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Humanitarian Agenda 2015 Democratic Republic of Congo Case Study

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IDP camp on the outskirts of Goma. IDPs were able to travel to Goma to ask WFP for food aid (Box 2).

PHOTO: Tasneem Mowjee

Introduction

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire, is the second largest country in Africa and rich in gold, diamonds and minerals in the East of the country. It has been plagued by violent conflict for a decade, though both the Congolese and the West have hopes that elections held in 2006, the first in 40 years, are the first step towards peace and reconstruction. However, the country faces considerable challenges — continuing violence in the East (due to fighting between various armed groups from other countries, mainly Rwanda, and between these armed groups and the Congolese national army), the near absence of healthcare and education facilities in many areas and the lack of roads and other infrastructure.

This case study is part of a larger research project undertaken by the Feinstein International Center at Tufts University, titled “Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Principles, Power and Perceptions” (HA2015).¹ The purpose of this study is to examine the relevance of the four issues that, in the coming years, are likely to challenge the resourcefulness and effectiveness of the international community and its humanitarian practitioners. These issues are:

- The extent to which humanitarian values and principles are accepted as *universal*;
- The implications of *terrorism and counter-terrorism* for humanitarian action;
- The trend toward *coherence* between humanitarian and political agendas, particularly as represented by UN integrated missions; and
- The *security* of humanitarian personnel and the beneficiaries of humanitarian action.

This paper begins with background information on the complex conflicts in the DRC that provides the context for action by the international community. It goes on to outline findings relating to each of the four issues in turn. The analysis focuses mainly on the third of the four identified challenges: in fact, the DRC was selected because it is widely viewed as a successful example of the integration of humanitarian activities into a broader UN peacekeeping mission. While this report examines the particularities of the relationship between MONUC and humanitarian activities in some detail, the discussion illuminates larger questions concerning the structural and operational connections between UN peacekeeping missions and the humanitarian enterprise. The issues of universality and security were also very relevant in this context, while the Global War on Terror was tangential to the DRC experience. The paper concludes with some recommendations for the international community.

¹ All case studies, related synthesis reports and other HA2015 materials are available at fic.tufts.edu



Figure 1: Map of the Democratic Republic of Congo.²

² Available from www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/drcongo.pdf

Methodology

This report employs the methodology used in each of the case studies in the Humanitarian Agenda 2015 series. That is, it relies on data generated largely from interviews conducted with a wide array of institutions and individuals in the field, proceeding inductively to arrive at evidence-based conclusions and recommendations. Interviews are conducted off the record, with quotations attributed to individually named interlocutors only with their permission.

This report is based mainly on a field visit of two and a half weeks in April 2007. This involved visiting three locations — Kinshasa, Goma and Bukavu. The fieldwork focused on Eastern DRC (Goma and Bukavu) as this is where humanitarian aid programs are concentrated. Goma is the capital of the province of North Kivu and Bukavu is the capital of the province on South Kivu. These two provinces, together with the North-Eastern district of Ituri, have seen most of the fighting as they border the countries (particularly Rwanda and Uganda) from where armed groups have infiltrated the DRC. The local population in the Western provinces also face considerable hardship and high rates of mortality and morbidity, but this is due to the lack of basic services and infrastructure. As a result, there are few humanitarian aid operations in these provinces.

The fieldwork involved semi-structured interviews and focus groups with 87 respondents representing IDPs, host families and beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance; local communities; Congolese and international NGOs; UN agencies; and the Mission de l'ONU en République Démocratique du Congo (MONUC). The interviews were based mainly on a standard questionnaire developed for the HA2015 study, although some of the discussions relating to the issue of coherence ranged beyond the questionnaire itself.

The fieldwork in the DRC was supported by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator's (HC) office, the Civil Affairs Section of MONUC, and World Vision's Goma office. They all provided much-appreciated assistance with transport and setting up interviews, and also engaged with the researcher on the issues of the study. The Humanitarian Coordinator's support for this study was particularly helpful and facilitated access to MONUC staff, especially on the military side. The study has also involved a review of documents such as UN situation reports, other UN documents and articles regarding the details of the DRC conflict.

Background and Conflict Details

The recent history of the DRC is complex and some of the numerous rebel groups and countries that have been involved in the conflicts of the last decade are still engaged in violence in the East. In particular, the FDLR (former Hutu militia, who fled Rwanda after the genocide in 1994) are present in large numbers in the Kivus and Ituri regions, and there are frequent clashes between them and the Congolese army, as well as Congolese Tutsi fighters (who, it is alleged, still receive support from Rwanda). In 2006-2007, Congolese Tutsi fighters, led by Laurent Nkunda, have attacked towns in North Kivu several times and fought with the Congolese army. This has caused large-scale displacement and widespread insecurity.

This section outlines some of the key dates and events that explain the challenges facing the Congolese authorities, MONUC and humanitarian agencies.

- 1870s** Belgian King Leopold II sets up a private venture to colonize the country, then known as Kongo.
- 1908** Belgian state annexes Congo. It is claimed that millions of Congolese were killed, or worked to death, during Leopold's brutal reign.
- 1960 June** Congo becomes independent with left-leaning Patrice Lumumba as prime minister and Joseph Kasavubu, the other top candidate, as president.
- 1961 Feb** Lumumba murdered, reportedly with U.S. and Belgian complicity.
- 1965** Kasavubu ousted in a coup led by Lt-Gen Joseph Mobutu, who establishes a dictatorship and receives backing from the U.S., as a defence against communism in Africa. Mobutu renames the country Zaire in 1971.
- Early '90s** Mobutu agrees to some power-sharing with opposition leaders.
- 1994** As a result of the Rwanda genocide, two million Hutus flee to Eastern DRC, including the *Interahamwe* militias responsible for the genocide. The *Interahamwe* begin attacks on both Rwandan and Congolese Tutsis.
- 1996** Rwanda is concerned that cross-border raids by Hutu militias is a precursor to an invasion and begins arming Congolese Tutsis, known as the Banyamulenge. In November, the Banyamulenge rebel when ordered out of Zaire by Vice-Governor of South Kivu. They combine with the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo (AFDLC), led by Laurent-Desiré Kabila³, and capture much of eastern Zaire. This is known as the First Congo War.
- 1997 May** With active support from Rwanda, Uganda and Angola, Kabila's forces capture Kinshasa. Mobutu flees, Laurent Kabila is installed as president and Zaire is renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Rwandan and Ugandan forces refuse to leave the country and Congolese begin to view Kabila as pawn of foreign powers. Eventually, Kabila orders them to leave.
- 1998 Aug** This worries the Banyamulenge, who rise up in Goma on 2 August and thereby start the Second Congo War. Backed by Rwanda and Uganda, they form the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) and take control of major towns in the Kivus.
Armies from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi also occupy part of North-Eastern DRC. Kabila enlists the aid of Hutu militias in the East and turns public opinion against Tutsis. After much diplomatic effort by Kabila, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola provide military support, mainly in return for mining contracts. Chad, Libya and Sudan also support Kabila and the rebels are pushed back.

- 1998 Nov** A new Ugandan-backed rebel group, the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) is reported in Northern DRC. Rwandan President Kagame admits for first time to Rwandan forces helping RCD rebels.
- In 1999, tensions emerge within the RCD about the dominance of the Bunyamulenge and it splits into factions. In May, the factions fight for control of the Northern town of Kisangani.
- 1999 July** The six African countries involved in the war sign a ceasefire accord in Lusaka. The following month the MLC and RCD rebel groups sign the accord.
- 2000** UN Security Council authorizes a 5,500-strong UN force, MONUC, to monitor the ceasefire but fighting continues between rebels and government forces, and between Rwandan and Ugandan forces.
- 2001 Jan** President Laurent Kabila shot dead by a bodyguard. Parliament unanimously chooses Joseph Kabila to succeed his father as President.
- 2001 Feb** Kabila meets Rwandan President Paul Kagame in Washington. Rwanda, Uganda and the rebels agree to a UN pull-out plan. Uganda and Rwanda begin pulling troops back from the frontline.
- 2002 Jan** Eruption of Mount Nyiragongo devastates much of the city of Goma.
- 2002 Dec** Peace deal signed in South Africa between Kinshasa government and main rebel groups. Under the deal rebels and opposition members are given portfolios in an interim government.
- 2003 April** President Kabila signs a transitional constitution, under which an interim government will rule pending elections.
- 2003 June** President Kabila names a transitional government to lead until elections in two years time. Leaders of main former rebel groups are sworn in as vice-presidents in July.
- 2004 June** City of Bukavu, capital of South Kivu, is occupied for several weeks by Tutsi forces led by Colonel Mutebusi and Brig.-Gen Laurent Nkunda. MONUC has a small presence in the town but does not intervene to stop the occupation (though it tries to use its presence to limit the raping and looting that follows).
- 2005 Mar** MONUC peacekeepers say they have killed more than 50 militia members in an offensive, days after nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers are killed in Ituri.
- 2006 Mar** Warlord Thomas Lubanga becomes the first war crimes suspect to face charges at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. He is accused of forcing children into active combat.
- 2006 July** Presidential and parliamentary polls are held. With no clear winner in the presidential vote, incumbent Joseph Kabila and opposition candidate Jean-Pierre Bemba prepare to contest a run-off poll on 29 October. Forces loyal to the two candidates clash in the capital.

³ Laurent Kabila had credibility as a follower of Lumumba and for having been an opponent of Mobutu for two decades.

- 2006 Nov** Joseph Kabila is declared winner of second round in presidential election. Poll has approval of international monitors.
- 2006 Dec** Forces of renegade General Laurent Nkunda and the army, backed by MONUC, clash in North Kivu, prompting some 50,000 people to flee.
- 2007 Mar** Government troops and forces loyal to opposition leader Jean-Pierre Bemba clash in Kinshasa.

Box 1: Combatants and Key Players

ADF/NALU (Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda): Anti-Museveni group based in North-East of Ituri province.

FARDC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo): Congolese national army, made up of former rebel groups that have been put together into “integrated” brigades and received some training. Still very poorly paid and trained to loot, rape and force people into working for them. Pose one of the biggest threats to the security of the population and is regarded as the “number one human rights violator” in the country.

FDLR (Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda): Comprises key members of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, Hutu members of the former Rwandan army and a mix of displaced Rwandan Hutus. In 2005, they reached an agreement with the Congolese government that should have led to their repatriation to Rwanda. However, the FDLR leadership demanded more political concessions from Paul Kagame, the Rwandan President, and the repatriation process did not go ahead. MONUC can repatriate disarmed and demobilized FDLR soldiers but only on a voluntary basis. Since many soldiers have married Congolese women and established lives in Congolese villages, they are reluctant to return. The FDLR’s presence in the DRC gives the Rwandan government a reason for continued interference in the DRC.

Laurent Nkunda: Was a senior officer in the RCD. In 2004 he was named General in the new national Congolese army but refused the post and withdrew with his troops to forests in North Kivu. Troops under his command occupied Bukavu in June 2004 and committed widespread atrocities. In November 2006, his troops occupied the town of Sake, just north of Goma, causing large-scale displacement. Indicted by the Congolese government for war crimes in September 2005. His position remains unclear since his troops have now begun a process of integration into the FARDC, known as “mixage”. Unlike full-scale integration, known as “brassage”, the troops are not moved out of their areas of former control.

Mai Mai: Term refers to a range of Congolese armed groups set up as local defence forces to resist invasion. In the 1990s, they were a religious movement believing that bullets would turn to water and not kill their members (the word Mai means water). However, they have lost their religious practices now.

RCD (Rally for Congolese Democracy): Rebel group composed mainly of Congolese Tutsis, known as Banyamulenge in South Kivu. Supported by Rwanda. Began rebellion in Goma on 2 August 1998. Joined the Congolese army in 2003.

Key Issues

Universality

This section examines the extent to which the Congolese accept international humanitarian principles and values and whether there is any conflict between these values and local customs and traditions. Previous HA2015 case studies have shown differing degrees of congruence and tension between the particularities of local mores, and the universals on which the humanitarian endeavor is based. Earlier studies in the series have also identified disconnects between the “insiders”, who uphold local values, and “outsiders”, who promote international or alien views.⁴ This section therefore also looks at where the divisions between “insiders” and “outsiders” lay.

The DRC is a strongly Christian country in which interviewees tended to accept international humanitarian aid workers as people who had been motivated by compassion, whose “hearts have been touched by God”. Despite the numerous churches active in the DRC, there were few examples of their engagement in providing internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others in need with material assistance. When churches did distribute such assistance, these activities tended to focus on their own particular constituencies, whether Protestant or Catholic. Recipients interviewed expressed a general preference for assistance from aid agencies that helped communities as a whole rather than embodied a sectarian preference.

Recipients also preferred assistance from international rather than Congolese NGOs. This may have been because Congolese NGOs are not well supported by international aid agencies or donors and so have little humanitarian aid to offer. In fact, none of the IDPs interviewed for this study had received any humanitarian aid from a Congolese NGO. The Congolese NGOs interviewed were largely focused on human rights work, which they financed themselves. The expressed preference for international assistance may also be due to a belief that Congolese NGOs are more corrupt than international ones. One interviewee argued that if aid came from abroad, an international NGO would use it to help people whereas a national NGO would sell half and only give half to help others. This was at least partly based on experience, as the study uncovered at least one case where the national staff member of an international NGO was diverting assistance from an IDP camp. The situation recalled that in the Sudan, where many of those interviewed in Darfur expressed a preference for assistance from international, over national, organizations. Certainly there seemed to be no major disconnect between the humanitarian work supported by the international community and local mores.

Such frictions, as were expressed, seemed to be in the realm of operational interaction rather than at the level of ideas and values. Whether due to

⁴ See Antonio Donini et al, “Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Principles, Power and Perceptions. Preliminary Report”, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, Medford, MA, September 2006; available on line at fic.tufts.edu

concerns about capacity or corruption, Congolese NGOs felt marginalized by the international community. A MONUC civilian staff member encountered resistance from international humanitarian organizations when his section had tried to bring Congolese organizations into the response system. For example, when the Cluster system⁵ was established, it was decided in Kinshasa that Congolese NGOs would be excluded from Protection Cluster meetings because there were a lot of them and meetings would become too big. Also, the international community has been concerned about the security of Congolese NGOs if they are seen to be associated with MONUC. However, as a Congolese NGO representative pointed out, local NGOs work closely with communities on human rights issues and have better access to information. The issue was also raised at a workshop on IDP protection in North Kivu, which involved local authorities and NGOs. Since then, the Cluster has been discussing whether or not to include Congolese NGOs. Local NGOs pointed out that international agencies could at least hold regular meetings with them as a group to convey necessary information from Cluster meetings. At the time of the study, it was up to individual Cluster members to act as information channels to their implementing partners.

International humanitarian agencies may believe that indigenous organizations lack operational capacity and be reluctant to collaborate with them, but they are not the only form of local capacity that can be supported and strengthened. The study found that IDPs themselves had tremendous resourcefulness and resilience and exhibited an ability to organize assistance for themselves. Examples of this are outlined in Box 2 below. Their activities gave concrete meaning to the values affirmed by international humanitarian organizations.

In general, aid recipients in Eastern DRC were very grateful for assistance from the international community and were satisfied with the performance of aid agencies. However, those in Kinshasa saw the international community's role as broader than just providing humanitarian aid, perhaps because there were few humanitarian aid programs in the capital. Interviewees highlighted the fact that the international community had role as broader than just providing humanitarian aid, perhaps because there were few humanitarian aid programs in the capital. Interviewees highlighted the fact that the international community had brought security, organized national elections, and helped to calm the fighting between the forces of President Kabila and Jean-Pierre Bemba at the end of March. They were also clear that the international community should now help with reconstruction and enable the new President to demonstrate that he can do a good job, thereby reducing the risk of a return to war.

⁵ As part of the reform of the UN humanitarian system, in December 2005, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) approved the Cluster approach as a way to address gaps in humanitarian response and improve coordination. The IASC has designated an agency to take the lead in each of the 9 sectors where there were gaps in response. This Cluster lead convenes regular meetings of the organizations active in the sector to identify needs, response and gaps. For further information on the Cluster approach, see <http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=70>

Box 2: Examples of Local Capacity

1. When IDPs in North Kivu were given some land by the chiefs of a village so that they could establish a camp, they asked the chiefs if they could also use the village school building in the afternoons when village children were not using it. Since fighting had displaced the entire village, they had their own teachers to educate their children. They also asked the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to transfer its school-feeding program to the village to which they had fled. Thus, the IDPs had addressed the problems of food and education for their children by themselves.

2. An IDP camp on the outskirts of Goma had not been receiving food so the camp representative made several visits to the WFP office in Goma to request a food distribution. Eventually, an INGO stopped by the camp one evening to say that it would be distributing food the following morning on behalf of WFP. This did not give the IDPs time to inform those living with host families to come to the camp to receive food (although, according to OCHA, the aid agencies were not providing assistance to those with host families but did not want to make this policy explicit to avoid the IDPs moving into the camp simply to receive assistance). To overcome communication problems with humanitarian agencies, the IDPs had sold some of the non-food items that they had received and bought a mobile phone for their camp representative.

3. The IDPs in this camp were also concerned about security because they had been robbed by local townspeople after distributions of clothes and other items. They had contacted the local authorities and arranged to attend the weekly security meeting to discuss their problems. They were hoping that it would be possible to arrange for police officers from their own town, who were now IDPs living with host families, to patrol the camp and ensure that aid distributions went smoothly.

4. Each camp is expected to elect a committee to speak on its behalf and represent the IDPs' views. In one camp, an elderly man had recommended an election technique that he remembered from the days of Mobutu. IDPs were asked to put forward candidates. There were 4 in total. The IDPs then had to form a line behind the candidate that they supported. The candidate with the longest line became President, while the one with the second largest number of votes became Vice-President. The remaining candidates formed the camp committee. The technique ensured total transparency and prevented fraud. The President explained that he could only remain in his position as long as people felt that he was doing a good job. The IDPs were not afraid to come and tell him when he had made a mistake and, if they were not satisfied with his work, they would choose another President. The President and committee appreciated the elderly man's experience and wisdom in suggesting such a clear election process and tried to follow his advice, even if they disagreed with him.

When asked about the relative performance of international and Congolese NGOs, they were in favor of international NGOs because they pay a better salary than their generally impoverished Congolese counterparts. Since local people in Kinshasa were not the focus of current aid programs in the DRC, they were very concerned about the problem of low salaries and identified this as the root cause of problems in the capital. In particular, they were conscious of the fact that, though everyone in Kinshasa shops in the same markets, there is a huge difference between the salaries of internationals and the Congolese.

While there was broad consonance between international and local values, there were some areas of exceptions. In one instance, an international NGO's program to educate local communities about children's rights and

protection issues as part of training to foster parents of demobilized child soldiers seemed to run against the local grain. Since it was traditional to have very large families and children working from a very young age, some parents argued that children would be spoilt if they were given rights. They also wanted the international NGO to pay their children's school fees as a precondition for sending their children to school because the children would not be available to help them with work and they would, thus, be losing income. However, the NGO had supported a group of foster parents to organize themselves in order to spread the message which, in turn, had established a "children's committee" to reach out to other children through music. Although even the local organization had difficulty getting across messages about the equal rights of boys and girls to education and not allowing daughters to be married at a very young age, representatives felt that these messages were becoming more widely accepted.

Though some humanitarian organizations were clearly engaging local communities in discussions about customs and values as they related to specific programs, there was no evidence of more general discussions, whether spontaneous or planned, of humanitarian principles, like neutrality and impartiality, and of human rights. One international NGO staff member argued, "Humanitarians come into emergencies to save lives. Informing people about principles, engaging them in discussions, comes later." Even ICRC, when raising awareness about international humanitarian law (IHL) and humanitarian principles, had focused on the FARDC, FDLR and civil authorities, including the police. This was because reaching out to communities was a "huge job". Also, the FARDC had expressed great interest in sessions on IHL and humanitarian principles so ICRC faced great demand. Since the FARDC is a major human rights violator, ICRC recognized the importance of engaging with it (understanding that soldiers themselves enjoy few rights and live in desperate conditions). But it also acknowledged that the failure to engage communities more broadly meant that some did not understand why humanitarian organizations worked on all sides of the conflict and this could pose a security risk.

The risk of a community not perceiving humanitarian organizations as neutral has been demonstrated in South Kivu. The local population had been terrorized by an armed group called the Rastas. Since international NGOs were negotiating access and working in rebel-held areas, the local population suspected them of supporting rebel groups with food and medicines. They found the idea of support to the Rastas "a bitter pill to swallow" in light of the atrocities committed by this group (see section on Terrorism below). So, they reported this to the newly elected Governor, who decided to stop humanitarian agencies from traveling to the area on security grounds — the FARDC was going to start operations against the Rastas and the government could not guarantee the safety of humanitarian agencies. The humanitarian community felt that the NGOs negotiated access in a principled and transparent way but this transparency may have been vis-à-vis the international community — reporting their activities at OCHA meetings and discussing them with donors — rather than local communities. The restriction was lifted only after intervention by MONUC and the HC and extended discussions with the Governor.

It was clear at the time of writing that the complex context of the DRC posed real challenges to humanitarian organizations in upholding humanitarian principles and the NGO/Red Cross Code of Conduct, particularly with involving beneficiaries in aid programs and being accountable to them. IDPs and other interviewees identified several instances where there had also been management failures, resulting in difficulties with the way that assistance was provided or where assistance had not been provided. These are outlined in Box 3 below. It will be noted that many of these involve issues of management and administration, rather than divergent understandings of humanitarian values by locals and internationals.

Box 3: Challenges to Principled and Well-Managed Humanitarian Aid

1. There were pockets of emergency need in Western DRC due to health epidemics, natural disasters — like floods — and occasional violence in areas like Bandundu. But, due to the lack of resources and actors on the ground, donors and humanitarian actors have focused on the East. At one stage, donors had decided that, even if areas of the DRC had mortality and morbidity levels that would qualify as a humanitarian emergency, this was not sufficient to warrant assistance. They regarded only the East, with its violent conflict, as being in humanitarian need.
2. There were several cases in which the method of aid distribution exposed beneficiaries to security risks, e.g., when a distribution was done in the town center, people were robbed on their way back to the camp. IDPs had to ask for food to be distributed at the camp itself to avoid such incidents.
- 3 One large camp did not receive assistance for five months. The expat staff of an INGO told camp residents that this was because they had been told that the IDPs had returned to their villages. It was only when they came to verify this information that they realized that the IDPs were still in the camp. OCHA could not corroborate this story or the reason for such miscommunication, although it confirmed that the camp had not received assistance for the five-month period.
4. In the case of an IDP camp on the edge of an area to which humanitarian agencies could not travel, the organizations had decided not to provide assistance to avoid encouraging more people to come to it. However, they had not communicated this decision to the IDPs who were desperately awaiting assistance because INGOs had created expectations by taking a list of their names and registering them for assistance.
5. IDPs living with host families seldom received assistance because humanitarian agencies did not want to destroy their “coping mechanisms”. However, it was not evident that the agencies had a clear idea of what these coping mechanisms were since they had not spoken to the IDPs or host families. When IDPs with host families did receive aid, this was the same standard package as IDPs in camps, which was not always appropriate, e.g., they needed mattresses to sleep on rather than plastic sheeting, but they were not consulted about such matters. Host families received no assistance at all, even though they regularly provided for 10 to 15 IDPs.
6. A program for fostering demobilized child soldiers had not addressed the problem of substance abuse, even though this was common and causing a real problem for the host families — the children would steal to buy drugs or get violent when they were under the influence of drugs. According to the contract between the INGO and foster parents (whereby the INGO paid \$2 a day per demobilized child), the INGO was not liable for any damage caused by the child and as the parents could not afford insurance, they had to pay for stolen

items and other damage themselves. The parents were also concerned because the INGO could cancel the contract without notice, in case of war or similar circumstances, but it was not clear how the parents were to continue providing for the child. The INGO had promised help with establishing a micro-credit program to generate extra income but this had never materialized.

While upholding humanitarian principles and standards has proved challenging in recent years in the DRC, humanitarian agencies at the time of this writing were beginning to face a further challenge as the new government was established and started to assert itself. One interviewee argued that INGOs have been used to “ruling the country” since the 1960s⁶. This is because they have provided key services like health and have developed parallel structures for this, with their own nurses, medical supplies, etc. As the new government begins to exercise its sovereignty and suggest that INGOs provide assistance in particular areas of need, there are likely to be conflicts with INGO neutrality and independence. There is some evidence that such conflicts already exist. A couple of interviewees suggested that humanitarian agencies had decided not to provide assistance to an IDP camp in South Kivu because the Governor had stopped them from traveling beyond the town, apparently for security reasons. Although the humanitarian agencies argued that they did not want to encourage further displacement from areas to which they could not provide aid, the interviewees believed that the agencies, which had been used to operating without government control before the national elections, were angry with the Governor’s restriction and were hoping that the lack of assistance would force him to lift his ban.

In sum, beneficiaries and local communities in the DRC broadly accepted the work of international humanitarian actors because this was in line with their notions of charity and Christian “good work”. However, they had some difficulty with more complex issues such as the principles of neutrality and impartiality (because they saw these as negotiating and supporting the armed groups, who were persecuting them) and human rights (like children’s rights to education because this conflicted with their livelihood strategies). Due to the difficult working conditions in the DRC, humanitarian actors themselves have been challenged to abide by their principles and Code of Conduct and maintain high standards of program delivery, as illustrated by the examples in Box 3. In particular, a lack of resources and capacity has meant that they have been unable to respond to the full extent of needs in the country.

⁶ An earlier case study found a similar situation in Afghanistan, where being associated with the delivery of humanitarian aid was important to a new regime seeking to establish its legitimacy and effectiveness.

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Unlike many of the other country case studies in the HA2015 research, interviewees did not generally deem the issue of international terrorism and the Global War on Terror to have any specific relevance to the situation in the DRC. A small number of interviewees speculated whether the DRC would be receiving more humanitarian aid funding from the international community if it was seen as more significant in the war against terrorism. One INGO gave the example of having signed funding agreements for DRC projects and then having them canceled because the donor was more focused on areas like Darfur. In his view, “If Bin Laden was situated in Eastern DRC, it would receive a lot more resources”.

Although DRC was not affected by Terrorism with a capital “T”, small “t” terrorism — defined as exposure to widespread physical and structural violence — is a daily reality for many people, especially in Eastern DRC. In the last several years a particularly vicious group called the Rastas has been preying on villagers in South Kivu, near the town of Walungu. Like other armed groups in the DRC, it has killed villagers in night attacks and raped women or abducted them for use as sex slaves. It had also been kidnapping people and holding them for ransom. According to one interviewee, in the past two years 535 people had been killed in the area (of whom 283 were burnt alive) and 1447 had been kidnapped. The attacks against girls and young women have been especially horrific. A doctor described having many patients aged 15 to 18 who asked if they would be able to have children (which is immensely important for the Congolese), but they would not be able to do so because their reproductive systems had been destroyed by the brutal ways in which they had been raped. In one case, the victim was a 10-year old girl who had had an object inserted in her by two soldiers. These incidents led one local NGO representative to describe the perpetrators of these acts as terrorists. In his view, terrorism in the form of Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein was a product of Western policies and the Rwandan “terrorists” came to the DRC with the help of the French government⁷.

Quite apart from specific acts of violence, the conditions of daily existence for many in the DRC were precarious. The International Rescue Committee’s mortality survey, published in 2006 showed that 1,000 people were dying each day in the DRC and half of these were children under 5. Since the start of the conflict in 1998 to April 2004 an estimated 3.8 million people had died as a result, making the conflict the worst since the end of World War II (Global Policy Forum 2004). This mortality rate represented an increase of 67% on the rate before the war. The “Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo” highlighted the widespread abuse of children, ranging from abductions, recruitment into armed factions and sexual abuse. It pointed out that, in 2006-2007, UNICEF identified 12,867 survivors of sexual violence, of whom 33% were

⁷ A reference to the French government’s “Opération Turquoise” in Rwanda in 1994, in which French troops created a “safe humanitarian zone” in Western Rwanda that may have allowed perpetrators of the genocide to flee to the DRC.



IDP camp on outskirts of Goma. The IDPs are with a representative of the local authority, discussing security needs (Box 2).

PHOTO: Tasneem Mowjee

children. It also reported that, according to a human rights team, Laurent Nkunda's men had used rape as a weapon of war in January 2006 in the Rutshuru area of North Kivu (UN Security Council 2007). An article highlighting the plight of raped women in the DRC called it "hell on earth" (Kirchner 2007).

In sum, the DRC experience corroborates the findings of a number of other country case studies in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the HA2015 research. Terrorism was a daily fact of life for those displaced, or otherwise affected, by the conflicts in the DRC. The terrorism involved, however, was not the terrorism of global reach: the DRC was not on the frontlines of the so-called Global War on Terror. Recurrent violations of human rights taxed not only the coping capacity of the population but also the protective capacity of humanitarian and human rights agencies.

Coherence

This section looks at the broad range of issues arising from the fact that the UN Mission in the DRC, MONUC, is an integrated mission mandated, among other things, to protect civilians and humanitarian aid workers and to improve the security conditions under which humanitarian assistance is provided. MONUC was established in 1999, following the signing of the ceasefire agreement in Lusaka. It is currently the largest UN mission with a total of 18,384 uniformed personnel in June 2007. In May 2007, its mandate was extended to December 2007.

As in other integrated missions, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) heads MONUC. The organization chart provides for two Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSGs): one as a political deputy and the other as the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the Resident Coordinator (RC). However, at the time of the study, the position of the political DSRSG was empty.

This section of the DRC case study examines the interface between MONUC and the work of the UN and other humanitarian assistance agencies, MONUC's activities to protect the civilian population, and MONUC's own delivery of humanitarian assistance. It concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of integrating the various activities supported by the international community into a single framework. The extent to which the integrated mission approach taken by MONUC was successful has clear implications for the organization of such efforts in other conflict settings.

Integrated Missions in Theory and in DRC

The concept of UN integrated missions was developed because traditional UN peacekeeping and humanitarian responses were found to be inadequate for

addressing the changed nature of conflicts in the 1990s. According to a paper on integrated missions:

Lack of communication, duplication of efforts and a failure to adapt strategy to the new tactics of belligerents meant that the “UN family” was ineffective at best. At worst, agencies found that the lack of coordination and standardization was actually feeding into the cycle of war (Weir 2006: 5).

Integrated missions, recommended in the “Brahimi Report” (UN 2000), were first introduced in 2000⁸. In this new organizational structure, the SRSG is responsible for the mission as a whole, including political, military and humanitarian responses.

Integration is designed to streamline UN efforts and ensure that the objectives of all UN forces and agencies are channeled towards a common overarching goal (Weir 2006: 5).

In early integrated missions — UNAMA in Afghanistan and UNMIL in Liberia are examples — the UN humanitarian component in the form of OCHA was subsumed into the mission and placed directly under the authority of the SRSG and DSRSG. Humanitarian actors have been concerned that putting UN humanitarian agencies under the same structure of control and accountability as the political and military branches of the mission compromised their perceived neutrality. This in turn would reduce OCHA’s effectiveness in coordinating humanitarian organizations and weaken the overall humanitarian response. More recent missions such as UNMIS in Sudan and MONUC have adapted the integration model so that OCHA remains a separate entity, though the human rights office is located within the political side of the mission. With MONUC, the process of integration began in December 2004-January 2005 with the appointment of Ross Mountain as both Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Resident Coordinator (RC). In his view, an integrated mission should be about “maximizing the impact for the local population of the considerable resources that the UN brings to bear”, including the military. The HC has tried to make the most of the tools available to him, even at the occasional expense of the mandates of individual UN humanitarian organizations. For example, he tasked MONUC’s Civil Affairs Section (CAS) with coordinating assistance and acting as OCHA’s focal point in some Western provinces (the two Kasais and Bas Congo) because OCHA does not have a presence in the area.

Recognizing that UN agencies were present before MONUC’s arrival and will remain to provide development assistance after MONUC has left, he attempted to establish positive collaborative links between MONUC and UN agencies. So, MONUC has carried out advocacy on behalf of humanitarian actors vis-à-vis the government, taking advantage of its greater weight as both a political and military actor. As described in the section on universality, the Governor of

⁸ For further analysis of the pros and cons of integrated and semi-integrated missions see the HA2015 case studies on Afghanistan and Liberia (integrated) and Burundi and Sudan (semi integrated) as well as the 2007 synthesis report at fic.tufts.edu.

South Kivu had restricted humanitarian access in Spring 2007. A combined intervention by the MONUC Head of Office in South Kivu (a highly respected individual) and the HC was necessary to get the restriction lifted.

The HC argued that local authorities respected MONUC's Head of Office far more than the head of any humanitarian agency because he had a strong military presence behind him. Joking about the increased leverage that the UN military provided when negotiating humanitarian access with armed groups, the HC pointed out that, a gun was far more effective than a threat to write stern letters or report commanders to the Human Rights Commission. Similarly, local authorities and donors respected the HC's position as DSRSG, which made him the second highest official in the mission, far more than his humanitarian role. An INGO also acknowledged the importance of this greater authority (particularly military backup) in engaging with armed groups to free child soldiers.

In addition to the capacity to bring greater political and military influence into the UN's interaction with local and national political authorities, MONUC was in a position to compile reports on war crimes and send them to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for action. While individual NGOs and UN agencies could provide such evidence as they encountered in the conduct of their programs, they lacked the capacity to do so on a comprehensive and mandated basis. It is noteworthy that MONUC's Civil Affairs Section facilitated some 400 joint assessment missions and field visits each year and that MONUC troops had increased humanitarian access in many areas. For example, following an attack on the town of Sake in November 2006, Nkunda set up a barrier on the main access road and charged vehicles for passing through. The MONUC military got Nkunda to remove the barrier and permit free humanitarian access.

Proponents of integrated missions contend that if a mission is not integrated, humanitarian organizations are not able to bring the international community's military and political power to bear on the challenges they face. Given the size of MONUC, the HC felt that it was better to have a say in how that power is used to benefit the population. An example of this has been the use of Mobile Operating Bases for civilian protection (as described below). Secure corridors for IDPs are another example of how humanitarian agencies can request military power for protection activities. In one case, after a massacre, international NGOs were providing assistance to IDPs in their place of origin to encourage people to return. But the IDPs were at risk on their way to and from their village — they had aid items looted and were harassed by the FARDC. A MONUC protection officer persuaded INGOs that a safe corridor would benefit the IDPs. Since she was located within the MONUC mission, she was able to arrange with the military to provide this safe passage for the IDPs.

Another example comes from the province of Katanga. As MONUC was overstretched, Security Council Resolution 1669 of April 2006 authorized the temporary redeployment of one infantry battalion, one military hospital and up to 50 military observers from the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) to MONUC. Since the battalion was new to the country, it approached

MONUC's Civil Affairs Section (CAS) for advice on deployment locations and priority activities. CAS consulted the provincial Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC, known locally as the CPIA), OCHA and other humanitarian organizations as well as the FARDC and local authorities and conveyed their recommendations back to the battalion. The battalion followed this advice and this permitted the return of 200,000 IDPs, increased humanitarian access and accelerated demobilization activities with the Mai Mai. Proponents of integration regard this as a successful example of integrated response because it was a joint operation between the security, humanitarian and DDR sections of MONUC.

In order to replicate this type of collaboration in other provinces, the MONUC Force Commander issued a directive on the protection of civilians that emphasized the need for the military to work closely with humanitarian and human rights actors. As the Directive put it:

The scarlet thread of our military strategy is the jointness of military with all substantive sections of MONUC, UN system partners, agencies and NGOs (both national and international) prior to, during and after military operations aimed at protection of civilians in all situations and at all levels so that effect of our efforts is maximized and it produces visible/tangible impact on the ground.

In view of the potential impact of coordinated action, the HC suggested that, instead of having a preconceived and generally negative view, perhaps humanitarian aid workers, who were in principle reluctant to engage with the military, should ask themselves whether cooperation with the military was in the interests of the victims of the conflict.

If the attitudes of humanitarian organizations and personnel have a bearing on the success of integrated missions, so too do the personalities and reputations of key mission personnel. The extent to which an HC/DSRSG can exert influence on the political and military parts of the mission and ensure that humanitarian concerns are taken into account depends to a large extent on personality. In the case of the DRC, where the HC/DSRSG commanded huge respect from the international community, local authorities and the MONUC military, he could have direct contact with military commanders and make them pay attention to humanitarian concerns without any direct authority over them. His forceful personality was instrumental in getting the political side of the mission to understand the position of humanitarian actors on issues such as negotiating access with those regarded as "bastards". In South Kivu, the civilian head of the MONUC office was also widely respected and was a Muslim, like the Pakistanis in the brigade stationed in the province, so there was close collaboration between the military and civilian parts of MONUC. This was further strengthened by the fact that the South Kivu commander was tremendously approachable and open to dialogue.

Issued only in March 2007, the Force Commander's Directive remains too recent to assess. But while the Directive laid out principles of cooperation, it did not provide standard operating procedures to operationalize the principles. This would be necessary because the level of cooperation between the military and humanitarian organizations varied. In one province, there was a perception that the MONUC military was not receptive to requests for

more patrols or deployment in certain areas because they had an attitude of “we’ll do our job and you do yours”. In many cases, cooperation depended on individual commanders. Since military personnel are only stationed in the country for one year, relationships can change significantly (for better or worse) with each staff rotation. Finally, cooperation also depended on the relationship between the civil and military units within MONUC — if this was not good, it was difficult for humanitarian organizations to request support from the military. Hence, to promote better mobilization of MONUC military and civilian resources, the role of the Civil Affairs Section as the interface between military and humanitarian organizations was critical.

The uneven relationship between civilian and military actors in the DRC may also reflect the fact that the concept of civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) was fairly new in MONUC and, because it had been a low priority, less competent personnel had been put into this role. At the time of the study, the mission had about 75 CIMIC officers at all levels. Senior CIMIC officers were based in Kinshasa while there were CIMIC officers at brigade, battalion, platoon and company levels. These officers were responsible for interacting with humanitarian organizations, providing security briefings, etc. Given the relatively high turnover of military contingents, new arrivals needed time to understand the complex situation in the DRC. As one interviewee noted, the peacekeepers’ knowledge and understanding was good after six months but by then they were preparing to leave. This constraint has implications for civil-military cooperation so civilian staff in the mission felt that it was necessary to capture CIMIC principles in a document. This led the Civil Affairs Section to develop CIMIC guidelines, in cooperation with OCHA and the military. After two years of discussion, the guidelines were finalized and circulated in December 2006. However, at the time of the study, MONUC was only just starting to organize workshops to disseminate them.⁹ (CAS in North Kivu had organized one with UN agencies and NGOs because there was great interest in the guidelines. This was probably because the security conditions in North Kivu had forced humanitarian organizations to engage with the military). Therefore, the implementation of the guidelines remains to be assessed.

Even within the MONUC civilian sections, interviewees found that people tended to work within their individual units, which led to parallel channels of information and approaches. There were also turf wars, for example, when the Protection Cluster approved a UNHCR-managed project to monitor protection issues in parts of South Kivu, MONUC’s Human Rights section felt that it was infringing on its activities and complained to the HC via email.

How effective was the integration approach of MONUC from the standpoint of humanitarian agencies? According to one OCHA interviewee, changing MONUC’s status to that of an integrated mission had not produced a significant increase in the day-to-day cooperation with MONUC. Even before such integration, OCHA was attending the daily joint security meetings at

⁹ The aim was to have two CIMIC workshops a year in each of the provinces where peacekeepers work on protection issues.

MONUC, using MONUC flights, sharing information with the Civil Affairs Section, having a CIMIC officer from the local brigade provide security briefings at OCHA meetings, etc. As early as 2003-2004, a staff member from OCHA New York was assigned to MONUC specifically to increase MONUC support to humanitarian organizations (i.e., non-MONUC entities). While formalizing MONUC's status as an integrated mission certainly helped to increase cooperation with humanitarian organizations, aid workers, despite the HC's best efforts, still got a low priority on MONUC flights, which meant that they were regularly off-loaded in favor of those with higher priority levels. The OCHA interviewee also pointed out that OCHA had been asked to pay for MONUC to transport a vehicle to an area that was difficult to access when the cost for this should have been borne by MONUC.

It is therefore clear that not all interviewees regarded integration as positive. One area of expressed concern was the perceived difference of agenda and constituency. One UN interviewee working on protection was worried that the MONUC military was trying to play down the seriousness of a massacre in the town of Buramba in North Kivu on 9 and 10 March 2007, when FARDC soldiers arbitrarily executed at least 15 civilians. Another interviewee argued that MONUC statements and emphasis on democracy and development were far more optimistic about the prospects of peace and security than the situation warranted. He speculated that this might be due to the distance of Kinshasa from the East, which was experiencing the greatest insecurity, so that those at MONUC HQ were simply unaware of the gravity of the violence. Alternatively, since MONUC's mandate was to deliver stability and it had organized the elections that were to bring peace, staff in Kinshasa might not want to acknowledge that Eastern DRC was far from being stable and ready to move into long-term development. An ICRC interviewee, unsurprisingly, was worried about the effects of integration on the perceived neutrality of humanitarian organizations. He felt that UN security rules requiring UN agencies to have a military escort for travel to certain areas were unhelpful but joint missions by humanitarian and military personnel using military aircraft were a step too far and compromised the perceived neutrality of humanitarian agencies more widely¹⁰.

By contrast, IDPs and local communities made a clear distinction between MONUC (which they usually defined as the military, not realizing that it has civilian aspects) and aid agencies. In general, they regarded the former as ineffective (see Protection of Civilians section below) and the latter as doing something good to help people in distress. The general perception of humanitarian organizations was favorable while attitudes to MONUC were more mixed. MONUC peacekeepers were viewed as powerful because of their obvious military equipment, yet in practice they were not seen as being able to deliver security or more assistance. Also, following the accession of an elected government to power, the new regime had to be seen to be meeting the minimum expectations of the population with regard to humanitarian

¹⁰ On at least one occasion, a MONUC commander had invited UN humanitarian personnel to join him on a reconnaissance trip to a troubled area that was of concern to both humanitarian agencies and the MONUC military.

and development assistance. In those circumstances, the activities of aid agencies assumed greater importance vis-à-vis MONUC's military and political sections.

Protection of Civilians

As early as 2000, in resolution 1291, the Security Council decided that MONUC may take necessary action to protect United Nations and co-located Joint Military Commission personnel, facilities, installations and equipment; ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel; and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. At the time, however, MONUC had an authorized strength of up to 5,537 military personnel, including up to 500 observers, compared with the 18,387 uniformed personnel that it had in June 2007. So, its capacity for protection activities was clearly far more limited than its mandate provided.

Security Council resolution 1493 of 2003 gave MONUC clearer authorization "to take the necessary measures in the areas of deployment of its armed units, and as it deems it within its capabilities" to protect civilians and humanitarian workers under imminent threat of physical violence and contribute to the improvement of the security conditions in which humanitarian assistance is provided.

In October 2004, Security Council resolution 1565 expanded MONUC's mandate substantially and authorized it:

To assist in the promotion and protection of human rights, with particular attention to women, children and vulnerable persons, investigate human rights violations to put an end to impunity, and continue to cooperate with efforts to ensure that those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are brought to justice, while working closely with the relevant agencies of the United Nations.

In May 2007, MONUC's mandate was extended to 31 December 2007. This extended mandate places the "protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel and United Nations personnel and facilities" at the top of the list of MONUC's responsibilities. Despite this growing emphasis on protection, MONUC military staff had received no training on their protection responsibilities. The interpretation of phrases such as "imminent threat of physical violence" and "as it deems it within its capabilities" was left to military commanders on the ground. Unsurprisingly, this had led to widely differing approaches by different battalions and different commanding officers. One protection officer pointed out that, as recently as December 2006, MONUC undertook a joint operation with the FARDC against the ADF/NALU without consulting civilian protection agencies and this resulted in the displacement of 150,000 people.

Given that MONUC had an extensive mandate that included disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs, the organization of elections, enforcing an arms embargo, and security sector reform, humanitarian agencies felt that protection of civilians was not the mission's top priority. In 2006, the organization of national elections was the main priority; demobilization and

institution building have since become the key priorities, as they are essential for stability. However, a lack of resources was probably more of a hindrance to undertaking protection activities than competing priorities. Despite being the largest UN mission, MONUC did not have the military capacity to tackle the range of armed groups in the large area of Eastern Congo. Hence, as one MONUC staff member explained, “The maintenance of the status quo alone is a huge achievement”. Therefore, to tackle the armed groups responsible for insecurity in the Eastern DRC, MONUC had to work with the FARDC, which is itself a human rights violator.

There were also times when activities under one part of MONUC’s broad mandate impacted on another, particularly protection. Based on its responsibility to disarm and demobilize armed groups and support the Congolese army, MONUC has provided support for former rebel groups to be integrated into the FARDC. The process of establishing “integrated FARDC brigades”, known as “brassage”, involves combining soldiers from different groups, training them as a unit and deploying them in areas different to their previous area of operation to break conflict links and links to illegal activities. As part of the negotiations following Nkunda’s attack on the town of Sake in November 2006, Nkunda agreed to allow his men to be combined with other troops to form mixed brigades. But he argued that, in order to give Congolese Tutsi refugees in Rwanda the confidence to return and to assure their protection as a minority, his Tutsi men should be deployed in their former areas of operation.

This process of “mixage” rather than “brassage” was used in North Kivu and had resulted in serious protection concerns. This is because integration of these groups had been limited to the level of officers while the remainder of the brigades retained their original composition. When they were deployed in the areas formerly controlled by Nkunda, this led to inter-ethnic tensions and direct conflict with the Hutu FDLR. In March 2007, protection agencies in North Kivu published a paper listing their concerns about the effects of the mixage process. These included:

- The arbitrary execution of at least 15 civilians in Buramba on 9 and 10 March 2007;
- Arbitrary arrests in February and March 2007;
- The displacement of 46,000 civilians;
- Widespread looting;
- Extortion and the confiscation of IDP identity documents in March 2007;
- Recruitment of child soldiers, some from IDP camps in Rwanda.

As part of its protection mandate, which is a concern shared by humanitarian agencies, MONUC was expected to prevent and/or address the problems (e.g., by forcing the FARDC to arrest and punish the perpetrators) that had arisen from the DDR side of its mandate.

MONUC’s wide-ranging mandate resulted in some confusion among the local population about the role of the MONUC military. One young radio journalist stated that MONUC troops were only observers and could do “absolument rien” to help protect civilians. A civil society representative believed that

MONUC could not repatriate FDLR soldiers because they were refugees — a misunderstanding because, as soldiers, the FDLR did not have refugee status. However, MONUC could only repatriate demobilized soldiers on a voluntary basis. Others believed that MONUC lacked the will to help them, even though it had the means to fight rebel groups. This may have been reinforced by the fact that, according to a MONUC interviewee, on one occasion when the MONUC military was not supporting a FARDC operation against the FDLR, FARDC soldiers began telling the local population, “We want to defend you but MONUC is preventing us”. This forced MONUC to provide support to avoid a negative image. The interviewee argued that MONUC had to be seen to be taking steps against the armed groups attacking civilians, even if it did not engage the FDLR unless attacked. However, not all local perceptions of the MONUC military were negative. On the outskirts of Goma, locals were pleased that their representatives could participate in joint security meetings with MONUC and that MONUC had provided an emergency number that they could call for assistance. They also appreciated a MONUC road maintenance program.

The issue of protection brought MONUC together with a range of actors around the same table. The Protection Cluster was established in January 2006, when the Cluster system was introduced in the DRC. A civilian section of MONUC co-chaired the Cluster, which met every two months, with UNHCR. MONUC’s role was a reflection of the mission’s mandate and also in recognition of the fact that civilian protection may require a military intervention. The section involved varied from province to province — it could be CAS or the Political Affairs Division or the Human Rights section — and this could result in different emphases, e.g., while the Political Affairs Division was happy to provide information, it did not work with other Cluster members on advocacy, preferring to undertake its own advocacy. The ICRC had observer status so its name was not on any Cluster decisions, documents or statements.

One of the tasks of the Protection Clusters was to negotiate the location of the military’s Mobile Operating Bases (MOBs) or other temporary deployments, weighing the priorities of humanitarian actors against the military’s assessment of the feasibility of the location¹¹. The MOB concept was developed to enable MONUC to respond to violent incidents in a more timely way and to be more proactive in dealing with rogue armed groups. Given the large size and difficult terrain of Eastern DRC, MONUC was unable to get to the location of incidents from permanent bases until it was far too late¹².

A MOB involves setting up a temporary camp (with Armored Personnel Carriers, sentry posts, observation towers, etc.) in a potential hot spot or remote area. Soldiers then undertake regular patrols from the camp, set up ambushes and react quickly to incidents. MOBs have a range of purposes, including to pre-empt attacks against civilians by armed groups, boost the confidence

¹¹ Information on MOBs based on Ahmed (no date).

¹² As one interviewee put it, “there is no point calling MONUC if your house is burning because it will be burnt to the ground by the time they come”.



Local communities often take in large numbers of IDPs, though these IDPs receive no assistance from the international community. The host in this photo lives in a small wooden shack but has taken in all the people standing behind him (Box 3).

PHOTO: Tasneem Mowjee

of the local population through the military's physical presence in the area, undertake "hearts and minds" activities, and strengthen cooperation and coordination with the FARDC by demonstrating that MONUC was willing to support them in remote locations.

While the MOBs were generally regarded as a success, one of the key problems was their temporary nature. They were expected to deploy for about a week, but in practice most deployed for a few weeks at least. In some cases, once the MOB left, the local population suffered retaliatory attacks by the armed groups from whom the MOB was seeking to protect them. Sometimes, the level of violence against civilians increased with the deployment of a MOB or there were failures in engaging with the local population to gather information so that soldiers focused only on local chiefs, who may not have suffered the same levels of violence as the rest of

the community or have detailed information about the movements of armed groups. As a result, one MONUC interviewee argued that MOBs should be evaluated systematically and that, perhaps, this should be done by the civilian sections of MONUC that co-chair the Protection Cluster. He also advocated the development of standard operating procedures for MOBs, outlining how to deal with attacks on the local population, collaboration with the FARDC and other complex aspects of their work.

Interviews revealed that soldiers from MOBs also tended not to establish contact with IDPs (whether in camps or host families), so the IDPs made no connection between the patrols that they saw go past and their own security. In fact, in one camp that had both a MOB and a FARDC integrated brigade encampment nearby, residents argued that the camp was secure because of the FARDC, not MONUC. This was despite the fact that elements of the same brigade had caused their displacement and MONUC had created a safe corridor to enable them to escape¹³. They argued that MONUC soldiers "don't care about us and never come to visit us in the camp. They have their camp in the town but they don't come to ask us our problems". This was understandable from the military's perspective. Camp security is the responsibility of the police, not the military. Also, since the military cannot provide humanitarian assistance (only very small-scale support through quick-impact projects, etc.), soldiers did not want to raise expectations by discussing needs with the IDPs. However, the IDPs did not know about this division of labor between the military and humanitarian actors, with negative consequences for their perception of the MONUC military's effectiveness. This highlights the need for

¹³ In many villages, FDLR soldiers have married Congolese women and live there with their families so that they are integrated with the civilian population. When the FARDC conduct operations against the FDLR, they often attack civilians as well for collaborating with the "enemy". Where the FDLR has not reached an agreement with the local population, it often attacks civilians for cooperating with the FARDC so civilians are persecuted by both armed groups.

better communication with humanitarian aid recipients to clarify the different roles of the military, MONUC civilian substantive sections and humanitarian agencies, which would also make clear the distinction between them. It would be helpful if the HC, as DSRSG, was responsible for ensuring this.

While the MONUC military was taking steps like MOBs to protect civilians, many protection actors were concerned about the effects of military operations on civilians, particularly because some joint MONUC-FARDC operations resulted in large-scale civilian deaths and displacement. MONUC has been criticized for failing to prevent FARDC soldiers from looting and burning villages after joint operations and become sensitive about the negative impact that collateral damage has on its image. Hence, it has become much more cautious about being seen to fight alongside the FARDC and moved towards providing logistical support (such as food rations, fuel for transport and planning support) instead. Also, since the national elections, the MONUC military feels that the FARDC should take the lead in tackling the various armed groups.

The HC had also provided strong leadership in getting the military to take account of humanitarian concerns, including appointing an individual with significant experience of protection issues (with both ICRC and OCHA) to work on a new coordinated approach to protection. This is because the HC believed that the military had a role to play in providing physical protection and that every UN peacekeeping operation should be mandated to protect civilians. Also, it seemed to him “that, if the mission has a protection mandate, which is dear to the heart of humanitarian organizations, it must be possible to develop a *modus vivendi* between the two”. As a result, MONUC peacekeepers are gradually learning to take account of the concerns of humanitarian organizations in their military planning. In South Kivu, prior to the launch of an operation against the Rastas, the military had a number of meetings with civilian protection agencies to discuss how to minimize the impact on the local communities and provide safe passage for those fleeing the fighting.

Despite this communication and an attempt on both sides to engage on the issue of protection, differences of opinion and approach do remain, such as on the issue of the Rastas in South Kivu. MONUC believed that it had sufficient evidence that the Rastas were linked to the FDLR¹⁴. However, NGOs and the ICRC argued that the two groups were not the same, despite some evidence of complicity. This difference meant that while the humanitarian agencies were willing to continue to negotiate access and engage with the FDLR, the MONUC military was taking a tougher stance, threatening military action against the FDLR if it did not curb Rasta activities and supporting FARDC operations against the FDLR and Rastas. Humanitarian agencies

¹⁴ This included the following:

- Women kidnapped by the Rastas had testified that they were transferred to FDLR commanders and used as sex slaves;
- Despite warnings from MONUC about the consequences of cooperating with the Rastas, the FDLR had done little to prevent the Rastas from operating in areas under their control;
- Former Rasta hostages had stated that they were made to carry looted items to FDLR camps;
- Many Rastas spoke the same language as the FDLR, though they had Congolese recruits as well.



IDPs at a camp in Walungu with translator. Though NGOs had provided some shelter and latrines, the IDPs were desperately awaiting food aid, unaware that the international community had decided not to provide any to avoid encouraging further displacement from areas to which the Governor had forbidden access (Box 3).

PHOTO: Tasneem Mowjee

were concerned that MONUC's approach would have humanitarian ramifications that the military had not foreseen. This was because attacking a group of 100 Rastas was a very different proposition to taking on the FDLR's force of 8,000 and could result in widespread violence (including retaliatory attacks) and displacement. Also, while the Rastas represented a threat to civilians in a localized area, the FDLR problem was of wider political significance involving relations with Rwanda. If not properly managed, the latter could lead to war. Humanitarian agencies were also worried about the impact of military operations on their access.

Humanitarian interviewees clearly found MONUC's approach misguided. One humanitarian aid worker argued that MONUC was "arrogant" in not listening to the views of humanitarian agencies working on the

ground in FDLR-held areas when MONUC itself did not have official relations with the FDLR for political reasons and so lacked a nuanced understanding of the situation. MONUC, on the other hand, believed that it was acting on sound evidence and fulfilling its responsibility to protect civilians from the Rastas. This highlights the fact that, inevitably, there will be occasions when peacekeepers and humanitarian organizations have different priorities and approaches and this needs to be acknowledged more openly by both sides.

The MONUC military also needed to do much more work on its relationship with the local population. Despite MONUC's efforts to engage with local people, as already mentioned, IDPs and locals were confused about the military's mandate. More importantly, they regarded it as ineffective and unable or unwilling to guarantee their security. Some of this was related to specific incidents, such as the occupation of Bukavu in June 2004 by Tutsi forces led by Colonel Mutebusi and Laurent Nkunda. MONUC had a limited military presence in the town and could have responded but MONUC headquarters in Kinshasa forbade the troops in the town from taking any military action because they feared that Rwanda would implement its threat to retaliate and invade Eastern DRC. Thus, for six days, the Tutsi forces looted, raped and killed at will while the MONUC military could only try to use its presence to deter violence. Eventually, the UN in New York reversed the order and MONUC was able to use force. However, MONUC's reputation was badly damaged. In other instances, MONUC had not used its full force unless directly attacked, as in Ituri in 2005, when it claimed to have killed 50 rebels only after nine Bangladeshi soldiers were killed. More recently, since MONUC had retreated from direct engagement with armed groups, perhaps to avoid a negative image due to collateral damage, the Congolese were not seeing them dealing with groups like the FDLR or the Rastas in the robust manner that they would expect.

One protection issue that was not raised by Congolese interviewees but by international interviewees (both military and civilian, NGO and UN) was that of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by MONUC itself. A report by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 2005 substantiated allegations

of sexual abuse mainly by MONUC peacekeepers, often with girls under the age of 18. As a result, MONUC had cracked down on SEA so that even newly arrived soldiers were told that they could not fraternize with locals. Interviewees from both the Indian and Pakistani contingents in North and South Kivu stressed that SEA cases were completely unacceptable and taken very seriously. However, a number of interviewees alleged that South African troops in the country had a more relaxed attitude so that, for example, young Congolese girls could be found waiting outside their base in Goma and talking to soldiers (which did not happen outside the Indian bases). According to some interviewees, South African commanders had said that it was normal to pay for sex and that there was no harm in “the boys having some fun”. Rumors of MONUC peacekeepers abusing young Congolese boys also persisted. Given the extent of human rights abuses by the FARDC, it is even more important for MONUC to set an example and to ensure that it does protect civilians and not become yet another abuser.

This section has highlighted the fact that protection of civilians was a real challenge for MONUC, particularly due to its relations with the FARDC and to the local population’s perception of it as ineffective. But integration had led to cooperation with humanitarian agencies and this had clearly supported MONUC’s protection role so that the military had made some effort through measures like MOBs, though with limited success. Despite some examples where the military had still not taken full account of humanitarian concerns, there seemed to be genuine progress in achieving coherence between the military and civilian approaches to protection. This can be attributed to the HC’s strong leadership. Structural integration alone is not enough to bring about such cooperation and it may not have been achieved under a different HC.

Humanitarian Activities by Military Personnel

A way in which the MONUC military had tried to promote a positive image was quick-impact projects (QIPs) and small-scale assistance under the framework of “winning hearts and minds” (WHAM). As one military officer pointed out, it was critical for a peacekeeping mission to establish good relations with the local population because it could not achieve military objectives without their support. As he explained, the military could not use “guns and sticks” alone but needed to empathize with the suffering of local communities and help them. However, the military also had to be careful about the assistance it promised because it “can’t be like politicians and make promises without keeping them. We have to keep our promises so people can see that we’re on their side”.

Most UN peacekeeping missions undertake QIPs, for which they receive funding from DPKO in New York. Usually, this funding is for one year. However, due to the complexity of the situation in the DRC and the length of the mission, there had been an on-going need to build up MONUC’s image and it had received \$1 million a year for four years for QIPs. The money was divided between the Eastern provinces and provided to the MONUC Heads of Office. Each province had a Local Project Review Committee (LPRC), which comprised MONUC substantive sections (like human rights) and OCHA and was chaired by the MONUC Head of Office. This LPRC had CAS as a Secretariat and submitted

recommendations for funding to Kinshasa for the SRSB's approval. OCHA was supposed to ensure that projects did not duplicate existing activities and advise on possible negative consequences, though it often did not attend LPRC meetings regularly. Following the elections, CAS was also starting to consult local authorities and civil society organizations. This level of consultation, even with OCHA, was unusual but was introduced within MONUC by the HC because he believed that it was vital for coordination with other humanitarian programs and for minimizing the potential negative impact of projects funded by the mission.

The amount allocated to each province has depended on the situation in the province (including the level of resistance to the mission) and the Office's priorities. For example, Ituri was likely to get higher levels of funding because it had seen some of the heaviest fighting. Projects normally lasted for three months though delays in implementation meant that some were extended to four to five months. Projects also tended to focus on urban areas, where there was likely to be greater resistance to the mission, rather than remote locations, where needs may have been greater but there was a lack of implementation capacity. Grants for a QIP could be as little as \$2,000 to \$3,000 while the maximum was \$15,000 (though this could be increased to \$25,000 in exceptional circumstances).

QIPs were expected to address gaps in assistance (i.e., to not duplicate existing activities) and promote conflict resolution if possible, e.g., by repairing a bridge to provide access to a malnourished population or constructing a market, which was used by two conflicting groups. To ensure that proposed projects were a priority for the assisted community, CAS asked them to identify priorities. CAS also examined the sustainability of projects. For example, before a school was rehabilitated, CAS checked that students were likely to attend, that it was not on private property, that teachers were available and that they could be paid.

QIPs were usually implemented by Congolese NGOs because INGOs found the reporting requirements too burdensome for relatively tiny amounts of funding. Since Congolese NGOs received very little funding from the international community, QIPs could be a useful source of support. The MONUC military lacked the capacity to implement QIPs themselves but there were a number of benefits for MONUC, e.g., CAS fulfils its mandate to strengthen civil society, local NGOs are grateful for financial support since MONUC is one of the only sources of international funding for them, so that enhances MONUC's image, and so on. CAS usually consulted INGOs and other agencies to check if they had worked with applicant organizations and got recommendations to ensure that QIP implementing organizations were capable and effective. The military could also receive QIP funding, though it had to follow normal funding procedures. There had been instances when projects proposed by the military would have duplicated existing activities, so CAS provided advice on changing these activities, e.g., providing textbooks to schools in high-risk areas that could not be reached by humanitarian agencies, rather than providing to the same schools as UNICEF.

While QIPs were funded from the DPKO budget, there was no separate budget for WHAM activities, which were managed and implemented by the military.

The military was reliant on national contingent resources, or help from UN agencies, national and international NGOs, the local government and the population itself. Hence, the military was not obliged to consult CAS about these projects. Also, WHAM projects tended to be very small but could be deeply appreciated by those helped. For example, during the demobilization process in Beni, former soldiers were living in very poor conditions so the Indian brigade organized assistance for them. Other examples of WHAM projects included:

- Workshops in a range of schools — both government-run and private — on HIV/AIDS awareness with WHO and NGOs;
- Vocational training in woodwork for street children, orphans and pygmies;
- Workshop in drawing and painting for 360 children aged 5 to 12;
- Providing mechanics to repair generators in a couple of hospitals.

WHAM activities have been popular with the MONUC military because, even if the peacekeepers were from developing countries, they were moved by the plight of street children and the extreme poverty that they found in the DRC. Even new arrivals were quick to think about the need for activities like vocational training so that those without jobs did not turn to crime. As a result, they were keen to help. As a CAS interviewee pointed out, though, it was important to channel this enthusiasm appropriately and ensure that WHAM activities were coordinated with those of humanitarian agencies. This was because, when the troops first arrived, they tended to be keen on activities like building schools and working with NGOs like MSF, without understanding the need to maintain clear distinctions between military and humanitarian activities. The period of handover between battalions was very short so it was difficult to transfer the learning about what assistance it was appropriate for the military to provide. CAS had tried to address this by providing orientation talks and training.

The conduct of hearts and minds activities is a recurring feature of the involvement of military and peacekeeping troops in such crises. It is examined, for example, in the case study on Pakistan. The importance attached by military personnel themselves to such work is examined in the case study on the National Guard's activities in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Effectiveness

Section II has described how integration was implemented in the DRC and the ways in which the military engaged with humanitarian organizations on the issue of protection of civilians. However, according to interviewees, a dimension to be noted was that MONUC administration was a barrier to both effective cooperation between the military and humanitarians, and to the effectiveness of the military in providing protection. Since MONUC's administration was focused entirely on the military and its civilian support staff, it was very difficult for its Civil Affairs Section (as the interface between the mission and humanitarian agencies) to ensure that the mission fulfilled its responsibilities towards humanitarian actors. For example, for bureaucratic reasons, despite integration, humanitarian personnel were accorded a low priority on MONUC flights so that they were regularly forced to give up their

places to military and other MONUC personnel. It had also been a five-year struggle to ensure support to humanitarian operations because there was no specific DPKO budget line for such support, even though it was in MONUC's mandate. In fact, the administration tried to charge humanitarian organizations for services whenever possible.

The military, too, was hampered by the administration that should have been supporting it. A senior officer pointed out that he needed permission from the administrative section to move troops because it had to organize the logistics. This restricted the flexibility of commanders to respond to attacks, particularly against civilians, and to deal with armed groups using guerrilla tactics. Troops could not even use their own military assets like aircraft or armored personnel carriers without authorization from the MONUC administration because their governments had to be reimbursed for the use of these assets. This failed to take account of the time sensitive nature of military operations. In turn, MONUC's slowness to respond frustrated local communities and reinforced their view of MONUC as ineffective.

This section has explored a number of issues under the theme of coherence — the implications of integration, MONUC's mandate to protect civilians and the provision of humanitarian aid by the military. Overall, integration has been more successful than in other countries like Sudan, Afghanistan or Liberia where the incorporation of the humanitarian wing of the UN within the mission resulted in varying levels of subordination to, or instrumentalization by, the mission's political leaders. In the DRC, humanitarian actors acknowledged as successes the DSRSG/HC's understanding and engagement on humanitarian issues, the bringing together of military and civilian actors to work on protection and ensuring that OCHA had an input into the QIPs funded by MONUC to avoid projects with potential negative consequences. Since, in the MONUC semi-integrated model, OCHA retained a separate office formally outside the mission structure though reporting to the HC/DSRSG, MONUC's role was acceptable to it and had not found its coordination efforts affected in any way. Other humanitarian actors like INGOs and the Red Cross had engaged with MONUC to a surprising degree on the issue of protection, a sign that they recognized the importance of cooperation. Overall, both the military and humanitarian actors believed that they had been able to do more on protection together than they would have done separately. In the final analysis, it was the position of HC/DSRSG that integrated the humanitarian with the other aspects of the mission. Also, unlike OCHA, the human rights component remained fully integrated within the mission.

The preliminary HA2015 report concluded that there were good reasons for humanitarian actors to be suspicious of the integrated mission agenda. The findings from the DRC do not necessarily change this. What they demonstrate, though, is that with sufficient commitment from country-level actors, integrated missions can be made to work in favor of humanitarian action. The achievements highlighted here were mainly due to the strong leadership of the DSRSG/HC and other senior officials, such as military commanders and MONUC Heads of Office. Such leadership enabled them to break down traditional boundaries and “make things happen”. Since the steps taken in

the DRC are more a function of personalities than of doctrine, they are not enshrined in policy, so there is no guarantee that lessons learned will be replicated in other missions. There is also a limit to what leadership at the country level can achieve because it requires wholesale cultural change within UN agencies and it cannot change administrative procedures and rules set in New York.

Security

The lack of security was a major concern for the local population in Eastern DRC because civilians were often subject to displacement either due to fighting between the FARDC and armed groups like the FDLR, or due to violence and harassment by armed groups, including the FARDC. As noted earlier, following the deployment of a MOB or military operations against the FDLR, the FARDC were sometimes unable to hold the area, even with support from MONUC. The FDLR then carried out retaliatory attacks against the local population. In one case at least, the traditional chief of a village felt that it was better to try to reach an accommodation with the FDLR and offer access to markets in return for granting villagers safe access to their fields. Thus, there were places in which the FARDC, the FDLR and local population had achieved a *modus vivendi* but, in others, the FDLR was engaged in criminal activities or terrorizing civilians. Similarly, if the FARDC protected villagers, they provided soldiers with food but Tutsi elements of the FARDC often looted and pillaged as a form of revenge against those who had reached an accommodation with the FDLR. Thus, the FARDC could be both the cause of insecurity and perceived as the providers of protection.

The MONUC military had tried to ensure that FARDC soldiers/officers caught thieving or engaging in other illegal activities were reported to the authorities. Also, if peacekeepers received information from the local population about looting or harassment by FARDC soldiers, they reported this to the FARDC commanders. But, even when these soldiers were arrested and put on trial, they were often not punished because of the lack of a functioning justice system in the DRC. The FDLR represented a more intractable problem. Many Congolese, particularly civil society organizations, believed that the international community was responsible for bringing the FDLR into their country during the Rwanda genocide, so it should take responsibility for returning them to Rwanda, instead of expecting the Congolese government to deal with them. As one interviewee put it, “The legal and moral responsibility [for solving the problem] lies with the international community”. However, IDPs tended to believe that it was the Congolese government’s responsibility to solve the problem of the FDLR and bring peace and security to their villages. One possible reason for this is that they had little faith in MONUC.

Amongst the local population, insecurity was particularly acute for women and young girls who were often kidnapped and used as sex slaves by armed groups. The girls (some as young as 8 or 10) and women suffered horrific violence. One interviewee recounted the story of a teenager, now in an orphanage in Goma. An armed group had kidnapped her at the age of 9, while she was working in the fields. She was forced to live in the forest and have sex with six “husbands”. Another young girl had been kidnapped by the

group and had seven “husbands”. The other girl got pregnant and, at the time of the birth, the armed group killed her by pushing a stick inside her. When the second girl became pregnant, she feared the same fate so she escaped when she was about 7 months pregnant. After a week of walking through the forest, she came upon a woman working in a field. The woman sheltered her and arranged for her to be taken in by the orphanage. The girl was severely traumatized by her experience and required counseling.

While armed groups posed a serious security risk in Eastern DRC, crime was the main cause of insecurity throughout the country, and the local population and the international community were equally at risk. The theft of items like mobile phones was common, particularly in Kinshasa. For example, while in a car on the road from the airport to Kinshasa in the evening rush hour, a woman had her cell phone stolen through an open window as she was talking on it. Interviewees attributed the high crime rate to a combination of two main factors — an army and police force that was armed and extremely poorly paid (when it was paid at all). Since the justice system in the DRC was non-existent, the army and police could turn to theft with impunity.

In Eastern DRC, the FARDC was usually based in, or very close to, towns but soldiers lived in squalid conditions together with their families. Diseases like cholera were rife in their camps. Therefore, the soldiers took advantage of their easy access to the local population. In Goma, the FARDC was based in town and one interviewee described how soldiers waited on street corners from 7pm onwards in order to rob people returning from the market. Being in town, the soldiers could also watch people’s movements and use the information to plan robberies. On certain routes, particularly through the Virunga national park, it was routine for travelers to be stopped and robbed. A national staff member of an international NGO argued that the FARDC was complicit in this because cars or motorbikes were sometimes stopped no more than a hundred meters from an army checkpoint but soldiers did not come to the rescue of travelers. As a regular traveler through the national park, he was often stopped by armed men. However, he tried to negotiate the amount of money he paid, giving the men the local currency equivalent of 20 or 30 cents.

In the DRC, aid workers were targeted, not due to the nature of their work, but as a result of the resources that they represented; i.e., they were more likely to have cash, cell phones and cameras than the local population. The one major attack against humanitarian aid workers was in 2001, when six ICRC staff members were killed in Ituri. This may have been a message to humanitarian agencies not to interfere with those profiting from the natural resources in the area, rather than an attack on the individuals themselves. However, INGOs that were not fully familiar with the local situation could inadvertently endanger themselves. One interviewee described an incident in Ituri: in Bunia, there was a conflict between two different ethnic groups over property and assets. An INGO, new to the area and unaware of this, hired a car from one of the groups. It put its stickers on the car and then used it when conducting a household survey. When members of the other group saw the car, they recognized it as their enemy’s car. They forced the INGO staff members out of the car and were going to kill them. Fortunately, the INGO staff

were able to radio MONUC for assistance and were rescued by the military.

Recently, INGOs in North Kivu have faced a different type of security risk. Due to the administrative procedures highlighted in the section on coherence, INGOs needed to request humanitarian escorts from MONUC well in advance of any missions. On a few occasions, when an INGO had requested an escort for a mission to access IDPs in an FDLR-held area, MONUC had suggested getting a FARDC escort, perhaps as part of its strategy to get the FARDC to take on more responsibilities. But this put INGOs at risk — the presence of FARDC soldiers meant that if they were seen as legitimate targets and may be ambushed. In one such incident in North Kivu, several FARDC soldiers were killed in the attack. A couple of weeks later, another INGO was told to get a FARDC escort to the same area but, this time, the FARDC received information about the approach of the FDLR and moved out of the area before an attack. Thus, MONUC's recommendation to use FARDC escorts had not only compromised the security of the INGOs but also the perception of their neutrality.

Apart from these specific incidents, there was a sense amongst interviewees (both local and international) that international aid workers were generally safe unless they happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Thus, it is clear that insecurity was a far more acute problem for local communities and the national staff of INGOs in the DRC than for international aid workers. It was not surprising, therefore, that local people were desperate for the problems to be addressed, whether by improving the pay and conditions of the army and police or by resolving the problem of the FDLR. In Kinshasa, interviewees recognized that security was an important precondition for development and attracting investment into the country. In the DRC, aid agencies were not targeted in any way because of perceived links to MONUC. Thus maintaining a greater distance from MONUC would have no impact on their security. Keeping away from the FARDC, though, seemed to enhance agency security.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the issues outlined under the four headings of universality, terrorism and counter-terrorism, coherence and security, this section lists some conclusions and recommendations for the UN system and humanitarian agencies.

UN System

Despite some resistance to the concept of integrated missions from humanitarian quarters, there is no indication that the UN will reverse its policy in the near future. Therefore, it needs to focus on ensuring that integration works for humanitarian actors in the field. In the DRC, while the general population does not seem to think that MONUC has been effective at improving security conditions in the East, this study found that integration had succeeded in bringing military and humanitarian actors together to work on protection issues and had not undermined humanitarian action in any way. However, the experience of MONUC has shown that it is critical to have strong leadership (particularly from the HC) and to make a real investment in getting the military and humanitarian organizations to understand each

other's concerns and ways of working so that they can cooperate effectively. The high turnover of military personnel poses real problems, both for understanding of the context in the country and for cooperation with the civilian sections of the mission and humanitarian agencies. Therefore, DPKO should consider phasing the rotation of personnel or find ways to improve the handover process.

It would be helpful to examine whether the measures put in place in the DRC can be replicated. This should include structures for dialogue and cooperation, such as including OCHA on any decision-making committee for QIPs. In the DRC, after the mission had been in place for seven years, this was just beginning in the form of the agreement of CIMIC guidelines and the Force Commander's Directive. Future peacekeeping missions should be encouraged to develop such guidelines from the very beginning. However, these guidelines need to include clear implementation procedures. Otherwise collaboration will continue to be highly dependent on personalities (though, due to turf wars and personality clashes, there is no guarantee of cooperation even where structures for this exist).

With the formal adoption of the Responsibility to Protect by UN member states¹⁵ and its possible mainstreaming in future peace operations, the protection of civilians is increasingly likely to be part of the mandate of UN peacekeeping missions. However, there is no guidance or training for field commanders on how to implement a protection mandate. Therefore, it is critical for DPKO to develop standard operating procedures and guidance documents. Again, it is possible to learn from MONUC's use of MOBs and other mechanisms.

Finally, it is clear from the MONUC experience that there is real frustration with the administration of the mission. As the HC has argued, DPKO must allow peacekeeping missions to be run according to policy demands, not administrative/bureaucratic demands. Otherwise, the mission risks being ineffective (e.g., because the military takes too long to respond to violent incidents).

Humanitarian Agencies

The numerous examples of challenges to principled humanitarian action in the section of universality highlight the urgent need for better communication with aid recipients. At the time of the study, there were too many cases where IDPs did not know what assistance to expect, when to expect it or whether they would get assistance at all. This was despite the fact that the DRC has a funding mechanism called the Rapid Response Mechanism, which is committed to responding to population displacements within 48 hours. Donors have guaranteed a basic level of funding for the RRM so humanitarian organizations have an obligation that they appear to be failing to meet.

Improved communication would also make clear to IDPs and local communities the separate roles of the military and humanitarian actors. This is important

¹⁵ In 2005, following a call from Kofi Annan, and as part of the process of UN reform, world leaders agreed at the Millenium summit, for the first time, that states have a primary responsibility to protect their own populations and that the international community has a responsibility to act when these governments fail to protect the most vulnerable. This is known as the Responsibility to Protect or R2P.

for ensuring that the local population understands that humanitarian agencies are supposed to operate according to the principles of neutrality and impartiality. Neutrality is clearly in the eye of the beholder and, as described in the section on universality, humanitarian agencies lost access to parts of South Kivu because the local population did not believe that they were neutral and complained about this to their elected official, the Governor.

Given that, despite the challenging environment in the DRC, aid distribution mechanisms and communication with aid recipients could be improved, it would be useful for the humanitarian community to undertake an externally conducted, wide-ranging review of the effectiveness of its aid programs. This would help agencies identify common problems and how they could improve programs, perhaps with lessons from other challenging contexts.

Finally, though humanitarian organizations claim to build local capacity (and it is part of OCHA's mandate to do so), Congolese NGOs are being marginalized rather than supported. Therefore, humanitarian agencies should consider how they can engage with Congolese organizations and build on the work already being done by MONUC's Civil Affairs Section as part of its work to strengthen local democratic institutions and civil society.

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