Chapter 6.

Supporting Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Development

SUMMARY

This chapter considers the efforts needed to sustain peace by preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict. Peacebuilding efforts need to focus on building resilient national institutions, a task which poses both governance and developmental challenges. Moreover, an actively engaged civil society is just as important as formal government institutions. While peacebuilding reforms cannot be enforced by national and regional leaders alone, they will need to be engaged in the effort.

It is important for a mission to consider mission exit and transition from the outset of a peace operation. Efforts to sustain peace must focus on addressing the issues of marginalization and unaddressed grievances, based on updated peace and conflict analyses. This requires a different approach to such analysis, one which allows for inclusive ownership and for identifying the drivers of peace and conflict that need to be jointly addressed by the state and society. It also means that the MLT must constantly undertake peace and conflict analyses to maintain awareness of the threats and risks to the mission and its ability to implement its mandate.

Peace operations are not often in the lead in many of these efforts. The MLT sets the tone for the rest of the mission to work collaboratively with other actors on the ground, allowing them to lead in areas where they have a mandate or a comparable advantage. The SRSG and DSRSG-RC/HC must exercise leadership and create political consensus in a broader sense, ensuring coordination among UN entities, mobilizing and maintaining donor funding, and marshalling support and engagement of key international players and regional financial institutions.

This chapter discusses a set of seven operational-level outputs, each with its own set of activities, risks and benchmarks, which together contribute to the overall outcome of sustaining peace and development.

1. ***Secure and Effective Humanitarian Relief Efforts Supported.*** This output emphasizes the important linkages and similarities between the objectives of humanitarian relief and efforts to sustain peace and deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Accordingly, many peace operations missions have been mandated to contribute to a secure environment to enable the delivery of humanitarian relief. Nonetheless, the relationship between humanitarian actors and a peace operation is a fine balancing act, driven by humanitarian principles.

2. ***Women's Role in Peace and Security Promoted.*** This output speaks to the fact that women's participation in conflict-prevention efforts, political processes and the security sector, as well as their perceptions of their own security, are essential contributors to a long-term and sustainable peace. This is particularly the case when a peace operation is preparing to drawdown and transition. Peace operations are expected to put in place mechanisms and reforms to ensure that women's peace and security is promoted.

3. ***Youth Participation Supported.*** This output reflects the fact that youth perspectives are underrepresented in formal political structures, including peace processes, and are excluded from discussions and decision-making. This can risk stoking grievances, making them an accessible demographic for armed groups, and creating enmity for the future, while ignoring the need to listen to, value and provide economic opportunities for the future electorate. Missions can foster these dialogues between the host authorities and civil society.

4. ***Civil Society Engaged and Supported.*** This output highlights the essential role of civil society in building and sustaining peace, especially in times of transition. The mission needs to view efforts to engage with civil society as a long-term process. Peace operations can leverage civil society to improve the conditions for mandate implementation in order to prevent and mitigate local-level conflicts, provide early warning on human rights violations and abuses, devise protection strategies, facilitate local consultations and foster greater inclusiveness, particularly of women and youth.

5. ***Return and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs Supported***. This output acknowledges that return and reintegration is a highly sensitive and potentially volatile process, from the identification and registration of affected persons to their eventual and voluntary return, in safety and in dignity, and their subsequent reintegration. Although the return of refugees and IDPs is managed and led by specialized UN agencies and their implementing humanitarian partners, the mission is central to establishing safe and secure conditions, and can play an important supporting role before, during and after the return.

6. ***Transition from Emergency Relief to Recovery and Development Enabled.*** This output highlights that once the need for emergency assistance has subsided and early recovery is in progress, the focus should be on a smooth

transition to longer-term development activities. This will entail gradual handover of responsibilities to national authorities. Ideally, planning for transition from emergency and early recovery to long-term rehabilitation and development should begin early in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding phase. The successful transition from recovery to development and the ability of national and other institutions to take responsibility in a number of areas will be defining factors in the exit strategy of a mission.

7. *Independent Media Supported.* This output underlines the vital role of the free and responsible flow of information in supporting efforts to build and sustain peace. While peace operations do not have a lead role in establishing an independent media, they can enable the process through their political offices and capacity-building tasks, which provide an opportunity to foster legal institutions that can protect journalists in the long term and support the development of an independent media.

Each of the seven outputs listed above generates a set of **considerations**. Given the primacy of the host country, the UNCT and other development partners in the long-term process of sustaining peace, these considerations give rise to management issues for the MLT and the mission, such as:

» Balancing short-term political expediencies and gains with long-term UNCT attempts to address root causes for a sustainable peace through development.

» Balancing humanitarian imperatives and the political and force-protection requirements of peace operations. While peace operations are largely driven by political mandates, humanitarian action is driven by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

» Balancing humanitarian programmatic activity against safety and security of all UN personnel in the mission area for whom the DO as HoM is responsible.

» Over-reliance on gender advisers rather than treating Women, Peace and Security (WPS) as a whole-of-mission activity and responsibility.

» Engaging with a polarized civil society alongside prejudices and reluctance of government elites on whom political progress for peace depends.

» Balancing security and mission responsibilities to protect vulnerable civilians and IDPs against the government's national ownership of the problem.

» Managing pressures for premature drawdown and early withdrawal alongside the dangers of overdependence on the peace operation and the erosion of national capacities.

Peacebuilding and the Role of Peace Operations

Efforts to help countries emerge from conflict need to consider the full spectrum of activities that support "sustaining peace" long after the UN peace operation has left the country. This means that the host government must be willing to support the post-conflict needs of the country and ensure that there is effective investment in sustaining peace and development following the departure of the UN peace operation. It also means that mission transition and exit should be planned for from the outset. Sustaining peace requires much broader engagement, beyond the host government, to foster inclusivity and dialogue throughout society with different individuals and groups, such as women's and youth groups, civil society and the media.

An essential part of the efforts of the MLT to support post-conflict peacebuilding will be the consideration of simultaneous efforts to sustain peace by "preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict".[27] These efforts need to focus on building resilient national institutions, which poses both governance and developmental challenges. Moreover, an actively engaged civil society is just as important as formal government institutions. These reforms cannot be enforced by national and regional leaders from the top, but they will need to be engaged in the effort.

While a mission may be deployed to address particular threats to peace and security in a country, it may also face risks from other regional and global threats. Terrorism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and violent extremism know no borders. Marginalization, exclusion and unaddressed grievances present long-term threats to international peace and security.[28] Efforts to sustain peace must focus on addressing these two issues. Exclusion and injustice can stoke grievances and also need to be addressed. This requires a different approach to peace and conflict analysis that allows for inclusive ownership and for identifying the drivers of peace and conflict that need to be jointly addressed by the state and society. It also means that the MLT must constantly undertake peace and conflict analyses to maintain awareness of the threats and risks to the mission and its ability to implement its mandate.

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Countries emerging from conflict have typically experienced significant socio-economic ruptures. Post−conflict intervention largely aims to repair these ruptures and lay the foundations for sustainable peace. It is

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27 UN General Assembly and Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General: Peacebuilding and sustaining peace', A/72/707-S/2018/43, 18 January 2018.

28 President of the UN General Assembly, 'Chair's Summary', High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, 24−26 April 2018, p. 3.

about instilling or restoring the confidence of citizens in the state's leadership and institutions. The immediate priorities are emergency assistance and early recovery, which will pave the way for longer-term development. From short-term emergency assistance and early recovery to longer-term development, it is fundamental to ensure that local authorities and agencies take ownership of these activities and the overall process. This requires investment and engagement at the earliest stages of the deployment of a UN peace operation.

Peace operations are not in the lead in any of these efforts. Many of these initiatives will be led by the UNCT. The mindset of the MLT should set a tone for the rest of the mission to work collaboratively with other actors on the ground, allowing them to lead in areas where they have a mandate or an advantage in doing so. Nonetheless, the presence of a peace operation should help to create a permissive environment for the improvement of essential infrastructure and incremental reform to social and economic life, all of which can lead to the creation of better employment opportunities for the local population. In addition, it can help to create the security conditions in which humanitarian assistance and a wide range of peace consolidation activities can take place. At the same time, a peace operation can offer direct support to the UN's humanitarian and development agencies, not least through the provision of security and logistical capabilities. Furthermore, a multidimensional peacekeeping operation is expected to provide and support the framework outlined in the Capstone Doctrine, which assists all UN and other international actors in pursuing their activities in a coherent and coordinated manner.The MLT, especially the SRSG and the DSRSG-RC/HC, through good leadership should work to create the necessary political consensus, ensuring coordination among UN entities, mobilizing and maintaining donor funding, and marshalling support and engagement of key international players such as the World Bank, the IMF, the European Union and regional financial institutions.

Preconditions for success

- A safe and secure environment, in which the local population can exist, and humanitarian or development actors can operate without the threat of physical violence or the lingering threat of ERW.
- Freedom of movement for UN agencies, local populations and goods.
- Freedom of information and expression through a free press and an engaged civil society.
- The donor community remains engaged and is willing and able to provide adequate resources.
- National authorities and local institutions are prepared to take ownership of recovery and development efforts and are supported in

developing the requisite leadership and management skills.

- Priorities are identified and agreed with national authorities and the international community.

Benchmarks

Many of these benchmarks are beyond the immediate responsibility of the mission.

- Emergency assistance is delivered on a consistent basis, according to humanitarian principles, and is supported and facilitated by the host government.
- Basic services are available to the general population, provided by government agencies where possible, and address the specific needs of women and youth.
- The return of refugees and IDPs is voluntary, safe and dignified, and the host government and communities are willing and able to receive and reintegrate returnees.
- The immediate impact of mines, ERW, and small arms and light weapons is addressed, with appropriate capacity building of national authorities to deal with the threat.
- Humanitarian, recovery and development efforts are sensitive to gender, ethnic and other issues, and women, youth and minorities play an active role in implementing policies and programmes.
- A strong legislative and judicial framework based on the rule of law upholds basic economic and social rights, gender equality and human rights, including freedom of expression.
- Both the international community and general population have confidence in social, political and economic institutions.
- Independent media is engaged, with press freedom and protections for journalists.
- Youth are engaged in educational and employment programmes and included in political and civic engagement programmes.
- Disarmament and demobilization of former combatants have been completed and reintegration initiated, along with effective follow-up processes.
- Civil society groups and organizations have begun to emerge.

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Outputs

In summary, the seven outputs that contribute to sustaining peace and supporting peacebuilding and development are:

1. Secure and Effective Humanitarian Relief Efforts Supported

2. Women's Role in Peace and Security Promoted

3. Youth Participation Supported

4. Civil Society Engaged and Supported

5. Return and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs

6. Transition from Recovery to Development Enabled

7. Independent Media Engaged

6.1 Secure and Effective Humanitarian Relief Supported

Humanitarian relief has important linkages with and shares many of the same objectives as efforts to sustain peace and deliver the SDGs. Humanitarian activities aim to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect and safeguard the human dignity of communities affected by crises, whether caused by natural disasters or conflict, often in cases where the host state or government is not in a position to provide such basic services to the population. Many peace operations missions have been mandated to contribute to the creation of a secure environment to enable the delivery of humanitarian aid. Nonetheless, maintaining and managing the relationship between humanitarian actors and a peace operation is a fine balancing act, as humanitarians are required to preserve their independence, impartiality and neutrality, as set it out in humanitarian principles. The MLT has an important role to play in managing this relationship, while ensuring that the mission mandate is delivered.

Although it plays only a supporting role, a peace operation can take on crucial tasks to facilitate the unimpeded delivery of relief by humanitarian agencies. In a relatively consensual environment—but one in which spoilers may still be active—these agencies value their "humanitarian space" and prefer to operate independently of and separately from uniformed UN personnel. At the same time, peacekeeping missions can provide valuable logistical support to humanitarian operations and are often ideally situated to support the creation of mechanisms that coordinate all stages of these efforts in concert with OCHA and other coordinating bodies. Coordination between humanitarian organizations and the mission can be "indispensable" in developing unarmed strategies to protect civilians.[29] Local actors, if engaged appropriately as part of "conflict-sensitive humanitarian action", can ensure the sustainability of humanitarian action long after international actors have departed, supporting efforts to sustain peace.

In more volatile situations, humanitarian operations, for example aid convoys, may require peacekeepers to provide protection and in extreme situations international humanitarian staff may rely on the peacekeeping mission actually to deliver humanitarian assistance or assist in their evacuation. Given these sensitivities and very different requirements, it is imperative that the mission, usually with the DSRSG-RC/HC taking a lead role, closely coordinates, consults and shares information with

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29 UN General Assembly and Security Council, 'Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people', A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 38.

humanitarian actors to bridge any differences and to coordinate plans and activities. In contexts where peace operations have an enforcement mandate, it is particularly important that a clear distinction is maintained between humanitarian actors and the mission.

The host government has primary responsibility for the provision of basic services such as shelter, the water supply, sanitation, food, basic education, emergency medical services and essential health care. Nevertheless, quite often in the short term, humanitarian actors will have to step in to provide assistance in some of these areas. In some situations, peacekeepers may find it necessary to take action in this area, as they are the only ones with access to isolated communities. A peacekeeping mission may also find that it can establish, strengthen or maintain relations with host communities by assisting, and sometimes delivering, low-cost solutions. These will often take the form of quick-impact projects, implemented for the direct benefit of local communities. Such activities should always be carried out in consultation and coordination with humanitarian and development actors already engaged in these areas, through the DSRSG-HC/RC, the cluster system and the civilian–military coordination mechanisms. Quick-impact projects are only ever a temporary measure and efforts must be made to ensure that more sustainable development initiatives are put in place in the longer term.

6.1.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities by the mission to support this output include:

- Providing a secure and stable environment to allow the unobstructed and safe delivery of humanitarian relief, including mine clearance of access routes and areas.
- Supporting UN agencies with monitoring and assessing humanitarian needs and contributing to the formulation of humanitarian appeals.
- Ensuring information sharing and joint planning between the peace operation and humanitarian agencies.
- Establishing civil–military coordination (CMCoord) centres, coordinating activities through CMCoord mechanisms with OCHA and other humanitarian agencies.
- Providing protection and security for humanitarian facilities and convoys as and when required, in keeping with humanitarian operational principles.

6.1.2 Benchmarks

Short-term

- Humanitarian agencies and populations in need have access to each another.
- Humanitarian agencies have conducted a needs assessment and identified priorities.
- CMCoord mechanisms are established and functioning.
- Quick impact projects are being implemented.
- Main access routes are safe and cleared of mines.
- Basic services start to reach isolated communities, including the provision of food and medical support.

Medium-term

- The number of attacks on humanitarian convoys has fallen and the active support of former belligerents facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- Humanitarian and security vulnerabilities have been mapped for shared use by the peacekeeping mission, and by international security, law-enforcement and host-government entities.
- Service providers are operating effectively and upholding the responsibilities they have been assigned, with the support of the peacekeeping mission.
- Excessive speculation and price swings on basic service items have been reduced.

Long-term

- Local capacity and reliable mechanisms for delivery of humanitarian relief exist.
- National and international humanitarian policies and responses are better integrated with the host country and long-term development frameworks.
- Service providers operate self-sufficiently, but not necessarily without the support or mentoring of peacekeeping personnel.
- Black-market structures have been overtaken by the public sector as providers of goods and services.
- National and local institutions begin to demonstrate autonomy and self-sufficiency.

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6.1.3 Responsibilities and coordination

While the main responsibility for the delivery of basic services rests with the national authorities, relevant UN agencies and other actors may need to assist the government in the short term. The mission, however, should stress the primacy of the host government, in order to avert the potential perception by the population that the peacekeepers and other external actors, rather than the national authorities, are the service providers.

The main responsibility for the coordination and delivery of humanitarian relief rests with relevant UN agencies, most notably OCHA, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and UNHCR, which have a cluster responsibility for coordinating the UN's efforts with those of relevant NGOs. UNDP has a role in mainstreaming early recovery, thereby promoting an early transition to nationally designed and owned recovery efforts. Within the mission, the DSRSG-RC/HC, in their role as Humanitarian Coordinator, is responsible for ensuring coordination of humanitarian and development activities and maintaining close contact and cooperation with all relevant agencies. The parameters for the use of mission assets or personnel in support of any UN humanitarian activities should be based on existing guidelines and a detailed agreement between members of the MLT and the DSRSG-RC/HC, under the overall authority of the HoM.

Quick-impact projects and similar activities carried out by the peacekeeping mission should be managed under the overall authority of the HoM and coordinated with the office of the DSRSG-RC/HC. Facilitating interaction between civilian and military actors will be essential and should be coordinated through established CMCoord mechanisms.[30]

6.1.4 Resources

A peace operation's mandate and resources are rarely adequate to provide basic services for the local population, even though the re-establishment of these services is essential for the consolidation of security. The resources available to a peacekeeping mission for the provision of basic services are limited to spare capacity generated from the mandated force levels, such as engineering and mine clearance, and the allocation of funds for quick impact projects, which come from assessed contributions and donors.

Since emergency assistance is a civilian undertaking, military assets should only be used in a humanitarian response when the civilian

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30 Because of the sensitivities involved, the UN has developed extensive guidance on the relationship and working methods, including Military and Civil Defence Assets Guidelines and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Paper on Civil–Military Relationships in Complex Emergencies

capability is insufficient to meet the need, and under the overall guidance of humanitarian actors. Mindful of humanitarian space and resource constraints, the MLT will need to carefully assess and decide when and how military assets should be used for humanitarian purposes.

6.1.5 Challenges and risks

- The delivery of humanitarian aid becomes politicized, aggravating armed groups and increasing insecurity for humanitarian workers and the recipient population.
- Peacekeepers in pursuit of "hearts and minds" objectives might, through their humanitarian activities, blur the distinction between politically driven mandates and neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian needs.
- Supporting humanitarian operations without compromising the neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian actors and infringing their humanitarian space, which they need for their own protection.
- Humanitarian relief falls into the wrong hands or is showcased for political purposes.
- Support to humanitarian operations diverts the resources required for other mandated tasks.
- Lack of consultation and coordination between the peacekeeping operation and humanitarian agencies.
- Quick-impact projects and other activities by the mission could create unsustainable expectations and dependency among local communities.
- Activities aimed at providing basic services may lead to mission creep and blur the line between humanitarian and peacekeeping efforts.
- Quick-impact projects and similar activities by the peacekeeping operation are of a limited and short-term nature and may be politicized and exploited by belligerents and spoilers alike.

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6.1.6 Considerations

Addressing humanitarian needs and the safety and security of UN personnel

Judgements have to be made by the MLT between the need to gain access to populations in need, and the safety of the UN personnel, for whom the HoM (as the DO for security) is ultimately responsible. Key members of the MLT are part of the SMT, alongside the heads of the principal UN humanitarian and development agencies. This responsibility creates a requirement for an understanding by the MLT of threat- and risk-analysis procedures, and the use of security-risk-mitigation measures, which often consume scarce mission resources.

Balancing humanitarian imperatives and the political requirements of peacekeeping

Peacekeeping missions are largely driven by political mandates. Humanitarian action is driven by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. The MLT needs to understand the differences in the application of these principles by peacekeepers and humanitarians. For example, for the mission, impartiality refers to the even-handed execution of a political mandate rather than an impartial response to an assessed humanitarian need. This different interpretation of impartiality can lead to misunderstandings and friction. The role of the DSRSG-RC/HC, as well as joint strategic frameworks designed to assist consultation, coordination and information sharing, can alleviate some of this tension.

Balancing short-term gains and long-term benefits

The UNCT will usually be in a mission area before the deployment of a peacekeeping operation and will remain after the peacekeepers depart. There are always pressures on a peacekeeping mission to make a difference, to meet national and international expectations and to achieve some quick wins in order to demonstrate progress. These pressures must be balanced against the long-term approach of the UNCT, which is to respond to needs and tackle the root causes of conflict through development activity.

Balancing force protection and the considerations of humanitarians

Civil–military activities by the mission's military component are ultimately designed to improve the standing of the peacekeepers among the local population. This is sometimes called "winning hearts and minds". The MLT should be clear that this is a force-protection measure. As such, it may be seen by humanitarians to be at odds with humanitarian principles. Potential tensions can only be reduced by the engagement of the MLT to ensure coordination and mutual understanding of the validity of both activities. CMCoord mechanisms need to be in place and, broadly speaking, peacekeepers should defer to the knowledge and counsel of humanitarians before embarking on "hearts and minds" activities which, unless sustainable, can be damaging. Finally, it should be recognized that many TCCs like to see their peacekeepers involved in "hearts and minds" activities and fund them accordingly. Guidance by the MLT is required to ensure that this activity is not perceived as political, is effectively focused on the long-term benefit of the local community and does not lead to unsustainable dependency or unrealistic expectations.

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6.2 Women's Role in Peace and Security Promoted

Gender equality is a key indicator in assessing a country's ability to emerge from conflict and sustain peace. Whether a country is well placed to sustain peace is closely related to the status of women in society. Therefore, women's roles in peace and security, through participation in conflict-prevention efforts, political processes and the security sector, as well as their perceptions of their own security, are essential contributors to a long-term and sustainable peace. This is particularly the case in conflict-affected communities when a peace operation is preparing to drawdown and transition. Peace operations are expected to put in place mechanisms and reforms to ensure that women's peace and security is promoted. This is grounded in the overarching goal of gender equality and the four pillars of the WPS Agenda as mandated by successive UN Security Council resolutions, beginning with Resolution 1325 in 2000.[31]

Broadly speaking, the four pillars of the WPS Agenda refer to (a) women's participation at all levels of decision making in peacebuilding; (b) prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women; (c) protection of women and girls and their rights; and (d) gender responsive relief and recovery.

Key UN Policies & Guidance

UN Policy on Gender Responsive United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is also essential to ensuring that the mission and national authorities are responding to the needs of women in particular. Gender mainstreaming means that, in all mission planning, implementation and evaluation, the MLT should consider, and report on, how activities, processes and procedures contribute to reducing inequality between men and women. It is also important to ensure that the approach advocated by the MLT is culturally sensitive to the wider social context in which the mission operations. The MLT has a clear responsibility to incorporate a gender-sensitive approach into all mission activities and policies, and to set standards and encourage actions that demonstrate and promote gender balance and mainstreaming across all mission components (*see 2.2 Promoting Integrated Planning and Operations*).

The MLT should establish clear goals and ensure sufficient resources to facilitate gender mainstreaming within mission budgets. It should review and monitor progress on compliance with the policy on gender equality through regular meetings designed specifically for this purpose. The MLT should consult and make effective use of gender advisers and encourage other components to do the same.

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31 In addition to UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the WPS Agenda has been further elaborated in resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015).

6.2.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities by the mission to support this output include:

- Undertaking gender analyses that include the gathering of data disaggregated by sex and age, and ensuring that these are integrated in the peace and conflict analysis as well as strategic and operational plans.
- Establishing monitoring and reporting systems on WPS to track progress and ensure accountability.
- Advocating with national authorities to promote equal opportunity in relation to women's participation in electoral processes as candidates, and in registration and voting processes.
- Enabling the active, equal and meaningful participation of women in dialogues and peace processes (both formal and informal) and negotiations.

6.2.2 Benchmarks

Short-term

- Gender advisers are deployed to the mission and have regular access to MLT to discuss needs.
- Gender mapping to identify women's representation within the community undertaken.
- Discussions held with national partners on women's participation in political processes and national institutions.
- Women serving in military, police and civilian components, and female-engagement teams enabled, where applicable.
- The needs of the population in terms of protection, particularly from SGBV, have been assessed and a protection strategy developed and operationalized.
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks established to track progress on UN initiatives related to women's participation in local security forces, the judicial sector and political processes.
- Gender responsive interventions for DDR programmes that include the sustainable integration of women ex-combatants have been developed.

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Medium-term

- Targets and recruitment programmes put in place for women to participate in the security sector.
- Dedicated capacities in national security structures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence established.
- Rights and well-being of women and girls in corrections institutions safeguarded.
- Women ex-combatants participate in community violence-reduction projects and other capacity-building initiatives to promote social cohesion.
- Gender-responsive electoral laws and equal opportunities for women to participate as candidates, elections officials and monitors legislated for.
- Capacity-building programmes for women running for public office and public-awareness campaigns on women's political participation implemented.

Long-term

- Government institutions engage regularly and meaningfully with women's civil society groups.
- Women participate fully and equally in electoral and political processes.
- Women's rights and protections included in reform of national and local governance structures.
- Gender-sensitive national security policies by national authorities developed and budgeted for.
- Laws and policies to prosecute perpetrators of SGBV enacted.
- Women participate in, and have access to equal opportunities within, the local security sector.

6.2.3 Responsibilities and coordination

While ensuring that women's peace and security is promoted is a shared responsibility across the mission for all personnel, the MLT has a particularly important role in setting the tone when it comes to women, peace and security. It should ensure that the mission is making every effort to follow and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions on WPS, which includes actions by the mission to support women's meaningful participation and empowerment, uphold women's rights, protect women and girls, and mainstream gender into the different lines of work of the mission.

The MLT should draw on the advice and expertise of gender advisers (both civilian and military) throughout the mission in different functional areas to advance gender equality and the WPS mandates and assist the senior leadership in monitoring progress and enhancing accountability across the mission. This should include coordination with the UNCT and UN Women as soon as drawdown and transition is envisaged, to ensure that any efforts by the mission are sustainable.

6.2.4 Resources

Efforts to sustain women's engagement in peace and security will also require the commitment and engagement of national and local institutions, as well as civil society. The MLT should ensure that as per the 2019 policy on gender-responsive peacekeeping operations, quick-impact projects apply a gender analysis as part of project selection, monitoring and evaluation, and that at least 15 per cent of funding is for projects that support gender equality and women's empowerment. Similar engagement should also take place with donor countries, in coordination with the national authorities and the UNCT, to ensure that a gender analysis is included in and funded for capacity-building projects.

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6.2.5 Challenges and risks

- Efforts to pursue the WPS Agenda in the mission may not be viewed as a priority by all stakeholders, and there may be pressure to prioritize other issues in a budget-constrained environment.
- Women's protection needs and gender analyses may be overlooked in crisis situations.
- Although women may have a seat at the table in peace negotiations or political processes, there is a risk that such participation may not have any substantive influence.
- Prioritizing gender equality and women's empowerment could lead to resentment among other parts of the population, who feel that their rights are being eroded as a consequence.
- Lack of support from national authorities to increase women's participation in security, justice, legal and corrections institutions, and to increase their representation in politics and government.
- A lack of women serving in the uniformed components deployed by TCCs/PCCs, which limits the ability of military and police contingents to engage effectively with the entire population.

6.2.6 Considerations

Reliance on gender advisers versus mission-wide responsibility

Gender advisers are an important resource for peace operations, enabling mission personnel, including the MLT, to draw on their expertise. However, there is a risk that all the work related to women, peace and security and gender mainstreaming will fall on the gender adviser, rather than being taken up as a responsibility by all mission personnel to implement as part of their areas of work. The MLT will need to ensure that there are adequate training opportunities for staff, as well as accountability mechanisms with responsibility for gender mainstreaming embedded in the different functional teams. Gender advisers may then be called on to provide expertise when needed at the operational level.

Ensuring that activities and programmes on gender equality include men

Focusing on women's participation and empowerment, without a more comprehensive discussion with the national authorities and local communities about the importance of gender equality, could alienate some men and make them feel marginalized by the mission. It is quite often men who are in positions of leadership in post-conflict countries, which means that they need to be supporters of any initiatives by the peace operation to strengthen women's participation in national institutions if they are to be sustainable following the departure of the mission. The MLT will have to consider their strategic communications with and approaches towards local actors on issues around women's participation in politics and security institutions, with a strong emphasis on the importance of gender equality to a long-term, sustainable peace.

Resources provided by troop- and police-contributing countries

Force generation in peacekeeping missions is generally beyond the control of the MLT. Nevertheless, the mission leadership can use its influence to urge contingents to deploy more women to peacekeeping missions, but the operational case needs to be clearly made with both the TCC/PCC and UNHQ. In cases where a contingent has deployed very few women, the MLT should work with the military and police leadership to encourage the deployment of the available women on patrols where possible, rather than use them in camp administrative functions, in order to engage with the local population and security forces.

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6.3 Youth Participation Supported

The importance of engaging with youth as part of efforts to maintain peace and security was mandated in 2015 by UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS).[32] In countries affected by armed conflict, youth comprise a significant yet heterogeneous portion of the population. Young people play a wide range of different and changing roles in conflict and peacebuilding. They can be peacebuilders and community leaders, while youth groups are often a source of resilience in any community. But they also account for many of those affected by conflict, not least as refugees and IDPs. Conflict may have disrupted their access to education and economic opportunities, increasing their vulnerability. Overlooking the rights and situation of young people can risk stoking grievances and make them an accessible demographic for armed groups, particularly if offering economic opportunities to provide for their future.

Despite these factors, youth are often excluded from discussions and decision making about peace and security, and underrepresented in formal political structures, including peace processes. The narrative around young people in conflict tends to stereotype and characterize them as either victims or perpetrators, strongly reinforced by gender norms (young female victims and young male fighters), with little recognition of their agency, unique perspectives and positive contribution to peace. However, young people's understandings of their local realities—and therefore of conflict dynamics and structural causes—can provide unique and valuable insights during the situational awareness phase of a mission, or in a conflict analysis process. Young people also often constitute an electoral majority, which means that there are demographic incentives for the host government to listen to them and to value their engagement.

Key UN Policies & Guidance

Youth, Peace and Security: A Programming Handbook

Peace operations have a number of different mechanisms for engaging with young people and supporting their participation in society. Engaging young people can involve mobilizing funding support to ensure they are able to achieve agency and leadership, build networks and organize themselves. Through the work of different mission sections—including Civil Affairs, Political Affairs, Strategic Communications, and Community Policing—missions can foster dialogues with the host authorities as well as civil society.

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32 UN Security Council Resolution 2250 defines youth as anyone aged between 18 and 29. However, there are variances at the national level, and different UN entities and regional organizations use various age definitions. Subsequent UN resolutions on YPS include UN General Assembly Resolution 70/262 (2016) and UN Security Council resolutions 2282 (2016) and 2419 (2018).

6.3.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities to support this output include:

- Ensuring a youth perspective, and young people's participation, in peace and conflict analysis processes.
- Mainstreaming a youth perspective in programme design, implementation and evaluation, and establishing inclusive mechanisms to enable meaningful youth participation in these processes, as well as in political forums within the host country.
- Establishing structured and systematic formal mechanisms to engage with youth, bringing together the mission, the UNCT and civil society.
- Enhancing institutional capacity by appointing a youth adviser in the mission and employing a network of youth focal points.
- Include training and briefings for mission and UNCT senior leadership, as well as civilian, police and military staff.

6.3.2 Benchmarks

Short-term

- Mapping exercise and youth needs assessment undertaken by mission and UNCT counterparts, together with young people.
- Key actors identified to foster youth engagement in peacebuilding activities.
- DDR programmes developed to support youth-specific needs.

Medium-term

- YPS is included in mission mandates, budgets and reports to the UN Security Council.
- A strategic YPS Agenda roadmap is developed to facilitate coordination between mission, UNCT and other actors.
- Institutional capacity is ensured through a mission youth advisor and a youth focal-point system.
- Structured and systematic mechanisms established for consultation between the mission, UNCT and young people.
- Youth groups are involved in collaborating and partnering with the mission on peace and conflict analyses and early warning, and developing sustainable options for peace and reconciliation, in line with "do no harm" principles.

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- Agreement among the donor community reached to avoid overlapping priorities and actions.

Long-term
- National and international policies and responses are better integrated with long-term development frameworks that include youth organizations.
- Meaningful input into the political process established from a diverse range of youth actors.

6.3.3 Responsibilities and coordination

Engagement with youth is undertaken by a number of mission sections. However, caution and special considerations must be observed with respect to military and police components when engaging with youth. Responsibility for youth programmes is likely to rest with the host government, the UNCT and NGOs on the ground. In particular, entities such as the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), UNDP, the UN Population Fund and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) may be involved in supporting longer-term programming on the ground. The mission can support these activities and should factor them into planning at the inception of the mission. The mission can also play a critical role in supporting the growth of—and, to a limited extent, kick-starting—the engagement of youth in post-conflict settings, through sections such as Civil Affairs, Political Affairs, Human Rights, Community Policing, Rule of Law, Gender, and Strategic Communications.

6.3.4 Resources

Despite its importance, youth participation is rarely planned and budgeted for in a mission's design phase. Activities to support engagement with young people are therefore likely to require additional donor support. This is not necessarily the responsibility of the peace operation but the MLT team can play a role in engaging with other partners to support these initiatives in fulfilment of the overall objectives of the mandate and building a more sustainable peace. In addition to programming, human resources are required to ensure a peace operation's institutional capacity to mainstream YPS, including training and staff resources such as a mission youth adviser, as well as partnerships that can be forged to support these efforts.

6.3.5 Challenges and risks

- Ill-informed assumptions stereotyping young people as victims, disengaged or perpetrators of violence and social unrest in the country.
- The common mistake of programming for but not with young people, seeing youth only as recipients of a programme rather than as partners in its design, planning, delivery and evaluation.
- The elites and political class may be reluctant to engage with youth, valuing experience in numbers of years over their rights, knowledge and unique perspectives.
- Conflict may have limited the ability of young people to receive education and training, thus also limiting their options for engagement.
- Youth are not a homogeneous group so efforts must be made to engage with a diverse range of young people, not just those in a position of privilege, and to seek their input and perspectives.
- Youth often carry the burden of social and economic insecurity, and may be excluded from employment and formal political processes due to lack of resources.
- Instrumentalization and tokenism of young people by institutions, taking advantage of a youth group to serve a political objective.

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6.3.6 Considerations

Youth engagement in political processes takes many forms and some may be in tension with each other

Young people are likely to be excluded from formal political processes and mechanisms. They may, however, have established other grassroots initiatives in the community to facilitate civic engagement. The MLT will need to identify how to engage with and navigate these organizations, along with the host government. Young people's own initiatives and organizations are often a source of community resilience. It is therefore important to consider building on, and partnering with, these initiatives, before creating new projects and programmes.

Youth, peace and security and other agendas

Although there are similarities between the YPS Agenda and the WPS Agenda, they require different approaches, as they address different power structures and forms of exclusion. Common approaches taken to women's peace and security or gender cannot therefore simply be templated. Furthermore, youth is not synonymous with "young men" any more than "gender" is synonymous with women. Youth, peace and security intersects with a number of other agendas, including the overarching 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as efforts to counter violent extremism and DDR efforts. It is important to understand how these agendas relate to one another when operationalized, to benefit from synergies rather than trade-offs in their implementation.

6.4 Civil Society Engaged and Supported

Engaging with civil society is essential to building and sustaining peace. Civil society is not a monolithic unit. It refers to a "political space" for organized peaceful collective action that is voluntary and uncoerced, and which involves a "wide spectrum of societal actors motivated by shared interests, values, or purposes to advance common ideas and objectives".

Key UN Policies & Guidance

UN Community Engagement Guidelines on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace

Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. It can comprise individuals, human rights defenders, journalists and independent media, community leaders, trade unions, women's groups, youth groups, faith-based organizations, advocacy groups, social movements and social media communities.

Efforts to engage with civil society need to be viewed as long-term processes. If engagement by the peace operations is ad hoc, the mission will not be viewed as a reliable partner. If the mission focuses only on consulting with formal and elite organizations, then it will marginalize and alienate parts of the population, particularly at the local level, potentially exacerbating tensions and conflict. The MLT needs to ensure that peacekeeping personnel adopt a holistic approach to engaging with civil society.

Peace operations can leverage civil society to improve the conditions for mandate implementation in order to prevent and mitigate local-level conflicts, provide early warning on human rights violations and abuses, devise protection strategies, facilitate local consultations and foster greater inclusiveness, particularly of women and youth. Such engagement can also positively enhance the perceived legitimacy of the mission. It is critical, however, that mission activities to engage with civil society take full account of the gender dimension, as well as the security risks to different groups. This might entail creating a space for the mission, UNCT and civil society leaders to consult, through mechanisms such as civil society advisory committees.

CSOs have an important role in shaping and transforming societies, but they may not always support the same objectives as the UN, particularly when it comes to a peace process. The MLT must be aware of the nature of the CSOs in their specific mission context and be careful to ensure that "the needs of all segments of society are taken into account" through an understanding of how different elements can and cannot contribute to

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building a peace.[33] The mission will therefore need to identify and map civil society actors on a regular basis in order to understand their interests and their ability to positively or negatively influence the peace process and its mandated tasks. These stakeholder analyses should inform planning processes and reflect a theory of change.

6.4.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities to support this output include:

- Conducting actor mapping and needs assessment of CSOs at the national and local levels.
- Establishing formal mechanisms for engaging with civil society that are structured and systematic, bringing together the mission, the UNCT and civil society, and which include specific consultation mechanisms for women and youth.
- Integrating the outcomes from peace and conflict and stakeholder analyses into relevant UN and strategic mission planning documents.
- Sharing good practices with civil society groups, producing practical tools and fostering a conducive environment for a robust civil society.[34]
- Coordinating support by the donor community.

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33 UN Security Council Resolution 2282, 27 April 2016, p. 2.
34 UN General Assembly and Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General: Peacebuilding and sustaining peace', A/72/707-S/2018/43, 18 January 2018, pp.17–18.

6.4.2 Benchmarks

Short-term

- Mapping exercise and needs assessment of CSOs undertaken between mission and UNCT counterparts, linking actors to objectives, identifying levels of interest and influence, and the relationships between key actors, the host state and parties to the conflict.
- Key actors with which to engage identified.
- Segments of local communities, civil society and diasporas are informed of and consulted with about mission objectives to facilitate greater understanding of the mission mandate.

Medium-term

- Structured and systematic mechanisms established for consultation between the mission, the UNCT and CSOs.
- Civil society involved in collaborating with the mission through early warning and development of sustainable options for peace and reconciliation (in line with "do no harm" principles).
- Agreement reached within the donor community to avoid overlapping priorities and actions.
- Best practices applied by bilateral and multilateral partners.

Long-term

- Climate of cooperation exists between civil society and the government in which each holds the other to account, with appropriate and proportionate checks and balances in place.
- National and international policies and responses are better integrated with long-term development frameworks that include CSOs.
- Civil society institutions are empowered and have the capacity to mobilize without fear of undue interference or pressure from government institutions.
- Meaningful input into the political process by civil society actors established.

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6.4.3 Responsibilities and coordination

The HoM will need to communicate that engagement with civil society is a priority across all mission components. It will also be important to engage the FC and Police Commissioner in discussions so that security concerns are heard and taken into account. If it is to be effective, such engagement with civil society needs to be systemic and coordinated. It should also leverage existing mechanisms, where possible, particularly those established by the UNCT. While other UN actors, such as UNDP and OHCHR, play an important role in supporting civil society, peace operations often have a very strong political mandate to work with civil society in the context of reconciliation, addressing local conflicts, promoting women's participation and gender equality, fostering inclusiveness and reintegrating former combatants. Through sections such as Civil Affairs, Political Affairs, Public Information, Human Rights, Rule of Law, Gender, and Child Protection, a mission can play a positive role in supporting the growth of civil society in a post-conflict setting.

6.4.4 Resources

The Civil Affairs section will have a central role in engaging with civil society, given its focus on monitoring and facilitation at the local level, as well as confidence building, conflict management and reconciliation. It will also have a key role in ensuring that local voices are heard and in forging partnerships with civil society. Additional engagement will come from the human rights section (to ensure that civil society is not coming under threat or having its rights violated) and the strategic communications section (to support messaging with communities while keeping the national authorities informed about different activities), where appropriate. Bilateral partners may also be involved in supporting CSOs, depending on donor interests.

6.4.5 Challenges and risks

- Strengthening or rebuilding civil society is a long-term process. Peacekeeping operations can only, at best, provide initial support. The challenge should be approached with humility, deference to local knowledge and avoidance of international and donor hubris.

- A polarized society is likely to have a negative impact on the emergence of viable civil society structures, as intimidation, real or perceived, may discourage members of civil society from pursuing their work freely and rigorously.

- As expectations within civil society may be high when it comes to implementation of the mission mandate, messaging needs to be carefully managed.

- Similarly, as CSOs may expect support in the form of financial resources, the mission will need to manage these expectations, which may involve providing information on external funding opportunities.

- The host government may view civil society as a threat to its authority and attempt to thwart engagement efforts between the mission and civil society.

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6.4.6 Considerations

Engaging locals versus elites

It is not possible for a peace operation to engage with all of civil society. It often only engages with a few elite people, normally based in the capital, who may deem themselves representative of a wider group, demographic or set of interests. This can cause friction, tensions and even conflict. The peace operation should ensure that it engages with civil society in a transparent but broad-based manner that is communicated at the national and community level. Engagement at field-office level will be essential to achieve this, but coherence of messaging will be challenging.

Navigating a polarized civil society and government caution

Civil society represents a diverse range of views and interests. This means that it is not necessarily neutral, and may be divided by the conflict, with different groups supporting different parties to the conflict. The MLT needs to be aware of this, and make assessments on engagement to ensure that the mission does not give the impression that it is inadvertently supporting one party or another. Engagement may also exacerbate tensions with the host government. Social media platforms have provided new outreach methods for stakeholders, but many countries have also witnessed a growth in attempts by governments to control civil society groups, which are competing for resources and legitimacy. A key challenge for mission management will be how to properly identify the various actors that can promote and strengthen peace, and to navigate the relationship with the host government where there are differences. Broad engagement across civil society is essential.

Supporting civil society while allowing it to stand on its own feet

A long-term view on supporting civil society argues that the most robust organizations should be free of any international support in order to maintain their local credibility.

6.5 Return and Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs Supported

The safe return of refugees and IDPs is a highly sensitive and potentially volatile process, from the identification and registration of affected persons to their eventual and voluntary return, in safety and in dignity, and their subsequent reintegration. Even after their return, a number of political and security issues (e.g. property disputes) may arise, as communities that were abandoned by their original residents may have been resettled by others, leading to tensions and renewed conflict. The status of returnees who may have been former combatants is likely to be legally and politically complex, and to require further guidance. As is the case with other humanitarian activities, the return of refugees and IDPs is managed and led by specialized UN agencies and their implementing humanitarian partners. However, the peacekeeping mission is central to establishing safe and secure conditions, and can play an important supporting role before, during and after the return.

6.5.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities by the mission to support this output include:

· Monitoring border crossings and securing return corridors.
· Providing physical protection in the form of temporary shelters, working closely with the authorities responsible for camp management and security.
· Coordinating and conducting mine clearance of routes and resettlement areas.
· Ensuring a safe and secure environment around IDP camps.
· In support of the host government, ensuring a safe and secure environment at the IDPs'/refugees' places of origin to allow a safe return.
· Providing logistical support to humanitarian agencies, as necessary and as requested, within the means and capabilities of the mission.
· Monitoring, recording and reporting human rights violations and helping to ensure that all returns are voluntary.
· Conducting civil affairs activities aimed at addressing the tensions between returnees and receiving communities.

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6.5.2 Benchmarks

Short-term
- Refugee and IDP camps are safe and secure and women's security is being considered.
- Refugees and IDPs are identified and registered and are agreeing to return voluntarily.
- Border crossings and return corridors are secure and free of mines and other threats.

Medium-term
- Places of origin are safe and secure, and women's security is being considered.
- Returns are taking place in an orderly and safe manner.
- Accommodation and basic services are available on return.

Long-term
- Reintegration of returnees is successful, and the receiving population is playing a supportive role.
- Property disputes are being addressed through well-established and impartial mechanisms.
- National and international policies and responses are better integrated with long-term development frameworks.

6.5.3 Responsibilities and coordination

The main responsibility for the voluntary return of refugees and IDPs rests with UNHCR or the International Organization for Migration, supported by WFP and UNICEF, and international and local NGOs. OCHA plays an important role in terms of coordination, policy and advocacy, but is not an operational agency directly engaged in the delivery of humanitarian programmes. The peacekeeping mission acts in a supporting role. Efforts should be closely coordinated by the DSRSG-RC/HC, in concert with the FC when the military is involved. Parameters for use of peacekeeping assets or personnel in support of the return of refugees and IDPs should be based on a detailed agreement between members of the MLT and the RC/HC, under the overall authority of the HoM.

In extreme situations, missions may be managing IDPs seeking protection from physical violence in what have been termed "POC sites" on or alongside UN bases as part of their mandate to protect civilians. This will require the direct engagement of the peacekeeping mission and the

MLT to manage the facilities and provide security, in close coordination with humanitarian actors. Broadly speaking, the same issues apply to returning and reintegrating refugees in these sites.

6.5.4 Resources

Providing security for protection camps can tie down scarce mission resources. If possible, local security services (in particular the police) will need to be supported, which will often require police component resources. Securing border crossings and return corridors is labour intensive and may require considerable military resources. Ensuring that returns are voluntary and that possible disputes are addressed are core functions of several civilian sections such as Political Affairs, Civil Affairs, Human Rights, and Public Information. It is therefore an integrated activity, which requires close coordination within the mission and with the UNCT, as well as adequate human and other resources.

6.5.5 Challenges and risks

- Information on the number, needs and types of displaced people may be lacking or inaccurate, or even manipulated.
- Refugee and IDP camps may become militarized and politicized and/or the centre of tensions and conflict, while borders become areas of direct security risk, particularly for women.
- Host governments may have an interest in maintaining the status of refugee and IDP camps to garner international attention or, alternatively, seek to have them dismantled before there is a safe and secure environment for IDPs to return to.
- Involuntary returns may create fear, tensions and instability.
- Security conditions along return corridors may still be fragile.
- Returning refugee or IDP groups may include former combatants who may seek to restart hostilities.
- Resentment between returnees and receiving communities may be a source of instability and spark renewed conflict.
- The status of refugees and IDPs could become institutionalized and entirely dependent on long-term emergency relief.
- After prolonged periods in camps, IDPs may be reluctant to move back to their areas of origin.
- Lack of coordination between the peacekeeping operation and humanitarian agencies.

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6.5.6 Considerations

Balancing security and national ownership

Refugees and IDPs and their camps can become political pawns, and there is a danger that they will exacerbate tensions. The security of refugees, IDPs and their environment is a concern of the MLT. A balance must be struck between the mission's responsibilities to protect vulnerable civilians and the principle of national ownership. Ideally, the security of the camps and their inhabitants should be a matter between UNHCR, the host government and the camps' internal organizational structures. However, the MLT may have a political role in facilitating the host government's close engagement in and resolution of the issue, as well as a responsibility, in support of the host government, to ensure that the camps exist in a secure environment. The amount of mission resources to commit to this process will be a matter of MLT judgement.

Promoting speedy returns while ensuring that all returns are voluntary and take place in safety and dignity

The existence and reduction in the number of dependent refugees and IDPs tend to be international measures of a peacekeeping operation's progress and success. While UNHCR is the lead on this issue, there may be tensions between the political motivations of the peacekeeping mission which will wish to free up committed resources and UNHCR's humanitarian criteria. This will require close coordination of activities and messages within the UN system.

6.6 Transition from Recovery to Development Enabled

Once the need for emergency assistance has subsided and early recovery is in progress, the focus should be on a smooth transition to longer-term development activities. This will entail gradual handover of responsibilities to national authorities. The transition from peacekeeping to subsequent phases of UN engagement should be factored in from the outset of the mission planning process, in order to clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the various UN actors on the ground. Ideally, planning for the transition from emergency and early recovery to long-term rehabilitation and development should begin early in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding phase. It is important at the outset to help national authorities implement a holistic approach that brings together all the relevant branches of government. Only national actors are in a position to meet their country's needs and objectives in a sustainable manner.

Clearly identified benchmarks will make it easier to plan the exit strategy of the peace operation. In other words, the successful transition from recovery to development and the ability of national and other institutions to take responsibility in a number of areas will be defining factors in the drawdown of a mission. Key elements of transition, such as socio-economic recovery, are rarely among the mandated tasks of a peacekeeping mission. This makes a holistic and integrated UN approach essential. Peace operations must also support a number of essential activities that contribute to the consolidation of peace, such as the restoration of basic services and the revitalization of the economy.

6.6.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities by the mission to support this output include:

· Completing the DDR process.
· Ensuring the ability of national armed forces, police and other law-enforcement agencies to provide security and maintain public order.
· Monitoring the restoration of state authority and the resumption of basic services.
· Overseeing the consolidation of legitimate political institutions and democratic processes.
· Benchmarking and achieving consensus on the criteria for successful transition in coordination with the UNCT.

Developing transition plans in all relevant areas in coordination with the UNCT.

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UNMIL: An accelerated, yet prudent and responsible, exit

When I arrived in Liberia in July 2015, the country was already fairly advanced along the path of peace consolidation. Achieving the long-awaited UN strategic goal in Liberia—attaining a steady state of security with national institutions able to maintain security independently of a peacekeeping mission—seemed closer than ever before. The democratically elected government had been in office for nearly 10 years, and the process of institution-building in the rule of law and security sector was at an advanced stage. Yet, fragility was palpable.

The UN Security Council had been considering the drawdown and withdrawal of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) since 2007. In my pre-deployment bilateral meetings with key members of the Security Council, most made it clear to me that the closure of the mission before the October 2017 general elections was a priority, and that preparation for that eventuality constituted the core of my mandate. They expressed frustration over a "wasteful mission creep", in terms of both mandated timeframe and expanse, leading to an "acute and chronic dependency syndrome".

However, the common narrative in Liberia—whether in the government or civil society, cities or countryside, the mission and other UN entities, or neighbouring, subregional and regional diplomatic representations—was running in the opposite direction. They argued that while there was significant progress in the area of security, the state of stability was still vulnerable, and people remained deeply weary of a dangerous relapse, which the government might not be able to handle in the absence of peacekeepers. They pointed out that the electoral campaign, which is always accompanied by heightened levels political tension, had the potential to lead to widespread violence. As such, they argued that the mission should remain in place until Liberia was ready to stand on its own.

It was obvious that UNMIL must rapidly and fully concentrate on helping prepare the country, psychologically and operationally, for a post-UNMIL future. The task of completing the UNMIL mandate in an accelerated manner had to be implemented in tandem with the mission's further drawdown as we moved closer to its closure. Our actions included extensive dialogue and engagement with the government, political parties and civil society leaders, as well as massive outreach campaign with (and through) the media and the general public, with a view to instilling self-confidence and national pride in assuming full responsibility for their future.

In the meantime, we accelerated the transfer of residual responsibilities in human rights monitoring, rule of law, national reconciliation and security sector reform to the government institutions, civil society and the UN Country Team. Given the critical significance of ensuring that transfer of power from President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to a new president took place through free, fair and peaceful elections, the mission successfully supported the joint appeal by the President and her Côte d'Ivoire counterpart, as well as many regional and subregional voices, for the Security Council to extend the mission's mandate until after the elections and the inauguration of the new president.

Furthermore, the mission enhanced its assertive engagement with the three branches of government to expedite full implementation of the transition agenda and the preparation of a peacebuilding plan.

Farid Zarif, SRSG UNMIL, 2015–18

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6.6.2 Benchmarks

Short-term

- Security situation stabilized.
- Host government generally considered legitimate and enjoys public support.
- Disarmament and demobilization completed, and focus shifted to reintegration of former combatants.
- Public participation in development visible.
- Public expectations for development managed.

Medium-term

- The state has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.
- Human rights violations are decreasing.
- The demands and needs of the victims of the conflict have been largely met.
- Reconciliation and transitional justice efforts are underway.
- Legitimate institutions of government have been established.
- Capacity-building efforts, including at the local level, are underway.
- A long-term development plan is in place.

Long-term

- Disputes are settled peacefully and within well-established and functioning political institutions and mechanisms.
- The rule of law has been fully (re-)established.
- General security levels and the economic climate are both conducive to foreign investment, encouraging participation by all economic actors, including local actors.
- Secure banking and credit structures and monetary policy are established, and inflation rate is controlled.
- Individuals and enterprises have access to loans and/or investment capital.

6.6.3 Responsibilities and coordination

A host of UN and external partners play lead roles in emergency assistance, early recovery and development, but the interface and involvement of a peacekeeping mission in all these efforts require close coordination with all the relevant actors, from the initial planning stage to the final handover of responsibilities. While the entire MLT should be actively involved in this regard, the role of the DSRSG-RC/HC is particularly important. Benchmarks should be formulated in close coordination with the national authorities, donor governments, and local and international NGOs. These should be based on the development of local capabilities rather than progress with mandate implementation. Careful cooperation and coordination between the mission and UNHQ, including the PBSO, will be necessary in determining possible follow-on arrangements to the peacekeeping mission.

6.6.4 Resources

From a resource perspective, most recovery and development efforts are outside of the purview of the peacekeeping mission. However, the mission should have adequate civilian human resources throughout its deployment, including during the process of downsizing/liquidation, to be able to efficiently undertake all liaison and coordination activities with relevant partners. Since many recovery and development activities are funded from voluntary contributions, the MLT, especially the SRSG and the DSRSG-RC/HC, will play an important role in coordinating UN efforts, and mobilizing donor support and the engagement of key international players such as the World Bank, the IMF, the EU and regional financial institutions.

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6.6.5 Challenges and risks

- The peace operation is withdrawn prematurely leaving the structural causes of the conflict unaddressed, with the potential to affect long-term development.
- National authorities and local institutions do not yet have the capacity to take over from the mission and/or UNCT.
- Donor fatigue leads to disengagement and under-funding of recovery programmes.
- Donor focus is diverted to other emerging international crises.
- There is a lack of funds for peace consolidation and development activities, such as for the reintegration of former combatants.
- There is a lack of coordination between peacekeeping mission and follow-on operations and/or entities.
- There is a lack of thorough analysis of or consideration given to the needs of women or perceptions of their security.

6.6.6 Considerations

Premature withdrawal versus over-dependence on the peacekeeping mission

Resource pressure may compel the UN Security Council and the wider international community to push for the termination or downsizing of a peacekeeping mission earlier than recommended or desired by the UN Secretariat. Pressure to withdraw may also come from the host government. On the one hand, premature withdrawal could have disastrous consequences from a political, security and financial perspective. On the other hand, the extended presence of a mission may lead to overdependence or inhibit the development of national capacities. Capacity development should start as early as possible rather than being seen only in the context of an international exit strategy.

Maintaining external support while preparing for withdrawal

International attention is greatest in the immediate aftermath of a conflict, generally defined as the first two years after the main conflict has ended. Transitions may be a sign of successful peace consolidation; but they are also highly sensitive periods. National authorities may have concerns that the departure of the peacekeeping mission will have unintended impacts or coincide with a huge drop in external political and financial support. The HoM and MLT should actively encourage international actors to continue their engagement after the withdrawal of the mission. The prospects for a responsible exit would be improved in each case, and overall costs reduced, by three sets of commitments by the international community: (a) enhanced economic support; (b) political oversight, perhaps through new Peacebuilding Commission country-specific mechanisms; and (c) security guarantees.

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6.7 Independent Media Supported

A free press can ensure that citizens have access to diverse sources of information, enabling them to take part in society more effectively. An independent media that is engaged with citizens can support many of the same objectives as a peace operation. It can encourage dialogue and foster a range of different views, which might counter or dispel efforts to perpetuate misinformation or hate speech. Investigative journalism can shine a light on impunity, atrocities or injustices, supporting the strengthening of government institutions and accountability, as well as mandate implementation of a peace operation.

The free and responsible flow of information can be vital in supporting efforts to build and sustain peace.[35] In the context of many peace operations, however, the media can also be manipulated to spread misinformation and hate speech, or journalists may be targeted, censored or arrested. A lack of independent media outlets, or a plurality of media institutions, can exacerbate tensions and conflict.

Peace operations do not have a lead role in establishing an independent media. Efforts to support the establishment of an independent media are largely beholden to the host authorities, which need to support freedom of expression. Moreover, independent regulators and funders are required in order to support the existence and work of an independent media. However, peace operations provide an enabling role, through their political offices and capacity-building tasks, which provides an opportunity to foster institutions that can protect journalists in the long term, through judicial and legal institutions, and foster the development of an independent media. The Strategic Commun-ications and Public Information section can do much to support the training of local journal-ists, thereby supporting the development of an independent media.

6.7.1 Operational activities

The key operational activities by the mission to support this output include:

- Encouraging and supporting local media professionals, including through the training of journalists.
- Supporting the creation of self-regulatory mechanisms in the media and/or an independent media commission.
- Supporting the development of institutions and/or legislation that will support press freedom and address impunity.

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35 For example, the Institute of Economics and Peace identifies "free flow of information" as one of eight pillars of "positive peace". See Institute of Economics and Peace, *Positive Peace Report 2018*, October 2018, pp. 7–8.

- Building the capacity of government institutions to engage with the media, through training on both traditional and social media.
- Supporting civic education programmes with civil society and development actors that foster an understanding in the community of the role of media and reporting.

6.7.2 Benchmarks

Short-term
- A process to establish an independent regulatory mechanism for the media has commenced.
- Host authorities are engaged in discussions about the value and importance of an independent media, and any judicial reforms that need to be considered.
- A mission radio station and/or programmes have been established to engage with civil society and local journalists.

Medium-term
- There is a legal framework that guarantees freedom of speech and access to information.
- Capacity-building or training programmes have been created to professionalize journalists.

Long-term
- Self-regulatory mechanism created by the print and electronic media, working effectively within the limits of the law.
- Independent media regulation/commission functioning effectively.
- Government engaging effectively with the media to communicate with the population.

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6.7.3 Responsibilities and coordination

Supporting an independent media is not necessarily a mandated task, and no single mission component has sole responsibility for providing such support. It is, however, an important consequence of advocating for legislative and judicial reform. In this regard, political affairs and judicial officers can have an important role to play. MLT members can act as role models for the host authorities in terms of how they and the mission engage with the media, particularly when there is criticism of actions the mission has undertaken. In support of a free and independent media, a mission may attempt to build capacity by establishing a radio station to provide free and independent news, and through the training of local journalists. This may require coordination with the Strategic Communications and Public Information section, the Civil Affairs section, development actors and bilateral donors.

6.7.4 Resources

Efforts to support an independent media are likely to require additional donor support, particularly to support efforts to establish a plurality of media organizations and the infrastructure needed to support different media platforms (including television, radio, print, Internet and social media). This is not the responsibility of the peace operation, but the MLT can play a role in engaging with other partners to support these initiatives in fulfilment of the overall mandate and objectives, and to build a more sustainable peace.

6.7.5 Challenges and risks

- Intimidation, real or perceived, may discourage members of civil society and the media from pursuing their work freely and rigorously.
- The media may pose a threat to the mission if not engaged with effectively.
- Global distrust in media organizations may result in a lack of public trust in established organizations and the news they communicate.
- Other actors may capitalize on new media platforms to spread "fake news" to promote a particular view of the conflict, or against the mission.
- If the mission fails to effectively engage with the media institutions that are established, particularly in times of crisis or criticism, this may set a bad example for the role of government in accepting a free and independent media.
- Funding media institutions can be a challenge, which means that there is a risk of undue influence if media organizations are not appropriately and sustainably funded and guided by journalistic ethics, which makes appropriate donor support essential.

6.7.6 Considerations

Access to and reach of different media platforms

In some countries, traditional media platforms may have more reach than new social media platforms due to limited or uneven Internet access. The MLT will need to consider the different priorities in terms of engaging in activities that might support an independent media, based on the availability and accessibility of different media platforms across the country

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