Protection of Civilians

Lesson 2.5
Relevance

Protection of Civilians (POC) is:

- A priority for the Security Council
- A responsibility for all peacekeeping personnel
Learning Outcomes

Learners will:

- Explain the POC mandate
- List examples of threats civilians face in armed conflict
- Describe the range of protection partners that operate alongside UN peacekeeping operations
- Explain the DPKO-DFS Operational Concept
- List actions to implement the POC mandate
Learning Overview

1. Definitions
2. Importance of POC
3. Legal Framework
4. Protection Partners
5. DPKO-DFS Policy on POC
6. DPKO-DFS Operational Concept on POC
7. Implementing the POC Mandate
8. Roles & Responsibilities
9. What Individual Peacekeeping Personnel Can Do
Instruction: Consider the images of critical incidents. What would you do? Compare with threats to civilians in armed conflict.

Time: 5 minutes
- Brainstorming: 3 minutes
- Discussion: 2 minutes
1. Definitions

POC Mandate

- “All necessary means, up to and including the **use of deadly force**, aimed at preventing or responding to **threats of physical violence** against civilians, within capabilities and areas of operations, and without prejudice to the responsibility of the host government”. 
Learning Activity 2.5.2

Standard Mandate Language

Instructions:
- Explain “threats of physical violence”
- Explain “all necessary means”
- Explain “use of deadly force (as a last resort)”
- Explain “responsibility of the host government”

Time: 5 minutes
- Brainstorming: 3 minutes
- Discussion: 2 minutes
Civilian

- Any person who is not or is no longer directly participating in hostilities or other acts of violence
## Threats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To life</th>
<th>To physical integrity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrary, summary or extrajudicial executions</td>
<td>Torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder (from individual killings, to systematic violence and genocide)</td>
<td>Rape and other forms of sexual violence (from opportunistic, to widespread and systematic use)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abduction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deliberate deprivation (of food, water, other goods or services necessary for survival)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To freedom</th>
<th>To property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced disappearance</td>
<td>Theft, extortion (e.g. illegal taxation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrary/illegal arrest and detention</td>
<td>Looting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restrictions on freedom of movement (including forced displacement)</td>
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Vulnerability Factors

- Individual, community factors
- Environmental factors
- Access to assistance
- Self-sufficiency
Learning Activity 2.5.3

Vulnerability and Threats

Instructions:
- Consider the case study
- Identify the threats
- Identify vulnerabilities of the civilian population
- Which civilians are most vulnerable?

Time: 10 minutes
- Group work: 5-7 minutes
- Discussion: 3 minutes
2. Importance of Protecting Civilians

- Harmed unintentionally
- Deliberate targets
- Women and children suffer disproportionately
3. Legal Framework

- International Law
- Security Council resolutions
- National laws
4. Protection Partners

- Host state government
- Local communities
- UN partners – UNHCR, OHCHR, OCHA, UNICEF
- ICRC
- Non-UN military forces
- NGOs, civil society organizations – national, international
5. DPKO-DFS Policy on POC

Guiding Principles

- Primary responsibility of host government
- Grounded in international law
- Whole of mission approach
- Priority mandate
- Cooperation with humanitarian actors
- Obligation of peacekeeping personnel
- Community-based approach
- Impartiality
- Gender perspective and child protection concerns
6. DPKO-DFS Operational Concept on POC

Three Tiers

- **Tier I**: Protection through dialogue and engagement
- **Tier II**: Provision of physical protection
- **Tier III**: Establishment of a protective environment
Four Phases of Response

**Prevention**
Threat is latent (risk)

**Pre-emption**
Threat is identified

**Response**

**Consolidation**
Threat has been mitigated/eliminated
7. Implementing the POC Mandate

Threat Assessment & Risk Analysis

Impact

Low

High

Likelihood

Low

High

Threat A

Threat B

Threat C

Threat D
POC Response Planning

- **POC Strategy**: Primary tool at mission level to implement POC mandate and plan responses to POC threats
- Operational level guidance, joint action, coordination for all mission components
## Coordination with Protection Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Authorities:</th>
<th>Political engagements; security sector reform programmes; targeted advocacy; joint operations or joint patrolling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Communities:</td>
<td>Dialogue with local population; mission-wide community engagement cooperation mechanisms such as Joint Protection Teams, Community Liaison Assistants, Community Alert Networks, localized protection strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanitarian Community:</td>
<td>Protection Cluster led by UNHCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parallel Forces:</td>
<td>Information sharing and operational planning on a case-by-case basis, including HOM exchanges and working-level cooperation</td>
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Learning Activity 2.5.4

Four Phases of Response

Instructions:
- Consider the case study
- Assess the threat in more detail
- Identify actions for the mission at each phase
- Identify roles of military, police and civilians

Time: 10 minutes
- Group work: 5-7 minutes
- Discussion: 3 minutes
8. Roles & Responsibilities

Protection Adviser

- Supports and advises mission leadership
- Development and regular review of mission-wide POC strategy
- Advisory, coordination, monitoring & reporting role
- Integrates POC concerns across the mission

Goal

Protection of Civilians
Other Units

Women Protection Adviser
Child Protection
Human Rights

Gender Adviser
Civil Affairs
Political Affairs
Rule of Law/Judicial Affairs
SSR
DDR
JOC/JMAC
Public Information
Mission Support
DSRSG/RC/HC
SRSG’s Office
Special Roles of Military & Police

- Physical protection
- Proactive approach
- Monitoring and reporting

Protection of Civilians
Joint Protection Teams

- Coordinated by POC Adviser
- Composed of military, police, civilians
- Gathers information on protection situations
9. What Individual Peacekeeping Personnel Can Do

- Engage local communities
- Understand POC mandate, environment, threats
- Cooperate with mission components and partners
- Interpret the POC mandate pro-actively, try to prevent threats
- Respond, intervene
Summary of Key Messages

- POC mandate – all necessary means to prevent and respond to threats of physical violence against civilians
- Threats to civilians – life, physical integrity, freedom, property from state/non-state actors
- Protection partners – host state government, local communities, UNHCR, OHCHR, OCHA, UNICEF, ICRC, parallel forces, NGOs, CSOs
- Take action – engage local communities, follow POC strategy, coordinate, intervene
Questions
Learning Activity

Learning Evaluation