BACKGROUND

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been tasking peacekeeping operations with Protection of Civilian (POC) mandates since 1999. As protection mandates have become increasingly frequent and complex, internal and external studies have identified the need to develop guidance and training material to prepare peacekeepers to effectively design and implement protection mandates.

In 2008 DPKO and OCHA commissioned an in-depth independent study to examine the POC efforts of a variety of United Nations peacekeeping operations and to identify challenges and impediments to effective protection.¹ The study, made a number of recommendations and highlighted the need for DPKO, with input from other protection actors, to develop an operational concept to guide protection activities in the UN peacekeeping context; that protection considerations should be included in the earliest stages of planning for peacekeeping missions; and that guidance should be developed to assist existing and newly mandated peacekeeping operations in implementing POC mandates.

In 2009, UN SC in its resolution 1894 acknowledged the enduring need to improve the protection of civilians in armed conflict and requested that the Secretary General initiate the development of POC training for peacekeepers, including senior mission leaders.


UN Protection of Civilians PDT Standards, 1st ed. (2011)
The report of the 2009 Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested that the Secretary-General provide a “lessons learned note” on POC and propose ways to strengthen the capacity of existing missions.

In response, the DPKO and DFS have developed *Lessons Learned Note*, as well as the *Operational Concept on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*.

Subsequently, the 2010 Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations report recommended that the UN Secretariat develop a strategic framework to guide senior mission leadership in the development of comprehensive protection strategies. The Special Committee also requested the Secretariat to develop a training package to better prepare peacekeepers to carry out effective POC activities.

**PURPOSE**

The pre-deployment training modules on POC and conflict related sexual violence are designed to improve the overall coherence and effectiveness of POC activities by:

- Establishing a common understanding of what “protection” means in the context of UN peacekeeping, as distinct from other, non-peacekeeping protection functions and actors;
- Clarifying UN institutional standards and expectations with regards to protection planning and the execution of protection activities;
- Clarifying the different roles and responsibilities of all protection actors – civilian, police and military – within a UN peacekeeping operation, and how the work of each actor relates and contributes to the overarching POC objectives;
- Supporting more effective protection planning by improving awareness of protection threats and civilian vulnerabilities, and by giving peacekeepers explanations of what has worked, and what has not.
- Providing an understanding of the challenges and dilemmas facing military and civilian decision-makers in the field, as well as best practices aimed at preventing or responding to sexual violence.
CONTENT OVERVIEW

The Specialized Training Materials on POC are intended to provide all peacekeeping personnel (military, police and civilian) with a shared understanding of the basic principles, guidelines and policies of UN peacekeeping concerning protection of civilians to ensure that UN peacekeeping operations can tackle their protection functions accordingly.

- **Module 1** provides an overview of protection of civilians issues, by familiarizing students with the objectives of protection, the main protection actors, the range of threats and how failure to protect civilians undermines field mission credibility.

- **Module 2** addresses the legal dimension of protection of civilians and its implications to field missions and individual peacekeepers, particularly regarding the use of force. The module also unpacks the concepts embodied in POC mandate language which are essential for a common understanding of what POC is, and what authorities peacekeepers have to implement this part of their mandate.

- **Module 3** explains the *Operational Concept on Protection of Civilians*, detailing its tiers, phases and correspondent peacekeeping protection activities. This module also gives a better understanding of the key challenges associated with the protection of Civilians in complex environments.

- **Module 4** explains the importance of operational level planning and addresses meaningful issues related to planning: the range of protection threats and civilian vulnerabilities, how different types of threat and vulnerability impact the response, as well as the importance and modalities of operational level information sharing and public information efforts.

- **Module 5** explains the nature of sexual violence in armed conflict, thereby enabling peacekeepers to consider and implement protection tasks at the strategic, operational, and tactical level as well as provide an Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence. It also explains military command measures
associated with the protection of civilians under imminent threat of violence, in particular sexual violence.

- **Module 6** contains a training pack comprised of 12 scenario-based exercises which provides trainers with a broad range of situations that might confront a UN peacekeeping mission charged with the protection of civilians. They are intended to give practical context to the theoretical and policy-level issues arising out of training modules one, two, three and four and should be run in conjunction with these modules.

**STRUCTURE OF THE MATERIALS**

**Preparatory Notes**
Each unit includes “Preparatory Notes” which provide guidance for the different parts of the unit. The notes include information on the overall aim of the session, intended learning outcomes, training sequence, session duration and methodologies. Additionally there is guidance on instructor profiles, general preparations (including materials and equipment) and preparations for mission-specific information.

**Symbols**
At the beginning of each unit there is a legend of symbols used throughout the document. The symbols can be found in the left margins and are intended to flag features such as speaking points, notes to the instructor, examples and insertion points for mission-specific information.

**Slides**
PowerPoint slides have been provided for all of the Specialized Training Materials and can be found, along with the units themselves, on the DPKO Best Practices website: [http://peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org](http://peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org) (this version is currently only in English; translation to other UN official languages is in progress)
Speaking Points and Notes to Instructors

Speaking points are provided as a guide to the standardized content, however, instructors are encouraged to use their own words and examples, rather than reading the text directly.

Learning Activities

Guidance on core learning activities are included in the body of the text. Optional activities, if provided, are listed at the back of the unit (or part of the unit). Experienced instructors are encouraged to use their own activities and resources.

Additional Resources

- **Toolbox:** In recognition of the need to keep the core materials streamlined, an online “Toolbox” has been created for storing additional resources. The Toolbox is a database of resources and materials that instructors may want to incorporate into their pre-deployment training. Examples of resources include photos, learning activities, scenarios and a listing of films. For information on accessing the Toolbox, please email: peacekeeping-training@un.org

- **Online Community of Practice:** An online community of practice is being developed as a forum where pre-deployment trainers can ask questions, exchange ideas and share resources. For more information on the community of practice, please email: peacekeeping-training@un.org

Instructor Profile

At the beginning of each module there is information regarding the specific background and knowledge required of the instructors in order to be able to properly deliver the material. The modules will be best presented by an instructor who has personal experience in a peacekeeping operation with a POC mandate, as well as a solid understanding of the DPKO DFS Operational Concept and how it is implemented in the mission(s) as well as issues related to conflict related sexual violence. For Module 2, it’s preferred that the instructor has a thorough understanding of international humanitarian and human rights law, including refugee law. Where possible, the instructor should have practical experience in dealing with issues related to human rights.
The Instructor should have undergone a formal training course on POC at national or international level.

FUTURE UPDATES

ITS will ensure that the modules be regularly updated to reflect changes in UN peacekeeping policies and guidance. Any updates to different units or sections will be posted and explained on the Peacekeeping Resource Hub website (http://peacekeepingresourcehub.unlb.org). Instructors are encouraged to check that site regularly. Approximately every two years ITS will also undertake a comprehensive review of UN Peacekeeping Pre-deployment Training Standards, including the Specialized Training Materials on Protection of Civilians (STM POC).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The training package (Modules 1 through 4 and Module 6) has been developed by the DPKO Integrated Training Service (ITS). Module 5 which deals with Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence has been developed jointly by UN Women and DPKO under the auspices of UN Action.

This project on the POC training materials was led by Farooque Choudhury with significant support and assistance from Jose Ricardo Vendramin Nunes and Siyuan Yang.

ITS and the project team would like to express its sincerest thanks to the UN Member States as well as and the many staff and experts from national peacekeeping training institutions and UN peacekeeping missions who provided feedback during the lengthy development process. The finalization of this important training initiative would not have been possible without their considerable experience, input and commitment to the protection of civilians.

ITS would particularly like to thank Major General (retd). Patrick Cammaert his astounding work on the module and exercises dealing with Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. Profuse thanks and gratitude to Erin A. Weir and Conor Foley for
their excellent work and for the personal commitment that they displayed in drafting and testing the training modules and exercises. Special appreciation is also extended to Refugees International for their active support of the training development project.

ITS would like to thank colleagues within the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the many relevant offices in DPKO and DFS who contributed their ideas and experience to this important endeavour. ITS would also like to thank the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for their critical advice and comments.