



UN Photo/Fred Noy: traditional community leader, advocating for peaceful co-existence between Misseriya and their Dinka neighbors

# Civil Affairs 2018 Newsletter

Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training/ United Nations  
Departments of Peacekeeping  
Operations and Field Support

New York, NY 10017

## Ongoing support to Civil Affairs components in the field

Throughout 2017, the three-person Civil Affairs team in the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training strived to support the effective and efficient delivery of mandated tasks by Civil Affairs in the field. The team provided policy and guidance support, notably by finalizing two key studies based on extensive surveys of practices in peacekeeping. The first study produced by the team explores aspects to consider when analyzing, planning and implementing activities geared towards extending the authority of the state. Given the complexity of the subject, the study was written mainly to generate discussion and conversation within peacekeeping and with other actors on how to improve the implementation of extension of state authority mandates. The study provides several recommendations that focus on the importance of conducting political and socio-economic analysis to understand needs within a given country. The recommendations also

point to the significance of ensuring that planning processes include local, national and international actors. With regards to implementation, the study offers some recommendations including that impact assessments should be an integral aspect of the implementation process.

The team also finalized a study focusing on local conflict management which, on the one hand, recognizes the critical work done by Civil Affairs at the local level in addressing conflict dynamics, and on the other hand, identifies areas for improvement including a more structured approach to conflict analysis and intervention design at the field office level. Consequently, DPET has been working with the German Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) to develop a strategic action matrix that will serve as a methodological tool to prioritize and plan interventions that most effectively address local conflict drivers. The strategic action matrix was first piloted in Kosovo in November 2017 and will be rolled out to other missions throughout 2018. In parallel,

the Civil Affairs team at Headquarters has been working with the UN mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) to introduce a more coherent approach to community engagement, both at the mission and field office level. Lessons learned from these efforts will constitute the basis for a Practice Note on community engagement that will be disseminated in 2018. The studies referred to above can be accessed from the Civil Affairs Community of Practice website as well as the following UN Peacekeeping website at:

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/preventing-conflicts>

## Addressing pastoral migration in South Sudan

Drivers of conflict associated with pastoral migration include destruction of host community farmlands, theft of livestock, and periodic armed confrontations between pastoralists and host communities. These often result in an erosion of confidence and trust between communities. Over the last two years, pastoral migration has

frequently led to communal violence and displacement of local communities. To address this violence Civil Affairs in UNMISS has collaborated with partners, such as USAID-funded VISTAS and Concordis, to provide support to the management of peaceful pastoral migration from Sudan into South Sudan and within South Sudan. UNMISS has been supporting local state authorities to learn from best practices in managing pastoral migration, and develop mechanisms to manage these movements.

Among its efforts to address the issue, Civil Affairs collaborated with VISTAS to support the formation of a Joint Border Peace Committee in May 2017, comprised of delegates from Amadi, Terekeka, Gok, Eastern and Western Lakes states. First, Civil Affairs brought the members of the committee together to identify issues associated with seasonal cattle migration. Then, it provided support to the committee members by assisting in the development of migration ground rules to regulate and manage cattle migration. In addition, Civil Affairs contributed to building the capacities of the committee members in conflict management, local laws, and ways to resolve disputes associated with cattle migration. The work of the Joint Border Peace committee has enhanced cooperation between the five states.

Another example of Civil Affairs efforts to tackle migration related conflict occurred in Malakal (Greater Upper Nile), where assistance from Civil Affairs included facilitation of two migration review conferences in November 2017. These conferences brought participants together for dialogue and to agree on migration-related issues. They also helped to strengthen trust and confidence between host and pastoralist communities. The conferences specifically reviewed challenges encountered in the last migration season and proposed solutions for peaceful migration. Also, in Jonglei



State, Civil Affairs focused on strengthening economic interdependence between host communities and migrating pastoralists, creating conditions for long-term cooperation between the stakeholders. The prevalence of localized conflict triggered by cattle migration has led Civil Affairs to focus on ways to address them including through fostering the development of mutual confidence and trust between communities.

### **Support to reducing tension and violence between the Twa and Bantu in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

Following the escalation of inter-communal violence in Tanganyika in 2016, Civil Affairs, together with the Kalemie office, enhanced their engagement with local actors and provided technical and logistical support to provincial and community-based conflict resolution efforts between the Twa and Bantus communities. The escalation of conflict, which is predominantly a

result of asymmetric power dynamics between the two communities and competition over land and resources, has caused serious protection of civilian concerns including civilian deaths, injuries and massive displacement.

Considering the complex context, a community-based approach was deemed appropriate to address the situation. MONUSCO therefore provided substantial support to the establishment of Baraza la Wazee in Nynuzu, Manono, Moba and Kalemie territories that recently experienced escalation of violence. The Barazas are traditional inter-ethnic councils, reuniting representatives of all the ethnic communities to prevent and mitigate inter-communal conflicts. For example, the newly set up Baraza in Kongolo territory in September 2017 managed to reduce tension and violence between these communities over the last year, enhanced resilience and facilitated the return of IDPs. In addition, the Barazas have gained the confidence and trust of the local population and the number of land conflicts have significantly reduced.

## **CLAs engagement in crisis prevention in the Central African Republic**

Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs) have been active in MINUSCA since 2015 and play a significant role in supporting crisis management and local conflict prevention initiatives implemented by MINUSCA. In close collaboration with the Force, the CLAs facilitate community engagement and access to privileged early warning information. Through their engagement, they have assisted MINUSCA's military force to address security concerns in various localities thus saving thousands of lives. For instance, following the outbreak of violence on 21 November 2016, the CLA in Bria was faced with the challenge of supporting MINUSCA in preventing ethnic cleansing of the Fulani residing in Gobolo neighborhood. The CLA facilitated the elaboration of a protection strategy which was developed in collaboration with Gobolo inhabitants. Building upon the protection strategy, collaborative efforts involving other MINUSCA sections, local authorities, UNPOL and the Force, paved the way for a multidimensional and well-coordinated protection plan. This identified potential entry points into the neighborhood that would be likely used by anti-Balaka and ex-Seleka combatants. The Plan prescribed specific actions to be taken by the Force, Gobolo inhabitants and traditional authorities in the event of an attack.

With the arrival of anti-Balaka groups in Bria, known to systemically target Fulani civilians, Gobolo inhabitants became increasingly vulnerable. During the crisis in March 2017, anti-Balaka prepared a massive attack against Gobolo, but the activation of the protection plan, including by the Force, prevented the anti-Balaka forces from marching towards Gobolo despite several attempts. Amidst ongoing violence in Bria, Gobolo remains to date, one of the safest

neighborhoods. This is in large part due to the continued efforts of the force and the persistent engagement of the CLA and the local Community Alert Network, a system which enables remote communities to report imminent threats to the mission force and/or local authorities.

launched in mid-2016 by Civil Affairs to enable MINUSMA and the UN Country Team to provide holistic and coordinated support to the process.

Civil Affairs brought together colleagues from different mission components, including Political



*Photo by MINUSCA: Locals during a mass sensitization campaign by the Head of State himself in Bangassou*

## **Creation of a special task force to support interim authorities in Mali**

Northern Mali has been marred by insecurity and political tensions which have prevented the holding of local elections. Considering this gap in local governance, the Agreement on Peace and National Reconciliation in Mali, signed by the Government and the two rebel movements (Platforme and CMA), provided for the establishment of interim authorities in these areas. As part of its support to the Malian decentralization process, UNSC resolutions 2295 (2016) and 2364 (2017) mandated MINUSMA to support the interim authorities. Civil Affairs took the lead in supporting the interim authorities by creating the Task Force in Support of Interim Authorities. This task force was

Affairs, Mediation Unit, Stabilization and Recovery, and the Force as well as the UN Country Team to ensure the task force was equipped with the necessary expertise to operate. The task force worked closely with other technical and financial partners including the European Union, the German Development Agency, Lux Dev and USAID to sponsor capacity development for designated officials to revitalize basic services (local infrastructures, access to safe drinking water, quality health and education, economic revitalization). One of the main goals of the task force is to train officials within the interim administrations, as well as provide logistical support to help establish offices. Therefore, after the establishment of all the interim authorities by April 2017, capacity-building training sessions were conducted for officials in the interim administration in all five regions. This

was followed by technical assistance in drafting Priority Action Plans to provide basic services and trigger socio-economic development. Under the task force, MINUSMA and UNDP also mobilized funding from the Peace Building Fund to provide long-term technical assistance to the interim authorities in all five regions to discharge their duties throughout their tenure.

### Building Trust and Confidence in Darfur

Local conflict between nomadic herders and farmers in Darfur has resulted in tensions and deterioration of trust between the two groups. Furthermore, the IDP population in Darfur is predominantly made up of farmers and a considerable number of IDPs are reluctant to return to their communities of origin because their farmlands are occupied by others. They also often fear returning to a situation where they might engage in conflict with nomadic herders whose cattle graze the farmlands. As a result, the Civil Affairs team in UNAMID has been working to rebuild confidence between nomads and returnee farmer communities to prevent conflict. Starting in February 2017, Civil Affairs supported confidence building efforts in Otash village by supporting the creation of a 17-member Peaceful Coexistence Committee. Members of the committee are drawn from nomadic community and voluntary IDP returnees. Civil Affairs has been providing support and training on peacebuilding and conflict prevention mechanisms to the committee.

With support from Civil Affairs, the committee has been instrumental in resolving disputes and facilitating coexistence between returnees and nomads. For instance, the committee strengthened confidence between farmers and nomads by launching a dialogue process that

was facilitated by Civil Affairs. The mutual trust and understanding that resulted from the dialogue process led to a successful and conflict-free harvest season. In addition, the committee played a key role through dialogue and other conflict prevention strategies in ensuring that land was returned to IDPs and was no longer occupied by others. The mutual trust established enabled nomads to support returnee farmers with horses to cultivate their farms and the returnees have also given the nomads some land in exchange.

The communities are now co-existing peacefully and have gone a step further

by creating seven sub-committees to address issues including education, women empowerment health, water peace committee, among others. The success of the Otash village Peaceful Coexistence Committee has inspired the committee to share its experience with other areas in the region facing challenges with voluntary return of IDPs. Civil Affairs continues to engage with the committee to ensure that it continues to promote an environment that is conducive to the peaceful return of IDPs. Since its creation, the committee's efforts have led to a notable decrease of conflict between farmers and nomads in the area.

