

Driving a Ferrari into the desert and leaving it there? The challenges of information management in UN peacekeeping and humanitarian NGOs

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‘We need to clarify what the information is for’ (B)

- Why do we need this information?
- What will be done with it?
- Has this been effectively communicated to those the information was collected from?

‘We need to improve the first level of information through a standard reporting format’ (B)

‘technical data requires greater interrogation of the methodologies used to collect it and so you have to be more cautious about the conclusions you draw’ (D)

- Training on data collection must include the purpose of information collection so that this can be communicated to interlocutors
- Guidelines either not shared or not followed in practice
- The ethics of data collection need to be addressed

Investigating and Reporting Human Rights Violations and Abuses

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- ✓ List all possible contacts and sources of information and decide who you would like to meet first.
- ✓ Consider security risks for yourself and your contacts. Don't go if the risks are too high
- ✓ Be prepared to answer questions about the reasons for your visit to the scene, or when people are suspicious about your questions

Remember: Don't try to be a super detective or a hero.

You should not put yourself or others in danger.

Investigating and Reporting Human Rights Violations and Abuses

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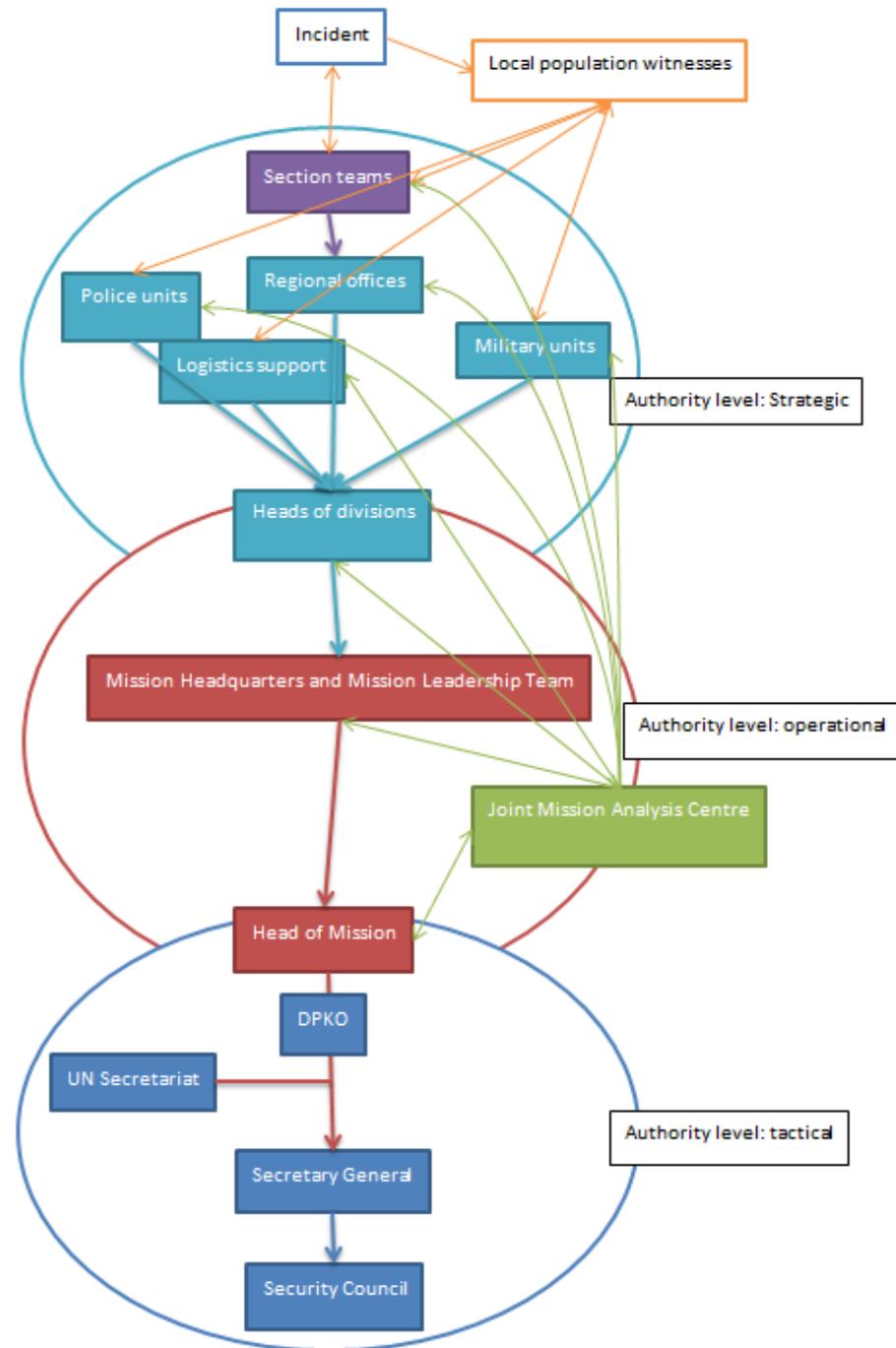
- ✓ Introduce yourself, the organization or group you work for, and the purpose of the interview.
- ✓ Stress the issue of confidentiality. Explain what you intend to do with the information.
- ✓ Make sure with the interviewee that the information furnished by him will remain confidential.
- ✓ Make sure the interviewee name will not be reflected anywhere even in the report.
- ✓ Ask permission to take notes and/or to use a recorder or about his willingness for the interview.

Getting agencies to share data 'like herding cats' (B)

- Data sharing between agencies one of the most contentious issues
- International law and codes of conduct unclear

‘Many of the reports throw around intuitive feelings about the conflict but have little to back it up’ (B)

- Processes of filtering, summarising and editing make it hard to trace where information has actually come from
- Information always flows upwards
- Analysis is separated from those who collect data (if done)



‘The system is overheated and we are feeding the beast. We need to invest in long-term analysis’
(C)

‘We need to be more like intelligence analysts, take all the information we can and use judgement to decide how much weight to place on it...I need information to be quick and dirty. Good information too late is useless” (A)

- Different people/organisations have different data requirements, reconciling these can be problematic

‘If you are not careful about the data you have, it takes on a life of its own’ (D)