Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop

September 17–18, 2020

Summary Report

September 2020 Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop – Summary Report

On September 17-18, 2020, over one-hundred participants – including humanitarian practitioners, academicians, and military leaders – engaged in two, half-day, virtual workshops hosted by the **Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies (CHRHS)** at the **Brown University Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs** and the **Humanitarian Response Program (HRP)** at the **U.S. Naval War College** to explore current and future challenges in humanitarian civilian-military coordination including natural and technical disasters, complex emergencies and pandemics.

On September 17, 2020, **CHRHS** and **HRP** hosted the first ever *Research Symposium on Civilian-Military Humanitarian Coordination,* featuring four presentations of recently completed original research studies from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, law, political science, and public health. The research questions covered in these studies were selected by the working groups at the *2018 Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop* after being identified as some of the most pressing and important topics in the realm of civilian-military coordination during humanitarian emergencies.

On September 18, 2020, in collaboration with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) Civil-Military Coordination Service (CMCS), **CHRHS** and **HRP** hosted the *2020 Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop*, which was the fourth in a series of workshops designed to explore current and future challenges in humanitarian response. The theme of this year's workshop was the related topics of humanitarian access, protection of civilians, and aid worker security. Participants were grouped into a series of working groups that met prior to and after the workshop to discuss and refine an agenda for six major themes within the civ-mil humanitarian space.

As a follow-on to the three previous *Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshops*, this event aimed to improve humanitarian coordination by supporting a Community of Practice in civilian-military issues and promoting information sharing that can inform policy and processes during crises; highlight opportunities for professional education, training, and development for key decision makers to identify the best practices associated with overcoming cultural, policy, technical, and legal challenges to coordination and information sharing; and continue to develop and refine a comprehensive research agenda in order to build the evidence base for this field and better inform practice.

Each working group approached their area from a slightly different perspective and developed the following synthesis and summary papers to continue to stimulate thinking, encourage an ongoing exchange of ideas, and ultimately help drive research, education, simulation, and other innovative efforts that can improve humanitarian civilian-military coordination and engagement in the future.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part in this workshop – for their willingness to explore critical issues so important to humanity – and for their passion and commitment to help the world's most vulnerable people. We are committed to ensuring that this event will continue as a vibrant conversation that can help to advance trust and confidence with key actors in the humanitarian ecosystem, allowing for more effective collaboration that can save lives and alleviate suffering around the globe.

On behalf of Brown University and the Naval War College, we would like to thank the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the R. Dudley Harrington, Jr. Charitable Foundation, the Naval War College Foundation, The Widgeon Foundation, and UN OCHA's CMCS for their generous support of our *2020 Research Symposium on Civilian-Military Humanitarian Coordination* and our *2020 Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop.*

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Aid Worker Security Working Group

Summary of Outputs

The first specific aid worker security working group was built from previous working groups in 2016, 2017 and 2018 that focused on international humanitarian law (IHL) and attacks on aid workers. Through three online sessions, the group explored a range of current and future operational challenges facing humanitarian aid workers and medical responders in complex emergencies around three broad themes - the future of aid worker security, the role of technology in aid worker security, and inclusivity within aid worker security.

Each session focused on tackling key operational concerns, addressing some of the assumptions affecting this thinking, and recommending opportunities to respond to some of these challenges. From the sessions, three categories of outputs were recommended:

- <u>Further research</u> on operational planning, sharing of information, and the threat and value posed by technology. Specific areas of research included:
  - o *Develop strategic principles for the use of technology in humanitarian security,* especially around collection, use, security, and privacy of data. Inspiration could be taken from human rights defender's, the ICRC, and UNHCR.
  - o *Explore how humanitarian and military planners consider aid worker security in a multitude of environments*, especially at the local level, in the U.S , in the technology / cyber space, and with humanitarian actors with diverse profiles.
  - o *Collect lessons learned about successful aid worker security solutions to create inspiration for the future,* Examples given included how local aid workers are adapting to COVID-19, comparing humanitarian notification system in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan and Gaza, developing a humanitarian focused human terrain system, as well as understanding successful information sharing between humanitarians and military entities.
- <u>Create an innovation hub</u> that bridges the gap between humanitarian, academic, and military practitioners of all levels to act as a vehicle for funding research, enhance and raise diverse voices to discussion, and contribute to providing solutions in aid worker security.
  - o The hub could focus on researching and supporting underserved areas of aid worker security, especially challenges to inclusivity or the role of technology.
  - o The space would need to be housed by a trusted, reputable, global civilian entity that has strong convening and communication power between the different groups.
- <u>Continued organic collaboration</u> will continue between the group in order to continue the momentum of workshop. Participants were encouraged to share and collaborate through online meetings and email groups.

Meeting 1 (August 26, 2020)
The first online session focused on the changes in current and future humanitarian contexts that could most impact aid worker security. Seven specific trends in aid worker security were discussed. These focused on the need to address; 1) growing local aid worker security needs and operational, capacity, and ethical concerns; 2) growing impunity of perpetrators of attacks against aid workers; 3) growing politicization of aid especially by military actors; 4) the impact of future pandemic events on aid worker security; 5) the need for improved logistics security; 6) growing cyber security/warfare concerns; and 7) concerns over the role and use of humanitarian notification system for de-confliction, especially differing perceptions about the systems purpose (accountability vs security), its use at different levels, and whether even technological solutions are appropriate (e.g. blockchain).

The group then discussed four assumptions with the previous discussion; 1) that humanitarians will have independent operational space in the future (especially in the technology and information space); 2) that humanitarian, military and government actors will share information with each other if it is related to their security; 3) that the US military will be perceived as a good actor and will act in everyone's interests; and 4) that the military understands the risks humanitarian face.
The final part of the session was dedicated to exploring ways to address some of the challenges mentioned in previous discussion. Specific solutions mentioned were develop a new humanitarian human terrain system model, similar to the one developed by the US army for aid worker security; conduct more research into how aid worker security is considered in humanitarian and military planning; develop more practical training for all types and levels of aid workers; and that future initiatives need to be more deliberate and inclusive of different types of aid workers.

Meeting 2 (September 4, 2020)
The second online meeting focused on inclusivity within aid worker security such as aid workers with diverse profiles like LGBTQ+ individuals, local aid workers, women and youth. Six concerns within this topic were identified, 1) data on attacks against aid workers with diverse profiles is weak; 2) there are numerous barriers to inclusion of aid workers with diverse profiles and local aid workers in security policies, decision making, and practices; 3) COVID-19 is transferring risk down to local staff that is not reflected in security responses; 4) there is a disconnect between organizational policies and practices on the ground, even if these consider inclusivity or use technology; 5) the role of humanitarian organizations in addressing inclusivity in aid worker security is not clear due to internal cultures and practices, with some participants suggesting improving this is more the role for civil society organizations and that some inclusivity policies in some areas of the work make the organization political; and 6) that there remains questions about the cost vs benefit of improving inclusion in aid worker security.

Following this, three assumptions with the previous discussion were introduced. These were that 1) written policies, even if they include good inclusive policies, will always translate into practice; 2) humanitarian organizations will support and have good inclusive policies and practices because they have humanitarian outlook; and 3) threats to aid workers with diverse profiles are external.
The meeting concluded by proposing three areas to explore to address security for aid workers with diverse profiles. These were to collect lessons learned from the COVID-19 period that could shed light on inclusivity of local aid workers and those with diverse profiles; try to understand where humanitarians can learn from the military, especially context analysis and planning; and

that more representation is needed from the local level and those with diverse profiles in crafting policies and developing practices, as well as participating in future discussions.

Meeting 3 (September 9, 2020)
The third online meeting focused on the role of technology in aid worker security. The discussion revolved around six concerns with the role of technology in aid worker security. These were 1) The full role of technology in aid worker security is not understood or trusted; 2) regulations and guidance for technology in aid work security needs to move towards the operational level, and prioritized over the introduction of technological solutions; 3) technology should not always focus on the solution but instead should focus first on the solution's usability and if it is appropriate for the local context (blockchain was specifically mentioned here); 4) data protection and privacy is a specific concern in aid worker security; 5) there is a lack of resources, capacity building, and training in implementing technology for aid worker security, and 6) the hijacking of information in future contexts is little understood by humanitarians.

Next three assumptions were identified in the role of technology for aid worker security. These were the assumption that 1) Humanitarians have the capacity and resources to implement technological solutions, 2) Resources and solutions that involve technology will go to local NGOs, and 3) civilian and military actors cannot share information about technology with each other due to technological and security concerns.

Finally, four areas to explore in the future were discussed including how humanitarian could adapt military solutions, such as blue force trackers or the human terrain system, for improvements in aid worker security; there needs to be a mapping out the information environment for different humanitarian contexts; explore establishing an innovation hub focused on technology and security for aid workers and create a principles document for humanitarians to use when deciding to implement technological solutions.

Working Group Leads
Megan Rhodes, U.S. Agency for International Development
Jonathan Robinson, U.S. Naval War College

Climate Change Working Group

Summary of Outputs

The climate change working group's mission is to generate new knowledge to inform stakeholder policymakers and facilitate pro-active long-term resilience planning and policy towards disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response. This working group has endeavored to bring together representatives of civilian, military, and humanitarian organizations to consider how climate change will affect the future of humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR). In 2017, 2018, and 2020, the climate change working group met to assess the myriad challenges and obstacles posed by this ever-evolving policy field.

Over the course of two meetings in 2020, the working group developed three research proposals, two of which were moved forward for implementation:

- Research Topic 1: *Develop a broad agenda-setting statement, including terminology and vocabulary, for civilian-military climate change issues.*
    - o (1) Outline key terms to facilitate dialogue between civilian and military actors
    - o (2) Identify climate drivers for future humanitarian disasters
        - ▪ (2b) Effects of these drivers on resources and capacity to respond
    - o (3) How do groups perceive their roles in future responses, and where are gaps?
    - o <u>Methods:</u> literature review, expert elicitations, consensus development.
    - o <u>Deliverables:</u> academic journal paper, white paper and/or lexicon.
    - o <u>Status:</u> This project was funded with seed money and is being conducted in 2021, with Chris Stockdale as project lead.
- Research Topic 2: *Identify environmental impacts of humanitarian responses on a local and global scale and seek policies and practices to mitigate these adverse effects.*
    - o (1) Compare how the UN Environmental Programme & the UNOCHA Joint Environment Unit (JEU) consider environmental impact.
    - o (2) How should this connect with UNOCHA Civil-Military Coordination?
    - o (3) How can militaries incorporate this understanding into responses?
    - o <u>Methods:</u> literature review, expert elicitations.
    - o <u>Deliverables:</u> journal paper, brief, and/or white paper.
    - o <u>Status:</u> This project is being conducted in 2021, with Andrea Cameron (USNWC) as project lead.
- Research Topic 3: *Compare domestic civilian-military relationships within different nation blocks and explore how they are focusing on resiliency and preparedness.*
    - o (1) Explore success and failures of domestic civilian-military relationships.
    - o (2) Analyze how internal coordination effects interstate coordination, or vice versa.
    - o <u>Methods:</u> literature review, identification of "civ-mil" partnerships, comparison of past disaster events and how systems have functioned.
    - o <u>Deliverables:</u> scholarly paper in defense journal, lessons learned/ best practices report.

    o <u>Status:</u> This project is on hold pending the identification of a project lead.

These research topics, along with their respective methodologies and deliverables, were selected from a broader list of potential topics compiled during the two working group meetings. The final research topics were selected by the working group leads with the advice of the working group as a whole, and reflect the most useful issue areas in which the prospects for meaningful deliverables were highest. More details can be found on the working group's website at https://sites.google.com/uri.edu/civ-mil-climate-resilience/home

Meeting 1 (August 31, 2020)
The agenda for the first working group meeting allotted time for general introductions, a recap of previous working group outcomes, a discussion of potential research topics, and initial proposals for climate change-related initiatives. Although a variety of issues and concerns were raised during the two-hour meeting, a significant portion of time was devoted to discussing definitions, stakeholder priorities, and time frames. A recurring theme throughout this discussion was the fundamental divide between civilian and military objectives in HA/DR settings, although the internal diversity of these actors was also discussed at length. Another climate-related factor discussed by the working group was restraints imposed by budgets and resource capabilities. However, although working group members agreed that financial limitations formed significant barriers to climate-related expenditures in both civilian and military contexts, discussion also indicated that costs framed in terms of future losses provide incentives for short-term mitigation and resilience measures. Special importance was given to terminology and vocabulary surrounding climate-related HA/DR and investigating the potential for improved civilian-military cooperation.

The discussion during the first meeting provided insight into what types of issues and concerns were common among the members of the working group. From there, the working group leads were able to narrow the list of potential research topics while starting to identify methods and potential deliverables for prospective projects. As a collaborative process, the working group leads received valuable inputs from the working group members that subsequently directed their agenda for the next meeting.

Meeting 2 (September 11, 2020)
The second meeting elaborated on the groundwork laid during the first meeting. With a narrowed list of potential research topics, the working group leads focused this meeting on eliciting interest for particular projects, outlining methods for following through on research, identifying project leads and participants, and identifying potential short-term and long-term deliverables. Through this process, the working group decided to focus specifically on terminology, HA/DR effects on climate change, and comparisons between the national and domestic policies of various nation blocks. Other issues, such as budgetary concerns or time frames, were either incorporated into the penumbra of these three research topics or shelved for discussion in future years.

Working Group Leads
Austin Becker, University of Rhode Island
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Humanitarian Access Working Group

Summary of Outputs

This was the first year that the humanitarian access working group met to discuss challenges associated with civilian-military access in conflict or natural disaster settings. Throughout the world, accessing populations with acute humanitarian needs is a complex and contentious process that determines the degree to which effective humanitarian assistance may be delivered. In response to conflicts and natural disasters around the world and the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the humanitarian access working group endeavored to explore untapped potential for civilian-military coordination in securing sustained humanitarian access for the world's most vulnerable populations.

For the humanitarian access working group, members were asked to attend only one of the two scheduled meetings. Both focus group meetings were formatted as open discussions, with little facilitation beyond introductions and general conversation starters.

Over the course of two focus group meetings, the humanitarian access working group engaged in a wide range of conversation visualized below and summarized in the meeting notes.

Data Visualization of Aggregated Focus Group Sessions

Meeting 1 (August 27, 2020)
During the first meeting, the working group focused in on several overarching themes related to humanitarian access. First, working group members focused extensively on the core humanitarian principles (neutrality, impartiality, independence, humanity) and their role in securing sustained humanitarian access. In response to Hugo Slim's article "You Don't Have to be Neutral to Be a Good Humanitarian[1]", working group members engaged in an impassioned conversation about the pros and cons of strictly adhering to the principles or allowing for some degree of "shortcuts". In general, working group participants concurred that strict adherence to the principles was the best way to secure safe and sustained access and avoid the politicization of aid delivery.

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[1] https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2020/08/27/humanitarian-principles-neutrality

Next, the working group members discussed the role of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) versus local NGOs in facilitating sustained access and providing effective humanitarian aid. In order to promote continued efforts to shift thinking, planning, and prioritization away from a Western "savior system", many members of the working group agreed that the localization of aid delivery and aid distribution should become a priority in humanitarianism, especially in complex political or conflict-ridden zones. Finally, the working group discussed a series of ancillary subjects related to humanitarian access, such as methods of funding, relative importance of different humanitarian principles, and differences between state and non-state actors in humanitarian responses.

Meeting 2 (September 3, 2020)
The second focus group session was structured in a similar manner and fostered discussion that amplified many of the concerns raised in the former meeting. For example, themes discussed at length during the first meeting were mentioned and incorporated into the second focus group's responses. Bureaucratic obstacles were discussed at length during the second working group meeting. Both for donors and recipients, governmental "red tape" and bureaucratic process produce significant barriers to humanitarian access that oftentimes hamper or even prevent humanitarian assistance. In an era of increased border controls and heightened security concerns, most members of the working group concurred that inefficiency, regulation, and excessive stonewalling by nation-states and international actors continues to threaten effective humanitarian aid.

Next, working group participants discussed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person humanitarian aid. As humanitarian funding diverts to national or regional pandemic-related concerns, INGOs have significantly reduced their overseas contributions while withdrawing money and aid from vulnerable populations around the world. In addition to presenting short-term challenges, working group members generally agreed that these same issues provided the opportunity for a long-term shift towards the localization of assistance and aid distribution. Along the same general vein, several working group members raised concerns over the effects of prior colonization on local perceptions of INGOs/ NGOs, especially if foreign militaries are involved. In addition, deconstructing "neocolonial" aid structures emerged as a priority among the working group in order to increase the potential for access in sustainable, effective, and safe manners.

Finally, the working group members discussed an emerging dissonance between humanitarian aid as issue affecting only developing nations or lesser hegemons. This Western bias is being tested in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such is the case because COVID-19 has exacerbated shortages of food and basic supplies domestically (including within the United States).
A follow-on meeting of the Humanitarian Access Working Group will be held on 28 January 2021 to discuss future topics to be considered for group members' research.

Working Group Leads
Beth Eggleston, Humanitarian Advisory Group
Hank Brightman, U.S. Naval War College

Outbreak Working Group

Summary of Outputs

It is the mission of the outbreak working group to explore challenges and identify good practice in humanitarian civilian-military coordination during pandemics, outbreaks, and other public health emergencies. Since 2016, this working group has sought to develop action and research plans, foster transatlantic growth and cooperation, and strengthen the Civil-Military Pandemic Response Network (CM-PRN). The focus of this years' working group was dominated, unsurprisingly, by a focus on the humanitarian civil-military dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of three meetings, the working group sought to identify priorities and subsequent actions for addressing challenges in civil-military coordination in the COVID-19 context, as well as contextualizing these issues within a broader continuum of past and present health emergencies. Specifically, working group members were interested in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the current civil-military framework through investigations into preparedness, resilience, and overall coordination.

Summary of Discussion

Given the structure of this year's workshop, the Outbreak Working Group spread their discussion out over several progressive conference calls between 01 June to 11 September. A brief summary of each discussion is included below:

Pre-Meeting

In advance of the Working Group meetings, a session of the Civil Military Pandemic Response Network (CMPRN) was convened on 1 June 2020. During this call, members shared updates and requests for support on a wide range of policy, programmatic and research initiatives being pursued by respective organizations and individuals related to civil-military dimensions of COVID 19. The group also inputted suggestions on a provisional agenda and key priorities for framing discussion during the three Working Group meetings. Lastly, CMPRN received a briefing from Benjamin Davies on the National Center for Disaster Medicine-Naval War College's "Urban Outbreak 2019" game, held at Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Lab 17-18 September 2019.

Meeting 1 (August 28, 2020)

The first meeting of the Outbreak Working Group, as part of the Humanitarian Civil-Military Workshop, designated a significant portion of time to a general conversation and agreement of priorities for discussion. Although guided by the challenges presented by COVID-19 and a desire to identify priorities in pandemic response, the conversation generally focused on a stock-take of individual participants' perspectives regarding the civil-military dimensions of national and international responses to date. Some experts among the working group who had experienced the US domestic response first-hand identified key strengths and weaknesses, and assessed whether or not the existing civ-mil infrastructure worked in practice. Other experts working on state or local levels discussed their (in)ability to acquire personal protective equipment (PPE), testing capabilities, or other pertinent medical supplies.

Overall, several key themes emerged from the initial meeting, which were developed further in Meetings 2 and 3. First, experts emphasized the highly political, contested nature of supply distribution, and how this conformed or conflicted with broader civil-military goals. Second, participants raised the potential tension between the conventional, "one-size-fits-all" approach to understanding the military contributions that can support major humanitarian health emergencies, versus a more granular and disaggregated analysis of individual assets and capabilities. Third, the validity of having such a conversation at all – in other words, whether or not civilian-military coordination played a functional role in the pandemic response at all – was questioned and examined in light of its successes or failures in recent months.

Meeting 2 (September 4, 2020)
Building on the previous discussion, Working Group members spent the second meeting focusing in on prioritization of research topics and deliverables. One of the central points discussed during this meeting were the distinct challenges and opportunities associated with civil-military pandemic coordination in the specific context of COVID 19. Moving beyond a purely national scope, the working group members discussed breakdowns in cooperation and coordination on an international scale, as well as salient differences between pandemic responses in developed and developing countries. In addition, attention was given to the role that international organizations played in facilitating cooperation and providing logistical support, as well as the United States' role, in particular, in financing or supporting such institutions.

During the second part of the meeting, the working group members discussed potential initiatives and research topics on which to focus and direct special attention. By the end of the meeting, a general idea of topics, and specific methods and deliverables for subsequent priorities, had been created with specific working group members taking lead positions.

Meeting 3 (September 11, 2020)
In the final meeting, the working group provided concluding remarks on many of the topics raised over the course of the previous meetings. In addition to relating many themes to broader opportunities and goals in the realm of civilian-military coordination, many working group members framed their proposals in terms of specific initiatives or deliverables to further the work of the outbreak working group. In particular, working group members were interested in using the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study on civilian-military coordination and outbreak preparedness, as well as a litmus test for whether or not the current system has performed well in response to the pandemic.

Key Themes

COVID-19 As an Intensifier of Pre-Existing Humanitarian Civ-Mil Issues
- A critical take-away from this year's session was the group's widespread consensus that COVID 19, while undoubtably a novel global public health emergency in many profound ways, also spotlights core challenges and opportunities for humanitarian civil-military coordination at both national and international levels which are not, in themselves, new. Lessons derived from past outbreaks, such as the West Africa Ebola outbreak, remain highly relevant and applicable reference points.

- As such, although 2020's conversation focused predominantly on COVID-19, the discussion ultimately reinforced core messages and priorities recommended by the Working Group developed in previous years. These include:
    1. **A still-unmet need to better address the long-standing operational and strategic coordination gaps continuing to impede effective humanitarian civ-mil coordination**. These include, for instance, i.) the persistence of ambiguous definitions, principles, and conceptualization in existing guidance around when, and how, military actors should be involved as a responder of "last resort" in the context of pandemics; a lack of discrete representation of pandemic preparedness/response in established CMCoord frameworks; a dearth of opportunities for joint civilian-military exercises and fora for sustained dialogue; and a lack of preparedness and thinking about pandemics which occur in **non-permissive environments.**
    2. **Tackling persistent knowledge gaps in our understanding of humanitarian civil-military good practice specific to major health emergencies**, including missing opportunities for generating empirical data and data-sharing.
    3. **Using a systems lens, acknowledging the intersectionality between outbreaks and other global megatrends,** including urbanization, climate change, and migration/displacement crises, and the important distinctions between responses in both **permissive and non-permissive environments.**
    4. **Advancing critical perspective on the politics of humanitarian civil-military engagement and promoting greater diversity of perspectives - in the context of major health emergencies, and more broadly.** The absence of voices from the Global South – including perspectives of Southern ministries, militaries, and affected community members themselves – and the contested discourse surrounding global health engagement, were recognized as essential considerations for debate.
- This year's Working Group also remains motivated by reaffirmation that, despite these significant challenges, **major global health emergencies represent a particularly constructive arena for civil-military coordination**. The severity, speed of escalation, and global nature of pandemics offer a powerful foundation of shared incentives between military actors and the international humanitarian community. Likewise, the natural pre-existing professional affinity for dialogue between uniformed and civilian medical communities suggests a constructive foundation for cross-sectoral communication. Chairs also reviewed the WG activities and individual member's own organizational accomplishments over the past year, pointing to the growth of a small but sustained 'global conversation' around pandemic civ-mil issues observed since the Working Group's initiation in 2016 as an encouraging development.

Unpacking the COVID 19 Problem Space
- A significant portion of the discussion was dedicated to scoping the conceptual boundaries of the complex range of issues related civil-military engagement and coordination in the global COVID response. Given the unprecedented scale and complexity of the crisis,

participants noted the daunting challenge of where to begin in this discussion – particularly give the very sparse, 'off the shelf' good practice and guidance on effective application of humanitarian civil-military principles in global health emergencies.

- Although this question was one the group struggled with over the three sessions, the resulting discussion led to a rich and thoughtful debate reinforcing core commitments to research and action priorities.
  - o First, some members questioned, at the outset, whether there in fact exists enough 'bandwidth' amongst experts to discuss civil-military engagement as a discrete topic of focus in the midst of competing priorities Participants ultimately agreed that, while there may never been an ideal 'right' time to engage on this issue, there nonetheless remains a practical value in creating the space for cross-sectoral dialogue and network building/strengthening as part of this year's working group - even if we need to be realistic about the over-stretched capacity of the community of practice at the time of this writing.
  - o Second, participants again emphasized that COVID 19, while novel in many ways, underscores the same underlying issues that defined the civ-mil debate around pandemic response, and which we identified through iterative discussions over the last four years of the working group, provide us a relevant starting point for engaging with COVID-19.
  - o Third, participants recognized that the first step in engaging with a health emergency at the novel scale and complexity of COVID 19 required us to further unpack the humanitarian civil-military dimensions of the crises along several different levels of analysis. These include, in particular, (i) domestic versus international levels of civil-military engagement, and (ii) between Northern and Southern global contexts. The conversation over all three sessions also divided between (iii) detailed conversations regarding the technical dimensions of civ-mil coordination (i.e., appropriate guidelines and doctrine, application of CMCoord principles, understanding of appropriate military assets for pandemic response) versus political dimensions (power, political economy, inclusion/exclusion of Southern voices, etc.).

A Historic Opportunity for Learning

- There was strong consensus from members that COVID-19 represents, in the words of one expert, the largest scale 'natural experiment' of comparative civil-military public health coordination efforts in modern history. As such, there is enormous scope – and, indeed, an obligation – for generating new research and policy lessons-learning.
- Several concrete proposals for immediate research topics were proposed, including:
  1. Case study research, such as (i) comparison of approaches between US and UK civil-military coordination, i.e., in management of treatment centres, procurement of PPE, etc., and (ii) emerging comparative opportunities for evaluating Ministry of Health vs. Extra-Ministerial leadership as a success variable in effective civ-mil coordination across several country and regional contexts.

2. Detailed analysis of the specific range of individualized military capabilities and capacities relevant to supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the context of epidemics and pandemics, leading to accompanying guidance on when and in what modalities such contributions should take place.

3. Participants also observed that the emerging record of various country's comparative experience in responding to COVID 19 across the world raises serious questions regarding core assumptions underpinning the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). As one member noted 'If COVID doesn't give us the opportunity to rethink everything we know about the GHSA, I don't know what will'.

Agreed Actions

At its conclusion, this year's Outbreak Working Group committed to several concrete actions to implement over 2021.

- Continuation of regular **Civil-Military Pandemic Response Network** (CMPRN) calls, in order to maintain a regular space for cross-sectoral dialogue, information-sharing, and collaborative support between defence, civilian humanitarian/health professionals, and researchers responding to both COVID and existing/emerging global health emergencies.

- Recognizing the continuing unmet need for pandemic-specific civ-mil **training/guidance** materials, including at the level of UN OCHA CMCoord, the Working Group will continue to advocate for and offer technical assistance in development of such content.

- Agreement to submit a proposal for seed funding to the Brown University Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies, on comparative modalities of civil-military coordination during COVID. This paper will develop recommendations for best practice during public health emergencies based on comparative analysis of civil-military coordination in UK, Chinese and Philippine COVID-19 responses. (Since the workshop, this piece has been approved for funding, and will be coauthored by Sam Boland, Rob Grace, and Josiah Kapan.)

- Continuation of member's advancement/advocacy of additional research and policy priorities as articulated in its pre-existing **Outbreak WG Action Plan**[2].

Working Group Leads
Josiah Kaplan, Oxford University
Adam Levine, Brown University

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[2] 2018 Civilian-Military Humanitarian Response Workshop - Working Group Summary Report. https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/workshop-reports/3/

Protection of Civilians Working Group

Summary of Outputs

The Protection of Civilians (PoC) working group is a new effort for the 2020 workshop, developed with the goal of examining the unique challenges, opportunities, and risks regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict.
The objectives of the PoC working group are to:

- Grow a network of academics and practitioners who are passionate about PoC issues;

- Explore research areas that can advance the understanding of PoC issues;

- Explore simulations and exercises that can advance the understanding of PoC issues; and

- Identify academic opportunities that can be developed to further educate a broad range of civilian and military stakeholders on key PoC issues.

Meeting 1 (September 10, 2020)

Over the course of one two-hour session on September 10, 2020, a diverse group of leaders from over twenty-five different civilian and military organizations convened to discuss key aspects of the May 2020 UN Secretary General's Report for the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict[3].

Initial discussions focused on a review of the "state of PoC in 2019" and quickly pivoted to an examination of the analytical portion of the report that highlighted five key risks and opportunities for PoC over the next decade. The highlighted areas are:

- New approaches for urban warfare;

- Development and proliferation of new weapons technologies;

- Use of malicious digital technologies (cyberspace, cyberwarfare, combined with traditional kinetic weapons);

- Environmental impact of conflict and climate change; and

- Peacekeeping and special political missions.

This framework allowed participants to discuss their unique experiences and ideas with the aim of determining what areas have the potential for making the greatest impact in PoC from a humanitarian civil-military coordination perspective. One key discussion that unfolded surrounded the general consensus that **while the necessity to protect civilians is well-**

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[3] https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2020_366.pdf

understood, the translation into actual doctrine and military practice continues to be a monumental challenge.

Additionally, members of the group shared various ongoing efforts by civilian and military organization to promulgate guidelines, standard operating procedures, and doctrine for PoC in armed conflict. Several of these documents are expected to be released in the near future – most notably by ICRC and NATO as well as the US Department of Defense's first ever comprehensive civilian casualties policy. Of note, members of the group were surprised to learn of these efforts. This highlights the need for improved communication and sharing of research, lessons learned, guidelines, doctrine, and other efforts amongst a community of practice and networks. The group agreed to explore the best way to develop a comprehensive online repository for PoC information.

The initial meeting is only the first of what will hopefully become regular bi-monthly meetings over the course of the next year leading into the 2021 workshop, and there will be additional discussions regarding specific areas for the group's focus. The initial leading topics of interest are:

- The unique challenges presented in urban warfare, particularly the issue of indirect or reverberating harms to civilians arising from operations in populated areas;

- Great power conflict between peer and near peer adversaries;

- New tactics in the information space with a focus on the social-digital terrain;

- Large-scale combat operations, while concurrently looking at grey zone and hybrid operations occurring in urban environments before, during, and after kinetic action; and

- Scalable doctrine and planning that specifically focuses on population density in large urban environments.

There was widespread agreement that the group should make every effort to collaborate on multiple lines of effort, rather than only one focus area, to work together towards critical research objectives where multiple issues come together. Moving forward, the working group is excited to add Ranya Ghadban, from the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management, as an additional working group lead to bolster the group's depth of expertise in the protection of civilians area.

Working Group Leads
David Polatty, U.S. Naval War College
Annie Shiel, Center for Civilians in Conflict

Urbanization Working Group

Summary of Outputs

The mission of the urbanization working group to improve civilian-military cooperation in response to conflict or humanitarian disasters in urban environments. As urbanization forces a shift in traditional humanitarian, the urbanization working groups seeks to optimize opportunities and mitigate challenges in delivering effective humanitarian aid to urban populations. Since 2016, this working group has worked to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with civilian-military humanitarian preparedness and response in urban environments.

Over the course of one two-hour session, the urbanization working group produced several overarching research proposals:
- Case study: "rise" of community-level humanitarian actors in urban centers throughout the Philippines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - (1) Engagement with national-level humanitarian actors.
    - (2) Typologies of humanitarian behavior involved in.
    - (3) Perceived gaps in humanitarian efforts by civilian-military actors during COVID-19 pandemic.
    - <u>Methods:</u> qualitative, interview-based research model.
    - <u>Deliverables:</u> culturally sensitive training programs, locally driven research.
- Potential modifications for the "2019 Urban Outbreak" Tabletop Exercise
    - Different level of focus (tactical, operational, strategic).
    - Modified time constraints, information transparency, etc.
    - Different sorting and/or experiential mixing techniques.

Meeting 1 (September 12, 2020)

The working group convened over one single session to facilitate conversation and produce substantive research initiatives for the coming year. For the first part of the meeting, the working group leads presented a summary of the 2019 "Urban Outbreak" Tabletop Exercise, which simulated civ-mil coordination among a diverse group of experts in response to a major bacterial outbreak. In addition to outlining the scenario and basic structure of game play, the working group leads introduced preliminary game results as well as practical implications for the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of this presentation was to offer potential modifications or revisions to the "Urban Outbreak" template for future iterations and research opportunities.

Next, the working group engaged in general discussion about the opportunities and challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic in urban environments. Many different topics were raised, and some general themes emerged from conversation. First, many of the working group members concurred that long-term, locally driven humanitarian efforts produce significantly better results than traditional international support. These "bottom-up" approaches increase resource utility, decrease time expenditures, and otherwise optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of successful humanitarian assistance. Second, many of the working group

members discussed the various organizations and administrations within local governments with which humanitarians may interact and provide aid. The structure of power among these institutions, as well as the viability of producing substantive assistance through cooperation with them, was discussed at length.

By the end of the meeting, several working group members decided on specific initiatives and research proposals that advanced the purposes of the urbanization working group. These proposals were subsequently sanctioned by the working group leads, as well as the totality of the working group members.

Working Group Leads
Lily Bui, Pacific Disaster Center
Ronak Patel, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative