The risks in conflict are shifting from military to civilians. Prevention is key in protecting civilians. A single strike can lead to many long-term effects. Many strikes can collectively compound harm for civilians.

National Contributions to PoC

Day 1: The risks in conflict are shifting from military to civilians. Prevention is key in protecting civilians.

Day 2: Collect and discuss data on human security with civilians to identify priorities. Local perspectives can give policymakers new insights.

Day 3: Make local perspectives accessible to a broader audience. A single strike can lead to many long-term effects.

People & Protection

Civilian Harm Reverberating Effects

This unique virtual conference convened a global audience of practitioners, researchers, uniformed service members, policymakers, and other experts on the protection of civilians (PoC) in conflict settings. The event focused around three central themes: National Contributions to PoC, People and Protection, and Civilian Harm Reverberating Effects.

For recordings of the conference sessions, additional reflections on the event, and key resources about the event’s core themes, please visit: www.protectionofcivilians.org.
Protection of civilians should be center stage in military interventions and must be applied inclusively.

Prevention is key in protecting civilians.

It’s becoming more and more difficult to protect civilians.

More insights to learn collectively how to best protect civilians.

Operating in conflict means taking risks, but this cannot deter us from protecting civilians.

You cannot be partial in protecting civilians - take off your political glasses.

There are more people needing protection than there are those able to provide it.

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National Contributions to PoC 2/3

PoC actors should explore collaborations in a fragmented security landscape.

PoC and SSR specialists should connect more to share their knowledge.

It is important to truly work together and have the same ultimate goals.

National and international institutions should not be in the way of moving forward.

Local and national levels should come together and work collaboratively.

Be patient and take time to really understand each other.

Empower civilians to be real drivers of change in their communities.

Workshop: Coherence in PoC Policy and Practice
How can PoC-focused policymakers and practitioners learn from one another and maximize their impact?
What can the experiences of countries like Germany and the United Kingdom teach others about being effective “champions of PoC”?

Access to information is key to conducting relevant analysis.

The risks in conflict are shifting from military to civilians.

Treat the root causes of insecurity, not just the symptoms.

If we talk about military awareness, we have to talk about PoC as well.

The PoC field needs to collect and share lessons learned.

Prevention is key in protecting civilians.

Those serving in missions need to develop a PoC mindset.

More research is needed into remote warfare and the implications for civilians.

National Contributions to PoC PAX Protection of Civilians Conference 2020
Human security goes beyond only physical safety, but includes economic, food, health, environmental, community, and political security components. We need shared and comprehensive definitions of human security, and a clearer sense of who is responsible for providing it.

Communication and trust among relevant stakeholders are necessary for human security. Every context is different, so involve local perspectives.

Human security responses should have military and civil components. Civilians have a lot of capacity to protect their own communities. Empower civilians and elevate their voices.

The absence from fear is the foundation of human security. People & Protection PAX Protection of Civilians Conference 2020

Introductory Opening: What Is Human Security?
What do we mean by “human security” and how can we use this concept to improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of protection of civilians in practice?
Give local civilians a voice in defining their protection needs.

Civilians should define solutions to make the results sustainable.

Collect and discuss data on human security with civilians to identify key priorities.

We need to improve the dialogue with civilian communities (and actually listen).

Local perspectives can give policymakers new insights.

Local citizens should be partners when it comes to security issues.

Amplifying civilian perspectives and creating feedback loops will generate greater impact.

Presentation: Voices from the Field

How can the PoC field create more opportunities to learn from – and be accountable to – civilians living in conflict?
Expert Panel: Community Engagement During Uncertainty

What do experts in Iraq believe are the needs and opportunities to bring civilian perspectives more to the fore?

- Communities must be empowered to work towards common goals.
- Educating and engaging young people in civic life is an investment in the future.
- We need to break down walls between political and security institutions and civilian populations.
- Make local perspectives accessible to a broader audience.
- Engaging female community members brings valuable perspectives and contributes towards greater gender equality.
- Use constructive dialogue to bridge the gap between civilians and authorities.
- Build and maintain communication channels between different stakeholders.
Session: Local Understandings of Human Security: Evidence from the Field
What can we as a field learn from doing comprehensive research with civilian populations in conflict contexts?

- Getting reliable data from the field requires talking to local civilians, rather than just elites.
- Repetition of research is important to capture trends in a constantly changing environment.
- Minority groups are often marginalized and do not feel heard.
- Overcoming access challenges in conflict is critically important.
- Stay connected and be transparent towards your research group.
- Minority groups are often marginalized and do not feel heard.
- Apply an intersectional lens to better understand the influences of gender and culture.
A single strike can lead to many long-term effects. Many strikes can collectively compound harm for civilians. The psychological consequences have a much greater effect than is immediately apparent.

Within a second, your whole history can be erased. It is impossible to get back the erased dreams. Those who cause harm should ask themselves what they can do to help heal lasting trauma.

For an in-depth exploration of civilians’ experiences in conflict and key recommendations to the field, read PAX’s forthcoming book on Civilian Harm.

Opening & Welcome + Presentation: The Visible and Invisible Effects of the Violence Used in Mosul + Presentation: The Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Mosul, Raqqa, and Hawija

What are the longer-term and less visible implications of armed conflict for civilians in places like Iraq?
Presentation: Modeling Reverberating Effects and The Frontlines Lab Initiative

How can experts use modern technologies to model the effects of conflict and inform more effective military operations?

Civilian Harm Reverberating Effects 2/3

 Various forms of data must be collected and fit together

 We need to better capture and integrate the data on civilian harm

 Experts should map critical infrastructure to prevent unnecessary harm

 A systematic approach is important to be able to make good analyses

 Experts should cast a light on reverberating effects to improve future military planning

 To build resilience, we need to create adaptable and flexible models

 We have to search for the missing pieces in our understanding

 Cast a light on reverberating effects to improve future military planning

 To build resilience, we need to create adaptable and flexible models

 A systematic approach is important to be able to make good analyses

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 Cast a light on reverberating effects to improve future military planning

 To build resilience, we need to create adaptable and flexible models

 A systematic approach is important to be able to make good analyses

 Various forms of data must be collected and fit together
A military that embraces the task of protecting civilians will benefit from improved conditions and relations.

The military is a first-line responder to civilians in conflict areas.

Coordination is still too limited when it comes to protection of civilians.

PoC interventions should mix skill sets and link different people and institutions for better protection.

Those operating without knowledge of the local context will have blind spots.

The mindset must be different when it comes to protecting civilians vs acting on a threat.

There is a lot of evidence out there, but we need to collect and share it to make it useful.

Once we have the data, we need to actually use it to have a greater impact.

Presentation: Understanding Reverberating Effects + Interactive Discussion: Practical Implications and Recommendations for Military Actors

What do militaries need to understand about the direct and indirect effects of conflict in order to effectively prevent and respond to civilian harm?