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# Mid-term evaluation: PAX Protection of Civilians Program 2019-2023

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## Evaluation Report

*PAX for Peace Netherlands*

June 2022

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## List of Abbreviations

AMA	Assistance Mission for Africa
CAD	Civil Affairs Division
CH	Civilian Harm
COMSECCOM	Community Security Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DoDI	Department of Defence Instruction on Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response
DSH	Department of Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid
EIA	Engaging International Actors
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HSS IQ	Human Security Survey Iraq
HSS SS	Human Security Survey South Sudan
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JPC-CDoT	Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Torit
KII	Key Informant Interview
MFA	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP	Nonviolent Peaceforce
ODA	Official Development Aid
PIP	Protection in Practice
PoC	Protection of Civilians
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
SSR	Security Sector Reform
T/PCCs	Troop and Police Contributing Countries
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UFE	Utilisation-Focused Evaluation

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Introduction to the PoC program

The **Protection of Civilians** (PoC) program<sup>1</sup> of the Dutch organisation PAX was commissioned in 2019 by the Department of Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The PoC program encompasses the following four projects, which are implemented in collaboration with a range of partners (*see Textbox 1*): Human Security Survey (HSS) Iraq, Human Security Survey (HSS) South Sudan, Engaging International Actors on PoC (EIA), and Protection in Practice (PiP).

The four PoC projects are conceptually interconnected: Within the HSS projects (Iraq and South Sudan), data on civilians' experiences and perceptions in situations of conflict is collected in order to increase understanding of the local security dynamics and trends, and enhance the "claim making capacity" of civilians. The HSS data shall inform the work of EIA and PiP in Iraq, South Sudan and on international level so that within these two projects evidence-based advocacy and training efforts can be used to enable international stakeholders to design and implement project activities that reflect local priorities.

The aim of the EIA project is to influence the PoC policy of international security actors – like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations (UN), Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) and the European Union (EU) – by raising awareness on the reality in the mission countries as well as the needs of citizens on the ground. The PiP project builds on the policy level advocacy of EIA, towards implementation of policies into practice; it delivers trainings to security institutions based on policies that were informed by HSS data. A major focus of this mid-term evaluation is on whether this conceptual idea of interconnection is already visible in the implementation of the PoC program and supports achievement of outcomes.

## 1.2. Scope of and objectives for the evaluation

Given the nature of a mid-term evaluation (in contrast to an ex-post evaluation) and the expectations of users to get guidance on potential course corrections relevant for the remaining grant period (ending in Dec 2023), as well as for future interventions, **the focus of this evaluation is on learning** rather than accountability. The **primary user groups** for this evaluation are the PAX PoC team as well as its partner organisations in Iraq, South Sudan, and the USA. **Secondary user groups** are the DSH at the MFA and further colleagues in PAX. The recommendations given in this evaluation will be targeted to these user groups.

### Textbox 1: Implementation partners:

#### EIA / PiP

- ❖ The Stimson Centre

#### HSS Iraq

- ❖ Iraqi Al-Amal Association
- ❖ Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society
- ❖ Wand Al-Khair Human Organization in Iraq
- ❖ Al-Ghad League for Woman & Child Care

#### HSS South Sudan

- ❖ Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)
- ❖ Catholic Diocese of Torit (JPC-CDOT)
- ❖ Individual implementation consultant

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<sup>1</sup> Long title: "Amplifying voices for the protection of civilians: improving standards and accountability of PoC and military operations".

After an extensive inception phase (see Chapter 2 on methodology) the user groups and the evaluation team agreed on the following learning foci:

1. Effectiveness of the PoC program's structure and processes
2. Interconnection of local, national, and international levels
3. Translation of activities into outcomes
4. Sustainability

This evaluation provides a considerable number of recommendations that are indicated with an arrow. To guide the reader, **each recommendation is addressed to one (or more) of the mentioned user groups**. Furthermore, **those recommendations our team considers of highest importance are marked with a "+"**.

Looking at the PoC program from an outside perspective, and given that this evaluation did not investigate the efficiency criterion, the evaluation team was not in the position to decide for all recommendations whether they are feasible based on the available staff and financial resources. **Therefore, those recommendations that start with the words "consider" or "explore" are meant to be discussed within the indicated user groups**; a management decision will be necessary to determine whether these recommendations can be implemented or not.

## 2. Methodology

The findings and recommendations for this evaluation will be presented in four different reports. The main report, which focuses on overarching issues of the PoC program, and three project level reports; one each on HSS South Sudan and HSS Iraq, and one on EIA and PiP. The methodology described here is valid for all reports. Specific methods used in the data collection and processing at project level are described in the project reports.

The following methodology was developed in a participatory manner during a comprehensive inception phase that involved PAX program staff and partner organisations. The full list of Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) can be found in Appendix 1, the lists of interview partners in Appendix 2, and a short description of the evaluation team in Appendix 3.

### 2.1. Evaluation criteria

Following the objectives of this evaluation, the focus of this mid-term evaluation has been guided by the following OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, revised in 2019:

- ❖ **Effectiveness:** *Is the intervention achieving its objectives?*

This criterion measures the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results. This takes into account the relative importance of the objectives or results. The term effectiveness is also used as an aggregate measure of the extent to which an intervention has achieved or is expected to achieve relevant and sustainable impacts efficiently and coherently.

Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) for the main report<sup>2</sup> are:

- Is the PoC program organised in a way that supports effective implementation and learning? What can be improved?

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed list of the KEQs can be found in Appendix 1. The project reports for KEQs are addressed at project level.

- Is the strategic approach effective? Do activities target the most relevant actors at the right level? To what extent have the short and long-term outcomes of the PoC program been achieved so far? What are the contributions by PAX and partners to these changes?

❖ **Sustainability:** *Will the benefits last?*

This criterion examines the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. This includes an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental, and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time.

The KEQ for the main report is:

- Do local and international security actors have ownership for PoC? How can ownership for PoC in target groups be improved?

Additionally, this mid-term evaluation considers the following **cross-cutting topics** whenever deemed relevant: **Synergies** with external and internal projects, **gender sensitivity**, **conflict sensitivity**, **adaptive implementation**, and **inclusive approach**<sup>3</sup>.

KEQs for the main report are:

- Is work at the different levels (local, national, international) well connected? Do the four projects create synergies / collaborate effectively?
- How can interconnectivity of the PoC projects be improved?

The preparation and implementation of this evaluation followed the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' **IOB Evaluation quality criteria** (2020). Certain IOB criteria were not implemented due to the agreed focus of the evaluation (e.g., no focus on efficiency). To ensure relevance of our KEQs and make the findings and recommendations from this evaluation as useful as possible to the target audience, the evaluation followed the **utilisation-focused evaluation (UFE) approach**. This included an **extensive inception phase**<sup>4</sup> and **several feedback loops throughout the evaluation process**, including the participation of the evaluation team in the PAX PoC partners meeting, where initial findings were presented and discussed in separate sessions with the staff of all four PoC projects. During the inception phase, all PAX team members, as well as representatives from its partners (*see textbox 1*) and from the MFA and the Dutch embassies in Iraq and South Sudan, were interviewed. Expectations formulated during the interviews were written down in an inception report, provided the basis for the chosen KEQs as well as for the above-mentioned learning foci agreed upon for this evaluation (see Chapter 1). During an **inception workshop** in February 2022, all participants taking part in the inception phase were given the chance to verify whether their expectations are being considered by the proposed scope and approach.

## 2.2. Data collection

The mid-term evaluation is based on **mixed-methods approach**, which involved the collection and analysis of qualitative data from primary and secondary sources during January to May 2022.

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<sup>3</sup> Gender and conflict sensitivity, adaptive implementation, and inclusive approach are looked at in the two HSS project reports.

<sup>4</sup> Including 17 inception interviews, some of which have included more than one person, and engagement of partners in South Sudan via written inception questions as the internet situation did not allow for a call.

During the inception phase, several methods for data collection were discussed, including semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), field observations, online survey, case studies (stories of change), impact harvesting, and document analysis. It was agreed that KIIs would be a crucial ingredient for the data collection as they allow for in-depth exchange with beneficiaries of activities. In addition, FGDs and observations were agreed to be useful as they enable an exploration of different perceptions, feelings, and ideas about a topic among members of a group and help to investigate similarities and differences in the participants' opinion and experiences. Both, KIIs and FGDs, were seen to give valuable input on potential adjustments of the program's approach as well as on the contribution of the program to stated outcomes. Impact harvesting had been done in the past and was considered by some PAX staff as too vague; based on narrations rather than displaying clear lines of contribution. It was not chosen to be part of data collection and analysis also because, with the focus of the evaluation being learning rather than accountability, "impact" is not a suitable evaluation criterion. An online survey was envisioned to capture a quantifiable perspective of target groups of the PoC program that are not in direct contact with the PoC team to avoid "courtesy bias". Yet, the approach had to be discarded later in the process for practical reasons (see Chapter on limitations below).

Overall, **primary data collection** included semi-structured KIIs, FGDs, and site visits in South Sudan and Iraq. In South Sudan, the in-person interviews were held in two implementation regions – Juba (Central Equatoria State) and Panyinjiar County (Unity State) – with the support of a national consultant; these were complemented by remote interviews with stakeholders that were not available to meet in-person during the visit. In Iraq, in-person interviews were held in Erbil and Diyala by the Iraq lead evaluator and local consultant, including field visits to stakeholders and areas in Diyala. In Basra, Kirkuk, Saladin, and Hawija the interviews and focus group discussions were held remotely and online due to access challenges, remoteness, Iraq visa issues, and unavailability of stakeholders for in-person meeting.

The **collection of secondary data** included an extensive qualitative analysis of internal PAX documents, such as project proposals, annual progress reports, annual work plans, previous evaluations, learning event notes, Theory of Change (ToC), results framework, and the HSS methodology. The analysis of the collected data involved comparisons between key informant responses and existing literature, as well as field observations where possible. An Excel matrix was used to organize responses per interview partner, category of interviewees (see list of interviewees in the Appendix), KEQs, and sub-questions. The analysis aimed at detecting trends that showed a common direction of answers to certain questions. Responses that contradicted a detected trend were discussed in the evaluation team and/or with follow-up interviews with PoC team members to understand whether the perspective of the respondent indicates a significant risk or not. When a risk was identified, a recommendation has been given on how to overcome the challenge in the future.

The **ToC of the PoC program was used as the causal chain** to be tested during the evaluation process. Its inherent logic was assessed, and evidence was collected to show progress towards the formulated objectives. The evaluation investigated the contributions by the PoC program as well as potential overlaps and synergies with other actors active in the field of PoC. Finally, recommendations were formulated on how to steer the program towards stronger results orientation.

The **selection of interviewees for KIIs and FGDs** was an iterative process. Based on the inception calls, the evaluation team drew up draft interview lists and requested program staff to provide contacts. During the interviews, respondents were asked whether they could propose further interview partners apt to provide a perspective on the KEQs for this evaluation. This succeeded in a few cases, but overall interview partners were mostly direct work contacts of PoC staff (see more reflections in the Chapter 2.3. on limitations).

The table summarises the project-specific distribution and number of interviews conducted. Due to the great variety of locations where interview partners are located, a hybrid form of data collection was chosen: All interviews for EIA and PiP took place virtually, while in-person evaluation missions were conducted to South Sudan and Iraq (Erbil, Diyala, Kirkuk). A detailed list of the interview partners can be found in [Appendix 2: Interview partner list](#).

PoC Project	No.	Format	
		In-person	Virtual
EIA/PiP	32	0	32
HSS South Sudan	22	12	10
HSS Iraq	31	13	18
Overarching	7	0	7
<b>No. (total)</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>

The evaluation uses **anonymised quotes** from KIIs. They are either used to **illustrate a trend** that was detected during several interviews (and FGDs) or substantiated by other sources (e.g., document research), or to present an extreme, which rather than signalling a trend **indicates a possibility (or a risk)**. If quotes are used for the latter purpose, the text will clearly show that this is the perspective of just one or very few respondents.

A **presentation of preliminary findings** at the annual partners meeting of the PoC program at the end of March 2022 allowed for reflection and validation with all partners and PAX staff.

### 2.3. Limitations

The mid-term evaluation is subject to the following limitations:

- ❖ In both South Sudan and Iraq not all interview partners that were initially contacted could be interviewed and there was limited access to certain stakeholder groups (e.g., COMSECCOM members from a region other than Panyinjiar County, Unity State, and international actors in Iraq), as well as limited access and engagement from some partner organisations and community members.
- ❖ The national evaluator from South Sudan could not join the lead evaluator as planned for the data collection in Unity State due to last minute booking cancellations by the UN Humanitarian Air Service flight. While this led to a slightly lower number of interviews that were conducted in Unity County, the national evaluator used the time in Juba to follow up on additional interview partners.
- ❖ Foci of the PoC program and thus of this evaluation are security issues and community perceptions of security actors. This is considerably sensitive for local partners, participants, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., enumerators, local security actors, community members), and it was maybe



difficult for some of them to be fully transparent about the measures and activities taken to support the project or engage with the local partner, among others.

- ❖ A planned online survey of external stakeholders for EIA and PiP could not take place. With Russia invading Ukraine, PoC program staff and management decided first to hold the planned distribution of the survey and later agreed to not pursue the survey with NATO and UN headquarters personnel. The online survey was supposed to seek feedback on changes in PoC policies and implementation from people that had not yet worked closely with the PoC team yet might have received trainings prepared by program staff or those that should be able to see changes induced by PoC policies that the program had influenced. Based on the very low response rate received<sup>5</sup>, it was concluded that the timing was not appropriate to engage stakeholders in a survey, and the PoC team agreed to focus on qualitative expert interviews with NATO, UN, and Pentagon staff instead. While most NATO and UN staff approached were available for an interview, the Pentagon declined participation because of limited resources, pointing to the Russian war in Ukraine.
- ❖ Almost all interview partners have a close working relationship with PoC program staff and might thus be inclined to “courtesy bias” (telling you what they think you want to hear and what is good for their partners). While we cannot rule out that this results in a positive bias, the number of interviews held (90) reduces this risk significantly.
- ❖ Activities focused on the EU are not considered in depth in this evaluation. Three interviews were conducted with the former and the present PAX EU advocacy advisers and with a former staff of the European Peace Liaison Office (EPLO). Based on the feedback given during these interviews, we will give a short insight into EU activities by PAX but cannot provide a well-founded assessment on the quality of activities. With the main goal for this evaluation being learning, it was not seen necessary by PAX PoC management to provide more ideas on how to engage with the EU through this evaluation, particularly as a consultant was hired by PAX to look into potential work streams and entry points at the EU level.

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<sup>5</sup> For UNMISS as well as the peacekeeping training centres in Ghana and Rwanda an attempt to spread the survey was made yet with very little feedback (seven staff from UNMISS replied, no response was received neither from Ghana nor from Rwanda). Another attempt to spread the survey was taken with the US Pentagon and with the 1German / Netherlands Corps (1GNC), yet only one staff from the Pentagon provided feedback.

### 3. Main findings on program level

The main findings on program level are presented along the four learning foci introduced above and address the KEQs indicated at the beginning of each sub-chapter.

In general, the whole first half of the program's implementation was greatly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular the restrictions that prevented international travel as well as domestic travel within South Sudan and Iraq, and the resulting focus on pandemic response among national and international security actors. Some activities could be shifted to online or hybrid formats (like the annual PoC Conference), yet network building especially at national level was difficult as sensitive communication is needed and online communication is not suitable for that. The PoC program had to adapt greatly in terms of general activity implementation and in particular the engagement with national and international security actors (*for details see the separate project reports and Chapter 3.3*).

#### 3.1. Effectiveness of the PoC program's approach

**Is the PoC program organised in a way that supports effective implementation and learning? What can be improved? Is the strategic approach effective? Do activities target the most relevant actors at the right level?**

In the following, the overall effectiveness of the PoC program's approach and its processes are assessed considering the implementation logic, existing monitoring and learning processes, as well as interactions between the PoC program and other PAX programs. Interactions and linkages between the four PoC projects will not be considered here as they will be subject of the subsequent chapter.

#### PoC program approach

The PoC program is composed of four integrated projects – EIA, PiP, HSS South Sudan, and HSS Iraq – which are logically linked as laid out in the ToC. They all work towards achieving the overall program goal “to increase the effectiveness of PoC interventions by both enabling civilians to hold local and international security actors to account and enabling and motivating those actors to design and implement protection strategies that are more civilian centred.”

**Conceptually, the four PoC projects are interconnected:** The HSS in Iraq and South Sudan provide long-term and cyclical data on the perspectives of civilians living in conflict areas. This systematic collection of civilians' viewpoints informs the work of EIA and PiP, with EIA aiming to influence the policy level of PoC approaches, and PiP delivering trainings informed by the data provided by the HSS to military and security institutions.

Currently, the program is considering a **merger of EIA and PiP**, potentially blending the work on international advocacy, research, and training in one combined project. The merged project is expected to increase the cooperation within the PoC team and to clarify responsibilities between the overall program Lead and the individual Project Leads (*for details, see the separate EIA/PiP evaluation report*). While the restructuring aims to bring efficiency gains to the management of EIA and PiP, it **does not seek a change to the overall program approach that includes working on local and international levels**. The conceptual logic of the program to strengthen the voices of civilians with the goal to guide debates and actions by local *and* international security actors is being upheld and **distinguishes the PoC program from other projects in the field of PoC** that either aim to influence the international

debate (advocacy and research focussed organisations) or intend to stimulate peacebuilding and security sector reform (SSR) in one particular country.

This **goal of linking the perspective of civilians with the policies of security organisations** (or, as one interview partner put it, “trying to link two different worlds”) is seen as a “**unique strength**” of the program by some interview partners, while others consider it **its biggest challenge**. Indeed, the different PoC projects are still considered by the program staff to work in silos rather than systematically looking for synergies and collaboration potentials – there is, for example, no systematic uptake or translation of HSS data for international advocacy efforts yet (*see details in chapter on interlinkages*). Some interview partners outside the PoC program even expressed doubts whether the work on the international level (e.g., with NATO and UN HQ) is needed to achieve impact on the ground and pointed to the fact that funding provided to the program has to be used for official development aid (ODA) purposes.

An alternative to the currently pursued approach of combining community level work with high-level advocacy would be to focus program activities on actors directly active within Iraq and South Sudan, including deployed missions as well as national and local military and police forces. In the following section we will **analyse whether it is conducive to the program’s goals to keep its current structure or whether it is more beneficial to re-focus resources on actors active in specific conflict areas**. This will be done considering advantages and disadvantages of each scenario from an effectiveness angle and a sustainability angle.

#### *Scenario 1: Reallocating resources from international to national security actors*

The **upside** of this scenario is threefold: a) **impact might be visible faster** if resources of the PoC program are allocated away from the international sphere and towards PoC implementation in Iraq and South Sudan, b) the highly context-specific **HSS data is more relevant** for activities at national level (compared to international level), and c) **funds would clearly be allocated to ODA-specific activities and outcomes**.

Major **downsides** of this reallocation concern (1) sustainability and (2) losing outcomes that have been achieved by the PoC program explicitly because of its engagement at different levels.

##### (1) Challenges to sustainability

- ❖ It will be **difficult to engage deployed missions in a sustainable way without engaging the international level**. Deployed missions are primarily guided by their headquarters that decide on the mission’s mandate and resources and the policies promoted. This is important as missions are in the position to influence national forces (especially if the mandate includes training and capacity building measures) and could promote more comprehensive PoC implementation by military and police forces. Furthermore, engaging national and local forces is considered a highly sensitive task by interview partners; working through international missions ease the engagement with these actors, especially in situations where national and local forces are rather part of the problem than the solution, such as in South Sudan and Iraq.
- ❖ The **PoC program would leave a significant gap at international level** if they decided to withdraw from their international advocacy efforts. The interviews confirmed the high relevance and strong demand for the PoC program to support international security actors. This is due to the **extremely high satisfaction that interview partners at international level showed towards the collaboration with the program** (*see the EIA / PiP evaluation report for details*), and to the fact that there are

only few other INGOs actively collaborating with security actors (e.g., through joint events, exercises, and trainings) that deliver the same quality as PAX and Stimson. For example, all interview partners expressed desire to keep or even expand cooperation with the PoC program on trainings, which indicates the high-quality work that is delivered by PAX and the difficulties to fill the gap the program would leave if it would phase out of its international activities.

(2) Outcomes achieved and further potential based on the interlinkages between the local and the international level:

- ❖ Another drawback of re-allocating resources from international to national level is that highly praised projects like the **Hawija Report and the discussions around it** (with representatives of Hawija having a face-to-face meeting with representatives from the Dutch Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs) would not have happened without the PoC program being active at the different levels.
- ❖ Another disadvantage of this scenario would be the limited ability of PAX to bring voices of civilians from conflict areas like South Sudan and Iraq into the international debate, which is considered a major strength. As one interview partner pointed out explicitly: **“PAX is better than anyone else to bring the voices of civilians to the political level”**. Even though the HSS data and general lessons learned on working with communities in conflict on protection issues are not yet systematically used to influence or inspire debates at NATO and UN HQ levels, the strong connections built with local partners seems to be valuable to international security actors. Several interview partners from the international level mentioned the need for their organisations to engage more with communities in conflict areas and expressed interest in involving local partners and/or community representatives in their trainings as well as in political debates at the HQ level. The PoC program approach of linking the different levels is thus considered a major positive quality.

*Scenario 2: Keeping resources distributed among international and local security actors*

There are considerable **advantages** of this scenario, which are linked to effectiveness and sustainability. Reiterating that deployed missions will only change if their HQs and mandates change, and those missions can be a good access point to work with national security actors, scenario 2 entails the **potential of influencing PoC more effectively and sustainably than only going via national security actors**. In addition, structural change in NATO and the UN can lead to impact on a broader scope, opening the **possibility to contribute to outcomes in more conflict-affected countries** rather than focussing on one or two countries only.

The **downside** of this second scenario is that **impact at national and local level might not be generated as fast** as it could if all resources of the PoC program would be allocated towards security actors active at country level. Outcomes thus might not be visible as quick as in scenario 1. Indeed, the evaluation has revealed that the **engagement with security actors (military and police forces as well as missions) active in Iraq and South Sudan constitutes a weak point** of the implementation up to now (*see the HSS Iraq and HSS South Sudan evaluation reports*). This is due to travel and access restrictions by the Covid-19 pandemic (especially during 2020 and 2021). However, more recently, major progress has been made towards engagement with security actors in Iraq as it was agreed that the PoC program develops a training session for the National Security Council of Iraq in arrangement with the NATO Mission to Iraq (NMI).

A point for further research and discussion is the **potential for collaboration with other international actors active in SSR to leverage work on supporting actors at country level**. In South Sudan, for example, actors active in SSR and institutional capacity development (e.g., UNDP and GIZ) present interesting cooperation partners (*see evaluation report on HSS South Sudan*).

The reflections above provide a clear picture of the value the integrated, multi-level approach of the PoC program entails. This holds true especially for the sustainability of the program but also for its effectiveness. Nevertheless, the weak engagement that exists so far with national security actors and deployed missions, the specification to spend funds for benefits in ODA countries, and the wish to make stronger use of HSS data, are valid points for those arguing for stronger allocation of program resources to country level. These need to be addressed in the second half of the project duration (and beyond) by partly reallocating available resources to activities at country level and by clearly explaining how international activities contribute to benefits in ODA countries. The loosening of Covid-19 restrictions provides a good opportunity for stronger engagement with national security actors and missions.

- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Keep core activities (trainings and advocacy) at international level active and seize the potential to influence PoC policies and implementation in a sustainable manner.*
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** *Address the trade-off between limited resources and the need to more strongly engage at country level in an internal transparent process. Assess requests by international security actors (e.g., on trainings or event organisation) if they meaningfully contribute to the program goals. At least two questions should be discussed and the reasoning behind the answer to these questions should be documented briefly to provide a basis for future assessments:*
  - *On effectiveness: Does the activity have the potential to contribute to change in ODA countries, in particular South Sudan and Iraq? Criteria include:*
    - *Activity takes place in ODA countries (e.g., engagement with missions or national forces)*
    - *Activity benefits population in ODA countries (e.g., Hawija Project)*
    - *Activity reacts to negative impacts on population in ODA countries with the aim to prevent harm in the future (e.g., Roadmap Process on CH with the Dutch Ministry of Defence)*
  - *On sustainability: Can the activity meaningfully influence PoC policies, doctrines, guidelines, etc. within international security actors? Criteria include:*
    - *Political weight of actors involved (what influence these actors have on NATO, UN, or EU?)*
    - *Existing coverage (is the topic or method covered meaningfully by other organisations or does it represent a gap?)*
    - *Trade-off (which ongoing or planned activities would have to be abandoned or tuned down to make resources available for the activity?)*

*To pursue the requested support, at least one of the two main questions should be answered with a clear “Yes.” If that is not the case the activity should be dropped. Staff resources that are freed up because of a more thorough scrutiny of activities on international level should be reallocated to support the establishment of a network at country level (e.g., support advocacy and training). This has already started with the engagement of military actors in Iraq.*

- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Work towards collaboration potentials with actors focussing on SSR in Iraq and South Sudan, some of who already expressed interest to make use of HSS data for their strategic planning (i.e., UNDP in South Sudan).
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Use annual work plans and annual reports to explain the contribution by international activities to benefits for ODA countries.
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** Keep investigating further funding opportunities for potential non-ODA activities (e.g., engage (potential) PoC champions – The Netherlands, Switzerland, USA - on possibilities to set up a funding facility to support PoC at international level).

### Textbox 2: EU engagement by PAX

The following is presented in a box because the limited amount of interview partners for this institution does not allow for a well-funded assessment of PAX engagement with the EU (see section on limitations above).

The main activities by PAX at EU level in the past two years did concern the European Peace Facility (EPF). The **EPF is a relatively new off-budget instrument for operational actions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)** that have military or defence implications; the EPF allows financing military equipment<sup>1</sup>. The budget contains 5,7 billion Euro for six years. Lately, two billion Euro were provided to Ukraine. As an off-budget instrument, the EPF management is accountable to national parliaments but not to the EU Parliament.

PAX and partnering NGOs do see a risk of fuelling conflict through the EPF rather than supporting peace<sup>1</sup>. The main criticism is that “safeguards (to prevent civilian harm) are extremely weak” and “not enough resources are provided for PoC in missions even though it was mandated”. The key advocacy goals thus included **strengthening civilian harm (CH) provisions and accountability mechanisms** in the EPF, which could be done through the “set up of realistic CH processes for missions in standard operation procedures,” as well as the **inclusion of a community engagement strategy**.

One interview partner mentioned it would be good to not only focus on mitigating potential adverse effects of the EPF but also work towards the transformation of EU security policies: “It would be good that the EU realizes it is not the new global policeman, but could look at conflict from a peace and prevention point of view. We need a balance between mitigation and transformation to lower the incentives to use force.” This view is slightly contrasted by two other interview partners who rather aim to focus on CH mitigation: “We cannot get rid of EPF, so we try to get CHM and CHT (civilian harm tracking) as well as accountability into the processes.”

Partners working with PAX expressed **strong content with PAX’s engagement in EPLO (European Peace Liaison Office) and the EPF** and stated the need to bring in local CSOs from conflict-affected countries for talks with EU officials. This matches well with the plans by the PoC program to set up a community engagement fund in the Sahel region in order to allow CSO representatives to be included in talks with the EPF and other EU officials working on the CFSP. As for the **linkages with the HSS projects**, the former PAX EU advocacy advisor as well as one interview partner outside PAX mentioned to have occasionally made use of the HSS data from Iraq on specific meeting on the country. While HSS data was considered useful for country advocacy, it is not yet seen to be an adequate tool to inform more general processes that focus on topic rather than country.

### Connection of the PoC program with the wider PAX organisation

Several staff of the PoC program mentioned the need for more support by overarching teams within PAX (e.g., accounting, communication, or event organisation). Also, PAX staff outside the PoC team



claimed that the PoC program is not yet as well connected with PAX's overall structure as it could be, even though this has slightly improved over the program duration. A lot of knowledge that is generated by the PoC team (e.g., by the HSS and advocacy efforts towards NATO and the UN) might be useful for the organisation and its other projects. One staff member of PAX, from outside the PoC team, expressed the need to **engage in a deeper dialogue** on the conceptual incorporation of PoC, which was seen to be one of the reasons for the weak connection; this could include a process on developing an internal understanding of how the concepts of PoC, human security, and peacebuilding are interlinked and how these linkages can be translated into stronger cooperation between the different PAX programs. The **Hawija project** was mentioned by several interview partners in PAX as a positive example illustrating the linkages between the PAX PoC, PAX Humanitarian Disarmament and the PAX Iraq team, thus further connecting the PoC Team with the wider organisation. Working together on certain projects seems to strengthen the connection between PAX's programs.

In South Sudan, synergies between the HSS project, **other PAX projects** and the **country office** are increasingly used, a close cooperation is desired and considered highly relevant by other PAX projects as well as the HSS team. While the PAX PoC program was initially considered as "separate" from the other PAX interventions in South Sudan both by non-PoC PAX staff as well as national partner organisations<sup>6</sup>, **there is now regular exchange between the PAX country director and the PAX program lead for the South Sudan country program as well as the HSS project lead** and other PoC project leads. While there is now increased exchange on management level, there is still potential for more joint activities and a regular reflection by all PAX staff members in South Sudan (PoC and other projects) on how the HSS data can inform other PAX projects, because the data is perceived as highly informative for the conceptualisation and implementation of other PAX projects in the country (*see evaluation report for HSS South Sudan for details*).

In summary, the connection of the PoC program with the wider PAX organisation has strengthened over the first half of the PoC program duration; joint efforts led to valued outcomes, yet more work should be put into the process to avoid missing opportunities for synergies between the different teams of PAX in the future.

- ⇒ **PAX PoC and PAX Board of Directors:** *Formulate the specific needs of the PoC team and engage in a dialogue with the PAX Board of Directors on how the PoC approach can be connected better with the wider organisational approach and how the needs of the PoC team can be met.*
- ⇒ **PAX Strategy and Innovation:** *Proactively identify opportunities to strengthen the connection of PoC to other PAX programs and discuss these with the PoC Team and the Board of Directors.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Discuss the feasibility of organising regular exchange sessions involving PAX PoC HSS South Sudan and PAX South Sudan staff from other projects after new HSS data and the validation sessions have been analysed, to assess how the findings impact other PAX interventions and which potentials for using synergies have emerged from it.*
- ⇒ **PAX Country Office South Sudan:** *Consider HSS data in the design and conceptualisation process of future PAX projects in South Sudan (e.g., gender-specific information from HSS data).*

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<sup>6</sup> This separation can be explained to some extent with the structural set up with the PAX PoC program being funded bilaterally by the DSH and most other PAX programs in South Sudan being financed through one "strategic partnership" with the MFA. This has resulted in the other PAX programs being more closely linked to each other and the non-program departments of PAX being more closely linked to them as well because all of them belong to one grant.

## Results framework, monitoring system and learning

In general, the **results logic is coherent** with activities having a logical connection to short-term outcomes (STOs) and long-term outcomes (LTOs)<sup>7</sup>. **We consider it a weak point though that the results framework is organised in silos** (division in LTOs and STOs, with only one activity explicitly describing the potential interlinkages between the three LTOs, namely activity 1.1.3). One interview partner mentioned this lack of explicit connections, stating that the results framework “does not encourage interlinkages, exchange, and cooperation between projects”. The annual work plans and annual reports are following this logic and do not include sections or even subchapter which explicitly stress planned and/or implemented collaborations between the four PoC projects. In addition, while the indicators are generally well designed (SMART), not all indicators have target values.

As for the **assumptions and preconditions underlying the results framework**, the following information was provided:

- ❖ In the **EIA and PiP** projects, the main assumption that did not hold true involves engagement with deployed police and military missions. While access to military actors on the international level did work even better and faster than some staff expected, connecting with field missions was pushed a back in time (due to travel restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and missions being focussed on dealing with the consequences of the pandemic) and looks to be more difficult than anticipated (as reported by a consultant hired by PAX to research entry points at UNMISS).
- ❖ For **HSS South Sudan**, the underlying precondition of the project logic – accessing national security actors for evidence-based advocacy on PoC – had to be revised throughout the first half of the program. The reason was that getting access to national actors and sustaining local efforts by connecting them to national processes has proven to be much more difficult than initially assumed, also because of the lacking political will among national stakeholders to develop coherent governance and administrative structures. PAX is in the process of approaching this challenge through an external consultancy contracted in 2022 to identify entry points into the national security actors’ landscape in South Sudan. The ToC for HSS South Sudan is mostly considered to still make sense, with one exception: The HSS team believes the original assumption concerning the uptake HSS data and community engagement by international security actors<sup>8</sup> needs revision.
- ❖ For **HSS Iraq**, where there is evidence on the relationship between organisational capacity-building interventions and improved capacity of security institutions and agencies to deliver security services, the PoC engagements with different national and international actors prove the validity and logic of the HSS strategies and ToC within the PoC. However, HSS team members and stakeholders see that some of HSS engagements (as a whole) are limited due to several challenges and context-related barriers, which is affecting the PoC strategy and its sustainability aims. Therefore, more revisions, adjustments or activities have to be allocated and explored for the promotion of PAX PoC and HSS visibility in Iraq and HSS advocacy approach and framework, which potentially could

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<sup>7</sup> One exception is the logic of planned EIA outcomes and activities linking to LTO 2. While LTO 2 aims for better articulation and implementation of PoC, activities are focussed on policy change. PiP activities have a stronger focus on supporting the implementation of PoC. The merger of the two projects can solve this incoherency.

<sup>8</sup> “IF local perspectives are consolidated and amplified through rigorous research and constructive facilitated dialogue among and between civilians and local authorities; and IF civilian populations, in coordination with key local civil society allies, advocate collectively and inclusively for their protection needs and priorities; THEN national security actors and UNMISS will be incentivised to adopt effective tools, policies, and practices for civilian protection” (PAX 2019).



be mainstreamed effectively in the reform processes, national advocacy, and negotiations (locally, nationally, internationally) to improve responsiveness among state actors to citizen needs.

The **monitoring system** established by the PoC program and supported by TolaData is convincing. The monitoring tool displays all goals, activities, and indicators and allows for clarification notes on certain concepts used as well as the storage of evidence on the implementation of activities and achievement of results. The current monitoring process and tool allows for regular reflections among those who enter the data into the system and is hereby perceived as a valuable “quarterly check” that can foster a team-internal discussions on why a certain indicator underperforms, for example (this is not done in a structured manner though). Moreover, it is considered very useful for writing the annual report.

Staff members raised the question on who actually is the end user of the outputs of the monitoring system and identified a lack of knowledge on whether the monitoring data is providing timely data or not. It was also highlighted by some staff members that the monitoring system did not live up to the high expectations that came along with its introduction as it is not used beyond data entry for one’s own project (it does not steer, for example, an exchange between the different PoC projects). Nevertheless, it was acknowledged by staff members that a monitoring system cannot substitute discussions on potential synergies between different activities and that the technical providers at Tola-Data are open for suggestions on how to improve the tool further. A more integrated results framework (see above) will help to also use the monitoring system for stronger exchange between the different projects.

The PAX PoC program has committed itself to a strong **focus on learning** throughout the program duration. Accordingly, a **comprehensive set of learning and reflection mechanisms** has been established over the first half. For example, the program and each project determine a set of internal **learning questions** at the beginning of the year, which are reflected upon in the annual report as well as during the annual PAX partners meeting. Furthermore, there are annual learning events dedicated to specific questions, such as “Are data and evidence enough? How do we go beyond generating interesting information towards fostering ownership for taking action rooted in local priorities?”<sup>9</sup>. All interview partners highly appreciated the priority that is given to internal learning processes and consider them as valuable. However, demand was expressed for more follow up on these dedicated learning instances. The evaluation team found that efforts to follow up on learning days are being considered by the program coordinator, e.g., during the partners meeting in 2022, those questions being discussed during the previous learning events were taken up again with the present partners. Moreover, it was an identified shortcoming of the learning days that they are not explicitly dedicated to actual exchange among projects (see *Interconnection between* EIA, PiP and HSS projects). This is, however, also perceived as being complicated by the huge difference concerning the depth that people are informed about other people’s work in the program. There also seems to be appetite to use learning sessions to focus on what was difficult, rather than highlighting the progress achieved. While the latter is considered important, focusing on downsides might lead to stronger learning effects. Learning would also be appreciated around specific activities, e.g., when designing an advocacy event, feedback from the learning experts within PAX would add great value to reflect more on how to reach best a certain audience or on which methodology best induces a change of thinking in the target audience.

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<sup>9</sup> “PoC Team Learning Day” in 2021.

- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** *Strengthen the integrative force of the results framework by including activities and indicators that spell out the potential collaboration between the different projects (e.g., for EIA/PiP “bring local representatives to X meetings at international level to enrich the political debates with voices from the ground”, or “include local representatives in X training exercises implemented with international security actors to give advice on the reality civilian live in conflict affected areas”, etc.). The planned merger of EIA and PiP provides a perfect opportunity for the revision of activities and activity indicators.*
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** *Clearly identify in the annual work plans how each project will collaborate with the other PoC projects and other PAX projects.*
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** *Reflect on whether the planned collaborations have happened or discuss the reasons why they did not take place in each annual report.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Define target values for all indicators to support the evaluation of outcomes at the end of the program.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Consider a learning event on concrete collaboration plans between the PoC projects (this could be done considering important moments for advocacy or planned training exercises, discussing options to engage local partners).*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Close learning sessions with one paper outlining the activities that follow from the discussion, including timelines and responsibilities.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Consider a learning session in a protected, internal environment discussing activities staff members would like to avoid in the future and why.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC and PAX Strategy and Innovation Experts:** *Engage with the PAX learning and innovation team to see if they can provide a sparring partner for PoC program staff around specific advocacy events.*

### 3.2. Interconnection between EIA, PiP and HSS projects

**Is work at the different levels (local, national, international) well connected? Do the four projects create synergies / collaborate effectively? How can interconnectivity of the PoC projects be improved?**

In our understanding, the first phase of the program implementation was mainly focused on building new and strengthening existing networks needed to implement activities both on international and local level and progress on outcomes planned for each of the four PoC projects (*see also Translation of activities and outputs into outcomes*). Building on past experiences in the two countries, partners in South Sudan and Iraq were brought on board, new PAX staff joined the team, and relations with NATO, UN, and EU staff as well as with communities and local (security) actors in Iraq and South Sudan were established. A strong basis has been built. It is now time to seize synergies between the different PoC projects and strengthen the structured exchange and collaboration with national security actors that has been started recently with the Iraqi military.

#### Existing interlinkages

First relevant interlinkages are visible in program implementation. For example, the **HSS data is being used by the PiP team to develop Tabletop Exercises (TTX), vignettes, and scenarios** for training purposes. The main feedback by interviewed participants of such trainings was that PAX produces “excellent” and “very realistic exercises” putting participants into real-life challenges (*see more details in the EIA/PiP evaluation report*). It can be concluded that the information provided by the HSS team makes a relevant contribution to the design of training inputs by PiP. Another example of utilised interlinkages

is the **Hawija research**, which was done in close cooperation of the different PoC projects and its partner in Iraq. The HSS Iraq and PiP teams led the research, while the PoC Conference organised by EIA was used as a platform to bring the mayor from Hawija and representatives from the Dutch Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs together. This allowed for a joint discussion on adequate consequences to the lethal airstrike of 2015 and a great visibility of the jointly done and presented research. The report produced on Hawija, and the dialogue supported by PAX was praised by interview partners: “The Hawija work is amazing, (the way) they get people together and to talk was brilliant”, with the cooperation between the HSS, EIA and PiP projects being vital for this achievement. The PoC Conference in itself can also be seen as an event bringing the efforts of the different PoC projects together and providing a platform to explore and seize interlinkages (with the Hawija project being a good example). Further, information from the **HSS is used in advocacy talks** with political personnel at NATO and UN level; however, this still seems to happen in a spontaneous rather than a systematic way.

Concerning **interlinkages between the two HSS projects**, the visit from the HSS Iraq team in Juba was highlighted as highly valuable. While there is no regular exchange between the partners of HSS in the two countries, there is desire for closer cooperation and exchange (e.g., on how to cooperate with national and international security actors).

#### **Potential to strengthen the interlinkages**

Despite these existing interlinkages, the potential **connections between the four PoC projects are not yet fully utilised**. International advocacy efforts are mostly detached from work with partners in South Sudan and Iraq. The national staff in South Sudan is generally not aware of the EIA and PiP activities, let alone about possible linkages between the four projects of the program. While they expressed interest in a more systematic exchange, it would need to be discussed (probably also integrating the rather new PAX country director) what the added value of this exchange would be and what would need to change to actually realise it, given that there have been prior efforts to integrate national staff more into the discussions. The **HSS work outputs** are generally shared with the other PoC projects; however, there is no systematic assessment of whether certain work outputs are used by PoC program colleagues, to what extent they are relevant and tailored enough for their work, and how the usability could be improved.

**On the international level, HSS data is not used beyond the PoC team**; some project staff from EIA and PiP provided the feedback that they have not yet made systematic use of HSS data. Within international security actors, challenges on using HSS data start with **most international actors not being aware of the data**. Respondents also commented on the **lack of targeted recommendations** extracted from the data: “I have not made use of it as it was not very actionable, [there were] no clear recommendations.” PoC staff is aware of the deficit but states that “there are not enough resources available to translate HSS data (for target groups) and provide targeted messages.” Furthermore, interview partners in the PoC team and outside it stated that it is **difficult to use data on specific country contexts for general advocacy**. This matches with feedback provided in the HSS evaluation reports, that HSS data is highly context and time specific. Influencing overarching PoC policies at international security organization (like the UN or NATO) based on HSS data will thus be challenging. **HSS data is seen to be more useful for country specific processes at international level**, e.g., when discussing country strategies, or extensions of mission mandates. Around these discussions, interest to acquire deeper knowledge on HSS data was expressed by some interview partners at international level: “Longitudinal

data from the ground sounds very interesting”. It was stressed though that **only short and targeted messages have the chance to be taken up** (see the *EIA/PIP evaluation report*). Also, staff in the MFA working on peacekeeping operations expressed interest to know more about HSS data in South Sudan to inform its policy making. However, like on international policy level, the concern was raised whether the Ministry has the capacities to make use of this very context-specific data because they rather look at the broader picture. A concrete output that could be useful for the MFA and derived from the HSS existing work outputs would be speaking points / technical input to ambassador speeches, for example. Systematic channel between DSH and colleagues working on peacekeeping operations to discuss the usefulness of HSS data and adapt messages for the work, e.g. on South Sudan, do not seem to be established.

In general, **international actors showed more interest in engaging with communities in conflict-affected countries** (e.g. by bringing local community representatives to political events, informal background talks, or training exercises<sup>10</sup>) **than in receiving more paperwork** (i.e. reports on HSS data). This **matches with the plan by the EIA team to introduce in countries of the Sahel region a CSO engagement fund**, which is a light-structured instrument that (similarly to HSS) aims to provide civilians in conflict regions with space to express their protection and security needs to those in positions of power. The engagement fund would provide finance for local community representatives and NGOs to participate in the above-mentioned activities, thereby meeting the interest of international security actors. This evaluation did not investigate in depth the pros and cons of a CSO engagement fund as it was out of its scope, yet considering the interest for stronger community engagement without necessarily having to read more papers, it sounds like an interesting idea to build relations with local communities in more countries affected by conflicts. Two advantages of the engagement fund can be identified: a) **It will be less time and resource intensive to set up** compared to duplicating HSS projects in other countries, b) it can support CSO representatives from different countries thus **covering a more representative range of country experiences that could be interesting for more general advocacy goals**, like influencing PoC policies. As a rather light-weight engagement instrument to be introduced in conflict regions, the idea for a CSO engagement fund meets the plans of the MFA to decentralise two-thirds of its funding available for cooperation partners to its embassies and the announcement to have rather shorter time horizons for funding through embassies<sup>11</sup>. It would be interesting to explore whether funding for the CSO engagement fund could be made available through the Dutch embassies in the Sahel region.

Another potential interlinkage between the PoC projects could emerge through a more targeted focus on **supporting the police** as the most relevant national security actor in South Sudan. As most security issues identified in the HSS in South Sudan fall under the responsibility of the police, not the military, this seems a suitable actor to focus on in the remaining project period. Bringing in an additional police advisor through the PoC program (similarly to the military advisors) could be a suitable way to stronger combine the bottom-up and top-down approaches of the program. Comparably to the military advisors, a police advisor could support access to national police actors (as his/her police status will have more credibility towards other police actors than NGO representatives) and can thus support HSS-informed advocacy and training on national level in South Sudan e.g., with the National Police

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<sup>10</sup> Difficulties with visa procedures can be a challenge for in-person meetings.

<sup>11</sup> See draft of the new Theory of Change for the DSH in the MFA.

Academy. At international level, he/she could feed the local and national perspectives to the policy debate on police in the UN and in PCCs. Considering that the program considers a pivot to more activities on country level, the former task should have preference, with international activities being focussed on strategic moments (like mission mandate extensions, etc.). Hiring a new staff binds significant resources. If these are not available, it can be considered hiring a police advisor on a consultancy basis for a specific project (e.g., designing a training for police forces in South Sudan or Iraq). Preparing for the consultancy would of course also bind resources, yet could possibly be done through a joint effort of PiP and HSS South Sudan, as well as the PAX South Sudan country office. This way costs for the consultant could also be shared. This would strengthen the collaboration within the PoC program as well as its connection with other projects in PAX.

With EIA and PiP activities pivoting towards country level, the **potential for collaboration between EIA/PiP and the HSS teams will rise significantly**. The evaluation reports on HSS and EIA/PiP outline how HSS data could be used to engage with missions and also with local police or military forces (see *report on HSS South Sudan*), and how local partners and community representatives can be included in training and advocacy activities at international level.

One **potential reason for the insufficient utilisation of synergies** between the projects could be that there is no dedicated staff member of the PoC program responsible for it. In a program as complex as the PoC program (with four different projects, implemented at three different levels with a range of different partners and very diverse target groups) this leads to a lack in planning and explicit discussion about potential synergies, also mentioned by one PoC team staff: “We should sit more strategically at the beginning of an activity, to see how the info generated can be relevant for (our target groups)”. The merger of EIA and PiP will free up resources of the program lead to explore potential for synergies and collaboration between the different PoC projects.

- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** *Organise an internal session on how PoC staff make use of HSS data and how others can learn from that.*
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC and partners:** *Concretise goals for the use of HSS data on national and international level by developing an overarching HSS advocacy strategy within the program based on the existing draft (e.g., Do you aim to influence mission mandates based on HSS data?). Allocate staff time (from HSS, local partners, and international advocacy staff) to support the defined goals (e.g., going into deeper discussions around “strategic moments” like mission extensions; or country strategy development). Regular “strategic moments” (like mandate extensions for missions) should be mentioned in the annual work plans and potentially included in a shared calendar of the PoC program.*
- ⇒ **PAX PoC, partners, and MFA:** *Discuss the usefulness of a stronger distribution of HSS data at international level (for example, through events launching newly collected data). Considering the limited impact that country specific data will have on general policy discussions this would only make sense if connected to country specific processes at international level. (This could, for example, happen as a side event to the PoC week in New York and could include the presence of local partners, while keeping in mind potential challenges for visa applications).*
- ⇒ **MFA DSH:** *Systematically brief colleagues in the MFA working on peacekeeping operations on HSS South Sudan data and provide feedback on the usefulness of the data.*
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** *Engage with actors active in institution-building in South Sudan and Iraq (e.g., UNDP) for them to make use of HSS data in their strategic planning.*



- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC and Dutch Embassies:** Offer MFA and relevant embassies to support the contextualisation of their new ToC and multi-annual country strategies. HSS data can provide relevant and valuable information to tailor the approach to the local context – esp. for priority area 1 of the new ToC. This can provide for a good basis to intensify cooperation with the embassies.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC and MFA DSH:** Keep exploring funding opportunities for the CSO engagement fund through the Dutch embassies in the Sahel region. The MFA is well placed to support these efforts by communicating relevant findings of this evaluation to its embassies (e.g., the strong interest of international security actors to engage stronger with local communities and the results that cooperation with local partners have already yielded, like the Hawija report).
- ⇒ **+ PAX PoC:** Consider contracting a police advisor (potentially on a consultancy basis) to support engagement with national (and potentially international) police actors, particularly for South Sudan. Explore synergies with other PAX projects in South Sudan.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Stick to the idea of making use of the program lead's newly available time after the merger of EIA and PiP to explore potential for synergies and collaboration between the different projects.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Explore in what form all PoC team members could better learn about others' work, but not only in form of updates, but rather in form of meaningful collaboration. This could be, for example, specific roundtable or brainstorming discussion between PoC program staff and local partners on certain topics like cooperation with international security actors.

### 3.3. Translation of activities and outputs into outcomes

**To what extent have the short and long-term outcomes of the PoC program been achieved so far?  
What are the contributions by PAX and partners to these changes?**

#### **Building the basis to achieve outcomes**

The first two and a half years of the PoC program were successfully active in two main areas: a) establishing networks and allies at international level as well as building trust at community level in South Sudan and Iraq, and b) developing products and formats supporting advocacy as well as the implementation of PoC<sup>12</sup>. Based on our research, we can confirm that **highly valued working relationships** have been built at least with the following target groups<sup>13</sup>:

#### International actors:

- ❖ NATO (NATO HQ, NATO ACO<sup>14</sup>, SHAPE, Landcom, NRDC ITA, NATO ACT, CIMIC COE)
- ❖ UN (DPO, OCHA, several member states delegations)
- ❖ Dutch embassy and MFA-supported programs and INGOs

<sup>12</sup> Please see the specific project evaluation reports for more detailed feedback on the quality of the networks and the products mentioned here.

<sup>13</sup> PoC staff have contact to more units within the mentioned organisation, yet we did not have a chance to speak with them and can thus not give an opinion on the quality of the relationships. Existing networks at EU level are not displayed here for the reason stated in Chapter 2.3.)

<sup>14</sup> NATO ACO (Allied Command Operations); SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe); SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe); NRDC ITA (NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – Italy); NATO ACT (NATO Allied Command Transformation); CIMIC COE (Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence); DPO (Department of Peacekeeping Operations); UN OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)

### National and local actors:

- ❖ All partner organisations for HSS activities
- ❖ Local authorities and security actors in South Sudan
- ❖ Community (committee) members

Furthermore, the **main products and formats** necessary to advocate for PoC and to train PoC implementation that were developed over the first half of the project, encompass:

- ❖ PoC Conference (including video records of it)
- ❖ “Civilian Protection” podcast
- ❖ “On Civilian Harm” book
- ❖ Hawija report “After the Strike”
- ❖ Tabletop exercises and vignettes for training purposes
- ❖ Exemplary Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) on civilian harm
- ❖ Methodology for the HSS in South Sudan and Iraq
- ❖ Methodology for the “HSS Expert Panel Monitor” in South Sudan
- ❖ Various HSS data publications including summary dashboards, data analysis reports, event summaries and recordings

The evaluation team consider these networks and products **as fundamentals to achieve sustainable outcomes**; having them in place lays the ground to achieve strong outcomes in the future. The main task of the program is now to continue making use of the established networks and products and to **engage more with security actors at country level**.

Acknowledging that it takes a long time and dedication to create useful products, build networks, and create trustful relationships, the achievements on these ends must be stressed and are highly relevant for the planned outcomes of the results framework and for achieving the overall program goal. **Changing PoC policies and especially implementation is seen by all interview partners that touched upon this point to be a long-term goal:** “We try to see impact in months, but this will take a generation.” We are working towards a “change in behaviour” and a “mind-set change.”

### **Outcomes achieved**

The Covid-19 pandemic led to restrictions in implementation for all PoC projects and slowed down progress towards the achievement of results. For example, engaging with UNMISS proved to be highly difficult (*see projects specific reports*). It should thus not come as a surprise that not all goals have progressed as expected and that not all the planned goals will be achieved at the end of the current financing period. A general challenge for seeking sustainable reform is the mismatch between the long-term goals and the comparatively short funding period of 4.25 years (*see chapter on sustainability below*).

### **EIA/PIp**

Currently, the STOs of PIp are all planned at mission level, while **activities during the first two years of program implementation had to focus on international level to a big part due to external factors**. The restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, made traveling difficult almost throughout the first two years of implementation, limiting the space to engage with missions on the ground. Further, both NATO and UN shifted their focus towards dealing with the consequences of the pandemic during 2020, limiting access possibilities further. **Planned outcomes at mission level have thus not been**

**achieved so far** and the ground for it (building strong working relations with the missions) is still in the process. Next to the restrictions that came along with the Covid-19 pandemic, little progress towards missions is due to the wrong assumption that access to missions would be quicker and easier as reality showed to be the case. Based on the information available today, **outcomes targeting missions were too ambitious in the planning of the project**; even taking into account the negative impact of the pandemic, progress towards missions has proven to be slower and harder than expected.

The STOs of EIA focus on the international level, including NATO, UN, and T/PCCs. Here good progress towards outcomes has been made (and to be fair, a lot of which is also due to work done by the PiP team). Much has been achieved, especially on STO 2.1, which focuses on the **awareness of NATO, UN, and T/PCCs about their capacity (gaps) concerning inclusive PoC**. The integrated work on Hawija of EIA, PiP and the HSS Team in Iraq as well as other PAX Teams (e.g., Humanitarian Disarmament), and the Roadmap Process, not only raised awareness within the Dutch MoD but is leading to changes in policy and potentially in practice – considering the well-established relationships with Dutch military centres that can take on the outcomes of the Roadmap Process and support the implementation of policy recommendations. As for NATO and UN, the interview partners we spoke to for this evaluation were well aware of the existing gaps (mainly in the implementation of PoC policies) and gave the impression of genuine interest to work towards closing these gaps, with the PoC program as a strong partner (*see chapter on “activities implemented”*). A caveat here is that most interview partners came from the “political side” and the overall feedback is that it will be much harder to get on board “the military side” within the organisations.

**Inclusive community engagement is the centre of STO 2.2; here progress is still in an earlier stage**, yet the interest expressed by several interview partners in NATO and UN to engage more with local communities is a first visible step in the right direction (*see EIA/PiP evaluation report*). The program can now build on this openness in international organisations and include local community members in its training and advocacy efforts to push the topic further. The planned CSO engagement fund could be a good tool to support this. The request by NATO asking the PoC program for input on its new PoC directive as well as the fact that PAX and Stimson were the only NGOs invited to address one of NATO's most important committees regarding PoC and the Ukrainian conflict, are two indications of the trustful relationship with NATO; it shows that the program is in the right place to influence policies to include more community engagement elements.

In regard to long-term outcomes (LTOs), there has been visible **progress towards LTO 2<sup>15</sup>**. While implementation of inclusive PoC policies and practices is still lagging, the articulation of policies, guidelines, and directives is progressing: NATO has a PoC policy and a military concept for PoC, and a revision of NATO action plan on PoC will be done soon; ACO developed a PoC handbook and a PoC directive is in the making; PAX and Stimson have given input to almost all of them. At UN level, PoC policy and community engagement guidelines exist. The processes in the US on the Department of Defence Instruction (DoDI) on Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response (CHMR) and in the Netherlands on CH (*see the EIA/PiP evaluation report*) are further examples of a stronger articulation of PoC in T/PCCs that the PoC program contributed to.

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<sup>15</sup> LTO 2: “NATO, UN, T/PCCs and mission increasingly articulate and implement inclusive PoC policies and practices”.



**Measuring contribution by the PoC program** is never easy in a complex environment with different factors influencing the behaviour of international security actors. Yet some indications exist that the PoC program has contributed to the improvement of PoC articulation and that the program has the potential to make a difference in the implementation of PoC in conflict-affected countries. The political side in NATO has explicitly acknowledged the input by Stimson and PAX to the NATO PoC policy and the PoC handbook. From the military side, the program was asked to contribute to NATO's PoC directive and interview partners from Landcom, and NATO force structures mentioned the PoC program to be important partners for training and developing exercises (*see the EIA/PIP evaluation report*). These last two points show that the PoC program manages to contribute to processes going on at the military side of international security actors, which is seen to be much more difficult than engaging with the political side. Both PAX and Stimson have been mentioned by the majority of interview partners to be two of their strongest partners in promoting PoC and providing trainings. One interview partner stated, for example, that the outcome of the training he organised "would have come nowhere near to the outcomes we achieved without PAX's support".

### HSS South Sudan

The overall goal of the HSS project is that civilians in conflict experience improved human security as a result of constructive engagement with national and international security actors. In South Sudan, significant contributions to this goal have been made during the first half of the project. A **highly acclaimed evidence base** was developed through extensive data collection on communities' security perceptions. The **established bottom-up approach** of PAX PoC and its partners has been praised for creating impact on community level, e.g., through improved interactions and trust between communities and local security actors.

The project made progress with regards to civilians being able to explore and articulate their security perspective through the HSS and community engagement sessions at the local level, because the local buy-in has increased: Local authorities, police, and government institutions increasingly embrace the methodology and the collected data. The validation sessions have not only stimulated dialogue among various actors that otherwise do not exchange in such manner, but also laid the ground for community initiatives that contribute to increased protection and conflict mitigation (e.g., conflict mediation meetings that involved COMSECCOM members, the chief, and the relevant conflict parties and eventually contributed to a de-escalation of the situation). A key strength of the overall HSS approach in South Sudan is the high relevance of the data, in particular its long-term and cyclical character. This data enables comparative analysis and the identification of trends concerning security perceptions of communities in the same areas<sup>16</sup>, which are of value for both national and international security actors as well as other INGOs working on protection (from the payam administrator to UNMISS and UNDP).

According to interview partners and the monitoring framework, PAX has made **considerable progress in its outcome achievements** despite many contextual challenges, including but not limited to the Covid-19 pandemic:

- ❖ Concerning STO 1.1. "Protection policies and practices in South Sudan are increasingly informed by HSS findings", PAX has advanced through regular enumerator training, conduct, regular review

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<sup>16</sup> This is complemented by longitudinal data from surveys with security experts in different South Sudanese regions in the "Expert Panel Monitor", which was introduced during the project as an additional research tool.

and publication of HSS surveys in five locations, the introduction of an additional data collection tool that complements the HSS survey (Expert Panel Monitor / Survey) as well as regular validation sessions with communities and security actors that foster the participatory identification of local security priorities. In particular, these sessions have contributed to increased accountability of local security actors as well as trust- and relationship-building between communities and the police, which is the most important security actor on community level. All these efforts have also led to a constant increase in visibility (e.g., views of online HSS publications, but also through an increased recognition among local stakeholders). Shortcomings in the achievement of this goal are the insufficient utilisation of the HSS data by South Sudan based institutions (e.g., UNMISS) for their policy, practice, or performance management, and the limited presentation of HSS data to international organisations or interested diplomats through roundtables, for example. However, it needs to be stressed that these shortcomings are mostly explained by Covid-19-related travel restrictions as well as a high-turnover within UNMISS that made remote outreach concerning the HSS difficult. In light of the pandemic, some activities were substituted by alternatives that could be easier managed remotely (e.g., development of a the “Expert Panel Monitor” research tool).

- ❖ Several community engagement activities, community dialogues, the production of radio talk shows and videos showcasing HSS findings and community views on security, as well as a well-received event in Juba on the law enforcement gap in South Sudan, contributed to achieving progress towards STO 1.2 “Community engagement activities inform more relevant protection of civilians strategies in target areas in South Sudan”. While there has been an increase in local engagement and closer cooperation between members, local security actors, and authorities, there has been limited progress towards a constructive engagement with national government or security institutions through advocacy.

### HSS Iraq

The PAX PoC team has utilised some of the lessons learned, experience and capacities from the previous PAX project in 2016 (NAP 1325, 2016), which fed into the strategy and design of the HSS project as part of the PoC program in 2019, by expanding the objectives and geographic focus, among others.. To a large extent, the short-term objectives of HSS Iraq have been achieved effectively, including capacity strengthening, trust building with security actors and key stakeholders, a high degree of partners’ commitment and efforts to promote HSS activities, engaging with key stakeholders, and improving the responses of the security actors. Due to the bottom-up and participatory approach of the HSS team, the HSS findings contributed effectively to the promotion of voices among different communities and stakeholders in the regions of the three partners.

The **main achievements** of HSS in Iraq so far are as follows: PAX partners have built distinctive capacities, including governorate-wide communications and channels with security actors, and a strong network of partners and supporters. Most importantly, the **effectiveness of targeting and engagement with the security actors and officials**, and in particular specific state departments (Iraqi National Security Advisory, Ministry of Interior, Directorate of Women Affairs), officials, authorities, and security officials, led to considerable progress towards project goals. By way of a specific example, one of **Al Amal’s key achievements** with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior in 2022 is the endorsement of a police Code of Conduct, an important example of localising PoC norms and the role of Iraqi CSOs in the promotion of the rule of law to create a protective environment. **Al Ghad’s capacity and leadership became evident in their role during the Hawija research**, which has made visibly contributions to STO

2.1 (see section on EIA and PiP above); it provided proof of the promising role of local actors in research on PoC issues, as well as the role of local actors, researchers, and insiders in regards to accountability and minimising civilian harm. These results have further promoted several indirect outcomes, such as leveraging the role of local partners in complementing and supporting the PAX team and PoC research and data-driven advocacy, as well as guiding the program's advocacy efforts in EIA and PiP on potential accountability mechanisms (Syria, Yemen, Ukraine, etc.). Challenges on the progress towards the key outcomes is due to several barriers, mainly the capacity and access challenges of the HSS team and local partners, including the time-consuming negotiations and communication with authorities and governmental actors and the volatile environment of Iraq.

*For details and recommendations on how to bridge the gap between outputs and outcomes, please see the project-specific evaluation report on EIA / PiP, HSS South Sudan, HSS Iraq.*

### 3.4. Sustainability

**Do local and international security actors have ownership for PoC? How can ownership for PoC in target groups be improved?**

**PoC is still not a priority for NATO and UN and less so for the military side** in these organisations: "PoC is a collateral duty, a side job." "A broader view on PoC is not in the institutional DNA of military actors." "The military is much harder to tame than the political side, they are trained to win a war."

In South Sudan, the term "protection" is often avoided all together, it is easier to talk about security, because "working on protection will make you look like a spy for local authorities". Protection is considered to be the responsibility of the government and organised forces, not of civilians and NGOs. And for UNMISS and other international actors in the country, PoC continues to equal "PoC sites" which were the focus of UNMISS's PoC police for a long time. This exemplifies the contextual difficulties for prioritising PoC on national level as well.

Having said this, those people working on PoC issues within the international organisations do transmit real interest to push for PoC and count on partners, like PAX and Stimson, to support these efforts.

**Shifting the mind-set of military personnel and national security actors** in countries like South Sudan and Iraq ("protection is for everyone"), and the **long-time horizon** needed for this, are perceived to be the **biggest challenges** for creating ownership. Several interview partners mentioned that security organisations move "very, very slowly".

The **main instruments mentioned to support this mind set change were exercises and coaching of high-ranking officers**. While most interview partners at international level stressed the importance of trainings and exercises to slowly mainstream PoC in the military, one interview partner emphasised that advocacy should focus more on the leadership level. The hope is that if those making the decisions genuinely support inclusive PoC, ownership will be strengthened throughout the institution (while middle ranks must get engaged as they draft policy papers, leaders are the ones to sign and champion them). This could be supported by a coaching approach, i.e., PAX and Stimson pairing up volunteer (retired) senior officers with expertise in PoC with high-level advocacy targets in the military. A complementary approach, that was not mentioned during the interviews, but could be combined with a coaching exercise, are **study tours offered for high military rank**. After being sensitized by their coach, they could be invited (if possible, at expense of their organization) to the conflict-affected regions where the PoC program is active and take part in a validation session of HSS data or attend a meeting

with local partners to get a hands-on view on the reality on the ground rather than visiting military compounds. The hypotheses behind this are that PoC will move up on the priority list of senior officials if they listen to the challenges civilians are facing and are coached on possible answers by (former) colleagues that bring authority in the military field. They would then be more inclined to prioritize inclusive PoC in policies and operational documents.

Some interview partners see the war in Ukraine and the huge damage done to civilian lives there as a turning point that can push PoC higher up the priority ladder. What is happening in Ukraine “is what Article 5 operations will look like.” The war is seen to be a critical point for engaging even more with NATO and UN on PoC. Advocacy through PAX PoC could try and get member states to call for briefings in the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on Ukraine and the consequences this brings for PoC and human security in the future. Eastern European countries, like Poland and Slovenia, are seen to be potential partners during these times, and a “mini book on Ukraine” might support advocacy efforts.

In conclusion, changing the minds and behaviours of stakeholders on international, national and local level takes time and consistent efforts. **The biggest risk for unsustainable program actions thus lies in the time-horizon of its funding.**

- ⇒ **PAX PoC, PAX Ukraine, MFA:** Discuss (internally but also with the PAX Ukraine Team and other INGOs, e.g., Airwars, as well as with the MFA) how to deal with Ukraine. Consider the criteria from the recommendation given above (see program structure) on whether an activity contributes to the effectiveness and/or the sustainability of program objectives.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Consider engaging (retired) senior officers with expertise in PoC for a coaching approach for high-military ranks.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Consider organizing study tours for those military officers already sensitized during the coaching to provide them with a real-life experience of the situation in conflict-ridden areas.
- ⇒ **PAX PoC:** Continue the development of training exercises (see evaluation report on EIA/PIP) and assess them according to their potential contribution to impact and sustainability of PoC program goals. Prioritise training exercises that fulfil one or both below criteria:
  - Political weight (the target group has strong influence within NATO, UN or EU),
  - ODA focus (the target group potentially makes a difference in ODA countries, e.g., pre-deployment trainings or trainings for forces within ODA countries).
- ⇒ **+ MFA:** Consider possibilities to think in longer time periods when it comes to funding terms.

See further recommendations in projects-specific evaluation reports for HSS South Sudan and HSS Iraq.

## 4. Main conclusions according to KEQs

The following table summarizes the main conclusions of the four evaluation reports developed during the mid-term evaluation of PAX's PoC program; including conclusions from this main evaluation report, the evaluation reports on HSS in South Sudan and Iraq and the EIA/PiP evaluation report. The conclusions are organized according to evaluation criteria and KEQs.

<b>Effectiveness</b>	<p><b>Are the PoC program and its projects organised in a way that supports effective implementation and learning? Is the strategic approach effective? What can be improved?</b></p> <p><i>On implementation:</i> The program structure is organised in a way that supports effective and sustainable implementation. PAX's engagement on different levels (local, national, and international) is a major strength of the program: Activities at international level contribute to structural change (sustainability), and activities at local and national level are crucial for the impact envisioned in the program's objectives (effectiveness). While networks and activities are well established at international level, Covid-19 travel restrictions led to slower progress on national level (i.e., engaging with missions or national military and police forces). With its plan to put more emphasis on the national level for the remaining program period, the program is on the right track to achieve its objectives.</p> <p>With the aim to reallocate activities to national level, activities at international level should be assessed according to a predefined set of criteria (as recommended in the main evaluation report and the EIA/PiP evaluation report). This will help making choices on which activities to support (and which to leave aside) to manage limited resources.</p> <p>The planned merger of EIA and PiP supports the effective implementation of the program by clarifying decision-making responsibilities and freeing up resources of the program lead to support the collaboration of the PoC projects working at different levels.</p> <p><i>On learning:</i> The PAX PoC program has committed itself to a strong focus on learning throughout the program duration and delivers via regular learning days and partner meetings on program and project level. Small adjustments can be made concerning the follow up of learning sessions.</p>
	<p><b>Do activities target the most relevant actors at the right level?</b></p> <p>Impact of the PoC program happens in the countries affected by conflicts. While the international networks built by the PoC program are highly relevant for the sustainability of objectives as well as to gain access to national security actors and missions in South Sudan and Iraq, the latter should be the target focus for the remaining program implementation.</p> <p>HSS data finds that security issues that fall within the mandate of police forces are the main security challenges both in Iraq and South Sudan. It will be beneficial to consider how to gain access to police forces in both countries (for South Sudan, certain entry points have already been identified through this evaluation). Increased exchange with UNDP and UNPOL as well as the (temporary) hiring of a police advisor by PAX could support engagement with police forces in South Sudan.</p>

**Are the activities implemented by the PoC program suitable for achieving the program objectives? What adjustments, if any, need to be made to continue the program?**

In general, activities implemented by the PoC program (including trainings, advocacy, dialogue, research, and community engagement) are highly relevant for the program goals.

- *Trainings* by PAX and Stimson are especially praised by respondents; only small recommendations are made to improve content and evaluation processes for trainings.
- *Advocacy* at international level is lauded but can be better aligned with advocacy goals at national level. Focusing advocacy on fewer topics will allow going into depths, providing more relevant inputs for political decision-making. Advocacy on national level (in South Sudan and Iraq) has to be ramped up significantly to reach national security actors and missions and achieve the program objectives. Joint advocacy goals across the PoC projects, targeted recommendations based on HSS data as well as collaboration with NGOs and donors active in PoC or security sector reform can support this. The Dutch embassies can be engaged more to support national advocacy efforts and in South Sudan it will be valuable to discuss with the PAX Country Office whether a (part-time) advocacy officer can support engagement of national security actors for the PoC program but also other PAX programs in the country.
- *Research* is appreciated but it should be made sure that target groups can comment on research outputs before they get published (the program is committed to this). Research is used by program staff to support training and dialogue activities by the PoC program and thus reinforces other activities' impact.
- *Dialogue measures* on international (esp. the Roadmap Process, PoC Conference) and local level (community dialogues co-led by COMSECCOM members) are highly valued and should be continued. Newer developments, like the production of the Civilians in Conflict Podcast and especially the engagement with the US Department of Defence are promising to produce results relevant to the program objectives.
- *Community engagement*: The well-established bottom-up approach of the HSS nourishes meaningful contributions on local level and is supported by all relevant stakeholders. The HSS activities, in particular the evidence-based community engagement sessions, as well as the locally led conflict mitigation dialogues and awareness raising sessions on self-identified community security issues, have contributed effectively to the achievements of the HSS core objectives. This includes the promotion of voices and agency among different communities and stakeholders in HSS project locations.

While the program has benefitted from its active networking, openness for new topics, and the ability of its staff to seize opportunities, it is now recommended to focus program activities to fewer topics in the remaining program duration. Considering that more engagement is needed on national level (*see KEQ on targeting most relevant actors*) an assessment of cooperation requests from international security actors based on clearly defined criteria will help to deal with limited resources and focus more on country level in the remaining program period.

**What is the unique selling point of PAX PoC approach in contrast to other PoC actors?**



The unique selling point of the HSS is its methodology as a civilian-based perception survey, including the vision and contributions developed by the local partners to use and employ the HSS data for advocacy and share it in conferences and events across Iraq and South Sudan. Specifically, gaining communities' opinions and perceptions about security, and the way that communities can work cooperatively to recover from and actively prevent violent conflict. Innovatively, these were reflected in the promotion of dialogues, communication and opening channels between communities and officials, which was a precedent of its kind in Iraq and South Sudan.

The unique selling points in comparison with other INGOs are a) the multi-level approach that allows PAX to bring voices of affected civilians into the international arena, and b) the military advisors and their potential to build a bridge between the civilian and military sides of organisations.

**Are indicators in the monitoring framework suited to measure intended results and did the assumptions underlying the ToC of the PoC program prove to be correct?**

A monitoring system is established and apt to capture progress towards set goals and indicators and to provide a basis for discussion. The results framework is still organised in silos and will gain by introducing indicators that capture the interlinkages between the PoC projects. The annual workplans and progress reports can support interlinkages within the PoC program by dedicating a separate section on collaboration potential between the PoC projects and an analysis how these have been realised in practice. The program objectives addressing missions (mainly LTO 3 and STOs 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3) have been too ambitious. Target values will have to be corrected to reflect on the time and staff effort the engagement with missions requires.

**Is work at the different levels (local, national, international) well connected? Do the four projects create synergies / collaborate effectively? How can interconnectivity of the PoC projects be improved?**

First synergies of the PoC projects can be identified (especially in the Hawija project, the roadmap process, and training exercises). Furthermore, HSS data is made use of and considered valuable in local dialogue processes and during the design of (international) trainings.

The evaluation team sees potential to foster the interlinkages between the PoC projects via: a) a dedicated person looking at potential synergies, b) a joint HSS advocacy strategy, c) actor-specific recommendation based on HSS data for actors in South Sudan and Iraq, and c) stronger collaboration between projects especially on advocacy but also on training efforts. Additionally, further ways of using HSS should be explored, e.g., HSS data in South Sudan and Iraq can be used to guide long-term strategic planning of donors (e.g., UNDP) active in security sector reform processes.

For international security actors, including representatives from conflict affected regions to political discussions or training sessions would be reportedly more interesting than HSS data distributed on paper. The inclusion of local community representatives in political debates and trainings should be supported by the PoC program. The planned CSO engagement fund in the Sahel region matches the expressed interest of international security actors to exchange more with local representatives and can bring great value.

	<p>HSS reports are considered most relevant at international level if they target country-specific processes (e.g., the extension of mission mandates or the development of country strategies). They are not suited for broader advocacy around topics without a specific country focus.</p> <p>The MFA is in a good position to provide stronger support to the PoC team when it comes to making use of HSS at the international level. It can proactively provide HSS information to its delegations to the UN and NATO around country specific processes (e.g., mission mandate extensions). On national level, the MFA / Dutch embassies could also play a stronger role in disseminating the HSS findings and providing a platform for exchange on PoC-related topics.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Synergies</p>	<p><b>How consistent are PAX activities with the interventions of other actors in the same context in terms of complementarity, harmonisation, and coordination? Where are there further opportunities for collaboration either within or outside of the program that could facilitate greater impact in the remaining grant period?</b></p> <p>In general, synergies with other actors in the field of PoC have been well explored and managed. Several partners at international level are interested in expanding their collaboration with the PoC program on different topics relating to PoC. While this is a positive sign, the program should consider carefully which requests to take on and which to leave aside as a more focused approach will be necessary to not stretch existing staff resources too much.</p> <p>Existing synergies between the HSS activities in South Sudan and other PAX activities in the country are increasingly used and there is the desire by all stakeholders to cooperate even closer in the future (e.g., in form of more regular exchange meetings between staff members of the different PAX projects). Concerning the engagement of other international actors on PoC in South Sudan, there seems to be no duplication of work. PAX PoC seems to rather fill existing gaps and complement other ongoing activities by UN agencies or (I)NGOs. However, there is room for improvement when it comes to communication and exchange on lessons learned and experiences among these different actors and the HSS could be promoted more within existing exchange platforms.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Sustainability</p>	<p><b>Do local and international security actors have ownership for PoC? How can ownership for PoC in target groups be improved? How can PAX make sure that their inputs are being used to induce change? Which factors are likely to influence the sustainability of the PoC activities positively or negatively?</b></p> <p>Ownership for PoC in international and national security organisations is still low. The main reason is that creating ownership for PoC is a long-term undertaking. It implies a shift in the mindset of the political and military personnel in security organisations. First, policies must be changed. Second, they must be implemented through a considerably long chain of actors (e.g., in NATO or UN) until they reach the missions deployed on the ground.</p> <p>The evaluation finds that the PoC program is on the right track to contribute to sustainable change in this regard. Targeting policy makers on the top with advocacy is necessary for structural reform, while training exercises and the development of exemplary standard operation procedures are important to build the capacities and processes necessary to implement the policies. More could be done to influence the highest ranks in the military through a coaching mechanism. Yet, this would need extra resources the PoC program currently did not plan for.</p>



	<p>Considering possibilities for longer-term financing at the MFA can support the long process to create ownership and foster sustained results of a program that is on track.</p> <p>Several external factors have the potential to negatively influence the sustainability of the HSS activities in South Sudan and Iraq, such as ongoing and unsettled conflicts and insecurity, environmental disasters as well as high staff turnover among relevant international and national stakeholders. Positive influencing factors for sustainability are the high relevance of the activities as well as the well-established and tested research methodology which can potentially be adapted and applied in other locations. As the commitment of the partners in both countries are another important factor for a successful anchoring of the program’s progress, it will be important to further discuss the role and capacities of the partners in the overall HSS cycle. For sustainable impact on community level, it will be helpful to provide specific support to the COMSECCOMs in South Sudan on resource mobilisation and networking.</p>
<p>Inclusive Approach</p>	<p><b>To what extent are partner organisations able and willing (in terms of financial organisational, personnel capacities) to continue activities without support? To what extent should local partners be better included in program discussions?</b></p> <p>Generally, the inclusiveness of the project activities has been well established over the first half of the program, especially through the involvement of different stakeholders in HSS review processes. Relationships between PAX PoC team and its HSS partners are based on an open exchange of views and shared management of the HSS project. The PAX PoC team is highly responsive to suggestions and modifications, accepting new activities based on local developments, area-specific priorities, and security issues.</p> <p>The HSS successfully contributed to the development of partners' capacities, via sharing responsibilities, and capacity building in data-driven projects, community mobilisation and engagement in both Iraq and South Sudan. Yet, the capacities of partners in HSS South Sudan and Iraq as well as that of COMSECCOMs in South Sudan should be strengthened further, empowering them to take over more of the projects work in the medium to long-term.</p>
	<p><b>What accountability instruments have to be put in place by PAX a) towards local partners, and b) by PAX and local partners towards citizens in its engagement areas?</b></p> <p>For HSS in South Sudan, there are no structured accountability or feedback mechanisms for partners beyond the annual national partner meeting in Juba and the annual partner meeting on program level in the Netherlands. Further, there is no mechanisms in place that allows survey participants to provide feedback to PAX and its partners. Thus, it is recommended to assess whether such mechanisms are requested and how it could look like in practice.</p>
<p>Gender sensitivity</p>	<p><b>To what extent does the programme take gender mainstreaming into account in terms of project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?</b></p> <p>PAX and its partners currently pursue a rather implicit approach of gender sensitive implementation by promoting women’s participation in all activities. There is a high level of awareness among HSS staff and partners but there is room for improvement when it comes to meaningful participation of women beyond mere numbers of female participations (e.g., through finding out more about barriers to women’s participation in COMSECCOMs, engaging more with existing women’s groups). This is of particular relevance because most of the identified security</p>

	<p>issues on community level are gender-specific (e.g., rape, early and child marriage, domestic violence).</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Conflict sensitivity</p>	<p><b>To what extent are the activities of the PoC programme designed, implemented, and monitored in a conflict-sensitive way?</b></p> <p>PAX PoC generally pursues a conflict sensitive approach in its HSS activities in South Sudan by closely monitoring local conflict and security dynamics through its partners and the COMSEC-COM structures. Yet, the great importance for PAX and its partners to be aware of local power struggles and changes in the political system needs to be stressed. To ensure this, it is recommended for partners to provide regular contextual information on security, political changes, and other relevant framework conditions, and exchange with other development and humanitarian actors in the region. Dedicated regular exchange sessions with PAX PoC staff and partners on conflict dynamics can be another way of ensuring a conflict sensitive project approach.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Adaptive implementation</p>	<p><b>To what extent have changes in the framework conditions influenced the achievement of objectives (e.g., dynamic security conditions, institutional policy shifts, and Covid-19) and which adjustments were made? What were good practices, challenges, and innovations that emerged over the period of the project?</b></p> <p>The whole first half of the program’s implementation was greatly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic (in particular the restrictions that prevented any international travel as well as domestic travel within South Sudan and Iraq), and the resulting focus on pandemic response among national and international security actors. PAX and its partners have shown great adaptability in this regard. Some activities could be shifted to online or hybrid formats (like the annual PoC Conference, which showed great success in achieving a significantly bigger audience). Yet network building, especially at national level in Iraq and South Sudan, has been difficult to pursue without in-person communication and outreach. The program reacted by focusing on international and local actors during the first half of implementation and is now taking strong steps to engage more with security actors at national level. In South Sudan, the above-outlined limitations in travel also facilitated a rapid change in the management and implementation of HSS activities, with the notable hand-over of many responsibilities from the Netherlands-based HSS team lead to the Juba-based project officer. In Iraq, the partners already operate in an access-constrained environment and have been well prepared to adjust activities to changing context situations. In response to challenges related to government security approvals, and limited engagements, PAX and its partners worked to adapt their HSS project activities accordingly; examples include adapting the HSS questionnaire, as well as topics, timing, and locations of the data collection.</p>

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Key evaluation questions

	Key evaluation questions
Effectiveness	<p><b>Key outcome question: To what extent have the short and long-term outcomes of the PoC program been achieved so far? What are the contributions by PAX and partners to these changes?</b></p> <p>⇒ These key evaluation questions will be operationalized in two steps: 1) via concrete outcome questions for each PoC project derived from the goals set in each projects' Theory of Change, and 2) through questionnaires.</p>
	<p><b>Key learning question: Why have certain outcomes been achieved and others not? What needs to be changed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the PoC program and its projects organised in a way that supports effective implementation and learning? What can be improved?</li> <li>• Is the strategic approach (including research, advocacy, trainings) effective? Do activities target the most relevant actors at the right level?</li> <li>• Are indicators in the monitoring framework suited to measure intended results and did the assumptions underlying the ToC of the PoC program prove to be correct?</li> <li>• Are the activities implemented by the PoC program suitable for achieving the program objectives? What adjustments, if any, need to be made to continue the program?</li> <li>• Which successful project activities have been identified within the four PoC projects in the current project period?</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<p><b>Outcome questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do local and international security actors have ownership for PoC? (Is PoC institutionalised, e.g., through SOPs, clear responsibilities, and high-level support)?</li> <li>• To what extend are research, community engagement and advisory activities anchored in the partner system (and national structures) yet?</li> <li>• To what extend are partner organisations able and willing (in terms of financial organisational, personnel capacities) to continue activities without support? Does PAX have an exit strategy?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can ownership for PoC in target groups be improved? How can PAX make sure that their inputs are being used to induce change?</li> <li>• What are the goals and needs of local partners and how can PAX support them?</li> <li>• Which factors are likely to positively or negatively influence the sustainability of the PoC activities?</li> </ul>

<b>Gender Sensitivity</b>	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does the program take gender mainstreaming into account in terms of project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict Sensitivity</b>	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are the activities of the PoC program designed, implemented, and monitored in a conflict-sensitive way?</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive Approach</b>	<p><b>Outcome questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ What is the relation between PAX and local partners? Who decides on activities and the allocation of funds and what are these decisions based on?</li> <li>❖ To what extent are PAX and local partners accountable to citizens in its engagement areas and PAX to its partner organisations?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To what extent should local partners be better included in program discussions?</li> <li>❖ What accountability instruments have to be put in place by PAX a) towards local partners, and b) by PAX and local partners towards citizens in its engagement areas?</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptive Implementation</b>	<p><b>Outcome questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ To what extent has changes in the framework conditions influenced the achievement of objectives (e.g., dynamic security conditions, institutional policy shifts, and Covid-19) and which adjustments were made?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ What were good practices, challenges, and innovations that emerged over the period of the project?</li> </ul>
<b>Synergies between PAX PoC projects and with other PoC actors</b>	<p><b>Outcome questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Is work at the different levels (local, national, international) well connected? Do the four projects create synergies / collaborate effectively?</li> <li>❖ How consistent are PAX activities with the interventions of other actors in the same context in terms of complementarity, harmonisation, and coordination (inside as well as outside PAX)?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Learning questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ What are the different strengths / weaknesses of the four PoC projects? What is the unique selling point of PAX PoC approach in contrast to other PoC actors?</li> <li>❖ How can interconnectivity of the PoC projects be improved?</li> <li>❖ Where are there further opportunities for collaboration either within or outside of the program that could facilitate greater impact in the remaining grant period?</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Interview partner list

### *EIA/PiP*

The following list encompasses all 39 interview partners which provided most of the information on the EIA/PiP projects.

<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Category</b>
PAX	Program Lead PoC / EIA Project Lead	PAX
PAX	Team Coordinator PoC / PiP Project Lead	PAX
PAX	Partnership Coordinator PoC	PAX
PAX	Senior Project Officer EIA	PAX
PAX	Senior Project Officer PiP	PAX
PAX	Military Advisor	PAX
PAX	Military Advisor	PAX
PAX	UN Advocacy Advisor PAX	PAX
PAX	PAX Learning Advisor	PAX
PAX	Policy Officer, Strategy & Innovation	PAX
PAX	Former EU advocacy advisor PAX	PAX
PAX	EU advocacy advisor PAX	PAX
PAX	Director Programs	PAX
The Stimson Centre	Project Lead	Partner
CIVIC	Director Europe	INGO
CIVIC	Director Research, Learning, and Innovation Unit	INGO
Airwars	Consultant	INGO
ICRC	Legal Adviser in the Arms and Conduct of Hostilities Unit in the ICRC's Legal Division	INGO
EPLO (European Peace Liaison Office)	Former EPLO staff	INGO
UN DPO	Head of Division, Policy Evaluation and Training	International security actor
UN OCHA	Head of PoC team	International security actor
UNMISS	Major, U.S. Army, U9-CIMIC DPRE (Displaced Persons Refugees Evacuees)	International security actor
NATO HQ	Senior Child Protection Adviser	International security actor
NATO ACO, SHAPE	Focal point for PoC in SHAPE	International security actor

NATO ACO, Landcom	Section Head Human Security/Gender Advisor, G9 Stability and Outreach Branch	International security actor
NATO ACO, NRDC ITA (NATO Rapid Deployable Corps Italy)	Lt. Col., Liaison Officer J9 (CIMIC)	International security actor
NATO ACO, ARRC UK (Allied Rapid Reaction Corps UK)	Human Security Advisor	International security actor (answers to interview questions provided in writing)
NATO ACT, Civil-Military Cooperation, Centre of Excellence (CIMIC COE)	Lt. Col., Staff Officer Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities	International security actor
NATO ACT, Crisis management and Disaster Response, Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE)	Head of Concept Development and Experimentation Section	International security actor (answers to interview questions provided in writing)
NATO ACT	Lt. Col. (retired), NATO ACT Liaison Officer to the UN, ICRC and NGOs.	International security actor
FINCENT	Senior Advisor	Military Training Centre
Amersfoort Army Officers' Training Centre, Dutch Ministry of Defence	Lecturer	Military Training Centre
1German/Netherlands Corps (1GNC)	Civilian Advisor	Military Training Centre
Ministry of Defence, Netherlands	Senior Policy Officer	Political representative
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Netherlands	Director Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH)	Political representative
MFA	Policy Officer DSH	Political representative
MFA	Policy Officer, Department for Multilateral Organizations and Human Rights	Political representative
MFA	Point of contact Peacekeeping, Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to UN	Political representative
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland	First Secretary of the Swiss mission to the UN; head of the group of friends on PoC in the UN	Political representative

## HSS South Sudan

The following list encompasses 22 interview partners that provided most of the information on the HSS project in South Sudan.

Location	Form	Affiliation	Position	Category
Utrecht, The Netherlands	Remote	PAX PoC program	HSS South Sudan Project Lead	PAX
Utrecht, The Netherlands	Remote	PAX PoC program	Senior Data Analyst Human Security Survey	PAX
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	PAX PoC program	HSS South Sudan Senior Project Officer	PAX
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	PAX Country Office South Sudan	Country Director	PAX
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	PAX PoC program	External consultant on UNMISS engagement	Additional resource person
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	PAX Country Office South Sudan	External consultant for PAX „Power of Voices“ Project	Additional resource person
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	Dutch Embassy / MFA in South Sudan	Deputy Head of Cooperation, Security, Rule of Law and Political Affairs	MFA / Dutch Embassy
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Torit (JPC-CDoT)	Coordinator for HSS Project in Eastern Equatoria State	Partner of PAX PoC program
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)	Executive Director	Partner of PAX PoC program
			program Manager	
			Monitoring and Evaluation Project Manager	
Juba, South Sudan	In-person	United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Political)	International security actor
Ganyiel, Payinjia County, Unity State, South Sudan	In-person	Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)	Current Field Coordinator	Partner of PAX PoC program
Ganyiel, Payinjia County, Unity State, South Sudan	In-person	Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)	Former Field Coordinator	Partner of PAX PoC program



Ganyliel, Payinjjar County, Unity State, South Sudan	In-person	Community Security Committee (COM-SECCOM)	Secretary and enumerator	Community representatives
Ganyliel, Payinjjar County, Unity State, South Sudan	In-person	Local Police Ganyliel	Police inspector	Local security actor
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	program Lead (flexible support to the peace and transition process in South Sudan)	Additional resource person
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	United Nations Development program (UNDP)	program Management Specialist (Access to Justice and Rule of Law program)	IO / (I)NGO
Ganyliel, Payinjjar County, Unity State, South Sudan	In-person	Nonviolent Peaceforce	Field Officer Ganyliel	IO / (I)NGO
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	Saferworld	Director &	IO / (I)NGO
			program Manager	
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility	Director	Additional resource person
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)	Senior Civil Affairs Officer	International security actor
Juba, South Sudan	Remote	/	Implementation Consultant Jonglei	Partner of PAX PoC program
Utrecht, The Netherlands	Remote	PAX Headquarter	program Lead for South Sudan Country program	PAX

## HSS Iraq

The following list encompasses interview partners that provided most of the information on the HSS project in Iraq.

Location	Form	Affiliation	Position	Category
Basra, Iraq	In-person	Local Police	Basra Police Command	Government/Security Forces
Basra, Iraq	In-person	Community member/Participant in HSS activities	Community Security Committee	Government/Security Forces

Basra, Iraq	In-person	Basra Municipality	Government official	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Basra, Iraq	In-person	Iraqi Civil Society	Activist/Feminist	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Basra, Iraq	In-person	Iraqi Civil Society	Religious Leader and activist	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Basra, Iraq	In-person	Basra Governor's Office	Government official	Government Institutions (Ministries/Municipalities/Directorates)
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Local Police	Community Police Officer	Government/Security Forces
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Local Police	Head of Police Station	Government/Security Forces
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Government	Qaem Al Maqam (Municipality Director)	Government/Security Forces
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Diyala Community (Community member/Participant in HSS activities)	Community leader in Muqdadiyah	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Diyala Community (Community member/Participant in HSS activities)	Educational worker	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Diyala, Iraq	In-person	Diyala Community (Community member/Participant in HSS activities)	Societal Activist	Local Community/Tribes/Community Leaders
Diyala, Iraq	Remote	NGO	Staff from NGO	Research Centre
Kirkuk, Iraq	Remote	IAA	Enumerators (FGD)	Partner of PAX PoC program
Diyala, Iraq	Remote	WAHO	Enumerators (FGD)	Partner of PAX PoC program
Basra, Iraq	Remote	Al Firdaws	Enumerators (FGD)	Partner of PAX PoC program
Germany	Remote	Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi)	Program Manager	IO / (I)NGO
Iraq, Baghdad	Remote	Dutch Embassy in Iraq	Security and Rule of Law point of contact	IO / (I)NGO
Erbil	Erbil	IAA	HSS Project Lead	Partner of PAX PoC program

Iraq, Basra	Remote	Al Firdaws	Director	Partner of PAX PoC program
Denmark	Remote	UNDP SSR program	UNDP's SSR program Interim Director	IO / (I)NGO
Diyala, Iraq	Remote	WAHO	Director	Partner of PAX PoC program
Iraq, Basra	Remote	Al-Firdaws	Project Manager	Partner of PAX PoC program
Diyala, Iraq	Remote	WAHO	Project Supervisor	Partner of PAX PoC program
Diyala, Iraq	Remote	WAHO	Data collection lead	Partner of PAX PoC program
Al Hawija, Iraq	Remote	Al-Ghad	Deputy Director	Partner of PAX PoC program
Al Hawija, Iraq	Remote	Al-Ghad	Head of programs	Partner of PAX PoC program
Al Hawija, Iraq	Remote	Al-Ghad	researcher of Hawija project	Partner of PAX PoC program
Al Hawija, Iraq	Remote	Al-Ghad	researcher of Hawija project	Partner of PAX PoC program
Al Hawija, Iraq	Remote	Al-Ghad	researcher of Hawija project	Partner of PAX PoC program
Netherlands	Remote	PAX PoC	HSS Project Lead	PAX
Netherlands	Remote	PAX Iraq	Iraq Program Lead	PAX

## Appendix 4: The evaluation team

The evaluation team<sup>17</sup> consisted of the following members:

- ❖ Jana Leutner (WINS Global Consult): Team lead and responsible for the main evaluation report as well as the EIA/PIP report. She brings more than ten years of experiences in monitoring and evaluation as well as an elaborate sense for context specific project implementation, as a result of her working experiences in several countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe.
- ❖ Nadja Frerksen (WINS Global Consult): Lead evaluator for HSS South Sudan and responsible for main evaluation report and HSS South Sudan report. With several years of experience in conflict-affected and fragile contexts and in particular in East Africa, she particularly contributed her experience in gender- and conflict-sensitivity project implementation and evaluations.
- ❖ Mohamad Al-Ashmar: Lead evaluator for HSS Iraq and responsible for HSS Iraq report and supported the evaluation team in inception phase, data collection and data collection in Iraq and South Sudan. He is researcher and MEAL consultant, has about 10 years of experience in humanitarian, peace, and development programmes in the fragile and conflict affected countries in the MENA region, including Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon.
- ❖ Hadeel Tawfik: Data Analyst and Evaluation Consultant, responsible for supporting the evaluation team in the method, tools, data analysis and data collection. She is a data scientist and Information Management Specialist in the humanitarian and development sectors. More than eight years of experience in information management and MEAL related to emergency response programs for Syria, Soudan, Afghanistan, Venezuela and Yemen crisis.
- ❖ Ohide Johnson: With diverse experience in preparing and conducting evaluations of internationally funded projects in South Sudan, he supported the team as national evaluator in South Sudan. He provided support in the preparation, implementation, and documentation of key informant interviews.
- ❖ Rahmeh Jakoush: Iraq Local Consultant and responsible for the in-field primary data collection. She provided support in the preparation, implementation, and documentation of key informant interviews in Iraq.

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<sup>17</sup> The team was awarded the contract after an open and competitive bidding process organized by PAX.