

PROGRESS AND KEY RESULTS

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has supported the G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) since 2018 with the establishment and implementation of a regulatory framework on international human rights and international humanitarian law known as the "Compliance Framework". Key advances per each of the seven pillars of the Compliance Framework to date, include:

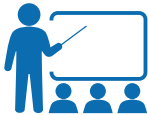
Pillar 1: Selection and background check



- Supporting the development of a Directive on the Police Component which was approved in late June 2020 and now awaiting approval by the G5 Sahel Defence and Security Committee, which integrates standards for staff selection, in particular:
 - minimum criteria, including the requirement of a clean criminal record, the absence of open investigations, and good conduct and discipline for each nominated personnel; and
 - the obligation to ensure the deployment of women to FC-G5S provost units and specialized investigative units.
- Successful advocacy for each zone to be staffed with a legal advisor and communications advisor to monitor and communicate on the implementation of the Compliance Framework in their areas of responsibility;
- Production and delivery in August 2020 of 9,500 military badges to facilitate the identification of all FC-G5S personnel and thus distinguishing them from national and other forces.

Pillar 2: Training

The Project enhanced the army headquarters' own capabilities to better understand, apply and enforce the elements of the Compliance Framework at the battalion level through:



- Supporting the FC-G5S and the troop-contributing countries in the conception, development and adoption of the training program and a specific training plan relating to the Compliance Framework.
- Participating in annual pre-deployment training for members of the *Poste de Commandement Interarmées de Théâtre* (PCIAT) and the three zones, in collaboration with the EU-RACC, EUTM, EUCAP and Barkhane, including the pre-deployment training for 38 new PCIAT personnel ahead of the rotation on 30 October 2020, presenting on Compliance Framework subjects.
- Organizing two advanced training courses in the law of armed conflict for senior officers from the FC-G5S legal and operational branches as well as the Police Component, in collaboration with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law of Sanremo, the JUROPS of EMA France, ICRC and CIVIC in December 2018 and February 2020.
- Establishing a mobile training team comprising representatives from the G5 Sahel Defense College, the army headquarters of the G5 Sahel countries, the FC-G5S and partners including, among others, UNITAR, UNODC, CIVIC, and ISS.
- Organizing four training courses for trainers in the law of armed conflict and human rights for the army headquarters of Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad, which strengthened the capacity of 120 trainers, in collaboration with various partners including MINUSMA, ICRC, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, EUCAP Sahel Mali and Niger.

Pillar 3: Development, adoption and dissemination of FC-G5S doctrine



- Supporting the FC-G5S in establishing internal procedures and mechanisms to implement the Compliance Framework and integrate human rights and international humanitarian law standards through its core doctrine, legal documents, and rules and regulations.
- Contributing to developing or revising 18 documents as part of the implementation of the FC-G5S Compliance Framework, including the concept of operations (CONOPS), the Status of forces agreement (SOFA), the rules of engagement, as well as various procedural documents, directives and instructions from the Force Commander, including on the conduct of internal investigations.
- Integrating numerous key principles of international law into the legal documents of FC-G5S. For example, the principles relating to the use of force, the treatment of individuals apprehended during operations and their handing over to national authorities for legal action, the guarantee of non-execution of the death penalty by member states of G5 Sahel against those handed over to them, procedures for the conduct of internal investigations, and the adoption of a code of conduct and discipline.

Pillar 4: Integration of the requirement for the protection of civilians during planning and conduct of operations



- Supporting the integration of rules ensuring the protection of civilians at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels, thus reaching all levels of officers. In addition, to ensure that rules for the protection of civilians are fully operationalized at the tactical level, a standard document which summarizes the rules of engagement and principles of international law was prepared as an annex to each Joint Force operational order.
- Similarly, the Project assisted with development of the Soldier's Manual, an easy-to-read pocket-card containing the essential messages for the protection of civilians for wide distribution to all front-line soldiers.
- Support to the initiative launched by the Executive Secretary of the G5 Sahel in January 2020 to develop a Regional Strategy for the Protection of Civilians common to the G5 Sahel countries, through the organization of the first of five diagnostic workshops in Mali in November 2020, with a wide range of stakeholders, notably national human rights institutions, local and traditional authorities and civil society. Similar workshops will be held from early 2021 in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger, subject to COVID-19 restrictions, to establish a regional POC Strategy for the Joint Force.

Pillar 5: RETEX¹ (After-action reviews) or an impact assessment of operations



- Two Retex meetings were carried out respectively in 2018 and 2019, allowing for a critical evaluation of FC-G5S military operations, focusing on the difficulties encountered as well as the concrete impact of operations carried out on the civilian populations.
- The Retex led to the identification of a series of concrete and necessary actions to improve future operations, and are the basis for a number of current Project actions, including in particular the contribution to operationalizing the FC-G5S Police Component to ensure the judicialization of the FC-G5S' field of operations, and activities planned to improve relationships of trust and collaboration between the FC-G5S and the populations.

Pillar 6: Internal control mechanism and report on the conduct of operations



- In partnership with the NGO CIVIC, OHCHR support to the FC-G5S enabled them to establish an internal Civilian Damage Identification, Monitoring and Analysis Mechanism (CITAC or MISAD in French), which was officially established by the Force Commander in June 2020. Several trainings have been delivered by CIVIC, with the participation of OHCHR, to enable personnel from PCIAT headquarters, command posts and battalions to operationalize the CITAC at all levels, with more programmed in 2021. A functional CITAC will facilitate the future organization of information-sharing exercises between OHCHR, the Joint Force operations and national commands of G5 Sahel countries to attribute responsibility for individual incidents, identify necessary remedial action, analyze patterns of civilian harm and discuss mitigation measures to address such patterns, and assess progress on the implementation of the CITAC itself.

Pillar 7: Mechanisms and procedures for accountability for human rights violations

Supporting the operationalization of the FC-G5S Police Component to guarantee the effective judicialization of the field of operations of the FC-G5S, through:



- Spearheading the development of a dedicated training program intended for the FC-G5S Police Component since July 2020, in coordination with the Joint Force, MINUSMA's Human Rights Division, UNPOL, UNODC, the EU-RACC, INTERPOL, AFRIPOL, and representatives of the police and gendarmerie of the five Sahel countries. The Police Component Training Program was formally approved in November 2020 and a first pilot training program will be held in early 2021.
- Supporting joint visits led by the Joint Force, the Executive Secretariat Defense and Security Office and judges from specialized pôles judiciaires of the G5 Sahel countries to the area of deployment of FC-G5S battalions in Burkina Faso, the Niger and Mauritania in September and October 2020. The visits sensitized provost and military officers on their respective responsibilities in the commission or handling of violations, the conduct of internal investigations, and with regard to detention and handover procedures. They also allowed for the further dissemination of key Force doctrine governing these procedures.
- Supporting the drafting of the statutes of the G5 Sahel Regional Police Academy, finalized in December 2020.
- Independent monitoring and follow-up of incidents involving the FC-G5S across the five countries, in collaboration with independent sources and utilization of remote monitoring techniques. Several documented incidents are followed up with the Joint Force in order to establish responsibilities. Monitoring missions were organized in Mauritania and Niger in the last quarter of 2020 to assess the human rights situation, exchange with FC-G5S personnel in those areas and establish contact with local authorities and other stakeholders.
- Strengthening the capacity of national human rights commission and civil society organizations in Niger, Mali, and Mauritania, through the organization together with the G5 Sahel Executive Secretariat of three trainings on human rights monitoring and reporting techniques to reinforce local knowledge and skills in monitoring, investigating, and reporting of human rights violations and abuses. Similar trainings are planned to take place in Chad and Burkina Faso as of early 2021.

¹ From the French, "Retour d'expérience".