue to operationalize their PoC policy. These elements of the project include: research, PoC capacity reviews, roundtable discussions and convening a group of experts to provide targeted advice to NATO.

#### 2.3.2. Progress Overview

The EIA project ended 2020 reasonably on track with regards to implementing intended activities and achieving primary outputs; however, the consequent impact of these results appears more limited than desired due to their virtual nature throughout the COVID-19 crisis. **Progress towards our desired longer-term policy changes within the UN, NATO and EU, as well as targeted bilateral countries was impeded to some extent due to the pandemic and associated uncertainty.**



Engaging directly with field missions in particular was challenging, as everyone was finding new ways of working befitting their operational conditions. This project was able to adjust and continue many planned meetings and roundtable events online, as well as continue to coordinate with peer NGOs and distribute policy briefs to key institutions virtually. While perhaps limiting opportunities for the more informal relationship building that can be so critical to effective advocacy under normal circumstances, moving these

efforts online had a significant indirect benefit of broadening our audience and making these efforts more accessible to a wider range of stakeholders.

For instance, PAX’s annual PoC event, which this year expanded in scale to a 3-day virtual conference, provided ample time to discuss a variety of different themes relevant to both our own work, but also to the



PoC field as a whole. **The interactive event engaged a truly global audience, expanding our network and generating many creative ideas and opportunities for how to advance and improve the protection of civilians in conflict.**

Similarly, in New York, prioritized engagements with UN and member states moved apace as a result of a relatively smooth transition from in-person towards virtual events on important themes, such as a series of expert-level sessions on improving peacekeeping training for PoC, community engagement in peacekeeping operations and assessing challenges and opportunities within the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative. These events were particularly effective at engaging and promoting UN member states considered “PoC champions,” including the Netherlands.

*EIA events leveraged the new virtual settings to enable more inclusive participation and to facilitate constructive engagement with and between attendees*

While NATO shifted the focus of almost all capacity (including the offices working on PoC) over to COVID relief, our partners at the Stimson Center managed to meet all of their intended deliverables in 2020. At the moment, NATO is not currently focused on PoC as a future component of missions, and we learned that the work we are doing through this program to prepare them to address

PoC in future conflicts is therefore especially vital. Particularly after September 2020, when key stakeholders at NATO HQ, ACO and ACT began to re-engage on human security topics. Stimson executed “Plan B” as approved by DSH in mid-2020, shifting towards desk-based research and convening their cohesive expert group via remote engagements. Holding their first annual conference online also allowed Stimson to convene a large and diverse community of experts and to forge new and deeper relationships with policymakers and practitioners both inside and outside of NATO.

In Brussels, the project team identified an important opportunity for engaging with the EU on the proposed European Peace Facility (EPF). In light of more limited prospects for engaging with NATO partners, our Public Affairs team representative seized the chance to input the expertise of our PoC Program into the policy discussion on the EPF, which we identified as potentially having negative implications for the protection of civilians through its militaristic approach and failure to adopt internal safeguards around conflict sensitivity or civilian harm mitigation. **PAX and its peers also argued that the EU should meaningfully engage with local communities and civil society as part of this process, a key message that resonates across the EIA project approach.**

Finally, when operational conditions limited our ability to access external stakeholders, the EIA team dedicated time in 2020 to strengthening programmatic cohesion. Internally we coordinated more with the HSS projects on community engagement and how to leverage better our insights from project areas in international settings, and we worked strategically with the PiP team, particularly in relation to developing the roles for our new Military Specialist colleagues as well as on the theme of Data for Protection.

### 2.3.3. Project Context Analysis

While the COVID-19 pandemic overshadowed preexisting conflict and human security dynamics, it did not make the work of PAX or its partners any less relevant in 2020. There were a number of shifts in focus and policy within key institutions targeted through this program, some of which open doors, and others of which posed challenges.

The adoption of Training, Accountability and Community Engagement as priorities in the A4P agenda by the Netherlands in 2020 links well with our program, and we aim to contribute to these priorities in 2020. The upcoming Ministerial and PrepCon on peacekeeping in 2021 also provide concrete and valuable chances for collaboration with the Dutch MFA. However, there is a risk that shrinking economies and Official Development Assistance (ODA) contributions overall might compound a lack of prioritization for international PoC with a lack of means. **This dynamic would increase the utility of this project's aims for comprehensive approaches where they matter most, but may equally make it more difficult to find fertile grounds for the effort to cultivate visible, global champions of PoC.**

The EIA team will work to cultivate continued working relationships at the MFA's office of Multilateral Organizations and Human Rights (DMM), as well as the Dutch MoD in the period to come. Work with MoD in 2020 stalled between divisions internally at the ministry on what to do with limited available budget (an issue extending far beyond prioritizing PoC) and following attention from national media. Initial plans to have a comprehensive approach to PoC in the Netherlands are progressing slowly, and likely will only have more traction until after pandemic conditions have improved.

In terms of more practical implementation considerations, the COVID-19 pandemic hindered access and ease of communication with the UN, NATO, EU and key member states throughout 2020. While we continued to work with many of our known interlocutors based in The Hague, New York and Brussels, meeting and forming new relationships proved to require more time and effort than in normal circumstances. EIA staff and our partners were forced to adapt many of our planned activities to virtual implementation, which garnered some benefits in terms of increased accessibility, but also inhibited the typical networking benefits from in-person meetings and conferences. Further, travel restrictions also meant that the project was unable to organize input sessions in project countries like Iraq and South Sudan as planned, which limited the potential impact of our work as measured through direct advocacy and meaningful collaboration with local civil society. While the feasibility of future travel is still unknown, PAX and Stimson will both eagerly make plans for high-level visits to Brussels and various field contexts when it becomes possible. We do not know the longer-term impact of the pandemic conditions on planned work in the period to come, but the EIA team has ambitious plans for 2021 that can be carried out remotely if necessary.

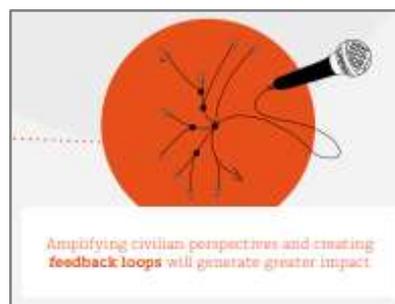
## 2.3.4. Key Results Achieved

***Long-term outcome 2: UN, NATO, T/PCCs and missions increasingly articulate and implement inclusive protection of civilians policies and practices***

The longer-term objective of the EIA project is to inform more inclusive PoC policies and practices among targeted institutions and missions. To facilitate these results, the PAX and its partners seek to organize expert-level events at UN and NATO headquarters that highlight civilian-centered approaches to PoC, and work with specific missions or member states to develop or adapt their own strategies to better incorporate civilian perspectives. Some key intermediate results were achieved this year, including:

- ◆ **1 [roundtable event](#)** on engaging local populations in UN peacekeeping
- ◆ **1 proposal for a PoC Action Plan for the Netherlands** provided to the Dutch MFA

On November 2, 2020, the governments of the Netherlands and Uruguay in partnership with the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC), Cordaid and PAX organized a virtual roundtable entitled, "Engaging Local Populations as Partners in UN Peacekeeping." The event brought together experts from UN peacekeeping missions, UN headquarters, civil society organizations operating in peacekeeping contexts, international NGOs and UN Member States. This event was prepared in close cooperation with the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO). **Participants highlighted how engaging communities as partners is crucial for the effectiveness and sustainability of peacekeeping operations' mandate implementation, particularly as it contributes to**



*Community engagement has myriad operational and strategic benefits for peacekeeping missions*

**improved understanding community's protection needs.** This event was the third in a series exploring community engagement in peacekeeping, and is considered by all of the involved partners as a new starting point for follow-up conversations with the relevant actors. However, new strategy sessions with the EIA and HSS team and our partners on the format, timing and involvement of relevant actors (UN HQ, Member States and mission staff) are needed to maximize impact of these events at the outcome level.

The EIA project also seeks to cultivate so-called “champions of PoC,” nations that are eager to advance international policy and practice in the field. Two of the countries that the project seeks to focus on are the Netherlands and Germany. In early 2020, the PoC team shared a process proposal for a PoC action plan for the Netherlands with counterparts at DSH. This proposal was the foundation for further exchanges with the Dutch MFA and MoD to formulate the PoC goals, means and approaches that the Netherlands will prioritize in the upcoming years. Not much progress was subsequently made, so the EIA team will review our strategy regarding the Netherlands PoC action plan in 2021.

PAX also aimed in 2020 to facilitate collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany on PoC through high-level policy engagements. While there was lower than desired buy-in during the pandemic, the project will seek to further cultivate the necessary political will within the Dutch and German governments for this kind of joint learning in 2021. We hope to see renewed interest in this initiative following the formation of a new government in the Netherlands. In the meantime, we will also review online work practices with a focus on inclusion and efficiency of exchanges to increase potential impact.

For a full summary of progress towards all EIA project indicators, please refer to **Annex 3.2** of the overall PoC Program Annual Report.

***Short-term outcome 2.1: T/PCCs gain knowledge about their current capacity for civilian-centered protection and how to increase their PoC capacity***

Under STO 2.1, the EIA project aims to engage NATO member states and UN troop/police contributing countries (T/PCCs) in practical dialogues about how to improve their capacity for civilian-centered protection. Some of the key results in 2020 include:

- ◆ **1 side event** during at UN PoC week on UN peacekeeping training for PoC
- ◆ **1 side event** during the UNSC Open Debate on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda
- ◆ **1 recommendations brief** on gender-sensitive capacities of UN peacekeeping operations
- ◆ **1 report** on operationalizing PoC under UN A4P priorities
- ◆ **12** specialized protection experts serving on Expert Advisory Team to NATO
- ◆ **418** participants attended PAX's 3-day [PoC Conference](#)
- ◆ **100+** participants attended Stimson's first [annual conference](#) on NATO and the future of PoC

At [our virtual UN PoC Week side-event](#) co-hosted by the Governments of Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Rwanda and Uruguay, approximately 100 representatives from the UN secretariat, UN member states, civil society and practitioners discussed the challenges and best practices of contributions to UN peacekeeping training. Both the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands are involved in the follow up subsequent to this event, and the aim is to inspire additional T/PCCs through these engagements.

PAX also convened [an expert panel](#) on the sidelines of the annual UNSC Open Debate on WPS, together with the government of Rwanda, PAX and Stimson. The event included a keynote address by Clare Hutchinson, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for WPS, as well as a Brazilian Military Gender Advisor, a Gender Affairs Officer at UN DPO, a Senior Military Advisor at CIVIC and an academic expert on gender-sensitive peacekeeping training practices. Participants discussed practical ways forward to improve critical gender-sensitive capacities of UN peacekeeping operations at the national and



*Global experts shared valuable and distinct perspectives on best practices and lessons learned in conducting gender-sensitive peacekeeping training*

international levels. PAX and Stimson provided a [recommendations brief](#) on practical ways forward to improve gender-sensitive capacities of UN peacekeeping operations at the national and international levels, which will be used for further PoC advocacy in 2021.

In 2020, we published several research products that directly support programmatic efforts to improve PoC tactics and approaches within UN. For example, the report '[Operationalizing PoC under A4P priorities](#)' includes reflections of representatives from A4P PoC Champion States and UN DPO on the implementation of PoC in peacekeeping operations in light of recent UN reforms and reviews, and concrete steps that UN member states can take to uphold their A4P commitments and improve capacities for PoC. This discussion was particularly salient ahead of the upcoming 2021 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul, at which member states will have the opportunity to make concrete pledges for tangible contributions to implementation of their protection and related commitments under A4P. PAX argues member states should focus on: improving training for PoC; ensuring adequate resourcing for coordination and information sharing, as well as planning and evaluation; and co-prioritizing implementation of the WPS agenda.



*PoCCon 2020 benefitted from a professional technical setup and interactive virtual platform*

From 1-3 December, PAX convened its fourth annual PoC Conference, though for the first time in an entirely virtual setting. **The PoC team decided to substantially expand the size and scope of the event, this year bringing together our network of PoC partners for three full days, each of which addressed a key theme: *National Contributions to PoC, People & Protection and the Reverberating Effects of Civilian Harm*.** The conference provided participants with diverse backgrounds and perspectives the opportunity to share knowledge, lessons learned, and ideas for how to advance

the field. International interaction was facilitated through live virtual panels, surveys, Q&A sessions, and pre-recorded messages from the field. Please visit [our website's events page](#) to see recordings of all of the individual sessions, review the informative visual notes and read recommendations briefs emerging from specific discussions.

#### Featured Story: PoCCon 2020

The first day of PAX's annual PoC Conference was dedicated to exchanging on National Contributions to PoC, highlighting in particular perspectives from the Netherlands, Germany and the UK. It proved incredibly useful to look at the national policies and practices of PoC with such a broad and informed group of participants in the afternoon session after hearing inspiring examples from the three experiences highlighted in the morning. **Widening our audience for our project both enhances our impact and improves the quality of our work through soliciting input, feedback and expertise from diverse stakeholders.**

Combining our work with the UN, EU and NATO during the conference and connecting it with all projects within the PoC Program was strategic, as evidenced by the fact that we engaged four times the number of attendees as in previous years. Participants indicated that they highly appreciated the real-conference feeling of the program (despite the virtual setting), something that people had missed since the outbreak of the pandemic.

We were fortunate enough to receive positive feedback throughout our various events in 2020, which was particularly reassuring after having to reorient towards organizing everything online. We were able to adapt to circumstances and went from advocating for continued access to decision making for civil society with the UN early in the pandemic to proactively organizing successful virtual events together *with the UN* in 2020.

Continuing our advocacy during these times has been challenging; however, we have been able to convene the right people and organizations active on our topics of concern. **We believe that convening a wide yet relevant range of perspectives around the (virtual) table on concrete PoC topics is one of the key strengths of the EIA project.** While we hope we can return to physical meetings and some travel soon in order to continue advancing our advocacy objectives, although we plan to maintain an online component to our events in any case to facilitate the active participation of constituencies we need in our work on PoC in the future.

In 2020, Stimson conducted research with nearly 40 stakeholders to understand the current "State of Play" of PoC at NATO. NATO HQ signaled positive interest in the idea of mapping PoC guidance of all NATO allies and partners to identify gaps in future implementation; however, due to the global pandemic, and the lack of capacity from NATO HQ, they postponed discussion of this collaboration until Fall 2020. At that point,

the Brussels office suggested that NATO HQ was unable to support this mapping exercise in 2021 or later without more clear guidance approved by the NAC, and frankly, interest from alliance members.

Stimson also built and convened an Expert Advisory Team in 2020 to deepen and develop the work with NATO, including the strategy for 2021-2023. The 12 members include four women, two of whom are co-chairs. Stimson held three group video calls this year and hosted a discussion with Clare Hutchinson, NATO Special Representative for WPS and Human Security, as a featured speaker in late 2020. This group will play a critical role in providing input to both Stimson and NATO in 2021 and beyond

One of the key achievements of 2020 for Stimson was successfully conducting their first annual conference to explore the implementation status of NATO's 2016 Policy on the Protection of Civilians.<sup>1</sup> From 14-17 December, the conference brought together expert representatives from government, NGOs, academia and NATO. The event served to identify research areas around NATO's PoC Policy and consider how future conflict scenarios facing NATO may need to take into account civilian harm in particular. The first day of the conference was recorded and can be viewed on [their website](#). Stimson will follow up on this event by commissioning a set of six papers from experts to identify specific issues for NATO's consideration and propose a way forward. In 2021, Stimson plans to widen the audience for their next conference with the aim of broadening exchange, and will focus on the military contribution to mitigating harm, particularly from other actors.

#### Featured Story: Stimson

In December 2020, the Stimson Center held a series of workshops to explore the implementation status of NATO's PoC policy. The conference brought together more than 100 expert practitioners, academics, and representatives of militaries and governments. NATO was also well represented with participants from 15 allied and partner nations, NATO Headquarters, Allied Command Transformation (ACT), and Allied Command Operations (ACO).

The event aimed to bolster exchange among PoC leaders working in, on, or with NATO. **The format encouraged sharing expertise, presenting new research findings and**

**identifying a greater understanding of progress and future challenges in implementing PoC at NATO.** In particular, the workshops focused on future conflict contexts. The discussion also looked at what NATO should consider while developing its next Strategic Concept, #NATO2030 planning and a new PoC Action Plan. The conference successfully identified areas for future research and analysis and areas of progress and gaps in the implementation of PoC across NATO. Further, the conference grew the network of policymakers, military officers, practitioners and experts interested in seeing PoC effectively implemented in NATO operations.

#### ***Emergent opportunities***

Stimson and the EIA team are excited about the planned work with Cordillera Advisory Group to develop an innovative PoC specific table-top exercise (TTX) with two vignettes focused on 1) mitigating harm from own operations and 2) preventing harm from the actions of others. This TTX will be the first exercise of its kind and was made possible through a partnership – funded by this grant – between Stimson and the Protection in Practice (PiP) Project.

We are also working with Stimson's *Protecting Civilians in Conflict* program, which is currently assisting the UN with migrating its PoC Handbook into a digital format. This collaboration will facilitate the additional sharing of lessons learned between Stimson and PAX, particularly for our NATO-focused work through exploring the content and approach towards PoC at the UN.

#### ***Short-term outcome 2.2: UN and NATO focus on PoC and inclusive community engagement in their operational plans and policies***

The EIA project also focuses specifically on promoting inclusive community engagement practices within UN and NATO missions in order to increase the relevance and effectiveness of PoC strategies. Below is a summary of the key results achieved towards STO 2.2 during the year:

---

<sup>1</sup> See: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133945.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133945.htm)

- ◆ 1 roundtable event on engaging local populations in UN peacekeeping (*detailed under LTO 2 above*)
- ◆ 1 [joint statement](#) from over 40 civil society organizations about the proposed European Peace Facility (EPF)

Much progress has been made in our PoC-focused advocacy work at the EU. We met our direct project targets regarding the number of written deliverables for EU officials as well as our ambition to expand joint advocacy efforts with civil society in Brussels. We also believe that we contributed meaningfully to both the inclusiveness and quality of the discourse around the EPF in particular.

In 2020 EU Member States negotiated this new financial instrument that would introduce fundamental changes to EU foreign policy, funding train-and-equip activities abroad via a novel off-budget facility. From a PoC perspective, the EPF risks increasing the risk of harm to civilians in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The EPF as proposed places too little focus on conflict prevention and civilian harm mitigation. Further, it facilitates the potential transfer of lethal weapons to local security forces without protections in place to limit illegal arms transfers or ensure that they will not be used to commit human rights abuses. Finally, there is insufficient attention made to creating mandatory due diligence frameworks to conduct risk assessments, monitor potential harm or legal violations or manage and respond to complaints. Each of these above issues should be addressed in partnership with local and international civil society organizations.

In order to communicate these concerns to EU officials, PAX co-drafted [a joint Civil Society statement on the EPF](#) with a core group of Brussels-based NGOs, which was signed and supported by 40 other civil society organizations. **The NGO coalition work was well received in Brussels, as evidenced by positive responses from EU member states, subsequent expansion of the civil society network and media attention garnered for the joint statement.** PAX sees the EPF as a key strategic priority to continue pursuing in 2021, including trying to identify means by which local civil society organizations in countries where the EPF will fund operations can meaningfully contribute their perspectives.

## 2.3.5. Implications for Planning

### ***Updates to our approach***

Since it is challenging to generate active interest in PoC at general levels, we aim to tailor our work towards more specific themes and stakeholders in 2021, such as exploring the potential to apply PoC lenses on activities that the Dutch Special Operations Forces (SOF) are undertaking in 2021. PAX in particular will also have more focus on the EU given the progression of the EPF concept and the fact that some NATO-focused work is not progressing to the extent that it requires as much staff time as originally anticipated. We also hope to test the viability of a PoC project in the Sahel region in coordination with DSH from the second half of 2021.

In the coming years, Stimson will broaden their work in partnership with the PAX Protection in Practice project (PiP) to take a multipronged approach working at the political (allies and partners), strategic (HQ, ACO, ACT) and operational (SHAPE/Operational Planners) levels within NATO on advancing the alliance's PoC policy. Stimson's annual conference of 2021 will be on the future of war because of the need to galvanize our targeted stakeholders around this frame.

### ***Updates to partnerships and management***

All activities requiring international travel were postponed in 2020 and will remain so until it is possible again. We will therefore continue engaging our key stakeholders via virtual events as long as necessary. In fact, we aim to maintain a virtual component to any future in-person events to be more inclusive and increase participation beyond those who can attend in person in places like The Hague and New York.

The EIA project chose to establish an advocacy traineeship initiative in our PAX offices in New York and Brussels in 2020. This has amplified our capacity to organize events and build relationships in these locations, and the concept will be reviewed to assess its functionality and potential improvements in the second half of 2021.

The website of the PoC team will be fully updated in 2021 to enable us to better communicate with our constituencies, share outputs of our activities and events and contribute generally to our partnerships and advocacy capacities.

## 2.3.6. Lessons Learned

### **Contributions to program-level learning questions**

#### **2. What does constructive community engagement by CSOs, NGOs, the UN, local and national security actors and international institutions look like, both currently and ideally?**

PAX found the answer to this question is broad and highly dependent on both the context and institutions involved. **Not only do “local” and “international” stakeholders have different priorities, interpretations and languages around the concept of community engagement, they often leave meetings expressly organized to minimize different interpretations more confused than when they entered.** The EIA team identified this issue specifically after a community engagement-focused event we convened in 2020, and aims to organize discussions on this topic more consciously of these factors next time around. We began an internal exchange and are drafting a short document to capture different interpretations of community engagement to help elucidate what we exactly mean when working on this topic at the level of the PoC Program, and will continue our work based on this document. The main aim will then be to connect the UN to partner interpretations of community engagement, rather than the other way around.



*Community engagement is central to the EIA approach, but it has different meanings in different contexts*

### **Contributions to project-level learning questions**

#### **1. How can we go from being “interesting” to “relevant and persuasive” when engaging international security actors? What makes a policymaker change behavior based on our interaction – is it mainly an effect of our position, network, unique data, relevant recommendations or other factors?**

The EIA project increasingly finds that our work is considered more relevant and persuasive when it is **strategically aligned with the interests and motivations of the decision makers we seek to influence.** Generalizations like “we all work to advance human security” are simply not sufficient a basis upon which to engage on often difficult institutional change processes. The lesson here is that we should both better understand and the interest and motivations of the individuals and institutions we aim to change, and build our advocacy strategies around those. However, during the pandemic we observed that working almost exclusively online made it much more challenging (or at least more time-consuming) to build the informal and personal relationships that can be the most effective way to build the understanding of key policymakers and institutions.

#### **2. How can EIA stimulate more comprehensive approaches to PoC in the Netherlands between MFA departments and MoD, and in coordination with the UN, NATO and the EU? How can we go from policy coherence to implementation coherence?**

PAX has found that learning from and inspiring comprehensive approaches is best done when framed in a specific context. **Generic discussions are interesting at best, but do not stimulate the follow-up and tangible lessons necessary for policymakers and practitioners to build comprehensive approaches relevant to their own institutions and contexts.** The lesson the EIA project learned in 2020 is to break up larger discussions into smaller components that are more likely to inform and motivate participants. A very practical operational implication for PAX is that, at a minimum, we need to make access to dialogues we organize easy for all participants, including from MFA and MoD in the Netherlands. For instance, many assume that virtual events will automatically be more accessible to as they do not require travel costs or logistical planning on the part of attendees; however, some institutions have strict rules about which digital platforms can be used on official devices, and this needs to be understood and communicated in advance.

The project also learned some valuable lessons in our work with NATO. **Within NATO PoC is a core military capability, but it is also a core *political objective* that needs focus as well.** Through Stimson’s engagements at NATO we learned very quickly – especially in the wake of the pandemic – that we would need to focus on rebuilding political support for PoC implementation. As Stimson gained access and garnered trust amongst our stakeholders (especially those at HQ and ACT), we observed a great deal about the real challenges PoC and Human Security as focus areas face within NATO. While PoC enjoyed quite a bit of support ahead of the policy’s adoption, that enthusiasm has largely fallen away as competing priorities have since taken precedence. We learned that rebuilding a political constituency for PoC at NATO through building a formalized buy-in from ACT (through formal letters) and HQ (in the form of several discussions and expressions of support) is key to future implementation.

## 2.4.7 Budget Summary

<b>Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA)</b>				
<b>Budget Line</b>	<b>Balance Y1</b>	<b>Budget Y2</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total Balance</b>
D.1 EIA Personnel	-5.547	113.201	149.438	<b>-41.784</b>
D.2 EIA Activities	-355	64.250	3.092	<b>60.803</b>
D.3 EIA Stimson Personnel	11.298	71.438	73.891	<b>8.844</b>
D.4 EIA Stimson Activities	27.172	141.231	96.452	<b>71.951</b>
D.5 EIA Stimson Audit & Other	17.443	66.907	38.618	<b>45.732</b>
<b>Subtotal EIA</b>	<b>50.011</b>	<b>457.027</b>	<b>361.491</b>	<b>145.546</b>

## 2. Project Reports

### 2.4. Protection in Practice

#### 2.4.1. Project Summary

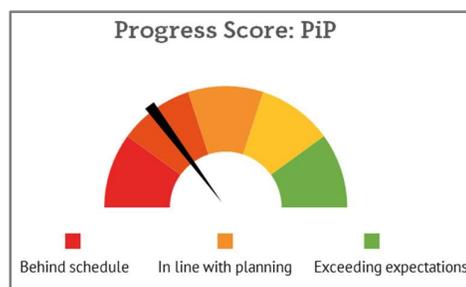
The Protection in Practice (PiP) project seeks to build technical capacities of international protection actors and contribute to greater transparency and accountability of military missions. **PiP activities work to embed civilian perspectives in PoC-focused training, policy, doctrine and assessment in order to improve the quality and relevance of protection in field missions.** More specifically, the project's approach includes:

- ◆ Developing specialized PoC training and exercise modules for military personnel based on best practices and lessons learned from diverse field contexts.
- ◆ Advising military missions and institutions on PoC-focused data collection, analysis and data-driven decision making.
- ◆ Contributing to guidelines, methods and tools used to track, report, and ultimately mitigate civilian casualties and other forms of civilian harm, including longer-term effects of conflict.
- ◆ Developing capacity for independent in-mission research on the effectiveness of military guidelines, methods and doctrine on the protection of civilians.

The project addresses the above key themes (i.e. data-driven decision-making, civilian harm tracking and response, and comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness) through a phased approach: first, conducting targeted research to identify best practices and lessons learned; second, developing a set of recommendations that can be contextualized and applied in the field; and finally, advocating for the integration of these recommendations in missions in practice. The PiP team also seeks to provide direct technical assistance and contributes to capacity building efforts for military actors from targeted troop- and police contributing countries (T/PCCs) and key international military missions, including in Iraq and South Sudan.

#### 2.4.2. Progress Overview

The PiP project made significant progress in 2020, particularly in relation to the theme of civilian harm monitoring, reporting and response. However, restrictions caused by COVID-19 unfortunately impeded or delayed efforts across all planned results areas. **Early on in the year, when the pandemic started to affect our work and limited our ability to travel to build relationships with key military missions and institutions internationally, the project team reoriented towards activities and research plans that would still be possible remotely.** We quickly realized that activities and research plans associated with short-term outcome (STO) 3.2 around civilian harm would be more feasible to continue work on than the other two themes (STO 3.1 on data-driven decision making and STO 3.3 on comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness). Stemming from that decision we adjusted our annual planning to postpone some activities and redouble our efforts towards the civilian harm theme.



In this work on civilian harm, PiP project staff produced a literature study, a position paper, policy briefs, a detailed research agenda and several blogs on different topics related to civilian harm. These all contribute to the most significant research output under the program to date, a comprehensive book called *On Civilian Harm* that will be published in 2021. Additionally, **PAX, as the lead coordinator of a consortium of likeminded NGOs, negotiated and agreed with the Dutch MoD in 2020 on pursuing the so-called "Roadmap Process," a series of meetings to review Dutch civilian harm reporting and mitigation policies and practices.**

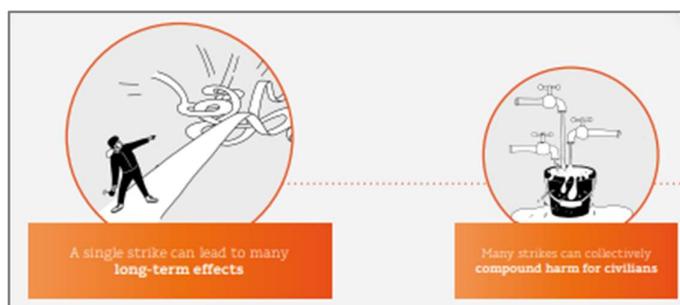
With Frontlines Lab partners (Stimson Center, Drexel University and Arizona State University), project staff also worked on the development of a civilian harm adaptive modeling tool with specific attention for reverberating effects. This resulted in a paper identifying current research needs in this area. Reverberating effects were also the thematic focus of day 3 of the program's December PoC Conference, detailed further below.

Where possible, staff continued to participate in developing PoC curricula for various military audiences, conducting practical trainings and exploring opportunities to contribute to hands-on military exercises.

### 2.4.3. Project Context Analysis

**A key development in the PoC field to which we as a program actually directly contributed in 2020 was the growing attention to so-called “reverberating effects” of conflict on civilian populations.** In the past few years a growing number of stakeholders have argued that not enough attention is given to longer-lasting negative effects of conflict that are indirect or not purely physical in nature, but that can have catastrophic effects for civilians. These include destruction of infrastructure, the loss of livelihoods and impacts on mental health, among others. However, these less visible manifestations of harm often go undocumented and are therefore neglected in any policy and public discourse that follows. Until 2020 there was no consensus on the definition of civilian harm, and most military actors and policymakers preferred to focus exclusively on counting direct casualties, meaning those injured or killed during a military action. PAX argues that this more narrow conception is insufficient when it comes to a proper discussion of the political, economic, moral, humanitarian and strategic implications of conflict.

In 2020, PiP staff contributed to a series of events and discussions that ultimately led to a new approach that broadens the terminology used when discussing civilian harm to be much more inclusive and expansive. This effort culminated in our PAX PoC Conference day 3, which focused on engaging diverse global stakeholders in discussions with experts specifically on the concept of the *Reverberating Effects of Civilian Harm*. It is also the focus and



Visual notes summarizing key points from PAX's PoC Conference highlight the concept of reverberating effects of conflict on civilians and communities

purpose of our forthcoming book on the subject, which will be published in Q2 2021. PAX is proactively advocating for this expanded definition in order to lay the foundation for **planned future activities under the PiP project designed to help military institutions develop or update their existing policies and practices around how civilian harm incidents are tracked, reported on, responded to and, ultimately, mitigated or prevented altogether.**

On the more practical side of project implementation, COVID-19 heavily affected PiP planning throughout 2020. Restrictions on traveling and on joining physical meetings and activities delayed implementation of activity under Outcomes 3.1 and 3.3 in particular. For both outcomes, the objective for 2020 included outsourcing baseline studies that required on-site interviews; traveling to build relationships and network with selected missions and participating in or conducting military training on location. All these activities were largely impossible in 2020 and were postponed until 2021 and beyond, though the project team is confident that the phased approach remains relevant and planned results can still be accomplished in the remainder of the program period. Planned activities contributing to Outcome 3.3 were largely planned to start in 2021 even before the global pandemic hit, so delays for that results area have been relatively minor.

Delays caused by COVID-19 also meant that we pursued the process of hiring a Military Specialist much later than originally planned. This is in large part because we were hesitant to recruit and onboard new colleagues when so much of the technical, field-based work was on hold. For instance, it was not practical to hire a dedicated trainer without opportunities to conduct trainings, as it took quite some time for our counterparts in key military institutions to transition to online platforms. As described in more detail in the

planning section below, the Military Specialist and an additional Military Adviser started working with us in December 2020. Several military training and exercise activities will be shifted to 2021 and beyond accordingly. Given their combined expertise, networks and enthusiasm, we are confident that we will be able to achieve the intended results before the end of the grant period.

## 2.4.4. Key Results Achieved

***Long-term outcome 3: Targeted military missions increasingly implement data-driven decision-making, civilian harm tracking procedures and comprehensive assessment of PoC effectiveness***

As outlined above, the approach of the PiP project relies upon consolidating a foundation of best practices around each of the three thematic focus areas, and then developing clear recommendations and training or advisory efforts to improve practice within targeted missions and institutions. **The whole logic of the project's theory of change is the idea that to achieve change in practice – meaning more effective and responsive protection of civilians in conflict settings – one needs to engage with military actors in a meaningful and sustained manner.**

This starts with building and maintaining relationships. The PoC Program team consistently receives enthusiastic requests from targeted stakeholders to provide training and advice. There is a great deal of demand in particular at the national level from the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, but also from specific components of the Dutch Armed Forces. While training efforts and simulation exercises will ramp up significantly in 2021 as a result of having additional dedicated staff to manage it, the PiP team still pursued a variety of regular training and relationship building efforts in 2020 with the Army Officers' Training Center in Amersfoort, Finnish Defense Forces International Center (FINCENT) and the First German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC).



*PAX works with military institutions not just on the theory of PoC, but the practice of protection in mission*

In order to scale up the desired results, the project needs to build working relationships with new missions and military institutions as well. There is also a great deal of interest from NATO HQ, the EU and relevant member states in the work of the PiP project. Unfortunately, COVID-19 slowed this effort considerably, as 2020 was not the most opportune year for building out new areas of work with institutions like NATO and the EU, which shifted their policy priorities significantly in response to the global pandemic. To date the PiP project's engagement with the UN has also been more limited, as pandemic conditions and limited staff capacity throughout 2020 hampered the natural development of relations at UN HQ and in key field missions. However, having a Military Advisor based in New York will hopefully improve access in 2021 and beyond.

While many of these opportunities have historically been focused around basic, foundational principles of PoC, PAX also strives through this program to deepen these engagements to focus around more practical and impactful components of providing effective protection in a mission context. In particular, the PiP project and PoC Program overall garnered a great deal of thought leadership and credibility around civilian harm as a central theme of our work, and we will similarly build out the other areas in the years to come. In 2021 – or when COVID restrictions end – we will be able to make up some of the lost time by:

- ◆ Shifting more of our focus specifically to STOs 3.1 and 3.3.
- ◆ Orienting towards engaging with military mission command structures on location, rather than military headquarters and ministries. Priority missions include UNMISS in South Sudan, UNAMI and NMI in Iraq, AMISOM in Somalia and missions in the Sahel region.

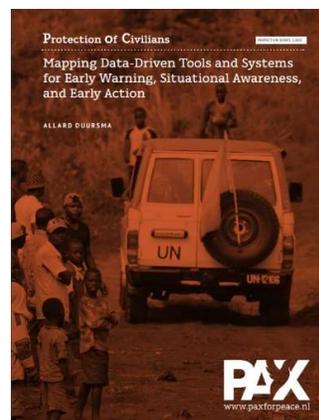
For a full summary of progress towards all PiP project indicators, please refer to **Annex 3.2** of the overall PoC Program Annual Report.

***Short-term outcome 3.1: Targeted missions have increased knowledge of, capacity and willingness for evidence-based and data-driven decision-making on PoC***

Progress towards STO 3.1 was somewhat delayed due to the global pandemic and will be developed further in 2021 and beyond. However, some of the critical initial scoping research and planning took place this year, such as:

- ◆ 1 [desktop baseline study](#) on data-driven protection<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ 1 internal planning document outlining research and activities in 2021-2023

PAX commissioned this baseline study to assess existing data-driven tools and systems that military and peacekeeping missions utilize for early warning, situational awareness and early action. The analysis focuses on how data-driven tools currently help key institutions like the UN, the African Union (AU) and NATO to rapidly increase their understanding of the local contexts in which they operate and to tailor their protection responses to meet civilians' needs. As the report itself begins, *"While the turn to protection of civilians by these security actors is undoubtedly a positive development, the capacity to anticipate attacks on civilians is lagging behind the institutional will to engage in PoC. A mandate to protect civilians is not enough; those implementing PoC-related activities will need adequate information and situational awareness to anticipate threats to civilians."* This research will serve as the foundation for future advocacy, policy guidance and training efforts around the theme of data-driven protection throughout the remainder of the program.



Read the full report on our website:  
[www.protectionofcivilians.org](http://www.protectionofcivilians.org)

Despite all the restrictions imposed during the global pandemic, we did manage to stay in contact with existing partners and peers in order to plan for activities under this theme in 2021 and beyond.

***Short-term outcome 3.2: Targeted missions have increased capacity and mechanisms on independently verifiable civilian harm tracking, analysis and response***

In 2020 the PiP project oriented its focus on activities and outputs that could be achieved despite restrictions associated with the global pandemic. The theme that provided the most opportunities was STO 3.2 focusing on civilian harm. Below is a summary of the key results achieved during the year:

- ◆ 1 [desktop literature review](#) on contemporary civilian harm tracking tools and investigation mechanisms
- ◆ 1 [position paper](#) outlining PAX's approach to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response
- ◆ 1 [discussion paper](#) investigating key challenges and best practices related to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response to feed into a research, advocacy and training agenda
- ◆ 1 [policy brief](#) on transparency measures around civilian casualty reporting shared with the Dutch MoD and Parliament
- ◆ 13 case studies on specific civilian harm events (part of a [book to be published in 2021](#))
- ◆ 1 [recommendation brief](#) summarizing outputs of the presentations, panels and roundtable discussions from day 3 of the annual PAX PoC Conference on *Civilian Harm Reverberating Effects*
- ◆ 1 research agenda on gaps and opportunities for civilian harm-related research activities in 2021 and beyond
- ◆ 1 start session of the 'Roadmap Process,' following formal agreement between the Dutch MoD and a consortium of NGOs to jointly address Dutch policy and practice on civilian harm
- ◆ 1 video and discussion paper introducing a proposed civilian harm modeling tool developed cooperation with the Frontlines Lab

As per the PiP intervention logic, progress towards this results area in 2020 began with a great deal of research to consolidate best practices and lessons learned to feed into practical advocacy, training and advisory activities. Our main achievements therefore include a series of desktop studies on civilian harm tracking, analysis and response. These fed into a number of policy briefs aimed at PoC policymakers and

---

<sup>1</sup> The study on data-driven protection was completed in December 2020, though only published officially in 2021.

practitioners, as well as a strategic position paper that defines and communicates our own programmatic priorities for 2021 and beyond.

The position paper outlines the program’s perspective with regards to civilian harm within the context of modern warfare, explaining core concepts and why we believe that **improving civilian harm tracking, analysis and response is a political, moral, humanitarian and strategic objective**. We found that despite there being a track record of good practice and lessons learned, the overall state of civilian harm tracking and investigation practices is compromised by three interrelated challenges:

1. A lack of universally-adopted policies and standardized operational practices hampers the effectiveness of civilian harm tracking.
2. Contemporary warfare’s increasing ‘remoteness’ presents new challenges that have yet to be addressed.
3. A lack of transparency around the processing of civilian harm claims – characteristic of many militaries – further aggravates these shortcomings.

**In an effort to further explore these challenges in real-world settings and to tease out actionable learning for the protection field, the PiP team took on the task of producing a comprehensive book on the topic.**

Throughout 2020 project staff and a consultant conducted research, wrote, edited and managed the review process. Thirteen chapters each detail one specific civilian harm event, and these case studies are followed by several conceptual chapters that together will be bundled and published as an edited volume in 2021 called *On Civilian Harm*. Our expectation is that this book will be a significant contribution to existing literature on the topic. Another complementary research initiative also began in 2020: a joint initiative with the Utrecht University *Intimacies of Remote Warfare Program* (IRW) to investigate the long-term civilian harm effects of the Dutch airstrike that occurred in Hawija, Iraq in 2015. This detailed qualitative research effort will also conclude in 2021.

In 2020 we also participated in the *Frontlines Lab Initiative*. This cooperation between PAX, Stimson Center, Drexel University and the Arizona State University conducted literature reviews, a round of expert interviews and panel discussions laying the foundation for the development of an adaptive tool to map civilian harm and with special attention for so-called ‘reverberating effects.’ In December 2020 this cooperation resulted in a short educational video, a research paper and a roundtable discussion part of the annual PAX PoC Conference.

The PiP team was also particularly proud that – despite the global pandemic – we were able to organize one full day of the PAX PoC Conference around the theme of the reverberating effects of the use of force on civilians. We brought together researchers, activists, civilian and military practitioners from numerous organizations and institutions to jointly identify lessons learned, best practices and opportunities for better mitigating civilian harm in future military operations. NATO and Dutch MoD officials were specifically targeted, resulting in a session dedicated to improving their policy and practice, and a subsequent [recommendations brief](#) that followed the conference. Significant about these achievements is that through the virtual conference platform we managed to convene participants from around the world, as well as to merge expert communities that are too often siloed, including those focusing specifically on PoC, “EWIPA,” or “Humanitarian Disarmament,”<sup>2</sup> achieving a deeper and more expansive discussion.



Omar Mohammed, a historian from Iraq, provided an informative and harrowing account of life under the Islamic State, as well as the long-term effects of the military interventions to liberate the city of Mosul

---

<sup>2</sup> EWIPA is shorthand for the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. These refer to mass-produced weapons like grenades, mortars and rockets, as well as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that are intended to have wide area

**Another of our most significant achievements in 2020 was the kick off of the so-called “Roadmap Process,” a series of structured engagements between the Dutch MoD and a consortium of NGOs led by PAX** (including Airwars, Amnesty International, the Center for Civilians in Conflict, Open State Foundation and Utrecht University’s *Intimacies of Remote Warfare* program). The purpose of this initiative is to share best practices and lessons learned with regards to civilian harm tracking, investigation and reporting, and to jointly assess gaps and opportunities for improvement in civilian harm mitigation policies and practices in the Netherlands. The PiP team worked resolutely over many months to secure the MoD’s commitment to this process, given the political sensitivity of the topic. The first session occurred in November and involved all of the critical stakeholders to the initiative, including both the policy branch of the MoD, but also the entire force command structure (land, maritime, air, military police and military intelligence). It was significant that each of these branches were represented by senior-level staff and servicemembers. Also participating were representatives of the Netherlands Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Security & Justice (JenV). **This outcome reflects a substantial change in behavior by the MoD in terms of them creating space at the table to discuss their policy and practice with civil society.**

#### Featured Story: PAX’s role in the “Roadmap Process”

The moment we sat down (online, of course) for the formal Start Session of what we call the “Roadmap Process” felt like a particularly big step forward. After calling for such discussions for years, and after many months of preparations – including written proposals, counterproposals and negotiations – **the Dutch MoD and a consortium of Dutch and international NGOs agreed to a series of six meetings to jointly review Dutch policies and practices relating to the politically-charged subject of civilian harm.**

The topic is particularly sensitive at the moment in the Netherlands due to the political and media upheaval about the Dutch role in the destruction of a neighborhood in Hawija that resulted in the deaths of over 70 civilians. This was compounded by the fact that it took the Netherlands almost 4 years to acknowledge their role in the incident, which served as a catalyst for much broader discussions civilian harm mitigation, as well as about transparency and accountability in military operations generally.

As the coordinator of the NGO consortium, PAX had worked towards this session with great anticipation

and, admittedly, some nerves. Organizing a session like this was particularly complex given the COVID-19 restrictions. When the session started, it confirmed that the MOD as well as the NGO partners commitment to engage and potentially learn from each other’s expertise and proposals. Mutual dedication to this project was moreover evident from the high-level participation in this session, which included various NGO (deputy) directors, the “Commandant der Strijdkrachten” and various directors of MoD departments.

Only the future can tell whether actual behavior on the battlefield will change fundamentally, and whether the Netherlands will truly become more transparent about its involvement in civilian harm events. For sure, cultivating **the MoD’s willingness to engage in this manner is a positive sign and an accomplishment in itself.** We remain cautiously optimistic that efforts such as the Roadmap Process will contribute to the ultimate aims of the PoC Program, and in the meantime see these intermediate results as a significant step forward in pursuing the PiP project’s strategic objectives.

While we were able to develop a significant number of activities relating to STO 3.2 in 2020 despite COVID-19, the pandemic still meant that important elements of our implementation strategy had to be put on hold. Notably, it prevented us from building relations with *military missions* whose behavior we ultimately want to influence in the field. Nonetheless, we believe that we raised a lot of awareness for the need and opportunities to foster cooperation between militaries and civil society on this important and often highly sensitive topic. Further, we believe that our activities and outputs from 2020 provide us with a solid foundation for field-based efforts once public health conditions allow.

***Short-term outcome 3.3: Targeted missions have increased knowledge about and increased willingness to engage in comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness***

---

effects and typically have disproportionate direct and indirect effects on civilians when used in populated areas. Humanitarian Disarmament refers to the regulation and/or prohibition of certain weapons, in particular those that by their nature or through incorrect use do not differentiate between civilians and military personnel. This includes nuclear weapons, as well as cluster munitions, anti-personnel mines, depleted uranium and fully autonomous weapons currently being developed (so-called “killer robots”).

The in-mission evaluation component of the PiP project was always meant to phase into implementation in 2021, although remains somewhat behind schedule as a result of both limited staff capacity and COVID-driven policy shifts within key potential target missions and institutions. The PiP team intends to prioritize this results area in the coming year, including proceeding with research that was postponed to date.

As part of laying the ground work for future comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness in the field, PAX contributes to a series of training efforts to build foundational knowledge and skills in PoC. Some of the corresponding outputs from 2020 include:

- ◆ Advised on NODEFIC Human Security E-portal course package
- ◆ Contributed to updated module on 'PoC failures' to FINCENT's CPOC course

PAX is pleased to collaborate with military training institutions like NODEFIC and FINCENT, both of which are critical knowledge centers for UN and NATO peacekeeping and peace support operations. Civilian and military personnel from around the world receive practical training in crisis management, logistics, civil-military coordination, gender awareness and many more specialized topics. The PiP team will continue to contribute to these, as well as more bilateral and in-mission training efforts in 2021 and beyond.

## 2.4.5. Implications for Planning

The global pandemic in 2020 caused the PiP project to delay a number of intended activities and outputs to 2021 and beyond. Limitations on travel and shifting policy priorities within institutions like NATO and the UN made it all but impossible to begin anticipated training and advisory work with field missions. PAX also deferred filling a central position within the team, that of the Military Trainer. During the imposed period of reflection caused by COVID-19, we expanded our ambitions for the role and scope of work for this function. During the recruitment process in Q3 2020, **the opportunity emerged to bring on 2 new colleagues to manage both the technical training and advisory component of the project (a Military Specialist, Marco Grandi), but also to facilitate the strategic relationship building and advocacy work that is so fundamental to the project's approach (a Military Advisor, Marc Garlasco).**<sup>3</sup> The new staffers both have service backgrounds, one having served in an EU military and the other in the US military, and have practical experience in the field with NATO and UN missions. Having these two new colleagues with such a breadth of expertise and relevant relationships will help the PiP team to ramp up implementation for each of the project's results areas at a much faster pace from 2021 onwards. We also believe that having colleagues who can work with military actors more as peers and less as NGO outsiders will help boost both our credibility and access within field missions.

## 2.4.6. Lessons Learned

### **Contributions to program-level learning questions**

- 1. What does meaningful accountability to civilians in conflict really look like in practice? How does it differ for different protection actors and institutions both nationally and internationally?**

The Roadmap Process provides particular insight into this particular question. It is clear that how the Netherlands dealt with the civilian harm event in Hawija since 2015 raises important questions about how countries participating in coalition missions can and should organize accountability. **By orienting the discussions not just around what happened, but on how to do better in the future, the Roadmap Process offers the Dutch MoD the unique opportunity to solicit expert advice from civil society,** particularly Dutch and international NGOs. The PiP team coordinates the collective NGO input and leverages its local partnerships and research efforts to provide Iraqi voices a place at the table. We believe the learning generated through this initiative will have resonance for other missions and militaries, and look forward to sharing relevant outcomes in the future.

---

<sup>3</sup> To learn more about our new colleagues, Marco Grandi and Marc Garlasco, read their bios on [our website](#).

**3. Are data and evidence enough? How do we go beyond generating interesting information towards fostering ownership for taking action rooted in local priorities?**

When trying to inform military missions about field realities and local priorities, having timely and accurate data is necessary, but not necessarily sufficient for generating more effective protection in practice. **The purpose of the PiP project is to translate the evidence that PAX has about civilian perspectives and experiences in conflict into actionable recommendations and training exercises that are relevant to those serving in military missions.** Our team utilizes the data from local activities in South Sudan and Iraq (including the HSS projects and the targeted research with IRW in Hawija), and combines that with evidence from external studies on interactions between military actors and civilians in these and other contexts. In our forthcoming book, *On Civilian Harm* and in the desktop studies produced in 2020 and 2021, we make concerted efforts to highlight inclusive local perspectives and to advocate for a meaningful role for civilians in understanding and appropriately responding to incidents of harm.

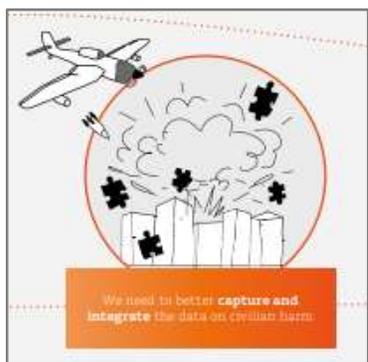
The project also seeks to equip military missions to better integrate local civilian perspectives in their operational planning, as well as in their monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of their protection efforts. The Data for Protection Study in particular provides a solid baseline for further study and engagement on this topic.

**Contributions to project-level learning questions**

**1. How do we best formalize our relationships with military actors, particularly vis-à-vis training?**

In 2020 the PoC Program gained valuable experience in building formalized relationships with military actors, most notably the Dutch MoD and NATO. In both cases we managed to build constructive, output-oriented cooperation. However, when we formulated the learning question, we were thinking about military mission leadership, rather than ministries of defense and headquarters-level institutions. In 2021 and beyond, we will continue to reflect on this learning question as we shift our focus towards engaging more with military missions on location. Hiring two experienced military experts is an important step for our project in that regard. It greatly enhances our capability to gain access to military stakeholders, expands our network and it makes us better able to engage effectively with military actors. One of our new colleagues will focus primarily on developing and conducting PoC-relevant training and exercises, while the other will concentrate more specifically on research, building relations and implementing work with military missions in the local contexts in which they operate.

**2. What is the “gold standard” with regards to civilian harm tracking, analysis and response?**



PAX's forthcoming book *On Civilian Harm* offers critical contributions to this question

The PiP project made substantial progress towards his learning question in 2020 without reaching a definitive answer. Several of the outputs and activities in 2020 contributed meaningfully to our own thinking and the broader public discourse on civilian harm mitigation and response best practices. We also initiated a number of longer-term collaborations in 2020 with institutions like the Frontlines Lab that will allow us to investigate different elements of this important question. We strive to incorporate the consolidated lessons learned into future training and advisory efforts, particularly around building or improving civilian harm tracking methodologies and response mechanisms, so that this expert-level discourse does not remain in the realm of theory, but ultimately results in better outcomes for civilians living in situations of conflict.

**3. How do we recognize or prevent cooptation – as opposed to cooperation – in joint efforts with missions and militaries? How can we best contribute to facilitating the implementation of lessons learned in targeted missions?**

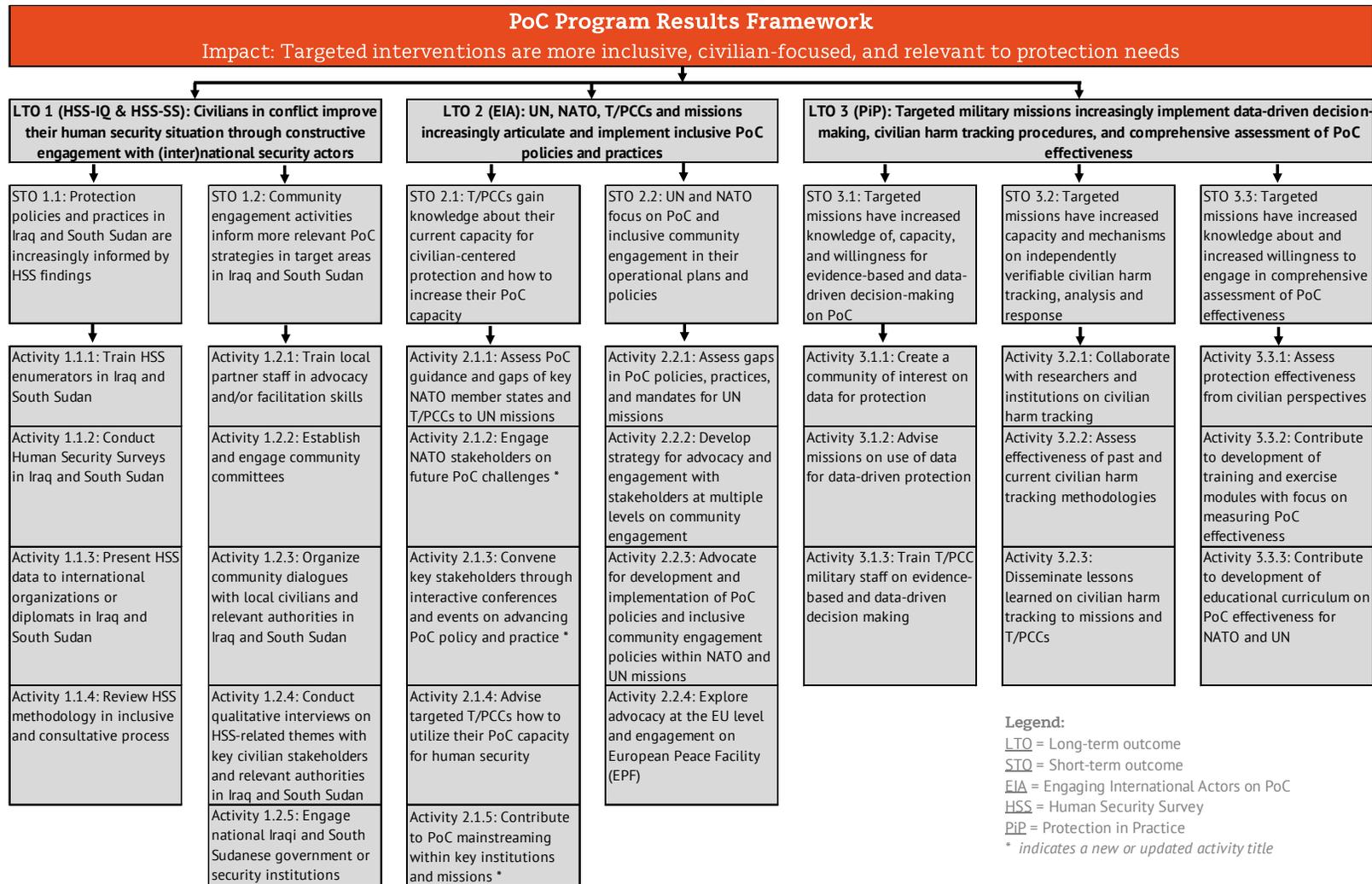
In 2020 we meaningfully cooperated with several military actors, gaining important experiences that will contribute over a longer period of time to answering this question. The Roadmap Process in particular necessitates constant reflection, and for 2020 we are happy to report that we managed to engage meaningfully with the Dutch MoD, while at the same time maintaining necessary independence and autonomy. We believe that by addressing the potential danger of cooptation early and transparently enabled those participating to relatively easily address tensions or issues as they emerged.

## 2.4.7 Budget Summary

<b>Protection in Practice (PiP)</b>				
<b>Budget Line</b>	<b>Balance Y1</b>	<b>Budget Y2</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total Balance</b>
E.1 PiP Personnel	14.177	165.876	102.007	<b>78.046</b>
E.2 PiP Activities	16.853	152.000	44.443	<b>124.409</b>
E.5 PiP Audit & Other	1.000	6.000	-	<b>7.000</b>
<b>Subtotal PiP</b>	<b>32.030</b>	<b>323.876</b>	<b>146.450</b>	<b>209.456</b>

# Annexes

## 3.1 Annex: PoC Program Results Framework



**Legend:**  
 LTO = Long-term outcome  
 STO = Short-term outcome  
 EIA = Engaging International Actors on PoC  
 HSS = Human Security Survey  
 PiP = Protection in Practice  
 \* indicates a new or updated activity title

## 3.2 Annex: Summary of all PoC Program Monitoring Data

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
<b>Impact: Targeted interventions are more inclusive, civilian-focused and relevant to protection needs</b>		
<u>Indicator A.IQ</u> : % of HSS respondents in Iraq reporting that their security situation has improved over the previous 12 months	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator B.IQ</u> : % of HSS respondents in Iraq reporting a favorable perception of international security actors	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator C.IQ</u> : % of HSS respondents in Iraq reporting a favorable perception of national security actors in their area	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator D.IQ</u> : Security Apparatus Iraq	N/A	8,2/10
<u>Indicator E.IQ</u> : Group Grievance Iraq	N/A	8,5/10
<u>Indicator F.IQ</u> : estimated fatalities in Iraq resulting from political violence per year	N/A	418
<b>Long-term outcome 1: Civilians in conflict improve their human security situation through constructive engagement with (inter)national security actors</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.IQ</u> : % of civilian participants in community dialogues who report that the dialogues provide an effective means of holding local authorities more accountable	80%	<i>Not yet available</i>
<b>Short-term outcome 1.1: Protection policies and practices in Iraq and South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.1.a.IQ</u> : # of Iraq-based formal/informal institutions targeted for advocacy that report having used PAX's data or analysis to inform their policy, practice or performance management	18	4
<u>Indicator 1.1.b.IQ</u> : # of views of online publications of HSS Iraq findings	4.200	1.170
<u>Indicator 1.1.1.IQ</u> : # of HSS enumerator trainees demonstrating sufficient knowledge and skills in conflict-sensitive quantitative research methods and the HSS methodology to serve on HSS data collection teams	200	62
<u>Indicator 1.1.2a.IQ</u> : # of HSS data collection rounds completed	16	4
<u>Indicator 1.1.2b.IQ</u> : # of HSS respondents	10.400	3.027

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
<b>Impact: Targeted interventions are more inclusive, civilian-focused and relevant to protection needs</b>		
<u>Indicator A.SS</u> : % of HSS respondents in South Sudan reporting that their security situation has improved over the previous 12 months	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator B.SS</u> : % of HSS respondents in South Sudan reporting a favorable perception of international security actors	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator C.SS</u> : % of HSS respondents in South Sudan reporting a favorable perception of national security actors in their area	N/A	<i>Not yet available</i>
<u>Indicator D.SS</u> : Security Apparatus South Sudan	N/A	9,4
<u>Indicator E.SS</u> : Group Grievance South Sudan	N/A	9,1
<u>Indicator F.SS</u> : estimated fatalities in South Sudan resulting from political violence per year	N/A	665
<b>Long-term outcome 1: Civilians in conflict improve their human security situation through constructive engagement with (inter)national security actors</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.SS</u> : % of civilian participants in community dialogues who report that the dialogues provide an effective means of holding local authorities more accountable	80%	<i>Not yet available</i>
<b>Short-term outcome 1.1: Protection policies and practices in Iraq and South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.1.a.SS</u> : # of South Sudan-based formal/informal institutions targeted for advocacy that report having used PAX's data or analysis to inform their policy, practice or performance management	20	3
<u>Indicator 1.1.b.SS</u> : # of views of online publications of HSS South Sudan findings	2.311	511
<u>Indicator 1.1.1.SS</u> : # of HSS enumerator trainees demonstrating sufficient knowledge and skills in conflict-sensitive quantitative research methods and the HSS methodology to serve on HSS data collection teams	170	40
<u>Indicator 1.1.2a.SS</u> : # of HSS data collection rounds completed	16	4
<u>Indicator 1.1.2b.SS</u> : # of HSS respondents	8.000	1.325

PAX Protection of Civilians Program

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
<u>Indicator 1.1.3.IQ</u> : # of thematic or country-specific roundtables at which HSS or other complementary data is presented to international organizations or diplomats interested in protection issues in Iraq	8	2
<u>Indicator 1.1.4.IQ</u> : # of local project partners and experts consulted for annual HSS methodology process review	32	7
<b>Short-term outcome 1.2: Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in Iraq and South Sudan</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.2a.IQ</u> : # of senior political or security leaders making concrete commitments to respond to civilians' protection concerns as a result of HSS community engagement activities	16	0
<u>Indicator 1.2b.IQ</u> : # of community engagement activities implemented by community committees	10	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.1.IQ</u> : # of local partner staff successfully completing training(s) in advocacy and/or facilitation skills	80	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.2.IQ</u> : # of existing or to be established community committees engaged in regular, structural efforts to follow up on local protection concerns emerging from community dialogues	4	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.3.IQ</u> : # of community dialogues with local civilians and relevant authorities	80	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.4.IQ</u> : # of local civil society or authorities interviewed	20	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.5.IQ</u> : # of national Iraqi government or security institutions constructively engaged through advocacy meetings about civilian protection issues	14	0
<b>Long-term outcome 2: UN, NATO, T/PCCs and missions increasingly articulate and implement inclusive protection of civilians policies and practices</b>		
<u>Indicator 2a</u> : # of comprehensive round tables organized with or by UN and NATO at HQ level on civilian-centered approaches to peacekeeping	16	1
<u>Indicator 2b</u> : # of targeted UN and NATO missions that develop/adapt strategies to include diverse civilian perspectives	8	0
<b>Short-term outcome 2.1: T/PCCs gain knowledge about their current capacity for civilian-centered protection and how to increase their PoC capacity</b>		

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
<u>Indicator 1.1.3.SS</u> : # of thematic or country-specific roundtables at which HSS or other complementary data is presented to international organizations or diplomats interested in protection issues in South Sudan	12	0
<u>Indicator 1.1.4.SS</u> : # of local project partners and experts consulted for annual HSS methodology process review	20	0
<b>Short-term outcome 1.2: Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in Iraq and South Sudan</b>		
<u>Indicator 1.2a.SS</u> : # of senior political or security leaders making concrete commitments to respond to civilians' protection concerns as a result of HSS community engagement activities	20	7
<u>Indicator 1.2b.SS</u> : # of community engagement activities implemented by community committees	60	25
<u>Indicator 1.2.1.SS</u> : # of local partner staff successfully completing training(s) in advocacy and/or facilitation skills	40	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.2.SS</u> : # of existing or to be established community committees engaged in regular, structural efforts to follow up on local protection concerns emerging from community dialogues	5	4
<u>Indicator 1.2.3.SS</u> : # of community dialogues with local civilians and relevant authorities	13	1
<u>Indicator 1.2.4.SS</u> : # of local civil society or authorities interviewed	40	0
<u>Indicator 1.2.5.SS</u> : # of national South Sudanese government or security institutions constructively engaged through advocacy meetings about civilian protection issues	20	0
<b>Long-term outcome 3: Targeted military missions increasingly implement data-driven decision-making, civilian harm tracking procedures and comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness</b>		
<u>Indicator 3a</u> : # of targeted missions that report an increased use of evidence and data in their decision making	N/A	0
<u>Indicator 3b</u> : # of targeted T/PCCs in military missions that publicly contribute data on civilian harm associated with their interventions	9	0
<u>Indicator 3c</u> : # of targeted missions employing a comprehensive assessment methodology for evaluating PoC effectiveness	3	0

PAX Protection of Civilians Program

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
Indicator 2.1.a: # of specific initiatives undertaken by targeted T/PCC key staff and departments (after an engagement with PAX/Stimson) on how to increase their PoC capacity for human security	N/A	1
Indicator 2.1.b: # of targeted T/PCCs that develop strategic plans or policies to improve PoC capacity at the institutional level	8	0
Indicator 2.1.1.a: # of NATO member states and UN T/PCCs identified as potential allies to cultivate as 'champions' of inclusive PoC going forward	N/A	0
Indicator 2.1.1.b: # of NATO member states and UN T/PCCs developing or improving national strategies on PoC	8	0
Indicator 2.1.2.a: # of specialized protection experts serving on the Expert Advisory Team to NATO	12	9
Indicator 2.1.2.b: # of research papers exploring future PoC challenges at NATO	6	0
Indicator 2.1.3.a: # of attendees participating in PAX's annual PoC conference	750	472
Indicator 2.1.3.b: # of attendees participating in Stimson's annual conference	350	100
Indicator 2.1.3.c: # of expert events facilitated to advance civilian-centered protection and/or improve the capacities of protection actors	6	3
Indicator 2.1.4: # of strategic engagements with targeted T/PCCs on how to utilize their PoC capacity for human security	16	4
Indicator 2.1.5.a: # of presentations or events by program staff or partners on general PoC or human security themes	15	5
Indicator 2.1.5.b: # of participants attending trainings by program staff or partners on general PoC or human security themes	150	40
<b>Short-term outcome 2.2: UN and NATO focus on PoC and inclusive community engagement in their operational plans and policies</b>		
Indicator 2.2.a: # of targeted PoC-mandated missions that develop or implement a conflict-sensitive community engagement component in their operational plans	8	0

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
Indicator 3.d: # of military missions in focus countries that apply a threat-based approach with an explicit human security component	N/A	0
Indicator 3.e: # of trainings for T/PCCs on PoC basics	10	2
<b>Short-term outcome 3.1: Targeted missions have increased knowledge of, capacity, and willingness for evidence-based and data-driven decision-making on PoC</b>		
Indicator 3.1.a: # of targeted missions that participate in activities aimed at sharing lessons learned on data-driven decision making	6	0
Indicator 3.1.b: % of participants (trained by T/PCCs with PAX materials) that display increased knowledge and skills in evidence-based and data-driven decision-making on PoC	75%	0
Indicator 3.1.c: # of targeted missions that report being better able to apply sources of data for data-driven protection based on advice provided	6	0
Indicator 3.1.1.a: # of individuals or institutions consistently engaged in the community of interest	12	5
Indicator 3.1.1.b: # of joint publications on data for protection	7	2
Indicator 3.1.2: # of missions that received technical advice on the use of data for protection	4	0
Indicator 3.1.3.a: # of trainings, exercises or mission preparation modules facilitated by PAX staff on evidence-based and data-driven decision making for military staff of T/PCCs	6	1
Indicator 3.1.3.b: # of participants completing training (by T/PCCs with PAX materials) in evidence-based and data-driven decision-making on PoC	80	7
<b>Short-term outcome 3.2: Targeted missions have increased capacity and mechanisms on independently verifiable civilian harm tracking, analysis and response</b>		
Indicator 3.2.a: # of targeted missions systematically utilizing independent civilian harm research for evidence and to inform the practices of international missions around transparency and accountability	9	0
Indicator 3.2.b: # of targeted T/PCCs that develop/adapt tools or methodologies for improved civilian harm tracking	8	0
Indicator 3.2.1.a: # of joint publications in which PAX collaborates with researchers or institutions to track civilian harm	8	2

PAX Protection of Civilians Program

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
Indicator 2.2b: # of targeted UN Agencies and offices that develop or implement clear standard operating procedures on community engagement	8	1
Indicator 2.2c: # of targeted missions that develop or implement a PoC component in their operational plans	N/A	0
Indicator 2.2d: # of targeted NATO member states that develop or implement clear SOPs on PoC	8	0
Indicator 2.2.1: # of research products that directly support programmatic efforts to improve PoC tactics and approaches within UN	8	3
Indicator 2.2.2: # of strategic sessions by program staff and partners	12	4
Indicator 2.2.3: # of advocacy meetings and strategy sessions facilitated with or by UN and NATO	16	2
Indicator 2.2.4: # of written deliverables for EU officials	4	3

Indicator	Life of Project Target	Results to Date
Indicator 3.2.1b: Comprehensive book on civilian harm written and published	N/A	N/A
Indicator 3.2.1c: # of copies of civilian harm book disseminated	750	0
Indicator 3.2.2a: # of civilian harm tracking methodologies assessed	8	0
Indicator 3.2.2b: # of publications resulting from desk research on Roadmap Process and civilian harm	N/A	4
Indicator 3.2.3: # of engagements with missions and T/PCCs to disseminate lessons learned on previous and current models and standards for civilian harm tracking	10	5
<b>Short-term outcome 3.3: Targeted missions have increased knowledge about and increased willingness to engage in comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness</b>		
Indicator 3.3a: # of targeted T/PCCs engaging in discussions about standardization of comprehensive assessment of protection effectiveness	12	0
Indicator 3.3b: % of participants (trained by T/PCCs with PAX materials) that report having increased knowledge about comprehensive assessment of PoC effectiveness	75%	75%
Indicator 3.3.1: # of in-mission evaluations conducted by PAX and partners using models and indicators based on civilian perspectives and enhancing locally perceived protection effectiveness	6	0
Indicator 3.3.2a: # of training and exercise modules on measuring PoC effectiveness developed with involvement of PAX and partners	12	0
Indicator 3.3.2b: # of participants completing training (by T/PCCs with PAX materials) on performing comprehensive assessments of PoC effectiveness	120	0
Indicator 3.3.3: # of engagements of PAX staff in training curriculum development	8	4

## 3.2.1 Impact Indicators

Starting in 2020 the PoC Program began tracking sociopolitical and impact-level trends in both our own HSS data and reliable secondary sources in order to supplement our regular context analysis in Iraq and South Sudan. These datapoints do not necessarily reflect on the quality or sustainability of our own interventions, but serve as indirect proxies for both the security dynamics we are trying to influence, and the contextual factors that are outside of our control. Below are a few of the key findings from 2020:

**According to the Fragile States Index (FSI), both Iraq and South Sudan score poorly in terms of their Security Apparatus and Group Grievance scores.** While both fall within the bottom-performing 10% of all countries covered by the analysis, Iraq and South Sudan have both improved their rankings somewhat in the last five years.

**Recent evidence from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) demonstrated that the number of incidents of violence against civilians increased during the last two years in both Iraq and South Sudan,** though the number of reported civilian fatalities actually decreased in 2020, likely as a result of pandemic-imposed restrictions on mobility and group gatherings (although these policies did prompt some degree of public backlash as well).

### Fragile States Index

#### Indicator C1: Security Apparatus

The Security Apparatus indicator considers the security threats to a state, such as bombings, attacks and battle-related deaths, rebel movements, mutinies, coups, or terrorism. The score also takes into account serious criminal factors, such as organized crime and homicides, and perceived trust of citizens in domestic security. Components: monopoly on use of force, relationship between security and citizenry, use of force, arms proliferation/DDR

#### Iraq

2019: **8,7** (13<sup>th</sup>/178 countries)

2020: **8,2** (17<sup>th</sup>/178 countries)

#### South Sudan

2019: **9,7** (3<sup>rd</sup>/178 countries)

2020: **9,4** (3<sup>rd</sup>/178 countries)

#### Indicator C3: Group Grievance

The Group Grievance Indicator focuses on divisions and schisms between different groups in society – particularly divisions based on social or political characteristics – and their role in access to services or resources, and inclusion in the political process. Components: post-conflict response, equality, divisions, communal violence

#### Iraq

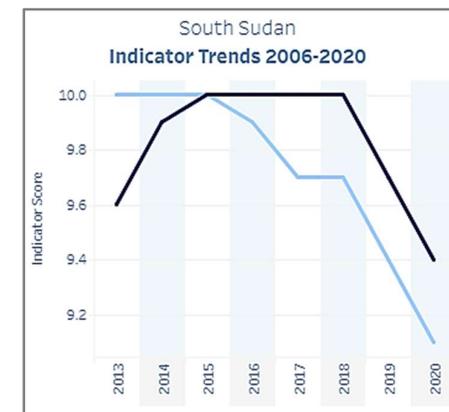
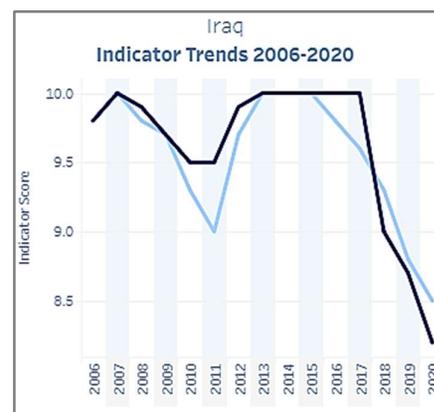
2019: **8,8** (13<sup>th</sup>/178 countries)

2020: **8,5** (17<sup>th</sup>/178 countries)

#### South Sudan

2019: **9,4** (3<sup>rd</sup>/178 countries)

2020: **9,1** (3<sup>rd</sup>/178 countries)



Trend graphs of FSI data pulled from their [online dashboard](#) show a decline in scores in both indicators in Iraq and South Sudan in recent years, signaling modest improvement in both Security Apparatus and Group Grievance factors

### Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)

#### ACLED Dashboard

- # of events of violence against civilians
- # of reported fatalities in events of violence against civilians, riots and protests

*Quantified events of violence against civilians include any violent attacks on unarmed civilians. ACLED defines this as violent events where an organized armed group deliberately inflicts violence upon unarmed non-combatants, and specifically includes sexual violence, attacks, and abduction/forced disappearance. By their definition, civilians are unarmed and cannot engage in “political violence.” The perpetrators of such acts include state forces and their affiliates, rebels, militias, and external/other forces.<sup>1</sup>*

<b>Iraq</b>	<b>South Sudan</b>
2019: <b>1.329</b> total events (255 riots, 883 protests, 191 cases of violence against civilians)	2019: <b>333</b> total events (13 riots, 19 protests, 301 cases of violence against civilians)
2019: <b>702</b> reported fatalities	2019: <b>976</b> reported fatalities
2020: <b>2.642</b> total events (441 riots, 1,794 protests, 407 cases of violence against civilians)	2020: <b>436</b> total events (21 riots, 40 protests, 402 cases of violence against civilians)
2020: <b>418</b> reported fatalities	2020: <b>665</b> reported fatalities

Note that while a significant amount of fieldwork was completed in three locations each in Iraq and South Sudan in the waning months of 2020, the data will not be analyzed until 2021, and is therefore a number of impact-level indicators referencing HSS data are not included herein. A proper trend analysis will be possible in advance of the next annual report.

<sup>1</sup> Note that According to ACLED’s codebook, the figures represented above **do not** include civilians injured or killed as a result of battles or explosions/remote violence, according to their event type definitions. Battles and remote violence are presumed to be aimed at military targets. Where civilians are affected, whether by direct targeting or incidental collateral damage during these types of events, it’s classified according to these other categories, rather than under attacks on civilians. This is a potential limitation for our analytical purposes.

## 3.3 Annex: Organogram

### 3.3.1 Utrecht: PAX Protection of Civilians (PoC) and Support teams

