

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE

TASK TEAM ON REVITALIZING PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Review of the Impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action

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Acronyms

ACU – Access Coordination Unit (in Israel/occupied Palestinian territories)

AHLC - Ad Hoc Liaison Committee

AMISOM – African Union Mission in Somalia

CAP – Consolidated Appeals Process

CAR – Central African Republic

CCTARC – Civilian Casualties Tracking, Analysis, and Response Cell (e.g., as proposed within the African Union Mission in Somalia)

CHF – Common Humanitarian Fund

CERF – Central Emergency Response Fund

CBPF – Country Based Pooled Fund

CPIA – Comité Provincial Inter-Agences

DHC – Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator

DPA – Department of Political Affairs

DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping Operations

DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo

DSC – Deputy Special Coordinator

DSRSG – Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General

EDG – Emergency Directors Group

ERC – Emergency Relief Coordinator

FARDC – Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo

FIB – Force Intervention Brigade (within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)

GRM – Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism

HAMAS – Islamic Resistance Movement (a political and armed group in Israel/occupied Palestinian territories)

HC – Humanitarian Coordinator

HCT – Humanitarian Country Team

HQ – Headquarters

HPG – Humanitarian Policy Group (at the Overseas Development Institute)

HPS – Humanitarian Protection Strategy

HRP – Humanitarian Response Plan

IAP – Integrated Assessment and Planning

IASC – Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

IOM – International Organization for Migration

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force (former North Atlantic Treaty Organization force in Afghanistan)

ISF – Integrated Strategic Framework

ISG – United Nations Integration Steering Group

Israel/oPt – Israel/occupied Palestinian territories

ITF – Integrated Task Force

JOC – Joint Operations Centre

KFOR – Kosovo Force

M23 – March 23 Movement (armed opposition group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)

MINUSCA – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

MINUSMA – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

MINUSTAH – United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

MISCA – African-Led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic

MLO – Military Liaison Officer

MNLA – National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (armed opposition group in Mali)

MONUSCO – United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

ODI – Overseas Development Institute

OCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

PoC – Protection of Civilians

PKO – Peacekeeping Operation

QIP – Quick Impact Project

RC – Resident Coordinator

RRP – Recovery, Reintegration, and Peacebuilding (section within the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan)

SC – Special Coordinator

SGBV – Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SHC – Senior Humanitarian Coordinator

SMGP – Senior Management Group on Protection

SMGP-P – Senior Management Group on Protection – Provincial

SOAS – School of Oriental and African Studies

SOP – Standard Operating Procedure

SPLA – Sudan People’s Liberation Army

SPM – Special Political Mission

SRA – Security Risk Assessment

SRSR – Special Representative of the Secretary-General

STAIT – Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team

UN – United Nations

UNAMA – United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

UNAMI – United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq

UNAMID – African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

UNCT – United Nations Country Team

UNDSS – United Nations Department for Safety and Security

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (or the United Nations Refugee Agency)

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

UNMIK – United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

UNMISS – United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

UNOCI – United Nations Mission in Côte d’Ivoire

UNOPS – United Nations Office for Project Services

UNOSOM II – United Nations Operation in Somalia II

UNSCO – Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

UNSOM – United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

WFP – World Food Programme

1. Executive summary

At the direction of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals, the IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action conducted a review of the impact of United Nations (UN) integration on humanitarian action. The review covered all applicable 18 integrated settings—defined as settings where a UN Country Team (UNCT) coexists with a UN peacekeeping operation (PKO) or special political mission (SPM).

This report documents the entire spectrum of experiences that humanitarian actors raised in the course of this review as far as they relate to UN integration, but it does not explore broader concerns regarding the functioning of humanitarian action. While the recorded views do not necessarily represent the positions of the Task Team members or individual agencies, they do reflect the experiences, observations, and concerns of a wide range of humanitarian personnel across integrated settings. In particular, the review looked at implementation of the UN Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP) Policy.

- **Low familiarity with policy and guidance**

The review’s findings indicate that familiarity amongst humanitarian actors with UN integration policy and guidance is extremely low, with only 23% of those surveyed responding that they are familiar with the UN IAP Policy, 16% with the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook, 24% with Strategic Assessments, and 28% with the IASC Principals’ paper on “UN integration and humanitarian space”. This low degree of familiarity is worrying given that the UN IAP Policy contains provisions to ensure that integration arrangements take full account of humanitarian considerations and are shaped in a manner that is conducive to humanitarian action. Understanding of the UN IAP Policy and related guidance is an essential pre-condition for humanitarian actors to be able to actively engage and ensure that the policy is consistently applied in practice. For example, the absence of UN-led formal risk analyses as part of Strategic Assessments in at least the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Israel/occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), Mali, South Sudan, and Sudan (Darfur) means that the mechanism embedded in the UN IAP Policy intended to account for the implications of UN integration arrangements for humanitarian action is not serving its purpose.

In addition, the review highlights the need for humanitarian actors to strengthen their own collective decision-making processes, coordinated actions, and capacities in order to effectively engage with and operate alongside PKOs and SPMs on critical issues. For instance, the issues of negotiation with non-state armed groups, access strategies, and security management are not regulated by UN integration policy or guidance but, nevertheless, require a more strategic approach by humanitarian actors when operating alongside a PKO or SPM. The lack of coordinated and strategic efforts by humanitarian actors to address integration related issues in these areas weakens their ability to adhere to humanitarian principles while undertaking effective coordination with PKOs and SPMs.

- **Humanitarian Country Team engagement**

Few Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) give dedicated attention to UN integration, and once integration arrangements have been determined, discussions are often challenging to initiate (e.g., a request for an independent Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) to replace a triple-hatted HC—Deputy

Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC)). Discussions are restricted by limited knowledge of integration policy and guidance, obstacles to providing inputs for HCT agendas, low will amongst humanitarian actors to push for such discussions, and fear of negative consequences resulting from raising difficult or sensitive topics.

- **Politicisation of humanitarian action**

Coordination and working relationships between an HCT and its respective PKO or SPM can affect the prioritisation of humanitarian action, partly due to poor understanding and respect for divisions between roles and responsibilities. For instance, if a PKO or SPM releases a report on humanitarian needs without coordinating it with its respective HCT, this may result in concerns that the PKO or SPM intended to influence the prioritisation of humanitarian efforts for political reasons. Such concerns may particularly arise depending upon other factors affecting the process, for example if a party to conflict was intent upon gaining support and legitimacy from the local population in the affected area and played a role in influencing the PKO's or SPM's analysis of the needs.

The influence of political interests and stabilisation objectives is alarming to humanitarian actors due to integration arrangements. For instance, when areas that have recently been brought under the control of a government are prioritised for humanitarian assistance, questions arise regarding the principle of impartiality. Humanitarian actors worry that they lose independence and control over prioritisation of humanitarian efforts when, for example, a PKO or SPM facilitates or provides armed escorts and air assets only for such areas or when pooled humanitarian fund resources are directed to areas that have recently been brought under government control. PKOs or SPMs may also try to pressure humanitarian actors to support the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) as part of stabilisation strategies. PKOs and SPMs may be unaware of how their actions affect humanitarian principles. It is not clear to what extent humanitarian actors have sought to minimise these influences by reducing their reliance upon PKO and SPM armed escorts and air assets and by re-examining the criteria and decision-making processes for pooled funds when newly accessible areas are prioritised. The behaviour of humanitarian actors themselves can also be of concern when they aim to be seen as delivering assistance in previously inaccessible areas regained by government forces or accepting a PKO's funding to carry out activities in support of stabilisation.

There are concerns regarding politicisation of protection interventions and broader issues involving IDPs in integrated settings that challenge humanitarian principles. Some humanitarian actors felt that having an independent HC outside of the integrated mission structure was responsible for the HC being more willing to advocate for humanitarian priorities in the face of political pressure (e.g., to relocate vulnerable persons when politically unpopular, or to stand against government pressure for IDP returns that were intended to demonstrate political progress). There were also concerns regarding the influence of non-humanitarian considerations on the protection of IDPs who seek shelter in PKO bases. These concerns include a PKO's perceived desires to limit and stop the access of IDPs to these bases and push for IDP returns. There are also concerns about the ability and will of humanitarian actors, including a triple-hatted HC, to tackle these issues in the face of integration related challenges and pressure from a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSRG).

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) that are implemented by PKOs or SPMs are a concern, particularly in CAR, DRC, Mali, and Somalia. On occasions, PKOs or SPMs undertook QIPs that overlapped with humanitarian issues or directly requested humanitarian organisations to implement QIPs, contradicting guidance and policy. Coordination between HCTs and PKOs or SPMs on QIPs has been inadequate across the board and should be addressed. In Mali, the PKO and humanitarian actors recognised this shortcoming and put in place a mechanism to consult with relevant clusters to ensure that QIPs do not overlap with or undermine humanitarian interventions.

- **Humanitarian access**

There are also complex views regarding PKOs' role in facilitating humanitarian access. Humanitarian actors recognise that military operations conducted by PKOs (e.g., targeted patrols and the provision of road security) can be beneficial for humanitarian operations and the protection of civilians and that triple-hatted HCs can help facilitate these (e.g., through advocacy to a PKO to improve road security). On one hand, the limited capacities of peacekeeping forces to facilitate humanitarian access and protection in this way remain a concern. On the other hand, being perceived as aligned (or actually being aligned) with a PKO's or SPM's military efforts or political priorities can undermine independence of humanitarian action.

Humanitarian actors take different positions regarding their operational independence, including security, logistics, and access negotiations. Nonetheless, the potential for dependence on PKOs' and SPMs' armed escorts and air assets to access people in need is worrying. Some rely on PKO or SPM armed escorts or air assets to avoid being 'soft targets'. For others, this dependence is contributing to a cyclic erosion of humanitarian principles that harms the ability of all humanitarian actors—UN, NGO, etc.—to maintain operations in complex political contexts. There is also a feeling that specific security factors are determining the behaviour of UN humanitarian actors and, in essence, the criticality of their programmes. These factors include the imposition of escort requirements on UN humanitarian agencies that are unwarranted in light of existing conditions, concerns about the manipulation and quality of security analysis, and a sense that support to humanitarian requests are a lower priority than those of UN PKOs or SPMs.

Continued confusion on the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian, military, and political actors remains a challenge hampering humanitarian action. Coordination on civil-military and humanitarian access matters in integrated settings is crucial to ensure common understanding of respective roles while enhancing coordination. Civil-military coordination in some contexts has suffered from a reduction in resources (e.g., OCHA civil-military coordinators) and a focus that prioritises engagement with international security forces over national actors. Establishing a civil-military coordination mechanism (e.g., one that includes a PKO's Protection Advisor, OCHA staff, Protection Cluster, NGO Consortia, and other military or security representatives) could be a good practice worth replicating. Civil-military guidelines that are tailored to specific contexts can help to gain common understanding, but challenges persist due to continual confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of actors involved in civil-military coordination and a lack of attention paid to updating guidelines in a timely manner or disseminating them sufficiently. Access coordination mechanisms vary by context, ranging from *ad-hoc*

discussions to standing bodies that help address access challenges. Humanitarian action can benefit from devoted, regular access coordination to address access challenges as part of a greater strategy.

- **Contact with parties to conflict**

UN integration has especially negatively impacted humanitarian actors' engagement with parties to conflict—an impact that has gone unaddressed in part because the UN has not been implementing the UN IAP Policy. In some contexts (e.g., Afghanistan), humanitarian actors disengage from UN-led humanitarian processes to safeguard their ability to engage with parties to conflict who see the UN as partisan. The existing framework for humanitarian negotiations, whereby the ERC (or HC in country) is responsible, is not fully understood or respected. Additionally, there is a failure to secure appropriate support from PKOs or SPMs (e.g., the sharing of contacts or analysis) or address challenges affecting humanitarian negotiations (e.g., a PKO's or SPM's security regulations, desires to block contact with an armed actor, or attempts to direct aid). UN integration arrangements also impact contact with parties to conflict when PKOs are involved in armed clashes with a party or are seen as supporting one side over another. At the same time, integration arrangements can open up doors for humanitarian dialogue, particularly with government authorities.

- **Humanitarian advocacy**

There is also a need for arrangements that set out clear roles and responsibilities on humanitarian advocacy to both safeguard it and maximise its efficacy. A lack of humanitarian leadership, poor respect for existing arrangements, and the influence of political or military priorities are notable challenges affecting humanitarian advocacy. The review particularly noted the perceived role of SRSGs and triple-hatted HCs in either supporting or undermining humanitarian advocacy.

- **Coordination to address protection concerns**

Humanitarian actors have been unable to maintain shared protection priorities and analyses with PKOs and SPMs. Coordination and information sharing on protection issues also are inadequate. Convening a Senior Management Group on Protection (SMGP) to bring together high-level leadership on protection issues emerged as a good practice, but there are concerns regarding the functioning of such groups, including for information sharing and problem solving.

- **Conclusion**

The report's recommendations highlight the need for continuous dialogue and coordination between humanitarian actors and their counterparts—the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Political Affairs (DPA), UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), etc.—in support of principled humanitarian action both at the HQ and field levels. This includes more candid dialogue with the highest UN representatives in order to support implementation of the UN IAP Policy. Humanitarian actors should take responsibility for putting in place arrangements conducive to humanitarian action in order to coordinate with and operate effectively alongside PKOs and SPMs. This entails dedicating resources, ensuring a common understanding on respective roles and responsibilities, and being pro-active.

2. Introduction

At the direction of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals, the IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action conducted a review of the impact of United Nations (UN) integration on humanitarian action. The review is intended to document and draw lessons from humanitarian actors' recent experience and observations regarding the implications of UN integration arrangements—positive and negative—since the adoption of the UN Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP) Policy in April 2013. Additionally, it is intended to build upon the 2011 Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG)/Stimson Center report commissioned by the UN integration Steering Group (ISG) and 2013 IASC Principals' paper on "UN integration and humanitarian space". The review was intended to yield concrete and actionable recommendations for consideration by the IASC Principals. It should also serve to support the ongoing work of the Task Team.

This report documents the entire spectrum of experiences that humanitarian actors raised in the course of this review as far as they related to UN integration. The recorded views do not necessarily represent the positions of the Task Team members or individual agencies. The review examined the following issues:

- Understanding of UN integration policy and guidance
- HCT engagement on UN integration
- Strategic Assessments and risk analyses
- Politicisation of humanitarian action
- Humanitarian access
- Contact with parties to conflict
- Humanitarian advocacy
- Coordination to address protection concerns

The review covered all applicable 18 integrated settings (see Table 1 above)—defined as settings where a UN Country Team (UNCT) coexists alongside a UN peacekeeping operation (PKO) or special political mission (SPM). The review also recorded experiences related to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) due to the close relationship between humanitarian actors, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), and AMISOM. Additionally, the review aimed to gauge the familiarity of humanitarian actors with UN integration policy and guidance because this familiarity impacts their ability to engage on the topic. Moreover, familiarity affects the ability of humanitarian agencies to negotiate and maintain distinct humanitarian operations while working with PKOs or SPMs.

The review's findings and recommendations should inform the work of the IASC and its members, humanitarian coordinators (HCs), humanitarian country teams (HCTs), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), and the many other relevant actors who are involved in matters impacting humanitarian action where the UN's

Table 1 – Integrated settings examined

- Afghanistan
- Burundi
- Central African Republic
- Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Guinea-Bissau
- Haiti
- Iraq
- Israel/occupied Palestinian territories
- Kosovo
- Lebanon
- Liberia
- Libya
- Mali
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan (Darfur)

integration policy applies. The review should particularly inform the upcoming review of the UN IAP Policy.

3. Methodology and participation

The Task Team used quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection to research the perceptions and experience of humanitarian staff in relation to UN integration arrangements.¹

The quantitative data provides an overview of the general trends and views on UN integration amongst humanitarian actors, while the qualitative data gives further insight into the reasons for those trends and views, including individual understanding of policies, context-specific examples, and organisational differences. Due to the sensitive information collected and the potential damage that attribution could do to relations, the review does not attribute information to specific individuals, agencies, organisations, or positions. The Task Team also felt that anonymity was important in order to collect candid views and consequently affirmed the need to maintain confidentiality of information collected through the survey and interviews during data collection and analysis.

3.A. Data collection

In the first phase of data collection, a 23-question survey was drafted and developed by the Task Team.² The survey was open from 11 December 2014 to 8 February 2015 to all humanitarian actors working or who have worked on a context where UN integration arrangements have been in place after introduction of the UN IAP Policy in April 2013.³ Due to the various distribution channels used to circulate the survey—email lists, postings on websites, inclusion in email newsletters, etc.—it is impossible to determine the exact number of potential respondents. The broad distribution of the survey ensured that respondents represent a diverse array of stakeholders, rather than pre-selected organisations or views. The Task Team specifically sought to ensure the participation of humanitarian actors working in field locations through engagement with NGO field consortia and UN humanitarian personnel.

Survey respondents were asked to provide information from their specific experience with UN integration arrangements, whether past or present, and to indicate clearly to which context their answers referred. The target population of the survey was international and national NGOs and NGO consortia, UN agencies and offices, and ‘other humanitarian organisations’, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

The survey included open answer questions and space for respondents to elaborate on answer choices, and it collected general information on demographics, locations, and professional experience. The survey asked participants to rank their familiarity with UN integration policies and guidance, comment on HCT processes and context changes related to UN integration, and indicate whether UN integration arrangements have had an impact on prioritisation of humanitarian activities and contact with parties to

¹ The Task Team formed a ‘Review Task Force’ to conduct the review. A Task Team representative from InterAction facilitated the work of the Review Task Force, which consisted of representatives from Action Against Hunger (ACF-USA), the International Rescue Committee, OCHA, the World Food Programme, United Nations Children’s Fund, European Interagency Security Forum, and World Vision.

² The complete survey can be found in Appendix 1. Question 4 only appeared for respondents who answered ‘Yes’ to Question 3, and Question 12 only appeared for respondents’ who selected ‘Yes’ to Question 11.

³ The Task Team administered the survey through Survey Monkey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com>.

conflict. Additionally, the survey recorded if humanitarian actors were aware of any arrangements with PKOs or SPMs on humanitarian negotiations, humanitarian advocacy, humanitarian access, and information sharing to record best practices and identify areas for improvement. 361 humanitarian actors participated in the survey, with 143 completing all questions. To allow for proper analysis, the Task Team only utilised the data from the 143 completed surveys.

The second phase of data collection featured structured interviews. Interview questions delved deeper into areas covered in the survey.⁴

3.B. Analysis

The Task Team analysed quantitative information through charts, with cross-tabulation for demographic and contextual data. This allowed for cross-referencing of information in order to determine where biases, lack of knowledge, or organisational differences may have impacted respondents' answers. The Task Team particularly considered familiarity with UN integration policies and guidance for analysis as answers revealed that many survey respondents were not well acquainted with these issues. Other important factors that the Task Team examined included organisation type (UN, NGO, 'other humanitarian organisation'); position location (headquarters (HQ), regional office, field); current position (senior leadership, field coordinators, cluster coordination staff, project management staff), and membership in an HCT.

The Task Team coded qualitative information from both the survey and interviews for two issues due to their complexity and the level of recorded detail: 1) impact of integration arrangements on the prioritisation of humanitarian activities and 2) arrangements that have been made to support humanitarian access. Coding of these two issues assisted analysis of emergent themes that humanitarian actors raised during the review.

The Task Team also conducted an extensive desk review of existing work on UN integration to identify areas of concerns and potential trends, as well as to allow for further analysis of data collected through the survey and interviews. The desk review and the cited research include relevant information that preceded the UN IAP Policy.

3.C. Constraints

The review's focus on specific issues related to UN integration highlighted a need to explore how humanitarian actors respond in light of the challenges that this report documents, including how they operationalise humanitarian principles and mitigate or contribute to challenges arising in integrated settings. There are also concerns about the content and process to develop Integrated Strategic Frameworks (ISFs), as well as the ability of humanitarian actors to engage with Integrated Task Forces (ITFs). UNCTs, the UN ISG, and other bodies may wish to examine these issues in light of this review's findings and recommendations.

Further constraints exist due to the review's methodology. The review did not examine non-integrated settings, precluding the Task Team from presenting a comparative analysis of recorded issues to better understand the potential impact of UN integration. Similarly, the study's focus on the perceptions of humanitarian actors did not afford collection of other views, including affected populations, staff from PKOs and SPMs, and parties to conflict.

⁴ See the section titled "Participation" for further information on interviews.

Additionally, due to the widespread distribution of the survey and the methods of sharing it, the responses do not represent a comprehensive picture of humanitarian actors engaged with UN integration arrangements; rather, they represent a motivated group of individuals with experience in the review's 18 targeted integrated settings. Therefore, some integrated settings and organisations may have higher response rates and consequently represent a greater percentage of the findings, possibly introducing biases.⁵ The Task Team selected key informants for interviews based upon their expertise, knowledge of UN integration matters, or experience in a setting where UN integration policy applied. When selecting survey respondents for interviews, the Task Team ensured that a respondent from each of the 18 integrated settings was identified for an interview. Additionally, the Task Team ensured a mix of both 'positive' and 'negative' answers to survey questions to avoid bias. To further safeguard against bias amongst the Task Team, the review highlights any potential conflicting perceptions that were recorded amongst humanitarian actors regarding the effects of existing integration arrangements and coordination with PKOs or SPMs.

Other constraints on responses are time and access. For instance, the survey occurred during a busy time of year and targeted multiple disaster and conflict contexts, thereby seeking responses from individuals with heavy workloads and possibly unreliable access to the internet. These factors likely hampered participation in the survey. Time and capacity were also constraints for the Task Team members in conducting in-depth interviews and reviewing collected information; to address these constraints, the Task Team extended the duration of the survey, interviews, and analysis.

Since many survey respondents worked in multiple integrated settings, the data related to country contexts proved difficult to disaggregate. Although the Task Team requested respondents to attribute their comments to a specific integrated setting, many did not, further limiting the Task Team's contextual analysis. The same problem arose with organisational disaggregation as many respondents worked not only for multiple UN agencies, but also across NGOs and 'other humanitarian organisations'. To allow for cross-tabulation, the organisations were coded into four categories: 'UN', 'NGO' (international and national NGOs and NGO consortia), 'other humanitarian organisations' (including IOM and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement), and 'mixed experience' (those with experience in more than one type of organisation, often UN and NGO). Categorisation of this nature was not possible for the 18 integrated settings.

More subtle constraints on analysis of the findings emerged as the Task Team coded data and completed interviews. It became obvious that many respondents did not fully understand the issues and policies meant to be investigated through the survey. Some answers did not correspond to the specific survey question or conflated a separate issue with UN integration arrangements, thereby indicating the respondent's lack of clarity on the details of those arrangements. The Task Team interpreted this data in light of respondents' elaborated responses. The questions investigating 'familiarity with UN integration policies and products' indicated that the majority of respondents were not familiar, or only somewhat familiar, with the broader policies of UN integration. This lack of knowledge is a major finding in itself and, as discussed below, it also decreased the significance of some of the review's findings. The Task Team noted that humanitarian actors were confused about all of the examined matters, including what arrangements have been made with PKOs or SPMs to support humanitarian operations and how integration arrangements may be affecting the prioritisation of humanitarian activities and contact with parties to the conflict. For example, a number of humanitarian actors confused Strategic Assessments

⁵ See the section titled "Participation" below for participation levels by context.

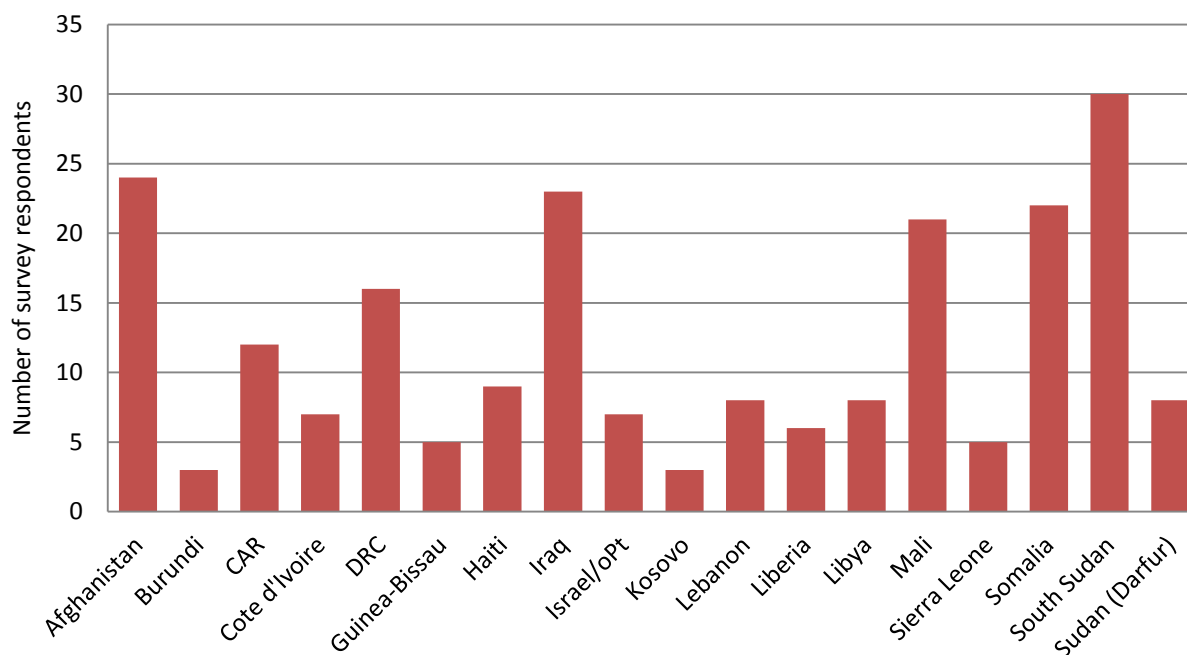
and the process of ‘risk analysis’, with the Humanitarian Response Plan, general humanitarian assessments, or other risk assessments that were not related to UN integration.⁶

3.D. Participation

143 staff from 19 different humanitarian agencies responded to the survey. 47% of respondents (67 out of 143) indicated experience working for UN agencies, and 42% of respondents (60 out of 143) noted work experience with NGOs (international and national NGOs and NGO consortia) in these integrated settings.⁷ Those with experience in other humanitarian organisations (IOM, Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement) represent 4% of respondents (6 out of 143), and 7% of respondents (10 out of 143) indicated experience in multiple types of organisations (UN, NGO, ‘other humanitarian organisations’, and the World Bank).

Chart 1 below illustrates distribution of survey respondents’ experiences across all 18 integrated settings. Amongst the 18 integrated UN contexts, participation was particularly high for humanitarian actors who had experience working in South Sudan (30 out of 143), Afghanistan (24 out of 143), Iraq (23 out of 143), Somalia (22 out of 143), Mali (21 out of 143), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, 16 out of 143). Many indicated experience across multiple integrated settings.

Chart 1: Experience by integrated setting



⁶ Risk analysis specifically refers to the risk UN integration may pose to humanitarian operations as outlined in the UN IAP Policy. Although uncertain, confusion could be due in part to linguistic challenges—the survey was only provided in English.

⁷ To safeguard the anonymity of respondents, the survey did not record individual NGO names unless respondents were willing to be contacted for a follow-on interview. UN agencies represented through participation in the survey include FAO, OCHA, OHCHR, UN-Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNOPS, UNRWA, WFP, and WHO.

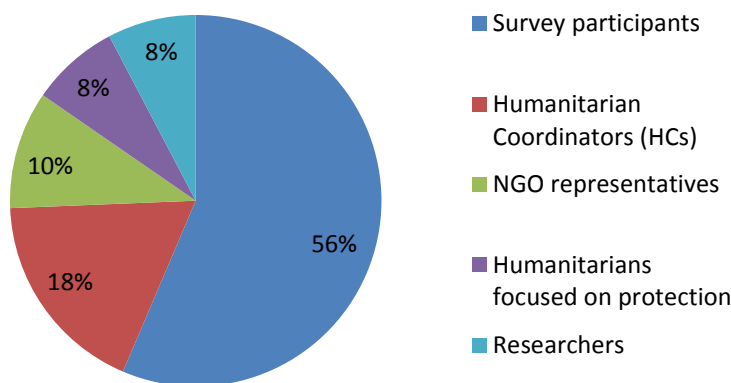
The survey asked respondents' current locations and job positions in order to aid analysis. 52% of respondents (75 out of 143) were based in the field, 29% (41 out of 143) were based at HQ, and 19% (27 out of 143) were based in regional offices. 40% of survey participants (57 out of 143) identified their current position as senior leadership, 13% (19 out of 143) identified it as technical/advisory staff, and 12% (17 out of 143) identified it as project management staff. Field coordination, cluster coordination, and policy/advocacy staff each accounted for 9% of respondents (summing to 27%, 39 out of 143). The remaining 8% of respondents (11 out of 143) selected 'other' to describe their current position.⁸

The survey also recorded if participants were a member of an HCT, a participant in the cluster or working group system, or if they had direct interaction with a PKO or SPM in an integrated setting for any of the examples given in their responses. 55% of respondents (79 out of 143) were not members of an HCT for any of the examples, 23% (33 out of 143) were members only for some examples, and 22% of respondents (31 out of 143) were members during the entire period of their examples. 55% of respondents (79 out of 143) indicated positively that they participated in the cluster or working group system for the period of their examples, 27% (38 out of 143) reported participation in the cluster or working group system for only some of their examples, and 18% of respondents (26 out of 143) indicated that they had no involvement for the period of their examples. 42% of respondents (61 out of 143) had not had direct interaction with a PKO or SPM in an integrated setting for any of their examples. 36% (51 out of 143) reported positively that they had direct interaction with a PKO or SPM for all of their examples, and 22% (31 out of 143) indicated they had direct interaction for only some of the examples given.

The Task Team conducted 39 interviews with key informants, which consisted of 22 survey respondents, 10 other individuals familiar with the subject matter (researchers and humanitarian actors from UN

agencies and NGOs), and 7 HCs (see Chart 2 for dispersion of key informants).⁹ 56% of the key informants (22 out of 39) were survey respondents.

Chart 2: Interviews



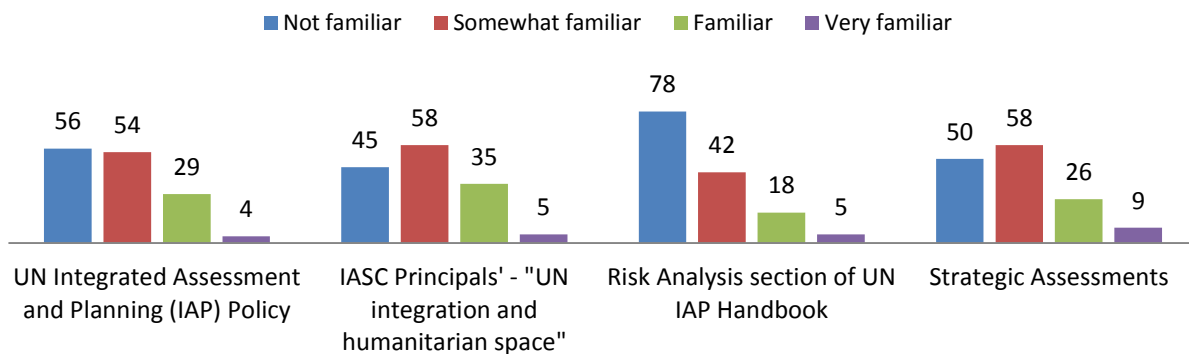
⁸ 'Other' positions included human rights officers, a program officer, a security/safety coordinator, and a desk officer.

⁹ Task Team members received the assistance of UNICEF and InterAction colleagues to conduct interviews with HCs. The Task Team had selected 33 survey respondents for follow-up interviews, based upon their knowledge, experience, locations of experience, and willingness to be interviewed. HCs for CAR, Sudan (Darfur), DRC, Mali, Israel/oPt, Somalia, and South Sudan were interviewed. Despite its attempts, the Task Team was not able to interview HCs for Afghanistan and Iraq.

4. Understanding of UN integration policy and guidance

In order to assess survey respondents' prior knowledge of UN integration arrangements, participants ranked their familiarity with certain policies and guidance related to integration on a scale from 'not familiar' to 'very familiar'. The survey recorded familiarity with the UN IAP Policy; the IASC Principals' paper "UN integration and humanitarian space: building a framework for flexibility"; the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook; and Strategic Assessments, which the UN utilises to determine integration arrangements. Overall, most survey respondents were not familiar with these policies and guidance (see Chart 3). With only 16% (23 out of 143) saying they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with it, the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook was the least known. The document most familiar to respondents was the IASC Principals' paper on "UN integration and humanitarian space", with 28% of survey respondents (40 out of 143) indicating that they were either 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the document. 24% of respondents (35 out of 143) reported that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with Strategic Assessments, compared to 23% (33 out of 143) for the UN IAP Policy.

Chart 3: Respondents' familiarity with UN integration guidance



Due to the wide range of experiences amongst survey participants, the Task Team analysed familiarity by organisation type, position location, and position within an organisation. Across the 67 UN staff who responded to the survey, Strategic Assessments were the most well-known, with 32% (22 out of 67) indicating that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with them. Again, the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook was least familiar to respondents, with 19% of UN staff (13 out of 67) indicating that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the section. 31% of UN staff (21 out of 67) indicated that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the IASC Principals' paper on "UN integration and humanitarian space", compared to 27% (18 out of 67) for the UN IAP Policy. Overall, the majority of UN staff who responded to the survey indicated little familiarity with any of the UN integration policies or products. These findings support the 2011 HPG/Stimson Center report, which found that beyond a basic familiarity with the concept of integration,

[T]here was often a limited understanding and awareness of the details of the policy and guidance on implementation. In general, awareness of the concept and policies was lower amongst UN staff in the field than amongst those at HQ, and those outside the UN system (including NGOs, UN Member States and donors) had, not surprisingly, a more limited understanding of the concept, its origins and related policies. Few DPKO, DPA, OCHA or UN agency staff (with the exception of those at HQ who were working on these issues directly) were

aware of the main policies related to integration, including the [Secretary-General] Decisions of 2008 and 2011 and their provisions on the protection of humanitarian space.¹⁰

Amongst NGO staff who responded to the survey, Risk Analysis continued to be the least known: 13% (8 out of 60 NGO staff) selected 'not familiar' or 'somewhat familiar'. 22% of NGO staff respondents (13 out of 60) stated that they were 'familiar' or 'somewhat familiar' with Strategic Assessments, compared to 20% (12 out of 60) for the IASC Principals' paper, and 18% (11 out of 60) for the UN IAP Policy. Only 6 survey respondents were employed solely by 'other humanitarian organisations' (see Chart 6 for their results in Appendix 2).

Amongst respondents who participated in an HCT for some or all of the examples given, the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook continued to be the least known, with only 28% (18 out of 64) indicating being 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the section. Familiarity with other policies and guidance was still poor: the IASC Principals' paper (40%, 26 out of 64), Strategic Assessments (39%, 25 out of 64), and the UN IAP Policy (38%, 24 out of 64).

For those survey respondents at HQ, the IASC Principals' paper was the most familiar, with 34% (14 out of 41) selecting 'familiar' or 'very familiar', compared to 24% (10 out of 41) for the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook, 32% (13 out of 41) for the UN IAP Policy, and 22% (9 out of 41) for Strategic Assessments.

Amongst regional office staff, the Risk Analysis was again the least known, with 11% of respondents (3 out of 27) choosing 'familiar' or 'very familiar'. 22% (6 out of 27) noted that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the UN IAP Policy, IASC Principals' paper, and Strategic Assessments.

At the field level, respondents were evenly familiar with the IASC Principals' paper and Strategic Assessments: 27% of respondents (20 out of 75) indicated that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with them. Only 13% (10 out of 75) were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook, compared to 19% for the UN IAP Policy (14 out of 75).

40% (57 respondents out of the total 143) were 'Senior Leadership'. These humanitarian actors were most familiar with Strategic Assessments, with 39% (22 out of 57) indicating 'familiar' or 'very familiar'. 32% (18 out of 57) responded that they were 'familiar' or 'very familiar' with the IASC Principals' paper, 21% (12 out of 57) with the UN IAP Policy, and 18% (10 out of 57) with the Risk Analysis section of the UN IAP Handbook (see Charts 7, 8, and 9 in Appendix 2 for analysis of familiarity amongst field coordinators, cluster coordination staff, and project management staff).

The lack of familiarity with UN integration policies and products adds to confusion on the implementation of integration arrangements. Furthermore, it likely leads to a focus on more visible forms of integration (e.g., the triple-hatted position of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, or DSRSG/RC/HC). Many respondents conflated integration with civil-military coordination or the 'one UN' policy, likely rooted in this lack of familiarity with guidance. During interviews, the Task Team noted the lack of familiarity with the UN IAP Policy at the field level, commenting that even when familiar with the issues related to integration,

¹⁰ Metcalfe, V., Giffen, A., Elhawary, S. (2011). UN Integration and Humanitarian Space: An Independent Study Commissioned by the UN Integration Steering Group. HPG/Stimson Center Commissioned Report. Retrieved from: <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/FINAL%20Integration%20humanitarian%20space%20study%20Dec11.pdf>

many could not reference specific policy frameworks.¹¹ Several interviewees commented that the UN IAP Policy was a helpful, flexible document that articulates the minimum requirements for accountability within the UN system and outlines the relationship between the UN mission and humanitarian actors, yet the policy remained largely unfamiliar to most actors. These observations are in line with a previous IASC paper, which found that there is “an apparent lack of familiarity with the ample room in existing UN integration policy to create arrangements conducive to principled humanitarian action and, simultaneously, a lack of adherence to other relevant IASC policies, for example, concerning the use of military assets, including armed escorts, only as a last resort”.¹²

At least one humanitarian actor commented that in Israel/occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) a significant OCHA presence allowed for the coherent dissemination of information about integration policies, leading to a better understanding of UN integration arrangements overall.¹³ Another good practice came from a humanitarian actor in DRC, who noted that rather than training staff on the UN IAP Policy alone, a more efficient practice was to promote effective operationalisation of the policy through other documents, such as civil-military guidelines and protection of civilians (PoC) strategies.¹⁴ These examples—having a pro-active OCHA role and incorporating the UN IAP Policy into other operational documents—could help in further disseminating integration policies and products at the field level.

5. Strategic Assessments and risk analyses

Strategic Assessments and their accompanying risk analyses—as outlined in the UN IAP Policy—are key mechanisms to ensure UN integration arrangements and processes safeguard humanitarian action. Consequently, the Task Team sought to examine to what extent humanitarian actors are engaged in the risk analysis process and, moreover, how well the UN IAP Policy ensures that humanitarian action is safeguarded from potential negative impact that integration arrangements could cause.

52% of respondents (74 out of 143) stated that there had been significant changes in a context that they were working in or in a UN PKO’s or SPM’s mandate—changes that could trigger a new Strategic Assessment according to the UN IAP Policy. 20% of these same respondents (15 out of the 74) indicated that the HC, UNCT, HCT, or broader humanitarian community had recommended that there should be another Strategic Assessment in light of these developments. This included for DRC, South Sudan, Haiti, Sudan (Darfur), and Guinea-Bissau. The remaining 80% of respondents (59 out of 74) indicated that a recommendation had not been made or that they were unaware of one. 23% of respondents (33 out of 143) said that a risk analysis was adequate for an integrated setting on which they had worked. The majority—64% (92 out of 143)—indicated that they did not know if a risk analysis was adequate.

The ‘Risk Analysis’ section in the UN IAP Handbook explicitly outlines the importance of the risk analysis and its use in determining appropriate integration arrangements. The ‘Humanitarian Considerations’ section of the handbook further outlines:

The analysis should engage the Humanitarian Coordinator, the humanitarian country team and the broader humanitarian community, and should help to identify any adverse consequences (or

¹¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

¹² IASC. (2014). Background Note on UN Integration. 86th IASC Working Group Meeting, 11-12 March 2014.

¹³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview. Feedback provided on the initial draft of the review by a UN humanitarian actor who had worked in Israel/oPt stated that the Deputy Special Coordinator (DSC)/RC/HC and RC support office are the primary disseminators of such information.

¹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

potential benefits) to the United Nations and NGO humanitarian coordination and response, including possible mitigation measures. The result of this analysis should be reflected in United Nations decision-making processes, including through corrective action where necessary.¹⁵

While the UN's IAP Policy establishes a number of measures to safeguard humanitarian action, these measures are not utilized to their full potential. The majority of survey respondents and key informants, including a number of HCs, admitted that there was no UN-led formal risk analysis as part of a Strategic Assessment. This is the case for at least South Sudan, DRC, Mali, Sudan (Darfur), and Israel/oPt.¹⁶

Previous observations expressed by a humanitarian actor on the process to determine integration arrangements provide a learning point reiterated through this review: "many humanitarian organisations are sceptical of the influence [that risk analysis] may have given that UN missions in Mali and Somalia were established with integrated structures in 2013 despite strong contextual arguments against doing so".¹⁷ Furthermore, humanitarian actors echoed another observation from the same humanitarian actor about the fog surrounding how integration arrangements are determined: "decisions about structure are being made. However, certainly to international NGOs, it is not clear who is making them, how or where they are being made".¹⁸

In part due to this lack of transparency, humanitarian actors see themselves as unable to change UN integration arrangements even when their negative impact on humanitarian action is known. Several survey respondents similarly indicated that decisions surrounding integration arrangements were made due to political considerations.¹⁹ The UN Security Council's decision²⁰ to override the Secretary-General's recommendation regarding UNSOM, which was consistent with the recommendation of humanitarian actors, indicates integration arrangements based upon political objectives.²¹ One respondent noted the need to balance the urgency of rapid PKO or SPM deployment against the importance of ensuring an adequate Strategic Assessment as the basis to determine appropriate operational arrangements, including with respect to integration.²²

The review also helps explore issues surrounding how humanitarian actors tackle risk analyses informally. One recorded perspective in the Central African Republic (CAR) emphasised that humanitarian actors must "deal with the absence of a dedicated forum that will look at challenges and issues of integration at the country level".²³ This observation is important in light of a previously recorded concern, also from CAR, wherein a humanitarian actor stated that "given the multiple priorities for humanitarians and peacekeepers, risk and benefit analysis around structural integration has not

¹⁵ UN, 2013, Integrated Assessment and.

¹⁶ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

¹⁷ Fanning, E. (2014). Safeguarding distinction in Central African Republic. Humanitarian Exchange Magazine. Retrieved from: <http://www.odihpn.org/humanitarian-exchange-magazine/issue-62/safeguarding-distinction-in-the-central-african-republic>

¹⁸ Fanning, 2014, Safeguarding distinction. Humanitarian actors echoed these views through the survey and interviews.

¹⁹ For instance, humanitarian actors working in and on Mali, survey.

²⁰ See para 21 of UN Security Council Resolution 2093 (S/RES/2093), available at [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2093\(2013\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2093(2013))

²¹ See paras 75 and 76 of the Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia from January 31, 2013, available at http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/69.

²² Researcher working on UN integration, interview.

²³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

been developed and championed fully by humanitarian actors in-country”.²⁴ These two gaps were tackled by humanitarian actors in CAR. A working group was established in June 2014 amongst humanitarian actors in order to analyse risks and mitigation measures pertaining to UN integration, and the working group produced a report that it shared with the HCT.²⁵ The development of such an analysis is a promising step. However, it is unclear to what extent the analysis was considered before the ERC designated the current triple-hatted HC in May 2015.

It appears that humanitarian actors have sought to raise integration related concerns primarily through HCT discussions. The Mali HCT communicated an assessment—prior to the establishment of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)—that noted concerns how integration arrangements with the PKO would harm humanitarian action.²⁶ Furthermore, the DRC HCT had repeatedly requested that the UN would conduct a formal risk analysis.²⁷ While in several countries HCT members felt the need to engage on these issues and see substantive changes, many humanitarian actors pointed out that questioning integration arrangements created tension and many feared that speaking out could have negative implications.²⁸

A humanitarian actor in Mali felt that the DSRSG/RC/HC and heads of UN agencies were not willing to discuss the potential risks of integration arrangements, while another humanitarian actor in Iraq observed that ‘integration’ was a sensitive issue.²⁹ In some cases, discussion on risks and integration arrangements took place only in the absence of a DSRSG/RC/HC, or humanitarian actors expressed the feeling that they could not discuss their concerns because of the DSRSG/RC/HC’s presence.³⁰ The DRC HCT’s discussion in December 2014 concerning the need to draft a letter to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) to call for an independent HC provide a glimpse into the sensitive, contested nature of such discussions. The discussion occurred in the absence of the DSRSG/RC/HC and ultimately resulted in no letter being sent. One perspective frames the HCT’s discussion on the need for an independent HC as precautionary—a desire to ensure that the future HC would be as strong in upholding humanitarian principles and advocating for humanitarian priorities even at the potential cost of strained relations with the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO).³¹ This view states that the letter was not sent following assurances that the future HC would be just as strong in her or his support for humanitarian interests.³² A different perspective frames the letter as an attempt to maximise the distance between humanitarian actors and MONUSCO, as well as ensure that the future HC would be able to devote the necessary time to humanitarian coordination.³³ This view states that the letter was not sent because the DSRSG/RC/HC said that he would not support the creation of such a position because it could be viewed as a critique of his performance.³⁴

Besides concerns about the role of DSRSG/RC/HCs, some examples demonstrate that humanitarian actors and PKOs or SPMs are not sufficiently exploring more creative methods to mitigate the negative

²⁴ Fanning, 2014, Safeguarding distinction.

²⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁶ Humanitarian actor working in Mali, survey. The assessment was sent to DPKO.

²⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

²⁸ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

²⁹ Humanitarian actors working in Mali and Iraq, interviews.

³⁰ Humanitarian actors working in DRC and Mali, for instance, interviews.

³¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³³ Humanitarian actors working in DRC, interviews.

³⁴ Humanitarian actors working in DRC, interviews.

impact of integration arrangements. On several occasions, proposed mitigation measures were rejected or not taken on board (e.g., in DRC painting UN humanitarian vehicles a colour that is different from MONUSCO).³⁵

The above observations demonstrate a need to promote more openness in discussing the impact of integration arrangements and the steps that are necessary to safeguard humanitarian action. First, there must be an understanding that the discussions are not personal critiques of HCs, PKOs, SPMs, or Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs); rather, they are meant to ensure a common understanding of integration related issues and measures necessary to ensure the distinct, independent character of humanitarian action. The humanitarian community's ability to strengthen and institutionalise substantive discussions at a country-level requires a 'safe space' for these discussions. Second, discussions regarding integration related risks should not be confined to periods of Strategic Assessments; on an ongoing basis, they should inform adjustments and plans that all relevant actors take, including humanitarian actors, PKOs, and SPMs. Third, ensuring adequate engagement of NGOs in these processes requires a separate process or venue in addition to the HCT, for instance through in-country NGO consortia or representation fora.³⁶ Fourth, as will be discussed further below, there should be an informal channel for HCTs to raise integration related concerns to the IASC Principals.³⁷

Additional concerns involve the nature of discussion and quality of risk analyses within Strategic Assessments. While discussion on the triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC is critical, discussion should be based on evidence and go beyond "principled negativity".³⁸ This is a shortcoming that has hindered critical, balanced examination of integration arrangements in some settings.

The review also recorded the need for the UN to examine the practical implications of triple-hatted HCs. For instance, assigning additional duties or roles to HCs reduces an HC's ability to focus on humanitarian coordination.³⁹ Other reviews have recorded similar concerns.⁴⁰ New lessons and experiences point to the need also to place more focus on outcomes when examining integration arrangements. For instance, as this review details below, there is not enough attention to how humanitarian actors and staff from PKOs or SPMs can collaborate to support humanitarian action. Some felt that by being integrated within a PKO or SPM, there is 'influence' which empowers an HC to leverage mission assets or weight for humanitarian action. Some, including HCs, supported this view by suggesting that only a DSRSG/RC/HC or a RC/HC would be able to secure more support from a PKO or SPM or influence a host government; advocate to a host government on humanitarian matters; or influence a PKO's or SPM's priorities.⁴¹

³⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview. Feedback provided on the initial draft of the review by a UN humanitarian actor working in the DRC stated that the possibility of painting UN humanitarian vehicles a different colour was rejected by individual UN humanitarian agencies due to the global repercussions of such a change.

³⁶ IASC. (2013). UN integration and humanitarian space: building a framework for flexibility. Retrieved from:

<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/downloadaddoc.aspx?docID=6885&type=pdf>

³⁷ See the sub-section "Mali" within "Contact with parties to conflict".

³⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

³⁹ Researcher and a humanitarian actor, interviews. This point was also detailed in the letter that the DRC HCT wished to send to the ERC regarding the need for an independent HC.

⁴⁰ NGOs in CAR expressed similar views: "NGOs and donors felt strongly that the HC and RC functions should continue to be separated in the future in order for the function to maintain a maximum focus on humanitarian action." (IASC. (2014, 23 March). Internal Report: Response to the Crisis in the Central African Republic (Operational Peer Review), p. 14.)

⁴¹ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

The range of concerns cited in this section indicates that the practice of establishing integration arrangements without taking into account the risks to humanitarian action is circumventing safeguards which the UN IAP Policy establishes.

6. HCT engagement on UN integration

Survey participants were asked whether they were aware of an HCT having dedicated discussions on UN integration to assess opportunities or formulate coordinated positions. 62% of respondents (88 out of 143) indicated that they did not know whether the HCT had dedicated discussions on UN integration. 22% of respondents (32 out of 143) stated that they were privy to HCT discussions on UN integration, and 16% (23 out of 143) indicated that dedicated discussions had not occurred. 69% of respondents who were aware of HCT discussions (22 out of 32) had participated in an HCT.

The overarching trend that emerged from the survey and interviews is that few HCTs have consistent discussions on UN integration. A second observation is that the functioning of HCTs may prohibit examination of integration related issues. Humanitarian actors working in Afghanistan and the DRC mentioned that issues are difficult to address in the HCT because the agenda for HCT meetings is circulated only days ahead of meetings.⁴² According to some humanitarian actors, the setting of the HCT agenda in DRC rests primarily with UN agencies, and it primarily focuses on operational issues, to the detriment of wider policy issues.⁴³ Some in DRC disagree, however, stating that HCT agendas are shared well in advance, and that strategic and policy matters are discussed.⁴⁴ Issues are able to be raised in the ‘any other business’ section of the Afghanistan HCT agenda, but doing so is not productive.⁴⁵ Another humanitarian actor working in Afghanistan noted that mechanics around influencing the HCT agenda are problematic, but an issue can be added onto a future agenda if there is enough will.⁴⁶ These views demonstrate that while there may be obstacles, such as how HCT agendas are developed, low will or motivation amongst humanitarian actors to tackle integration issues is also a factor.

Candid discussions within HCTs on UN integration have occurred in spite of challenges. For example, the HCT in CAR advocated early for the creation of an HC position that would be distinct from the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA).⁴⁷

In DRC, discussions took place around the change in the mandate of MONUSCO and the formation of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). However, conversations specifically on integration have been challenging (see the section ‘Strategic Assessments and risk analyses’ above).⁴⁸ Despite continual erosion of security and the dissolution of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, there was no discussion of integration arrangements as UNAMA’s mandate underwent changes in 2015.⁴⁹ Humanitarian actors also noted that discussions on integration took place in Somalia during 2013—prior to the establishment of current integration arrangements.⁵⁰ Since that time,

⁴² Humanitarian actors working for NGOs in Afghanistan and the DRC, interviews.

⁴³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

⁴⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

⁴⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, survey.

⁴⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁵⁰ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and an NGO in Somalia, interviews.

discussions have ceased.⁵¹ One person provided a slightly different view, stating that the HCT in Somalia had discussed issues related to integration, but other than OCHA taking up the issue there has not been much engagement on the topic.⁵²

Equally of note, the occurrence of discussions within an HCT does not guarantee results. In the case of Mali, discussions on UN integration within the HCT have seemed to be “just for show” because responsible actors have not followed up on concerns or recommendations that humanitarian actors voiced regarding integration arrangements.⁵³ The lack of progress in Mali can lead to fissures amongst humanitarian actors, with NGOs opining that the DSRSG/RC/HC and UN heads of humanitarian agencies do not want to take action.⁵⁴

In South Sudan, UN integration has been a “recurrent focus” of HCT discussions since December 2013.⁵⁵ These discussions include how the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and the HCT can collaborate; UNMISS’ PoC strategy; the PoC sites; and coordination on early warning, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) reporting, and access issues (logistics, the use of armed escorts, and negotiations).⁵⁶ As is the case for Mali, the occurrence of discussions is not a desired outcome, rather a means to achieve one.

HCTs and HCs should address the obstacles that humanitarian actors face in shaping HCT agendas. On a broader level, however, the absence of UN integration discussions from HCT agendas suggests that HCTs need to evaluate if they are sufficiently examining strategic issues and making critical decisions. For example, one humanitarian actor noted that both the ‘core’ HCT and the ‘expanded’ HCT in Afghanistan are “more information sharing bodies rather than decision making ones”.⁵⁷

7. Politicisation of humanitarian action

The review examined the impact that UN integration has had on the prioritisation of humanitarian activities. As detailed below, the impact demonstrates a worrisome picture of potential politicisation of humanitarian action in some contexts. Humanitarian actors expressed a range of concerns, including the influence that political priorities have had through triple-hatted HCs; attempts by governments, PKOs, and SPMs to determine or prioritise areas for humanitarian assistance; and political considerations that have developed around the protection of civilians and IDPs. Overall, 38% of survey respondents (54 out of 143) believed that integration arrangements have impacted the prioritisation of humanitarian activities, positively or negatively. There were, however, clear differences of opinion between HCT and non-HCT members. 56% of HCT members—who are arguably more likely to be aware of such an impact—believe that integration has impacted the prioritisation of humanitarian activities. For respondents with solely UN experience, 40% (27 out of 67) believed that integration impacted the prioritisation of humanitarian activities. Amongst NGOs, 33% of respondents (20 out of 60) believed that integration had an impact on prioritisation, compared to 50% of respondents who worked for ‘other humanitarian organisations’ (3 out of 6). 46% of respondents who were in senior leadership roles (26 out of 57) believed integration arrangements had impacted prioritisation.

⁵¹ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and an NGO in Somalia, interviews.

⁵² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁵³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, survey.

⁵⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, interview.

⁵⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁵⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁵⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

A recurring issue documented during the review is triple-hatting of HCs. A 2014 Oxfam policy note described triple-hatting as “a visible sign of integration that has raised concern amongst humanitarian agencies because of its significant implications for the independence of decision-making on humanitarian priorities”.⁵⁸ The Norwegian Refugee Council reported that NGO representatives “argue that it is impossible for the same individuals or structure to protect humanitarian space while also retaining responsibilities related to promotion of the overall political agenda of a UN mission”, thereby maintaining a contradiction in roles.⁵⁹ This review provides humanitarian actors’ examples of perceived conflicts that have resulted from triple-hatted HC positions.

Those who believed that integration did impact the prioritisation of humanitarian activities felt that HCs had difficulties separating themselves from the interests of their PKO or SPM responsibilities. Humanitarian actors from South Sudan, DRC, Mali, and Somalia mentioned how HCs in these contexts often have prioritised political or military interests above humanitarian interests and have used humanitarian assistance to further political or military objectives.⁶⁰ This perception reinforces previously voiced concerns that UN integration arrangements risk politicising humanitarian action.⁶¹ In CAR, the independence secured by the standalone SHC position was cited as an example of how humanitarian action can be safeguarded from political pressure, as well as how humanitarian interests were being defended. For instance, humanitarian actors needed to support the rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the face of governmental pressure by insisting that IDP returns occur only after adequate preparations and verification that the returns are in line with IDPs’ desires.⁶² The SHC displayed resolve in support of these efforts to safeguard IDPs due to strong opinions amongst humanitarian actors.⁶³

Another concern raised through the review was the extent to which PKOs or SPMs have been able to politicise aid. For example, without prior consultation with the HCT in South Sudan, UNMISS issued public reports about humanitarian needs in Unity State.⁶⁴ These reports were based on unverified figures that were provided by local authorities in government-controlled areas—specifically areas where the government was trying to gain support and legitimacy from the local population.⁶⁵ Additionally in Unity State, UNMISS pressured WFP through another public report to respond to a purported food security situation in Bentiu—again without consulting with the HCT or the food security cluster.⁶⁶ Humanitarian actors also mentioned UNMISS pressure for humanitarian actors to provide assistance outside of certain PoC sites—not according to need and in the face of reigning insecurity.⁶⁷ Humanitarian actors are being pressured to provide assistance outside of the Bentiu PoC site, for

⁵⁸ Oxfam. (2014, August). Oxfam Humanitarian Policy Note: UN integrated Missions and Humanitarian Action.

Retrieved from:

https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/story/oi_hum_policy_integrated_missions_august2014.pdf

⁵⁹ Glad, M. (2012). *A Partnership at Risk? The UN-NGO Relationship in Light of UN Integration*. Norwegian Refugee Council, 6. Retrieved from http://www.nrc.no/arch/img.aspx?file_id=9175273&ext=.pdf

⁶⁰ Humanitarian actors working in Somalia, DRC, Mali, and South Sudan, interviews.

⁶¹ See, for instance, Glad, 5.

⁶² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, interview.

⁶³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, interview.

⁶⁴ Humanitarian actor working in South Sudan, interview. See the “South Sudan” sub-section of “Contact with parties to conflict” below for further examples of UNMISS’ attempts to influence humanitarian action.

⁶⁵ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews.

⁶⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁶⁷ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews.

instance, to bolster the South Sudanese government’s legitimacy in the area and to support UNMISS’s desire to close the Bentiu PoC site.⁶⁸ Humanitarian actors cited UNMISS’ absence from opposition-held areas and strong relationship with the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) as adding to their concerns about UNMISS’ partisan stance and desire to influence the delivery of aid.⁶⁹

Somalia was another example of politicisation raised during the review—an issue closely tied to stabilisation efforts. AMISOM, donors, and the Somali government have said that humanitarian actors must provide assistance in areas that have been recently brought under the control of the Somali government because these areas have unmet humanitarian needs.⁷⁰ Humanitarian actors push back on this pressure, however, noting the need for them to first assess needs and weigh the risks.⁷¹ As expounded upon below in the section titled ‘Stabilisation’, there is a push to align humanitarian assistance with military operations.⁷²

7.A. Funding mechanisms

There was concern that DSRSG/RC/HCs’ leadership in determining priorities within Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) allowed the potential for political objectives to influence humanitarian action. Poor knowledge surrounding pooled funds (e.g., regarding the use of steering groups and advisory boards) likely add to these concerns.

A factor of consideration under the Somalia Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) was if the area in consideration had been recently brought under the control of the Somali government.⁷³ If needs existed in these areas, using the CHF was appropriate, but using the CHF to ‘win hearts and minds’ harmed principled humanitarian action according to humanitarian actors.⁷⁴ There was a perception that the Somalia DSRSG/RC/HC made support to these areas a humanitarian priority, even if the needs might not be as great as in other areas.⁷⁵ For instance, malnutrition rates are alarming in Baidoa, yet funding is not being directed there because it has not recently been brought under the control of the government.⁷⁶ In integrated settings where there was no perception that the DSRSG/RC/HC influenced humanitarian priorities through pooled funds, such as Afghanistan, there were still concerns about the HC’s political interests potentially having an influence (e.g., one humanitarian actor said there was no firewall to prevent such influence).⁷⁷

Humanitarian actors should utilise pooled funds strategically and to complement other funding channels. Through the HC’s leadership, pooled funds can help ensure a collaborative, comprehensive response. Likewise, multiple other humanitarian actors (e.g., cluster lead agencies) play a role in ensuring the good functioning of pooled funds.

⁶⁸ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews.

⁶⁹ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

⁷⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁷¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁷² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁷³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁷⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁷⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, interview.

⁷⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somali, interview.

⁷⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

7.B. Stabilisation

Support for stabilisation activities in Somalia, DRC, and Mali is problematic for many humanitarian actors since these activities attempt to link the political or military strategy of the UN to humanitarian action and direct humanitarian assistance based upon location rather than needs.⁷⁸ In some instances, there has been HCT action to address attempts to incorporate humanitarian action into stabilisation strategies (e.g., in the DRC, where the DSRSG/RC/HC and HCT took the position that humanitarian action would continue to be needs-based, and look to target these needs wherever they may exist).⁷⁹ Overwhelmingly, however, the information that humanitarian actors provided focused on the ‘challenges’ and not methods to mitigate negative effects—a glaring gap.

Somalia was the most often-cited example of stabilisation influencing humanitarian priorities. One person emphasised that stabilisation is the highest priority for AMISOM and UNSOM.⁸⁰ Consequently, political imperatives and the need to show progress in the fight against al-Shabaab appear to influence the prioritisation of humanitarian assistance significantly.⁸¹ Once an area has been recovered from al-Shabaab there is pressure from the government, AMISOM, UNSOM, and donors to align military and humanitarian objectives and provide humanitarian assistance in these areas as soon as possible.⁸² It is important to note that AMISOM also influences humanitarian action because it provides armed escorts or air assets only when “interests align” (i.e., when humanitarian actors seek to visit areas that have been newly recovered from al-Shabaab).⁸³ This demonstrates a need for improved dialogue between humanitarian actors and AMISOM to ensure that AMISOM support is provided based upon humanitarian priorities, rather than AMISOM’s priorities. Previous research has noted how donor governments’ attempts to use humanitarian assistance in support of stabilisation initiatives have also been detrimental to humanitarian action in Somalia.⁸⁴

There is a mix of views amongst humanitarian actors regarding the provision of humanitarian assistance in areas targeted for stabilisation, demonstrating sensitivities about the ability of humanitarian actors to maintain a distinct humanitarian character under such difficult circumstances. One humanitarian actor stated that the DSRSG/RC/HC also requests that humanitarian actors provide assistance in these newly recovered areas without mentioning the factor of need.⁸⁵ Conversely, another person noted that the HC does not pressure humanitarian actors to provide assistance in these areas.⁸⁶ Pressure from so many actors, potentially including the DSRSG/RC/HC, bolsters the notion that humanitarian assistance is thus intended to win hearts and minds and to demonstrate the government’s renewed control.⁸⁷ A further factor affecting prioritisation of humanitarian activities is the desire of some humanitarian actors to demonstrate that they are able to deliver assistance in previously inaccessible areas.⁸⁸

⁷⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN, interview.

⁷⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁸⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁸¹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, survey.

⁸² Humanitarian actor working with the UN in Somalia, interview.

⁸³ Humanitarian actor working in Somalia, interview.

⁸⁴ Jackson, A. and Aynte, A. (2013, December). Talking to the other side: Humanitarian negotiations with Al-Shabaab in Somalia. ODI/HPG. HPG Working Paper. Retrieved from: <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8744.pdf>

⁸⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, interview.

⁸⁶ Humanitarian actor working in Somalia, interview.

⁸⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an ‘other humanitarian organisation’ in Somalia, survey.

⁸⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

Another issue that emerged during the review was the view that some ISFs (e.g., for Somalia and DRC) reflect stabilisation and state-building strategies and fail to include independent humanitarian priorities.⁸⁹ Previous research on Afghanistan suggests that omission of humanitarian perspectives can hamper humanitarian action: “because the Strategic Framework [in Afghanistan] contained a clear set of principles and objectives to which all segments of the United Nations and the vast majority of the NGOs had subscribed, the humanitarian voice had a better chance of being heard”.⁹⁰ However, the suggestion that ISFs should include humanitarian priorities is problematic given that priorities within ISFs are intended to support ‘peace consolidation’. Humanitarian priorities should be included in ISFs only when they overlap with peace consolidation. The 2011 HPG/Stimson Center report notes that humanitarian actors in Afghanistan found inclusion of humanitarian priorities in ISFs problematic:

In Afghanistan, humanitarian perspectives were included in the context analysis, but humanitarian actors argued against including a specific humanitarian objective because they felt that the ISF was focused on activities aimed towards peace consolidation, and that it was important therefore to make a clear distinction between the ISF and the UN’s humanitarian aims; the document points readers to the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) as the principal humanitarian strategy.⁹¹

Concerns also exist regarding the close tie between the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States and the ISF.⁹² The Somalia DSRSG/RC/HC has been forceful in encouraging humanitarian actors to take New Deal funding, which is worrisome due to the political nature of the initiative.⁹³ The HC’s shifting between political and humanitarian priorities, as seen in the case of the New Deal, has caused a great deal of confusion amongst humanitarian actors.⁹⁴ The perception that the DSRSG/RC/HC is unable to compartmentalise his political interests breeds mistrust amongst humanitarian actors.

In addition, there are concerns that the resilience agenda in Somalia has also been subsumed by the stabilisation and state-building agendas. There is a perception that the Somalia DSRSG/RC/HC is pushing to place resilience activities under the New Deal.⁹⁵ Such a push could compromise the humanitarian components of a resilience response, including attention that would normally be paid to social safety nets.⁹⁶ As of 2012, resilience activities in Somalia were much more focused on building the resilience of communities.⁹⁷ Today, however, the focus is on bolstering the government’s authority by directing assistance to local, district, regional, and national government officials.⁹⁸ This approach is taking place in newly recovered areas, as well as areas where local authorities are not even present.⁹⁹ These abovementioned concerns exist despite some contradictions amongst the humanitarian community, for instance, calls for greater coordination with governments on resilience efforts. Humanitarian actors

⁸⁹ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in Somalia and DRC, interviews.

⁹⁰ Donini, A. (2011). Between a rock and a hard place: integration or independence of humanitarian action? *International Review of the Red Cross*, 93 (881), 141-157. Retrieved from:

<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/review/2011/irrc-881-donini.pdf>

⁹¹ Metcalfe, et al.

⁹² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁹³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁹⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁹⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Somalia, interview.

⁹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, interview.

⁹⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, interview.

⁹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, interview.

need to consider what is the appropriate level of engagement with a party to conflict, including in support of resilience, if that engagement could be viewed as bolstering the party's position or political goals.

Humanitarian actors in Mali expressed concerns about how stabilisation is affecting humanitarian action. For instance, UN humanitarian agencies have not been fully able to deploy to northern Mali since the formulation of MINUSMA because they are seen as actors within MINUSMA's stabilisation plan.¹⁰⁰

There were also notable concerns about how stabilisation is affecting humanitarian action in DRC. MONUSCO's 'Islands of Stability' concept and International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (I4S) directly challenge principled humanitarian action because they are dependent upon humanitarian actors entering an area to provide assistance immediately after MONUSCO has cleared the area of a non-state armed actor.¹⁰¹ The inclusion of IDP returns as an area of focus within the I4S is also troublesome.¹⁰² The Islands of Stability concept and I4S mirror the 'clear, shape, hold, build' strategy that the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) pursued in Afghanistan to the detriment of humanitarian action.¹⁰³ MONUSCO also has pressured humanitarian actors to provide assistance in its Islands of Stability.¹⁰⁴ Humanitarian actors' concerns about MONUSCO's influence are amplified because humanitarian agencies and organisations (e.g., WFP, IOM, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN-Habitat, and NGOs) are implementing projects that are funded by MONUSCO outside of the humanitarian response plan (HRP) as part of its peacebuilding strategy.¹⁰⁵ Even with such pressure, the decision whether or not to provide assistance in support of the stabilisation objectives lies with humanitarian actors. The issue of implementing projects funded by MONUSCO is outside of the UN IAP Policy's scope and points to conflicts or dilemmas that can occur when organisations have multiple mandates (e.g., humanitarian and peacebuilding). Some of these concerns echo those recorded by the IASC Emergency Directors Group (EDG), which noted that the humanitarian response in DRC was being defined by political and military objectives rather than by where the most acute needs were present.¹⁰⁶ Conflating humanitarian assistance with MONUSCO's military objectives threatens the impartiality, neutrality, and independence of humanitarian action.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, it has caused a great deal of confusion within MONUSCO regarding the differences between humanitarian action and efforts to 'win hearts and

¹⁰⁰ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, survey.

¹⁰¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview. For further information on MONUSCO's Islands of Stability concept, see Oxfam's blog "More harm than good? UN's Islands of Stability in DRC", available at <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2014/05/islands-of-stability-in-drc>.

¹⁰² See MONUSCO's website for the I4S objectives:

<http://www.monusco.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=10831&language=en-US>

¹⁰³ See Donini, 2011, for previous research on principled humanitarian action in Afghanistan.

¹⁰⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁰⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁰⁶ IASC, 2014, Democratic Republic of, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

minds'.¹⁰⁸ Similar to Somalia, humanitarian actors are concerned that DRC's ISF is a stabilisation strategy.¹⁰⁹

7.C. Quick Impact Projects

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) that are implemented by PKOs or SPMs in a variety of contexts emerged as an issue of concern for humanitarian actors, particularly in CAR, DRC, Mali, and Somalia. For example, even though the practice contravenes agreed civil-military guidelines in Somalia, civil-military coordination officers with AMISOM contact NGOs directly to solicit their interest in QIPs.¹¹⁰ In addition, humanitarian actors are concerned that they are not adequately able to weigh in on QIPs.¹¹¹ Despite the concerns surrounding QIPs in Somalia, humanitarian actors noted that there have consistently been organisations which are willing to implement them.¹¹²

Although coordination between HCTs and PKOs or SPMs on QIPs is occurring, it is widely seen as being inadequate.¹¹³ Some humanitarian actors are taking a pro-active role to mitigate concerns that they may have with QIPs, for instance, in DRC.¹¹⁴ The provincial HCT in Orientale (Comité Provincial Inter-Agences, or CPIA) asked an NGO in approximately May 2015 to cease its work on a MONUSCO QIP because of shrinking humanitarian access and concerns about perception.¹¹⁵ In CAR, MINUSCA has included QIPs in its plans, and there are concerns about the type of activities that it plans to support.¹¹⁶ For example, MINUSCA staff recently expressed an interest in providing medical assistance to a specific IDP camp.¹¹⁷ MINUSCA and humanitarian actors consequently set up a coordination mechanism for QIPs that facilitated joint review and discussion.¹¹⁸ Working together in Mali, however, humanitarian actors and MINUSMA have addressed this gap: now all QIPs are submitted through relevant clusters.¹¹⁹ This practice is in line with the intent of the DPKO/Department of Field Support QIP Policy, which states that "[c]lose coordination with other UN bodies engaged in assistance activities is required through the RC/HC or DSRSG/RC/HC to ensure that approved projects do not duplicate or undermine the humanitarian or developmental activities of other actors".¹²⁰ Despite the existence of policy and guidance on QIPs, additional complications arise because PKO troop contingents (e.g., for MONUSCO

¹⁰⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁰⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview. The UN IAP Policy states that ISFs should include an "articulation of all programmatic, functions and/or operational areas requiring an integrated approach". (UN, 2013, Integrated Assessment and.)

¹¹⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview. See Somalia Country Specific Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination Guidelines for Humanitarian Actors Engagement with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), p. 13, <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Somalia/051214%20-%20Somalia-specific%20civil%20guidelines.pdf>, for guidance on QIPs.

¹¹¹ Some QIPs that humanitarian actors in Somalia supported were not approved, while some that they disapproved of were carried out. Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹¹² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹¹³ Humanitarian actors working in CAR, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Iraq, Somalia, and Sudan, survey and interviews.

¹¹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO, DRC, interview.

¹¹⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹¹⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

¹¹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

¹¹⁸ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹¹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Mali, interview.

¹²⁰ UN DPKO/DFS. (2013, January 21). Policy: Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). Retrieved from: https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/DPKO_DFS_revised_QIPs_2013.pdf

and MINUSCA) have funding from their respective countries to undertake activities that are aimed at ‘winning hearts and minds’ outside of PKO QIP approval channels.¹²¹

7.D. Protection of civilians and IDPs

Another key concern that emerged during the review was the impact of integration on protection of civilians, with CAR and South Sudan being the most often cited examples. Humanitarian actors raised the relocation of vulnerable civilians during April 2014 from Bangui to northern CAR as one example. Humanitarian actors supported relocating 1,300 minority IDPs who had sought refuge in the PK-12 area of Bangui because they were subject to attacks and mounting violent threats from anti-Balaka armed elements.¹²² However, political actors were wary about the relocation going forward due to potential implications: further changes in the sectarian make-up (many minorities had already fled Bangui), the risk of fracturing the country, and potential harm to the legitimacy of national elections.¹²³ Humanitarian actors were troubled that these considerations—albeit amongst other complex considerations—could trump humanitarian interests and endanger the IDPs. Through the SHC, humanitarian actors were able to advocate independently and successfully for the need to relocate the groups despite serious political pressure to the contrary.¹²⁴

Several humanitarian actors raised politicisation of IDP issues, as well as the use of IDP returns as a proxy indicator for political progress. In CAR, there was disagreement on the government’s desires regarding IDP relocations. One view was that the government has been pushing the UN to support IDP returns as a way to demonstrate that sufficient progress had been made on the political and security sides to enable IDPs to return.¹²⁵ Another noted that the government and humanitarian actors shared concerns regarding IDP conditions and the need for eventual returns (e.g., for IDPs located next to the Bangui airport, a location that was unsafe).¹²⁶ The government was focused on relocating IDPs to another camp nearby, according to this view, which detracted from efforts to support returns.¹²⁷ Both views note that the SHC consulted with the humanitarian community so that she could ensure IDPs’ desires and rights were the central consideration.¹²⁸ Following these consultations, the SHC advocated to the government to focus its efforts on IDP returns and create the conditions for such returns, rather than focus on relocation to another camp.¹²⁹

There is an overwhelming concern about the impact of having a triple-hatted HC in South Sudan on the protection of IDPs who are seeking shelter in PoC sites. The South Sudanese government is pressuring both the SRSG and the DSRSG/RC/HC to move IDPs out of the PoC sites.¹³⁰ While UNMISS states that IDP returns should be voluntary, humanitarian actors perceive that UNMISS has been pushing for IDP returns so that it can close PoC sites.¹³¹ Humanitarian actors felt returns were not voluntary due to notable insecurity and the limited ability to provide assistance in the areas that were selected for

¹²¹ Humanitarian actors working for the UN, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹²² Researcher working on CAR, interview.

¹²³ Researcher working on CAR, interview.

¹²⁴ Researcher working on CAR, interview.

¹²⁵ Humanitarian working for an NGO, interview.

¹²⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹²⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹²⁸ Humanitarian actors working for an NGO and the UN, interview and feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹²⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹³⁰ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, survey and interviews.

¹³¹ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews.

returns, as well as poor awareness amongst IDPs on the conditions to which they would be returning.¹³² Humanitarian actors view the DSRSG/RC/HC as lacking independence from UNMISS priorities at times, including on the matter of PoC sites.¹³³ Humanitarian actors expressed, for instance, that the DSRSG/RC/HC is not consistently advocating for humanitarian interests regarding the PoC sites.¹³⁴ A key informant reported that UN humanitarian agencies are afraid to voice opposition towards the SRSR's firm intention to close the PoC sites.¹³⁵ This fear stems from pressure that the SRSR has at times placed on UN humanitarian agencies in the past.¹³⁶ UNMISS is also making decisions about who is allowed to seek refuge in the PoC sites and what assistance humanitarian actors can provide.¹³⁷ Humanitarian actors view these decisions as being based on political and military considerations rather than the principle of need.¹³⁸ In this politicised context, where independent humanitarian action is challenged, humanitarian actors feel that they are unable to defend IDPs' rights.¹³⁹

8. Humanitarian access

46% of survey respondents (66 out of 143) said 'Yes', they do know of arrangements made between humanitarian actors and a UN PKO or SPM to support humanitarian access, including civil-military coordination, logistical support, mapping, and security arrangements. Senior leaders, with 48% of positive responses (32 out of the 66), were the largest segment of respondents to state that they are aware of these arrangements. 56% (37 out of the 66) of survey respondents who are aware of such arrangements have HCT experience, while 44% (29 out of the 66) do not. When sorted by organisation type—NGO, UN agency, and 'other humanitarian organisations'—there are minor differences between respondents' answers (see Chart 10 in Appendix 2).

Besides the above data on recorded survey responses, the Task Team examined details provided through the survey and interviews to understand 1) arrangements that have been made to improve humanitarian access (see Chart 4 below) and 2) potential common concerns that humanitarian actors expressed regarding their ability to improve humanitarian access with the assistance of PKOs or SPMs (see Chart 5 below).

Below is a detailed examination of humanitarian actors' views on the following matters:

- Coordination on security;
- Civil-military coordination meetings;
- Civil-military coordination guidelines;
- Access coordination meetings;
- Peacekeeping operations to further humanitarian access; and

¹³² Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews. For instance, many IDPs believed that there would be an UNMISS base that they could seek refuge in, or that they would be relocating to another IDP camp. The areas that UNMISS had suggested for returns included Pagak, Akobo, and Juba.

¹³³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

¹³⁴ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, interviews.

¹³⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in South Sudan, interview.

¹³⁶ Humanitarian actor working for UN in South Sudan, survey.

¹³⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in South Sudan, interview.

¹³⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in South Sudan, interview.

¹³⁹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in South Sudan, interview.

- Other support from PKOs and SPMs

Chart 4: Arrangements with UN PK or special political missions to support humanitarian access

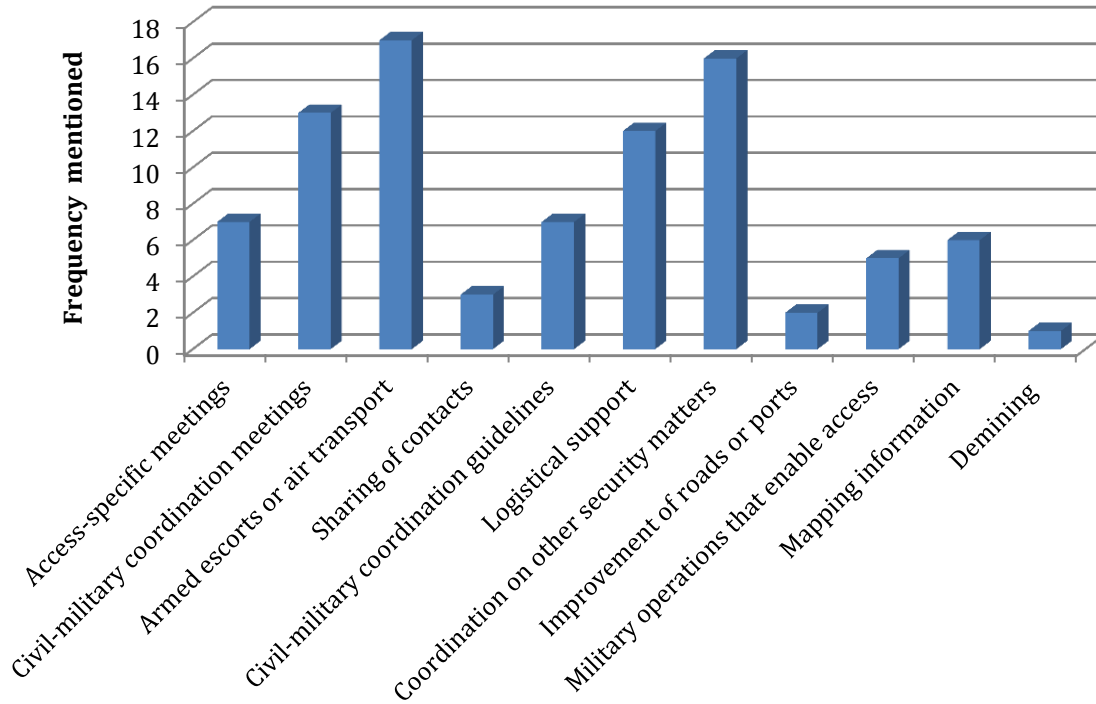
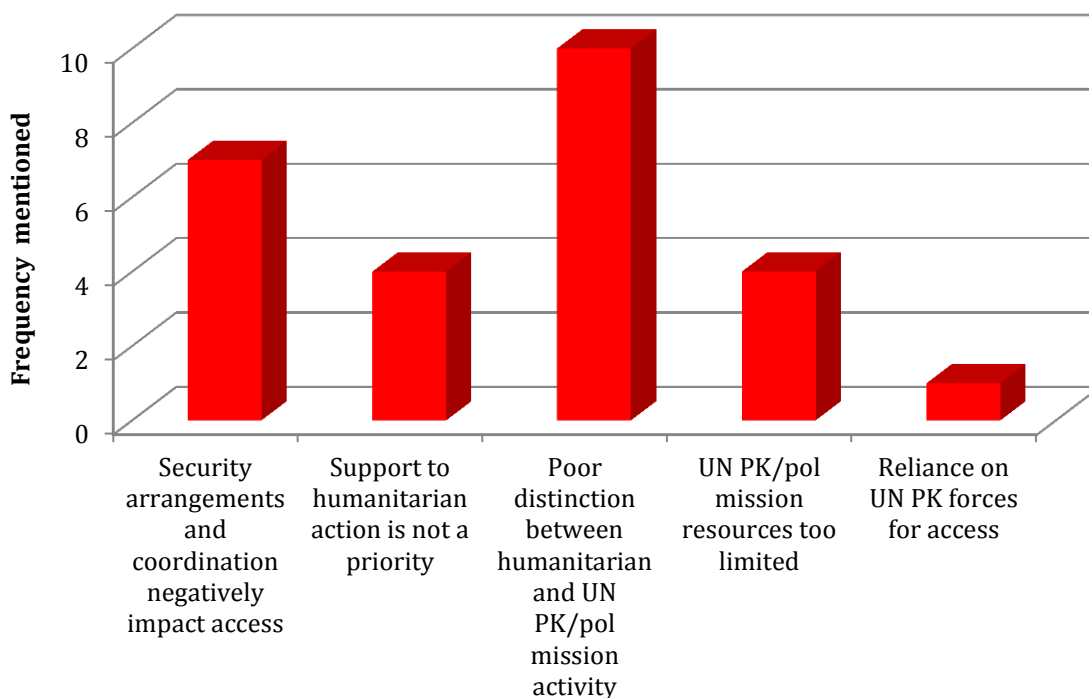


Chart 5: Concerns regarding humanitarian access



8.A. Coordination on security

The most commonly mentioned matter is the use of UN PKOs' or SPMs' assets (e.g., armed escorts and air transport) to further access, followed closely by coordination with a UN PKO or SPM on other security matters (e.g., the integrated area security management forum chaired by MONUSCO and facilitated by a UN Agency). Existing research on the use of UN PKOs' or SPMs' assets reinforce the views that the Task Team collected from humanitarian actors during the review. This includes the UN's focus on staff security, a dependence on PKOs' or SPMs' assets for access to people in need, and concerns about the resultant damage of this dependence.¹⁴⁰

There were notable concerns regarding the lack of distinction between humanitarian actors and PKOs or SPMs in DRC, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and CAR. Distinction is a concern due to humanitarian actors' use of armed escorts and air assets, as well as misperceptions by others (e.g., non-state armed actors) that humanitarian actors are supportive of a PKO's or SPM's political or military objectives. Furthermore, humanitarian actors worry about how these two factors affect their ability to reach people in need. Humanitarian actors' perspectives regarding the lack of distinction in Somalia, for example, show that the tie between distinction and security is convoluted.

¹⁴⁰ See, for instance, Ferris, Elizabeth. Ten Years after Humanitarian Reform: How Have IDPs Fared? Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement. Retrieved from: <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Papers/2014/12/29%20idp%20humanitarian%20reform%20reports/Brookings%20Introduction%20to%20final%20report%20IDP%20Study%20December%202014.pdf>

A humanitarian actor stated that al-Shabaab will target any UN organisation based upon how “soft” a target al-Shabaab perceives the actor to be, regardless of its mandate.¹⁴¹ Another felt that Somalis make no distinction between agencies involved in humanitarian action and those supporting the political process because humanitarian actors are seen as too close to the UN.¹⁴² He also stated that Somalis view NGOs as intelligence collectors for military operations.¹⁴³ He reinforced this notion by highlighting that Somalis working for NGOs received at least two threats from al-Shabaab in the last year and he had never seen so many incidents targeting humanitarian actors.¹⁴⁴ He concluded that in light of these observations there is a need for better messaging on humanitarian principles and priorities.¹⁴⁵ A different person expressed frustration about ‘militarisation’ of the humanitarian response in Somalia and the proximity of humanitarian organisations to UNSOM because of UNSOM’s partisan role in the Somalia conflict.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, she emphasised that humanitarian actors must stop relying on AMISOM—its military operations, securing of roads, and provision of escorts—for access rather than pursuing acceptance and negotiations.¹⁴⁷ There should be a paradigm change in which humanitarian actors place distance between themselves, AMISOM, and UNSOM, according to her.¹⁴⁸ Previous research on Somalia has noted that the reliance on non-neutral peacekeeping forces—the UN Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)—to access people in need does not go unnoticed: “Many humanitarian organisations were dependent on UNOSOM for armed escorts and were seen to be taking sides by virtue of where they worked, who they worked with, the source of their funds, and the nationalities of their staff by various militia groups, eroding their acceptance”.¹⁴⁹ Humanitarian actors’ recognise that relying on peacekeeping forces to secure areas and thereby facilitate humanitarian access can be problematic; however, as discussed below in the section ‘Peacekeeping operations to further humanitarian access’, they still see a need for such measures at times.

Underlining a serious need for a renewed focus on establishing access through core humanitarian methods that rely on adherence to humanitarian principles and invest in continuous dialogue with parties to conflict to obtain consent and acceptance, one HC expressed that humanitarian actors have lost a nuanced approach to security management and fail to see options between no protection and the use of armed escorts.¹⁵⁰ Humanitarian actors have lost focus of these best practices, the HC continued, not particularly due to integration, but rather the insistence of UNDSS on the UN’s use of armed escorts.¹⁵¹ The HC’s view is echoed by existing research, for instance, which notes

The focus on ‘protective’ rather than ‘enabling’ approaches to security management has meant tighter restrictions on movement of staff (convoys, military/security escorts) and ‘bunkerisation’ of office and residential accommodation. These measures have made it more difficult for OCHA

¹⁴¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹⁴² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹⁴³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹⁴⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹⁴⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

¹⁴⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, survey.

¹⁴⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, survey.

¹⁴⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, survey.

¹⁴⁹ HPG. (2011, February 14). Politicisation and Securitisation of Aid: Challenges to Humanitarian Space in Somalia.

HPG Roundtable Meeting Series on Humanitarian Space. Meeting 4. ODI/HPG and SOAS. Retrieved from:

<http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/4654.pdf>

¹⁵⁰ HC, interview.

¹⁵¹ HC, interview.

and UN agency staff to actively and consistently engage with locals in order to negotiate access.¹⁵²

Another HC interviewed by the Task Team noted, “An overpowering military presence in humanitarian operations is negative but unavoidable. Had we thought about it better, it could have been done differently”.¹⁵³ The contradiction in this reflection may be owed to the influence that limited planning and overwhelming contextual factors can have on humanitarian action. Again turning to Somalia, research demonstrates the value of investing “significant resources and time” to support humanitarian access.¹⁵⁴

Humanitarian actors expressed frustration with the impact of security arrangements that they perceive are imposed by UNDSS in the field, as well as the level of security coordination or support that is available. The roles that UNDSS staff and UN humanitarian agencies play in decision-making on security matters appear to be either poorly understood, or poorly followed. Humanitarian actors also raised the imposition of escort requirements on UN humanitarian agencies that are unwarranted due to existing conditions (e.g., in CAR, DRC, and Iraq), concerns about the manipulation and quality of security analysis (e.g., in Mali), and a sense that support to humanitarian requests are a lower priority than those of UN PKOs or SPMs (in Iraq, CAR, Mali, and Somalia).¹⁵⁵ One humanitarian actor stated, for instance, that there has been a trend in CAR wherein UNDSS encourages the ‘adding of an armed escort’ under the assumption that doing so will avoid any casualties; this trend is worrisome for the HCT in CAR.¹⁵⁶ Another humanitarian actor noted that in Somalia UNSOM convoys are prioritised because they are seen as supporting Security Council mandated activities.¹⁵⁷ One HC stressed that UNDSS is consequently determining the criticality of programmes through its provision of support without consulting with UN agencies, funds, and programmes.¹⁵⁸

In one example of the above frustration, a humanitarian actor working for the UN in Darfur noted that UNDSS requiring an escort for travel to Zam Zam Camp, 30 minutes outside of al-Fasher, negatively impacts access to the camp because UNAMID escorts were not always available despite the submittal of advanced requests.¹⁵⁹ The Sudan HCT asked repeatedly for UNAMID patrols on this route in order to negate the need for direct escorts, but this alternative was not taken up.¹⁶⁰ Similar restrictions on UN road travel in West Darfur existed despite NGOs moving about freely, and similarly trips throughout the region often needed to be cancelled due to the unavailability of UNAMID escorts.¹⁶¹

A disconnect between NGO and UN practice was also noted for DRC, where certain roads are classified as ‘red’ for UN vehicles, necessitating the use of armed escorts despite NGOs using the roads without

¹⁵² Metcalfe, et al. See also Combaz, E. (2013). The impact of integrated missions on humanitarian operations. GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 939. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham, p. 2.

¹⁵³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN, interview.

¹⁵⁴ Jackson, et al., 2013, Talking to the. Jackson et al. note that “Those agencies that succeeded in remaining in areas under Al-Shabaab’s control, and which appeared to avoid paying fees or ceding control of their programming, pursued rigorous, structured engagement with the group at all levels”.

¹⁵⁵ Humanitarian actors, survey, interviews, and feedback provided on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁵⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁵⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁵⁸ HC, interview.

¹⁵⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Darfur, survey.

¹⁶⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Darfur, survey.

¹⁶¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Darfur, survey.

incident.¹⁶² UNDSS reportedly lacks the capacity to conduct security risk assessments (SRAs) and, therefore, areas or roads considered safe by other actors are still restricted areas for UN humanitarian agencies.¹⁶³ The requirement for UN agencies to travel with MONUSCO escorts has increasingly hampered humanitarian action due to MONUSCO's current focus on military operations.¹⁶⁴ There is frustration because exceptions to movement requirements are often only allowed by MONUSCO if a UN agency's HQ authorises the specific movement request in question.¹⁶⁵ There is a sense that PKOs' or SPMs' resources are too limited to support humanitarian operations and, moreover, support to humanitarian activities is not a priority (e.g., an HCT prioritised requests for MINUSCA support, including helicopters, which were not fulfilled).¹⁶⁶ The expressed impact of these requirements ranges from cancellation of field visits (e.g., noted for DRC) to a significant reduction in the humanitarian response because of associated costs of UN armed escorts (e.g., noted for Iraq). In the case of PKOs, one humanitarian actor noted that establishing a PoC Section or PoC positions within the mission can help advance understanding of the urgency that certain humanitarian requests may entail.¹⁶⁷

The views expressed on the topic of armed escorts and PKOs' air assets demonstrate a struggle between the costs and benefits of their use, particularly the need to minimise the potential damage on the perception of humanitarian actors.¹⁶⁸ Some humanitarian actors feel that the reliance on PKOs' or SPMs' assets, including armed escorts, is a norm that the community must become accustomed to due to the seemingly increasing threats confronting humanitarian actors as they try to access people in need. UNAMID's escorting of convoys within, to, and from Darfur was noted as having a significant positive impact on access by one respondent.¹⁶⁹ Another person noted, for instance, that compounding challenges—the threat of al-Shabaab attacks on the road and the limited existence of air strips—create a reliance on armed escorts and helicopters to access locations throughout Somalia.¹⁷⁰ A person in DRC noted that outside of MONUSCO, the only armed actor his NGO has contact with is the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC—DRC's armed forces), which his NGO relies on for escorts.¹⁷¹ He credits MONUSCO for brokering this relationship.¹⁷² Nonetheless, because of the potential negative consequences, humanitarian actors also noted that HCTs and OCHA continually reiterate the need to use armed escorts only as a last resort (e.g., in South Sudan and DRC).¹⁷³

¹⁶² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁶³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁶⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁶⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

¹⁶⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

¹⁶⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁶⁸ Existing research reiterates this conflict. For instance, Metcalf et al state that “UN integration arrangements have enabled increased humanitarian access for UN agencies and some of their partners through the provision of logistical and security assets, such as passenger and cargo transportation, shared residential and office accommodation and the use of UN military assets for escorts and area security.”

¹⁶⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Sudan, survey.

¹⁷⁰ Humanitarian actor working in Somalia, interview.

¹⁷¹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

¹⁷² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

¹⁷³ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in South Sudan and DRC, interviews. Existing research provides a good example of how relying on armed escorts can harm access. “One NGO who had negotiated access with [Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)] commanders in Lofa county during late 2003 reported that a fellow organisation had instead relied on UN armed convoys. When the UN and the LURD temporarily fell out at the beginning of the demobilisation process (Christmas 2003) the LURD did not allow the NGO who had been using

The above observations suggest that humanitarian actors need to increase investments in cultivating acceptance and engaging in dialogue with all parties to conflict. They also highlight a need to further examine the logistical independence of humanitarian action and identify best practices for increasing humanitarian access. Furthermore, they demonstrate that there is a need to strengthen understanding and collaboration between UNDSS and UN humanitarian agencies (e.g., through the practice of embedding UNDSS personnel within UN humanitarian agencies).

8.B. Civil-military coordination

Humanitarian actors realise that fruitful civil-military coordination can have a direct impact upon improved humanitarian outcomes. This realisation leads to concerns about the level of resources that are devoted to civil-military coordination (e.g., the reduction of OCHA staff in Afghanistan who are dedicated to civil-military coordination).¹⁷⁴ The focus of civil-military coordination on PKOs or international forces, at least in Afghanistan, has distracted from the need to examine matters pertaining to national security forces.¹⁷⁵

Humanitarian actors also mentioned the existence of civil-military coordination guidelines in Somalia, DRC, and CAR, but not all existing guidelines were noted (e.g., Afghanistan).¹⁷⁶ In the case of Somalia, one survey respondent pointed out that it is too early to assess whether the civil-military coordination guidelines for engagement with AMISOM are respected or if they support or hinder access.¹⁷⁷ The respondent went on to note that guidelines do not result in improved outcomes in part due to poor dissemination.¹⁷⁸ Likewise, in South Sudan, another humanitarian actor noted that “there is a lot of confusion on the roles and responsibilities of different actors in civil-military coordination” in spite of existing guidelines.¹⁷⁹ Changes in a context (e.g., the withdrawal of ISAF in Afghanistan) should necessitate a review of guidelines.¹⁸⁰

The occurrence of civil-military coordination meetings that include staff from a UN PKO or SPM was mentioned for DRC, Iraq, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and CAR. Cited as an exemplar, the OCHA Civil-Military Coordination Cell in CAR holds weekly meetings in which stakeholders—OCHA, the Protection Cluster, MINUSCA, French forces, and NGO consortium—have been able to discuss critical access matters.¹⁸¹ Through these discussions, humanitarian actors and civilian components of MINUSCA gained access to Kuongo, in Waka Province.¹⁸² In the past, some held that the cell’s success was due in part to having clear roles for participants, two fully-dedicated OCHA Civil-Military Coordinators, and a fully-dedicated Protection Advisor who attended from MINUSCA’s AU predecessor—MISCA.¹⁸³ The clarity in roles and responsibilities that has assisted these civil-military coordination meetings presents an opportunity for improved collaboration and highlights the need for improved information sharing

UN convoys to work in their area. By contrast the NGO who had negotiated access directly continued to work without trouble” (Sida, 13 and 16).

¹⁷⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁷⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁷⁶ Humanitarian actors working in DRC, interview.

¹⁷⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, survey.

¹⁷⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, survey.

¹⁷⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

¹⁸⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁸¹ Humanitarian actor working in CAR and a researcher working on CAR, interviews.

¹⁸² Humanitarian actor working for the UN, interview.

¹⁸³ Researcher working on CAR, interview. MINUSCA now has a delegate of the MINUSCA Force Commander regularly participate (Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview).

amongst humanitarian actors. For instance, humanitarian actors stated that there was a gap in the abovementioned humanitarian relocation of vulnerable civilians during April 2014 from Bangui to northern CAR: senior MINUSCA leadership (e.g., the SRSO) could have assuaged concerns about the relocation by holding discussions with the governments of CAR and France.¹⁸⁴ According to another humanitarian actor, however, these discussions did occur.¹⁸⁵

8.C. Access coordination mechanisms

Through interviews and the survey, the Task Team also recorded the occurrence of regular coordination meetings that specifically focus on access and include staff from a PKO or SPM. Regular access coordination meetings were only mentioned for Israel/oPt, with Afghanistan and Iraq being on the cusp of initiating the practice at the time of the survey and interviews.¹⁸⁶ Dialogue on access constraints has been occurring in South Sudan and Darfur, albeit in a less focused manner, and in Afghanistan NGOs have been holding their own humanitarian access working group.¹⁸⁷ The review recorded other related forms of ad-hoc coordination that was intended to address access constraints. This includes joint dialogue between MINUSCA staff, OCHA civil-military coordinators, national authorities, traditional leaders (e.g., sheiks), and anti-Balaka and ex-Seleka commanders in CAR to address the targeting of road traffic, as well as MINUSCA's engagement with national police and gendarmes on the issue of establishing greater security in Bangui.¹⁸⁸ Following the dialogue, humanitarian actors developed a declaration on access that was shared with the involved armed groups.¹⁸⁹

Practice in Israel/oPt regarding access challenges demonstrates the benefits of integration arrangements. Administered by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Access Coordination Unit (ACU) reports directly to the Israel/oPt Deputy Special Coordinator (DSC)/RC/HC and works closely with the HCT.¹⁹⁰ Both UNSCO and humanitarian actors submit requests for support to the ACU, and the ACU provides the HCT with a number of services.¹⁹¹ Key informants emphasised the important role that the HC plays in supporting the ACU, for instance, by serving as an intermediary with *Ḥarakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah* (the Islamic Resistance Movement, HAMAS) officials to advocate on visa regulations, facilitating contact with the Israeli government through inclusion of the ACU in liaison meetings, and emphasising the broader ramifications of challenges on humanitarian action.¹⁹² It is not clear to what extent the ACU is collating information from the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) and humanitarian actors to formulate a humanitarian engagement strategy, similar to past practices in Afghanistan and DRC that were noted in previous research.¹⁹³ One humanitarian actor noted that the integrated nature of the HC's position is especially

¹⁸⁴ Researcher working on CAR, interview.

¹⁸⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked in the CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁸⁶ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

¹⁸⁷ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, Darfur, and Afghanistan, survey.

¹⁸⁸ Humanitarian actors who worked or are working in CAR, survey and feedback on the initial draft of the review.

Both of these coordination efforts in CAR had not yet succeeded in improving security, according to this Humanitarian actor.

¹⁸⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁹⁰ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in Israel/oPt, survey and interviews. The ACU is also referred to as UN Access.

¹⁹¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

¹⁹² Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in Israel/oPt, interviews.

¹⁹³ Metcalfe et al. noted, "Respondents highlighted that both MONUSCO and UNAMA were able, because of their political/peacekeeping roles and capacities, to develop analysis of non-state armed actors, including their

beneficial because it allows the HC to advocate on the behalf of humanitarian actors when they themselves may be excluded from conversations due to sensitivities or standing discord.¹⁹⁴ The connection between the ACU and UNSCO was particularly important during the July and August 2014 hostilities, according to one humanitarian actor, because it allowed for successful humanitarian negotiations with the Israeli government to secure access into Gaza.¹⁹⁵

8.D. Peacekeeping operations to further humanitarian access

Humanitarian actors also noted that PKOs had made limited contributions towards improved access in certain contexts. Discussions with UNMISS occur on a daily basis regarding the use of patrols to create an enabling environment for humanitarian action.¹⁹⁶ Humanitarian actors also view MONUSCO's military operations in Uvira as promising for contributing to protection and improving humanitarian access in the region.¹⁹⁷ Additionally, humanitarian actors view MINUSCA's increasing of patrols in the North and securing of roads (e.g., the Bangui-Cameroon route) as beneficial to humanitarian access.¹⁹⁸ Coordination between humanitarian actors and peacekeepers regarding how peacekeepers can contribute to improved access through their operations happens at varying levels. In one example of how integration arrangements can help facilitate consideration of humanitarian issues, the DSRSG/RC/HC in Somalia advocated to AMISOM during an after-action review on the need for greater road security in the south central region.¹⁹⁹ Humanitarian actors are nonetheless sensitive to the perception that apparent collaboration with peacekeepers can have under certain circumstances. Taking the example of Somalia again, humanitarian actors want to gain access to areas under al-Shabaab control, but they are very hesitant to begin operations in these areas if they were recently taken over by AMISOM forces due to the perception that humanitarian actors may be working in concert with a party to the conflict.²⁰⁰

A general theme in recorded perspectives was serious concern about the limited capacities of peacekeeping forces. As one HC noted, humanitarian access is often constrained due to lack of basic security.²⁰¹ In South Sudan, there is a strong need for increased patrols to support access and, moreover, a need for more dialogue on how different actors can work to support protection outcomes.²⁰² Despite coordination that is occurring, a sense of dismay exists amongst humanitarian actors regarding the support that MINUSCA is able to provide towards protection and expansion of humanitarian access.²⁰³ For instance, humanitarian actors have requested that MINUSCA forces increase road patrols to ensure safety of humanitarian convoys on the route from Bangui to Boali, but the response has been inadequate.²⁰⁴ The inadequate response was likely due to low troop numbers, which have improved over time.²⁰⁵ Humanitarian actors are also concerned about the security vacuum that has resulted in

dynamics and power relations at various levels, which could inform the development of humanitarian engagement strategies for UN agencies and OCHA".

¹⁹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

¹⁹⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

¹⁹⁶ Humanitarian actor working in Geneva, survey.

¹⁹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, survey.

¹⁹⁸ Humanitarian actors who worked in CAR, survey and interview.

¹⁹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

²⁰⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

²⁰¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN, interview.

²⁰² Humanitarian actor working on South Sudan, survey.

²⁰³ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs, survey.

²⁰⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in CAR, survey.

²⁰⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

Bangui following MINUSCA's assumption of responsibility for security there, as well as the inability of MINUSCA to respond to sudden and erratic bursts of extreme violence throughout the country.²⁰⁶ The low number of police within MINUSCA requires regular military forces to be placed in charge of policing—an area of work that they are not always prepared to assume and detracts from existing military responsibilities.²⁰⁷ Sudan is another context where humanitarian actors feel the PKO's resources have had a negative impact. One person expressed that UNAMID has generally not been able to serve as an enabler for humanitarian action or effectively protect civilians due to low troop numbers and insufficient resources.²⁰⁸

8.E. Other support from PKOs and SPMs

PKOs or SPMs also contributed to humanitarian access by providing logistical support (in Sudan, South Sudan, DRC, Afghanistan, and Iraq) and mapping information (in DRC, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Somalia), conducting demining (in Lebanon), and improving roads (in DRC) and ports (in South Sudan).²⁰⁹ In some cases, humanitarian actors mentioned the need for PKOs or SPMs to establish formal processes to improve access to assistance from missions, for instance, for logistical support in Somalia.²¹⁰ Furthermore, humanitarian actors expressed the need for non-military additional logistic support and assets for their use (e.g., in South Sudan).²¹¹

9. Contact with parties to conflict

The Task Team also collected information on two related issues that greatly affect humanitarian access: 1) contact or liaison with parties to conflict and 2) arrangements between humanitarian actors and UN PKOs or SPMs regarding humanitarian negotiations. In the case of the first issue, 34% of survey respondents (49 out of 143) said 'Yes', they do know ways that UN integration arrangements have supported or hindered contact or liaison between humanitarian organisations and parties to conflict. The bulk of awareness—61% (30 out of the 49)—rests with respondents who have HCT experience. With 57% of recorded positive responses (28 out of 49), humanitarian actors working in the field expressed the highest awareness of UN integration arrangements impacting contact or liaison with parties to conflict. Senior leaders who participated in the survey provided a significant amount of positive ('Yes') responses—47% (23 out of the 49). Differences in awareness between UN agencies, NGOs, and 'other humanitarian organisations' were minimal (see Chart 11 in Appendix 2).

Only 27% of survey respondents (39 out of 143) positively indicated awareness of arrangements that exist between humanitarian agencies and a UN PKO or SPM regarding humanitarian negotiations. 62% of positive responses came from senior leaders who participated in the survey (24 out of the 39). Similar to other issues, survey respondents with HCT experience are more aware of arrangements regarding humanitarian negotiations, with 67% of positive responses (26 out of the 39) coming from them. Differences in awareness between NGOs, UN agencies, and 'other humanitarian organisations' are again not indicative of any significant differences between organisation types (see Chart 12 in Appendix 2).

²⁰⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in CAR, survey.

²⁰⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁰⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Sudan, interview.

²⁰⁹ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews. Not all forms of contributions were noted. For instance, a DPKO staff member stated through feedback on this review that humanitarian actors in Mali and Somalia received risk education on explosive threats, and structures (e.g., schools) were cleared of explosive threats in oPt.

²¹⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey and interview.

²¹¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN on South Sudan, survey.

Organised by context, the below section presents detailed information on contact with parties to conflict in Afghanistan, DRC, Israel/oPt, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan (Darfur).²¹² Certain observations can be made from the perspectives presented below. The disengagement of humanitarian actors from UN-led humanitarian processes (e.g., from clusters and working groups in Afghanistan, as discussed below) is a serious negative consequence of UN integration arrangements that has fractured collaboration and coordination amongst humanitarian actors. Humanitarian actors see no alternatives to disengagement because of their inability to address past and future integration of HCs within PKOs, as well as SPMs that are widely deemed to be politically aligned with one side in a conflict. The safeguards established through the UN IAP Policy fail to protect humanitarian action. Disengagement may become an increasing norm, consequently, and further damage collaboration amongst humanitarian actors on sensitive matters.

Humanitarian actors recognise that they themselves have failed to safeguard humanitarian negotiations. The framework noting the roles of the ERC and HCs in facilitating humanitarian negotiations is not respected or understood.²¹³ Humanitarian actors also have been unable to secure support from PKOs or SPMs (e.g., the sharing of contacts or analysis) and address challenges affecting humanitarian negotiations (e.g., due to PKOs' or SPMs' security regulations, desires to block contact with an armed actor, or attempts to direct aid). One HC noted the benefit that UNDSS could have on humanitarian access if it would share contacts, for instance, that staff have with armed groups maintaining checkpoints.²¹⁴ The sensitivity of humanitarian negotiations also means that HCs, HCTs, and other leaders may be unaware of problems or challenges hindering such negotiations.

UN integration arrangements also impact contact with parties to conflict when PKOs are involved in armed clashes with a party or are seen as supporting one side over another. At the same time, integration arrangements can open up doors for humanitarian dialogue, particularly with government authorities. SPMs can also play a pivotal role by serving as an intermediary or advisor under certain circumstances, for instance, those wherein a party to conflict will not deal with humanitarian actors or wherein there is pressure on humanitarian actors to avoid liaison with designated terrorist organisations. These circumstances also create opportunities for misrepresentation, requiring inclusion of humanitarian actors in decision-making processes, for example, on agreements or initiatives that will impact humanitarian outcomes.

9.A. Afghanistan

The Task Team recorded a common concern that the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has maintained a partisan stance in the conflict.²¹⁵ In conjunction with the DSRSG/RC/HC position, this view continues to cause disengagement from UN-coordinated humanitarian processes in Afghanistan. Some NGOs are choosing to safeguard humanitarian principles that allow them to maintain humanitarian dialogue with all parties to the conflict by operating outside of UN coordination structures in Afghanistan, even those supported by OCHA. Some NGO humanitarian actors view engagement with OCHA to be less beneficial because OCHA does not “have its own voice”.²¹⁶

²¹² The Task Team did not record sufficient enough information for other contexts to include them in the review.

²¹³ See UN General Assembly. (1991, December 19). Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations. A/RES/46/182. Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/46/a46r182.htm>

²¹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²¹⁵ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

²¹⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Afghanistan, survey.

One staff member working for an NGO in Afghanistan noted that it is critical for humanitarian NGOs to distinguish themselves from the UN.²¹⁷ To this end, his NGO will not travel to UNAMA compounds, and his NGO emphasises its independence from the UN during humanitarian dialogue with non-state armed actors to assuage any concerns regarding its acceptance of UN funding.²¹⁸ Lastly, he emphasised that the absence of formal or informal coordination on humanitarian negotiations in Afghanistan is natural in light of the above concerns.²¹⁹ The Task Team’s observations in Afghanistan are echoed by 2012 research that notes NGOs perceive the UN “to have become ‘compromised’ or too politicised”, leading them to reassess “their relationship with UN humanitarian actors”.²²⁰ This research suggests that “[i]f more NGOs decide that the risk of association to the UN agencies is too high, the current system of humanitarian coordination could collapse”.²²¹ While collapse of the entire system is unlikely, disengagement surely impacts the functioning of the system within a country and, consequently, the ability to achieve humanitarian outcomes. Existing research also illustrates that UN agencies share similar concerns about their ability to engage non-state armed actors when they are “politically or generally associated with” a PKO or SPM “through highly visible UN integration arrangements”.²²²

The abovementioned concerns bolster past and present observations of UN humanitarian agencies’ inability to engage all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan because the UN is perceived as partisan in the conflict.²²³ Moreover, because past and present observations demonstrate clear harm done to humanitarian action in Afghanistan, the question remains why the UN has not altered the integration arrangements.²²⁴ This highlights a critical weakness in UN integration practice: even when there is a clear need for integration arrangements that guarantee the independence of HCs, and existing policy allows for changes, there often is inadequate will to alter integration arrangements once they have been established.

9.B. DRC

Similar to Afghanistan, humanitarian actors working on matters in DRC noted concerns about their ability to safeguard humanitarian dialogue with non-state armed actors in light of current UN integration arrangements and the position of MONUSCO as a party to conflict. Less organised non-state armed actors, as well as the general public, in DRC are often confused about the roles of MONUSCO and humanitarian actors—confusion that is amplified by integration arrangements.²²⁵

There is no formal agreement on the issue of humanitarian negotiations in DRC, but humanitarian actors ask MONUSCO not to negotiate access.²²⁶ Non-state armed actors, likewise, generally request that OCHA conducts negotiations without representatives from MONUSCO.²²⁷ These requests justify humanitarian actors’ concerns about their perceived proximity to MONUSCO, but humanitarian actors’

²¹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

²¹⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

²¹⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked for NGOs in Mali and Afghanistan, interview.

²²⁰ Glad, 5.

²²¹ Glad, 5.

²²² Metcalfe, et al.

²²³ See, for instance, Donini, p. 151-152.

²²⁴ The IASC noted that disengagement from coordination and dis-association from UN humanitarian efforts “has a detrimental effect on humanitarian partnerships and results in a weakening of the humanitarian system”. (IASC, 2013, UN integration and).

²²⁵ Humanitarian actors who have worked for the UN in DRC, interviews.

²²⁶ Humanitarian actors who are working or have worked in DRC, survey and interviews.

²²⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked in DRC, interview.

ability to be responsive to these requests during negotiations is hindered due to UNDSS' security restrictions.²²⁸ If UNDSS requires a MONUSCO armed escort for a meeting with an armed group that is at odds with MONUSCO, for instance, the meeting cannot take place without an exception to the rule. UN humanitarian agencies are sometimes unable to fulfil requests to attend negotiations without MONUSCO representatives because UNDSS may require demonstration of "program criticality" to receive such an exception.²²⁹ Demonstrating program criticality requires approval from senior levels at UN HQ—a process that humanitarian actors do not want to pursue because of concerns about the sensitivity of negotiations, as well as a perceived risk-adverse stance at HQ due to negative outcomes during past negotiations with armed actors (e.g., the deaths of NGO staff during negotiations in 2002).²³⁰

The integrated setting and imposition of prohibitive security requirements in DRC has created the potential for MONUSCO interference in humanitarian dialogue with parties to conflict. In one example, MONUSCO forces had been denied access into areas under a non-state armed actor's control in Province Orientale.²³¹ Following this denial, UNDSS refused to grant permission for a UN humanitarian agency to meet with the armed group around October 2014 in Province Orientale for the purpose of negotiating access.²³² UNDSS justified its refusal of the request by noting that it violated MONUSCO's "common position" on not talking to armed groups.²³³ Only local organisations have yet been able to negotiate access with this armed actor due to this interference.²³⁴ MONUSCO's interference has consequently harmed the ability to provide assistance in the areas under the armed actor's control and damaged the reputation of UN humanitarian agencies and potentially international NGOs.²³⁵ Because of ongoing sensitivity surrounding negotiations with the armed actor, the HC and HCT were not informed of the blockage and consequently not able to address it.²³⁶

The IASC has sponsored other efforts that have documented similar forms of interference in the independence of humanitarian dialogue with armed actors. The 2011 HPG/Stimson Center report noted that "[o]n occasions the senior managers within a UN integrated presence have asked UN humanitarian actors not to engage on humanitarian issues with certain non-state armed actors. This is largely related to groups that are considered 'spoilers' to a peace process or political process and engagement was limited so as to ensure that it would not confer some level of legitimacy on these groups".²³⁷ While the rationale for such interference is not clear, it is clear that interference in DRC constrains access and suppresses humanitarian dialogue.

Negotiations with non-state armed groups for access become more complex when MONUSCO is involved in armed clashes with the groups.²³⁸ One humanitarian actor stated that MONUSCO's mandate to neutralise all armed groups may have negatively affected the HC's and OCHA's ability to negotiate humanitarian access.²³⁹ Conversely, one humanitarian actor noted that the HC led humanitarian

²²⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

²²⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

²³⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

²³¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in DRC, interview.

²³² Humanitarian actor working on DRC, interview.

²³³ Humanitarian actor working on DRC, interview.

²³⁴ Humanitarian actor working on DRC, interview.

²³⁵ Humanitarian actor working on DRC, interview.

²³⁶ Humanitarian actor working on DRC, interview.

²³⁷ Metcalfe, et al.

²³⁸ Humanitarian actor working in DRC, interview.

²³⁹ Humanitarian actor working in DRC, interview.

negotiations with the Mouvement du 23-Mars (M23), a prominent non-state armed actor, while MONUSCO's FIB was concurrently conducting operations against M23.²⁴⁰ The M23 leadership was able to distinguish between the humanitarian actors within the UN and MONUSCO's staff who were supporting political and military operations during these negotiations.²⁴¹ Humanitarian actors also recognise that the integrated position of the DSRSG/RC/HC in DRC potentially creates opportunities for humanitarian actors to channel their requests to government authorities, for instance, regarding the protection of civilians.²⁴² However, in light of the HC's integrated position they would like to see the HC not lead or coordinate humanitarian negotiations and be limited to administrative support.²⁴³

Reinforcing the findings of previous research, humanitarian actors stated that they appreciate when MONUSCO shares relevant contacts for humanitarian negotiations.²⁴⁴ The DSRSG/RC/HC's integrated position allowed him to share such information.²⁴⁵

9.C. Israel/oPt

The roles of the DSC/RC/HC within UNSCO and the ACU emerged as an example of how humanitarian actors and staff from a SPM should partner to improve humanitarian actors' contact with parties to conflict. This is likely due to the position of the ACU, the processes that are in place, the political sway that the DSC/RC/HC has, and the mediator role that the DSC/RC/HC is required to perform on the behalf of humanitarian actors with HAMAS and Israeli authorities.²⁴⁶

The DSC/RC/HC and the ACU represent NGOs' interests, for instance when HAMAS requests reports or payments, if NGOs are under pressure—real or perceived—to avoid liaison with HAMAS due to counter-terrorism restrictions.²⁴⁷ The DSC/RC/HC has likewise been able to step in and mediate when humanitarian actors have been threatened with closure of their organisations.²⁴⁸ Parties to the conflict, such as HAMAS, are able to distinguish between political and humanitarian arms of the UN in Israel/oPt and recognise that while the two sides have the same objectives, short term priorities may sometimes differ.²⁴⁹ One person noted that HAMAS does not condition humanitarian access based upon its political relations with the UN.²⁵⁰ Contact with Israeli authorities has been more difficult and confusing, however.²⁵¹ The SC managed the UN's few high-level Israeli contacts, which presented challenges for the HC, who had contact with lower-level officials.²⁵² It is unclear to what extent this was due to the

²⁴⁰ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in DRC, interview.

²⁴¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in DRC, interview.

²⁴² Humanitarian actor working in DRC, survey and interview.

²⁴³ Humanitarian actor working in DRC, survey and interview.

²⁴⁴ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews. Previous research noted that MONUSCO Child Protection Advisors facilitated "direct contact and engagement of UN humanitarian actors with certain non-state armed actors on the release of child soldiers". Furthermore, it stated that "integration arrangements, including the DSRSG/RC/HC role, helped facilitate this support". (Metcalf, et al.)

²⁴⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁴⁶ Humanitarian actors who are working in Israel/oPt, survey.

²⁴⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁴⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁴⁹ Humanitarian actors who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview and feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁵⁰ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁵¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁵² Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

integration arrangements or the Israeli authorities' requests.²⁵³ An additional challenge is that Israeli authorities have often not wanted to engage with humanitarian actors.²⁵⁴ This challenge demonstrates the value of the ACU which, as noted above, maintains dialogue with all parties to the conflict.²⁵⁵

While contact with parties to conflict in Israel/oPt benefited from the integration arrangements and close coordination, the "safeguarding of the humanitarian character of work in [Israel/oPt] is a constant struggle".²⁵⁶ The struggle between political goals and humanitarian principles is manifest, for example, in UNSCO's 2014 negotiation of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM).²⁵⁷ Humanitarian actors were not consulted on the GRM, nor were they able to bring it to the HCT for discussion, prior to its announcement.²⁵⁸ After learning of the proposed GRM, opinion formed amongst humanitarian actors in Israel/oPt that it was a UN-brokered deal which would legitimise political control of aid and fail to fulfil minimum requirements for humanitarian assistance.²⁵⁹ Discussion on the GRM finally occurred within the HCT in late 2014 after it was publicly announced.²⁶⁰ The discussion was heated, led to fissures within the humanitarian community, and concluded with the DSC/RC/HC's insistence that humanitarian actors support the GRM regardless of their objections.²⁶¹ The exclusion of humanitarian actors from such a significant negotiated process that directly impacts humanitarian outcomes is worrisome, but multiple factors need to be considered. According to some, the GRM was formulated only by the governments of Israel and oPt, without consultation with humanitarian actors, because of sensitivities and the fragile negotiation process.²⁶² Furthermore, OCHA's poor standing with the government of Israel would have impeded the UN's role in brokering any such agreement.²⁶³ The example of the GRM, although contentious, demonstrates complications that humanitarian actors can face when they wish for triple-hatted HCs to advocate for humanitarian interests in the face of political opposition. Challenges such as are evident in the example of the GRM illustrate the need for further tools that humanitarian actors can rely on to raise concerns in such situations (e.g., to conduct coordinated advocacy) and further indicates the need for the IASC Principals to maintain direct liaison with HCTs.²⁶⁴

9.D. Mali

The proximity of humanitarian actors to MINUSMA strongly affects relations with parties to the conflict according to the views recorded by the Task Team.²⁶⁵ Non-state armed actors view MINUSMA as a political actor and party to the conflict.²⁶⁶ One respondent noted that humanitarian actors' relations with non-state armed actors improved, while relations with the Malian government suffered, following

²⁵³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁵⁴ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁵⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁵⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Israel/oPt, survey.

²⁵⁷ Brokered by the United Nations, the GRM is an agreement between the governments of Israel and the Government of Palestine to allow for the import of 'dual-use' materials at the scale required for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

²⁵⁸ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁵⁹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, survey.

²⁶⁰ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁶¹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

²⁶² Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁶³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

²⁶⁴ See the section titled "Strategic Assessments and risk analyses" for additional discussion on this measure.

²⁶⁵ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

²⁶⁶ Humanitarian actors who are working or had worked for an NGO in Mali, interviews.

the May 2014 clashes in Kidal;²⁶⁷ the cause of this change was the perception that MINUSMA had become closer to non-state armed actors during its renewed efforts to support the inter-Malian negotiation process.²⁶⁸ It is unclear if relations with the government have remained stable, but humanitarian actors' relations with non-state armed actors have deteriorated since then due to their perceived alignment with MINUSMA and resultant non-neutrality. For instance, the Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad—MNL) became threatening and aggressive towards NGOs following armed clashes it had with MINUSMA in January 2015.²⁶⁹ This back-and-forth, unstable effect on humanitarian actors' relations with parties to conflict in Mali is likely why another respondent noted that any association of humanitarian actors with MINUSMA hampers the ability of humanitarian actors to interact with non-state armed actors.²⁷⁰ This clearly challenges the ability of humanitarian actors to maintain a continuously neutral posture in a conflict environment.

The perception of the UN in Mali has resulted in a split between humanitarian organisations. One person working for an NGO, for instance, noted that it is critical for NGOs to distinguish themselves from the entire UN in light of MINUSMA's role in the conflict.²⁷¹ In practice, this in part means emphasising during discussions with a non-state armed actor that an NGO is not a UN agency.²⁷² Non-state armed actors in Mali always inquire during discussions about NGOs' funding sources and ask many questions if an NGO is receiving funding from the UN.²⁷³ They understand NGOs' humanitarian mandates and goals of assisting people who are in need, and they make the distinction between UN humanitarian agencies and international NGOs.²⁷⁴ Non-state armed actors in Mali, however, are not aware of specific integration arrangements within MINUSMA.²⁷⁵ Consequently, any steps that humanitarian actors can take to communicate distinction and separation from MINUSMA (e.g., the establishment of an independent HC) could be notably beneficial. It is unclear how this practice of ensuring distinction between NGOs and UN agencies affects relations between the two groups, as well as perceptions of UN humanitarian agencies.

Besides the abovementioned concerns, the state of the conflict and perception of the UN in Mali has the potential for creating a rift also between UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs. Existing tensions between NGOs and UN agencies surrounding the conduct of humanitarian negotiations could also fuel such a rift.²⁷⁶

The existence of a policy or agreement between humanitarian actors and MINUSMA regarding humanitarian negotiations is unclear. One humanitarian actor stated that the Mali HCT, through the assistance of OCHA, "developed guidelines for humanitarian negotiation, including the responsibilities

²⁶⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN on Mali, survey.

²⁶⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN on Mali, survey.

²⁶⁹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷⁰ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, survey.

²⁷¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷² Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷³ Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷⁴ Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷⁶ Prior to MINUSMA's deployment, the HCT's attempts to conduct humanitarian negotiations actually harmed access for international NGOs by creating a misunderstanding on the part of non-state armed actors regarding international NGOs' activities. This misunderstanding slowed international NGOs' negotiations. (Humanitarian actor who worked for an NGO in Mali, interview.)

for different actors”.²⁷⁷ Another humanitarian actor noted that the HCT provided MINUSMA with generic guidelines on humanitarian negotiations in May 2013, but these guidelines unfortunately did not clearly articulate roles and responsibilities.²⁷⁸ The two guidelines mentioned by humanitarians are likely the same.

9.E. Somalia

Previous research has highlighted the difficult, varied experiences that humanitarian actors have had in obtaining humanitarian access to areas under the control of al-Shabaab.²⁷⁹ Integration arrangements, nonetheless, provide an additional challenge for humanitarian actors to overcome when negotiating access. Integration arrangements appear to have strengthened the perception of humanitarian actors as partial towards the Somali government because of UNSOM’s mandate.²⁸⁰ An additional concern is al-Shabaab’s naming of the UN as a primary target because of the UN’s role in the conflict.²⁸¹ This has jeopardised the overall ability for humanitarian actors to assist people in need throughout Somalia, particularly in areas under the control of al-Shabaab.²⁸² In addition, this perception has further damaged the ability of humanitarian actors to conduct humanitarian dialogue with al-Shabaab.²⁸³ One person also noted the feeling that the integration arrangements have harmed the level of collaboration between the UN and NGOs.²⁸⁴ In support of this, one NGO noted that it minimises trips to UN facilities because of perception concerns.²⁸⁵ The reality of perception concerns is evident to this same NGO because it received a letter from al-Shabaab, stating the NGO could no longer operate in al-Shabaab controlled areas because the NGO was linked to the Somali government’s broader political objectives.²⁸⁶

Humanitarian actors shared almost no information regarding how humanitarian negotiations have fared in light of integration arrangements in Somalia, as well as if there is an agreement or policy in place to safeguard and support them. One person stated that personnel from DPA and OCHA maintain a firewall to safeguard humanitarian negotiations, with HCT members providing a “watchdog” function that includes addressing concerns that arise.²⁸⁷

UNSOM’s mandate and the nature of the violent conflict in Somalia should have drawn attention to the serious risks that the current integration arrangements would cause for humanitarian action. Furthermore, these risks should have sensitised UN member states to the dangers of requiring structural integration in Somalia. Humanitarian dialogue between al-Shabaab and humanitarian actors must occur so that humanitarian actors can extend assistance and address protection concerns for all people who are in need. As the above observations demonstrate, however, the current integration arrangements seem to help ensure the failure of any concerted effort to establish dialogue. Humanitarian actors recognise that the UN is not neutral in the Somalia conflict. Just as is seen in Afghanistan, this recognition may cause further fractures within the humanitarian community (e.g., between UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs) and fuel disengagement from UN-led coordination processes.

²⁷⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, survey.

²⁷⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Mali, interview.

²⁷⁹ Jackson, et al., 2013, Talking to the.

²⁸⁰ Humanitarian actors working for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and an NGO, survey and interview.

²⁸¹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, interview.

²⁸² Humanitarian actors working for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and an NGO, survey and interview.

²⁸³ Humanitarian actors working for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and an NGO, survey and interview.

²⁸⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Kenya, survey.

²⁸⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, interview.

²⁸⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on Somalia, interview.

²⁸⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

Furthermore, it will doom the coordination and information sharing between organisations that are necessary to support humanitarian negotiations.

9.F. South Sudan

Humanitarian actors have faced obstacles in their attempts to establish dialogue with armed actors in South Sudan due to UNMISS' integration arrangements.²⁸⁸ Particularly, UNMISS' close alignment with the government both before and after the outbreak of violence in December 2013 has impacted humanitarian dialogue with parties to conflict. One humanitarian actor noted that access negotiations in South Sudan became more difficult following the March 2014 incident in Rumbek that resulted in the government accusing UNMISS of attempting to supply opposition forces with weapons and ammunition.²⁸⁹ Another person stated that UNMISS' non-neutral role makes it difficult to establish contact with all actors involved in the conflict.²⁹⁰ Similar to practices in Afghanistan and Somalia, humanitarian actors consider the perception of the UN when deciding whether to conduct visits to UNMISS facilities.²⁹¹ In Juba, humanitarian actors engage more with OCHA because of its location outside of the UNMISS compound.²⁹² The large number of humanitarian actors providing assistance within PoC sites demonstrates that this is not a unified position.

Humanitarian actors also expressed the notion that UNMISS, including the DSRSG/RC/HC, is reluctant to engage with non-state armed actors for fear of upsetting the government following the outbreak of violence in December 2013.²⁹³ One person noted that this fear has impacted humanitarian negotiations.²⁹⁴ For instance, UNMISS (including UNDSS) discouraged at least one UN humanitarian agency from pursuing access negotiations with an armed opposition group.²⁹⁵ UNDSS also blocked certain requests perhaps because of low capacity or low prioritisation.²⁹⁶ Humanitarian actors cited UNMISS' lack of focus on, as well as physical presence in, opposition-held territories as a potential reason for low prioritisation.²⁹⁷ Regardless of the above challenges, UN humanitarian agencies have been able to hold humanitarian negotiations with non-state armed actors.²⁹⁸ Humanitarian actors also feel that the prominent nature of the DSRSG/RC/HC position can be beneficial for engagement with the South Sudanese government.²⁹⁹ How effective, however, depends upon the government's attitude at the time. One person noted that the relationship between the HC and the government has been notably hostile at times.³⁰⁰ This hostility has harmed communication with the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and other governmental institutions.³⁰¹ Potentially in recognition of perception concerns surrounding

²⁸⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁸⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey. The search of a UN convoy revealed weapons and ammunition that UNMISS was transporting to Ghanaian forces in Bentiu.

²⁹⁰ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on South Sudan, survey.

²⁹¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

²⁹² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

²⁹³ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in South Sudan, interviews and survey.

²⁹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁹⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁹⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁹⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

²⁹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO on South Sudan, survey.

³⁰⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³⁰¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

the HC's integrated role in UNMISS, contact with non-state armed actors has been delegated to the head of OCHA.³⁰²

Humanitarian actors expressed contradictory information and frustration when asked about the existence of arrangements between humanitarian actors and UNMISS regarding humanitarian negotiations.³⁰³ One person noted that UNMISS has no responsibility in humanitarian negotiations and, moreover, that there is a paper developed by humanitarian actors "to ensure non-interference" by UNMISS.³⁰⁴ Another stated that it often has been unclear if humanitarian actors or UNMISS would take the lead in humanitarian negotiations, as well as how the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian actors would be protected.³⁰⁵ The same person stressed that this lack of clarity sometimes leads "prominent actors to ponder or even implement forms of 'separation' rather than integration".³⁰⁶ This observation echoes concerns voiced in Afghanistan regarding the fracturing of UN-led humanitarian coordination due to integration arrangements. A third person noted that UNMISS had negotiated for access until recently, and confusion remains regarding roles and responsibilities.³⁰⁷ This person suggested that possible reasons for the confusion are individual personalities involved in the topic, as well as OCHA's limited capacity.³⁰⁸ A fourth person noted that there is an agreement between the HCT and UNMISS to split negotiation based upon whether it involves expansion of PoC sites.³⁰⁹ In these instances, UNMISS has responsibility for negotiations because the PoC sites fall under UNMISS' remit.³¹⁰ There are no safeguards to ensure that negotiations on expansion of PoC sites happen, however, despite the impact that space restrictions are having on IDPs within them.³¹¹ This is because UNMISS generally suspects "humanitarian requests for additional space, fearing that this will prolong what UNMISS views as a problem (having IDPs under the physical protection of the UN)".³¹² The fourth person notes that a UN humanitarian agency has had responsibility for negotiations on the use of "cross-border river and road corridors" between Sudan and South Sudan.³¹³

Outside of Juba, it appears that responsibilities for humanitarian negotiations are being shared. In Bentiu, for example, OCHA and other UN humanitarian agencies negotiate on matters related to access.³¹⁴ However, UNMISS Military Liaison Officers (MLOs) have also negotiated on the behalf of humanitarian actors when OCHA's capacity is low, for instance, to ensure safe use of the air space for

³⁰² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³⁰³ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

³⁰⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey. This likely refers to the IASC's previously recorded "agreement by UNMISS to refrain from describing their role as "humanitarian" and clarification that humanitarian access negotiations must be undertaken by humanitarian actors for humanitarian purposes alone, whereby UNMISS is not expected to play a role" (IASC, 2014, Background Note on, 1). The South Sudan Operational Peer Review also cites this agreement: "The HCT also endorsed a set of procedures/ground rules on access negotiations; these were sent to UNMISS staff to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities" (IASC. (2014, July 30). Internal Report: Response to the Crisis in South Sudan (Operational Peer Review), 9-10).

³⁰⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN on South Sudan, survey.

³⁰⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN on South Sudan, survey.

³⁰⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³⁰⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³⁰⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³¹⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³¹¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³¹² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³¹³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

³¹⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

humanitarian flights.³¹⁵ This sharing of responsibility potentially fuels the recorded confusion amongst humanitarian actors in South Sudan on ‘who does what’ for humanitarian negotiations. Moreover, relying on MLOs and other elements within UNMISS for humanitarian negotiations also creates the opportunity for UNMISS to influence the prioritisation of aid, as is demonstrated in the above example regarding UNMISS’ pressure on the humanitarian community to provide aid in Bentiu outside of the PoC site there.³¹⁶ It also jeopardises the perceived neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian action in South Sudan and contradicts the desire of humanitarian actors for greater distinction.³¹⁷ The state of confusion in South Sudan regarding the existence of a policy or agreement on humanitarian negotiations is especially discouraging in light of the July 2014 South Sudan Operational Peer Review’s documentation that the HCT had endorsed a “set of procedures/ground rules on access negotiations” which were to be “sent to UNMISS staff to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities”.³¹⁸

South Sudan also provides one example of how humanitarian actors are not necessarily able to influence decision-making to support humanitarian outcomes despite the assumed beneficial access and influence that integration arrangements afford. During negotiations between a UN humanitarian agency and non-state armed actors in Bentiu on the ability of the agency to repair roads and thereby facilitate the passage of relief items, the armed actors stated that they would attack the UN humanitarian agency if it attempted to use or repair the road.³¹⁹ In the non-state armed actors’ eyes, allowing any use of the road would have signalled to opposing forces—the SPLA—that they could use it to move troops into the contested territory.³²⁰ This information was shared with UNMISS, but UNMISS decided to travel on the road and was consequently attacked. Following the attack, tension between the non-state armed actor and the UN humanitarian agency delayed negotiations, which ultimately resulted in the agency successfully receiving guarantees that it could use the road to transport relief items.³²¹

9.G. Sudan (Darfur)

The Task Team recorded few opinions on how UN integration arrangements have impacted contact with parties to conflict in Darfur. Uniquely, however, one humanitarian actor noted that the parties to the conflict there often push humanitarian issues to the side during discussions, which she did not attribute to the integration arrangements.³²² Humanitarian actors noted that access to areas under the control of non-state armed actors in Darfur has been poor since the expulsion of international NGOs in 2009. Now, some NGOs have access to these areas, but UN humanitarian agencies only have intermittent access and have been unable to conduct assessments.³²³

³¹⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³¹⁶ See the section titled “Prioritisation of humanitarian activities”.

³¹⁷ Humanitarian actors have been calling for greater distinction between humanitarian and UNMISS activities since December 2013, survey and interviews. For other documented calls for distinction, see IASC, 2014, Background Note on, 1.

³¹⁸ IASC, 2014, July 30, Internal Report, 9-10.

³¹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³²⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³²¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

³²² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Sudan, interview. The de-prioritisation of humanitarian issues could be emblematic of historic sensitivities in Sudan surrounding humanitarian and human rights issues, but this is unclear.

³²³ Humanitarian actors who worked or are still working for the UN in Sudan, interviews.

Friction existed in the past between UNAMID and humanitarian actors regarding the roles and responsibilities for parties during humanitarian negotiations.³²⁴ One humanitarian actor emphasised that this tension was primarily due to the position of one UNAMID staff member.³²⁵ Another cited a conflict between UNAMID's Humanitarian Protection Strategy (HPS) Coordination Division and humanitarian actors as the core problem.³²⁶ Humanitarian actors felt that the primary function of the HPS Coordination Division should be to liaise with the HCT, while HPS staff felt they should lead UNAMID's 'humanitarian' work, such as humanitarian advocacy and the development of humanitarian policies and strategies.³²⁷ The impact of this conflict stretched outside of humanitarian negotiations. Sometimes UNAMID had its own ideas of what humanitarian actors' priorities should be and consequently developed its own initiatives that at times undermined the work of humanitarian and development actors.³²⁸ As an example of such an initiative, in 2011 UNAMID launched Operation Spring Basket to gain access to areas under the control of non-state armed actors in Darfur and deliver emergency aid.³²⁹ UNAMID representatives met with these armed actors and were told that access would be granted if humanitarian assistance was delivered (e.g., food and medical supplies).³³⁰ UNAMID—prior to consulting with humanitarian agencies—agreed that this assistance would be provided.³³¹ Subsequently, the agreement fell apart when the armed actors insisted that assistance must be delivered and prevented HCT members from conducting an assessment.³³²

In spite of the past tensions surrounding humanitarian negotiations, there now appears to be a good understanding between UNAMID and humanitarian actors regarding the separation of roles and responsibilities.³³³ Unity between the HC, HCT, OCHA, and individual organisations allowed humanitarian actors to overcome this tension and clarify appropriate points for UNAMID involvement (e.g., the provision of mission assets).³³⁴ Identifying one area of potential improvement, a person highlighted that UNAMID has contact with non-state armed actors, but it has not shared these contacts to help expand humanitarian access in Darfur.³³⁵ It is uncertain if this gap remains. The former RC/HC, with the support of OCHA, led humanitarian negotiations with non-state armed actors.³³⁶

10. Humanitarian advocacy

Only 36% of survey respondents (52 out of 143) knew of arrangements that have been made between humanitarian actors and a PKO or SPM concerning humanitarian advocacy, including public

³²⁴ Humanitarian actors who worked for the UN in Sudan, interviews.

³²⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³²⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview. For information on the HPS Coordination Division, see <http://www.unamid.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=11016&language=en-US>.

³²⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³²⁸ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³²⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview. For further information on the operations, see <http://unamid.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=11027&mid=14214&ItemID=17561>.

³³⁰ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³³¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³³² Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³³³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview. A DPKO staff member noted that improvements have been made between humanitarian actors and UNAMID on coordination, for instance, as is seen in the finalization of the 2014 ISF and implementation of UNAMID's PoC Strategy.

³³⁴ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³³⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

³³⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Sudan, interview.

communications on humanitarian issues. Of those, 54% (28 out of 52) were in senior leadership positions. 62% of respondents who were aware of such arrangements (32 out of 52) were part of an HCT, while 65% of respondents *who did not know* of any advocacy arrangements (59 out of 91) were non-HCT members (see Chart 13 in Appendix 2). Knowledge differences between staff from UN agencies, NGOs, and ‘other humanitarian organisations’ were minimal.

As demonstrated through the below details, arrangements related to advocacy can help support humanitarian goals when there is clear understanding of roles and responsibilities according to mandates. This observation mirrors the abovementioned positive impact that such collaboration and clarity can have on humanitarian negotiations and civil-military coordination. The UN Integration Steering Group’s 2011 study stated that “with a degree of trust and confidence, good leadership and effective processes and frameworks in place, [joint advocacy] efforts can be highly effective”.³³⁷ The views of humanitarian actors that were captured during the review echo this point.

Humanitarian actors identified a lack of humanitarian leadership or poor respect for existing arrangements as notable challenges for humanitarian advocacy. Furthermore, humanitarian actors noted that advocacy is politicised and weakened in several integrated settings. Either PKOs or SPMs take control of advocacy for political purposes, or they do not prioritise advocacy because of overarching political or security agendas. In this regard, one aspect that came up several times in the review is the role of SRSGs and DSRSG/RC/HCs in either supporting or undermining humanitarian advocacy. Previous research shows that “in some instances, individual mission leaders have sought to restrict humanitarian actors from speaking out on issues of concern at a time and in a manner of their choosing”.³³⁸ Also, this review shows that leaders seek to control the narrative on humanitarian issues to support their goals. The below section presents detailed information in support of these general observations surrounding humanitarian advocacy in integrated settings: Afghanistan, CAR, Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Iraq, Israel/oPt, South Sudan, Somalia, and Sudan (Darfur).³³⁹

10.A. Afghanistan

Humanitarian actors noted little information regarding arrangements on humanitarian advocacy in Afghanistan. One person stated that UNAMA and its Human Rights Unit lead advocacy on the topic of civilian protection.³⁴⁰ Additionally, there can be tension when other UNCT members “wish to engage publicly” using information that these actors have compiled.³⁴¹ Another person noted that there is advocacy around humanitarian needs through the cluster system, but there is not advocacy on access.³⁴² Outside of Kabul, UN humanitarian agencies “follow the lead of their respective HQs” regarding advocacy.³⁴³

No humanitarian actors noted an explicit agreement on the roles and responsibilities for humanitarian advocacy, nor did any express concerns about integration arrangements adversely impacting advocacy. One person expressed that advocacy on humanitarian needs is independent.³⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the

³³⁷ Metcalfe, et al.

³³⁸ Metcalfe, et al.

³³⁹ The Task Team did not record sufficient enough information for other contexts to include them in the review.

³⁴⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, survey.

³⁴¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, survey.

³⁴² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

³⁴³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Afghanistan, survey.

³⁴⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Afghanistan, interview.

absence of coordinated advocacy efforts and positions amongst all humanitarian actors is very problematic.

10.B. CAR

There is little information on advocacy arrangements in CAR, and similarly no one noted an agreement that sets out roles and responsibilities regarding humanitarian advocacy. The SHC, cluster coordinators, and civilian components of MINUSCA engage in humanitarian advocacy.³⁴⁵ OCHA established an inter-agency Advocacy Working Group, but participation in it is quite low due to competing time demands.³⁴⁶ UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs often adopt different advocacy approaches, however.³⁴⁷ For instance, NGOs in CAR are very cautious about how others perceive their engagement and relationship with MINUSCA and therefore avoid joint advocacy initiatives.³⁴⁸ The SHC was sensitive to these concerns and consequently ensured that advocacy messages were issued in the name of the HCT, including NGOs.³⁴⁹

The SHC's inclusion in the Senior Management Group on Protection (SMGP), the 'G5' (a forum for senior management of the mission—the SRSR, the two DSRSGs, SHC, and a representative of the HCT), and meetings with ambassadors of donor countries is beneficial for advocacy.³⁵⁰

10.C. Côte d'Ivoire

Humanitarian actors expressed mixed perspectives on who leads humanitarian advocacy in Côte d'Ivoire—either the SRSR or the DSRSG/RC/HC.³⁵¹ Some humanitarian actors noted that the SRSR merely supports humanitarian advocacy by echoing messages when necessary.³⁵² Humanitarian actors highlighted the SRSR's role in advocating on the May 2014 closure of the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, which stranded 35,000 refugees who were looking to return to the Côte d'Ivoire.³⁵³ In illustration of how political considerations can sway advocacy on humanitarian matters, though, one person expressed the belief that the SRSR was not willing to press the government on the matter for fear of being viewed as intervening in governmental affairs.³⁵⁴

In light of the above mixed views on the involvement of the SRSR and DSRSG/RC/HC, it appears that there is not a clear agreement on roles and responsibilities regarding humanitarian advocacy.

10.D. DRC

MONUSCO has a significant advocacy voice and uses it to promote human rights and the protection of civilians.³⁵⁵ However, the absence of a formal agreement that lays out the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian actors and MONUSCO has led to tension and potentially harmed principled humanitarian action. Some humanitarian actors note that it is important to keep the communication of MONUSCO

³⁴⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

³⁴⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁴⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

³⁴⁸ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and an NGO in CAR, interview and survey.

³⁴⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁵⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

³⁵¹ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, survey.

³⁵² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, survey.

³⁵³ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, survey.

³⁵⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, interview.

³⁵⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

and the HCT separate, particularly in light of the FIB's operations.³⁵⁶ Conversely, others note the importance of being alongside MONUSCO staff during public briefings to field questions on humanitarian matters, rather than leave them to MONUSCO staff; the MONUSCO weekly press briefing is one example where a joint presence is deemed beneficial.³⁵⁷ One humanitarian actor noted that MONUSCO and the HCT understand this importance well, including when it comes to MONUSCO's actions to 'win hearts and minds'.³⁵⁸ The majority opinion was to the contrary, however.

Humanitarian actors stated that they continue to ask MONUSCO to abstain from reporting on humanitarian issues and refer them to existing civil-military guidelines regarding the matter.³⁵⁹ They particularly feel that there is a need to clarify the SRSG's involvement in humanitarian advocacy and thereby ensure that the SRSG does not make statements on humanitarian matters.³⁶⁰ The SRSG's statement in mid-2014 that the situation in Katanga was a humanitarian catastrophe, for instance, was not made in consultation with the HCT.³⁶¹ The statement was accurate. Nonetheless, having come from the SRSG, people dismissed it because it was perceived to be based on political motives.³⁶² Humanitarian actors view the statement, while being well-intentioned, as having undermined efforts that they could have taken to address the situation.³⁶³

The review also recorded concern regarding issues that straddle lines of responsibility, such as protection.³⁶⁴ For instance, in early 2015 the DSRSG for Rule of Law accused a non-state armed actor through a press release of hindering activities in North Kivu Province.³⁶⁵ Following the public statement, an NGO working in the area at the time was attacked.³⁶⁶ It is unclear if the attack stemmed from the statement, but the lack of coordination breeds mistrust.³⁶⁷ There was also concern about the role of the DSRSG/RC/HC when it comes to advocacy on protection matters. For example, a humanitarian actor noted that the DSRSG/RC/HC had requested at one point to approve cluster-led advocacy, a request that was seen as problematic because it challenged the clusters' ability to safeguard independence for issues, such as protection, that implicate MONUSCO.³⁶⁸ The DSRSG/RC/HC took this step to mitigate negative consequences that could result from contested public statements.³⁶⁹ This example highlights the need for good practices—outside of UN integration matters—that help ensure a balance between coordination and independence. While there may be sensitivities about an HC's 'approval' of cluster-developed advocacy strategies, regardless if the HC is triple-hatted or not, these advocacy strategies should support the humanitarian program cycle and be closely coordinated with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Mechanism and the HC/HCT.

³⁵⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁵⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁵⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁵⁹ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in DRC, interviews.

³⁶⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶⁶ The NGO has since not been able to restart operations. Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁶⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, survey.

³⁶⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

There is also concern that weekly press conferences conducted jointly by MONUSCO and OCHA place humanitarian actors too close to the PKO and blur the distinction between political and humanitarian messages.³⁷⁰ In addition, MONUSCO’s wording in public statements can be troublesome. For example, MONUSCO clearly attributes actions to itself in public statements when it seeks to highlight that it has done something well, yet it refers to the “UN system” whenever there are setbacks or accusations made against it.³⁷¹

The efficacy of DRC’s Humanitarian Advocacy Group—a mechanism that humanitarian actors and MONUSCO staff could use to address these concerns—is debated. According to some, the group does not discuss advocacy,³⁷² rather, it serves as a forum to provide updates on the attending agencies’ activities.³⁷³ Furthermore, the HCT has as of yet not taken up this shortcoming.³⁷⁴ An opposing view is that it has produced advocacy messages targeted towards MONUSCO, armed groups, humanitarian actors, civil society, development actors, and the government of DRC.³⁷⁵

10.E. Iraq

There was confusion surrounding humanitarian advocacy, which was at times led by UNAMI, until the establishment of an OCHA office and increased staffing.³⁷⁶ The OCHA Head of Office’s and DSRSG/RC/HC’s leadership on humanitarian advocacy following this transition has been encouraging. Humanitarian actors also view the SRS’s senior management meetings as beneficial for coordination on advocacy matters.³⁷⁷

10.F. Israel/oPt

Humanitarian actors in Israel/oPt are concerned about their long-term inability to lead advocacy. The review noted there is “an understanding that UNSCO should reference humanitarian actors for humanitarian advocacy”.³⁷⁸ Humanitarian actors expressed conflicting views, nonetheless, on if UNSCO systematically consults with humanitarian actors when necessary, for instance, on Security Council or other high-level messaging on humanitarian matters.³⁷⁹ One person noted that OCHA is able to provide input for UNSCO’s monthly briefings to the Security Council as long as information is based upon evidence.³⁸⁰ Another person emphasised that consultations are not systematic.³⁸¹ For instance, humanitarian actors were not able to submit information regarding conditions in Area C for one of UNSCO’s reports to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC).³⁸² Concerns also exist that when consultations are carried out, information that humanitarian actors provide may not be taken on board for unclear reasons.³⁸³ The report to the AHLC is a consolidated UN report that includes contributions

³⁷⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁷¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

³⁷² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

³⁷³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

³⁷⁴ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

³⁷⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁷⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Iraq, interview.

³⁷⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Iraq, survey.

³⁷⁸ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, survey.

³⁷⁹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, survey.

³⁸⁰ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁸¹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁸² Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview. Area C is the area of the West Bank that is under full Israeli civil and security control.

³⁸³ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

from UN humanitarian agencies.³⁸⁴ Since not all contributions are incorporated, there is a need for clear communication on the rationale for exclusion of information and dialogue on the involved actors' expectations.³⁸⁵

Similar to observations in DRC, humanitarian actors stated that challenges in the functioning of Israel/oPt's Advocacy Working Group hindered their ability to properly coordinate with UNSCO.³⁸⁶ These challenges included past inadequate liaison between the Advocacy Working Group and UNSCO and the continued absence of a system to review UNSCO messaging.³⁸⁷ Poor review of UNSCO messages prior to their release persists despite the participation of the DSC/RC/HC in the working group.³⁸⁸ As one person noted, the Advocacy Working Group is a fora for debate and dialogue, but not for actual policy or advocacy work.³⁸⁹

According to some, it is difficult to get the UN leadership, including the DSRSG/RC/HC, to take strong humanitarian positions.³⁹⁰ For instance, in October 2013 the DSC/RC/HC cancelled an advocacy activity that the working group planned, and he objected to the working group's key messaging regarding collective punishment and the fifth anniversary of the Gaza blockade.³⁹¹ The DSC/RC/HC took these actions due to security concerns and the desire to avoid any unnecessary provocation of the Israeli military.³⁹² Additionally, the DSC/RC/HC has not shared UNSCO messages with the working group for their input.³⁹³ One person noted the impression that the DSC/RC/HC is not free to lead humanitarian advocacy, potentially in part because the SC's office leads on the matter.³⁹⁴ There also is no guarantee that UNSCO will take on board comments from humanitarian actors, nor is there a commitment that UNSCO's messaging will not contradict agreed messaging from the humanitarian community.³⁹⁵ A potential compromise to address disagreements on humanitarian advocacy has been put in place: the Advocacy Working Group assembles a list of messages from which the DSC/RC/HC chooses.³⁹⁶ This appears to have satisfied humanitarian actors while also ensuring that the DSC/RC/HC's desire to use messages that are aligned with political constraints is fulfilled.³⁹⁷

Some humanitarian actors stated that solutions will inevitably be political, yet they were dismayed with their inability to have frank dialogue with UNSCO and follow-up on agreed advocacy points.³⁹⁸ For instance, while there was lively debate within the Advocacy Working Group during Israel's Operation Protective Edge in 2014, they stated that the response was unexpectedly weak.³⁹⁹ One person put it simply: you leave the meeting thinking that we have agreed on a course of action and then later hear

³⁸⁴ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁸⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁸⁶ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁸⁷ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁸⁸ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁸⁹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹⁰ Humanitarian actors, survey and interviews.

³⁹¹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹² Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁹³ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹⁴ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹⁵ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁹⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

³⁹⁸ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

³⁹⁹ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

that a decision has been taken to the contrary.⁴⁰⁰ There is an impression that UNSCO leaders, including the DSC/RC/HC, consequently make decisions in isolation and not in line with the wishes of the humanitarian community. Conversely, others highlighted that OCHA and the DSC/RC/HC worked closely on advocacy and media engagements during Operation Protective Edge.⁴⁰¹ Humanitarian actors recognise that there are disagreements on advocacy approaches due to the political nature of the conflict in Israel/oPt, but the issuing of humanitarian statements that conflict with the interests of humanitarian actors is unsettling.⁴⁰²

The above concerns regarding the independence of humanitarian advocacy may have developed more recently. Under the previous DSC/RC/HC, OCHA was in the lead on humanitarian advocacy, and the system around advocacy was predictable and transparent.⁴⁰³ Furthermore, previous coordination with the SC in Israel/oPt and other UN agencies allowed OCHA to strengthen and add nuance to its messaging, while remaining independent.⁴⁰⁴

10.G. Somalia

In Somalia, humanitarian actors lead humanitarian advocacy and are looking to coordinate with UNSOM to develop an agreement that will set roles and responsibilities for advocacy and public communications.⁴⁰⁵ Humanitarian actors see the DSRSG/RC/HC as their voice on a range of advocacy issues, but they believe that the SRSG could increase his efforts to address humanitarian challenges.⁴⁰⁶ It is unclear to what extent or through which methods humanitarian actors in Somalia think the SRSG should help address humanitarian challenges. These factors are important in light of continual concerns, as expressed in this report, regarding the need for greater distinction between humanitarian action and political or military efforts.

Communications or public information heads come together from humanitarian agencies, UNSOM, and the SRSG's office regularly under the umbrella of the UN Information Group—a practice that existed before the formulation of UNSOM.⁴⁰⁷ Through this group, humanitarian actors provide inputs for messaging and have been working with UNSOM to develop common messaging and a communications campaign.⁴⁰⁸ Due to short deadlines, however, humanitarian actors are not always able to provide advocacy points.⁴⁰⁹ There is a need for better coordination and communication flow to rectify this shortcoming.⁴¹⁰ The group would also benefit if the HCT provided guidance on objectives or messages, more senior staff participated, the group disseminated key advocacy messages, and the group regularly shared discussion notes.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁰ Humanitarian actor working in Israel/oPt, interview.

⁴⁰¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁰² Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Israel/oPt, interview.

⁴⁰³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview, referring to Maxwell Gaylard.

⁴⁰⁴ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

⁴⁰⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey.

⁴⁰⁶ Researcher working on Somalia, interview.

⁴⁰⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey and interview.

⁴⁰⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey.

⁴⁰⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey.

⁴¹⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, survey.

⁴¹¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Somalia, interview.

10.H. South Sudan

Humanitarian actors expressed strong frustration on the lack of respect for roles and responsibilities regarding humanitarian advocacy in South Sudan. This included UNMISS statements that publicly aim to influence and direct humanitarian action, internal UNMISS communications on humanitarian matters, and a perceived condescending and dismissive approach by senior leadership.⁴¹² Previous disagreements between humanitarian actors and UNMISS on public communications resulted in an HCT memo that clearly outlined roles and responsibilities and noted that UNMISS would refrain from public statements on humanitarian matters.⁴¹³ For instance, the memo states that UNMISS staff should not “[s]peak publically or report on behalf of the humanitarian community about the humanitarian situation in South Sudan”, nor should they “[s]peak publically or report about the work of aid agencies inside or outside UNMISS bases”.⁴¹⁴ However, the current SRSG does not respect this memo, as well as the leadership role that the DSRSG/RC/HC should be taking on humanitarian advocacy.⁴¹⁵ There also are concerns that the DSRSG/RC/HC is now hesitant or unable to address the above conflicts between UNMISS staff and humanitarian actors, as well as support popularly-held advocacy points, due to the SRSG’s undermining of his position.⁴¹⁶ If correct, this creates a serious challenge for humanitarian advocacy on more contentious issues involving UNMISS (e.g., the PoC sites and the need for a greater UNMISS presence in opposition-held territories).

The review also recorded concerns outside of Juba, where there is even less clarity on roles and responsibilities. UNMISS State Coordinators, because of their considerable seniority, tend to advocate and formulate messages on humanitarian issues.⁴¹⁷ To address this concern, OCHA is working to increase the seniority of its field-based staff in key locations.⁴¹⁸

Humanitarian actors also noted hesitance amongst UNMISS staff to speak out regarding protection issues (e.g., the recruitment of child soldiers).⁴¹⁹ Additional challenges affecting humanitarian advocacy in South Sudan include humanitarian actors’ lack of capacity and poor knowledge of peacekeeping matters, including leadership structures.⁴²⁰

10.I. Sudan (Darfur)

There is no formal agreement in Sudan that delineates roles and responsibilities, but there is a clear understanding that the HC and HCT, with OCHA support, lead on humanitarian advocacy.⁴²¹ Both UNAMID and humanitarian actors want to ensure distinction between their public communications.⁴²²

⁴¹² Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in South Sudan, survey and interviews. See the section “Prioritisation of humanitarian activities” above for examples of UNMISS public communications on humanitarian matters.

⁴¹³ Humanitarian actors working for an NGO in South Sudan, interviews.

⁴¹⁴ Examples of Dos and Don’ts on Humanitarian Access Negotiations and Reporting. (HCT memo). (2014).

⁴¹⁵ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in South Sudan, interviews.

⁴¹⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴¹⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁴¹⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁴¹⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁴²¹ Humanitarian actors who worked for the UN in Sudan, interviews.

⁴²² Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

When there have been disagreements about humanitarian related information (e.g., the number of IDPs), UNAMID has agreed to rely on HCT or OCHA data.⁴²³

Learning from concerns that were raised prior to 2012, OCHA and UNAMID Public Information Officers (and occasionally more senior leadership) coordinate before the release of statements that cover humanitarian issues.⁴²⁴ The HCT regularly meets to discuss its coordination with UNAMID, and joint UNAMID-HCT meetings are held every few weeks to discuss issues, including advocacy.⁴²⁵ The result of these meetings has been mixed, though.⁴²⁶ Achievements were relatively small and strategic concerns have never been resolved.⁴²⁷ Some humanitarian actors have wanted coordinated advocacy and communications, including joint statements, but UNAMID often acts on its own.⁴²⁸

11. Coordination to address protection concerns

The review captured information on coordination to address protection concerns through its examination of information sharing. 41% of survey respondents (57 out of 143) were aware of arrangements that have been made between humanitarian actors and a PKO or SPM concerning information sharing. While the difference in knowledge between UN, NGO, and 'other humanitarian organisation' staff was minimal, membership in an HCT again appeared to be a factor in one's awareness: 58% of respondents who were aware of an agreement (33 out of 57) were HCT members, and 64% of respondents who were not aware of arrangements (55 out of 86) were non-HCT members (see Chart 14 in Appendix 2). Participants in senior leadership roles comprised 46% of respondents who were aware of such arrangements (26 out of 57).

Perspectives on information sharing draw attention to concerns surrounding humanitarian actors' inability to maintain shared protection priorities and analysis with a PKO or SPM. They also illustrate a need for better coordination and information sharing on protection issues. These arrangements should be established also to ensure dissemination of information amongst humanitarian actors. PKOs should emulate the practice of maintaining an SMGP to bring together high-level leadership on the topic. Furthermore, they should examine the functioning of coordination fora, such as the SMGP, to ensure that they function as intended, as well as how they can support dissemination of information to relevant actors. As described below, the existence of meetings and groups does not guarantee results and can create tension that will harm coordination and principled humanitarian action if they are ineffective.

Even when mechanisms are in place, humanitarian actors are reluctant to share information with political and military actors, especially when it relates to protection concerns. Research conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council reinforces this observation: "Uncertainties about how information is used and shared between the humanitarian/human rights actors on one hand and the political/military components of the mission on the other could jeopardise the information-sharing mechanisms fundamental to effective humanitarian response".⁴²⁹ Not having clear policies that spell out how information is shared and who owns the data adds to the problem.

⁴²³ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Sudan, survey.

⁴²⁵ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁶ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁷ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁸ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Sudan, interview.

⁴²⁹ Glad, 5.

The remainder of this section provides detailed insights that humanitarian actors provided regarding information sharing in CAR, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Haiti, Iraq, Israel/oPt, Kosovo, Somalia, and South Sudan.⁴³⁰

11.A. CAR

The DSRSG for Political affairs convenes the SMGP, which consists of the MINUSCA Force Commander, MINUSCA section heads, the SHC, and heads of OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, and the Protection Cluster Coordinator.⁴³¹ Humanitarian actors view this group as effective and beginning to play a role in translating strategic direction into action.⁴³² The SHC also attends weekly meetings with the SRSR and DSRSG/RC to share humanitarian concerns.⁴³³

HCT members regularly exchange information with MINUSCA outside of this group, but some NGOs do not wish to be associated with these efforts.⁴³⁴ The importance of information sharing between the Protection Cluster and the PKO is ingrained, for instance, through MINUSCA's PoC strategy and the Protection Cluster's sharing of information through a "protection matrix".⁴³⁵ Humanitarian actors see room for improvement in MINUSCA's current level of information sharing, however.⁴³⁶ The HCT is aware of the need to develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) on information sharing.⁴³⁷

Some humanitarian actors noted that information sharing has improved overall awareness in CAR, but not resulted in better collaboration to address protection gaps that could benefit from MINUSCA's assistance (e.g., escorted evacuation and increased security patrols for Muslims who are isolated in Boda and Yaloke).⁴³⁸ Some also said that they had not been able to address concerns about MINUSCA forces prohibiting the migration of Muslims from certain areas, such as Boda, amplifying a humanitarian crisis.⁴³⁹ One person emphasised the gravity of the situation: "We literally have peacekeepers, aid workers, and journalists watching these people starve to death".⁴⁴⁰ The concerns about shortcomings in protection coordination and shared protection priorities with MINUSCA may be linked to the lengthy delay in establishing and staffing MINUSCA's PoC Unit, as well as the absence of NGOs from PoC discussions; the arrival of MINUSCA's Senior Protection Advisor in April 2015 should help to address some of these gaps.⁴⁴¹

11.B. Côte d'Ivoire

There has been regular coordination between humanitarian actors and the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to share information on protection issues.⁴⁴² Additionally, UNOCI copies the UNCT on the daily

⁴³⁰ The Task Team did not record sufficient enough information for other contexts to include them in the review.

⁴³¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³⁵ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in CAR, interview.

⁴³⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in CAR, survey.

⁴³⁹ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in CAR, survey.

⁴⁴⁰ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in CAR, survey.

⁴⁴¹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in CAR, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁴² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, survey.

situation reports that it submits to New York.⁴⁴³ Although information sharing is good, it has not resulted in strategic coordination.⁴⁴⁴

11.C. DRC

Information sharing and coordination in the DRC has resulted in better understanding about the mandates of humanitarian actors and MONUSCO staff.⁴⁴⁵ Additionally, there is a feeling that joint analysis between MONUSCO and humanitarian actors on protection has had a significant impact.⁴⁴⁶ However, knowledge gaps remain regarding humanitarian principles, humanitarian access, and the different forms of security management that the actors use.⁴⁴⁷ Some stated that coordination on protection matters (described below) is more oriented towards supporting MONUSCO's objectives and workplan rather than common protection concerns.⁴⁴⁸ Others, conversely, said that humanitarian actors benefit overwhelmingly from this coordination.⁴⁴⁹

Coordination and information sharing on protection in DRC closely resembles practices in CAR. The SRSG convenes an SMGP that has improved information sharing and coordination and receives support from the Protection Cluster and the Civil-Military Coordination Group.⁴⁵⁰ In the past, the SMGP had an irregular schedule, which was a challenge.⁴⁵¹ Staff from OCHA, UNICEF, the Protection Cluster, and MONUSCO's sections and force convene a Protection Working Group to discuss PoC matters and set the agenda for SMGP meetings.⁴⁵² Similar to CAR, some NGOs do not wish to be associated with information sharing.⁴⁵³ Because of overall concerns about the sensitivity of protection related information, MONUSCO receives a focused protection matrix that identifies issues requiring coordination.⁴⁵⁴

Information sharing and coordination on protection also occurs outside of Kinshasa through the SMGP-Provincial (SMGP-P). The SMGP-P meets at a provincial level every two weeks and includes the MONUSCO Head of Office, DPKO commander, and UN humanitarian actors (e.g., from OCHA, UNHCR, and UNICEF).⁴⁵⁵ The Protection Working Group deals with SMGP-P matters that require higher attention from the SMGP.⁴⁵⁶

11.D. Haiti

Information sharing between humanitarian actors and the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) appears to be quite limited. The NGO Coordination Committee shares information with MINUSTAH.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁴³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, interview.

⁴⁴⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Cote d'Ivoire, interview.

⁴⁴⁵ Humanitarian actors working for the UN and NGOs in DRC, survey and interviews.

⁴⁴⁶ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in DRC, interview.

⁴⁴⁷ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in DRC, survey and interview.

⁴⁴⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback collected on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁴⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁵⁰ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in DRC, interviews.

⁴⁵¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, feedback collected on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁵² Humanitarian actors working for the UN in DRC, feedback collected on the initial draft of the review and an interview.

⁴⁵³ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in DRC, interview.

⁴⁵⁴ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in the DRC, feedback collected on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁵⁵ Humanitarian actors working for the UN in DRC, survey.

⁴⁵⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in the DRC, feedback collected on the initial draft of the review.

⁴⁵⁷ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Haiti, interview.

Disconnects between MINUSTAH and humanitarian actors (e.g., NGOs are not able to access MINUSTAH's Joint Operations Centre (JOC)) likely contribute to poor coordination.⁴⁵⁸

11.E. Iraq

There appear to be no specific coordination mechanisms to share information between humanitarians and UNAMI staff.⁴⁵⁹ However, being co-located with UNAMI staff has facilitated interaction and information sharing.⁴⁶⁰

11.F. Israel/oPt

UNSCO staff provide briefings to the HCT on political developments and projections. In one example, UNSCO advised humanitarian actors on how to formulate the annual report on Children and Armed Conflict.⁴⁶¹ It is unclear, though, if there are coordination mechanisms focused on information sharing in support of protection.

11.G. Kosovo

Information sharing between UN humanitarian agencies and staff from the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Kosovo Force (KFOR) occurs through regular meetings that address protection and urgent matters.⁴⁶² The meetings between UNMIK, KFOR, and UN agencies are taking place once a month or more when needed.⁴⁶³

11.H. Somalia

Humanitarian actors are concerned about the safety of sharing information and the absence of structures to pull together protection-related information in Somalia.⁴⁶⁴ The establishment of a Civilian Casualties Tracking, Analysis, and Response Cell (CCTARC) within AMISOM—an initiative that has faced considerable delays—is promising because of its potential to contribute to the protection of civilians.⁴⁶⁵

11.I. South Sudan

Coordination and information sharing on protection in South Sudan occurs through multiple forums and mechanisms that are unclear and confusing for humanitarian actors.⁴⁶⁶ Some humanitarian actors noted that information sharing has improved since December 2013, but they still categorise it as 'poor'.⁴⁶⁷ At the same time, there is a general feeling that humanitarian information should not be shared with UNMISS.⁴⁶⁸ Humanitarian actors share information with military actors within UNMISS on a case by case

⁴⁵⁸ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Haiti, interview.

⁴⁵⁹ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Iraq, interview.

⁴⁶⁰ Humanitarian actor who worked for the UN in Iraq, interview.

⁴⁶¹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in Israel/oPt, interview.

⁴⁶² Humanitarian actor working for an 'other humanitarian organisation' in Kosovo, survey.

⁴⁶³ Humanitarian actor working for an 'other humanitarian organization' in Kosovo, survey.

⁴⁶⁴ Humanitarian actors working on Somalia, survey and interview.

⁴⁶⁵ Humanitarian actor working for an NGO in Kenya, survey.

⁴⁶⁶ Humanitarian actors working in South Sudan, survey and interviews.

⁴⁶⁷ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan and a researcher working on South Sudan, survey and interview.

⁴⁶⁸ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

basis.⁴⁶⁹ Due to past complaints that UNMISS misused or shared confidential information, humanitarian actors will not share sensitive protection information (e.g., SGBV).⁴⁷⁰

Information sharing has not allowed humanitarian actors to establish shared protection priorities with UNMISS.⁴⁷¹ An additional concern amongst humanitarian actors is that UNMISS' PoC strategy has not clarified how information is shared, who is responsible for sharing, and who owns information.⁴⁷² These feelings about the inadequacy of information sharing persist despite the clear existence of forums to share information. Disappointment in collaboration potentially stems from 1) what appear to be disconnects between humanitarian actors and UNMISS on contextual analyses, 2) humanitarian actors' poor internal relaying of information, 3) UNMISS' persistent attempts to influence the prioritisation of aid, and 4) the inability of UNMISS to expand its operations to opposition-held territories. Poor information sharing occurs outside of Juba and UNMISS' PoC sites due to low capacity.⁴⁷³

The South Sudan NGO Forum holds monthly meetings to share information with UNMISS' RRP.⁴⁷⁴ UNMISS' Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC) also attempts to ensure the sharing of information.⁴⁷⁵ Various other sections within UNMISS (e.g., Recovery, Reintegration, and Peacebuilding (RRP) and Early Warning) regularly provide information to the Protection Cluster.⁴⁷⁶ RRP has played a significant role interfacing between humanitarian actors and UNMISS staff on matters (e.g., protection and coordination) in the PoC sites.⁴⁷⁷ Regular protection discussions occur through weekly SMGP meetings that include UN humanitarian agencies, similar to CAR and DRC.⁴⁷⁸ Humanitarian actors who attend the meeting in turn provide discuss information to the HCT "usually in the form of context briefings".⁴⁷⁹ Humanitarian actors (e.g., from the Protection Cluster) also have access to UNMISS' JOC.⁴⁸⁰

12. Recommendations

The main purpose of UN integration is to maximise individual and collective efforts of the various components of the UN system to consolidate peace.⁴⁸¹ Consequently, the UN IAP Policy notes that humanitarian action is "likely to remain outside the scope of integration, which can, at times, challenge the ability of UN humanitarian actors to deliver according to humanitarian principles".⁴⁸² Indeed, the UN IAP Policy does not prescribe specific integration arrangements. Instead, it states that the "structural configuration of the UN integrated presence should reflect specific requirements, circumstances and mandates and can therefore take different forms".⁴⁸³ While the policy makes it clear that humanitarian

⁴⁶⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁰ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷¹ Humanitarian actors working for NGOs in South Sudan, interviews.

⁴⁷² Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷³ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁴ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁵ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁶ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁷ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁷⁸ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁴⁷⁹ Humanitarian actor working for the UN in South Sudan, survey.

⁴⁸⁰ Researcher working on South Sudan, interview.

⁴⁸¹ United Nations Secretary-General. (2008, June 26). Decision No. 2008/24: Decisions of the Secretary-General – 25 June meeting of the Policy Committee.

⁴⁸² United Nations. (2013, April 9). Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning. Retrieved from:

⁴⁸³ UN, 2013, Policy on Integrated.

action may need to remain separate, the review presents evidence that there is insufficient implementation and knowledge of the UN IAP Policy and persistent confusion over the distinction between the roles of humanitarian actors and PKOs and SPMs.

Familiarity with UN integration policy and guidance is extremely low amongst humanitarian actors, adding to the problem. For instance, humanitarian actors are not aware of the role that they should be playing in the risk analysis stage of Strategic Assessments, nor are they aware that new Strategic Assessments may be undertaken when following significant changes in a context or prior to substantial changes in a PKO's or SPM's mandate.

The review found that humanitarian actors somewhat recognise the practical benefits of coordination with PKOs and SPMs at the strategic level. The review presents evidence of good practices where humanitarian actors are coordinating with PKOs or SPMs in the context of integration arrangements to ensure clarity of mandates and roles and to support humanitarian outcomes, for example, to enhance the protection of civilians. At the same time, the review highlights practices that should—and can—improve. In light of the review's findings, the Task Team proposes the below recommendations to safeguard and support humanitarian action in contexts where UN integration policy applies. The recommendations apply to humanitarian actors' relationships with non-UN PKOs, such as AMISOM, in these contexts. It is important to note that these recommendations necessitate a pro-active role on the part of humanitarian actors themselves. The recommendations are in line with, and build upon, the 2011 HPG/Stimson Center report and the IASC Principals' paper "UN integration and humanitarian space: building a framework for flexibility". They also aim to strengthen implementation of the UN IAP Policy and the guidance provided through the UN IAP Handbook.

A. Increase familiarity with the UN IAP Policy, principled humanitarian action, the roles of PKOs and SPMs, and guidance on UN integration. The IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action will explore measures and strategies to increase familiarity with UN integration policy and guidance (e.g., through webinars and presentations) and principled humanitarian action and detail these in an action plan. The action plan should prioritise familiarity of HCT members with integration policy and guidance so that they can actively shape integrated UN presences in a manner that is conducive to humanitarian operations.

Senior humanitarian representatives, HCTs, NGO consortia, clusters, and UN agencies should individually and jointly disseminate policies and guidance, use opportunities that arise to clarify aspects of the UN IAP Policy, provide technical support to field operations, and incorporate integration policies and guidance into policies, coordination, planning, and regular practices in integrated settings. IAP briefings during senior leadership inductions should ideally be expanded to include inductions for relevant HQ colleagues based in Rome and Geneva.

The EDG—on its missions and through the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team (STAIT)—should support HCTs' reflection on their relationships with PKOs or SPMs, as well as integration policy, guidance, and good practices.

DPKO, DPA, and other non-humanitarian actors affected by UN integration should additionally ensure dissemination and compliance with the policy and guidance by their staff.

B. Reinforce the HCT role to pro-actively and continuously shape the integrated UN presence. HCT members should systematically analyse and monitor the impact—positive and negative—of

integration arrangements on principled humanitarian action and report key developments to their HCs and respective IASC Principals, including suggestions for supporting advantages and mitigating risks. HCTs should also hold regular discussions on the management of relationships with PKOs and SPMs and develop practical coordination mechanisms and policies for engagement with PKOs and SPMs that go beyond the broad guidance of the UN IAP. Every effort should be made to ensure that the HCT environment is conducive to raising and solving critical and problematic issues affecting humanitarian action. Additionally, the HCT should have the resources necessary to ensure adequate engagement on UN integration matters.

C. Raise integration related concerns to the IASC Principals and the IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action. The IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Humanitarian Action, in consultation with HCTs, will track the implementation of UN integration policy and country-specific arrangements to engage on issues of concern in a timely manner; the Task Team will report these issues to the IASC Principals and Working Group, along with analysis that will allow for lessons learned. These issues will include the failure to complete Strategic Assessments and the effects of integration arrangements on principled humanitarian action (e.g., on humanitarian access, advocacy, and negotiations and the overall politicisation of aid). To facilitate monitoring, the IASC Principals should encourage their respective HCT members to raise issues of concern to their respective Principals and Task Team representatives. HCT members should use the IASC Principals as a forum to take collective action when the concerns cannot be addressed through the HC or HCT. This is consistent with the Principals' December 2014 agreement to "communicate problems posed for humanitarian action by integrated missions to the ERC, with copy to other colleagues".⁴⁸⁴ This will likewise support the Principals' December 2014 commitment to follow-up on integration related concerns during visits to the countries in question.⁴⁸⁵ The IASC also should systematically include the impact of integration arrangements in the annual EDG operations review.

HCTs should include analysis and monitoring of the impact of integration on humanitarian action, as well as the relationship between humanitarian actors and their respective PKO or SPM, in their monthly reports to the ERC.

D. Ensure full and consistent implementation of the UN IAP Policy, in particular the conduct of Strategic Assessments when warranted. The UN ISG should ensure the full and consistent implementation of all components of the UN IAP Policy.

The Secretary-General should ensure that Strategic Assessments are carried out prior to decisions on UN integration arrangements, as well as following significant changes in a context and/or prior to substantial changes in a mandate of a PKO or SPM.

The ERC should support implementation of the UN IAP Policy and the Principals' 2013 statement on UN integration by asking that Strategic Assessments—including risk analyses that are inclusive of

⁴⁸⁴ IASC. (2014, December 9). IASC Principals Meeting: Final Summary and Action Points. Retrieved from: <http://www.interaction.org/sites/default/files/16012015Final%20Summary%20Record%20IASC%20Principals%20%20December%202014.pdf>

⁴⁸⁵ IASC. (2014, December 9). IASC Principals Meeting: Final Summary and Action Points. Retrieved from: <http://www.interaction.org/sites/default/files/16012015Final%20Summary%20Record%20IASC%20Principals%20%20December%202014.pdf>

humanitarian considerations—are completed before any structural arrangements involving triple-hatting HCs.

Strategic Assessments should be conducted as early as possible and include consultations with all key humanitarian actors (e.g., NGOs).

In addition, there are currently a number of integrated presences where changed mandates or operational contexts warrant new Strategic Assessments in order to identify the need for potential adjustments in the UN approach, including integration arrangements. Additionally, in some contexts Strategic Assessments were never conducted. While some contexts might merit a full Strategic Assessment, others might benefit from focused engagement to identify concerns and appropriate mitigating measures. The IASC Working Group should determine the identification and prioritisation of countries requiring focused attention in this regard. OCHA, together with UN humanitarian agencies, should lead a process to prioritise and coordinate efforts, including through its representation of the humanitarian community in ITFs and the ISG, in this regard.

E. Improve communication on and understanding of roles and responsibilities for humanitarian negotiations and advocacy on humanitarian issues. With the support of OCHA, HCTs should help ensure that humanitarian actors and their respective PKOs or SPMs in integrated settings understand the roles and responsibilities for humanitarian negotiations and advocacy on humanitarian issues to safeguard principled humanitarian action. It should be clear that humanitarian actors, not PKOs or SPMs, are responsible for humanitarian negotiations and advocacy. HCTs should also explore methods to secure appropriate support from PKOs and SPMs (e.g., sharing of PKOs' and SPMs' contacts and actor analyses with humanitarian actors).

F. Improve coordination on humanitarian access matters. Where appropriate, HCTs should develop country-specific humanitarian access strategies with the support of OCHA. Access strategies should safeguard impartiality, independence, and neutrality (e.g., from pressure to support stabilisation agendas) and identify geographical areas that require devoted attention due to unmet humanitarian needs and access challenges. Development of access strategies should be tied to other relevant strategies (e.g., HRPs and HCT protection frameworks) and identify, amongst other things:

- The rationale for expanded access (e.g., provision of assistance or protection through presence);
- Specific barriers to access and the methods necessary to overcome them;
- Risks and benefits associated with methods to expand access (dialogue with certain armed actors, the use of armed escorts, etc.), drawing on the comparative advantages that different humanitarian actors bring, thereby creating a complementary set of approaches focused on the totality of needs across geographic areas;
- Necessary coordination mechanisms between the HCT and the PKO or SPM to support humanitarian access (e.g., use of a dedicated working group or unit); and
- Required additional resources (e.g., dedicated OCHA staff to handle access discussions with armed groups).

Humanitarian actors should consistently and concertedly utilise context-specific mechanisms to support an HCT's collective work and allow for improved coordination with PKOs or SPMs on relevant access

matters. Methods to maximise the impact of these mechanisms could include ensuring NGO representation (local, international, and consortia).

Access strategies and mechanisms should support, not infringe on, the operational independence of NGOs and UN humanitarian agencies.

G. Improve coordination and information sharing on protection. HCs and HCTs need to examine the state of integrated coordination and information sharing in their settings to ascertain if they are functioning effectively. All mechanisms should ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information. In locations where there are high risks that sensitive information could be misused, safeguards must be put in place, including the possibility that such information is not shared. Modalities should be determined to ensure appropriate and effective engagement by HCTs and Protection Clusters/Working Groups with PKOs or SPMs, which afford NGOs opportunities to engage directly in discussions if they chose to do so and include mechanisms or processes for appropriate and safe information sharing with PKOs and SPMs. Furthermore, HCs and HCTs need to explore future opportunities to share information and coordinate with PKOs and SPMs in support of protection outcomes. HCs, with the support of the Protection Cluster and key protection agencies, should take a leadership role in ensuring that effective coordination on protection occurs. The Global Protection Cluster’s (GPC) “Diagnostic Tool and Guidance on the InterAction between field Protection Clusters and UN missions” is one tool that may help HCs and HCTs to ensure that their interaction on protection matters with PKOs and SPMs is effective.⁴⁸⁶

Humanitarian actors should additionally examine internal dissemination practices to ensure that information (e.g., a PKO’s PoC strategy, or information on protection threats) reaches all necessary actors and levels.

PKOs should ensure that PoC Advisors are present at the beginning of a PKO’s establishment. Additionally, whenever possible, PKOs should provide advance notice to humanitarian actors of military operations in order to discuss potential protection concerns.

H. Increase the use of acceptance to conduct humanitarian operations. NGOs and UN humanitarian agencies should examine their country-specific risk management strategies to ensure that they maximise their use of acceptance to conduct humanitarian operations. As outlined by the 2013 “IASC Non-Binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys”, humanitarian actors should minimise their reliance on armed escorts.

The IASC Principals should ensure their organisations, either individually or collectively, examine current humanitarian negotiation practices, resources, and areas requiring investment with an immediate and longer-term view to enhance the capacity for, and increased use of, humanitarian negotiations as a critical component of managing principled humanitarian action.

HCTs should develop action plans to address challenges affecting acceptance (e.g., poor distinction by parties to a conflict between humanitarian actors and a PKO or SPM). Where humanitarian actors are using armed escorts for longer than 30 days, HCTs should monitor and review “the effectiveness and on-

⁴⁸⁶ The GPC should consider the findings of this review if it makes updates to the tool, which is available at http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/tools_and_guidance/GPC_Diagnostic_Tool_Interaction_UN_Missions_2013_EN.pdf.

going appropriateness of using such escorts to avoid creating a dependency”, as stipulated in the 2013 “IASC Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys”.⁴⁸⁷

Where relevant and necessary, donors should provide targeted funding to increase organisational capacity for humanitarian negotiations and acceptance-based humanitarian action (e.g., for dedicated staff to manage liaison with non-state armed actors).

Additionally, there should be a review of the UN security system—inclusive of UN humanitarian agencies—to address the impact of current security regulations and practices in integrated settings on humanitarian actors’ acceptance-based access approaches and explore steps to ensure that UN operational security measures support the operational requirements of effective and principled humanitarian action. In doing so, it should be noted that the security management approaches by one humanitarian actor or group of actors can affect the broader operating environment for all humanitarian actors, including NGOs. NGO experiences, practices, and perspectives must be taken into account, and collective accountability to adhere to humanitarian principles and good security management practices should be reinforced.

I. Ensure a dedicated forum for cross-cutting civil-military issues. As a general rule, OCHA should, as early as possible, ensure the existence of an adequately resourced and predictable civil-military coordination platform, cell, meeting mechanism and/or liaison, adapted to each specific operating environment with a UN integrated presence. The dedicated space will enable humanitarian interaction on cross-cutting issues and may cover such issues as standards for the use of PKO or SPM assets, civil-military access issues, and the use of armed escorts in accordance with established guidelines. It will facilitate maintaining distinction between humanitarian activities and those of PKOs or SPMs, and it will function as an important resource across clusters and sectors.

J. Coordinate on QIPs. HCs, HCTs, and their respective PKOs or SPMs should utilize mechanisms for systematic coordination and consultation on all QIPs. The mechanisms should ensure coordination with humanitarian actors, clusters, or working group coordinators and OCHA. HCTs, OCHA, and PKOs should coordinate to include detailed information on the appropriate use of QIPs within their respective civil-military guidelines to reinforce good practices. These mechanisms should reinforce standards in the DPKO/DFS policy, including its stipulation that QIPs are not meant to be humanitarian assistance, should not undermine the work of humanitarian actors, and should be closely coordinated with the HC when they are of a humanitarian nature. Coordination mechanisms and civil-military guidelines should also help ensure that humanitarian actors are not pressured to implement or take over responsibility for QIPs.

K. Examine the functioning of CBPFs. OCHA should examine the functioning and knowledge regarding the mechanics of CBPFs within countries where UN integration policy applies to ensure that they are functioning properly and humanitarian actors are aware of how to engage safeguards that exist to protect the funds from the influence of political or military priorities. If necessary, OCHA should institute changes to existing safeguards and practices.

⁴⁸⁷ IASC. (2013, February 27). IASC Non-Binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys. Retrieved from: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/523189ab4.pdf>

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