



Helpdesk Research Report

Lessons for coherent and integrated conflict analysis from multilateral actors

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Question

(3) What lessons are there from “non-aid agents” in how they have conducted and applied conflict prevention and peacebuilding analysis in a coherent and integrated way?*

**“non-aid agents” are those whose primary role/focus is not aid, but is diplomacy, trade, security, etc. E.g. UN Dep of political affairs/Peacebuilding support office, NATO, WTO, EEAS, European Parliament*

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1. Overview¹

This rapid literature review collates lessons from multilateral organisations on their efforts to conduct and apply conflict analysis in fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS) in a coherent and integrated way.

The literature base on this issue is mostly drawn from the donors' grey literature (including evaluations funded by the donors), with some reports from think tanks. There was substantial information about the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN), and much less about North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Key findings include:

Lessons from the EU

The EU established that conflict analysis should be conducted as part of the EU's programming cycle in 2001, and restated this in 2013. Through its "comprehensive approach" (CA), the EU developed: guiding principles and procedures to approach conflicts in a systematic way; concrete objectives and priorities for EU actors; and a culture and the practices of coordination (Faleg, 2019). The EU's needs for coordination in its conflict prevention and peacebuilding analysis and action are fairly unique in that it needs to ensure coherence and integration across a number of complex sets of actors.

The EU's CA evolved into an "integrated approach" (IA) in 2016. The main organisational innovation of the IA has been creating the "PRISM" Division (Prevention of conflicts, Rule of Law/Security Sector Reform, Integrated Approach, Stabilisation and Mediation) (Faleg, 2019). PRISM enables the implementation of the IA and works to improve coordination between all actors in crisis response, early detection and prevention and, stabilisation (Pietz, 2017). The EU focuses on early warning indicators, as part of its conflict and context analysis. PRISM and INTCEN (EU Intelligence and Situation Centre) are responsible for monitoring and analysis (Juncos & Blockmans, 2018).

Lessons include: Personnel, time, and budget are scarce resources, limiting the EU actors' abilities to implement the IA; engaging other stakeholders with the EU's conflict analysis process is preferable, but complex and with certain trade-offs; coordination and cooperation within the EU remains a key challenge; ultimately, real integration requires "true change in the EU's organisational culture" (Faleg, 2019); the lack of a unified information exchange system within the EU structures limits knowledge sharing and lesson learning; and the warning-response gap remains, "despite policy consensus that prevention is always better than managing the consequences of conflict" (European Union, 2016, p. 29).

Lessons from the UN

The UN's new "sustaining peace" agenda, initiated in 2015, aims to reform the UN system (including all its agencies, funds, and programmes) to "prioritise prevention and sustaining peace; enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions; move towards a single, integrated peace and security pillar; and align it more closely with the development and human rights pillars to create greater coherence and cross-pillar coordination".² Part of this reform agenda focuses on advancing its conflict analysis and joint assessments.

¹ This query responds to three interrelated questions, the first two are answered in - Herbert, S. (2019). *Institutions, approaches and lessons for coherent and integrated conflict analysis*. (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. Herbert (2019) also includes an overview of the broad changes occurring across bilateral and multilateral donors in this area.

² See - <https://reform.un.org/content/peace-and-security-reform>

One of the institutional innovations of this reform agenda is the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) (established in 2019), which merges the former Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). Among its responsibilities, the DPPA monitors and assesses political developments to detect potential crises and responses, and supports the Secretary-General and its envoys, and the UN political missions.³ The DPA contains the PBSO (established 2005), which, among other tasks, works to enhance system-wide coherence and partnerships with UN and non-UN actors.⁴ Other recent innovations to improve conflict analysis include: the establishment of a centralised unit in the Secretary-General's office responsible for conflict analysis and planning for the whole UN system; the establishment of DPA regional offices; the deployment of Peace and Development Advisers (managed by DPA and the UN Development Programme (UNDP)) to non-mission settings; advances in joint assessment, planning, and programming (e.g. the UN, World Bank, and EU Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments); and advances in digital technologies feeding into conflict analysis.

UN weaknesses in its use of analysis are widely highlighted in the literature as: needing to fill key analytical gaps; contributing to major UN failures (Wilmott, 2017); and where the UN's "biggest gap in capacities lies" (Pantuliano, et al., 2018). Lessons include: the failure to translate analysis into more conflict-sensitive, politically smart programming; challenges in integrating the many UN entities each with different mandates, interests, funding streams, governance arrangements, etc; resource constraints limit the DPA's capacity to meet all its needs. e.g. its analysis is restricted by its limited full-time political presence overseas, and desk officers are often overwhelmed with admin duties, with too little time for analysis; conflict resolution is often initiated at a late stage, thus analysis and strategy is often developed under pressure; there is a lack of analytical frameworks, and/or staff skills to conduct deep conflict/context analysis (with the exception of UNDP); while developing a shared conflict/context analysis between actors is often highlighted as best practice, there are many political and practical challenges relating to this; and the value of engaging with communities in analysis processes to understand their needs.

Lessons from NATO

NATO employs a CA, based on the "Understand to Prevent" (U2P) process. Within NATO, it appears that The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has overall responsibility for monitoring and analysing regional instabilities, military capabilities, and transnational issues. This includes: monitoring, assessing and warning of impending crises, horizon scanning, information/knowledge management and knowledge development, and the development of situational awareness and understanding of emerging crises for planning activities. A large number of other NATO units feed information into SACEUR's analysis (NATO, 2013).

Key challenges to NATO implementing its CA include: "the struggle to achieve internal cohesion, lack of synchronization with member states planning, and lack of budget allocated to foster [comprehensive approach] CA implementation and the projection of stability" (Faleg, 2018). NATO's comprehensive approach has been effective at strengthening its partnerships with external actors, especially the EU (Faleg, 2018).

Lessons from the OSCE

³ See UN DPPA website - <https://dppa.un.org/en/about-us>

⁴ See UN DPPA website - <https://dppa.un.org/en/about-us>

The OSCE was the first security organisation with the concept of comprehensive and cooperative security as its original political mandate. The OSCE's Conflict Prevention Centre provides policy advice, support, and analysis. It acts as an OSCE-wide early warning focal point, among other tasks it: collects, collates, and analyses information from different sources and advises on possible response options. It also coordinates the dispatch of needs assessment and fact-finding teams.

Challenges facing the OSCE's comprehensive approach include: reaching political consensus can be hard and time-consuming; OSCE commitments and principles are not politically or legally binding; agreements on new or upgraded policy frameworks are difficult to reach; its wide range of disparate activities seem to lack coherence; lessons learned processes are hampered by limited resources; institutional capacity and incentives to implement the CA are limited by high staff turn-over; and sceptical attitudes from some participating states (Faleg, 2018). Lessons from OSCE experience are: the importance of political consensus among participating states to operationalise a comprehensive approach; and the importance of making few concrete, measurable actions, to allow a comprehensive approach to scale up over time (Faleg, 2018).

2. Lessons from the EU

The goal of ensuring conflict analysis is conducted as part of the EU's programming cycle was initiated in 2001, with the Conflict Prevention Communication,⁵ and restated in 2013, with the Communication on the Comprehensive Approach,⁶ and the 2013 Guidance Note on how to conduct conflict analysis (European External Action Service (EEAS) & European Commission, 2013). This followed an evaluation of its prevention and peacebuilding work in 2011.⁷ In parallel, the EU has worked with the World Bank and UNDP on Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments, in line with its commitment to multilateralism.

Through its CA, the EU developed: a culture, and the practices of coordination, among the many actors involved in its conflict work; guiding principles and procedures for an integrated approach to conflicts in a systematic way; concrete objectives and priorities for EU actors (Faleg, 2019). For example, the EU's conflict early warning system (EWS) is a key component of the CA. The guidance suggests improving coherence and effectiveness through: shared analysis; situational awareness; information sharing; sharing a common methodology for conflict analysis; sharing a common strategic vision to strengthen operational coordination; and the use of EU delegations (Faleg, 2019). "Originally, the EU's CA relied on two components: civil–military cooperation (CIMIC) at the tactical level, and civilian–military coordination (CMCO) at the political, strategic and institutional levels... [the CMCO] serves the double purpose of building a more holistic crisis response capacity, and avoid conflicts between divergent mandates and priorities of EU institutions" (Faleg, 2019).

The EU has identified the integration of its conflict analysis as a key priority, and in 2013 it published a joint guidance note on the use of conflict analysis in support of EU external action (EEAS & European Commission, 2013; Davis, et al., 2017). The note determines that the conflict analysis process should involve "the active participation of all the EU stakeholders who need to own and use its findings. Typically, this will include the delegation(s), the EEAS and the [Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development] DG DEVCO, and other Commission services such as the [Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations] DG

⁵ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/cfsp/crisis_management/docs/com2001_211_en.pdf

⁶ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/statements/docs/2013/131211_03_en.pdf

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/strategic-evaluation-eu-support-conflict-prevention-and-peacebuilding-third-countries-2001-2008_en

ECHO and the Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI)” (EEAS & European Commission, 2013 In Berglund & Bruckert, 2017). There are two main approaches to its conflict analysis: light touch conflict analysis; and conflict sensitive political economy analysis (EEAS & European Commission, 2013).

The EU’s needs for coordination in its conflict prevention and peacebuilding analysis and action are fairly unique in that it needs to ensure coherence and integration across three complex sets of actors: (a) between and across different mechanisms and instruments of the EU institutions (b) between and across the EU institutions and the EU Member States; and (c) between and across other key multilateral and bilateral foreign policy actors (e.g. UN, World Bank, etc.).

The CA evolved into the Integrated Approach (IA) in 2016 with the 2016 EU Global Strategy (Faleg, 2019). Where the CA was a “process” to achieve coordination, the IA provided clearer guidelines for action to “streamline, operationalize, and deepen” coordination (Faleg, 2019). Faleg (2019) identifies a number of aims of the practical implementation of the IA including: to enhance EU capacities in early warning and conflict sensitivity; to provide better conflict analysis and prevention capacity; to reframe the EU’s stabilisation approach, integrating political, security and development to make sure that the transition between crisis management and stabilisation is more coherent and inclusive; to integrate (rather than coordinate) different levels of EU action; and to better link all levels of EU responses with other international actors to ensure consistency in international community interventions (Faleg, 2019).

The main organisational innovation of the IA has been creating the PRISM Division (also called CSDPCR.PRISM) (Faleg, 2019). PRISM enables the implementation of the IA and works to improve coordination between all actors in crisis response, early detection and prevention and, stabilisation (Pietz, 2017). See Figure 1 for an organigram of the EU’s structures for implementation of crisis management missions (Pietz, 2017, p.2).

The EU focuses on early warning indicators, as part of its conflict and context analysis. Its monitoring and analysis faculties are based in the EEAS in INTCEN (EU Intelligence and Situation Centre) and PRISM (Juncos & Blockmans, 2018). The conflict early warning system enables staff across the EU (the EEAS, Commission, Member States, headquarters, and in-country) to identify long-term risks for violent conflict and/or deterioration in a country or region and to stimulate early preventive actions to address those risks (Davis, et al., 2017). Strategic direction is provided by the EU Global Strategy (Faleg, 2019).

See: Figure 1: EU structures for implementation of crisis management missions (Source: Pietz, 2017, p.2),

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ZIF_Policy_Briefing_Pietz_GSVP_Sept_2017_EN.pdf



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Personnel, time, and budget are scarce resources, limiting the EU actors' abilities to implement the IA. The extent to which conflict analysis can be developed and integrated into programming across the many levels and actors is constrained by it having one of the lowest staff-to-budget ratios of donors (Davis, et al., 2017). This is compounded by budget limitations for joint actions, the lack of internal incentives, the heavy transaction costs of coordination, difficulties in measuring and attaining impact on the ground, and the lack of political consensus among Member States for joint action (Faleg, 2019).

Engaging other stakeholders with the EU's conflict analysis process is preferable, but complex and with certain trade-offs. For example, conflict analyses written in collaboration with the partner country government tend to be more politically correct (or even biased) and less critical (EEAS & European Commission, 2013). While the EU supports the New Deal's commitment to locally written conflict analysis, the EU acknowledges the need to also have its own analysis (EEAS & European Commission, 2013). Asking actors about conflict risks and actors in their own country can be highly sensitive, can lead to misinterpretations, and can be dangerous (EEAS & European Commission, 2013). It may be preferable, in these cases, to focus on transition, resilience or promotion of stability, rather than conflict risks or actors (EEAS & European Commission, 2013).

Coordination and cooperation within the EU remains a key challenge. For example, a key challenge is getting the EU-28 to agree common policy (Davis, et al., 2017). Member States can use the EU to further their self-interests – e.g. while the UK is a major contributor to EU conflict prevention, the UK tends to be careful that its resources are used by the EU to further the UK's foreign policy objectives. "Member State interests may be particularly served by the EU in states where there is little Member State presence, especially where the state concerned is not a key geopolitical interest" (Davis, et al., 2017).

Ultimately, real integration requires "true change in the EU's organisational culture" (Faleg, 2019). "The CA was about coordination and cooperation, whereas integration requires truly breaking the silos, revising the authorizing environment and the way decisions in some areas are taken, including the decision-making structure, the allocation of resources, the transaction costs and incentives to sustain an integrated bureaucratic machine. Moving from the comprehensive to the IA thus requires a true change in the EU's organizational culture" (Faleg, 2019).

The lack of a unified information exchange system within the EU structures limits knowledge sharing and lesson learning. Almost every EU policy area and service has its own classified system (civilian, military, intelligence, etc.), with a lack of connectivity on technological and physical levels (Berglund & Bruckert, 2017). Thus, communication is not systematic, but relies on "good personal contacts and cooperation between different actors and services, willing to share information and cooperate" (Berglund & Bruckert, 2017).

The warning-response gap remains, "despite policy consensus that prevention is always better than managing the consequences of conflict" (European Union, 2016, p. 29). The EU Global Strategy identifies this limitation and emphasises that "[e]arly warning is of little use unless it is followed by early action" (European Union, 2016, in Juncos & Blockmans, 2018). Thus "the challenge for the conflict Early Warning System is not the quality of the analysis, but the relationship between early

warning and early action – a concern that repeatedly surfaces in EU documents as well as among analysts. This brings us back to the question of priority-setting and political decision-making: how (finite) resources are distributed among a long list of ‘at-risk’ situations, and the risk that the urgent overshadow the important” (Davis, et al., 2017).

In its guidance note, the EEAS and European Commission (2013, p. 9) recommend that when linking conflict analysis to EU external action, the follow-up work should be:

- goal and objective driven, rather than instrument driven
- Identify complementary measures needed to reinforce / support key elements across the relevant domains (e.g. diplomacy, development/external assistance, and security and defence)
- Consider from the start the different time dimensions needed (short, medium and long term)

An illustrative planning matrix – that links the analysis and work in the different domains - is provided in the annex of that paper (EEAS & European Commission, 2013, p.10).

3. Lessons from the UN⁸

The UN’s new “sustaining peace” agenda, initiated in 2015, aims to reform the UN system (including all its agencies, funds, and programmes) to “prioritise prevention and sustaining peace; enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions; move towards a single, integrated peace and security pillar; and align it more closely with the development and human rights pillars to create greater coherence and cross-pillar coordination”.⁹ It takes a whole-of-system approach. The agenda was initiated by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (“HIPPO”) report in 2015. Part of this reform agenda focuses on advancing its conflict analysis and joint assessments.

One of the institutional innovations of this reform agenda is the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) (established in 2019), which merges the former Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). The DPPA:¹⁰

- “Monitors and assesses global political developments to detect potential crises and responses. It support the Secretary-General and his envoys, and UN political missions in their peace initiatives.
- DPPA rapidly deploys mediators and other peacemaking expertise.
- DPPA provides staff support to the UN Security Council, advises the UN Special Committee on Decolonization and services the Secretariat of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. And it coordinates UN electoral assistance”.

⁸ This subsection focusses on the institutional reforms to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UN DPPA), and not the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in line with the query request. However, it is generally not possible to extract the lessons only applicable to the DPPA from the general lessons for the UN.

⁹ See - <https://reform.un.org/content/peace-and-security-reform>

¹⁰ See UN DPPA website - <https://dppa.un.org/en/about-us>

The DPA contains the PBSO (established 2005), which “fosters international support for nationally-owned and led peacebuilding efforts, and works to enhance system-wide coherence and partnerships with UN and non-UN actors”.¹¹

An innovation as part of this reform agenda is the establishment of a small, centralised unit responsible for analysis and planning for the whole UN system, based in the Secretary-General’s office (Boutellis & Connolly, 2016). In addition to carrying out conflict analysis, this office is responsible to improving the prioritisation and sequencing of some mandates. However, Boutellis and Connolly (2016, p. 6) find that “these actions have yet to translate into the primacy of politics in guiding the conduct of peace operations”.

Other innovations include: the creation of Peace and Development Advisers (jointly managed by UNDP and the DPA), and their deployment to non-mission settings; the establishment of DPA regional offices (to broaden its reach); and advances in cross-donor joint assessment, planning, and programming (e.g. the UN, World Bank, and EU Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments)¹² (Ponzio, 2018).

New digital technologies are also shaping UN conflict/context analysis processes, e.g. with mediation teams most commonly using: automated or manual social media analytics; text mining programs; customisable news feeds; and geographic information system (GIS) tools, including satellite imagery and digital maps (UN DPPA & Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, n.d.). UN DPPA and Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (n.d.) highlight the opportunities of these technologies as:

- Low-cost, real-time and, increasingly automated access to greater volumes and variety of information to support conflict analysis;
- Efficient tools to manage, organise, and visualise information for conflict analysis.
- Real-time remote access to monitor developments on the ground (e.g. military activities, movements of populations or armed groups).
- Enhanced capacity to identify sources/promoters of instability and violence, including hate speech, misinformation and disinformation.

They highlight the risks of these technologies as (UN DPPA & Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, n.d.):

- Lack of capacity and resources (human and technological) to manage, secure, analyse and contextualise significant volumes of information.
- Biased results due to inaccurate data or skewed algorithms, reinforcing existing discriminations and exclusionary patterns or producing new ones.
- A false sense of fully informed decision-making.
- Insufficient technical capacity to understand how conflict parties use digital technologies to support their positions and interests or compete for control of critical internet resources.

Yet UN weaknesses in its use of analysis are widely highlighted in the literature. E.g. an evaluation of the DPA’s work from 2008 to 2015 by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services’ (UN OIOS)

¹¹ See UN DPPA website - <https://dppa.un.org/en/about-us>

¹² See - <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/recovery-and-peace-building-assessments>

makes one recommendation of four, that the DPA needs to “fill key analytical gaps” in its overall contextual analysis for early warning and early action and its political analysis (UN OIOS, 2016). “In the aftermaths of several major failures, the UN commissioned experts to review its actions. In each of the reviews, poor situational awareness was identified as a reason for failure, and improvements were recommended”, finds Willmott (2017). And a review of the UN system’s conflict and prevention work across its agencies, funds, and programmes (AFPs), finds that although all interviewees highlighted the importance of conflict/context analysis as the basis for more conflict sensitive and effective programming, the majority of interviewees at headquarters (HQ) and field level felt that this was where “the biggest gap in capacities lies” (Pantuliano, et al., 2018, p.10).¹³ And the most widely held criticism was the failure to translate the conflict/context analysis into more conflict-sensitive, politically smart programming (Pantuliano, et al., 2018, p.10).

The UN system faces specific challenges to the integration and coherence of its analysis due to “the difficulties of integrating the many UN entities each with different mandates, interests, funding streams, governance arrangements, and reporting lines (Willmott, 2017, p.16). The size and diversity of its member states also complicates integration, coherence and neutrality. Boutellis and Connolly (2016, p.10) emphasise that “the next secretary-general should ensure that the small centralised unit for analysis and planning the current secretary-general created is empowered to help design peace operations that are guided by political strategies based on a solid understanding of the conflict, rather than the political interests of member states or bureaucratic tussles within the UN”. Analysis needs to be independent from member state politics, providing policy-relevant but policy-neutral analysis (Willmott, 2017).

Another challenge is that Secretariat desk officers are stretched thin over many portfolios, so when a crisis occurs or a mission is deployed, they are often overwhelmed (UN, 2015; Boutellis & Connolly, 2016). This means there is a limited capacity in the Secretariat to assess UN reporting, alongside external information, to underpin its conflict assessments, policy and strategy formulation and planning (UN, 2015; Boutellis & Connolly, 2016). The DPA has struggled to be effective and efficient, e.g. desk officers report spending only 41% of their time on substantive work, with 59% of their time spent on administration and other work. And when disaggregating the 41% of time spend on substantive support, half of this time is spent on internal and external coordination and supporting HQ decision-making, with only 22% on information gathering and analysis, and only 17% on expertise-specific technical support (UN OIOS, 2016, p.23). This ultimately leaves too little time for political analysis (UN OIOS, 2016, p.23).

Resource constraints also limit the DPA’s its capacity to meet all needs, while its strategic planning documents do not demonstrate clear, data-driven thinking on how DPA will focus its limited resources (UN OIOS, 2016). In-depth analysis is limited to where the DPA has a large staff presence – in the most-critical settings (UN OIOS, 2016). Reform proposals are often limited by member states declining to provide the sufficient resources (Willmott, 2017, p.13). Notably, the inclusion of women protection advisers has ensured better monitoring, analysis, and reporting on conflict-related sexual violence, and gender-disaggregated data has been incorporated in reporting to the Security Council.

The UN (more generally) often engages in conflict resolution at a late stage, thus analysis, strategy, and mission visits (to assess the context) are developed under time pressure. “Under such pressures, past plans have often been built upon hastily developed assumptions and traditionally available tools, rather than on a deep analysis of the situation and clear high-level strategic parameters for UN wide engagement” (UN, 2015, p.44). Further, the DPA’s shift from desk-

¹³ Based on document review, 300 interviews, and a survey (Pantuliano, et al., 2018).

based analysis, to more field-focused operations, has left a gap in its early-warning analysis, with DPA less equipped to foresee and act on potential threats to peace (UN OIOS, 2016).

The lack of analytical frameworks and staff skills to conduct deep conflict/context analysis (with the exception of UNDP), was highlighted in the review by Pantuliano, et al., (2018). UNDP is identified as an exception, as it has the necessary staffing, tools and frameworks, and UNDP analysis is appreciated by other UN entities at the country level (known as the UN Country Teams (UNCTs)). But outside of UNDP, there is a lack of common or pooled capacity to develop or share such analysis within UNCTs or between UNCTs and UN missions (Pantuliano, et al., 2018). The 2015 sustaining peace report highlights the need for conflict analysis to be produced by professional analysts, yet the number of professional analysts in the UN system is limited (UN, 2015; Willmott, 2017). Yet Pantuliano, et al.'s (2018) review showed that most AFPs on the ground do undertake some form of conflict analysis, though the approach may not always be institutionalised, its depth and scope vary, and it may be just a one-off activity.

While developing a shared conflict/context analysis between actors is often highlighted as best practice, there are many political and practical challenges relating to this. E.g. host government sensitivities and bias may disadvantage a shared analysis; resource constraints can mean there is little capacity to manage and share knowledge effectively; and member states may resist knowledge sharing with and within the UN system. There is now actually less member state sharing of information, intelligence, and analysis with and through the UN than in the 1990s, warns the (UN Association of the USA (UNA-USA), 2019). This means that sometimes external non-governmental organisations actors can provide better briefings than the UN (UNA-USA, 2019). This lack of sharing also occurs within the UN system, e.g. information from experts' reports for the UN sanctions committee, is not easily shared with UN Secretariat officials or member states not serving on the Security Council (UNA-USA, 2019). Shared analysis can also skew the focus of the research towards one actors' level of focus – e.g. shared analysis across the wider UN system, in country, was seen as often overly focusing on high-level politics, rather than on a more holistic analysis (Pantuliano, et al., 2018). And ultimately, the sharing of analysis and information across the UN system is limited by: the situational awareness entities not being joined up; not using systematically gathered and analysed information; and situation awareness processes not always being linked to decision-making (Willmott, 2017).

The HIPPO report identifies the value of engaging with communities in analysis processes to understand their needs (a more people-centred approach). However, this can be limited by the reality that insecurity can restrict deep-field presence for analysis, and the need to build relationships of trust with local people (UN, 2015).

The UN's analysis is restricted by its limited full-time political presence overseas, as except for its field-based Special Political Missions and regional offices, DPPA does not have a full-time political presence overseas. "While called on to anticipate and prevent crises, the DPPA does not have the reach of the US government and its embassies worldwide. DPPA's early warning and action activities, among other core functions, would benefit from more eyes and ears on the ground (in country or, at the very least, at the sub-regional level)... DPPA might also consider expanding its network of regional offices to have senior-level DPPA representation based full-time in a region or country" (UNA-USA, 2019).

4. Lessons from NATO

NATO employs a CA, initiated in 2006 (Faleg, 2018). It is based on the “Understand to Prevent” (U2P) process, which acknowledges “the need for military actors to develop a common understanding of the conflict with other actors working towards the same ends and, wherever possible, to ‘co-design’ effective and complementary preventive actions and structures” (Multinational Capability Development Campaign (MCDC), 2017). The approach was developed in response to the lessons learned from NATO operations, in particular in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans, which highlighted how “a comprehensive political, civilian and military approach is necessary for effective crisis management” (NATO, 2013, p.1). Another important driver was the desire for closer ties with the EU, UN and other international organisations for better division of labour and more effective work on the ground (Faleg, 2018).

U2P shifts the focus from crisis response to upstream engagement to positively manage conflict, prevent violence and build peace (MCDC, 2014). The U2P is a multinational project, not wholly owned or directed by NATO, but including many of the same NATO members.¹⁴ Key documents are: the extremely detailed 444 page Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD) (NATO, 2013); NATO’s 2010 Strategic Concept document; the AJP-5 (Allied Joint Doctrine for Operational-Level Planning) (which gives doctrinal guidance); and the U2P MCDC (2017) handbook (which provides detailed practical conflict analysis tools, and advises the use of the handbook as a common tool to “help harmonise approaches and support shared assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation” (MCDC, 2017, p.206). This rapid review did not find an evaluation online.

Within NATO, it appears that The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has overall responsibility for monitoring and analysing regional instabilities, military capabilities, and transnational issues. It is responsible for monitoring, assessing and warning of impending crises, conducting horizon scanning, information/knowledge management and knowledge development for detection of potential crises, and the development of situational awareness and understanding of emerging crises for planning activities (NATO, 2013, p.2.1). To developing a holistic understanding of a crisis, it employs a multiagency and multisource process, drawing on NATO and non-NATO expertise (military and non-military) (NATO, 2013, p.2.2).

The NATO Crisis Management Process (depicted in Figure 2) provides a template for planning and decision-making, it is designed so the relevant staffs and NATO Committees coordinate their work and submit comprehensive advice to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in a timely way. The NAC decides on whether NATO should act, how, and strategic objectives (NATO, 2013, p.1.2). Yet, while “informed processes and tools guide and enable the preparation of a commander’s decision making”, “they are not an end in themselves. A commander’s intuition, experience and military judgement remain paramount” (NATO, 2013, p.1.7-1.8).

Analysis is conducted throughout the crisis management process phases; two key analysis phases are: the initial situational awareness of a potential/actual crisis; and the SACEUR’s strategic assessments (the processes for these phases of analysis are depicted in Figures 3 and 4, respectively) (NATO, 2013, p.1.2). A large number of other NATO units feed information into SACEUR’s analysis, including (NATO, 2013, p.4.8):

¹⁴ See - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understand-to-prevent-the-military-contribution-to-the-prevention-of-violent-conflict>

- The Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre (CCOMC) draws attention to emerging crises, develops an understanding of, and monitors the crisis;
- J2 - coordinates and directs intelligence production across the Allied Command Operations Intelligence Organisations;
- J9 Civil-Military Interaction (CMI) branch (primarily composed of civilian experts) - provides a strategic engagement and outreach capability to develop awareness and contextualised understanding of non-military aspects of the situation;
- Civil-Military Analysis (CMA) branch - applies regional and thematic expertise, including to research and analysis activities, in support of the development of the contextual understanding of emerging crises and ongoing operations;
- Knowledge Development Direction (KDD) Section - at the strategic level a KDD Section will be responsible for managing SACEUR and Allied Command Operations overall knowledge priorities and requirements, and ACO's knowledge base;
- NATO Intelligence Fusion Centre (NIFC). The NIFC is a multi-national intelligence organisation with intelligence analysts from participating member nations;
- NATO Headquarters (NATO HQ) Civil-Military Planning and Support (CMPS) Section - maintains a Comprehensive Approach Specialist Support database covering a wide range of civil/commercial/technical expertise available to NATO.

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Figure 2: The NATO Crisis Management Process (NCMP) (Source: NATO, 2013, p.3.3)

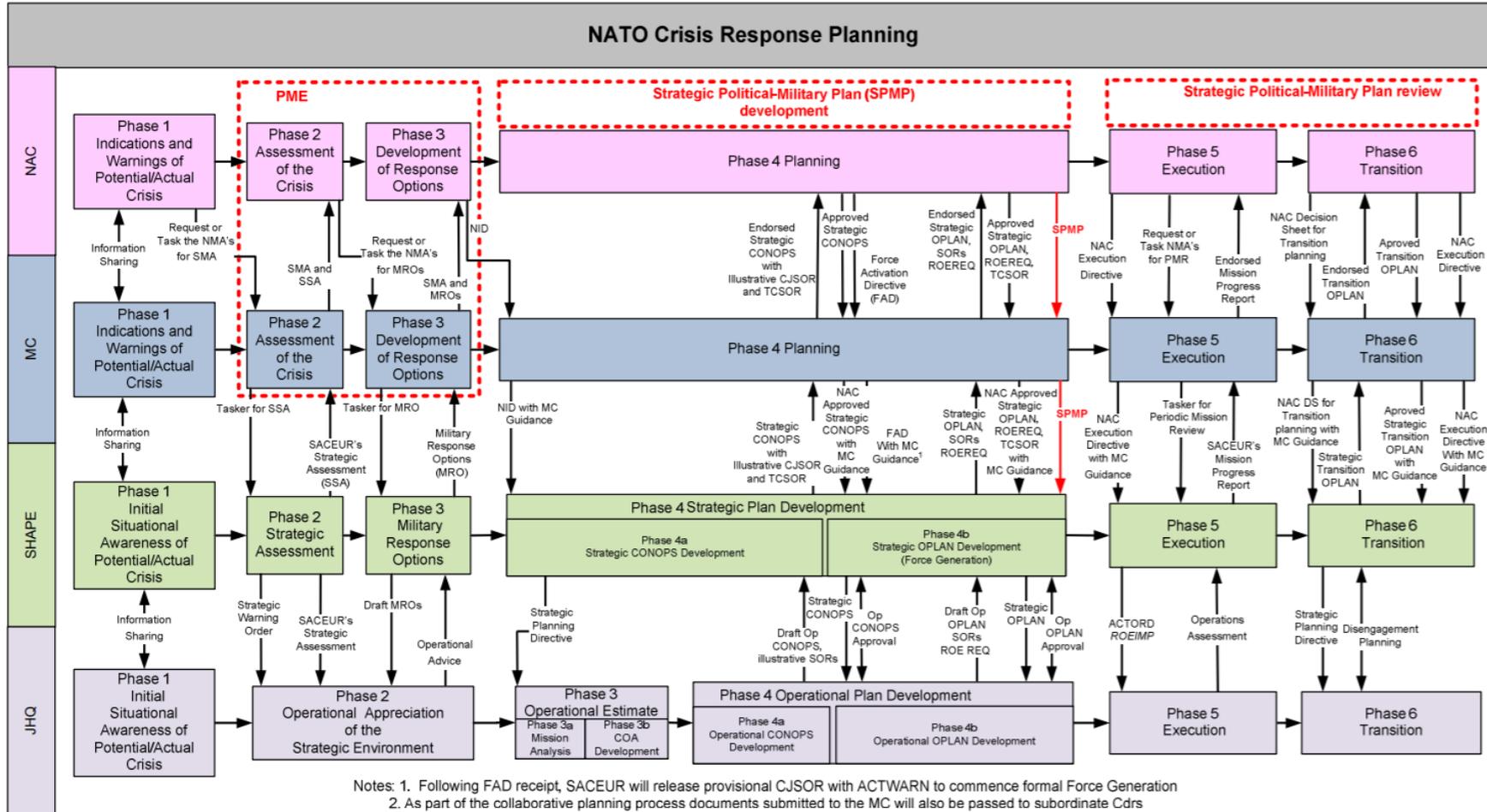


Figure 3: Initial situational awareness of a potential/actual crisis (Source: NATO, 2013, p.3.9)

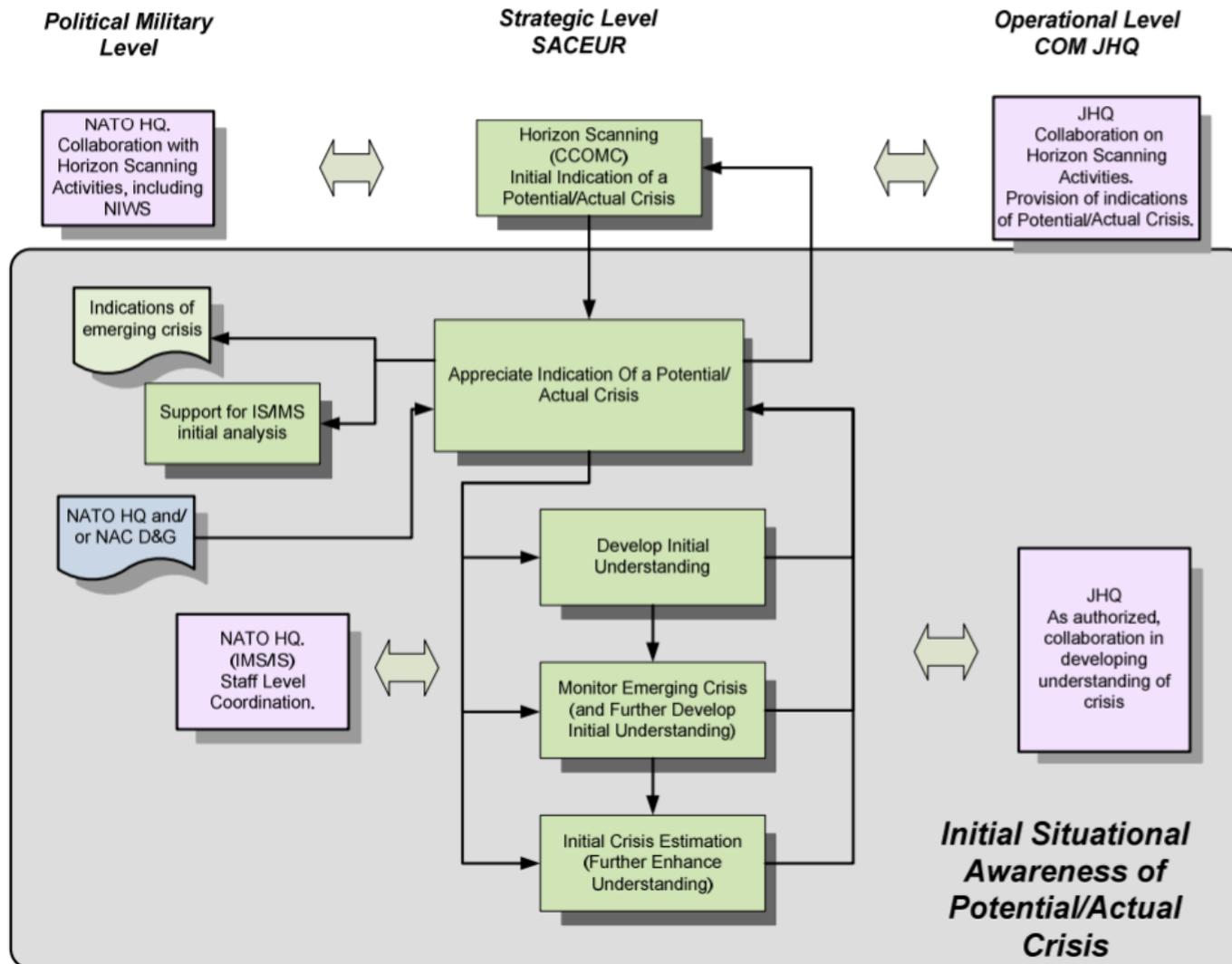
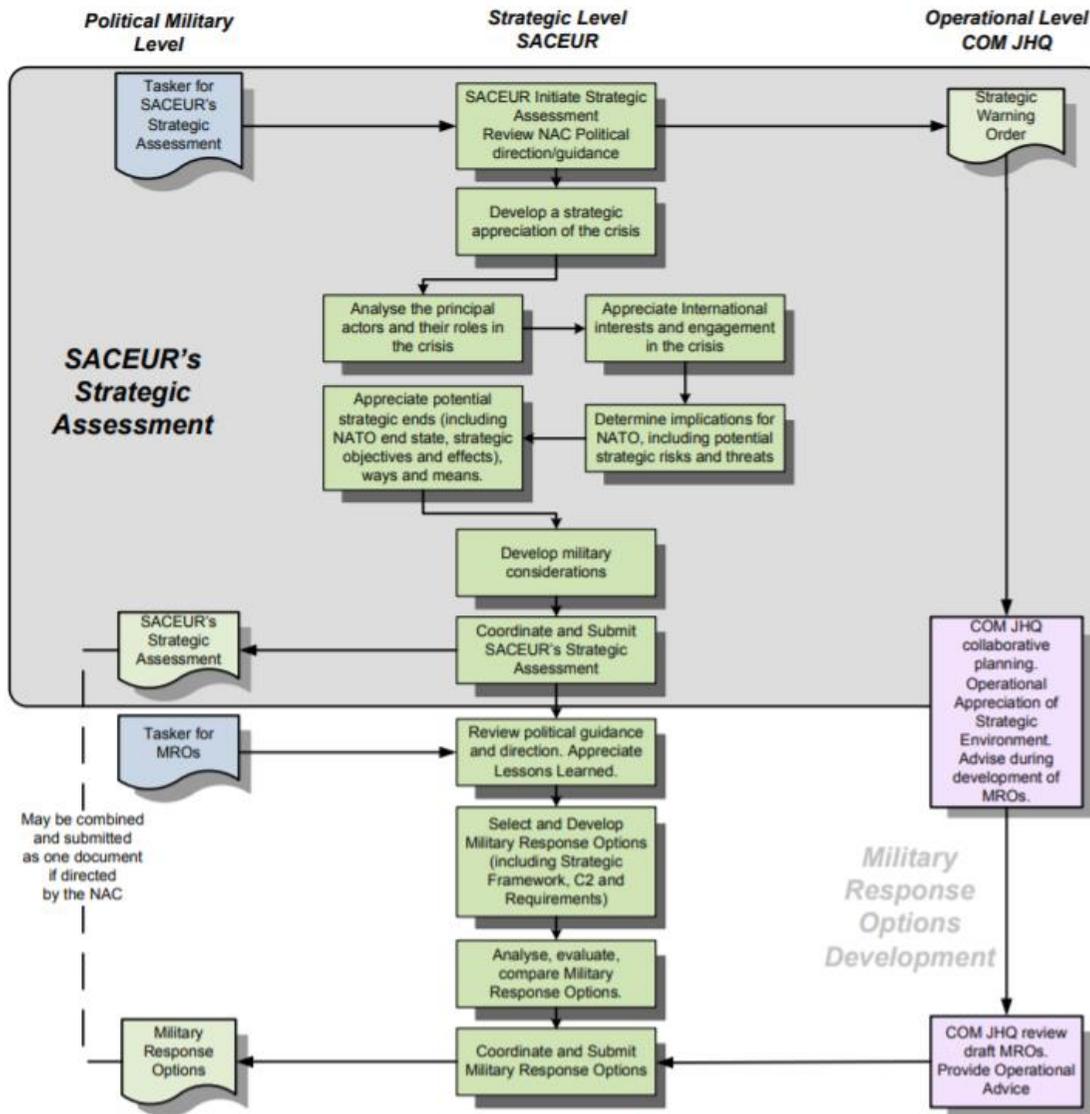


Figure 4: SACEUR's strategic assessment (Source: NATO, 2013, p.3.17)



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Key challenges to NATO implementing its CA include: “the struggle to achieve internal cohesion, lack of synchronization with member states planning, and lack of budget allocated to foster CA implementation and the projection of stability” (Faleg, 2018). In response to these challenges, NATO is revising its action plan (Faleg, 2018).

NATO’s CA has been effective at strengthening its partnerships with external actors specialising in institution building, development, governance, the judiciary and the police, finds Faleg (2018). And this has “in turn contributed to improving NATO’s own crisis management instruments, and to breaking some of the silos within the organization, although the military culture remains predominant” (Faleg, 2018). In particular, the CA has strengthened NATO’s relationship with the EU in: identifying and addressing emerging security challenges; in coordination of civilian and military planning; conduct of operations; lessons learned; and training/exercises (Faleg, 2018)

5. Lessons from the OSCE

The OSCE was the first security organisation that conceived and adopted a concept of comprehensive and cooperative security with its original political mandate as a forum for political dialogue and a platform for joint action (Faleg, 2018). It takes a CA, with key documents designing the approach from 1975, 1990, 1999, 2003, and 2011 (Faleg, 2018).

The OSCE’s Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) (created in 1990) provides policy advice, support, and analysis to the Secretary General, Chairmanship, participating States, and field operations. It is part of the OSCE secretariat, as is the Chairman-in-Office (CiO). The CPC acts as an OSCE-wide early warning focal point, facilitates negotiation, mediation, and other conflict prevention and resolution efforts, and supports regional co-operation initiatives.¹⁵ The CPC collects, collates, and analyses information from different sources and advises the Secretary General and the Chairmanship on possible response options in the case of an emerging crisis. It also co-ordinates the dispatch of needs assessment or fact-finding teams to the field, as well as the use of the OSCE’s roster for the rapid deployment of staff in urgent situations.¹⁶ The CPC developed its Operational Framework for Crisis Response (OFCR) in 2013, and its most important departments are the Operations Services and its Planning and Analysis Unit (Dijkstra, et al., 2016).

Challenges facing the OSCE’s CA include: reaching political consensus can be hard and time-consuming, due to the nature of the organisation; OSCE commitments and principles are not politically or legally binding and it has no effective mechanisms to sanction violations; agreements on new or upgraded policy frameworks are difficult to reach, making it preferable to improve the existing ones, due to the different priorities and perspectives of participating states; the OSCE undertakes a wide range of disparate activities, which seem to lack coherence or clear implementation criteria, due to its broad conceptualisation of security; lessons learned processes

¹⁵ See - <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/conflict-prevention>

¹⁶ See - <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/conflict-prevention>

are hampered by limited resources; institutional capacity and incentives to implement the CA are limited by high staff turn-over and the secondment system; and sceptical (if not negative) attitudes from some participating states (Faleg, 2018). However, the OSCE's CA "has undoubtedly made headway" since 1975, especially in mediation, early warning, and in complex operational theatres (Faleg, 2018).

Lessons from OSCE experience are: "the importance of political consensus among participating (or member) states for the operationalisation of an IA". Also, "the importance of translating concepts into a few concrete, measurable actions, for instance in the areas of mediation, early warning and early action, which can allow the institution to scale up the IA over time, matching the demand for comprehensiveness with an adequate level of financial and human resources" (Faleg, 2018).

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